



Visiting Clinicians: Teaching... and Learning

By Lisa Radtke Bliss, Associate Clinical Professor, Co-Director of HeLP Legal Services Clinic,
Georgia State University College of Law, USA

I was fortunate to arrive at BABSEA CLE Chiang Mai just as the Thai legal interns were finishing and the summer legal interns beginning, so I had the opportunity to get to know several of them at a time when the office was full of activity.

It was exhilarating to make so many new friends at once. Although travel halfway around the world to a new country can be disorienting, I felt welcomed as they kindly introduced me to local food and customs. I was immediately integrated into the daily work of BABSEA CLE with interns and Fellows as part of my orientation. I am impressed with the mentoring of interns and fellows that I observed. Their time with BABSEA CLE is preparing them to be the teachers and leaders of the future. There is a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and mutual support that helps everyone achieve their best.

I also had the opportunity to co-teach a class with Doug Colbert to interns and fellows. We enjoyed seeing them show the skills they have learned and make presentations to us in English. Thai Fellow Tak is supporting my work here, and we help one another improve our Thai and English skills.

Moving to Mae Fah Luang

After orientation in Chiang Mai, I relocated to Chiang Rai with Tak to work with the law faculty at Mae Fah Luang University (MFLU). MFLU is located in the mountains outside of Chiang Rai and the campus is beautiful, with lovely views all around.

Before my arrival, I worked hard with Tak and the interns to practice my Thai. I was proud to be able to introduce myself to the Dean and faculty members here using my new skills. Fortunately, everyone here speaks English, so

when I quickly reached the end of my useful vocabulary, we chatted in English. All of the classes at MFLU are taught in English, except the law classes. However, I am assisting Ajarns (professors) in developing the first law class to be taught exclusively in English. The course is designed to help law students learn lawyering skills, learn about social justice and improve their English skills. We are enjoying collaborating on the creation of something new; with the benefit of resources from BABSEA CLE, we have some lessons to draw from already. I am also assisting the faculty in the development of new clinical education opportunities, including establishing off-site clinics in surrounding communities.

I know my time here will go by quickly, and that I will take home many lessons about teaching and learning from my time here.

Clinical Legal Education Model in Thailand Visiting Clinicians: Teaching... and Learning

By Prof Douglas L. Colbert, Maryland University, Francis King Carey School of Law, USA

The invitation from Bruce and Wendy came packaged with their irresistible charm and passion for justice.

Come to Chiang Mai, they said. Help create the first university-sponsored Pretrial Justice Project in Thailand. Plant the same idea at law schools in other Southeast Asia countries where an accused remains in jail waiting for trial without having seen a lawyer. Spend your summer working with a talented group of volunteer students, lawyers and professors on clinic projects like this one.

They made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

For nearly a decade, Bridges Across Borders Southeast Asia Community Legal Education Initiative (BABSEA CLE) has provided an international link for the law school community to demonstrate how clinical education enhances the educational experience of students preparing to join their country's bar, while also reinforcing the lawyer's professional value of serving marginalized communities.



I first met co-directors Bruce Lasky and Wendy Morrish at a Global Alliance for Justice Education (GAJE) conference in Manila in 2008. I attended their class, which of course relied on interactive teaching, and Wendy "volunteered" me to draw a map of Southeast Asia. Responding to my mild protest ("I cannot draw") and definite concern with placing the countries correctly, Wendy asked, "So what will you do, Doug, since YOU cannot draw and may not know locations?" Thank you, Wendy, I get it. I reached out for help by calling upon my Filipino colleague who knew the area and who would have received an "A" for constructing an acceptable map. Thus began

my learning the BABSEA CLE way: collaborative, interactive, collective, prepared, organized and fun teaching.

Working with Interns

I have only just completed my first week here, but already I appreciate the valuable lessons that BABSEA CLE's talented staff brings to every assignment. Wendy and Bruce attract an unusual collection of interesting, highly motivated and committed student interns, teaching fellows, lawyers and experienced teachers (like my U.S. clinic colleague, Lisa Bliss). This summer's student group includes representatives from Thailand, Viet Nam, Singapore, Laos, Sweden, Canada and the U.S. They



Bridging Borders

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work on a variety of projects -- Bruce and Wendy instill an excellent work ethic and teach the invaluable lawyer skill of juggling many balls at the same time -- and learn the importance of brainstorming, organization, creativity, planning, keeping promises and completing work on time.

