International Public Interest Law
# Table of Contents

## Chapter 1  Introduction and Advice

A. The Guide  
B. Practice Types  
C. Personal Profile  
D. Self-Assessment  
E. Networking  
F. Law School and Training  
G. Summer Internships  
H. Post Graduate Experience  
I. Salaries  
J. Some Practical Considerations  
K. Funding a Public Interest Career  
L. Yale Fellowships  
M. Some Additional Post-Graduate Fellowship Opportunities  
N. The International Public Interest Resume  
O. Frequently Asked Questions

## Chapter 2  The United Nations

A. Internships  
B. Post-Graduate Employment  
C. Recruitment of Young Professionals through Competitive Examinations  
D. Short-Term Consultancies  
E. Young Professional Programs  
F. Organizational Listings

## Chapter 3  Resources within the Yale Community

A. CDO Assistance  
B. Mentors  

*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed due to their proprietary nature.*  
C. Classes  
D. YLS Student Organizations and Journals  
E. International Projects and Centers

## Chapter 4  Words of Wisdom

A. Practicing Attorneys  
   1. United Nations  
   2. United States Government  
   3. Nongovernmental Organizations  
B. Student Interns  
   1. United Nations  
   2. Intergovernmental/Foreign Government Settings  
   3. United States Government  
   4. Nongovernmental Organizations
Appendices

*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed due to proprietary nature.

B. List of Selected Online Resources

Index of Narratives

Practicing Attorneys

United Nations
United Nations Development Programme, Governance & Rule of Law Unit, Khartoum, Sudan, *Hillary Forden*
World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, *Edward Kwakwa*

United States Government
U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of General Counsel, Moscow, Russia, *Tim C. Riedler*
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of International Affairs, Washington DC, *Christopher C. Herman*

Nongovernmental Organizations
Center for Legal and Social Studies and the Association for Civil Rights, Argentina, *Jeremy Robbins*
Earthrights International, Washington, DC, *Marco Simons*
*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed.*
Fund for Global Human Rights; Human Rights Watch, Washington, DC, *Regan Ralph*
Genocide Watch; State Department Foreign Service, McLean, VA, *Gregory H. Stanton*
Human Rights Watch, New York, NY, *Kenneth Roth*
*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed.*
Open Society Institute; Amnesty International; Senate Foreign Policy Aide; State Department, Washington, DC, *Stephen A. Rickard*

Student Interns

United Nations
United Nations, Political Affairs Department, Europe & Americas Division, New York, NY, *Christina Andersen*

Intergovernmental/ Foreign Government Settings
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Liberia, *Karen Kudelko*
Supreme Court of Israel, Jerusalem, *Gabriel Rosenberg*

United States Government
U.S. Department of Treasury, Office of Foreign Asset Control, Washington, DC, *Abbas Ravjani*
**Nongovernmental Organizations**

Proyecto Linguístico Quetzalteco de Español (PLQ), Guatemala, *Carolyn Lipp*

Proyecto Linguístico Quetzalteco and Chico Mendez Proyecto de Reforestación, Guatemala, *Paul Rink*

Workers Rights Consortium, Dhaka, Bangladesh, *Mary Yanik*
A. The Guide

With the increasing interconnectedness of our world, the breadth and range of international institutions and jobs continues to grow. Attorneys are involved in diplomacy, policy-making, administration, and internationally-oriented advocacy and activism. The goal of the guide is to facilitate the process of career exploration for law students and recent graduates interested in public international work.

This guide takes an expansive definition of international public interest. Opportunities are available in varied fields such as documenting human rights abuses, humanitarian work, international courts and tribunals, regional organizations such as the Asia Pacific Forum or the African Development Bank, inter-governmental agencies including the United Nations, and the diverse types of non-profit organizations operating either domestically in the United States or abroad.

This guide provides career advice, practice areas and ideas to prepare students interested in international public interest work. It also includes extensive online resources, YLS resources, and contains numerous narratives of YLS students and alumni who have worked in international human rights, explaining the rewards and demands of the work, and providing suggestions and encouragement for finding your path.

In addition, our Opportunities with International Tribunals and Foreign Courts provides information and listings of court-based international public interest positions and is available on the CDO website, under Resources We Provide, then Career Guides & Advice.

The good news is that it is possible to have a lifelong career as a lawyer in international public service. The bad news is that there is no clear and guaranteed path leading to a career in this broad field. This is, in part, because of the great diversity of public international work done by lawyers. Moreover, as in the domestic sphere, international public and nonprofit organizations have fewer resources than private corporations and law firms. Because of this, they have fewer openings, may not offer formal training for young attorneys, and usually prefer to hire attorneys with at least three to five years of experience. However, opportunities for entry-level work do exist and are discussed in the chapters that follow.

Breaking into a career in public international law may require taking short-term positions, seeking work as a consultant, or applying for fellowships or grants to fund your work. Most important is your determination to stick with it and your willingness to be inventive in attaining your goals.

B. Practice Types

Finding the right job means assessing your needs and expectations. In researching practice areas, think about clients (many or just one?); the advocacy type (mostly litigation, community-based legal education, legislative work, or a combination?); and the location (are they permitted to work openly, without reprisal?). Some types of employers include:

- **The Federal Government.** There are agencies within the federal government that have robust international components such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S. Department of State, some agencies within the U.S. Department of Justice, the Central Intelligence Agency, and Department of Defense to name a few.
Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO). There are thousands of NGOs worldwide which are organized on a local, national or international level. In the United States, they are often recognized as 501c (3) tax-exempt organizations by the IRS. They use a variety of advocacy methods and are best known for taking action in bringing human rights and other concerns to public attention and developing legal principles that need assent of states. International NGOs based in the U.S. include Human Rights Watch, the International Rescue Committee and the International Center for Transitional Justice.

Inter-Governmental Agencies (IGO). This refers to an entity created by treaty involving two or more nations. IGOs address a variety of human rights and other issues of common interest to members and provide a forum for development of international law. They can be organized worldwide (United Nations (U.N.), International Monetary Fund (IMF), regionally (the African Union (AU), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Organization of American States (OAS)), or around a specific issue such as finance or trade (World Bank, African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, World Trade Organization).

International Tribunals and Courts. The last decade has seen a proliferation of international tribunals and courts providing multiple forums for adjudicating a multitude of cases. Consult the Opportunities with International Tribunals and Foreign Courts guide on the CDO website for additional information.

Each of these broad areas will require different skill sets and competencies. It may mean a field posting versus one at headquarters. At some point in your career, you may be an activist or an academic. You could seek change within a government structure or with diplomacy. All are valid practice types. Are you interested in being in the “middle” of things and having contact with individuals in the field or would you like to think of the bigger picture and work on policies which will affect the greatest number of people? The immediacy of field work can be overshadowed by the incremental changes that you are able to make. Conversely, the politics of working at headquarters may be frustrating to some. You need to find the type or types that you find most fulfilling and consider the fact that these considerations may shift as you progress in your career.

C. Personal Profile

Despite the fact that there is no “typical” path for those who wish to do international public interest law, they often have the following in common:

Knowledge of International Law—In order to be the most effective, a good knowledge of international law and local law is strongly encouraged. You should take advantage of courses and clinics to give you a solid foundation in international legal laws and rules.

Demonstrated Commitment and Interest—You will be expected to show that you are truly interested in the work that the organization does, the geography, the subject area or the advocacy type. Few organizations will expect you to have the exact experience they are looking for, but you need to make a good faith argument that you are someone who will work hard to further their mandate.

Language Skills—You must be able to communicate in the language(s) in which the work is being done. One of the most important things you can do to prepare for an international law career is to make sure to keep up any language skill you may have or spend some time in
developing the skills you will need. You should take advantage of any opportunities to enhance your language skills. For instance, after the first term, YLS students may take a limited number of courses in the graduate and professional schools or undergraduate college of Yale University for Law School credit and these could include language classes. You could use part of your summer to advance your language skills. You can find another student to practice with by creating language tables. You can go online and read newspapers and magazines in the language you are learning. You can also find a good compilation of international news from Lexis’ News tab.

- **International Experience**—International organizations will value your ability to work in their environment. Your résumé and cover letter can highlight your travel experiences, including study abroad and leisure travel.

- **Relevant Work Experience**—Last but not least, you will need to demonstrate that you have the appropriate skill set for the work you would like to be hired to do. You do not have to have worked in that specific context to demonstrate that you are capable of doing their work. Domestic litigation experience can translate well internationally. Focus on the skills that you believe would be useful for the organization.

**D. Self-Assessment**

As you search for an international law practice career that is right for you, it is important for you to do a self-assessment and evaluation. Individuals who do international public interest work share a few characteristics. There are some things to keep in mind:

- Do you have the personality which allows you to work on some of the most difficult issues, sometimes away from family and friends?
- Is this really what you’d like to do, even when the next job seems unclear?
- Are you endowed with a healthy dose of realism and pragmatism to deal with situations where sometimes there isn’t an absolute right or wrong?
- Are you able to deal with concepts of fairness and justice that may be different from yours?
- Are you comfortable with knowing that there may be periods when your employment situation might be uncertain?
- Are you all right knowing that you may live and work in areas of conflict, political and social repression, or intense poverty? Have you thought about living and working in places where there may be little infrastructure, including running water and electricity?
- Do you know when to step away from work and recharge?
- Are you preparing yourself for your “dream” job? Are you taking the classes you might need? Are you networking with individuals who are of interest? Are you getting as much advice as you can?

**E. Networking**

A great number of international positions are obtained through networking. In this field more so than other public interest fields, a personal introduction can net you not only insights and advice but also opportunities. There are opportunities to network not only in the Law School but throughout the University. Look broadly for individuals to connect with in a variety of ways. Once you have made initial contact, keep in touch with these individuals. Letting your contacts know of changes and updates in your situation or acknowledging their changes and updates is crucial in keeping the connection relevant.
Take the time to introduce yourself to presenters and panelists when you attend their programs. Informal conversations may lead to discovering that they are looking for a research assistant or that your ideas on a particular issue may be useful for a project they are working on.

F. Law School and Training

Law school can be a time to deepen your knowledge and broaden your experience within your chosen field and to learn about related fields, or to explore and better define your specific interests. Your own values and interests should be your primary guide for choice of classes, extracurricular activities, summer jobs, and other learning opportunities in this field. While it is not necessary to narrow your interests down to one “dream job” or even one particular practice area, you can take better advantage of opportunities that arise in law school if you have articulated to yourself what you want to get out of the experience. See CDO’s *Introduction to Career Development* on the CDO website for information on self-assessment and be sure to tap into the resources available through the Career Development Office and the Schell Center for International Human Rights.

Without going overboard, exhausting yourself, or losing perspective on what matters in life, you can gain valuable professional experience while in law school from clinical and other classes, scholarly research, extracurricular activities, pro bono projects, internships, journals, and other law student pursuits. Many professors are willing to offer informal career advice to students. Seek out professors whose area of specialization overlap with some of your own interests and who seem approachable.

Take advantage of the speakers and visitors not only to the Law School but to the University. They will not only provide first-hand information about their practice and advocacy, but they will offer you the opportunity to network with key players in the field. Creating and maintaining a robust network is a crucial component of your professional success.
Be strategic as you are planning the training you’ll need. If you aim for a career in international criminal law, going abroad may not be the most important facet of your training. Make sure you get good criminal litigation under your belt—that is what international courts and tribunals will be looking for. Be creative and think outside the box as you consider various opportunities.

**G. Summer Internships**

One of the best ways to get essential international public service experience is through a summer internship. Before applying for an internship, you should try to ensure that your interests, strengths and goals are a good match for the organization you have in mind. Talk to Jim Silk or Hope Metcalf of the Schell Center about your goals. They have years of experience with many international public interest placements. In addition to researching organizations through websites like the PSJD (see below), it is also a good idea to search out past interns. The Schell Center has online student reports from Kirby Simon Human Rights fellows about where they have worked. In addition, CDO’s online summer job evaluations (found in CMS) provide seven years of searchable summer employment reports.

Communicate with people at the organizations in which you are most interested and people knowledgeable about those organizations, and get clear answers to your important questions. Is this organization willing and able to provide you with the degree of supervision you seek? Will you be able to work on legal projects? International projects? Will there be other interns? Will you have access to computer, telephone, and other resources necessary for doing your work? What is it like to live in that area? Make sure that you and your potential sponsoring organization agree on your goals for the summer and how they will be met.

Do your research about the organization since in some instances they may not have well developed websites. Have they participated in recent international/regional conferences? Have they been the subject of recent newspaper articles? Do they have connections with other U.S. law schools? International internships may carry different expectations than U.S.-based ones. The pace or scope of work may be defined differently than what you are used to seeing in the United States. Legal work may encompass more community based advocacy or policy work than you may expect. Clarify expectations by asking specific questions about your internship and work product. And once you get “on the ground,” be flexible and proactive in seeking work that interests and challenges you.

Be aware of significant events at the organization and in the region that might affect your summer internship. For example, it would be important to find out if the project you intend to work on will not go forward if the organization does not receive critical funding, or if the region is politically unstable. You may want to confirm that your supervisor will be there when you are. Keep in mind that some questions are more appropriate to address to someone outside of the organization who is familiar with its work.

Generally, international placements decide on interns later than U.S. ones. Organizations abroad will typically make decisions about a summer internship in the middle or late Spring semester. You may wish to be gently persistent in following up on your application. In addition, infrastructural glitches such as lack of internet service or unreliable phone lines may delay decisions.

**H. Post-Graduate Experience**

Once you decide to further your professional experience in the international field, finding post-graduate employment can be a challenge. With perseverance and ingenuity, you can work in a field that you truly are passionate about. You can look to fellowships; take on contract work with organizations like the United States Agency for International Development or the United Nations; or, if you are able, get your backpack and get in the field to volunteer and network your way to in-country opportunities. See the
section below on funding. It cannot be said enough that the majority of opportunities in international public interest are found through personal and professional connections. Make sure to network vigorously. Keep up your membership with affiliated organizations such as relevant sections of the American Bar Association and the American Society of International Law.

I. Salaries

Salaries for international work can vary a great deal. Salaries for international public interest work for organizations based in the United States are typical of salaries for other public interest salaries in this country. Some sample annual salaries:

- Human Rights Watch (post-graduate fellowship): $57,800
- United Nations, P-2: $56,000-$77,000; ($87,000 - $118,000 for NYC)
- U.S. Government: $60,601

Do note that local salaries in developing countries may be much lower which can be offset by the lower cost of living.

J. Some Practical Considerations

Yale University provides UHC Global Travel Assistance at no cost to all students and current University employees while traveling on University business or for pleasure. The program provides international and domestic emergency medical, security, and travel assistance services anywhere in the world.

If you are going overseas, you will need passports, valid through the date of return, and, for many of the countries to which you will be going, visas. Ascertain whether a visa is necessary by calling the consulate of the country. Most consulates process visa applications during specific hours. The U.S. Department of State has information about entry and visa requirements.

For general passport information, consult the U.S. Department of State Passport Services website.

For general contact information for consulates in the United States, consult the U.S. Department of State “Foreign Consular Offices in the United States” website. Make sure to work with your host organization to get the right kind of visa.

There are many things to think about when traveling. Have you thought about the following?

- What is the best and safest place for me to exchange my money?
- What will be the easiest and safest way for me to do my banking?
- Have I made copies of my passport, immunization card, student identification card, credit cards, travelers’ check serial numbers and other important documents and left them in a secure place? If I don’t have the documents with me, can they be sent to me quickly in case of emergency?
• What will the weather be like?

• If I am planning on driving, do I have a valid license and the proper insurance? Did I make copies of my driver’s license and insurance papers and leave them in a safe place?

• Did I renew my prescriptions and take enough with me?

### K. Funding a Public Interest Career

#### Summer:
Yale Law School provides funding for those wanting to pursue public interest work over the summer. YLS SPIF (Summer Public Interest Fellowships) can fund your public interest work while the Kirby Simon travel grants will cover your travel expenses for international public interest work. Yale also offers opportunities to work closely with professionals on international projects through the Lowenstein Clinic and Lowenstein Project, and access to alumni mentors who have pursued public international careers through YLS Career Connections. You can find additional funding resources at PSJD.

The Summer Public Interest Fellowship (SPIF) provides up to $625 a week for up to 12 weeks to every student who needs this financial support to pursue a public interest job in the summer. For the summer of 2017, this program gave 205 students funding. See the Yale Law School Financial Aid website for an in depth description of this program.

