



Growing Support for International Externships

By Wendy Morrish

When we received our invitation to present at the Externships 6 Conference in Boston, USA, I was filled with anticipation: which law schools would attend; what themes would arise from the sessions; what is the future of externship programs in U.S. law schools? What I did not anticipate was snow!

We arrived to a blanket of snow on our first morning, greeting friends from around the world as we made our way to Northeastern University – a real "warm up." We talked about the increased number of international sessions: Global Law Field Placements, Preparing Lawyers for Modern Practice and The Development of Externship Clinics Worldwide. Such interesting topics made me almost as happy as watching Jeff Giddings (Australia) and Ernest Ojukwu (Nigeria) coming down the icy path.

International Interest

This was the first Externship conference with such a large international interest. Participants from 11 countries (Thailand, China, Spain, Australia, Nigeria, USA, Hungary, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Canada and Kyrgyzstan) made up the 200+ delegation. Congratulations to



Jerry and Liz ((Gerald Slater and Liz Solar) for getting us all there!

As the conference progressed, it became clear that U.S. law students are seeking more international opportunities and expressing a strong desire to participate in Social Justice placements. Yes! Let's give students an opportunity to become global law students! Many of the externship professors were eager to engage their students in such placements, while ensuring that they receive good supervision and support.

I was pleased to hear Professor Daisy Floyd from Mercer University School of Law speak about the externship being more than a place for law students to "work"; it is an opportunity for them to explore their role as a legal professional.

This is one of the core beliefs that we at BABSEA CLE encourage our interns to explore – and not just their future legal professions,

but their role as global citizens ensuring access to justice.

It was the final day when we were presented, and by then I felt Bruce and I were in a good position to describe the successes and challenges we have observed over the 10 years of running our [international legal studies externship clinic](#).

We also had the good fortune of having a former intern, [Rachel Tritter \(BABSEA CLE Intern 2008\)](#) join our session to share how the BABSEA CLE experience has guided her life goals. Rachel delighted us all with stories of an all-American girl seeing squat toilets for the first time and also being overwhelmed by the gratitude of Thai women prisoners for her legal lessons.

Overall, "Externships 6" offered a wealth of insight on the world of field placement clinics. Just as Jerry and Liz promised. The snow was just icing on the cake!