An Interview with Miranda Margetts
Calli Burnett

This past Spring the Health Justice Project here at Loyola University Chicago School of Law welcomed Miranda Margetts. A practicing health attorney from Sydney, Australia, Margetts worked with the organization that developed Australia’s national electronic health record system before coming to Chicago. Margetts shares what led her to health law, her experiences working in Australia, and what she has learned about the medical-legal partnership through her work at Loyola.

Q: What led you to become involved in health law?
A: I enrolled in a general medico-legal course elective as part of my law degree at the University of Queensland in Australia and found the subject matter particularly interesting. I also enjoyed the biology and psychology subjects I undertook at university so given health law covers all sorts of health related fields, I realized I would like to become involved in this area should the opportunity arise.

Fortunately I had an opportunity soon after university to work for an organization which represented Australian rural doctors and this role provided me with exposure to many of the workings and issues relevant to Australia’s health care system.

Q: What did your day to day practice look like in Sydney?
A: I worked in a small privacy law team for a health information technology organization that was initially established to develop better ways of electronically collecting and exchanging health information. The organization was also responsible for the development of Australia’s national electronic health record system.

My day to day work included providing privacy compliance advice across the organization’s work program, assisting with the development and implementation of a privacy management framework, consultation processes and training activities. Our team was also responsible for ensuring existing and emerging legal issues relevant to the work programs were
identified accurately and appropriate responses were developed to support relevant eHealth initiatives. We regularly undertook engagement with medical indemnity insurers to ensure that any adverse impacts of eHealth initiatives were identified, mitigated or minimized early.

Overall the role was varied and I enjoyed the mix of compliance work with internal teams, supporting implementation projects in partnership with hospitals and IT vendors and the ongoing engagement with the medical indemnity insurers for risk management purposes.

Q: Did your work deal with domestic or international issues or both?
A: The vast majority of the work I undertook was of a domestic nature - for example, ensuring the projects complied with relevant Australian state, territory and federal health information related legislation. As many of the projects were implemented at the national level and therefore across Australian jurisdictional boundaries, it was important to ensure that projects compiled with applicable state and federal legislation in addition to relevant public or private health sector legislation.

Regarding any international aspects of our work - at times when considering particular legal/policy issues it would be helpful to understand if and how other countries had addressed similar issues in their own eHealth systems. It was therefore beneficial to stay aware of significant legal and policy developments in the eHealth space.

Our team was also part of the International Association of Privacy Professionals (the Australian and New Zealand chapter) which was useful for engaging with international colleagues.

Q: What brought you to Loyola and Chicago?
A: I decided I should take advantage of an opportunity I had to obtain a visa to come to the U.S. I chose Chicago as I had spent some time here on previous visits (never in Winter!) and have some lovely friends here so thought it would be a good place to initially be based.

I also became aware of the Beazley Institute for Health Law and Policy, and specifically the Health Justice Project, around 12 months ago when I was back in Australia. I had received a recommendation from a US health lawyer I met at a conference in Melbourne, Australia who was familiar with the work at Beazley and kindly provided me with introductions.

I hoped my experience at the Health Justice Project would provide me with exposure to some aspects of health law here in the US. Fortunately, with thanks to my colleagues, I have had a very positive experience at Loyola and have appreciated the unique insight into both the medical-legal partnership model and Chicago, my time here has provided.

Q: What has been your biggest take away while here?
A: There have been several but one of the key take aways has been my increased understanding of the differences between the US and Australian health systems. While there are of course similarities, I have been quite surprised at times by the vast differences and have appreciated the opportunity to obtain this perspective based on my experiences.

I have also appreciated the opportunity to obtain a better understanding of the real Chicago, as opposed to my previous 'tourist' version.

Q: Do you plan to return to Sydney? When? How will you incorporate your experiences here into your practice?
A: I do plan to return to Australia at some stage next year. How I incorporate my experiences here into my work in Australia will depend on what particular projects I am involved with, but overall I expect my understanding of the medical-legal partnership model (with one of its key aims being to break down the silos between the medical and legal profession for the interests of patients) will be of benefit for the majority of health law initiatives.

Q: What do you see as the future for the field of health law?
A: Based on conversations with colleagues here in Chicago, the Health Justice experience and my Australian work experience, I would expect legal issues related to the implementation of broader health care reforms, the focus on 'patient-centered' care and advances in health technology will continue to require attention.

Q: Do you have any more comments for Loyola Law students who are interested in International Law?
A: While your law qualifications can restrict you to working in particular jurisdictions, there are a number of industries where your legal skills can be quite transferable to roles in other jurisdictions. In my experience, opportunities often present themselves through professional networking connections so I would recommend letting those around you know of your interests so they can help you in your endeavors. Sometimes the world can seem quite small.
Dr. Bruno Zeller Visits Loyola
Jessica Saltiel

On Wednesday, November 28, the International Law Society hosted its final event of the Fall semester and welcomed Dr. Bruno Zeller from Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia.