Students who plan to undertake human rights work during the summer are eligible to apply for summer funding through the Schell Center’s Kirby Simon Summer Fellowship program, which supplements a weekly stipend in the same amount as SPIF for basic living allowance with funds to cover costs associated with international travel. For the summer of 2017, the Schell Center funded 36 Kirby Simon Summer fellows. The Schell Center administers the program and distributes application information to all students in the fall semester. Contact the Center at schell.law@yale.edu for information about the program and potential placements, and to obtain approval of your placement.

#### Post-graduate:
In addition, Yale has post-graduate fellowships in international public interest law through the Bernstein and Robina Fellowships and with the U.S. government through the Heyman Fellowships. The YLS Public Interest Fellowships can also be used to fund international public interest work. In addition, the Gruber Fellowships will fund post-graduate work in Global Justice or Women’s Rights.

### L. Yale Fellowships

Below is a discussion of Yale Law School’s fellowships

• The **Robert L. Bernstein Fellowship in International Human Rights**, administered by the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for International Human Rights, offers financial support for two to three recent graduates of YLS to pursue human rights work for a year.

• The **Gruber Fellowships in Global Justice and Women’s Rights** are post-graduate fellowships that allow recent graduates of Yale graduate and professional schools to spend a year working on issues of relevance to the fields of global justice and/or women’s rights.
• The **Heyman Federal Public Service Fellowship** supports two or three recent Yale Law graduates who wish to work closely with high-level leaders in the federal government for one year. The fellowship can be used for federal government work that is involved in international issues, such as with the U.S. State Department. Information is available on the YLS Public Interest Fellowships page, under ‘YLS Fellowships Open Only to YLS Graduates’.

• The **Initiative for Public Interest Law at Yale** is a nonprofit organization that provides one-year grants of up to $35,000 for projects that protect the legal rights of inadequately represented groups or interests.

• The **Office of Fellowship Programs (OFP)** located at 55 Whitney Avenue on the third floor, provides information about Yale-specific and other international fellowship and study abroad programs, for which graduate and professional students are eligible.

• The **Robina Foundation Human Rights Fellowship** is a Law School fund that supports work anywhere in the world. The Fellowships enable experiences of six months to a year in a number of categories: judicial clerkships in international and foreign courts and tribunals with substantial responsibility for human rights issues; international criminal tribunal internships; internships with international organizations concerned with human rights; and independent research on human rights topics.

• The **Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale (MacMillan Center)** offers a number of grants and fellowships for graduate and professional school students interested in researching international relations or studying foreign languages.

• The **Yale Law School Fellowship at the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) at The Hague** allows students and recent alumni who are interested in international law and arbitration to spend one year working at the PCA.

• The **Yale Law School Public Interest Fellowship** and the **Yale Law Journal Fellowship** support recent Yale graduates interested in public interest work in the United States and abroad. Information is available on the YLS Public Interest Fellowships page, under ‘YLS Fellowships Open Only to YLS Graduates’.

**M. Some Additional Post-Graduate Fellowship Opportunities**

• The **Fulbright Program** is the flagship international educational exchange program sponsored by the U.S. government. The program provides scholars with the opportunity to study, teach, conduct research, exchange ideas, and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

• **Human Rights Watch** is one of the world’s leading independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights. Using objective investigations and strategic, targeted advocacy, the researchers build intense pressure for action and raise the cost of human rights abuse. Fellows work at the sponsoring organization on issues and projects determined by the organization.

• **Open Society Foundations** seeks to shape public policies to assure greater fairness in political, legal, and economic systems and safeguard fundamental rights. The Foundations fund a variety of fellowships some of which are only available for domestic projects while others, like the Open...
Society Fellowship, support innovative approaches to global challenges that stand in the way of fair and open communities.

- The American Society of International Law offers micro grants through their Arthur C. Helton Fellowship for law students and young professionals to pursue field work and research on significant issues involving international law, human rights, humanitarian affairs, and related areas.

- Ashoka is a social entrepreneurship organization. They provide a living stipend for an average of three years, allowing fellows to focus full-time on building their institutions and spreading their ideas. The organization also provides fellows with a global support network of peers and partnerships with professional consultants.

- Echoing Green provides seed-stage funding and strategic foundational support to emerging leaders working to bring about positive social change.

- Foundation Center is a leading source of information about philanthropy worldwide. The Center maintains the most comprehensive database on U.S. and, increasingly, global grantmakers and their grants—a robust, accessible knowledge bank for the sector. People are served in its five regional library/learning centers and its network of more than 500 funding information centers located in public libraries, community foundations, and educational institutions nationwide and around the world. A section of the website focuses on individual grantseekers. CDO has an online subscription to Foundation Grants for Individuals; please contact the office for login information.

N. The International Public Interest Résumé

A résumé used to obtain employment in the field of international public interest is very similar to the standard legal résumé. Sample student résumés can be found in Introduction to Career Development and sample alumni résumés can be found on the CDO website under Resources We Provide, Career Guides and Advice, and the Job Search Skills tab. The differences are dictated by the fact that your intended reader may not be familiar with U.S. education institutions, awards, employment, abbreviations, or conventions. With this in mind:

- Don’t abbreviate dates (use April 2017, rather than 4/6/17), degrees (Masters of Arts rather than MA), locations (Connecticut rather than CT) or employers (U.S. Department of Justice, not DOJ). Avoid using seasons, such as Fall 2017—they don’t always translate well.

- Emphasize your connection to the relevant geographical area and your familiarity with languages and cultures other than your own. Do not overstate your language abilities.

- Explain your credentials, such as law school honors or responsibilities of a job, whenever in doubt.

- Emphasize all of your knowledge and background of that region or topic area, including conferences, projects, or papers.

- You may want to translate your résumé into the working language of the organization to demonstrate your language ability.
• Include publications, even if they are not legal, if relevant.

• It is possible that this increased detail and explanation may cause your résumé to exceed one page. As long as you are focused on the position at issue, this is not a problem.

O. Frequently Asked Questions

What classes should I take?
Since international public interest law is very broad, there is no way to answer this question across the board. Your specific interests and career goals should guide you. Take classes that help you develop knowledge and clinics that help you develop skills—whether litigation, writing, oral argument, research, or something else—that relate to your career interest. Public Order of the World Community: A Contemporary International Law is a popular, basic public international course at YLS, but many others may enrich your understanding and skills in international law.

What skills are most important to landing a job in this area?
Many attorneys involved in hiring law graduates for public international jobs believe that the basics are most important: good writing, strong research skills, the ability to analyze at a sophisticated level, and being able to advocate for your ideas clearly and forcefully. For many legal jobs, proficiency in a foreign language or comfort with a foreign country or culture is also important. Otherwise, specific skills will depend on the particular job that interests you.

How important is it that I be on a competitive law journal?
This may be very useful in helping you to stand out as an applicant for an “honors program” and other positions within the U.S. government, post-graduate fellowships, and other similarly competitive U.S.-based employment opportunities. In general, however, being on a competitive journal is not likely to make or break your chances for a career in international public interest. Many employers do look favorably upon applicants who have published on subjects relevant to the job in question. For many jobs, however, what is most important is having relevant work experience.

Is it important to work abroad?
For most public international jobs, experience living and working abroad is extremely helpful personally as well as a good professional credential. In some cases, experience working abroad is essential, as with many positions related to human rights, international health, development, or humanitarian assistance.

Are judicial clerkships useful?
Like being on the board of a very competitive law journal, holding a judicial clerkship can give you a leg up on the competition for U.S.-based jobs, especially with the government, by indicating that you are intelligent and have good research and writing skills. It is doubtful whether a clerkship in a U.S. court would give you a competitive edge with non-U.S. employers. If you are interested in working in a specific country or region, you may be able to arrange a clerkship abroad. U.S. law students and graduates have worked at the Israeli Supreme Court, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and the Land Claims Court in South Africa, among other places. See CDO’s Opportunities with International Tribunals and Foreign Courts for guidance in this area.

Is it possible to find a paid job right out of law school?
Yes, but you should be willing to explore short-term opportunities such as fellowships, consultancies, “honors programs,” “junior officer programs,” and other similar positions. Be creative and patient.
What about becoming a career diplomat?
The U.S. Department of State Foreign Service career track provides the means for U.S. citizens to pursue a career as a diplomat. Information can be found on their website. A required Foreign Service Officer exam is offered several times each year. Entering officers begin in the Management, Consular, Economic, Political, or Public Diplomacy tracks.

How can I get a job with the United Nations (U.N.)?
The Young Professionals Programme (YPP) examination is held on a yearly basis in countries that are selected on the basis of their representation in the Secretariat through the Young Professionals Program (YPP). The purpose of the YPP examination is to recruit people for career positions at the Secretariat. Recruits will initially be given a two-year fixed-term appointment followed by conversion to a career contract, provided their performance is satisfactory. The U.N. also sponsors lawyers through the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) program to work in peacekeeping missions or developing countries. Contrary to what the name implies, UNVs receive a stipend and per diem which can be more than adequate. Additionally, positions are listed on the main U.N. career sites or here. The State Department publishes a bi-weekly list of international vacancy announcements. If you are interested in working for other United Nations agencies, funds, or programmes, please visit their websites directly. Enthusiastic networking should accompany the formal process of applying to the United Nations. Please contact the CDO office with any questions about this process.

When should I apply for summer internships and post graduate opportunities?
Because there is no general structure to hiring for international public interest jobs, it pays to start your research early, develop an action plan, and follow through. For summer internships, 2Ls should begin contacting organizations that interest them in the fall, and 1Ls should begin as soon after December 1st as they are ready. Many of these organizations (often the foreign NGOs) will not be willing to engage in the process for several months, but some (for example, the U.S. government) will follow a very structured and early timeline so it is best to learn the specific employers’ timelines before they expire.

The same advice applies for post-graduate opportunities. There are benefits to making contact early, even though many of these organizations will not know their needs until a vacancy arises or funding develops. Once again, the exception tends to be government hiring, which commonly has very early and strict application deadlines for entry-level jobs.

Can I transition from international to domestic work or vice-versa?
Generally, yes. You can make strategic decisions which will allow you to make the transition a bit more smoothly. Think about developing transferable skills which will make you more marketable. In addition, keep ties to the market you’d like to return to. For example, if you would like to return to the United States after spending some time abroad, think about doing a domestic internship for one of your summers.

Can I survive on a public interest salary?
Only you know that. Can people survive on a public interest salary and lead happy lives? Sure. They do it all the time. Not only is this question enormously dependent on what you consider the essentials of life, whether you have a working partner, where you live, and whether you plan on raising some kids, but it is also dependent on the type of public interest work you pursue. Some legal services providers employ an amazing group of committed attorneys and offer relatively low starting salaries; however, people working for the federal government will probably start in the fifties and can work up to well over $100,000. In addition, Yale’s loan repayment program (COAP) lightens the debt burden significantly and enables graduates to pursue public interest work.
CHAPTER 2
THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations is one of the most popular and attractive places to work for those considering international public interest law. However, securing employment with the U.N. is not often a straightforward process. This chapter will present some of the paths available for employment within this very large organization.

Founded in the aftermath of World War II, the United Nations (U.N.) is the single largest intergovernmental organization in the world with 193 member states. The six organs which make up the United Nations are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. There are also 15 agencies and several programs affiliated with the U.N. called the U.N. Family of Organizations.

The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the U.N. and is composed of representatives of all U.N. member states. The Security Council is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Economic and Social Council is the principal body coordinating the economic and social work of the U.N. and its family of organizations. Seventy percent of the U.N. human and financial resources are under the purview of the Economic and Social Council. The Trusteeship Council was established to supervise the transition of former colonies to self-government and is now largely inactive. The International Court of Justice settles legal disputes submitted to it by States and gives advisory opinions on legal questions to the United Nations and its agencies.

The Secretariat, with a staff of approximately 44,000 and offices worldwide, takes care of a range of issues dealing with the management and day-to-day running of the United Nations. Within the Secretariat are the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA), the Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and many others including Regional Commissions and International Tribunals. Visit their website for a full list.

U.N. headquarters are in New York but the U.N. has offices all over the world. Significant operations are carried out at the regional economic commissions in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Santiago, and Vienna. Official languages of the United Nations are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish; the Secretariat uses two working languages, English and French.

The U.N. family of organizations is comprised of the Secretariat, U.N. programs and funds such as UNEP (U.N. Environment Programme) and UNFIP (U.N. Fund for International Partnerships), and specialized agencies (such as UNICEF, UNDP) that have their own governing bodies and budgets, and set their own standards and guidelines.

Additionally, there are numerous subsidiary bodies dealing with legal or related issues within the U.N. system. Many of these meet as committees only several times a year and are staffed by individuals appointed by Member States—either as independent experts or state representatives.
A. Internships

Internships for law students (and others currently engaged in graduate studies) are available with the U.N. Secretariat, programs, and specialized agencies. The vast majority of U.N.-affiliated organizations hire interns year-round. Summer internships are usually full-time, but it is usually possible to work part-time during the semester. Minimum qualifications include proficiency in one or more U.N. languages and background in the substantive area of the specific organization’s work. Most internship positions (including all internships with the Secretariat) are unpaid, although a few organizations provide limited stipends. The minimum duration for U.N. internships ranges between one and three months, while the maximum duration is usually six months. Because of the U.N. bureaucracy, it is advisable to submit your application for an internship four to eight months before you wish to begin work.

Some affiliated organizations have established internship programs, usually with a centralized application process. Detailed information about such internship programs can usually be found online. Occasionally, application forms can be downloaded from an agency’s website or application materials can be sent via email. Where there is a centralized application process, internship applicants have a varying degree of control over the division to which they are assigned. In most cases, applicants are asked to indicate their preferred assignment at the time of application, but are not guaranteed to receive their preference. Because most U.N. organizations are not primarily legal in focus, most internship programs are open to non-law graduate students and undergraduate as well as law students. We urge you to ask whether opportunities for legal work exist, and whether the application process differs from the general one, before submitting your application.

Internships also are possible to arrange with U.N. organizations that do not have established internship programs. You may be able to arrange an internship by directly contacting the department or individual for whom you wish to work.

The United Nations Headquarters Secretariat Internship Programme is for the United Nations Secretariat in New York only and is offered on a two-month basis three times a year: mid-January to mid-March; early June to early August; and mid-September to mid-November. The programme is normally full-time, in the department or office of the Secretariat which has selected them.

B. Post-Graduate Employment

The U.N. seeks candidates with extensive international backgrounds. Most of its employees have traveled widely, lived in several countries, and are fluent in at least two U.N. languages. Other factors taken into consideration are prior work experiences and relationships with the U.N. as an intern (paid or unpaid), as a consultant, or as an employee or volunteer with an organization that works in partnership with the U.N. Both the substance of your prior work and your established networks are important in obtaining positions in the U.N. system.

Within the United Nations, individuals with legal backgrounds work as specialists in a variety of substantive areas in addition to law. For the most part, legal staffs are small and staff turnover limited. Most legal positions demand specialized knowledge in areas such as public international law, human rights, refugee law, labor law, patent and copyright law, or international criminal law.

There are various paths to working in the U.N.: fixed contracts, competitive examinations, short-term consulting positions, and “young” or “junior professional programs.” Because many U.N. organizations prefer to hire professionals with three to five years of experience, opportunities for entry level employment are limited. The hiring processes also take a long time. For example, the hiring process for fixed contracts may take as long as one year.
C. Recruitment of Young Professionals through Competitive Examinations

In recruiting for professional posts, special attention is paid to the development and maintenance of a proper balance among Member States, some of which have few or none of their nationals on the Professional staff of the U.N. Secretariat. Entry-level posts for junior professionals (P-2) are filled through competitive recruitment examinations organized on a rotational basis for nationals of inadequately represented Member States. United States citizens are eligible for these competitive examinations for 2018. The examinations are offered in several occupational groups, economics, political, and social affairs. Candidates must be 32 years of age or younger with fluency in either English or French. Be prepared, however, for a long process. From application to selection, the Competitive Exam process can take up to two years. Additional information, such as country of nationality participation, application form, date of next exam, eligibility, etc., is available here.

D. Short-Term Consultancies

For those with limited professional experience, short-term consultancies and jobs with “field operations” are usually the best ways to break into the U.N. system. Interested candidates may consider going to the city where you plan to work and spending several weeks doing intensive networking.