Pretrial Justice Project

I have been fortunate to be working with a terrific and engaged Pretrial Justice team. We have had rich, forthright discussions filled with students' alarm at learning that an accused poor person stands a good chance of remaining incarcerated before having had a trial or been found guilty. Student interns and fellows interviewed practicing lawyers and observed court proceedings; they gained appreciation for a lawyer's advocacy and able representation. Students meet, exchange emails and share collected information. Already, we have information about Nigeria's and Afghanistan's pretrial justice/detention clinics (we await replies from other countries) that we can present to faculty, are familiar with Thailand's and Laos' right to counsel and bail law, and are developing a detailed lesson plan that will allow us to make an informed, energizing, skill- and value-based presentation to law school and bar audiences. Soon we will travel to

universities in the region and initiate conversations for extending clinical education programs to their students and legal services to the unrepresented.

BABSEA CLE's Pretrial Justice Project is familiar work. For the past 14 years, my Access to Justice Clinic students at the University of Maryland have interviewed, counseled and advocated for pretrial detainees who had no lawyer when deprived of liberty prior to trial. Law students gained valuable lawyer skills while bringing the attention of the legal community to a reality they had been unaware of: the lack of representation for low-

income defendants.

Being Part of the BABSEA CLE Family

Now BABSEA CLE comes along and offers the unique opportunity of joining the international clinic community, becoming a better teacher, learning interactively with volunteers from many countries, adding to law schools' curricula, and promoting people's access to social justice in Southeast Asia. Add the excellent food, wonderful and hospitable people, and you, too, might find yourself here very soon. That would make the BABSEA CLE community very happy.



Training of Trainers for People Living with HIV

by Trang Tran Le (Ivy), BABSEA CLE Staff Trainer



At the end of June, BABSEA CLE and CLE Foundation, with support from UNDP, UNAIDS, and CARE International, offered a two-day Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop at Ho Chi Minh City University of Law in Viet Nam. The workshop was part of the project, "Raising Awareness of Rights Holders and Duty Bearers on the Legal Rights of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) and Key Populations in Viet Nam."

BABSEA CLE worked with partners VNP+ and the Education and Cultural Center (E&C) on this special workshop to train participants who will go on to become the main trainers of other groups in the PLHIV community.

There currently are proposals for two community teachings in Can Tho and three in Ho Chi Minh City on the legal rights of PLHIV, to be held from August-October.

After the TOT workshop, the participants were divided into small groups of students from different universities and members of the community, to start preparing for the upcoming activities.

Participants in the Training of Trainers workshop in June included law students from Can Tho University, the University of Economics and Law and Ho Chi Minh City University of Law, four people from Can Tho and eight from Ho Chi Minh City who are PLHIV and/or working with PLHIV.

The workshop lessons included knowledge about HIV, the legal rights of PLHIV, how to teach others about HIV and legal rights of PLHIV, the value of protecting the rights of PLHIV and how to organize a workshop. All the

participants reported that they enjoyed all the activities.

Future Plans

In addition to forming small groups to carry out tasks for future workshops, all the participants helped form a country-wide network made up of law schools, NGOs and communities: a network dedicated to working to support the rights of PLHIV.

The success of this Training of Trainers workshop marks a turning point in the program: having succeeded in community outreach and the training of a core group of law students, NGO and community members, the program is set to grow nationwide, providing valuable training to more PLHIV and law students in Viet Nam.

Enlisting Australian Law Firms to the Global CLE Pro Bono Movement

BABSEA CLE co-directors Bruce Lasky and Wendy Morrish went to Australia in May to secure collaborations with the heads of pro bono at a number of the country's leading law firms.

"Australian firms have done some great things in international pro bono work," said Lasky, "but one thing they can learn is that while they can't necessarily go into a courtroom outside Australia, they can still be doing what is considered pro bono locally, but on a global stage."

As Lasky explained to Australian publication *Lawyers Weekly*, BABSEA CLE offers the opportunity to work in programs and clinics that "assist communities, provide legal aid services and simultaneously help build the next generation of pro bono, social justice champions."

BABSEA CLE already has strong ties with the Freehills Foundation of Australia, with a number of the firm's lawyers visiting Southeast Asia to do pro bono work. Executive Director of the



Mutual Benefit

Lasky believes that making a commitment to partner with BABSEA CLE can be of huge benefit to both firms and lawyers, in addition to being a benefit to clinics in Viet Nam, Laos and elsewhere in the region.

Foundation, Annette Bain, will give a presentation on best practices at the First Southeast Asia Pro Bono Conference, hosted by BABSEA CLE in Laos this September. In November, Freehills litigation lawyers Michael Mills and Michelle Fox will visit legal clinics in Ho Chi Minh City in Viet Nam and Vientiane in Laos.

The trip to Australia was intended to "widen the net" and secure similar collaborations with other firms. To this end, BABSEA CLE Directors Lasky and Morrish met with Ashurst and DLA Piper in Melbourne, both of which offered support. They met with several other firms to show them ways they could collaborate with BABSEA CLE outside Australia.

"From both a personal and professional point of view it's a brilliant opportunity. It's a great way to travel and meet like-minded people, while at the same time staying focused on your professional career," he said.

