How the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians Positively Impacts U.S.

The Trifecta: Ufuoma, Gloria, and Priya – We Are All Winners!

Teresa Miguel-Stearns & Lucie Olejnikova

We are happy to share one of our colleague’s experiences with three recent recipients of the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians.

You might remember Ufuoma Lamikanra of Nigeria, who was with us in Denver in 2010, Gloria Orrego-Hoyos of Argentina, who was with us in Philadelphia in 2011, and Priya Rai of India, who was with us in Boston in 2012. Each of our amazing recipients provided Kristina Alayan, Foreign & International Law Reference Librarian at the Goodson Law Library, Duke Law School, with unparalleled assistance, giving her (and them) superstar status among the Duke Law School faculty.

Kristina fondly recounts: Almost two years ago (May 2012), Ufuoma Lamikanra came through for me in record time. One of my liaison faculty members identified and asked me to obtain a Nigerian publication, specifically two chapters, that he was hoping to review. My colleagues and I exhausted all the usual sources, such as ILL and contacting the publisher, author, and editors. At last I emailed Ufuoma seeking her assistance. I asked if she might connect me with the editors, who are professors at the University of Lagos, or provide me with electronic copies of the chapters my professor desired. Within a day of my initial email, she responded to let me know that she was happy to help and had already reached out to the editors. The next day she sent me one of the two chapters by email; less than a week later, I received the other chapter. Thanks to her, I was the hero of the day! My faculty member was so impressed with “how easy” it was to obtain the publication, and so pleased with its quality, that he naturally wanted to see the entire book. Thus, without hesitation...

Ufuoma Lamikanra mailed a book from Nigeria to help with a faculty request

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**From the Chair**

*Don Ford*

Hello fellow FCIL-SIS members. We have important news to report in this May 2014 Newsletter.

**ANNUAL MEETING FCIL-SIS PROGRAMMING**

There are 6 FCIL-related programs at the upcoming San Antonio Annual Meeting. The line-up includes:

**FCIL-SIS Sponsored Program: Tuesday, July 15, 8:30 to 9:45 a.m.:** Mexican Law and Legal Research: Overcoming the Challenges. Jonathan Pratter (University of Texas) and Julienne Grant (Loyola University Chicago) join David Hurtado Badiola, partner in the Mexico City law firm of Jáuregui, Navarrete y Del Valle, S.C., to give a *visión de conjunto* of Mexican legal research.

**Monday, July 14, 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.:** Marriott Riverwalk-Alamo Ballroom Salon E: FCIL-SIS Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians Recipient Presentation. Irene Kraft, Associate Library Officer at the International Criminal Court (ICC) Library in the Hague, will speak.

**Monday, July 14, 2:30 to 3:45 p.m.:** Hot Topic: Land Grabbing: Accessing Information to Protect Property Rights of Indigenous People. This program will include presentations by both reference and cataloging librarians on the challenges of legal research involving indigenous property issues. Veteran law librarians Jolande Goldberg (Library of Congress), Teresa Miguel-Stearns (Yale Law Library), and Joan Policastri (University of Colorado Law Library) will present.

**ADDITIONAL FCIL-RELATED PROGRAMMING**

**Sunday, July 13, 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.:** Global Law Resources Fair. Neel Agrawal and his team of law librarians will be offering hands-on demonstrations of FCIL primary materials being made available from the LA Law Library’s renowned global law collection. We thank the Teaching FCIL Interest Group for graciously making their conference meeting time available for this presentation.

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**Joint AALL/IALL/FCIL-SIS International Attendees Joint Reception**

Please join us for the International Attendees Joint Reception, to be held on Monday, July 14 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. As you can see, we were creative with our programming this year. Some meetings are being held during interest group meeting times. We found that this was necessary, but we’re pleased to see how the FCIL-SIS membership has risen to the occasion!

**FCIL-SIS BUSINESS MEETING ON MONDAY AT 7:45 A.M.!!**

Please note: Our Business Meeting has been changed to the morning this year. We will meet at 7:45 a.m. in HBGCC Room 207A for a buffet continental breakfast Business Meeting.