E. Young Professional Programs

In some cases, it is also possible to find employment through an “Associate Expert/Junior Professional Officer Programme” or “Young Professional Programme” run by specialized agencies. Once again, the hiring process often is a slow one. A small number of these programs are open to applicants of all nations and are geared toward recruiting and grooming career staff for the agency in question. A larger number of training programs are more limited in scope, restricting participation to citizens of nations willing to fund their participation or from developing nations and typically offering “training” positions with a two-year duration. Specific information about these programs is provided in the organizational listings.

Relevant academic training, language skills, and international work experience are prerequisites for most U.N. professional positions. As previously stated, spoken and written command of at least two of the official U.N. languages is often required. Fluency or proficiency in other languages such as Arabic is often desired, depending on the location and nature of the agency or program. For lawyers, knowledge of French and/or Spanish (plus English) is especially valuable. In addition, work experience in the developing world is highly desirable and, in many cases, indispensable.

Most U.N. agencies post job vacancies on their websites; the subsequent organizational listings provide directions for accessing such information. Listed below are other useful resources for U.N. employment, including internships.

- The homepage of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), which is responsible for hiring within the U.N., has links to U.N. job listings and other useful information.

- The International Civil Service Commission, which regulates and coordinates hiring and employment policies for U.N. affiliated organizations, posts vacancy announcements by agency, as well as information on personnel and related issues. Check out individual programmes, funds and agencies at the International Civil Service Commission website.
• The **Bureau of International Organization Affairs** at the U.S. Department of State, which is responsible for coordinating the federal government’s participation in the U.N. and for managing an information and recruitment program, posts a list of vacancies at the U.N. and other international organizations on its [website](#). Most federal employees are eligible by law to be “detailed or transferred” to an international organization for a period of up to five years—and in certain instances up to eight years—with reemployment rights to their respective federal agencies, continuity of service and protection of fringe benefits. This is subject to prior approval by the federal agency concerned.

• **United Nations Volunteers (UNV)** recruits individuals for short-term assignments in developing nations related to humanitarian relief and rehabilitation, human rights, electoral and peace-building processes, and technical cooperation. Compensation and eligibility requirements vary, though some relevant experience is usually required.

• **Women Watch** lists all gender-related vacancies within the U.N. system.

**F. Organizational Listings**

In addition to the agencies described above, you should look to the many subsidiary committees, commissions, working groups, special rapporteurs, and other bodies that relate to law, such as the International Law Commission, the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, and the U.N. Commission on International Trade Law. Enterprising law students and graduates may well be able to arrange internships and other employment opportunities with such bodies.

There are a number of organizations affiliated with the U.N., including the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). Generally, small professional staffs, technical subject matter, or citizenship issues limit opportunities for U.S. law students and lawyers in these organizations.
CHAPTER 3
RESOURCES WITHIN THE YALE COMMUNITY

A. CDO Assistance

Yale Law School’s Career Development Office offers a number of useful resources for students interested in international public service careers.

CDO Publications
In addition to this guide, CDO produces a guide to *International Tribunals and Foreign Courts* and a guide to *Public Interest Fellowships*. We also produce the brochure *Public Interest Programs and Resources*. All are updated yearly and available on the CDO website.

Summer Job Evaluations
CDO has online summer job evaluations of YLS students (found in CMS), spanning the last seven years. These evaluations can be searched by location and type of employer, allowing internationally oriented students to quickly find relevant reports.

Public Interest Career Fair
CDO organizes an annual Public Interest Student Career Fair each November, at which second-and third-year students who have worked in public interest jobs over the summer share their experiences with first-year and other interested students. International placements are well represented.

Career Connections
CDO and the Alumni Office have created, and maintain, YLS Career Connections, an online alumni mentoring service. From this link on the CDO website you can search for YLS alumni who are involved in international public interest law and who are willing to assist students and YLS graduates in their career efforts.

Counseling
CDO is available to help you pursue your public interest international career goals. Make an appointment by calling (203) 432-1676 or stopping by the office.

Job Search Expenses
CDO has also created TRI PI (Travel Reimbursement Interviews for Public Interest) which reimburses 2Ls, 3Ls and LLMs for travel expenses including accommodations, up to $800 per academic year, for travel to public interest fellowship and job interviews.

Print Resources
Books, guides, and directories related to the field of international public interest law can be found in the CDO library, under *Career Specialties* and *Public Interest*
B. Mentors

*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed due to their proprietary nature.
The classes listed below have international content and will be offered at the Law School during the 2018-2019 academic year. Consult the Law School’s website for changes or additions to this list. Other schools and departments at the University offer a plethora of courses that are relevant to those interested in public international issues. In addition to improving language skills and knowledge about a particular region, you can gain expertise in specialized topics (e.g., environmental conservation, economics, international trade, public health, rural development) related to your international interest. For information on Yale University courses, see the Law School bulletin. Check for scheduling conflicts with Law School classes and exams before cross-registering with other departments and schools. Most other schools at Yale are on a different academic calendar than the Law School and the vacation periods may not always coincide.

## Fall Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Instructor(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Global Health Justice Practicum</td>
<td>A. Kapczynski, A. Miller, G. Gonsalves</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced International Refugee Assistance Project</td>
<td>L. Finkbeiner, S. Poellot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Legal Assistance: Immigrant Rights Clinic</td>
<td>J. Bhandry-Alexander, D. Blank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic</td>
<td>J.J. Silk, H.R. Metcalf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borders, Culture, and Citizenship</td>
<td>S. Benhabib</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking</td>
<td>V. Kendall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparative Constitutional Law</td>
<td>A. Amar, G. Calabresi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Rights Workshop: Current Issues and Events</td>
<td>P.W. Kahn, J.J. Silk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigration Law</td>
<td>L. Guttentag</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Assistance: Immigrant Rights Clinic</td>
<td>J. Bhandary-Alexander, D. Blank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic</td>
<td>J.J. Silk, H.R. Metcalf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Order of the World Community: A Contemporary International Law</td>
<td>W. M. Reisman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings in Comparative Administrative Law: Public Law and Public Policy Making</td>
<td>S. Rose-Ackerman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transnational Corporations and Human Rights</td>
<td>A. Dhir</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States Foreign Policy and the Law</td>
<td>P. Gewirtz, J. Sullivan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy</td>
<td>M.I. Ahmad, M. Orihuela</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spring Semester

**Advanced Global Health Justice Practicum**
A. Kapczynski, G. Gonsalves, A. Miller

**Advanced International Refugee Assistance Project**
L. Finkbeiner, S. Poellot

**Advanced Legal Assistance: Immigrant Rights Clinic**
J. Bhandary-Alexander, D. Blank

**Advanced Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic**
J.J. Silk, H.R. Metcalf

**Advanced Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic**
M.J. Wishnie

**Comparative Constitutional Law**
B. Ackerman

**Comparative Law.**
J.Q. Whitman

**Contemporary China Research Seminar**
P. Gerwitz, J. Horsley, D. Longarino, M. Rapp-Hooper, R. Williams

**Corruption, Economic Development, and Democracy**
S. Rose-Ackerman

**Foreign Relations Law**
J. Goldsmith

**International Law**
O. Hathaway

**International Refugee Assistance Project**
L. Finkbeiner, S.T. Poellot

**The Law of the Sea**
W.M. Reisman

**Legal Assistance: Immigrant Rights Clinic**
J. Bhandary-Alexander, D. Blank

**Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic**
J.J. Silk, H. R. Metcalf

**Negotiating International Agreements: The Case of Climate Change**
S. Biniaz

**Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic**
M.J. Wishnie
D. YLS Student Organizations and Journals

The following YLS student organizations undertake activities related to public international law and/or service. In addition, other student groups, such as the Environmental Law Association, Latinx Law Students’ Association, and the Law and Technology Society, often sponsor internationally-focused educational, cultural or social events.

The Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Project provides students with the opportunity to carry out human rights research and advocacy projects, usually on behalf of nongovernmental organizations.

The Rebellious Lawyering Conference is an annual student-organized conference devoted to exploring and promoting public interest law and practice. Each year the conference includes panels and participants on international topics.

The Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal (YHRDLJ) is primarily an online publication that strives to provide a broad range of perspectives on issues at the intersection of human rights and development. The journal is edited by students and advised by members of the Law School faculty, and includes articles solicited from top legal scholars, student notes, and links to notable Internet sites devoted to human rights and development topics.

The Yale Journal of International Law is a student publication that contains articles and comments written by scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and students on a wide range of topics in public and private international law. Published twice a year, the journal is a primary forum for the discussion and analysis of contemporary international legal problems.

The Middle Eastern and North African Law Students Association provides a forum for engaging the Yale Law School community on the legal, political, social and cultural realities of the peoples of North Africa and the Middle East, with particular focus on issues of discrimination, equality, citizenship, and human rights. It also serves as an institutional home and social network for law students of Middle Eastern and North African background or with an interest in the region.

E. International Projects and Centers

The Orville H. Schell, Jr., Center for International Human Rights, located at the Law School, coordinates a diverse program to serve students and scholars at Yale and contributes to the development of the human rights community locally and internationally. The center organizes lectures and conferences on human rights topics; furthers human rights scholarship by hosting visiting scholars and providing research fellowships; promotes activism through summer and post-graduate fellowships; and supports the Allard K. Lowenstein International Human Rights Project and the Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal.

The China Law Center seeks to assist the legal reform process within China and to increase understanding of China’s legal system outside of China. To these ends, the center carries out research and teaching, promotes academic exchanges with China, and undertakes a variety of cooperative projects on important issues in Chinese legal reform. Since the center was launched, it has initiated in-depth cooperative projects with leading Chinese legal experts and institutions in the areas of judicial reform, administrative law and regulatory reform, and legal education.
The **Global Constitutionalism Seminar** brings together a group of about fifteen Supreme Court and Constitutional Court judges from around the world. The group meets for four days in a seminar-style setting at the Law School to consider topics of common interest. Past meetings have considered structural questions about judicial review, precedent, separation of powers and federalism, and the developing law—nationally and transnationally—on equality, free expression, national security, indigenous rights, terrorism, dignity, and detention. In 2011, it became part of the Gruber Program for Global Justice and Women’s Rights. This seminar has been directed by various Yale Law School professors over the years, including Paul Gerwitz, Robert Post, Bruce Ackerman, Jed Rubenfeld, and Judith Resnik.

The **Gruber Program for Global Justice and Women’s Rights** is a Yale University Program administered by the Law School. It consists of four core components: 1) the Global Constitutionalism Seminar; 2) the Gruber Distinguished Lectures in Global Justice and Women’s Rights; 3) the Gruber Global Justice and Women’s Rights Fellowships; and 4) the Gruber Project in Global Justice and Women’s Rights.

The **Jackson Institute for Global Affairs** offers courses and diverse workshop and lecture opportunities focused on global affairs for Yale University. They also bring in senior fellows such as Russ Feingold, Stanley McChrystal, and Rakesh Mohan.

Each summer, the Law School sponsors a student exchange with several universities in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. Students involved in the **Linkage Program** focus on a wide range of areas including human rights, constitutional law, international law, and criminal law through participation in classes, meetings with professors, and workshops at universities in Buenos Aires, Santiago, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. In addition, students visit government institutions, meet with national authorities, and work with local NGOs. Students live with host families. The Law School pays students’ travel and living expenses. For more information, visit their website or contact Brad Hayes, program coordinator.

The **Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies** at Yale is the university’s principal agency for encouraging and coordinating teaching and research on international affairs, societies, and cultures around the world. The MacMillan Center seeks to make understanding the world outside the borders of the U.S., and America’s role in the world, an integral part of the liberal education and professional training at Yale University. It provides opportunities for scholarly research and intellectual innovation; encourages faculty/student interchange; brings international education and training to teaching professionals, the media, businesses, and the community at large; sponsors more than 700 lectures, conferences, workshops, and other activities each year; and produces a range of academic publications.

The **World Fellows Program** each year brings to Yale 16 highly accomplished men and women from a diverse set of countries around the world. Each fall, the Program sponsors a multitude of events featuring the World Fellows as speakers. A large number of these events are open to the entire Yale student body and to faculty, and many are open to the broader Yale and New Haven communities.

The **Yale Center for the Study of Globalization** (YCSG) is devoted to examining the impact of our increasingly integrated world on individuals, communities, and nations. The YCSG draws on the rich intellectual resources of the Yale community, scholars from other universities and experts from around the world. On campus, it supports research on the many facets of globalization and helps to enrich debate on globalization through workshops, conferences, and publications. Off campus, the center furthers its mission through collaboration with a variety of institutions across the globe. The center’s flagship publication is the **YaleGlobal Online** magazine. For more information, please visit the center’s website or contact Haynie Wheeler at 203-432-1904.
CHAPTER 4
WORDS OF WISDOM

A. Practicing Attorneys

1. United Nations

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, GOVERNANCE & RULE OF LAW UNIT, Khartoum, Sudan
Hillary Forden ’05

Career Path
I became interested in pursuing a career in international human rights as an undergraduate and chose to attend law school in order to improve my chances of succeeding in this field. While in law school, I took classes in international law, participated in the Immigration Legal Services and Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinics, and joined the Yale Journal of International Law and Yale’s Human Rights and Development Law Journal. I also forewent the typical summer associate path and spent both of my summers in unpaid internships with human rights organizations. During my 1L summer, I interned at the Asociacion por los Derechos Civiles, a small but well-respected Argentine NGO. I split my 2L summer between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’ Regional Office for the United States and the Caribbean in Washington, DC and Yale’s Linkages Program in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

After law school, I spent a year clerking for a judge on the Alaska Court of Appeals in Anchorage, Alaska, before moving to Asmara, Eritrea, to work for Prof. Lea Brilmayer on Eritrea’s case before the Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission. In this position, I took witness statements, gathered documentary evidence, drafted portions of Eritrea’s written filings, and ultimately attended a damages hearing before the Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission. While in The Hague for this hearing, I reconnected with a friend who informed me of an opportunity in the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) rule of law unit in Sudan. I joined UNDP as a United Nations Volunteer (UNV) in August 2007. Since I left the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, described below, I have worked in post-conflict rule of law development, first for the International Development Law Organization’s South Sudan program and then for the Department of State, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs’ Afghanistan Justice Team.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
UNDP is the U.N.’s global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. In particular, UNDP helps countries to build and share solutions to the challenges of democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, environment and energy, and HIV/AIDS. When I joined UNDP in 2007, the organization was implementing projects to promote access to justice and human security in Southern Sudan; the Three Protocol Areas (Abyei, South Kordofan State, and Blue Nile State); Darfur; Eastern Sudan; and internally displaced persons camps in Khartoum. UNDP also implemented projects to build the capacity of Sudan’s National Judiciary and provide institutional support to the Judiciary of Southern Sudan and Southern Sudan’s Ministry of Legal Affairs and Constitutional Development.

From August 2007 to August 2008, I served as a United Nations Volunteer in UNDP’s Governance & Rule of Law Unit in Khartoum, Sudan. During my first seven months, I worked primarily on UNDP’s Access to Justice project in Sudan’s Three Protocol Areas. I managed the project budget; responded to
requests from donors; liaised between project staff in the field and operations staff in Khartoum; wrote and edited progress reports for donors and UN bodies; participated in contract negotiations; and attempted to solve problems inherited from my predecessor. For the remainder of my time at UNDP, I was tasked with assessing UNDP’s demand-side access to justice programming (i.e. legal aid and human rights awareness-raising) in northern Sudan. I spent approximately 50% of my time in the field, meeting with and interviewing UNDP colleagues, NGO and U.N. partners, and government and civil society counterparts, and collecting knowledge products created and used by UNDP’s offices in these various locations. Based on these investigations, I drafted a comprehensive report identifying best practices and lessons learned and making recommendations for improvement.

My favorite part of this job was that it allowed me to travel extensively throughout Sudan and experience first-hand the geographic and ethnic diversity of Africa’s largest country. I also had the pleasure of speaking with UNDP’s project beneficiaries and seeking their advice on how to improve UNDP’s program.

Unfortunately, I often found working for UNDP Sudan more frustrating than it was rewarding. Despite spending much of my time solving problems from the past, UNDP made little headway during my tenure. High staff turnover, bureaucratic delays, and poor training made it difficult to accomplish the organization’s objectives. Additionally, internal politics often took precedence over UNDP Sudan’s programs, the needs of the Sudanese people, or the goals of project donors.¹

**International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

At the end of my one-year stint as a UNV with UNDP, I joined IOM as a Protection Officer in the South Darfur Sub-Office in October 2008.

IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration. IOM works to ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, promote international cooperation on migration issues, assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems, and provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people. In 2008 and 2009, IOM’s projects in Sudan targeted internally displaced persons, refugees, returnees, labor migrants, and others. In Darfur, IOM registered internally displaced persons for assistance (particularly food aid); verified and monitored returns and relocations of internally displaced persons; and collected and analyzed data on population distribution and movements in the region.

As a Protection Officer in IOM’s Verification and Monitoring Unit in South Darfur from October 2008 to March 2009, I worked with a team of national and international protection staff to assess the voluntariness and appropriateness of IDP returns and relocations in South Darfur. I visited villages of return throughout South Darfur, led focus group discussions with sheikhs and other community leaders in villages of return, oversaw individual interviews conducted by national staff with randomly selected returnees, conducted village assessments, and gathered information from government officials and humanitarian actors. I also helped develop and revise interview and assessment forms; drafted internal and external reports on IOM’s findings; shared findings with IOM counterparts in the Sudanese Government and the U.N; represented IOM in meetings with national authorities, non-state actors, U.N. agencies, NGOs, and donors in South Darfur; helped chair the Return and Reintegration Working Group in South Darfur; and led inter-agency protection interventions related to IDP returns and relocations. Finally, I conducted legal and policy research on issues including forced relocation, freedom of movement, IDP data protection, and durable solutions to displacement.

¹ Note that these criticisms refer specifically to UNDP Sudan and should not be understood to apply to other UNDP offices.
This position allowed me to serve as a watchdog against forced returns and relocations of IDPs; travel throughout South Darfur; meet with IDPs and returnees and discuss their movements and conditions in the IDP camps and places of return; and analyze, and in some cases challenge, Sudanese government policies towards internally displaced persons. At the same time, I felt constrained by IOM’s limited mandate and internal guidelines intended to prevent future returns to inappropriate locations. For example, while my colleagues and I frequently met with returnees who were living in harsh conditions and begging for humanitarian or development assistance, we rarely provided or encouraged assistance to these populations. Our mandate was limited to assessing and reporting on the voluntariness and appropriateness of their returns. Moreover, we were only supposed to encourage and support assistance to returns that were found to be fully voluntary and appropriate or where assistance was considered lifesaving.

United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)
The ICTR was established by the United Nations Security Council in 1995 to prosecute persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of Rwanda between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994. It was also authorized to prosecute Rwandan citizens responsible for genocide and other such violations of international law committed in the territory of neighboring States during the same period.

As an Associate Legal Officer in the ICTR’s Chambers Support Section from May 2009 through December 2010, I assisted judges responsible for trying individuals charged with genocide, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. I was involved in all phases of the trial process, from pre-trial through judgment delivery. I conducted legal research on issues such as elements of crimes in international criminal law, modes of criminal liability in international law, and fair trial rights. I also drafted decisions, orders, and judgments on behalf of the judges for whom I worked. Most importantly, I coordinated and drafted the judgment in the case of Prosecutor v. Kanyarukiga with one other Associate Legal Officer. In this position, I supervised nine legal interns, including both law students and qualified lawyers.

The most rewarding aspect of this job was also the most frustrating: I had far more responsibility than I had anticipated. This was due to a number of factors, including that my direct supervisor resigned and was never replaced. As a result, my colleague and I were obliged to perform his functions in addition to our own. With this greater level of responsibility came stress and longer working hours. At the same time, I had the privilege of contributing to the development of international criminal law and procedure while building management and coordination skills.

Work-Life Balance
I typically worked between 40 and 50 hours a week at both UNDP and IOM. Although this schedule could easily accommodate a life outside of work, the question of balancing work with one’s family or personal life was often more complicated than that. While living in South Darfur, I was subject to two different curfews: a U.N. curfew and a government curfew. The U.N. curfew varied but was typically 9 or 10 p.m. The government curfew was 11 p.m. My lifestyle in Sudan was also heavily influenced by the Islamic legal system. Not only were alcohol and pork products illegal in northern Sudan, but all residents were expected to conform to conservative standards of dress and conduct.

Moreover, by the end of my time in Sudan, all U.N. duty stations were “non-family”. This meant that international staff could not bring their dependents to Sudan with them unless those dependents were also employed by the U.N., an NGO, an embassy, etc. In exchange, staff received hazard pay and a week off for rest and recuperation every six to eight weeks. This is in addition to the 30 days of annual leave to which all U.N. employees are entitled.
My work-life balance at the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania, could not have been more different. On the one hand, life in Tanzania is very pleasant. Arusha is a family duty station, so the vast majority of staff members with families had their spouses and/or children living with them in Arusha. Arusha is also surrounded by world-renowned tourist destinations, including Mt. Kilimanjaro, the Ngorongoro Crater, the Serengeti, and Zanzibar. Consequently, I had the privilege of spending weekends on safari, climbing mountains, scuba diving, gorilla tracking in Rwanda, etc. On the other hand, my working hours were not always conducive to travel or a personal life. While I typically worked 35 to 45 hours a week during trial, I spent approximately six months judgment drafting, during which I worked around 70 hours per week.

Advice
Students interested in working for one of the international criminal tribunals should try to take international criminal law or international courts and tribunals during law school. Moreover, I would highly recommend that students who are interested in international criminal law intern at one of the tribunals, preferably the one they are most interested in working with after law school.

Rule of law is more likely to be taught in law schools now than it was when I was at Yale. However, getting into UNDP, or the U.N. in general, still tends to come down to who you know and whether you’re in the right place at the right time, although a number of UNDP staff have prior experience with the organization’s implementing partners or donors. Also, while the backgrounds of those in UNDP’s rule of law program were varied, experience in criminal defense or with a legal aid organization and knowledge of project management, finance, and monitoring and evaluation are all useful. Students interested in “Rule of Law” work, particularly with UNDP, should also know that most substantive legal work is done by implementing partners, international consultants, and national lawyers. International program and project staff are mainly responsible for managing and coordinating these various actors.

Finally, I would suggest that students interested in working with IOM take courses in migration-related subjects, such as immigration and refugee law. While migration experience is clearly the most relevant to work with IOM, IOM highly values field experience and tends to hire people who are already working or have previously worked in the country where the position in question is located.

2018

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION, Geneva, Switzerland
Edward Kwakwa, J.S.D. ’90; LL.M. ’87

I was Legal Counsel at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva from October 2004 until September 2016, after which I became Senior Director in the Department for Traditional Knowledge and Global Challenges. WIPO is a Specialized Agency of the United Nations with a membership of 191 States. It was established in 1970 to promote the protection of intellectual property worldwide.

I obtained my LLB (first law degree) from the University of Ghana in 1984, earned an LLM from Queen’s University in Canada in 1986, and earned another LLM and a JSD from Yale in 1990. From 1990 to 1993, I worked in the Washington, DC office of O’Melveny & Myers as an Associate, practicing mostly international trade and corporate law. In 1993, I was lucky to receive a call from the Commission on Global Governance’s General Secretary, informing me that they were interested in hiring “a young international lawyer.” They had been given my name by one of their contacts at the United Nations in New York, and wanted to know if I was interested in being interviewed for the position. From 1993 to 1994, I took a leave of absence from O’Melveny & Myers to serve as International Legal Adviser at the Commission in Geneva.
In 1994, I applied for a job with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva when I heard they were looking for someone with a public international law background. I joined the UNHCR as Senior Legal Adviser. After two years of international refugee law, however, I decided to move to a more commercial area of international law, and that was what motivated me to apply for a vacancy notice that appeared at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1996. I worked at the WTO for only a few months before moving to WIPO. Since all these organizations are based in Geneva, the move from one organization to another was relatively smooth and painless.

My work at WIPO included various aspects of a typical international administrative, constitutional and public international law practice. For example, because the Director General of WIPO acts as depository to some 26 treaties in the field of intellectual property, I performed various depository functions (e.g., receiving and processing instruments of accession and ratification, making determinations as to the acceptability of various reservations to treaties, etc.). In addition, I was responsible for drafting and interpreting rules of procedure as well as administrative and final clauses for the various treaties adopted at WIPO’s diplomatic conferences. I also represented the Organization at the International Labor Organization’s Administrative Tribunal, where staff members occasionally bring cases against the Organization. This happened to be the least desirable aspect of my work, as I had to defend the Organization against colleagues and, in certain cases, friends. I was also responsible for the legal aspects of my Organization’s relations with the Host State, Switzerland. This included advising on the Headquarters Agreement and the privileges and immunities to which the Organization and its staff members are entitled. My work hours at WIPO have been generally more than the average in the United Nations system. In general, I work between 10 to 12 hour days.

In my view, students wishing to have a career in the field of public international law must take all the courses available in that area. In particular, the courses in world public order, international business transactions, international comparative law, international commercial arbitration and legal constraints on the foreign affairs power are indispensable. The importance of a second language cannot be overemphasized. I had to enroll in a crash course in French, as my knowledge of the language was elementary at best. Due to the international nature of the work, most international organizations require a working knowledge of at least two main languages.

One of the best decisions I made while in law school was joining the American Society of International Law (ASIL). I attended every annual meeting, served as Reporter at panel sessions for four years, and have since participated in different capacities at the annual meeting, including as a Panelist and as a Member of the Annual Meeting Organizing Committee. Attending and participating in the annual meetings of the ASIL opened up various opportunities, including meeting several of the pre-eminent scholars and practitioners in the field. It also enabled me to keep abreast with developments and discussions in the field. I served on the Executive Council of the ASIL from 2001 to 2004, as a Counsellor from 2012 to 2015, and as a Vice President of the ASIL from 2015 to 2017.

Another useful activity was publishing articles in law reviews, journals and elsewhere. While at Yale, I made sure to elect a paper option whenever possible, and I frequently finalized those papers and submitted them for publication. I believe this gave me an advantage over my colleagues who did not have any publications when we graduated.
I have immensely enjoyed working as a public international lawyer and I would gladly and wholeheartedly recommend a career in any field of international law. I had some frustrating moments during my tenure at the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. In particular, I was surprised to see the temerity with which governments seemed to violate the provisions of the principal international refugee conventions. My general impression is that international trade and investment/international business norms are more effectively enforced and more rigorously adhered to than are the norms in the international human rights/humanitarian law area. This should, of course, not be the sole criterion in determining the area of international law in which one would like to have a career.

2. United States Government

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development
Washington, DC
Elbridge A. Colby, ’09

I pursued an international public interest fellowship because the program provided an ideal way to gain valuable government experience in a position that would be almost impossible to obtain through standard channels. The fellowship in effect gives a law student the ability to present oneself as a free good to a government office, which is usually very constrained in its ability to hire people, especially from outside of those already serving in the government. In my case, the fellowship worked out exceptionally well. Given my interest in defense and security policy, and especially U.S. nuclear weapons policy, I was able to find a placement through a former colleague from the RAND Corporation with the Secretary of Defense’s Representative to the negotiations for the successor to the expiring Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia. This would simply not have been possible, even if I had been in the government, because the office was constituted almost entirely of detailees—that is, individuals employed by other parts of the Defense Department.

In the course of my job, I was treated as a regular member of the team. Through the IPA channel, the government can hire individuals working for non-profit organizations, and this is a familiar model in the Defense Department, which brings in fellows or temporary employees from the national laboratories and places like RAND, CNA, IDA, as well as think tanks like the Council on Foreign Relations. This familiarity with the model allowed me to integrate fairly seamlessly into the team from an administrative point of view.

In terms of my work, my time was divided between my first seven months, primarily in Geneva, negotiating with the Russians, and the second half, working on the ratification effort in the U.S. Senate. Work in Geneva was akin to a contract negotiation, with much of the work involving poring over and analyzing the Treaty and its protocols and annexes in the search for agreement with the other side, and then providing records of the proceedings back to Washington via cables. The work on ratification was more broad and policy-oriented, involving preparations of materials needed for Senate consideration such as a treaty article by article analysis, answers to questions for the record, testimony, etc. Naturally, a large part of this work involved coordinating answers within DOD and with other agencies, and making sure these documents were sent up for senior level clearance.

On the whole, the fellowship was immensely fulfilling and productive. Even though I had had four years of government experience, I had not been directly involved in nuclear weapons or arms control policy, so I learned an enormous amount, not least about how the sausage is made in the government. I also was
able to gain rather unusual experience working on the negotiation of an arms control accord as well as its ratification, which are relatively infrequent events.

In terms of preparation, I read up on the START Treaty as well as other arms control agreements, and on nuclear weapons and deterrence issues more broadly.

My advice to future YLS’ers thinking about government service is to think seriously about this program. It is an exceptional way to get really good government experience right out of law school. It’s enormously difficult to crack into the government, especially outside of legal tracks, and this can be a way to get a foot in the door. Even if it doesn’t lead to a government job immediately thereafter, it will stand one in good stead and, if done right, can be a really rewarding experience. My advice is also to think creatively and big about what one wants to do—as a free good, an applicant will be popular!

2017

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL, Moscow, Russia
Tim C. Riedler ’82

I work as a Foreign Service lawyer for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Office of General Counsel (GC). Affiliated with the Department of State, USAID is the U.S. government agency that administers official foreign aid programs. USAID was created by President Kennedy in 1961 and currently operates in about 60 countries around the world, with headquarters in Washington, DC. Our programs focus on economic growth, democracy building, health and family planning, education, and humanitarian aid/disaster relief, among other things.

GC employs nearly 100 lawyers, with slightly more than half working in Washington, DC and the rest overseas. Lawyers overseas are in the Foreign Service and most of those working in Washington are in the regular Civil Service. GC has lawyers posted in about 25 countries, with roughly 10 multi-lawyer posts, and the rest single lawyer posts. The USAID “Mission” is usually co-located with the American Embassy.

I am currently serving as the USAID Legal Advisor in Moscow, Russia. Before I arrived in Moscow recently, I served for a year in Baghdad, Iraq. Prior to that I spent four years as Regional Legal Advisor in Budapest, Hungary, where I provided legal services for our aid programs in southeastern Europe (Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia), as well as for Cyprus, and for regional programs managed out of Budapest. Prior to Budapest, I worked in Washington for three years as the Assistant General Counsel for Europe & Eurasia and for Latin America & the Caribbean. Earlier in my career with USAID I served as the Regional Legal Advisor for four years each in Amman, Jordan (also covering USAID programs in West Bank/Gaza, Lebanon and Morocco); Jakarta, Indonesia (also covering our programs in the Philippines, Sri Lanka and the South Pacific); and Mbabane, Swaziland (also covering our programs in Mozambique, Botswana and Lesotho). I joined USAID in 1987 and served in the GC office in Washington for two years before my first posting in Swaziland. Before joining USAID, I worked for Gibson Dunn & Crutcher and Graham & James in Los Angeles.
Most USAID lawyers overseas are regional, covering several countries (three or four is much more typical than the 10 countries I covered out of Budapest, and also more typical than Moscow, where I cover only USAID/Russia programs). We often spend from 15-30% of our time traveling to service our “client missions.” Our “tours” in a post are generally four years, broken up by a two month “home leave” in the middle, and usually an R&R the first and third years (except while in Budapest, where no R&R was deemed necessary). A typical USAID Mission in a country has 10-15 other American staff and 40-70 local staff.

Our basic role as lawyers for USAID is to help in the design and implementation of foreign aid projects, ensuring that this is done in accordance with U.S. law and USAID policy. (Official U.S. foreign aid is heavily regulated, as evident in the fact that USAID employs 100 lawyers.) Some USAID lawyers like to work as “development specialists” as much as lawyers per se, getting deeply involved in the technical and programmatic details of the work. Although USAID Foreign Service lawyers work overseas, we of course only practice U.S. law. We consult with local lawyers when an important matter involving local law comes to us. In a few cases, such as Russia, where local law issues are common, we have a local lawyer on-staff.

As to the work itself, I spend most of my time dealing with USAID policies (perhaps 1/3 of my time), federal statutes or regulations (1/3 of my time), and basic U.S. legal principles (constitutional law, contract, tort, conflicts of interest, privacy rights, etc., for 1/4 of my time). Clear thinking and common sense often count for as much as specific knowledge of law, given the variety of matters that USAID legal advisors have to deal with. Careful analytic thinking of the type developed in law school and law practice, reading carefully, writing precisely, anticipating problems/spotting issues, advocating for USAID, and negotiating out issues with parties with divergent interests, are central elements of a USAID legal advisor’s job. The USAID lawyer is often the only U.S. Government lawyer at post, though the Department of Justice sometimes posts lawyers overseas for specific matters, and in Baghdad two lawyers from the Department of State were posted (very unusual) as well as several Department of Defense lawyers. The USAID lawyer often acts as legal advisor, advocate and judge (with our clients not always certain which role we’re playing at a given time). This, together with our relative independence from Washington while in the field, gives Foreign Service lawyers considerable autonomy and power-to-influence.