"We've had lawyers arriving back to Australia after doing work for us saying they have improved as a lawyer from the experience, by sampling new cultures and by analysing the systems of law in other countries. They can then bring that back and apply it here in Australia, which can only benefit their firms."

Adapted from article by Andrew Jennings in *Lawyers Weekly*:
www.lawyersweekly.com.au/news/global-pro-bono-organisation-seeks-support

IBM's Pro Bono Work in Viet Nam

By Lewis Truong

Lewis Truong is a qualified Australian lawyer who has worked for various multinational companies in Australia and Europe. Currently, Truong is the Country General Counsel for IBM Viet Nam and reports to the ASEAN office in Singapore. Truong is fluent in both English and Vietnamese.

Question: "How many lawyers does it take to change a light bulb?"

Answer: "How many can you afford?"

As lawyers, we might think that lawyer jokes like this are dull and at best only enjoyed by non-lawyers.

Yet, it is this very stigma of the ambulance-chaser that casts a shadow over the legal profession -- and even the countless pro bono hours altruistically volunteered by so many lawyers. Therefore, in an effort to promote pro bono work and further help our collective reputations (and hopefully without sounding too self-serving), I would like to take this opportunity to share with you my Viet Nam pro bono experience.

In mid 2011, I received an invitation from the ASEAN Regional Counsel to assist with pro bono initiatives in the GMU. Initially I was quite hesitant about accepting the invitation (albeit delighted). I almost frightened myself into saying, "Sorry, I'm



not sure I am up to the job". But ultimately, I bit my tongue and the decision was made.

Fortunately for me, at the time, I was volunteering with a US-NGO. They were focused on introducing clinical legal education to law schools in Viet Nam. The organization has a long but impressive name: "Bridges Across Borders Southeast Asia Community Legal Education Initiative" (BABSEA CLE).

To me, the marriage between BABSEA CLE and IBM's pro bono culture was perfect. It didn't take an IQ of a Cloud Architect to see the compatibility between BABSEA CLE and the Legal Department's pro bono principles:

1. Positive impact on the community, locally & globally.
2. Support of the Company brand and reputation.
3. A chance to meet some very intelligent and interesting people.
4. Improving access to justice

to marginalized people.

5. An opportunity to feel good about myself.

My calling towards pro bono was simple - it was my exit, my little sanctum away from the everyday grind. Too often I found myself entangled in the momentum of work: contracts, meetings, emails, research, updates... and the list continues. Pro bono work has helped me keep my sanity.

Every Tuesday evening after work, I prepared and held CLE classes for a group of 12 - 20 budding lawyers at the National Economics University of Viet Nam. The teaching followed a set syllabus on practical lawyering skills (i.e., client interviewing, drafting, negotiation, etc.). In more fortunate jurisdictions, these skills are considered typical of a good legal education. However, in other jurisdictions, they are considered "co-curricular".

More than just keeping my sanity in check, I actually came to enjoy

conducting the classes. The difference in jurisdiction was not an impediment. Good lawyering skills are universal and transferable. The students' enthusiasm for learning, coupled with my healthy understanding of what they could offer to their community, is what I really enjoyed.

Today, BABSEA CLE is registered with IBM's Corporate Affairs group and was granted a small fund by IBM in 2011. Over 100 students in at least five universities in Viet Nam successfully completed their CLE curriculum in 2011. At least two universities have agreed to incorporate the CLE program into their official syllabus, a momentous achievement, given that most local law schools still

exercise a rigid syllabus inherited from the post-war era.

So, what lies ahead for this compelling couple?

BABSEA CLE is hoping to replicate the successful collaboration with IBM in other markets in which both have a presence: Australia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos and Singapore.

As for IBM-VN, in 2012 BABSEA CLE and IBM Corporate Affairs will organize a senior GBS Project Manager to host a full-day workshop on Project Management. This workshop will be the springboard for servicing the marginalized community. It will be my honor to monitor and

supervise the roll-out of this project. If successful, we hope to replicate this model to other Law Schools in Viet Nam.

Before ending, I would like to acknowledge and thank the strong leadership, support and encouragement from the IBM Law Department and IBM Corporate Affairs Department for providing a supportive working environment that is conducive to staff engagement in pro bono activities.

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The Clinical Movement Expands into the Middle-East and BABSEA CLE is There!

Incredible, amazing, fantastic, unbelievable, first of its kind, are just some of the ways to describe the First Middle-East Clinical Legal Education Colloquium, held in Mt. Nebo/The Dead Sea, Jordan, from May 27-28. A select group of Global Alliance for Justice Education (GAJE) members were invited to provide support for the event, including Bruce Lasky of BABSEA CLE.

BABSEA CLE's experience in the development of regional networks and the kind of insight it provides was considered vital to working with the network of legal educators from the Middle-East and North Africa.