The joint FCIL-SIS/AALL/IALL reception for international attendees will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, July 14. This change has been made in order to accommodate AALL Executive Board members and others who are attending the off-site Thomson Reuters party later Monday evening.

**FCIL-SIS ELECTION**

Congratulations to Lucie Olejnikova, our newly-elected 2014-2015 FCIL-SIS Vice Chair/Chair-Elect! Lucie will begin her term during the Annual Meeting in San Antonio, when our current Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Teresa Miguel-Stearns, becomes Chair.

Lucie is a very active member of the FCIL-SIS. From 2011-2013 Lucie served as the FCIL-SIS Secretary/Treasurer. In addition, Lucie served as both Co-Chair and then Chair of the fundraising committee for the FCIL-SIS Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians. And, Lucie was one of the three winners of the 2010 Spirit of the FCIL-SIS Award.

Lucie is Reference/Electronic Services Librarian and Adjunct Professor of Law at the Pace University Law School Library in White Plains, New York. She is originally from Prague in the Czech Republic. Please take a moment to read

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Visualizing International Law: ILRIG’s Program at the ILA-ASIL Joint Biennial Conference

Gabriela Femenia

At this year’s joint ILA-ASIL annual meeting in Washington, D.C., the International Legal Research Interest Group (ILRIG) presented a thought-provoking and informative program, Connecting the Dots: Visualizing International Law. Co-sponsored by the International Law and Technology Interest Group and coordinated through the gracious work of ILRIG secretary Marylin Raisch, the program offered insights on the effective presentation of complex concepts and “big data” in international law through database technology and visualization tools.

Dr. Alejandro Ponce, Chief Research Officer of the World Justice Project, explained in detail the development of the Rule of Law Index, the project’s methodology, and the many ways the resulting rich data is presented on the World Justice Project’s interactive website. Visitors to the site can view country and regional data in dynamic map, graph and table formats, sorted along the project’s 47 indicators organized along 8 themes.

Jeffrey B. Ritter, Adjunct Professor at Georgetown Law, spoke next on the use of mind-mapping tools in international law teaching. As he demonstrated, these tools can help instructors better present complex structures such as multicultural and multi-system compliance efforts, and can permit students to self-direct their learning.

Lastly, Ana S. Ayala, Institute Associate at the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown Law, discussed the Global Health and Human Rights database, which she has managed for the past four years in addition to developing international partnerships for the database. This resource offers a fully-indexed, searchable pool of international, regional, or domestic court judgments on health issues, as well as relevant national constitutional provisions and international instruments. Users can access the database’s contents via a map interface, or via sections sorted by health topic, implicated human right, region, country, or responsible body.

Following the program, co-chair Wanita Scroggs conducted the ILRIG business meeting. The officers reported on the past year’s activities and budget, and proposed the creation of an award to recognize important contributions in providing and enhancing open access to legal information resources in international law. Details on the award creation process will be forwarded to the ILRIG membership, and members are encouraged to contact any ILRIG officers with their suggestions on names for the award and selection criteria. Any member interested in co-editing the newsletter is likewise encouraged to contact an officer. Before the meeting concluded, the members approved an amendment to the ILRIG bylaws requiring that at least one of the co-chairs be an FCIL law librarian.

A gentle reminder: if you are an ASIL member but have not yet joined ILRIG, please join! There is no additional cost to you, but ILRIG will get the benefit of your membership through additional allocated funds. You can easily join ILRIG, and any other groups of interest, by logging into your account on the ASIL website and editing your member profile.

From the Chair, cont. from page 2

Lucie’s CV at Pace Law Library.

Congratulations and best wishes to Lucie!

UPCOMING BYLAWS CHANGES

We will be proposing some bylaws changes in the coming weeks. These changes will involve resolving some inconsistencies in dates regarding our FCIL-SIS elections. Please stay tuned.