Given the nature of our work, we do not recruit lawyers for the Foreign Service with any specific backgrounds in mind, though a typical recruit graduated from a top law school and comes from a law firm, with at least four years’ experience in transactional/corporate/commercial practice, or occasionally litigation or some other practice or legal field. Below is a sample job announcement statement on qualifications:

“Applicants should have a minimum of four years of experience practicing as a private or government attorney, of which at least one year should be specialized experience working as an attorney with responsibility at a level close to that of this position. Your specialized experience should have given you the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities required to successfully perform in this position. Typically we would find this experience in legal work of a transactionally oriented nature or focus. Prior overseas and/or experience working in an international context and foreign language skills are highly desirable. Corporate transactional and/or government contracts experience is highly desirable as well.”

We rarely recruit directly from law school, and require some practical experience in lawyering, beyond clerkships or academic work. Although overseas lawyers are in the Foreign Service, USAID lawyers, as is true with USAID employees generally, are not tested through the Foreign Service Examination. I would not recommend any particular “preparation” for this job, either in law school or law practice, though we
do often look to see if an individual has demonstrated an interest in social/development issues, has good social skills to work with a variety of people, and will thrive living in a developing country environment.

As some examples of work done out of our Budapest office, I provided advice to our Mission in Serbia & Montenegro to prepare them for Montenegro’s new status as a country (e.g., identifying agreements that the new government in Montenegro needed to ratify for the benefit of the USAID program and how to adjust our programs and administrative arrangements to reflect that we would now be dealing with a new “host” government). There were similar issues with Kosovo as its “final status” was determined. Kosovo also benefited from a large infusion of additional aid money, so I advised the USAID/Kosovo Mission regarding how they could prudently plan and administer large projects to spend the additional money effectively. (Contrary to popular conception, USAID rarely simply “gives” money to a host government, but rather programs the aid money for specific projects and disburses the funds itself to project implementers.) We also closed our aid programs in Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania a few years ago, as those countries “graduated” from USAID assistance, having joined the EU, so we had legal questions to deal with regarding project termination, disposition of loan assets from microfinance and enterprise fund projects, ethics issues concerning job hunting and future employment for our local staff, and termination of property leases. The program in Cyprus generated unusual issues because of the fact that our program there focuses primarily on the “North”, which is not a country recognized by the United States, and yet requires coordination with the “South,” which is the official Government of Cyprus (and often hostile to our programs in the “North”). Our program in Serbia is complicated by numerous legal sanctions against the Government of Serbia because of its unwillingness to cooperate fully with the Hague Tribunal for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia.

Russia also has numerous Russia-specific statutory prohibitions, related to concerns about interference in the sovereignty of other countries in the region, nuclear assistance to Iran, access restrictions to Chechnya for humanitarian relief organizations, and religious and civil society repression in Russia. Our Russia aid program is heavily focused on democracy/governance assistance, in particular grants to Russian non-governmental organizations.

Some advantages of this kind of work compared to a U.S. law practice are: 1) we don’t have to worry about billing hours or attracting clients; 2) there can be great job satisfaction in development work; 3) spending your days with Americans “committed to development” at least at times can be more rewarding than negotiating with other lawyers; 4) although our work is often intense and demanding, we are not usually expected to work nights or weekends, thus having time for family and other activities outside work; 5) living and traveling overseas is stimulating; and 6) although our salaries can’t really compare to a U.S. private practice salary, they’re adequate, and we have good benefits, such as free housing, generous leave (including both local and U.S. holidays, and six weeks home leave in the U.S. every other year), Embassy health units with free and capable medical care, travel costs paid yearly for home leave or R&R, education allowances for our kids, and cost-of-living allowances, among others.

On the downside, this job is not a high profile, wealth-and-status kind of job. Opportunities for promotion within GC are also somewhat limited, at least if you want to remain a Foreign Service lawyer and stay overseas. USAID lawyers overseas are also a bit isolated from the U.S. legal community, which some may consider a disadvantage. Spousal employment can be a challenge overseas. Schooling for children is often excellent, in some cases more comparable to private schooling than public schooling in the United States, but moving around every couple of years can be disruptive for some children (others seem to thrive on it). Living overseas isn’t for everyone, and has its hardships and deprivations, such as tap water you often can’t drink, substandard local medical care, and long distances from family and friends in the United States. For the right person, though, this job can be as good as they come for a lawyer.

2016
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, Washington, DC
Christopher C. Herman ’73

For starters, I should say I do policy, not lawyering; then I should add that the policy work I do is more effective because I’ve been a lawyer.

Since 1989 I’ve worked on ‘finance and environment’ policy issues in EPA’s Office of International Affairs. The intersection of finance and environment at the international level is a particularly interesting one. The portfolio includes environmental issues arising from multilateral development bank (World Bank, etc.) investments; environmental governance issues arising as negotiators make rules for international investment, goods and services trade (World Trade Organization); and domestic and global market greening issues (green supply chains, ecolabels, voluntary standards, etc.)

Working in this area means lots of reading (reports), writing (“comments”) and interacting, a.k.a., policy advocacy, at several levels: with colleagues to help shape office policy; with agency counterparts as government policy is shaped by whatever agency has the policy “lead”; occasionally with counterparts in other governments in organizations like the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Some examples: Did the World Bank adequately analyze the downstream impacts of a large dam proposed to be built in Laos to provide power to Thailand? Should the list of environmental goods proposed for tariff reductions in the World Trade Organization include insecticides? Should organic or other labels be considered barriers to trade? Does the notion of expropriation describe when compensation is required for an otherwise legitimate action of government or is it a sanction for illegitimate action?

As it happens, much of this work links to issues of development and poverty reduction—the relation of sound environmental governance to equitable, sustainable economic growth—which, in turn, links back to how environmental and economic change elsewhere will affect, possibly profoundly affect, the U.S. I’ve always felt fortunate to have a role, however small, in this game.

EPA’s Office of International Affairs has about 80 professional and other staff organized into groups that manage environmental cooperation programs involving specific countries, e.g., China or India, and environmental technology initiatives, e.g., lead in gasoline, mercury, or water or do “policy” work involving various international organizations.

Post law-school, I spent six interesting (but my heart was elsewhere) years doing the lower Manhattan law firm thing, then ten years in EPA’s Office of General Counsel with responsibility for aspects of the Clean Air Act, the Atomic Energy Act, and UMTRCA (you don’t really need to know what that means). I’ve migrated around less than most and much less than some; and have fewer toys than many. I wish I could say I’d worked myself out of the job; truth is, however, there’s more than enough work to keep another couple dozen policy-oriented JDS busy.

2016
3. Nongovernmental Organizations

CENTER FOR LEGAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES (EL CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS LEGALES Y SOCIALES) AND THE ASSOCIATION FOR CIVIL RIGHTS (ASOCIACION POR LOS DERECHOS CIVILES), Argentina
Jeremy Robbins ’06

Having spent six months volunteering and traveling in Chile immediately prior to starting law school, I entered law school with Latin America on the mind. I quickly gravitated towards the Linkages Program and befriended many of the Latin American LLMs and JSDs that were studying at Yale during my three years there. I was never certain about whether or not I wanted a career in international law, but I did know that I adored Latin America and wanted to find a way to move back, at least temporarily. The question was just how.

So I met with Jim Silk to discuss how to approach finding a human rights job in Argentina upon graduation. He suggested the Bernstein Fellowship, which funds YLS grads to work on discrete international human rights projects for a year after graduation.

I was unsure of exactly what type of project I would do, but had met several prominent Argentine human rights activists and professors through YLS programs. As my 3L year approached, I reconnected with several of them to discuss projects that could take me to Argentina for the year. At the time, I was very involved in the Prisoner Legal Services Clinic at YLS, so I sought out projects that could combine my interest in Latin America with my interest in prisoners’ rights work. Activists at two Argentine NGOs showed interest in prison work, so I spent a few months planning prisoners’ rights projects that made sense with each organization. Working with Jim Silk to make sure these projects were realistic in a one-year time frame, I put together a project proposal and was accepted for the Bernstein fellowship.

My two projects were in many ways polar opposites. One involved developing a prisoners’ rights project for an Argentine NGO that focused primarily on democracy and access to information issues. The other involved assisting the NGO that was at the forefront of prisoners’ rights work in Argentina and likely all of Latin America. For the former, my daily life was a constant hustle: trying to come up with the next entrepreneurial idea, trying to convince judges and prison officials to grant me access to inmates and prison facilities, trying to find funders to pay for projects. For the latter, the path for the organization was already set and I was just trying to find my own place in it. And for both, the first few months were very difficult. Projects failed for lack of buy-in. I had trouble finding my niche.

But then things slowly began to click. I found book publishers to donate books for a prison library, helped attain funding for a project to strengthen criminal defense, took photos of prison conditions that were published in a human rights report, wrote a white paper on access to prison information, and had an article on Argentine impact litigation accepted for publication in an Argentine political science journal. And I simply adored Argentina.

My biggest takeaway from my year in Argentina was the value of stepping off the path, of thinking creatively of what to accomplish and then taking risks to accomplish it. While I left international human rights work, I use the entrepreneurial skills I developed in Argentina every day in my current role directing a nonprofit that advocates for immigration reform. In many ways, my Bernstein Fellowship helped shape how I approach my career, and I am very grateful to both Yale and the Bernstein family for the opportunity to have such a wonderful and life-altering experience.

2016
When I applied to law school in the fall of 1997, I had one basic goal: I wanted to litigate human rights cases against multinational corporations. I had graduated from college earlier that year with an environmental science degree and an intense passion for international human rights issues, but without much sense of where that would take me. When I learned about the efforts of a few organizations to bring cases in U.S. courts against corporations involved in human rights and environmental abuses, I decided that I needed a law degree. Yale, with its longstanding emphasis on human rights, was a natural fit.

In law school, I made every effort to take advantage of Yale’s resources to pursue my goals. From my first semester, I was involved in the Lowenstein Project, working with human rights organizations outside the Law School. I also joined the Lowenstein Clinic in my second semester, as soon as I was able. The connections that I made in the Lowenstein Project helped me to secure an internship my first summer with EarthRights International (ERI), in Thailand. ERI was doing the kind of work that I wanted to do: litigating cases against multinational corporations for human rights violations. The internship was unpaid, of course, and so I relied on Summer Public Interest Fellowships for living expenses and a Schell Fellowship for travel expenses.

I continued working with ERI throughout the following school year, and spent a few weeks interning with ERI in its Washington, DC, office during my second summer, before spending the rest of the summer interning with the Capital Habeas Unit of the Federal Defender Association in Philadelphia. At the end of my second summer, I began considering postgraduate opportunities. At that time, federal judicial clerkships had a nearly two-year lag time between applications and the clerkship year, and so when I began applying for clerkship positions in the fall of my third year I faced at least a year after graduation before the clerkship would begin. I also began looking into fellowships for my first postgraduate year.

Having worked with EarthRights International throughout law school, it was natural for me to pursue a fellowship with that organization. I applied for, and gratefully accepted, a Robert L. Bernstein International Human Rights Fellowship to work with ERI in Washington, DC, and Thailand. I believe that my past experience with the organization probably helped my fellowship application. I also was offered a clerkship with the Honorable Dorothy W. Nelson on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which would begin after my fellowship year.

During my fellowship year, I continued working on human rights litigation as well as other projects. I knew that, even after my clerkship year, ERI probably would not be able to hire me, so I took the opportunity to make connections with other groups that ERI works with: human rights organizations, environmental organizations, and private law firms that work on human rights and environmental cases. The fellowship was a fantastic experience.

I then moved on to the clerkship, in Pasadena, California. This was also a great experience, constantly intellectually stimulating. In my view, however, although a clerkship is a good addition to any education or career path, it is certainly not essential and probably did not make that much difference to my subsequent career opportunities. I would not trade my clerkship year for anything, but I probably would have continued on the same path even without it.

When I left my clerkship, I had no job lined up. (Earlier in the year I had been reassured that no Judge Nelson clerk had ever left the clerkship without a job, so perhaps I was the first.) Most of my fellow clerks moved on to law firms, often accepting offers that had been extended before they started their clerkships. Throughout the spring and summer of my clerkship, I took a more relaxed attitude—I reasoned that, outside the large law firm hiring process, most employers do not hire employees years or
even months in advance, but hire people when they need them, so I did not feel the need to have a job waiting for me. After my clerkship, I talked with Hadsell & Stormer, a small plaintiffs’ firm in Pasadena which was co-counseling several cases with EarthRights International, and began work with them not long after.

I spent most of the next year and a half with Hadsell & Stormer, working mostly on human rights cases but also on civil rights and employment litigation. I found that this was valuable experience; even though the firm was working on some of the same cases as ERI, the private lawyers did more of the discovery, deposition and trial work while ERI’s lawyers focused more on legal issues, so I developed experience in different areas of litigation. (I also took one detour during this period, spending three months volunteering full-time for one of my law school classmate’s congressional campaign. Although not directly related to my subsequent career path, this was a fascinating and rewarding experience, and I would encourage anyone to get involved in public service and electoral politics when possible.)

In the spring of 2005, EarthRights International was able to expand its legal program, and I was offered my current position as ERI’s Legal Director in Washington, DC. This was a natural progression for me, returning to an organization that I had worked for and worked with for several years. I currently oversee eight full- and part-time staff in three countries, as well as legal fellows and interns, and work on human rights and environmental litigation as well as other legal projects.

It is undoubtedly difficult to find jobs in international human rights law, but I found that a demonstrated commitment to a particular area of law or a particular organization is very important. Breaking into the field can be difficult, so it is critical to start early—you can always go from a public interest job to a law firm, but it is much more difficult to transition to a human rights job if you spent your time in law school and your postgraduate years working for law firms (especially defense-side firms). Summer positions, clinical experience, and law school student activities, in addition to being great ways to develop lawyering skills, can all help to demonstrate a commitment to human rights or any other public interest field. They can also help make connections with potential employers.

Even if it is not possible to find a human rights job immediately out of law school, having already shown a commitment to this work and keeping in touch with relevant organizations will greatly increase the chances of getting the ideal job in the future. And if you aren't able to work full-time in your chosen field, keep a hand in it somehow—volunteer or do pro bono work to keep your skills sharp and demonstrate that you continue to be committed to public interest work.

2016

*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed due to proprietary nature.*
After a stint working for a Legal Aid office documenting the working conditions of migrant farm workers on the Delmarva Peninsula in the Chesapeake Bay area, I decided to apply to law school. Never before had I seen so few people—three attorneys staffed the office, with the support of a handful of interns and two secretaries—have such a significant impact. As I learned during the summer spent searching for and traipsing through labor camps across three states, the law could be a powerful tool for social change. We documented abysmal living conditions, wage violations, restrictions on personal mobility and threats by crew bosses and farmers against the men and women picking tomatoes and melons and potatoes. The lawyers used this information in complaints to the Department of Labor and lawsuits in federal court that changed the working lives of thousands.

I arrived at Yale Law School intending to arm myself with the knowledge and skills needed in places where legal activism was a key component of promoting equality, human dignity and justice. My first summer internship at the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (LDF) provided mentors and invaluable experience in civil rights litigation. At the same time, that was the summer of 1989, when the Supreme Court handed down several decisions restricting the application of civil rights laws. As a consequence, the LDF summer associates began talking about whether bringing cases to court was really the best strategy for challenging discrimination and other barriers to equality and justice. Some advocated community organizing; others, political office. No one talked about human rights and the international human rights framework. My next public interest undertaking, however, turned my attention to the rapidly developing international effort to challenge human rights abuses around the globe.

Thanks to the Lowenstein Human Rights Program at YLS, I started doing research and writing for Human Rights Watch during my second year of law school. My first project was a survey of discriminatory laws...
and practices in several North African countries, completed as the organization was preparing to launch a new program on women’s human rights. Along the way, I learned about the innovative advocacy work being done by women’s human rights activists in these countries. There was something creative and exciting about joining forces across national borders, cultures and other differences to identify shared outrages and aspirations and to mobilize in opposition to women’s secondary status and the terrible toll that it takes on women’s lives and on societies around the world.

A Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellowship allowed me to join Human Rights Watch as a staff attorney after a one-year federal district court clerkship. There I documented violations of women’s human rights—in Bosnia, Turkey, Kuwait—prepared reports making the case that women are protected by international human rights norms, and pressed governments for better behavior and increased protection. My responsibilities ranged from live television interviews, to visiting Turkish prisons, to arguing that the Refugee Convention definition of political persecution should be interpreted to allow the Canadian government to grant asylum to a woman fleeing Saudi Arabia’s discriminatory policies (often violently enforced limiting women’s education, work, and personal freedom). As removed from law school textbooks as these experiences might sound, there were many times that year that I drew from the lessons learned at Yale, especially from the trial practice course and the prison clinic on how to question wily adversaries, how to build compelling and novel legal arguments, and how to gather and interpret evidence.

At the end of the fellowship year, I learned an important lesson about working in non-profits—you have to be willing to take risks and seize unexpected opportunities. That summer, a boutique law firm made me a tempting job offer. Human Rights Watch, on the other hand, could guarantee funding for my position for only three months. Both offers were appealing, albeit for different reasons, but I knew that I would be challenged and handed great responsibility as one of the few Human Rights Watch staff members focused on women’s human rights.

Then I spent nine years at Human Rights Watch helping to build and ultimately directing its Women’s Rights Division. My job description changed every few years—from staff attorney to Washington director, to executive director—because women’s human rights issues were attracting unprecedented attention and resources and because the organization was growing and bringing in new staff. I was lucky. As international human rights groups have gained visibility and garnered support, they have evolved into highly professional outfits that hire primarily those with significant academic and experiential credentials. I doubt that I would be hired by a group like Human Rights Watch today with the skills I had in 1992. On the other hand, there are more organizations and thus job opportunities in the human rights field today. And, there are ways to build toward a career in human rights work; if the goal is to work globally, then it pays to develop fluency in languages other than English, study or work outside the United States (preferably on human rights issues, but international experience of any kind is better than none), take advantage of fellowships to learn the field and develop relationships with potential colleagues, be a part of the fundraising effort at any organization with which you work or volunteer, and participate in the human rights clinical program. It’s also important to recognize, as noted by Eleanor Roosevelt, “Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home - so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world…Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.” One of the most significant developments in human rights over the past twenty years is the explosion of organizations working at the community and local levels to promote and defend human rights. Given the increasing hostility to human rights at the global level, these more local efforts may well lead the way on human rights in the future, and they exist everywhere, including in the United States, and offer endless opportunities to get involved and forge a professional path.
I am deeply familiar with the value and impact of local and national human rights work, because in 2002, a group of American and European funders asked me to build a new organization, the Fund for Global Human Rights, to deliver resources to human rights groups around the world. The Fund for Global Human Rights is founded on the belief that securing the most basic freedoms for people worldwide requires front-line organizations and movements challenging human rights abuses wherever they occur. To this end, the Fund raises funds and distributes them to human rights actors in places with great need and minimal access to funding. The Fund acts as a bridge between on-the-ground human rights defenders working in extremely volatile or repressive environments, and donors who have the resources to sustain this critical work. We also work with the groups we fund to build broader constituencies supporting human rights and to bolster the resilience of activists operating under threat. The Fund operates in roughly twenty countries and has cross-border thematic programs on corporate accountability, migrants’ rights and protecting civic space.

When faced with a visa application or other document demanding to know my profession, I admit to being perplexed. Am I an attorney, the CEO of a public foundation, a human rights activist? My position requires me to be all these things. I manage a growing international staff, raise money to support the organization and its grantees, and develop strategic grant-making programs designed to strengthen human rights movements and improve human rights conditions around the world. There is no typical day in a job like this one. My job includes editing, planning for organizational and programmatic growth, consulting with human rights activists, staying current with human rights developments around the globe, troubleshooting for grantees in crisis, monitoring the Fund’s activities and publications to ensure that they comply with relevant laws and regulations, preparing budgets and income projections, public speaking, and working with an international board of human rights activists and donors to build the organization and the resources that fuel growth. During law school, I never envisioned being in a job quite like this one, but I cannot imagine a greater or more satisfying challenge than launching an organization that plays an essential and leading role in the global fight for human rights. The work is demanding, but the hours are flexible when they need to be, and the colleagues are always inspiring.

2018

GENOCIDE WATCH; STATE DEPARTMENT FOREIGN SERVICE, McLean, VA
Gregory H. Stanton ’82

At times you may feel intimidated, because you are taking a less traditional path than your colleagues or because the jobs you seek are not well recognized among your family or friends. During those hard moments, seek out students and professors in similar positions. It is very likely that they have experienced the same fears and hesitations. But while you can get good advice from mentors, the ultimate decision is yours. At that time, evaluate whether your choice is compatible with your values and convictions. Make sure you are being true to the person you were when you came to law school and the person you aspire to be after you receive your degree. Be ready to pursue your dreams into whatever jobs they may take you. But never take a job from which you will not have the integrity to resign.

During my first year at Yale Law School, Church World Service called me to become Field Director of its relief program in Cambodia. My roommate from Oberlin College was then the organization’s program director in New York and he knew that I had been a Peace Corps Volunteer and had just spent a year in India. I landed in Phnom Penh in June 1980. As I walked through the mass graves and talked with the survivors, I realized that the Khmer Rouge had violated every international humanitarian law on the books, including the Genocide Convention. I had studied with Professor Reisman in law school, and knew that law wasn’t law without authoritative decision, and compliance or enforcement. But the Khmer Rouge had gotten away with mass murder. There was no political will to capture them in Thailand, and no international court to try them.
Such impunity would only allow the Khmer Rouge to plague Cambodia for years to come. But there was a narrow opening for civil justice, the International Court of Justice. The Khmer Rouge no longer controlled Cambodia because of Vietnam’s intervention, so evidence could be gathered against them. If a case were taken against Cambodia to the World Court for violation of the Genocide Convention, the Khmer Rouge would have to respond, because they still held Cambodia’s seat in the United Nations.

When I came back to Yale, I founded the Cambodian Genocide Project in order to gather the evidence to make that case possible. I thus began my career in public international law while still a student at Yale Law School. And I found my calling: the prevention and punishment of genocide.

When I started law school, my career objective was to teach international human rights law. Thus, after a judicial clerkship and two fruitless years with a corporate law firm (yes, I too, was seduced,) I became a law professor at Washington and Lee University. Law teaching is a good platform for working on international human rights law because it offers both financial security and freedom. However, demands of teaching and publishing and the location of most schools away from policy-making centers greatly limit the academician’s ability to create institutions or shape policy. I did get the Cambodian Genocide Project sponsored by a Human Rights Committee of the American Bar Association that I chaired and got funding to gather evidence in Cambodia one summer funded by the Law School’s research center and the U.S. Institute of Peace. But when it came to finding a government to take the case to the World Court, those of us working on the case struck out. I learned a crucial lesson: human rights are not lost because of the absence of law, but because of the lack of political will to enforce it. We needed to change the political will of crucial nations, notably the United States, which opposed pursuing the case because it might legitimize the Vietnamese-backed government in Phnom Penh.

A group of us set out to change the political will of the U.S. government. Prof. Ben Kiernan, Dr. Craig Etcheson, and many others formed a coalition called the Campaign to Oppose the Return of the Khmer Rouge, and I co-chaired its Justice Committee, which worked with Senator Robb to pass the Cambodian Genocide Justice Act. That act declared it to be U.S. policy to prosecute the Khmer Rouge leaders and mandated the opening of an Office of Cambodian Genocide Investigations in the State Department. By 1994, I had taken the Foreign Service examination and joined the State Department; I was assigned to the steering committee for the Office of Cambodian Genocide Investigations. We moved U.S. policy to support creation of a tribunal to try the Khmer Rouge.

Years of work followed, during which I left the State Department, went back into university teaching and became an advisor to the task force appointed by the government of Cambodia to negotiate with the U.N. and create the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, popularly known as the Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT.) Using models from other tribunals, Cambodian legal procedure, and the International Criminal Court, I wrote the first drafts of the Internal Rules of Procedure for the Tribunal. They were revised by judges of the tribunal and became the rules of the KRT. Offices and a large courtroom were built for the KRT, and trials began. Over thirty years after they committed their crimes, the joint United Nations/Cambodian tribunal finally convicted three top Khmer Rouge leaders of crimes against humanity.

The lesson I learned from the Cambodian Genocide Project is that ideas that change the world often take many years and the work of hundreds of people to come to fruition. Never hesitate to plant the seeds. Then ask for help to water them until they take root and are tended by many other people.

I joined the U.S. State Department in 1992 because I wanted to build international human rights institutions. I was fortunate that my assignments allowed me to do that. The Director General of the Foreign Service jumped me several grades to positions of responsibility. Most junior Foreign Service Officers would not have been so lucky. I arrived in Washington after my initial consular assignment (Bangkok) at the end of the Rwandan genocide. The Director General assigned me to be coordinator for U.S. policy for Africa in the United Nations Security Council. I was immediately lent to the U.N. Commission of Experts that investigated the Rwandan genocide, and helped write their report, which
recommended establishing the Rwanda Tribunal. Back at the State Department, I then drafted the U.N. Security Council Resolutions that created that tribunal, and became the U.S. liaison and troubleshooter during its difficult start-up. I also initiated and wrote the resolutions that created the Burundi Commission of Inquiry and the U.N. Commission on Arms Flows in Central Africa. These were all institutional contributions to the punishment and prevention of genocide.

It became clear, however, that more lasting institutions are necessary to prevent genocide. What is needed is creation of an effective early warning system for the U.N. Security Council, standing regional or U.N. rapid deployment forces that can intervene to stop genocide, and an International Criminal Court. The U.S. government stood opposed to a U.N. force and to the International Criminal Court. I left the State Department to become coordinator of the Washington Working Group on the International Criminal Court. We built a coalition of human rights, legal, veterans, and religious organizations that successfully lobbied the Clinton administration to sign the ICC treaty. President George W. Bush promptly unsigned it. The U.S. is increasingly cooperating with the ICC. However, the ICC still lacks a police force, which should be created by an Optional Protocol to the ICC Treaty.

In 1998, I founded Genocide Watch in order to build an international coalition of groups to fight genocide. At the Hague Appeal for Peace in 1999, The International Campaign to End Genocide was founded with Genocide Watch as its coordinator. Since then the Alliance Against Genocide, as it is now called, has grown to 70 member organizations around the world, including such heavyweights as The International Crisis Group, the Minority Rights Group, Survival International, and the Aegis Trust. We proposed and lobbied successfully for the creation of the position of Special Adviser to the U.N. Secretary General on the Prevention of Genocide. We have campaigned to stop or prevent many genocidal situations from becoming worse, including East Timor where we were instrumental in getting intervention; Ethiopia, where we prevented further genocide against the Anuak people, and many other behind the scenes campaigns.

I returned to academia to earn my living as the James Farmer Professor in Human Rights at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia. In 2007, I became President of the International Association of Genocide Scholars. In 2009, I became Research Professor in Genocide Studies and Prevention at George Mason University’s School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution in Arlington, Virginia.

Genocide Watch is now launching several new initiatives, including an effort to get genocide education adopted in secondary schools around the world. We have drafted an Optional Protocol to the Genocide Convention, which reasserts the authority of the U.N. General Assembly and Regional Organizations to take action to prevent genocide. The U.N. Special Adviser has been supportive of this effort. We have drafted a U.N. Security Council Resolution to refer ISIS to the International Criminal Court.

I have this advice for those considering the calling of international law: never underestimate your own ideas. The world is governed by people with smaller ideas than your own. Yours may change the world.

**2016**

**HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, New York, NY**

**Kenneth Roth ’80**

In the eyes of most people, I am no longer a practicing lawyer. I rarely litigate a case, advise a client, or craft a deal. Yet, in my view, my job as executive director of Human Rights Watch, the international monitoring and advocacy organization, involves me deeply in the practice of law. Admittedly, I operate in a very different domain from a traditional courtroom lawyer, but my professional life today has many parallels to my earlier practice as a litigator and prosecutor.
Human Rights Watch combats human rights violations in some 90 countries worldwide. We conduct on-site investigations of abuses, expose them to public scrutiny, and generate economic, diplomatic, and public pressure to curtail them. Different as these steps may sound, each corresponds to a stage of litigation. We collect the facts of a case, although this is more likely to be done by interviewing witnesses in repressive societies or abusive war zones than by conducting depositions or requesting documents. We analyze those facts under applicable law, although our briefs tend to be published reports, and the law is usually found in international treaties rather than domestic statute books. And we engage in oral argument, although our courtroom is typically a press conference, congressional hearing, or U.N. conference room, and our jury is the court of public opinion.

Indeed, as law schools increasingly recognize, the human rights movement has developed a new legal method, but one that does not rely upon the courts. When there is an independent judiciary and the rule of law, traditional litigation works well enough to protect basic rights. But in most countries where Human Rights Watch works, there is no adequately functioning judicial system. The human rights movement thus has had to develop an extrajudicial method to protect rights. By stigmatizing abusive governments in the press, and convincing other influential governments to withhold certain forms of aid or trade benefits, we exert pressure on the executive and legislative branches of abusive governments to curtail their human rights transgressions.

Compliance with this pressure-based approach is hardly as sure-fire as the response to a judicial order in a democracy, but this methodology is often quite effective in mitigating human rights violations.

Of course, there are important differences between my “litigation” and that of most practitioners. It is not enough for me to convince a particular judge or jury of the merits of my case; I must move an entire government. Often that means figuring out how the press will cover an issue, how the public will react, and how other influential governments and institutions will respond. Instead of looking to the law books for precedents, I must look to the past conduct of governments and international organizations. In conducting an investigation, the usual difficulty of communicating with witnesses is only compounded by cultural and linguistic divides. And the frustrations of dealing with an obstructionist adversary in classic litigation cannot compare with—to cite just a few of my experiences—being tailed by a dozen surveillance agents through the streets of Havana, detained at gunpoint by an army patrol on a remote hillside in Rwanda, or ducking gunfire by Haitian troops in Port-au-Prince.

Some parts of my job are also similar to the non-courtroom aspects of a traditional legal practice. Like a senior partner at a law firm, I must ensure that my staff is well-trained and meets high standards of performance, and that the organization is well managed. I even have to worry about “rainmaking,” but instead of drumming up business I need to raise the organization’s $80 million annual budget—a task which, to my surprise, I find I often enjoy, because of the accomplished and intelligent people I meet in the process, and the sense of fulfillment I secure from building an effective organization.

Like many people who move into management positions, I sometimes long for the days when I could be on the front line of my profession, rather than sending others to do the most exciting work. When I started at Human Rights Watch more than 25 years ago, I regularly undertook investigations myself. It was exhilarating to enter a repressive country, outfox the government as it sought to keep me away from key sources of information, and meet the remarkably courageous and dedicated people who lead local human rights or democratic movements. I conducted investigations in such places as Kuwait just after the Gulf War; Cambodia and Albania, as their closed and secretive regimes were beginning to open up; Haiti, El Salvador and Guatemala in the midst of armed conflict or civil strife; Rwanda after the genocide; and many more.
Today, as the growing professionalism of the human rights movement demands lengthier investigations, and as my responsibilities at headquarters in New York make it increasingly difficult to get away for long periods, I find myself involved in fewer investigations. More often, I travel to hold press conferences, to meet with government officials, or (necessary task that it is) to raise money. But this representational role also has its share of rewards and challenges.

People often ask me how I got started in the human rights field. I point to various formative aspects of my life. One was certainly my father, whose stories of growing up in and fleeing Nazi Germany left me with a keen appreciation of the evil that governments can cause and the importance of building a strong legal system for protecting human rights as a restraint against such atrocities. My international orientation came in part from having lived briefly abroad and in part because I came of age at a time when many of the biggest domestic civil rights battles seemed to have been waged and won, while the international human rights movement was in its infancy, with many of the big battles still to be fought. But above all, as a child of the 1960s, I sought a profession that accorded with my basic values and would allow me to do something in which I believe. I thus feel tremendously fortunate to have found a job that fits so perfectly with my values, that consistently challenges me intellectually and personally, and that leaves me feeling that work is a natural extension of my life and aspirations rather than a necessary diversion.