The event was organized and supported by The Protection Project at the Johns Hopkins

Washington D.C, USA, with substantive technical support from GAJE. The event was conceived during GAJE's 6th Worldwide Conference in Valencia, Spain, by Mohamed Mattar, Executive Director of the Protection Project, in consultation with the GAJE Steering Committee. In addition to BABSEA CLE, GAJE and CLE representatives came from South Africa, Bangladesh, Spain, the USA and Poland to provide support.

As the first forum of its kind in the Middle-East, the colloquium was primarily aimed at generating interest in clinical legal education in the region. It was also meant to help build the capacity of faculties of law to establish and develop new -- or to expand and improve existing --

clinical programs. While the clinical movement in the Middle East has been somewhat slower to develop than in other regions of the world, interest has been rising in recent years. A number of universities in the region now boast either beginning or fully developed clinical programs, including in Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan and Pakistan; and interest is growing among the Gulf Cooperation Council members and in the Maghreb.

The colloquium was designed to help build the capacity of those clinics, as well as to introduce the clinical method to those who remained reluctant, unsure, or unaware of CLE and its advantages. Participants agreed it was a success on both counts.

"This was one of the most thrilling events in all my years of doing access to justice work. It was a great honor to witness first-hand representatives from throughout the region pro-actively and positively working together, setting aside long-standing differences to achieve a clear common good -- something almost unimaginable just a short time ago."

– Bruce A. Lasky, Co-Director, BABSEA CLE, shown here with GAJE members David McQuoid-Mason and Catherine Klein.



My CLE Work Experience

By Souliya Vithonthai, Legal Fellow, Laos



I work at the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLP) of the National University of Laos, where I am a Legal Fellow in the Community Legal Education (CLE) office. The vice dean of FLP is the director of the CLE program. So, this is important work in an important office and it makes me happy, because it gives me the opportunity to help teachers and students. I coordinate information and activities with many organizations, here and abroad.

What I like best about being the CLE Fellow here is the training I do with the students and then going with them to teach in the countryside. The Land Law lessons I teach are important for

both the students and the community, because many people do not understand the law. I really want to help the people in the rural areas understand their rights, so that they can protect those rights. And the training that I do with the FLP-CLE students is important to me because it also helps me develop my teaching skills. It gives all of us more knowledge than we had before!

BABSEA CLE supports me to do this work in Laos; they pay my salary and they sent me to do training in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Singapore to help me develop both my working skills and my English. Before I came to work here with FLP-CLE and Lux Development, whose programs support the Law Faculty at NUL, I received many lessons in teaching techniques. In my training, I learned how to interview clients, how to manage an office, how to collaborate on projects with partners and, most importantly for me, how to

develop legal knowledge and teamwork with many different people.

One of the most important things for me personally, is that I have had the opportunity to work with CLE experts from all over the world. I learn many things from them, from Bruce and Wendy, who encouraged me to become a Fellow, from CLE teachers and CLE students and "Sister Thip", my fellow Fellow who mentors me here at FLP-CLE.

We work to learn the law, to teach the law to law students and to help people in society understand the law. It's my job to coordinate this training and to support all the activities of FLP-CLE, so that it can grow and continue. When I first came here, I did not have many skills; now I am a trainer. When I first came here, the CLE program was just starting; now FLP-CLE is getting ready to open its in-house clinic. We have grown a lot... together!



CLE Legal Fellow Experiences

By Ann, Ben, Tak



Ann, BABSEA CLE Legal fellow

I knew when I finished my Bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Law at Chiang Mai University that I wanted to work for a non-governmental organization. And I already knew BABSEA CLE as an organization, because they provided technical assistance and financial support to the Legal Consultation Center at my university. I was drawn to the vision of BABSEA CLE of working for social justice for vulnerable people. So it's my good fortune now to have the opportunity to work here as a CLE Legal Fellow. Community teaching to single mothers at Wildflower is a wonderful experience for me. Now, I'm working on a Pretrial Detention Project to support a clinician visiting us from an American law faculty.

Since BABSEA CLE is an international organization, being good at English is very important. Therefore, I have to study hard to improve my English so that I can work effectively with the BABSEA CLE team. Even though I've only been here three months, I have learned many things. And I'm ready and looking forward to learning more and more.

I love to use my legal knowledge to help people, and I enjoy working with people who have a pro-bono attitude about social justice. I don't think I will be a lawyer though, because I don't think it's suitable for my personality. I'm happy to directly work for social justice for disadvantaged people. I love to see them smile when they know their legal rights. That's enough to make me happy, too!



Ben, BABSEA CLE Legal fellow

My name is Kasidit Thongthaikhunakon. I'm 23 years old. I come from Mae Hong Son. I graduated from the School of Law, University of Phayao. I wanted to work at BABSEA CLE because I experienced BABSEA CLE's activities at my university.