MY THANKS TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD AND TO THE FCIL-SIS MEMBERSHIP

As my term as 2013-2014 FCIL-SIS Chair draws to a close, I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the FCIL-SIS Executive Board for their outstanding support this year. Teresa Miguel-Stearns (Vice Chair/Chair-Elect), Roy Sturgeon (Secretary/Treasurer), and Heidi Froestead Kuehl (Immediate Past President) were a truly collegial trio who regularly contributed to our normal FCIL-SIS operations. Moreover, I truly appreciate all the extra help Teresa, Roy, and Heidi provided in dealing with every curve, detour, pothole, and speed bump on the road to San Antonio. My many thanks and best wishes to this superb Executive Board!

In addition, I wish to thank all of you, the FCIL-SIS members, for the privilege of serving such an outstanding group of law librarians. Every day in person, on listservs, and via blogs, we see the help that FCIL-SIS members give to law librarians worldwide. FCIL-SIS members are leaders in resourcefulness and tenacity, both of which are particularly evident in our “unconventional” convention programming this year!

Many thanks and all the best!

Don Ford, FCIL-SIS Chair 2013-2014
Foreign, Comparative & International Law Librarian
University of Iowa College of Law Library
tion, Ufuoma mailed us the book from Nigeria. None of this would have been possible without Ufuoma’s help or without the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians that brought Ufuoma into our world.

Last summer, Gloria Orrego-Hoyos provided invaluable assistance by helping me to prove a negative, which is always a difficult task. Gloria and I first met at the 2012 AALL Annual Meeting in Philadelphia when she was the recipient of the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians. I have since been delighted to get to know her better through IALL. Over the years we have helped each other with various questions, but most recently, she went above and beyond when the Dean of Duke Law School came to me with a complicated request. He had just returned from a trip to Argentina and, as a former federal judge, he was fascinated by the developments in judicial reform taking place in Argentina. He was especially interested in a recent ruling from their Supreme Court and was hoping I would be able to obtain an English translation of the lengthy opinion for him. Hopeful but doubtful, I consulted the usual sources such as the Foreign Law Guide, GlobaLex, and the Argentine Supreme Court website, all of which indicated (as I had suspected) that reliable translations are difficult to find, if they exist at all. I obviously wanted to provide the Dean with a definitive answer, so I wrote to Gloria and asked her to confirm this for me as a native Argentine legal research expert. In less than 24 hours, Gloria not only confirmed that this translation did not exist, but she also provided insightful cultural context to both the political and social developments in Argentina, and included a related decision that she thought might be of interest to the Dean. I was more than satisfied at this point, and very grateful, but Gloria went a step further by following up with colleagues at the Supreme Court to see if there was an informal translation being circulated. The Director of the Supreme Court Library confirmed definitively, after checking with the foreign legal research office responsible for publishing the Court’s opinions, that a translation did not exist and was not forthcoming. Thus, with a team of experts on the ground in Argentina, I was able to explain to the Dean that a translation of the desired case did not exist; however, I was able to pass on to him the additional information that Gloria provided including a related case, and he was thrilled. Thanks to Gloria and her colleagues in Argentina (and to the Grant for bringing Gloria to us), I was able to lessen the Dean’s disappointment with a wealth of related information for which he was immensely grateful.

Finally, just last December, Priya Rai provided assistance in a flash, helping us meet a looming deadline. One of my law librarian colleagues at Duke had been helping a faculty member locate a copy of the Indian Patent Act. My colleague had ably identified numerous sources for the text of the original Act and subsequent amendments, but the faculty member wanted to see a consolidated version. Because of the tight deadline, my colleague and I decided to divide and conquer our respective sources. I had a leg-up on my colleague with Priya as one of my sources. Without fail, Priya not only provided us with a consolidated version of the Indian Patent Act, but she also offered additional assistance which proved invaluable.

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LA Law Library Offering Webinar

Our colleague Neel Agrawal, Librarian of Global Law at the LA Law Library, shares the following great opportunity for FCIL-SIS readers:

WEBINAR: GLOBAL LEGAL RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES
June 4, 2014, 12-1 p.m. (Pacific)
The State Bar of California International Law Section
Acquire essential foreign and international legal research skills to effectively represent your clients in cross-border matters.