Still, it was hardly easy getting into the human rights field, let alone into my current position. I owe a lot to lucky breaks, though there was a certain calculation behind the luck. My first stab was hardly auspicious: each of my three years at Yale Law School I tried to sign up for the one human rights course offered, and each year it was canceled. I thus left law school without any formal human rights training. I didn’t let this daunt me, though. One of the first things I did upon finishing a federal judicial clerkship and joining the New York law firm of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison was to begin volunteering to do human rights work on a pro bono basis. My first task was simply representing a young Haitian man seeking asylum. That got my foot in the door. When martial law broke out in Poland several months later, I was handed the task, still as a volunteer, of monitoring and reporting on human rights conditions. I continued following events in Poland, traveled there, and wrote a major report about it, as I left Paul, Weiss for the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York. Serving as a prosecutor and ultimately chief criminal appellate attorney in the Southern District (I also had a brief stint in Washington, DC on the Iran-Contra investigation), my human rights work took up many evenings and weekends. But I hardly looked at this as a sacrifice, because the work so thoroughly captivated me.

However, the human rights movement was small at the time, and job prospects were poor. It wasn’t until nearly seven years into my legal career that I received a phone call asking whether I might be interested in applying for the new position of deputy director that was opening up at Human Rights Watch. This offer would never have come my way had I simply applied cold from the outside. But by volunteering and staying involved, I became known within the human rights movement and, perhaps most important, my judgment and skills came to be trusted.

Needless to say, I grabbed the opportunity, although many of my colleagues at the U.S. Attorney’s Office, as they moved to partnerships in major law firms, were skeptical. There certainly was some risk involved: Human Rights Watch was a tiny organization at the time, and while it kindly offered to match my salary at the U.S. Attorney’s Office, this was considerably less than I could have been making at a law firm. But instinctively I felt that the job would be right for me, and I was far more excited about it than about following the more traditional career paths of my colleagues.

Today, after more than two decades at Human Rights Watch, I still have not seen anything else that I would rather be doing. It is a privilege to be able to choose my cause rather than having it dictated by random clients. It is endlessly challenging to provide the intellectual leadership for figuring out how to
keep human rights issues alive in the public’s consciousness while outwitting governments and their many excuses for violating human rights. And it is deeply satisfying knowing that I am making a difference—that without the vigilance of Human Rights Watch, without the pressure that we generate, governments worldwide would indulge far more often their temptation to violate human rights.

I suspect that I also obtain many of the same satisfactions from my job as a business leader does from running a thriving company. In the 24 years that I have headed the organization, I have watched it grow more than twelve-fold in size and become a truly global organization. As the organization expands—it now has more than 430 employees—I take pride in attracting a stunningly talented and dedicated staff, including an influx each year of some of the top students from this country’s major law schools, and in helping to create an environment that is intellectually alive and a fertile ground for innovation and professional growth.

How does one enter the human rights field today? It isn’t easy, but there are more opportunities than when I started. With the range of internships now offered by major law schools, it is often possible to spend a summer or semester working overseas for a local human rights group. Learning foreign languages, spending time in the developing world, and honing investigative and writing skills can help set a job applicant apart from others. Human Rights Watch also offers unpaid summer internships as well as one-year, paid fellowships for recent law school graduates. The fellowships enable recipients to work as full-time members of our staff, with their own investigative, advocacy and writing responsibilities. Many of these fellows go on to join the organization’s permanent staff. Obtaining a job at Human Rights Watch still isn’t easy—indeed, the competition can be intense—but as the movement grows in importance and size, career opportunities do exist for increasing numbers. Much as I found when I got started, the best route is simply to find a way, as a volunteer, intern or otherwise, to begin doing the work.

2017

*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed due to proprietary nature.*
I grew up in a Methodist parsonage and internalized as my personal motto the biblical admonition that “Faith without works is dead.” I saw law as a powerful tool for advancing the cause of freedom and building a better world. After graduating from a small liberal arts college in Michigan (Adrian) with a degree in English and Political Science, I enrolled in Yale Law School and subsequently was also admitted to Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School where I obtained a masters degree in Public Affairs concurrently with my law degree. I had always planned to go to law school, but wanted a school that had a reputation for being interdisciplinary and open to joint degrees. I was thrilled to be accepted at Yale.

At YLS I participated in the Moot Court competition and served on the Moot Court Board, was a Jessup team member, and was an editor on the International Law journal. My YLS course load tilted heavily toward international law (International Law, International Business Transactions, World Public Order, Law of War, Socialist Legal Systems, Human Rights Law, plus one Yale political science grad school course for law credit). Because YLS gave me course-credit for one semester at the Wilson School, I was at the Law School for only five semesters. As a result, my non-international law coursework was light and oriented toward my anticipated litigation career (Civil Procedure II, Antitrust, and Business Law). It made taking the bar a bit tough, but I studied hard during the bar review course and did fine.

If you had asked me as I entered law school to list the least likely places that I would begin my career upon graduation, a Wall Street law firm would have been high on the list. Nonetheless, my first business card read White & Case, 14 Wall Street. Students should realize that law school is a powerful mixing bowl. It’s hard to know where you’ll end up, no matter what you think going into school.

I decided to begin my career at a major firm on the well-worn theory that it was easier to start there, pay off debts and then move to a policy or public interest career than the reverse. I looked for a firm with
three qualities: 1) a strong commitment to pro bono work, 2) a strong litigation practice, and 3) a strong international practice. I went to White & Case in New York and never regretted that decision. I helped manage the firm’s pro bono practice and became actively involved in supporting Legal Aid. I co-authored two major human rights reports pro bono on the firm’s time and engaged in numerous other pro bono activities. I also did very interesting international litigation and arbitration work, spending most of one year in the firm’s Stockholm office and worked on arbitrations in Stockholm and Paris. A major disadvantage to working at White & Case, however, was that the cases I worked on were mostly very large and therefore the amount of responsibility I had was less than if I was handling matters on my own. When I left after six years I had some courtroom experience, but not much and certainly not as much as I would have liked.

But I got good training, had fun (although working very long hours), paid off my debts and then—and this is the most important point in the narrative—I left. Big firm litigation is a fine career for those who want it. I’m not critical of those in firms in the least, but it wasn’t what I set out to do with my life. Many who felt the same way never left—inertia, golden handcuffs, never found the right alternative, whatever. It is something to consider long and hard before proceeding down the “start at a big firm” path if you really don’t want to end up there.

One important difference between my situation and those of students today is that I owed a lot less money (about $25,000 total for law and undergrad) than the typical law graduate today. Moreover, most of my debt was in the form of very low-interest government-supported student loans that were still available then. I paid off my debts and built a nest egg pretty quickly which made it easier to leave. Today’s students have a much heavier debt burden. Of course, starting salaries are also much higher now, too. I started at $45,000 if I recall correctly, although salaries shot up around my fourth year.

It was also quite important and helpful that I maintained a pretty modest lifestyle during my time at the firm, living in a tiny, pretty grungy apartment in Hoboken and driving a beat up Ford Granada with the paint peeling off. When I left the firm I actually moved into a nicer apartment. I took a significant pay cut, but it didn’t feel like it. If you think you want to work at a firm for a while and then leave, I strongly urge you to avoid the “golden handcuffs.”

From White & Case I was extremely fortunate to be able to land a job as Senator Moynihan’s senior foreign policy aide in Washington. This happened largely through a Wilson School connection. My law background was initially a problem in landing the job because—the office usually looked for someone with a PhD for the foreign policy position. In the long run, however, it was very helpful for a variety of reasons. Moynihan had a profound respect for the law and appreciated having staff members with legal training. It was useful in considering legislation and in having a framework to understand how the legal profession would attempt to implement it.

I spent five years in the Senate, then two years as senior advisor for South Asian Affairs at the Department of State (essentially a deputy assistant secretary for those familiar with these titles). At State I worked on a wide variety of issues, but took a particular lead on economic and “global” issues, including human rights and the environment. Again, legal training was helpful because there were a number of laws (for instance the Pressler Amendment) that had significant implications for our work. I ended up spending a lot of time working with the Legal Adviser’s office.

When I left the government, I joined Amnesty International U.S.A. where I worked for four years as the Washington director and where my responsibility was essentially to try to make U.S. foreign policy more human rights friendly. I supervised a staff of eight people and subsequently developed a number of programs designed to help Amnesty members and the general public be more effective in influencing their elected officials. After leaving Amnesty, I did a variety of work with human rights NGOs, including
the RFK Center for Human Rights. For a time, I was essentially a solo practitioner working on human rights and international justice issues. I created a small NGO called the Freedom Investment Project with the purpose of improving the human rights performance of the Department of State.

At the moment I am the Washington Director for the Open Society Institute (OSI) and Executive Director of the Open Society Policy Center (OSPC). OSI is a major philanthropic organization created by George Soros to further his efforts to promote open societies around the world. It has a substantial grant making budget, conducts public education and advocacy and also operates programs on various topics around the world. OSPC is a 501(c)(4) organization that lobbies the United States government to promote better policies on human rights, public health and other issues.

A couple of career points concerning human rights and NGOs in general that might not be obvious to the student. First, getting good jobs in this field is highly competitive—more so than getting firm jobs. Salaries can also be pretty low. I took a six-figure pay cut leaving White & Case. Although I’ve worked myself back up, and as a manager of a substantial staff am paid very well, no one should expect to make more than a fraction of what they would make in a major firm if they pursue public interest work. But it’s more than enough to get by, send my kids to college, etc. I’ve learned that two skills that make one both more employable and in a better position to command a decent salary are the ability to manage an office and a staff and the ability to raise money. These are far more scarce skills than being smart, being hard working or having a law degree.

Second, the jobs are hard and often frustrating. You lose a lot of battles. You also have many more battles with NGO colleagues than you might expect. People in these fields are generally very collegial, but they are also very passionate about the issues. The “it’s just business” attitude of some firm work is quite different than a screaming match with someone who thinks you are “selling out” torture victims.

Third, if you think you want to work in this field, get your foot in the door. Start by getting internships or doing projects with well-respected NGOs. Today, most job applicants have pretty impressive experience and/or connections with NGOs. Language skills are becoming increasingly important (I say this ruefully as a typical unilingual American). The days when a talented fourth-year associate with stellar academic credentials but no human rights experience whatsoever might be able to land a serious human rights job are pretty much over. NGOs can choose now from among candidates with similar academic backgrounds and regional studies experience, with relevant NGO internships, or substantial academic or clinical work specifically in the human rights field. Besides, there is still no substitute for the telephone call from an NGO colleague who knows and has worked with an applicant and vouches for their abilities, professionalism, and collegiality.

2017

**B. Student Interns**

Further information and narratives concerning summer internship sites are available from the Schell Center through the Kirby Simon Summer Human Rights Fellows’ Reports.

**1. United Nations**

**UNITED NATIONS, POLITICAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, EUROPE & AMERICAS DIVISION, New York, NY**

Christina Andersen ’09

My internship at United Nations headquarters in New York was with the Political Affairs Department, Europe & Americas Division. I worked on the Europe side of the division, and focused on political
developments in Eastern Europe. The highest profile Europe-related political developments for the United Nations at the time were the final status of Kosovo and the corresponding fate of the U.N. Mission in Kosovo; instability in the breakaway regions in the Caucasus; and the G-8 Summit.

I received my internship with the United Nations by applying directly through the website www.unjobs.org. While it is true that the most common way to find a position with the United Nations is through networking or personal connections, the Internship Programme at headquarters seemed to have been strictly drawn from the online application process. The application is due by the end of January, and I was notified in early March, with a two-week period in which to accept or decline the offer. The Internship Programme brings over 100 interns to headquarters to work in various departments. It makes for a kind of instant community within headquarters, which is quite large and has many staff members coming and going between missions and other U.N. positions abroad. Interns inform each other about interesting events or conferences organized by their departments. Interns truly come from all over the globe, but most of them were pursuing graduate degrees at an English or French-speaking university in the West. English is the dominant language, although French can be quite helpful.

Day-to-day work as a Political Officer varies depending on one’s desk assignment—the country or countries one covers. For Western European countries, much of the work involves drafting talking points, speeches, press releases, and letters on the Secretary-General’s behalf to world leaders. Most of the issues discussed are of global significance in which the U.N. plays a largely symbolic or coordinating role, such as climate change; however, lobbying world leaders to support a U.N. peacekeeping mission in Darfur was a significant part of the Secretary-General’s interactions with Western Europe in the summer of 2007. Diplomatic relations are a smaller part of the portfolio of an Eastern European desk officer, who spends more time reading up on the latest political developments, staying in contact with U.N. staff in their areas of responsibility, and fielding the many mini-crises that arise in the various frozen conflicts. A Political Officer does a lot of intelligence work among the delegates to the U.N., in order to get an inside view into member states’ positions on issues coming up in the Security Council. I did a lot of drafting of briefing papers and talking points, and wrote a strategy paper discussing the U.N.’s potential role in the Black Sea region. Besides providing the Secretary-General with political background and analysis, Political Affairs sees itself as a kind of early warning system for the Peacekeeping Department: providing the information and analysis to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat needed to spot, and hopefully defuse, nascent threats to international peace and security.

A perk of working at headquarters is being able to sit in on Security Council sessions. I attended the session in which the resolution authorizing peacekeepers in Darfur was approved. I saw the ICTY prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, give an update on the status of the tribunal’s war crime prosecutions. Being an intern at headquarters gives a great sense of the size and scope of the organization, including all of its potentials and shortcomings. I got a much better sense of how the U.N. and the Secretary-General fit into international politics, and how the U.N. can best play a productive role on the world stage. Although I often felt I could have been given more work to do, the experience was valuable and enlightening, and I would recommend the Internship Programme to other students.

Summer 2007

2. Intergovernmental/Foreign Government Settings

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE, Liberia
Karen Kudelko ’10

International public interest work was the main reason I went to law school, and Yale’s Kirby Simon Fellowship program was one of the main reasons I chose Yale. I knew that I would be able to get the international experience I was searching for in my very first summer of law school. In college, I had
worked at a Liberian refugee camp in Ghana, and knew I wanted to find work in Liberia in law school. I spoke with some people I’d met because I worked at the camp in Ghana, and soon found out that Liberia’s Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) was in the process of putting together an Office of Legal Counsel and needed help.

I touched base with the administrative head of the MoHSW, spoke with the Minister himself, and sought advice on living in Liberia from people I’d met in Ghana, current students at Yale, and friends of friends who lived or were living in Liberia. Finally, I applied for the Kirby Simon Fellowship.

The internship provided me with excellent international law experience. Upon arrival, we soon realized that the Office of Legal Counsel consisted at the time of me and another law student who also received a Kirby Simon Fellowship, so the Ministry’s legal work fell to us.

We reviewed the ministry’s contracts and memoranda of understanding when they were up for renewal, made visits to regional hospitals around the country with inspection teams, headed up a committee to investigate the country’s adoption process, and drafted a new adoption law after much research and many long meetings. We even attended a legislative hearing on the new adoption law. The internship was overwhelming at times and we worked very hard because we were given so much responsibility, but it was that sort of impactful, hands-on experience that I had been looking for.

When looking for an international public interest job, I’d make sure to ask about what specific projects you will be working on before you arrive. This can be difficult, but organizations low on staff can very easily welcome someone offering free legal work, but may not always think through what specific tasks you can do for them. It is important to make sure you won’t arrive to sit and read a novel all day (something I heard other students at other Ministries in Liberia experienced). Make sure you have not only specific projects, but someone to directly supervise and organize your work.

I’d also recommend going with a friend. As it turned out, another law student had the same interests as I did, so I invited him to join me at the Ministry that summer. Going through the process with a buddy was certainly a comfort in such a foreign place. Next, do not be afraid to email or call friends or friends of friends to get advice about living in that specific place. People are often willing to talk about their experience, good or bad, and give some great advice not found in travel books or the State Department website. Finally, I’d recommend branching out while you are at your internship. I reached out to the Liberian Bar Association, the Association of Female Liberian Lawyers, and even other ex-pats working for other Ministries, the State Department, or other international organizations. Your summer can be an excellent chance to fully explore another culture, and network with other people who have similar interests. Really diving in will make it that much more rewarding.