BABSEA CLE conducted workshops at the University of Phayao. Then, I felt this organization was interesting and important. Also, I wanted to learn and develop my English with native speakers. Therefore, I am really happy that I am now a Legal Fellow of BABSEA CLE.

When I started to work here, I was worried because my English was not good and I was afraid to speak with foreigners. However, I have tried my very best and I am hoping my English will improve.

The part I like best about working here is when new interns come to BABSEA CLE, because then I have new work partners and we can exchange ideas and attitudes. They also help me learn English. In my work at BABSEA CLE I also support visiting clinician Michelle Langlois from the University of Montreal. I will help her in her work at the University of Phayao. I am very happy to work with her because she has a great personality, is very friendly and will be going to help my old university CLE group!

In the future, I want to be a judge. It was my ambition when I began to study law. Moreover, I want to be good in English since it is important to know everywhere.



Tak, BABSEA CLE Legal fellow

My name is Klanarong Kaikrong. My nickname is Tak. I'm 22 and I come from Lumpang. I graduated in law at the University of Phayao.

I wanted to work at BABSEA CLE because of all the BABSEA CLE activities I joined at my university. The workshops they conducted made me know that this organization is interesting and important. Also, I wanted to work with foreigners to improve my English. Now, I am a Fellow here, and my duties include contacting locations, and arranging the food and vehicles we need for each workshop. When I first started here, I was very worried about my English. I cannot speak or write English very well. I think my English is very poor. However, I have to do my duties to the best of my ability. I think practice makes perfect. Now, I am

working at Mae Fah Luang University, where I am the support person for Professor Lisa Bliss, a visiting clinician from the United States.

In the future, I want to be good at English because I think it is important to communicate with people from other places. If I am better at English, I can be more professional in my work here. I am happy to be here and getting along very well with foreigners

Thank you BABSEA CLE for teaching us connecting legal knowledge to legal skills in practice

Building a Bridge from Australia to Viet Nam

By Wendy Morrish

BABSEA CLE is working hard to develop opportunities for cross-border Clinical Legal Education (CLE) collaborative initiatives as we answer the demand from participants in for a deeper understanding of how the law and CLE work in other countries. Over the next 12 months, we will be focussing on identifying international clinic programs that have similar goals to programs currently being developed in the region.

In May, BABSEA CLE made a formal arrangement with CLE programs at Griffith University, Monash University and Newcastle University in Australia, to place Vietnamese CLE law lecturers at those universities to follow how an Australian course on Clinical Legal Education is taught over a full academic semester.

BABSEA CLE will assist eight Vietnamese law faculties to place, train and support clinicians in Australia for a two to four months during 2012-2013. The Vietnamese Universities are: Can Tho



Bruce Lasky (center) with Dr Colin James, Senior Lecturer and Research Ethics Advisor, and Director Shaun McCarthy, University of Newcastle Legal Centre.

University; Vietnam National University, Hanoi; National Economics University, Hanoi; Trade Union University, Hanoi; Vinh University; Hue University; Ho Chi Minh City University; and University of Economics & Law, HCMC. Both the Australian universities and our Vietnamese partners are looking forward to implementing this arrangement. This type of collaboration was one of the key recommendations to come out of the UNDP research project that we undertook in 2010-2011.

CLE experts who came to Viet Nam from countries in transition - including Poland, Russia and South Africa -- or CLE experts who helped develop clinic programs in countries in transition, recommended the need to identify, recruit and build the capacity of a select group of persons coming from various university CLE pro-grams, to

build a team of "national CLE Champions".

The idea of building a team of core university partner 'champions' in Viet Nam was discussed during the 2011 National CLE Conference in Hanoi with CLE experts from around the world. This informal group concluded that finding local 'champions' within Viet Nam was the next step to assuring the success of CLE in that country.

The "team of champions" will start with the core person at each university partner who will be well trained in the area of CLE. Each "champion" will then help their home institution and others to develop CLE clinics. In this way, the team will assist in the proliferation of CLE through-out Viet Nam.

First BABSEA CLE Human Rights Award Given at CEU

In 2011, Co-Director Bruce Lasky received Central European University's 20th Anniversary Alumni Hero Award. At that time, he established a new award program at CEU for Legal Masters Human Rights Program graduates, to be given in BABSEA CLE's name.

The BABSEA CLE Award was presented for the first time this year to Ephrem Birhanu, who completed the CEU LLM in Human Rights with distinction in June. Birhanu is from Woldia, Ethiopia and holds an LLB from Addis Ababa University, where he graduated from the Faculty of Law with Great Distinction. He has been involved in many human rights causes and projects, including as a volunteer legal counselor with the Organization for Social Justice in Ethiopia and the Children Legal Protection



Center of the African Child Policy Forum. He has also contributed to peace-building strategies in his home country by participating in the Ethiopian Peace and Development Committee.

