Lawyers Without Borders Student Divisions

Overview

Lawyers Without Border (LWOB)'s model leverages pro bono hours and in-kind support by harnessing financial and volunteer resources to engage all sectors of civil society as well as private profit-driven institutions in a borderless, globally-oriented and collaborative effort.

A LWOB Student Division is an autonomous and self-sufficient entity officially recognized and licensed by Lawyers Without Borders. With Lawyers Without Borders' official recognition, LWOB Student Divisions give young people the opportunity to engage with pro bono work and human rights issues, fostering a culture of engagement in pro bono that we hope will then follow them into their future legal careers. Part of the aim of having affiliated student managed entities is to help students to understand that in today's world, "making a difference" and having measurable impact, particularly in the rule of law sector, involves creating a structure that can be managed, has focus, is run according to well-established principles, sets the ethical bar high and promotes charitable support among like-minded individuals. Student Divisions are the engine behind Lawyers Without Borders, which seeks to generate action that results in impact in a sustainable way.

There are three main elements to Student Divisions: (1) Outreach and awareness raising; (2) Fundraising; and (3) Research projects. Several research projects have been undertaken this year, including research, comparative legal analyses and product formation for LWOB's Combating Gender-Based and Domestic Violence program in Namibia, research into women's inheritance rights for an INTEL/LWOB project based in Kenya and assistance with the creation of a Pro Se Representation Manual aimed to guide women in Kenya who cannot afford legal aid.

Investing in our students is an essential means of strengthening pro bono work globally and in the long-term. Currently there are 16 UK Student Divisions, one US Student Division, two new Student Division in Australia and one new Student Division in Northern Ireland. We have received further interest from students at universities in the US, the UK, Germany, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Canada and Kenya, many of which are in the process of applying for affiliation.



Over the past year, LWOB's Student Division network continues to grow exponentially. To anticipate the needs of each division LWOB has set up an in-house recording area (pictured to the left), where each Student Division upon request can receive a personalized welcome video from LWOB's executive director and founder, Christina M. Storm. We have already created three introduction videos in 2019 which were featured at Student Division-lead events.

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Rule of Law Innovation Challenge (ROLIC)



On March 1, 2019, LWOB held its fifth annual Rule of Law Innovation Challenge (ROLIC), a high-spirited competition among LWOB Student Divisions in the UK designed to challenge students to develop innovation tools for LWOB programs in the developing world. ROLIC is the highlight of the Student Division calendar, and this year, a record of nine teams competed. Each entry included an oral presentation, concept narrative and innovative deliverable designed for legal concepts relevant to an ongoing LWOB Rule of Law project.

The ROLIC event is designed to provide students with opportunities to contribute and aid the development of original educational mechanisms in rule of law. This year, the challenge was to create learning mechanisms for LWOB's current programs in Tanzania, Namibia and Kenya. The final submissions for this years' challenge each encompassed one of the following categories: Combating Violent Extremism, Wildlife Crime, Gender-Based and Domestic Violence or Evidence Processing.

The ROLIC event submissions were judged by two accomplished associates from LWOB's partner law firms, a LWOB staff member and a student from the previous year's winning team. Other highlights included an *Introduction to Lawyers Without Borders* Video and keynote speaker, Felicity Kirk, the pro bono director for Ropes & Gray LLP, a top international law firm based in London, UK.

In follow up meetings with one of LWOB's partner firms, the lawyers agreed to take one of the strongest entries as a starting point and work directly with students to finesse it into a complete product for the current Gender-Based and Domestic Violence program LWOB has planned.

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Spotlight

Each of our divisions holds conferences, events, fundraising, talks and debates throughout the year. Below, you can find a small snapshot of just some of the work undertaken by our divisions this year.

University of Leicester

Students from the Lawyers Without Borders Student Division at the University of Leicester worked on the creation of a Local Race Equality Centre based in Leicester. Student volunteers engaged in many activities from: Developing their social media, website, volunteering through legal research, and volunteering in classes to teach English.

Aberdeen University

Human Rights Conference 2019



The members of Aberdeen University's Lawyers Without Borders Student Division organized their fifth annual conference, which took place March 11th, 2019. The topic was "Refugee Protection: Are refugees afforded sufficient protection under human rights law?" The conference brought together distinguished panelists from multiple universities in the UK to discuss refugee protection. The question of whether refugees are afforded sufficient legal protections under human rights laws was explored in speeches by student division president and student speakers. The event, attended by 150 participants, proved to be a resounding success for LWOB's very active and engaged Aberdeen Student Division.



Durham University



At a time when the legal profession is becoming increasingly diverse and more graduates are exploring alternatives to the traditional route of working in the City, Durham Lawyers Without Borders hosted a two-part event with guest speakers from well-known law firms. The event discussed LGBT inclusion in the workplace and wider community. Students ended the event with a networking session which provided the opportunity to speak to more legal representatives about working at a regional office of an international firm.

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LAWYERS WITHOUT BORDERS

SOAS

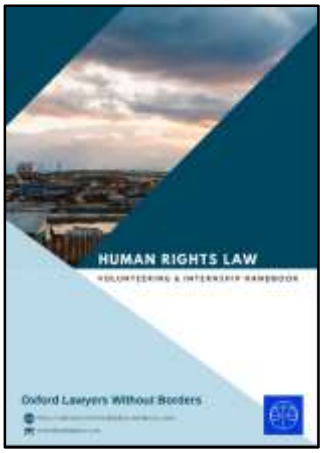
Freshers' Fayre



At the start of the academic year, LWOB Student Division attended the annual SOAS "Freshers' Fayre". There was a great turn out at the SOAS stand, where 178 new students joined the LWOB Student Division mailing list. New students were buzzing with excitement over the prospect of assisting LWOB with future projects, and showed particular interest in the work LWOB did with the "Artistic Freedom" Memo.

Over the school year, SOAS organized several speaker events which promoted conversations on the changing professions and mechanisms of Human Rights Law. They also held an event on the influence of young advocates in Diaspora communities. These events were accompanied by networking opportunities and career advice within the respective fields of the speakers in attendance.

Oxford University



LWOB Oxford Student Division launched a new Human Rights Law Volunteering & Internship Handbook.

The Handbook consists of 50 opportunities in the field of public international law and human rights, divided into 3 sections-- internships, volunteering opportunities and Barristers' Chambers mini-pupillages. It provides an introduction into the wide range of legal opportunities available for undergraduate and postgraduate students, within and outside the UK.

The Handbook is available online, which you can access here: https://tinyurl.com/oxlwobhandbook

LWOB Oxford Student Division also hosted a three-part Alternative Careers Panel Series. Students hosted speakers from various academic and legal research backgrounds to provide insight and information about pursuing non-commercial law careers.

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Queen's University Belfast



LWOB has launched its very first student division in Northern Ireland at Queen's University Belfast. Students began actively recruiting new members with a launch event on April 10th, 2019. The event featured a number of prominent speakers who discussed the impact of some of today's most pressing legal questions. Guest speakers included a legal representative who has been involved in a human rights case that is likely to have a powerful impact on the status of individuals born in Northern Ireland in the Brexit era. The event was joined by members of the Law Centre Northern Ireland and faculty members from Queen's University Belfast School of Law. The forty attendees were given an in-depth introduction to LWOB's mission and programs in the form of a short video produced by LWOB, featuring its executive director and founder, Christina M. Storm. A link to the video is provided below:



https://vimeo.com/326628495/618d196b53

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