Family Comes First

As a national leader in experiential education, Northeastern University School of Law is taking our hands-on, collaborative model to the next level with a new Family Law Clinic. While all Northeastern law students complete four, full-time, quarter-length field placements (co-ops), many students want even more time to delve into complex legal work. This new clinic accomplishes that goal, offering students a six-month experience in lawyering for domestic violence survivors in Probate and Family Court.

It all starts with a family law litigation seminar that simulates a divorce involving domestic violence. In class, students take the divorce from initial client interview to a trial of contested issues, experiencing the intricacies of family court practice and the complexities of the lawyer/client relationship. At the same time, students begin the clinical component: 12 to 16 hours a week with a family law practitioner in either a nonprofit or private firm setting. Students spend the next quarter working full time with the same employers as part of our signature co-op program. As a result of this unique program, our students come away with unparalleled hands-on experience in one of the most complex — and rewarding — areas of legal practice.

Students benefit from this clinic through:

• A deepened awareness of the complex dynamics of domestic violence, and the particular challenges facing abuse survivors in Massachusetts family courts.
• Enhanced skills in interviewing and counseling survivors and in providing client-empowering legal services.
• Concrete substantive knowledge of Massachusetts family law and procedure, and familiarity with the practices of the Probate and Family Court.
• Experience in the intricacies of case management and record-keeping, including proper pleading and document preparation.

If you missed last month’s postcard about our Community Business Clinic, please visit our website.

Sonia Queralt ’12 (left) with FLC supervisor Amy Egloff at Schlesinger and Buchbinder
Growing & Expanding:
Northeastern University School of Law Clinical Program

Family Law Clinic
Community Business Clinic