In his thank you letter to Bruce and BABSEA CLE, Birhanu said the award meant not only recognition to him for his efforts, but also as inspiration

to continue to pursue his passion as a human rights activist.

"I plan to start the process of establishing a local Human Rights and Community Development Association," he wrote, "to work for the realization of human rights and improve the living standard of people in Ethiopia."



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First Asia Youth Forum: Strengthening CLE through Debate

By Uyen Hoang To, Thuong Thuong Dang and Van Tran Thi Tuong

The First Asia Youth Forum, sponsored by the International Debate Education Association (IDEA) and UNITED Thailand was held in Bangkok and Pattaya in Thailand May 14-17. More than 200 representatives from 23 different countries attended.

The aim of the forum was to develop and empower youth through debate. It was a great honor and wonderful experience for the Vietnamese CLE team to participate. We were five members, coming from different universities throughout Viet Nam: Uyen Hoang, Thuong Dang and Van Tran were the debaters, with coach Huong Dang and supervisor Hien Bui.

Team CLE Viet Nam was there to compete in debates, and also to learn, by participating in debate training sessions. Debate is a formal contest of argumentation between two teams or individuals. More than just a verbal or performance skill, debate combines the ideals of reasoned argument, tolerance for different points of view and rigorous self-examination. It is a great way for those who hold opposing views to discuss



*"Debate is not only about winning or losing.
It's about the art of persuasion."*

controversial issues without descending to insult, emotional appeals or personal bias.

More importantly, debate is an essential tool for developing and maintaining democracy and open societies. That's why debate as a skill is

important not only to CLE members, but to all law students.

A Necessary Skill

Our CLE programme is educating future legal advocates on the social justice needs of marginalized communities. Our programme also aims to equip communities with skills they can use to protect their rights. In order to achieve those goals, CLE members are trained in critical thinking, reasoning and research skills and then teach that training to communities. It is obvious that lawyers can use debate skills and that debate helps train people to "speak up" for themselves.



So we consider debate one of the necessary skills of law students. With the idea of integrating debate trainings into CLE programmes created by BABSEA CLE and IDEA, the Team focused on learning how to teach debate to others during the event.

With the knowledge, skills and experience the Team gained through participating in the Asian Forum, we already have a concrete plan of how to use debate to strengthen CLE in Viet Nam.

First, we will design a debate lesson plan following the CLE lesson plan format. Then, we will offer mini-workshops to all the Core Partner universities, to train other CLE members debate skills through lessons and competitions. We will co-operate with Viet Nam Youth to form a Debate Club, Soft Skill Centers and keep in touch with the experts from IDEA.

Last but not least, we want to encourage students to write articles relevant to debate on the CLE website, social media and CLE magazine to spread this idea. We, as the pioneer debaters among CLE members, are excitedly ready to put this plan into action!



“Although our team included CLE members working and living throughout Viet Nam, we quickly became a strong and friendly family. The 1st IDEA Asia Youth Forum helped us understand and practice teamwork. We will use this skill to develop CLE in Viet Nam with high solidarity!”

– Uyen



Human Rights Based Access to Justice

By Laura Milne, Access to Justice and Pro Bono Programme Manager, Hanoi

The 2nd Annual Capacity Building –Advocacy Workshop Conference of the Asian Consortium for Human Rights-Based Access to Justice, was held in Pattaya, Thailand from 27 to 29 May 2012. While Bruce was drifting around the Red Sea attending a Conference in Jordan, I and my colleague Hien Thi Bui, travelled to Pattaya to connect with our fellow Consortium members.

The Consortium is comprised of national judicial and human rights institutions, civil society organisations and academic institutions

from across Asia. It aims to instill a human rights-based approach in access to justice programs through capacity development and advocacy activities with access to justice practitioners throughout the region, including member organisations and outside institutions.

The 2nd Annual Capacity-Building – Advocacy Workshop Conference brought together 28 representatives from a diverse range of organizations, from the Laos Bar Association to the Korean Public Interest Lawyers Group and the Kathmandu School of Law to the Center for Asia Pacific Women in Politics based in the Philippines.

Broadly speaking, the aims of the Conference were to deepen understanding of the HRBA (Human Rights-Based Approach) through knowledge sharing, increase awareness of relevant UN and non-UN procedures for improving access to justice and refining the Consortium's role as well as work plan over next two years.

Being relatively new to BABSEA CLE and Vietnam, the Conference was a great opportunity for me to learn about the human rights and A2J (Access to justice) situation across Asia. For example, did you know that there are only 30 places a year available at law school in

Cambodia? Or that in parts of Thailand, forest dwellers ordain trees to protect their homes? Or had you heard that the Philippine National Police Academy has its own Human rights Affairs Office? Me neither.

