TRANSNATIONAL LAW SUMMER FELLOWSHIP

Felicia Cantrell The Philippines



Below are my blog entries that discuss the legal work I did so as to get a real glimpse into my life in the Philippines at the moment that it happened.

DAY 6:



Fig. 1: City Prosecution office

On Wednesday, we went to meet with a prosecutor assigned to one of our rape cases with Kathy. Here, you have to be a practicing attorney for 12 years before you can be a prosecutor. We talked quite a bit with the prosecutor about differences in prosecuting rape cases in the Philippines and in the U.S. They don't have access to DNA testing or rape kits here, so cases are only based on testimony, which makes it more difficult. Kathy had taken photos of the crime scene a month ago, but the pictures were not clear enough to quash all the defense arguments. It was a woman who was raped by her neighbor on her property. Since Krystle has a really nice camera and I

have experience presenting photographs of crime scenes in rape cases, we agreed to go back to the crime scene the next day to take some more photos and videos. no one really knows what the police actually do here...

After this, we went with Kathy, Sheila, and Ethan (Sheila's son) to watch Foundation University launch 4000 floating lanterns. It looked really cool once they were all floating... but I wouldn't want the ocean clean up job. Then, Sheila took us to a hotel of one of her clients and close family friends. They have an amazing pool and restaurant. It was literally glorious and Krystle and I were told we could go swimming there anytime for no charge. The restaurant and hotel is painted entirely by the wife. She painted all these celebrity photos, Italian building murals, sea animals, celebrities... etc. Since I can only draw penguins, I was impressed. Their son runs the restaurant and he made us a banana nutella crepe, which is my favorite.

DAY 7:



Yesterday, we went with the Dean of the law school to a university run by his uncle to speak on human trafficking. My part was talking to around 40 students about sex trafficking. Now, let me preface this by saying that they don't say sex in the Philippines, they call it carnal knowledge. Okay, I absolutely was not going to use that ridiculous phrase. So when I

described semi graphically to the students about what happens when you are forced into the

sex industry, everyone started laughing. We were all a bit confused to be honest. The Dean told us that they laughed because they were really uncomfortable that we used the words sex and rape. But the GWAVE staff told us that it is good we finally told them the truth because

they sugar coat things too much here. Obviously, I have never been known for my sugar coating abilities. We were so shocked when the students asked not only if sex trafficking happened a lot in the U.S., but if it happened here in the Philippines. Krystle and I looked at each other like seriously? So all in all it was good we talked about it with them because this university recruits poorer rural students and gives them all scholarships to attend school, so these students and their families are at great risk for being trafficked.



After this talk, we went with Kathy to the rape victim, April's house, to take photos of the crime scene. Literally, it was ridiculous that the defense counsel was arguing that people on the street and her uncle in the kitchen should have seen her being raped on their property because the banana trees and pineapple plants were so thick that even in the daylight, I could not see Krystle standing 4 feet from me. Not exaggerating. So we took some videos where we had Kathy lie where April was dragged to, and Krystle and I walked from the street videoing our walk to show how long it took for us to be able to see Kathy. We could not see her until we were literally on top of her. We thought we could introduce it as a 'where's waldo' game in court. Plus, the bugs and traffic are so loud that you could not hear someone screaming. On top of this, April's family is so poor that they have one light bulb on the entire property hanging from a tree and their home is just wood boards leaned together with a dirt floor and everything. Her husband, who is a worker in Saudi Arabia, and her mom do not want her to go through with the prosecution, but her father is supportive. Due to this, she was happy and surprised to see 2 American's walk up and take photos of the crime scene. I think it put her at peace that she wasn't alone, and she was happy that we will her redirect testimony Every night at 7, Krystle and I go back to our apartment and cook dinner and watch tv on our Ipad's because we aren't allowed to go out at night by ourselves. So we go to bed around 8:30 pm usually.

DAY 8:

Today, we went with Sheila to a hearing on a concubinage case in a town 40 min

north of Dumaguete. The woman charges brought against husband for bringing a mistress into their home and keeping her for himself in the house with his wife and kids. He also started beating his wife. Since he is an attorney, she also brought bar license revocations against him. Also, since he is an attorney, instead of just the judge hearing the case like normal, the top 3 prosecutors in the municipality are acting as the jury. Sheila thinks that since we were there, the 3 male



prosecutors granted all of Sheila's motions on behalf of the wife.

Also, apparently cokes are for rent here. Today at the courthouse, I bought a coke in the bottle, and the girl chased me out of the store to ask me to return the coke bottle when I was done. We met a friend of Sheila's today who is a colonel in the police force and he said he would take us shooting. I am excited and Krystle is not as excited.

DAY 10:

Last Sunday, we went to Valencia, in the mountains, and swam in a bunch of waterfalls. Afterwards, we went ziplining. I was so scared to go ziplining, so it was one of those I should get over my fears sort of things. I was silently staring at the ground on the way to the top of the zip line to get hooked in. Krystle was like, oh no she's in her head.. Talk talk! I thought I might pass out and Krystle made me go first so that I did not chicken out. So I sat down, and then they pushed me.... and it ended up being really fun. It feels like you aren't moving and we were a mile up ziplining from one mountain to another. I think it was 600 meters long. Although, I couldn't help but picture what would happen if the zip line broke and how I would die. But other than that I feel like it was a success! Monday, we gave a talk to the law school on human trafficking and domestic violence in the states. Pretty typical.

