

NOTE

Animal Law – A Global Phenomenon

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Introduction

Animals have always fascinated humans, and our relationship with them has evolved in unexpected ways as we have become more aware of the many extraordinary ways in which we are alike. How we treat animals under the law has likewise evolved, with ever more protections available, particularly for those with whom we share our homes. Yet, we remain troubled by the injustice that still exists for so many of our animal brethren, and a growing number of activists, attorneys, policymakers, students, philosophers, and others have chosen to dedicate their lives to righting the many wrongs levied against them. Every day we meet new people from around the world who are passionate about this cause and indeed the many excellent articles you will read in this journal are a testament to the worldwide phenomenon we are witnessing on behalf of animals. It is an exciting time, filled with hope for the future of animal law and, as we look ahead, it is a good time to reflect on where we've been. As we consider the extraordinary development of animal law, particularly in education, we are filled with appreciation for the mentors and students who came before us, for it is their legacy upon which we all continue to build our programs. The story behind the Center for Animal Law Studies is one that continues to inspire us every day.

The Spark That Starts it All

Lewis & Clark Law School, in Portland, Oregon, is located in the northwest corner of the United States. Portland is a place that has long cared about environmental issues, and prides itself for embracing an ethos that values nature over rampant development. The law school has a similar sensibility, and was the first to develop a sophisticated, multi-dimensional environmental law program over 40 years ago. In 1982, a small group of students in the environmental law program approached a professor with an interesting proposition. They were particularly interested in that part of environmental law that focused on animals, and wondered if there might be faculty support for a half-day conference on wildlife at the school. The professor enthusiastically supported the idea, and the first Animal Law Conference at Lewis & Clark Law School was launched. The

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following year, many of the same students received faculty support to start the first-ever law journal dedicated solely to animal law issues. This was quickly followed by the formation of the first Student Animal Legal Defense Fund (SALDF) chapter. In 1998, Lewis & Clark students again were at the forefront of animal law education development when they petitioned for an animal law course to be taught for the first time on the campus.

Today, the Animal Law Conference is entering its 22nd continuous year, and the Animal Law Journal is working on its 21st year of publications. The Lewis & Clark SALDF chapter is the largest, and one of the most active, of the more than 200 chapters that now exist world-wide. From that one course offered in 1998, the school now offers over 30 distinct seminar and lecture-style courses on a wide-range of animal law issues. Lewis & Clark is the only law school to offer a summer program, open to U.S. and international students, where visiting professors from around the world are invited to teach in their area of animal law expertise. We have a full-time dean, staff and faculty devoted exclusively to animal law, and we host the National Animal Law Competitions (entering its 12th year) where students from around the United States can develop their oral and written advocacy skills in front of real judges and animal law experts.

The Center for Animal Law Studies

With this solid base firmly established, the program at Lewis & Clark Law School had the infrastructure in place to make a quantum leap forward when a unique collaboration was forged with the Animal Legal Defense Fund in 2008. The Center for Animal Law Studies (CALS) was created to provide a supportive home for all of the animal law activities already operating at Lewis & Clark but also to elevate animal law education by supporting serious scholarship, developing additional class offerings, promoting unique experiential opportunities, and building post-J.D. degree offerings. Through the on-going work at CALS, we are doing all of that and more. The Animal Law Clinic, the Animal Law LL.M. degree program, and the newly formed Kenya Legal Project, are just three of the many exciting projects we have embarked on as we continue to strive to fulfill our mission of “educating the next generation of animal law attorneys.”

The Animal Law Clinic

Animals in peril need newly-minted attorneys to be effective advocates immediately upon graduation. To accomplish this goal, animal law attorneys require more than traditional classroom experiences, and the Animal Law Clinic provides this necessary training. This unique clinical education offers students the chance to work with an experienced, licensed attorney on a variety of legal problems faced by animal advocates and to help them develop strategic approaches by utilizing the research and analytical skills they have already developed.