But the Conference was not just sharing and swapping stories; we spent a considerable amount of time planning what we will be doing for the next two years to further the Consortium's aims. Consortium members agreed that legal education must be a priority activity. While BABSEA CLE's work will continue to focus on legal education for law students, lecturers and the community, other member's expertise lie in legal education for the judiciary, prosecutors and the security services. The Consortium is an excellent space for legal educators to share best practices, collaborate on HRBA2J initiatives and create networks of mutually supportive organisations.

Capacity-Building Plans

BABSEA CLE is a member of the Consortium's Steering Committee and we also sit on the Capacity Development Committee (CDC). During the Conference I had the opportunity to work with the CDC to map out the Consortium's capacity development activities over the next year. In line with our priorities, the CDC plans to hold a series of training of trainers for non-Consortium practitioners, utilising the recently published *Manual on Human Rights-Based Approach to Realising Equal Access to Justice*. While BABSEA CLE clearly have a huge amount of experience in this area, so too do other members of the CDC. The Conference hosted practitioners doing some truly inspirational work: disability discrimination cases in China, environmental law in Mongolia and legal empowerment in Bangladesh. Working collaboratively, we will not only increase awareness, understanding and

practice of the HRBA to A2J, we as an organisation will be able to learn from our Consortium colleagues to strengthen our own work.

The Consortium closed with a wonderful dinner on the final evening. I was invited to MC along with Jyoti Panday from the Nepalese National Judicial Academy. I was somewhat surprised when, during my pre-dinner briefing from one of the organisers, I was told that after dinner everyone will take to the stage to perform a dance or song from their country. I nodded along in quiet disbelief. How wrong I was. Everyone got up – some fabulous and some hilarious. As MC I somehow managed to avoid the humiliation but promised to prepare something for next year. I am from the UK, land of the Morris Dancer. I just hope I can find a costume in Hanoi. Fingers crossed.



Meet Our Thai Interns!

This year, for the first time, CLE Foundation hosted three interns for our Legal Studies Volunteer Internship Program 2012. Top law students Prik, Lek and Neung, who report on their experiences below, were sent to us by our partner universities Mae Fah Luang University and University of Phayao. In the Internship Program, they learnt about CLE (Clinical/Community Legal Education), managing and administrative systems, teaching communities such as Wildflower Home, and other trainings, including one partner-sponsored workshop by International Justice Mission. These interns trained with and worked closely with our new Fellows, as well as with international interns in the Summer Externship program. While they were working here, they did their jobs very well and we are proud of them. Moreover, we believe that now that they are back in their universities, they will make good use of the knowledge they gained here by applying it in their law clinics. -- Yada (Sung) Mahawongsnan, CLE Foundation

WEERAPHONG SRIWONGSANYUAN UNIVERSITY OF PHAYAO

I'm not confident enough to speak English because I'm afraid to make mistakes. The most difficult part of the internship for me was making the work plan and working in English. Moreover, it was quite hard to understand the office rules in English. But English is the official language for the organization's communication and efficient operation.

I liked working with people from other countries -- America, Australia, Vietnam, Sweden, China, Burma -- to learn how to work alongside people from different cultures, and to learn about similarities

and differences in the legal systems of each country. I learned a lot about things like teamwork skills, and organizational systems.

I appreciated the support and welcome of everyone at BABSEA CLE. I liked CLE class because I could learn both English for communication and about CLE program. I also learned about legal procedure in Thailand and other countries. And I now know more about BABSEA CLE itself. I have seen that this international organization works for access to justice and legal education that helps us become ethical lawyers at the same time it helps empower communities.





KETSARA THEPMA MAE FAH LUANG

I was happy to come here and interested in relationships with international friends because I had never had that opportunity until I worked with BABSEA CLE. I gained experience and knowledge from this internship.

I liked working with people from other countries and learning about their culture. I hope I can apply those experiences with studying and working abroad one day. The most difficult thing was having to speak English at work. But I improved my English by translating chapters from the new CLE manual and lesson plans for Wildflower Home into Thai.

I really enjoyed teaching at Wildflower. I was surprised and happy with this experience. I thought that I couldn't teach if I had to teach in English, but finally I could do it in Thai. It was wonderful that I could give

knowledge to learners. I like this project very much because I liked to teach. I liked that the learners participated in my lessons, they had fun! The most important skills I learned was teamwork and being responsible for my work.

There are many good reasons why law students should come to be interns here. First, law students can provide legal assistance to help poor people and society. Moreover, students get experience and the chance to learn about other cultures. Most importantly, they become more aware about social justice and professional ethics.

ATTAPOL YUNGNOI UNIVERSITY OF PHAYAO

I was very excited to be one of the first Thai interns at BABSEA CLE, but I didn't know what to expect, what I would do. But from the beginning all the BABSEA CLE staff were kind and friendly and I felt like they

were my family. I didn't want to leave at the end, but I had an obligation to finish my studies.