Learn practical research strategies when dealing with the laws of other countries and international treaties. Taught by Neel Agrawal (Librarian for Global Law, LA Law Library), Jeffery Daar (Principal, Daar & Newman, Los Angeles), and Marci Hoffman (Associate Director, UC Berkeley Law Library). For registration, please visit http://www.calbarjournal.com/CLECalendar.aspx. Please direct questions to Neel Agrawal at nagrawal@lalawlibrary.org.

FCIL-SIS Election

Congratulations to Lucie Olejnikova, our newly-elected 2014-2015 FCIL-SIS Vice Chair/Chair-Elect! Lucie will begin her term during the Annual Meeting in San Antonio, when our current Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Teresa Miguel-Stearns, becomes Chair.

Lucie is Reference/Electronic Services Librarian and Adjunct Professor of Law at the Pace University Law School Library in White Plains, New York.

Congratulations, Lucie!

Committee and IG Reports

Committee and IG Chairs:
Each Committee and IG Chair should plan to submit their reports for the October issue of the newsletter.

Email your report in .docx or .rtf format to Deborah Schander (dschander@gsu.edu).

Submission deadline: October 1, 2014

FCIL Newsletter

The FCIL Newsletter is a publication of the Foreign, Comparative, and International Law Special Interest Section of the American Association of Law Libraries. It is published in February, May, and October of each year.

Current and past issues of FCIL Newsletter are available on our website, at http://www.aallnet.org/sections/fcil/newsletters.

We welcome submissions. Contact us for more information.

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As you can see, each of our recipients of the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians helps us provide superior research support to our faculty and students on a regular basis. The Grant is allowing us to create an invaluable network of legal research experts around the world. While the FCIL Schaffer Grant for Foreign Law Librarians allows the annual recipient to benefit from the travel and networking opportunities at the AALL Annual Meeting, we FCIL librarians are equal beneficiaries of the Grant not only due to the recipient’s informative presentations at the Annual Meeting, but also through the worldwide professional and personal connections we make with them.

FCIL-SIS Blog

The FCIL-SIS blog has been redesigned! Check it out at http://fcilsis.wordpress.com/.

If you have comments or suggestions on the content, or if you’re interested in being a contributor to the blog, contact the Publicity Committee at aall.fcil.blog@gmail.com.
Continuing FCIL Education

Gabriela Femenia & Alison Shea

It’s not always easy for FCIL librarians to say they have a full mastery of their specialty — no one can be expected to learn the legal systems of 190+ jurisdictions as well as an array of comparative topics. Despite this, thanks to great resources such as Globalex, Foreign Law Guide, and others, we are able to survive questions varying from the age of criminal liability in Latvia to the complexities of securities regulation in China. However, there are often geographic areas and specialized topics in which our institutions have a special focus, and we may be called upon to be more knowledgeable about those countries, regions, and topics than others. Obviously we as information professionals are capable of identifying a range of sources to help bring us up to speed in these areas, but what if you (or your institution) require more?

Unlike the legal profession, which requires licensed attorneys to keep up to date on developments within the law through Continuing Legal Education (CLE) courses, the law library profession—and indeed the library profession in the US as a whole—does not have any comparable requirements for continuing professional education. Librarians are nevertheless heavily involved in a wide array of professional development activities, including conference attendance, contributing to and reading library publications, and networking. As FCIL librarians, we have additional venues for building our specialist knowledge, including IALL conferences, Joint Study Institutes, and other regional law librarian associations. Recent scholarship has highlighted a need to improve training opportunities for both new and veteran librarians, and suggestions such as specialized webinars and more in-depth AALL Annual Meeting programming have been put forth.