The Animal Law Clinic functions like a *pro bono* law office within Lewis & Clark Law School. It represents non-profit organizational clients who need help with animal law issues and assumes responsibility for both representing the client and teaching students

how to be effective lawyers. Under the supervision of the clinic director, students spend considerable time engaged in legal analysis, research, writing, client counseling, and direct legal advocacy. Through their work in the Clinic, students learn how to be a real lawyer for the animals, and get to experience directly the joy and satisfaction that comes when their work has made a difference in the lives of one or more animals and their guardians or caregivers.

Students in the Clinic have drafted local legislation, memoranda on numerous legal topics, petitions to state and national agencies, and comments on administrative government action. They have made public records requests, analyzed the data, and made recommendations for action. They have provided research for lawsuits and supported the development of coalitions. They have encouraged better government enforcement of the laws we have, in both the criminal and civil contexts and have sought changes in the law to better protect animals.

The Clinic students have been able to work on a wide variety of animal legal issues in the United States, and increasingly, on an international level. They have helped companion animals, wildlife, animals used in entertainment or for food or research. It has been exciting to watch students in the Clinic grow and learn to take their current legal knowledge and apply it in unique ways to help protect animals from abuse and neglect. Through this process, we have come to value clinical education even more because we have seen directly how it can make a world of difference for those working to achieve important animal protection advances.

The Animal Law LL.M. Degree Program

CALS is also committed to the ongoing development of the field of animal law in practice and in education. To that end, Lewis & Clark Law School fully supported CALS' goal to develop the world's first and only LL.M. degree in animal law. There is an advanced American legal degree in animal law? Yes. LL.M. degrees are no longer the exclusive realm of tax law or intellectual property. The existence and success of the Animal Law LL.M. program both symbolizes the advancement of the field and reflects the shifting societal views most of us have towards animals. In 2012, we proudly accepted the inaugural class of LL.M. students into our program. In 2013, we began to accept international students. Now, as we look forward to welcoming the class of 2014-2015, we continue to offer all of our students extensive course offerings and opportunities. Through this total immersion process, LL.M. students graduate as highly specialized animal law attorneys who are equipped to become change makers for animals everywhere.

We are particularly gratified by the significant contributions being made by foreign practitioners and students who choose to enroll in the LL.M. program. As they look to enhance their global understanding of animal law through intensive training in the U.S., they also educate us by offering an international perspective in our classes, programs and discussions. In this way, all of us have played an important role in increasing the cultural competency of our graduates. This is a global field of international concern where our

subjects, and those who represent them, don't necessarily recognize borders or cultures. Through the participation of our international students in the LL.M. program, we are creating a global network of animal lawyers who will communicate and collaborate together throughout their careers.

The Kenya Legal Project

The Kenya Legal Project is a leading example of the type of global, collaborative initiative CALS is interested in developing with international colleagues. This project brings both J.D. and LL.M. students and lawyers to Kenya to study first hand the implications of wildlife and cruelty laws in the rapidly changing landscape of the African wildlife trafficking crisis. Our goal is to develop relationships with and offer assistance to Kenyan lawyers, judges, and other wildlife professionals in their efforts to enhance and enforce legal protections for all the animals of Kenya. In recognition of the importance of experiential learning, the project takes the students out of the classroom to explore and understand the multifaceted legal issues involving humans and animals. Students are exposed to the complexity of wildlife and animal cruelty legal issues when constrained by biodiversity conservation efforts, traditional values and culture, resource scarcity, ecotourism goals, institutional infrastructure limitations, poaching, and human-animal conflicts.

This is the first animal law course ever taught in Africa. It is an exciting and vivid example of commitment to encouraging and assisting the growth of animal law and animal law education both at home and in every corner of the world.

Conclusion

As you read the articles in this journal, we invite you to consider deeply your own place in the development of animal law and animal law education. We hope you are inspired by the stories you read, and with that inspiration that you feel compelled to act. With every advance that is made, we become more acutely aware of the overwhelming amount of work that is yet to be done. If you are passionate about animal protection or animal rights, we call on you to join us and bring your considerable talents to benefit animals everywhere. Moving forward together, no matter where each of us resides in the world, will make our individual efforts that much more powerful. Let us use this collective brainpower and passion to make a world of difference for the animals.