The most difficult thing for me was learning how to plan ahead for doing projects. Speaking English was very important for me, since I had a plan to go to study abroad. English wasn't difficult for me because I've always been interested in speaking this language. Certainly, I liked to work with

people from other countries and practice and improve my English with them. I could also learn about the legal systems of other countries.

I liked to go to teach at Wildflower because I could know and talk about real-life problems. I have acknowledged that in our society there are people who are less fortunate than me. The most important thing I learned as an intern was how to work in a team. It was the basis of working with others in community.

I think Thai law students should be interns here because BABSEA CLE teaches a lot of good and useful things. I believe that you can be a very good lawyer after working here, because they have a manual that can teach you how to be a good lawyer. Living at BABSEA CLE was like a family, I loved it.

BABSEA CLE Externship: Making a Difference

By Danielle Oxford

Flashback two years. I am in Mae Sai, Thailand, working with an NGO that battles human trafficking along the Thai-Burmese border. I witness children treated as commodities to escape from the cycle of poverty and debt in which most of families remain trapped. One of my students is coerced back into sex work overnight, leaving me feeling overwhelmed by immense anger and sorrow. But in the midst of terrible struggle, this NGO was rising to the challenge to provide a solution. That's when I realized: perhaps I should, too. I decided to attend law school in order to fight for justice for people around the world who do not have the power to fight for themselves.

So I was skeptical about whether or not BABSEA CLE's method of approaching human rights issues would be effective. However, after only a month of interning at the organization, I fully believe in what BABSEA CLE is doing. While I am more familiar with direct services NGO work, BABSEA CLE essentially empowers communities... even countries.

Not only is BABSEA CLE providing access to justice for



"Working at BABSEA CLE means physical as well as intellectual training! Our hike to Doi Suthep showed us one of the wonders of Thailand, and the wonder that is team spirit." – Sukrat Baber, Canada, Indiana University

individuals by helping to establish legal clinics at partner universities, it is sparking systematic change throughout the legal education systems in the region. Thus, unlike the NGO I worked for in the past that assisted individuals, BABSEA CLE attacks the problem of access to justice in an active and sustainable way.

This internship experience is far from typical in that it is giving me the opportunity to see how social justice work can have real and tangible results. This is more valuable than working on functioning cases, because it allows me to be part of a mission that is greater than myself. I have been able to interact with real people in real situations, and empower them through educating them about their legal rights. We have also been working with diverse projects encompassing a variety of at-risk populations. The issues we have explored include

everything from pre-trial detention to transgender sex worker rights. No day is really the same at BABSEA CLE. The environment at BABSEA CLE is unique in that the staff and the volunteers are international and speak a variety of languages. What binds the diverse crew together is devotion to a hope of achieving justice and freedom for all.

BABSEA CLE is teaching me how to be a great lawyer, providing me with the knowledge to empower people, to save lives and to restore individual liberty and dignity. I truly believe that the world is full of extraordinary hope and boundless potential where it is often overlooked. This externship with BABSEA CLE has allowed me to move towards becoming the change that I so desperately want to see in the world.



Bridging Borders

July 2012



"Here we are at Elephant Nature Park, where we fed and washed elephants all day! The elephants here have been rescued from bad situations. We really enjoyed our day in the park, and we learned a lot about these amazing and adorable creatures." – Guang Yang, China, Indiana University

"The Sunday Market captures the cultural mosaic that Chiang Mai offers. The streets are alive with artists, musicians, handicrafts, and delicious street food, presenting visitors with infinite opportunity for adventure and amusement. I leave smiling every time I go." – Danielle Oxford, USA, University of Texas



"As a recent high school graduate, I still find it almost unbelievable that I was given the opportunity to be in the team teaching a CLE workshop to the law faculty at Mae Fah Luang! In many countries, it would be unheard of to bring a group of law students to make a presentation to distinguished faculty members and the dean! Our visit became a real proof of the power of CLE and BABSEA CLE methods and, for me personally, a great lesson confirming that youth can bring change to the world."-Son Tran Tuan, United World College of South East Asia.

"If I had to chose one meal for the rest of my life, it would have to be Pad Thai... And nothing beats a real, homemade Pad Thai made by the Thai BABSEA CLE team and served at a warm and friendly 'International Dinner' at BABSEA CLE House." – Ellen Rehnberg, Sweden, Mount Holyoke College



"It was great to have the interns bring the Pretrial Detention Workshop to the university where I had been working with clinician Michelle Langlois. It made me feel proud... and connected to both Phayao and BABSEA CLE in a special way." – Andree-Anne Menard, Canada, University of Montreal





July 2012

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*"Many thanks to BABSEA CLE's July 2012 Newsletter Team:
BABSEA CLE Fellow Nattakan (Ann) Chomputhong and
Legal Clinic interns Ashumi Merchant and Ellen Rehnberg"*

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