In addition to the opportunities provided via our professional organizations as well as our own institutions, a further idea is to individually invest one’s own time—and in some cases, financial resources—in a certificate program or other type of formalized learning. In the past few years, the availability of online courses has exploded with the rise of “Massive Open Online Courses”, or MOOCs. These free courses offer a level of instruction previously unavailable without enrolling in an actual course. Alternatively, there are a number of certification programs offered for a fee that provide similar instruction but are often more closely associated with a degree-granting program. These exist in distance-learning format as well as condensed, on-site learning experiences.

For those looking to improve their FCIL knowledge, there are a multitude of courses—both fee-based and free—available through a variety of institutions, but most are affiliated with a university or a professional organization. To give fellow FCIL members an idea of what these programs entail and what might be gained from them, we thought it might be helpful to share our experiences with both a free MOOC and a fee-based certificate program to gain additional knowledge about particular areas of interest to us.

COURSEMA’S EUROPEAN UNION LAW MOOC - GABRIELA

The usefulness and overall quality of MOOCs has been widely debated, but my experience last summer in taking the University of Leiden’s “The Law of the European Union” course via Coursera was excellent, and convinced me of the educational value of a well-executed MOOC.

I originally signed up for the MOOC to see what they were like, and in anticipation that I might eventually have to either teach one myself or support a faculty member in presenting one. The EU course just happened to fit my overall interests, and was judiciously timed for the relatively slow post-exams period of June and early July.

The course was taught by Professor Stefaan Van den Bogaert in thematic modules over five weeks. Students were expected to read short selections from an abridged textbook available for free through the course portal (a discount was offered on personal copies of the full text), watch about 90 minutes of video lectures per week, and complete weekly quizzes plus a final test. An “Advanced Track” was also offered for students wanting a certificate of accomplishment, which I chose not to undertake because it required an additional peer-reviewed exercise in the third and fourth weeks.

Although I could easily have sharpened my understanding of EU institutions and the lawmaking process by working through a treatise, I found the MOOC an entertaining and painless way of clearing up some of my confusion about the post-Lisbon restructuring, and of getting a grip on some of the key ECJ precedents. The lectures were well-structured and broken up into very digestible 10- to 15-minute chunks, with multiple-choice questions embedded in the videos as a checkpoint and an incentive to pay attention. The readings were supplemented with some very helpful tables and diagrams to aid understanding, and the discussion forums were well-trafficked by the instructor and several RAs, who elaborated on the material and answered students’ questions. By the end of the five weeks, I not only felt better able to answer some esoteric questions about EU law, but also picked up some good ideas about how to better explain EU research in my FCIL. advanced legal research seminar that fall.

I had a far less productive experience with the second MOOC I took, also through Coursera, which reinforced my hunch that a MOOC instructor needs to
Continuing FCIL Education, cont. from page 6

both be generally good at teaching and have a grasp of how to use distance learning technology and methods. My impression of Professor Van den Bogart is of a skilled and personable instructor who made a concerted effort to adapt his style to the short-video format, had good support from his technology team in editing his videos and making full use of the Coursera interface’s functions, and was willing to put in extra time to make the learning experience effective, as shown by the extra Q&A videos he produced to address any interesting questions that popped up in the discussion forums. The end result was very close to what I’d have gotten out of auditing a live class, but completed on my own time and at my own pace, and for free.

Getting the most out of MOOCs requires some luck of the draw, and obviously you’ll need to be self-motivated enough to do the reading, watch the videos, and complete the assignments, but based on that positive experience, I recommend them as a cost- and time-effective way to brush up or broaden your expertise.

BIALL’S LEGAL FOUNDATIONS COURSE – ALISON

To contrast Gabriela’s experience, I recently completed a more formalized distance education certificate program called the Legal Foundations Course (LFC), offered annually through the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians. The LFC is an excellent opportunity to acquire extensive knowledge on the substantive aspects of the English legal system remotely. Run by BIALL’s Professional Development Committee in conjunction with the University of Westminster (UK) Department of Professional Legal Studies, the LFC provides a grounding in legal concepts and terminology commonly encountered by law librarians in England and Wales. It is intended to help librarians in the UK who may be unfamiliar with the legal profession gain sufficient knowledge to execute their responsibilities without needing a formal law degree, but it can also be very useful for foreign librarians looking to learn more about UK law.