Dr. Zeller is a preeminent Australian scholar who specializes in a variety of areas within international legal scholarship, including international trade law, international alternative dispute resolution, comparative law, and conflict of law. His published writings on these topics are extremely influential and are often cited as persuasive authority. For example, quotations from his published works have been used in a submission to the U.S. Supreme Court. Dr. Zeller is an accredited arbitrator and is a fellow of the Australian Institute for Commercial Arbitration. In addition, he is a National Correspondent at the United Nations Commission for International Trade Law and has been appointed, as of 2008, as an arbitrator by the Maritime Law Association of Australia and New Zealand (MLAANZ). Dr. Zeller became an Adjunct Professor at Murdoch University in Perth in 2006, and he is also an associate at the Institute for Logistics and Supply Chain Management at Victoria University.

Furthermore, Dr. Zeller is also a member of the International Law Section of the Law Council of Australia.

The topic of Dr. Zeller’s November lecture was a consideration of the various challenges that may arise when a country adopts an international law that is in conflict with its own national laws. Dr. Zeller introduced the concepts of textual and contextual approaches to the interpretation of international treaties within an individual nation’s own domestic sphere. Countries may either apply the soft laws of international treaties as they are, or individual nations may change and adapt these model laws within their own legislative contexts. In addition, Dr. Zeller addressed the importance of such conflict of law considerations within the contemporary global environment. He discussed that developments such as these have produced a brand new international legal landscape, which will provide exciting opportunities for young lawyers.

The International Law Society would like to thank the students and faculty who attended this exciting lecture. In addition, the International Law Society is extremely grateful to Dr. Bruno Zeller for bringing his expertise on this emerging field of law to the students of Loyola Law School.

International Association of Law Libraries Annual Course

LUC Law Librarian Julienne Grant attended the 31st Annual Course on International Law Librarianship in Toronto, Canada in October last semester. The Course is sponsored by the International Association of Law Libraries and is held at a different location each year. Julienne also attended the 2007 Course, which was held in Mumbai, India.

This year’s conference was entitled “Canada: The Cultural Mosaic and International Law” and offered a variety of programs on Canadian legal topics. Speakers included Dean Lorne Sossin of the Osgoode Hall Law School (York University), Professor Ayelet Shachar of the University of Toronto Faculty of Law, and Professor Peter Hogg of Osgoode. Participants also heard from librarians representing the University of New Brunswick, l’Université Laval (Québec), Queen’s University (Ontario), the University of Toronto, and York University. The Chief Justice of Canada, Beverley McLachlin, also addressed the attendees via video.

Along with the excellent programs, the Course included tours of local law libraries. Participants saw the Great Library of the Law Society of Upper Canada, the Legislative Library of the Legislative Assembly of Canada, and other significant legal institutions in Toronto.

The Course provided an opportunity for participants to learn from experts in the field of international law librarianship and to network with colleagues from around the world.
With just a few short weeks left before the deadlines, the Newsletter would like to remind readers who are also subscribed to the International Law Society’s e-mail list of two writing competitions of interest to international law students.

The ABA Section of International Law is sponsoring a writing competition and attendant cash prizes. The writing competition concerns the upcoming Supreme Court case Kiobel v. Royal Dutch Petroleum. For those of you who started researching and drafting, don’t forget to submit by February 1st!

Contact Angela Benson at the ABA with any questions about the competition: angela.benson@americanbar.org

Information is also available at: http://www.americanbar.org/groups/international_law/students.html

Additionally, the American University Washington College of Law Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law and the American Society of International Law’s Lieber Society on the Law of Armed Conflict (ASIL) are currently holding their Third Annual International Humanitarian Law Student Writing Competition. As the name suggests, the competition calls for research and writing about humanitarian issues around the globe. Remember that the deadline for this competition is January 31st.

All of the details are available at: http://www.WCLCenterforHR.org

Good luck!

Summer Law Programs Abroad

As the spring semester begins, it is a good time to start to make plans for the upcoming summer. If you would like to study or work abroad, please take a moment to look through the ABA’s list of approved summer programs. The list is organized by country, and there are programs in all corners of the globe to help you get to whatever country will best suit your educational and future career goals. The list can be found at: http://www.americanbar.org/groups/international_law/students/summerprograms.html

Stay in the Loop on International Programs and Events at Loyola

Students at Loyola interested in International Law should consider getting involved with Loyola’s International Law Society. To do so, simply add the International Law Society course available on TWEN to be added to the mailing list. E-mails go out periodically to inform members about upcoming events, writing competitions (like those mentioned above), and other points of general interest. If you have questions, feel free to contact David at dyoshimura@luc.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!