Summer 2012

SUPREME COURT OF ISRAEL, Jerusalem
Gabriel Rosenberg ‘09

In the summer of 2006, I worked as a foreign law intern to President Aharon Barak of the Supreme Court of Israel. I decided to pursue a foreign law internship for several reasons. First, I felt viewing the American legal system from an outsider’s perspective would help me understand it better. Second, my first year at Yale made me interested in understanding how courts work, and the opportunity to work in a country’s highest court was too good to pass up. Third, I felt that I could better appreciate the recent American judicial tension between freedom and security through the experience of a country that has dealt with the issue for more than 50 years. Finally, I enjoy living abroad and had always wanted to live in Israel.
Legal staff working for the Supreme Court justices fall into one of three categories. Legal assistants are the most senior, full attorneys, and work full time at the court for a number of years. Clerks are, as in the United States, recent law graduates and generally work at the court for a year. Foreign law interns are either law students or professional attorneys who some justices choose to offer unpaid positions to for varying amounts of time; this is where American law students fit in. The Kirby Simon Summer Fellowships, offered through the Schell Center, makes it possible for YLS students to take on this unpaid position.

The job of a foreign law clerk is to help the legal assistants, clerks, and justices research and understand the law of jurisdictions outside Israel. Often, a case will come up in Israel law for which foreign law may be instructive. A foreign law clerk will then be asked to prepare a memo on what other relevant jurisdictions (usually the United States for American law students) have to say on the issue. The justices then can use this memo in analyzing the case under consideration.

The primary skill needed for this job, therefore, is legal research ability. Most research can be done on Lexis or Westlaw, though occasional recourse to textbooks may be necessary. In this sense, the day-to-day job is not much different from what other students have told me they did at U.S. Attorneys Offices, DOJ offices, and the like. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. In general, the work I was given involved relatively long-term deadlines; I was never given an assignment due the same or next day.

While the Court can be a hectic and stressful place, the atmosphere for foreign clerks is very relaxed. The foreign clerks work together in library, away from some of the pressure of the chambers. The legal assistants were very aware that we were on summer vacation, and encouraged us to enjoy our time in Israel. This relaxed atmosphere made the summer feel like a working vacation and a break from the daily grind of school.

At the time I applied, there was no formal application for a foreign law internship at the Israeli Supreme Court. This has since changed; there is an application available on the Court’s website. In my case, a YLS professor proved instrumental in getting me the summer job.

In sum, the Supreme Court of Israel is an incredibly interesting place for a YLS student to work for the summer. The work is not overbearing, and understanding how a court operates in a place with many problems is helpful in understanding the function of the judicial system in our own country.

*Summer 2007*

### 3. United States Government

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY, OFFICE OF FOREIGN ASSET CONTROL, Washington, DC**  
Abbas Ravjani ’09

I was a summer law clerk at the Chief Counsel for the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) in the Department of the Treasury. As a student interested in national security, OFAC was the perfect place to be working on cutting edge issues that play an important role in our foreign policy. OFAC is responsible for administering United States sanctions programs, including our embargo on Cuba, and it also works on the terrorist finance problem. Lawyers are routinely major contributors both within Treasury and at inter-agency meetings. It is not uncommon for OFAC issues to be on the radar screen at the highest levels of national security policy.

The day-to-day life of an Attorney-Advisor within the counsel’s office can be a hodgepodge of different activities. The main job of the attorneys is serving as the legal advisor to the client, the OFAC policy
staff. Most decisions the policy staff make are run through the office and usually a lawyer has a seat at the table during meetings. Lawyers are rarely involved in litigating cases and traditional legal writing is the exception. However, legal skills are put to the test as attorneys are often asked for interpretations on regulations and Executive Orders.

Despite only a year of law school under my belt, I was treated like every other Attorney-Advisor within OFAC and was assigned my own portfolio and set of issues. In my summer experience, I was paired closely with another attorney who served as my mentor for the summer. In addition to having a small portfolio for which I was responsible, I was also assigned more ‘traditional’ legal memoranda assignments on issues facing the office.

To get a summer law clerk position at OFAC, security clearance is necessary. The office rarely takes on summer clerks; however, if you can get in, it’s a great place to see a government agency in action. I truly enjoyed my experience at OFAC. The attorneys are generally younger associates who have migrated from the private sector and are all top-notch. If interested in a full-time position, a summer position is a good starting point, but in the private sector, working on sanctions and export control issues would make you an attractive candidate. I would highly recommend someone taking a position here.

*Summer 2007*

**4. Nongovernmental Organizations**

**PROYECTO LINGUISTICO QUETZALTECO DE ESPAÑOL (PLQ), Guatemala**  
Carolyn Lipp ’18

PLQ is not just a Spanish language school; it strongly emphasizes teaching students about human rights and other contemporary issues in Guatemala. In that way, this program exceeded my expectations. I knew I would get better at Spanish through my time at PLQ, but I did not realize how much I would learn about Guatemalan history and the sordid involvement of the U.S. From the orientation on day one, the coordinator gave us a presentation about Guatemalan history to give all students a base level of knowledge that they continuously expanded on. Each Friday, they hold a session called “what happened in Guatemala this week?” In this session, a former guerilla soldier discusses the weekly events and news. The recent genocide and civil war affects so many of the conversations I had with my instructors and with other PLQ staff, even though it is taboo to talk about those things outside of PLQ. The weekly lectures and documentaries also deepened my understanding of the political landscape and recent history of Guatemala.

One thing I wish I had done before starting the program is to set out clearer goals for myself. Since each class is one-on-one and student-driven, you can decide exactly what you want to do each day. For example, some days I felt like walking around the city or going to a coffee shop, and we would be able to do our sessions walking or in a coffee ship. So, I would recommend making a list of all the things you want to practice doing in Spanish: a mock client meeting, a Know Your Rights presentation, an affidavit interview and write-up, legal research and writing, etc. and then showing that to your instructor. Since I was new to the program, I relied more on the instructors to structure the lesson, which sometimes left me feeling unsatisfied about not getting to learn what I wanted to learn.

I also had planned on volunteering at the Asociación de Mujeres MAAN, a women’s rights organization. While they had confirmed that I could volunteer there in advance over e-mail, they did not get back to me once I had arrived in Guatemala. By the time I decided to give up on them, there did not seem to be sufficient time to volunteer in any meaningful way somewhere else. So, I would recommend that a student who wants to volunteer should make sure that they have a specific supervisor and project set up in advance of coming to Guatemala. That being said, not pursuing a volunteer position after classes meant I
could fully immerse myself in the activities of PLQ and my host family. Students have classes five hours a day, normally some kind of day trip or activity, and then homework for classes. Looking back, I can't imagine how I would have been able to regularly volunteer without sacrificing all of the other amazing things I got to do and feeling rushed about getting everything done.

For students who want to improve their Spanish, learn about human rights issues in Guatemala, and meet teachers and students committed to social justice, I would absolutely recommend this program!

Summer 2017

PROYECTO LINGUISTICA QUETZALTECO (PLQ) AND CHICO MENDEZ PROYECTO DE REFORESTACIÓN, Guatemala

Paul Rink ’19

My experience exceeded my expectations both at the Proyecto Linguistica Quetzalteco (PLQ) language school and at Chico Mendez Proyecto de Reforestación. Both were very rewarding for me personally, and both helped me understand the various social difficulties currently facing Guatemala. PLQ is a language school with a clear social mission. It employs only local teachers for its classes and incorporates them into the social framework of the school through weekly graduation dinners and other community-building activities. In addition, PLQ offers students the opportunity to live in the homes of local families. Not only does this give students an opportunity to practice their Spanish with locals, but it provides these families with a relatively stable source of supplemental income.

PLQ also sponsors programs that help local children learn computer skills and English. In addition to these community-centered activities and policies in Quetzaltenango, PLQ has a satellite school in the mountains of rural Guatemala. I was fortunate to spend a week in this location. Aside from the beautiful and relaxing atmosphere of the “escuela de la montaña,” this satellite location allows students to see close-up some of the inequities present in Guatemala today. The nearby village communities often arose after poor plantation workers were forced to leave the “finca” (farm) where they had worked for years. This would often happen because of a change in ownership and after months of unpaid labor. The local families who feed the students at “escuela de la montaña” greatly need the extra funds that the school provides them and still have trouble covering expenses because of the lack of work in the area. PLQ started the mountain school partly as a way to help steer students’ money more directly into the hands of local Guatemalans who need it the most.

The efforts of Jorge Armando and his family at Chico Mendez similarly promote community-centered programs that support human rights (as well as environmental protection). Jorge Armando utilizes tree planting as a way to bring his community together around a single project (especially the children of Pachaj). He recognizes the health benefits of planting trees both for his local area and for the planet. In addition, he plants specific species of trees that are protected by law in Guatemala in order to deter mining interests from gaining a foothold in the community. Seeing how these projects have been able to market themselves to foreigners while maintaining efforts to better their communities helped me realize that the ability to be a tourist comes with certain responsibilities. It is important for travelers to try to support these and similar projects as much as possible in order to make sure that the time and money they spend in other countries is used to benefit local interests. Tourists should conduct background research regarding where to stay, eat, and spend time. By supporting projects like PLQ and Chico Mendez, they can enjoy their experience in a different country while also helping to make it a better place than when they arrived.

Summer 2017
I had a great experience working with the Worker Rights Consortium this summer in Bangladesh. The local staff member was very nice, always helpful and responsive to my interests. I think that my experience was somewhat unique because I had a relationship with the investigator in Dhaka and the nonprofit headquarters in DC from many years of working together before law school. I am not sure that a student that was not as familiar with the organization and had never been to Dhaka before would enjoy it. I know there have been other legal interns for the WRC in Dhaka, but I think it would be very challenging.

Dhaka is a difficult place to live, so I think students should think twice about it before they come. I think that Bangladeshis are wonderfully friendly, particularly if you know a bit of Bengali so you can communicate more easily, and very helpful to foreigners. But, Bangladesh is a very poor country and so many everyday tasks are much harder than they would be in the U.S. or even most other countries in Asia. Bangladesh is also a Muslim country, so I think it is very important to be culturally sensitive to this and wear local dress. Some other foreigners that I interacted with found this uncomfortable and felt that they were always being stared at, but I did not mind it and I don’t think it’s a problem as long as you know what to expect when you go.

My work consisted of developing and administering a survey on working conditions for garment workers. The local investigator was always with me when we were talking with workers, and he largely administered the survey because of the language barrier. I also met with local community and union leaders. At some of these meetings, the local investigator came with me and helped me communicate because some of them spoke no English. At others, I went by myself. I felt that this work was important and like I was able to contribute, although it was definitely challenging because I am far from fluent in Bengali and there were many barriers to communication. It also took a while to set up the interviews and get started with the work, so that I was a little bit frustrated in the first few weeks that I was there. If I were to do a similar project again, I would put more effort into trying to figure out exactly what I would be doing and make a work plan before going to Dhaka.

While this was far from a typical legal internship, I think I learned a lot and was able to do good work. It was a challenging environment, and I think would be difficult for someone who had not been to Dhaka before or had not worked with this organization. I think Bangladesh is a great country with a lot of problems and so a lot of opportunity for really interesting work.

As part of my work, I met with many garment workers to ask them about labor conditions. My background is in labor organizing, so it was challenging for me to work in an environment where there is very little real worker organizing and limited union activity. I struggled for the first few interviews because the workers are not used to talking about their working conditions and are relatively shy. It’s frustrating to meet with workers that are laboring in terrible conditions and are underpaid and know that there is not a lot that I or my organization can do to immediately rectify the situation. In Bangladesh, like many other developing countries, the labor laws are good but either not enforced or selectively enforced in the worst possible ways.

In the last few weeks that I was in Bangladesh, I met with workers that had formed a factory-level union to talk to them about their working conditions. These workers were exactly the opposite of the other workers that I had encountered. They were eager to speak about the factory conditions and talk about what could be done to improve their situation. They also shared some harrowing tales of how workers in their factory had been physically abused by their supervisors. While it was difficult for me to hear their
story, I was glad I got a chance to meet with them because it gave me hope in the workers’ movement in Bangladesh.

There are very few labor unions in Bangladesh, and the garment industry in Bangladesh is arguably only successful because they pay rock bottom wages, so there is a lot of political resistance to raising wages. Also, most of the members of parliament are linked in some way to the garment industry, either directly as employers, or indirectly as investors or business partners with the employers. So, the government is very resistant to recognizing unions or improving conditions. But, in spite of all this, I was able to meet with an active factory-level union, where workers were agitated and organized, and fighting for better wages and respect on the job. Most of what I saw and heard during my summer was disheartening because the labor relations system in Bangladesh is so dysfunctional. I was glad I also had an opportunity to talk to workers that were ready to be leaders in the fight for their rights.

*Summer 2012*
Appendix A

*Please note: Some sections of this public guide have been removed due to proprietary nature.
Appendix B

List of Selected Online Resources
## List of Selected Online Resources

### Select Fellowships/Grants
- Foundation Center
- Fulbright Fellowship
- Human Rights Watch Fellowships
- International Human Rights Funders Group
- New Voices Fellowship
- The Echoing Green Fellowships

### General Information Websites
- American Bar Association - Section on International Law
- American Society of International Law
- Association for Women's Rights in Development
- Communication Initiative
- Derechos
- DevNet Jobs
- Foreign Policy Association
- Human Rights Internet
- Human Rights Jobs
- Human Rights Resource Center
- Idealist (Action without Borders)
- Microfinance Gateway
- One World
- Pambazuka News
- Learning Portal for Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation of Peacebuilding
- Pro Bono Net
- Public Service Jobs Directory
- Public Interest Law Institute
- ReliefWeb

### International Organizations Directory, Northwestern U. Library

### U.S. Government Resources
- Central Intelligence Agency
- Commodities Futures Trading Commission
- Congressional Research Service
<table>
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<th>List of Selected Online Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Export-Import Bank of the United States</td>
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<td>Federal Reserve Board</td>
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<td>Federal Trade Commission, Bureau of Consumer Protection</td>
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<td>Fedworld</td>
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<td>Government Honors &amp; Internship Online Handbook PW: YLScareer2015</td>
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<td>House Committee Lists</td>
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<td>Nuclear Regulatory Commission</td>
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<td>Office of the U.S. Trade Representative</td>
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<td>Overseas Private Investment Corporation</td>
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<td>Roll Call</td>
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<td>Securities and Exchange Commission</td>
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<td>Senate Committee List</td>
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<td>U.S. Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom</td>
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<td>U.S. Department of Transportation</td>
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<td>U.S. Federal Jobs Locator</td>
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<td>U.S. Government Trade Agencies Listing</td>
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<td>U.S. International Trade Commission</td>
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<td>U.S. NonProfit Gateway</td>
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<td>U.S. Trade and Development Agency</td>
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<td>JPO Programs (Non-U.S. Citizens)</td>
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<td>JPO Programs (U.S. Citizens)</td>
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**List of Selected Online Resources**

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<th>International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda</th>
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<td>International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia</td>
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<td>Special Tribunal for Lebanon</td>
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**UN Resources**

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<th>International Labor Organization</th>
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<td>UN Development Program</td>
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<td>UN High Commission for Human Rights</td>
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<td>UN High Commission for Refugees</td>
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<td>UN Volunteers</td>
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<td>UNDP Leadership Development Program</td>
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<td>UNHCR International Professional Roster</td>
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**Select Organization Sites**

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<td>American Friends Service Committee</td>
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<td>Amnesty International - Jobs Available</td>
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<td>Arms Control and Disarmament Agency</td>
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<td>CARE International</td>
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<td>Center for Justice and International Law</td>
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<td>Inter-American Court of Human Rights</td>
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<td>International Center for Transitional Justice</td>
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<td>List of Selected Online Resources</td>
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<td>International Civil Service Commission</td>
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<td>International Commission of Jurists</td>
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<td>International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)</td>
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<td>International Organization for Migration</td>
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<td>International Rescue Committee</td>
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<td>Open Society Institute</td>
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<td>Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe</td>
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<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<td>PAE-REACT</td>
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<td>Robert F. Kennedy Center for Human Rights</td>
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<td>International Institute for Sustainable Development</td>
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<td>The Carter Center</td>
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<td>The Vance Center for International Justice</td>
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<td>World Legal Information Institute</td>
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<td>World Vision</td>
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Career Development Office

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Mailing Address:  Career Development Office, Yale Law School,
127 Wall Street, New Haven, CT 06511

Physical Address:  Ruttenberg Hall, Room 184, 133 Wall Street,
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International Public Interest Law
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Law Firm Practice
Lawyers in Business
Opportunities with International Tribunals and Foreign Courts
Public Interest Careers
Public Interest Fellowships Vol. I
Public Interest Fellowships: Sample Applications Vol. II
The Fall Interview Program
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