As someone very interested in the UK and Ireland, I have tried to establish myself as an expert of sorts within my library for these jurisdictions. However, I found myself lacking specific knowledge that would help me better assist a student wishing to write a paper comparing the procedural laws of the UK and the US, or a professor looking for an explanation of how the ADR system in the UK works. Therefore, as a member of the British and Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL), in 2012 I noticed an opportunity to apply for a bursary to cover the cost of the LFC; through the generosity of the Awards and Bursaries Committee, I was selected and embarked upon a one-year course on almost every substantive aspect of English law. As a non-BIALL member, the current rate to sign up for the LFC would be about $900.

The course was moderated and maintained by Avis Whyte, who is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Westminster, and who was always available via email to help address any administrative issues I had with the course. As for actual substantive lectures, the various modules were taught by different members of the University of Westminster law staff, with Avis teaching the core English Legal System modules. The module topics ran from basic units on torts, criminal law, contracts, and civil procedure to more specialized units on intellectual property, company law, and EU law.

The first class session of the LFC is an optional on-site meeting at the University of Westminster, and although I was unable to attend, it does provide a nice way for others in the course to meet the instructor as well as other participants. Following this initial meeting, the remainder of the course was entirely online and was delivered via the University of Westminster’s Blackboard system. Despite the normal hiccups that accompany trying to access and register for a new system, I was at once familiar with the platform due to my usage of Lexis’s WebCourses, which also runs on the Blackboard platform. Each week a new lecture is made available to participants; these lectures are almost exclusively delivered via narrated slides or video files. A small activity such as a multiple choice quiz follows the lecture, and to receive the end of course certificate all students must successfully complete and pass all of the activities – luckily for me, you can retake the tests more than once!

As for my personal experience with the LFC, I found that the lectures varied in the length and depth of the discussion of each topic. Of course, there were certain topics that I found more interesting than others. However, I was surprised by the number of times I was able to relate what I was learning to similar principles of US law. This was just as personally rewarding for me as the growth in professional knowledge that I gained from this course.

The program advises that participants should plan on setting aside 3 hours per week to complete the activities, and as I mentioned, I did find there to be a wide variety in the length of the lectures as well as the difficulty of the activities. Some modules would take me far longer than 3 hours, but one nice aspect of this course is that you have four weeks to complete each module. Even then, if you are unable to complete the module in its allotted four weeks, the facilitator of the class makes the modules available at the end of each semester for catching up. This greatly aided my ability to complete all the required lectures and activities by the end of the course deadline, which

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Continuing FCIL Education, cont. from page 7

was a prerequisite to my receiving the certificate of completion at the end of the course.

Whether you or your institution could financially support a course of this type is obviously a factor in deciding whether to pursue these more traditional models of continuing education. The benefit of having a more structured program was that I felt more compelled to keep on schedule and actually internalize what I was learning. In my opinion, one of the main drawbacks of the MOOCs is that they are more suited to those who are self-motivated and disciplined, as Gabriela mentioned above. In all honesty, I also signed up for the same EU course that Gabriela completed last summer, and I didn’t make it past lecture 1!

We hope that this article has inspired you to consider alternate ways of increasing your professional knowledge, whether they be fee-based or open access, and we would encourage those who have been involved with a continuing professional education program to share their experiences with us in hopes of setting up some type of repository on the FCIL-SIS website.


3 For an example of the range of offerings, see e.g., Short Course Portal – Law related offerings: http://www.shortcoursesportal.eu/search/?q=di-6|lv-short.

4 See https://www.coursera.org/course/introclaw.

5 For additional listing of law MOOCs offered by Coursera, including one on English Common Law, see https://www.coursera.org/courses?order_by=upcoming&cats=law.

6 http://law.leiden.edu/organisation/publiclaw/europeanstitute/staff/vandenbogaert.html.


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