

Irena Susan Lieberman

Experience:

American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Immigration, Washington, DC, 9/03 – present

Director

- Supervise Pro Bono Immigrant Detainee Projects in Seattle, WA, and Harlingen, TX; Provide technical assistance on substantive legal issues, management and personnel issues, program development, and fundraising; Administer grants from funders including Microsoft Corporation, law firms, State Bar of Texas, & American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Supervise ABA's Detention Standards Implementation Initiative; Review attorneys' reports on conditions in immigration detention facilities; Meet with Immigration & Customs Enforcement officials to advocate for humane detention policies
- Edit and oversee the development of *ABA Standards for the Custody, Placement and Care; Legal Representation; And Adjudication of Unaccompanied Alien Children in the United States*
- Administer grants, including a grant from the Executive Office for Immigration Review; Draft grant applications
- Develop and edit various publications relating to immigrants' rights and pro bono development
- Provide technical assistance to attorneys and others on issues including pro bono development and advocacy
- Provide expertise and support to ABA Office of the President, Office of Government Affairs, & Division for Media Relations
- Recruit pro bono attorneys to represent unaccompanied immigrant children
- Organize CLE programs and other trainings for attorneys
- Advocate for due process and other rights for immigrants with high level government officials; Participate in the Department of Homeland Security Enforcement Working Group; Prepare policy letters and comments on regulations affecting immigrants' rights
- Respond to requests for assistance from detained immigrants; Provide information on applying for relief pro se, attorney referrals, and conditions complaint processes
- Organize events for ABA and local bar leadership to raise awareness about immigrants' rights
- Serve as Project Advisor for the Unaccompanied Children's Advocate Project in Chicago, Illinois
- Serve as Member of the National Working Group on Immigrant Children and Domestic Violence, convened by the Family Violence Prevention Fund & Learning Systems Group

Tahirih Justice Center, Falls Church, VA, 1/98 – May/03

Director of Legal Services (formerly Deputy Director of Legal Services & Legal Intern)

- Practice areas include: U.S. Immigration, Asylum, and Refugee laws; Violence Against Women Act (VAWA); Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act (VTVPA); United Nations Convention Against Torture; United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees; Alien Tort Claims Act
- Represented clients before the Immigration & Naturalization Service, Immigration Courts, and Board of Immigration Appeals
- Co-counsel in oral arguments for precedent case before the Board of Immigration Appeals: Matter of Adeniji, Int. Dec. 3417 (BIA Nov. 3, 1999); Secured Mr. Adeniji's release from INS detention; Matter of Adeniji established that undocumented aliens taken into custody prior to the expiration of the Transition Period Custody Rules are not subject to mandatory detention
- Directed the Gender-based Human Rights & Immigration Project; Clients faced abuses such as rape and incest, domestic violence, honor killing, widow rituals, sexual orientation persecution, gender apartheid, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, sex slavery, forced abortion, widow rituals, involuntary servitude and slavery, and trafficking; Pioneered the use of the "U" and "T" visas for immigrant survivors of human trafficking and other crimes
- Directed the Battered Immigrant Women Advocacy Project; Clients were survivors of domestic violence seeking legal status independent of their abusive U.S. citizen or legal resident spouses; Coordinate partnership between the Tahirih Justice Center and the Center for Multicultural Human Services pursuant to a U.S. Department of Justice Violence Against Women Office grant
- Created and Directed the Refugee Women-At-Risk Project; Clients were Afghan women and girls seeking resettlement in the U.S.; Initiate dialogue between advocates in the U.S., UNHCR, and NGOs in Pakistan to promote transparency in the resettlement process, and to facilitate increased access by Afghan women and girls; Advocated for individual Afghan women and girls' refugee resettlement cases; Drafted and disseminated guidelines for refugees applying for resettlement
- Created and Directed the Campaign to End Exploitation by the International Matchmaking Industry; Drafted legislation and lobbied for its passage; Served as co-counsel in civil litigation against a matchmaking agency; The mission of the Campaign is to hold agencies that pair immigrant women with abusive American men accountable for their actions, and to empower immigrant women by ensuring that they are informed of their rights under domestic violence laws and the VAWA
- Served as an expert resource for the National Institute of Justice and the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe on the implementation of the U & T visa provisions of the VTVPA
- Engaged in public speaking, guest lecturing, education and outreach, and media appearances (please see list below)

- Drafted comments on proposed regulations that impact the rights of immigrant women and girls
- Collaborated with advocates on drafting legislation to promote the rights of immigrant domestic workers
- Participated in lobbying initiatives including the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence Annual Lobby Day
- Supervised Pro Bono Attorneys, Staff Attorney, Pro Bono Coordinating Attorney, Equal Justice Works Fellow (2000-2002), Public Policy Fellow, Paralegal and Legal Interns; Provided technical assistance to outside attorneys, law students, and immigration law clinics
- Developed employee policies and legal program budget; Hired legal staff; Provided counsel to the Board of Directors and Executive Director regarding program development, non-legal staff hires, grant proposals, annual appeal letters, newsletters, and other fundraising initiatives
- Wrote grant applications and proposals; Presented proposals to funders
- Developed and Directed Pro Bono Gender Asylum and Immigration Representation Program; Created gender-based asylum manual

Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C., 9/97 – 4/98

Dean's Fellow for Professor Candace Kovacic-Fleischer

- Analyzed Title VII employment discrimination issues, e.g., the allocation of burdens of proof and proof of pretext
- Researched claims brought under the Family and Medical Leave Act

United States District Court, District of Massachusetts, Boston, MA, 6/97 – 8/97

Judicial Intern for Chief Magistrate Judge Joyce London Alexander

- Researched and drafted Bench Memoranda, Opinions, and Orders on civil and criminal matters
- Researched, edited and helped compile report on current developments in sexual harassment litigation

Legal Services of Northern Virginia, Falls Church, VA, 9/96 – 5/97

Family Law Intern

- Drafted complaint for sexual harassment and national origin discrimination cases, custody orders, legal briefs, motions and discovery requests; Researched various legal issues; Assisted with trial preparation and discovery; Prepared affidavits and witnesses for trial
- Conducted client intake interviews in English and French

National Organization for Women, Boston, MA, 6/96 – 8/96

Government Relations / Legislative Intern

- Lobbied state senators and representatives; Worked on successful campaign of state representative Alice Wolf; Monitored NOW sponsored legislation; Attended state House and Senate hearings and floor debates; Managed candidate endorsement process and coordinated interviews
- Assisted with developing organizational materials for presentation to the public and the press

Education:

The American University, Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C., Juris Doctor 5/98

- First Year Moot Court participant; Domestic Violence CLE program participant; Dean's Fellow; Upper Level Paper on the International Sexual Slavery of Women and Children; Concentration on Gender and Human Rights

The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, Bachelor of Arts, English Literature 4/95

- G.P.A. 3.8; Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, Golden Key National Honor Society, Sophomore Honors Award; Principal flutist in the Campus Symphony Orchestra, Chamber music recitalist; Planning Committees for "Women's Weekend"

Media Appearances:

- **CNN World Report**, 2/02, Correspondent Hande Atay
- **Radio Free Europe**, Washington, D.C., "Afghan Women Refugees," Broadcaster Nazira Karimi
- **Arts & Entertainment**, Washington, D.C., "Love Chronicles: Runaway Brides"
- **Washington, D.C. Legal Times**, 7/30/01, "Seeking Shelter," by Jim Oliphant
- **UN Chronicle**, Vol. XXXIX, #1, 3-5/02, "The Mental Health Dimension," by Katrin Eun-Mayo Park
- **Washington Times**, 8/18/02, "Center Asks Asylum for Victims," by Winter Casey
- **Women's Enews**, 3/28/03, "Gender Violence Victims Wait for Visas," by Shauna Curphey
- **New Orleans Times Picayune**, 2/23/02, "War Brings Attention to Women's Fight," by Joan Treadway
- **Interpreter Releases**, 11/22/99, Vol. 76 No. 45 at 1690: "BIA Considers Applicability of INA § 236(c) to Alien Released Before Expiration of the Transition Period Custody Rules"
- **Interpreter Releases**, 8/19/02, Vol. 79 No. 33 at 1236: "INS Grants Asylum Based on Widow Ritual and FGM"

- **Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism Human Rights Reporting**, Spring 2002 “*Women Migrants Fleeing “Macho” Cultures Being Recognized as Legitimate, Oppressed Refugees,*” by Stephen Desroches
- **Digital Freedom Network**, NJ, “*Afghan Women Refugees*”
- **Digital Freedom Network**, NJ, Honored for Women’s History Month
- **KZFR radio** Human Rights Hour, Chico, CA, “*Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan*”
- **WELW radio**, Willowick, OH, “*Women Speak Out: Trafficking of Women and Girls*”

Publications:

- “*Women and Girls Facing Gender-Based Violence and Asylum Jurisprudence,*” American Bar Association Individual Rights and Responsibilities: Human Rights, Summer 2002
- “*I Hope this Letter Will Reach You,*” Women for Afghan Women: Shattering Myths and Claiming the Future, Edited by Sunita Mehta, October 2002, Palgrave Macmillan
- *Gender-based Asylum Manual for Pro Bono Attorneys*
- Edited and oversaw the development and publication of *ABA Standards for the Custody, Placement and Care; Legal Representation; And Adjudication of Unaccompanied Alien Children in the United States*
- Edited and oversaw publication of *Immigrant Detainee Pro Bono Opportunities Guide*
- Edited and oversaw publication of *Naturalization and Criminal Offenses, Detention, & Removal: A Legal Guide for Immigrants & Advocates*

Teaching & Public Speaking Experience:

- “Ending Violence Against Women,” Forty-Seventh Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, New York City, NY
- “Repressive Regimes,” United Nations Beijing + 5 International Women’s Conference, New York City, NY
- “Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan,” Horace Mann High School, New York City, NY
- “Women’s International Human Rights,” Highpoint High School, Beltsville, MD
- “Women & the Law-Fall,” Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
- “Women & the Law-Spring,” Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.
- “Human Rights in Algeria and the Alien Tort Act,” Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C.
- “Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan,” 2000 Fulbright Youth Conference, New York City, NY
- “Gender-based Asylum,” George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.
- “Afghan Women & Human Rights,” Human Rights Club, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, VA
- “Media and Ethics, Hood College,” Frederick, MD
- “How to Present an Effective Asylum Case,” University of Virginia Law School Human Rights Clinic, Charlottesville, VA
- “Female Genital Mutilation & Asylum,” Trinity College, Washington, D.C.
- “Matter of S-A-: Gender and Religion,” George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.
- “Overview of U.S. Asylum & Refugee Law,” Catholic University Law School, Washington, D.C.
- “Women’s International Human Rights,” Public Leadership Education Network, Washington, D.C.
- “Women’s International Human Rights,” Girls Advisory Board to the Empower Program, Washington, D.C.
- “Women’s Rights in Afghanistan and Gender-based Asylum,” AmeriCorps Program, Falls Church, VA
- “Women Refugees,” *Keynote Speaker*, Tulane University Women’s Law Student Association, New Orleans, LA
- “The Plight of Women Refugees,” University of Texas Women’s Law Student Association, Lubbock, TX
- “Domestic Violence, Political Asylum, & Race,” Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C.
- “Gender-based Asylum,” International Law Students’ Association Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- “Gender-based Asylum Practice,” Women’s History Month Events, Trinity College, Washington, D.C.
- “Female Genital Mutilation,” Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
- “Female Genital Mutilation,” George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
- “Topics in Asylum, Refugee, and Human Rights Law,” Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C.
- “Matter of R-A- and the Fate of Gender Asylum in the U.S.,” George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.
- “Reproductive Rights and Political Asylum,” University of Michigan Law School, Ann Arbor, MI
- “VAWA II and the new Crime Victims & Anti-Trafficking Visas,” Abused Persons Program, MD
- “Domestic Violence & Political Asylum, Post-Matter of R-A-,” D.C. Bar Association, Washington, D.C.
- “Pro Bono Asylum Training,” D.C. Bar Association, Washington, D.C.
- “Pro Bono VAWA Training,” D.C. Area VAWA Network, Washington, D.C.
- “Gender Asylum Training,” Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, Washington, D.C.
- “Documentation, Evidence & Asylum,” International Conference on Gender-based Persecution, Montreal, Canada

- “The Repression of Women in Sudan & Afghanistan,” National Audubon Society, Washington, D.C.
- “Female Genital Mutilation,” National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Association, Washington, D.C.
- “Political Asylum in Practice,” D.C. Asylum Clinic, Washington, D.C.
- “Issues in Interpreting,” Migrant & Refugee Cultural Support, Silver Spring, MD
- “Cultural & Legal Obstacles to Gender-based Asylum,” Migrant & Refugee Cultural Support, Silver Spring, MD
- “Afghan Women: Securing Our Future,” Women for Afghan Women Debut Conference, New York City, NY
- “Anti-Trafficking Initiatives in the U.S.,” Vital Voices Global Partnership, Washington, D.C.
- “Pro Bono Gender-Based Asylum Practice,” Patten Boggs, Washington, D.C.
- “Pro Bono Gender-Based Asylum Practice,” Greenberg Traurig, Washington, D.C.
- “Pro Bono Gender-Based Asylum Practice,” Hogan & Hartson, Washington, D.C.
- “Female Genital Mutilation as Child Abuse,” Ethiopian Community Development Council, Arlington, VA
- “Female Genital Mutilation & the Law,” Ethiopian Community Development Council Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- “Pro Bono Development Strategies,” DOJ Legal Orientation Program Training, San Diego, CA
- “Careers in Public Interest,” Georgetown University Law School Youth Day, Washington, DC
- “Interviewing Female Asylum Seekers and Evidence in Gender-based Claims,” CIS Asylum Officer Training, Arlington, VA
- “Unaccompanied Immigrant Children’s Asylum Claims,” Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C.
- “Opportunities in the Human Rights Field,” Washington College of Law, Washington, D.C.
- “Opportunities in the Human Rights Field,” Washington Council of Lawyers' Summer Forum, Washington, D.C.
- “Case Study and Overview of Human Trafficking,” American Bar Association annual meeting CLE, Chicago, IL
- “ABA Standards for Unaccompanied Immigrant Children,” Annual ORR DUCS conference, Warrenton, VA

Professional Memberships and Associations:

- Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts
- American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA); AILA Children’s Issues Committee
- American Bar Association
- National Child Welfare Advisory Board
- National Workgroup on Children, Immigration, and Family Violence

Languages:

- Proficient in written and oral French