DAY 13:

Wednesday, we went with Sheila and her uncle to a legal meeting at her client's sugar cane farm. Actually, we know the clients because they are the family who own the hotel and pool by our house, and they let us swim there for free. So when we got to the sugar cane farm, Nonoy (the owner's nick name) took us to his home on the plantation. It was glorious of course, and he had a huge pool, and maids and the like. He showed us his original satellite dish that he couldn't have removed from a few years ago because it was literally 25 meters in length. I mean, you could call outer space with this thing. Then his maid brought us drinks and sandwiches (I think I'm going to have trouble readjusting to normal U.S life after our friends having maids and drivers). And to our glorious eyes, came 6 golden retriever puppies

running towards us. So we were in heaven. After the meeting, we went to Sheila's uncle's house on the ocean, and drank wine all night was sitting by the dock. It was a glorious day.

DAY 14:

Today, I developed a deathly cough disease. We had to go to a meeting with the women's council in the morning and were supposed to meet with the head city legal advisor afterwards, but Sheila had to send someone out to get me medicine because I was really losing it. After these meetings, I proceeded to drink Robotussen out of the bottle. We met our friend Pie for lunch at a bbq chicken place, but by that time I was so loopy that I don't remember much. So I went home and slept the rest of the afternoon and watched movies. Then that night we had to speak in the 2L class about what life was like at a law school in the states. I was still pretty loopy so I don't remember what I said.

DAY 15:

We gave the same talk about law school in the states to the 1L's and I started coughing uncontrollably, so Krystle got to talk most of the time. When we asked for questions, a group of girls asked us if we had any brothers. 1L's..... Now, I am sitting in the back of the class listening to Sheila question her students and she just had 3 students standing until one of them could answer. A girl just came back to ask me a legal question. Here is the scenario: if two people fight, and then the person reaches out to the other via text or call, or goes to see them, is that a crime? and so I had to explain stalking and harassment law in the Philippines to her. She tried to make it hypothetical... "hypothetically if this actually happened to me..." As I walked out in the hallway, I noticed our friends who are in the 2L class singing Karaoke on the projector in their classroom. Someone had a karaoke app on their laptop. So I joined in for a little Bohemian Rhapsody and Backstreet Boys. Why don't we sing karaoke at our law school, hmm?? I'm totally starting this, FYI.

DAY 16:

Saturday morning, we were on the radio talking about trafficking laws in the Philippines and the U.S. Many people called in, and a lot of people were concerned about Filipinos traveling to the States. In more traumatic news, a giant cockroach flew into my hair, and luckily the heart attack that I had was mild, but it scarred me deeply. After this, I had my favorite breakfast called Budbod Cabog, which is rice with chocolate sauce and mango slices.

DAY 17:

Sunday, we got up at the crack of dawn to drive 2 hours north of Dumaguete to go dolphin watching. We saw 30 dolphins... I think they were spinner and spotted dolphins. We then went to a sand bar out in the middle of the ocean and went swimming. I was still really sick so it was kind of like I had narcolepsy because I would randomly fall asleep for 40 minutes throughout the day.

DAY 18:

Monday, we got up at the crack of dawn again to catch the ferry to the island Siquijor. We got to hang out at this island resort all day called Coco Groves which has coconut trees with hammocks, a white sand beach, massages by the pool, etc. It was

glorious. Monday night we had to stay in a dorm room at Siquijor State College because the purpose of the trip was to give an all day talk on Gender Equality, Domestic Violence, and Trafficking. Oh and last night at the resort, I got to take my first hot shower in 3 weeks!!!!

The more I reflect on my summer in the Philippines, the more I feel that I became a stronger and more understanding person. One of the last weeks we were there, all the staff at GWAVE, Krystle, myself, and one of the social worker's (Atty Letty) daughters were having lunch together. Her daughter is around 18 years old and just started college. In the Philippines, they have this phenomenon of whitening lotion, and some people even ingest chemical bleach pills to become whiter. We brought this up at lunch because we were so shocked by all this lotion. Atty Letty (Atty is a term of endearment for older women in the Philippines) explained to us that they all want to look like white American's and have big noses like American's do too. I could not believe this and we proceeded to explain to them that American's go tanning, lie out in the sun all day, and get nose jobs to look more like cute Filipinas! They were shocked by this because they had never been to America, so they did not know that we went tanning and had plastic surgery to make our noses smaller. On the day we left to come back to Phoenix, Atty Letty told us that since our talk about whitening lotion, her daughter has stopped using it and is more proud to be a tan Filipina woman. That is the best news that I could hear because Filipinas are so beautiful and I could not believe that they would want to be pasty white like me.

We were also able to speak to quite a few judges and give them our views on a society that has no juries or consecutive trials. We tried to give our opinion in a respectful manner that we wished that their trials took place consecutively so that victim fatigue was less likely to occur. Plus, it would be easier on the judges because all the evidence would be fresh in their minds. Hopefully, this will slowly change in the Philippines.

At first, it was hard living without hot water and accepting that lizards and spiders were part of daily life in our home there. But we came to love it there and we grew so close with our Filipino friends. We are already planning a reunion in 5 years in Boracay. There are so many people in the Philippines that are fighting for justice and striving to make their country a better place, and I am so proud to have been able to be a small part of that. Unfortunately, a week after we returned home, Sheila's uncle who is an attorney that we had met, was gunned down in broad daylight in his law office in Dumaguete. The police do not have any leads, and sadly, in any place where justice is fought for (even Arizona) tragedy takes place.

I hope more law students will want to go to the Philippines and be a part of such an amazing culture!