

# Holly L. Christian, Esq.

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HollyLChristian@gmail.com  
937-681-4198

## **EDUCATION**

### **DePaul University College of Law, Chicago, IL**

*Juris Doctorate, Certificate in Public Interest Law, May 2016*

- Dean's list, Law Merit Scholarship, DiGrazia Scholarship, Ward Scholarship
- CALI awards (top grade) in Animal Law, Disability Law, and Public International Law
- AmeriCorps JD Stipend Award Recipient

### **University of Dayton, Dayton, OH**

*Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and French, May 2013*

- Study Abroad Program, Intermediate-High ACTFL Certificate in French
- Statehouse Civic Scholar, Supreme Court of Ohio

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **Detroit Mercy Veterans Law Clinic, Detroit, MI**

*Assistant Professor of Law and Director, August 2023-Current*

*Visiting Assistant Professor and Director, November 2022-August 2023*

*Toni A. Wisne Foundation Fellow, July 2021-November 2022*

- Represent veterans and directly supervise students and legal fellow on VA benefits claims and military record correction applications
- Design and teach weekly seminar for the Veterans Law Clinic (3cr), Advanced Veterans Law Clinic (2cr), Children in the Law Seminar (3cr), and coach the Veterans Law Moot Court Team (2cr)
- Designed asynchronous learning modules including content, rubrics, and assessments for a new Critical Lawyering Skills Course taken by all first-year law students
- Manage Pro Bono Program by recruiting, training, and supporting volunteers through case placement and other pro bono opportunities, as well as planning and holding annual award program and community outreach events
- Record and document case outcomes, create grant reports for funders, report clinic statistics, and apply for federal, state, and private grant funding

### **Swords to Plowshares, San Francisco Bay Area, CA**

*Pro Bono Manager and Staff Attorney, December 2019 - June 2021*

- Cultivated relationships with key pro bono stakeholders to secure funding
- Trained, recruited, and mentored volunteer attorneys for monthly legal clinics, representation, and discreet research projects
- Provided trainings on substantive law and cultural competency to veteran communities, lay advocates, pro bono attorneys, and other veterans law attorneys including national CLE events
- Directly supervised and trained program's administrative assistant and legal fellow
- Made eligibility determinations, interviewed, and represented veterans in VA benefits claims and military records correction applications
- Transitioned the existing Pro Bono Program to a new model including creation of a unique portal for volunteer attorneys which included an example brief bank searchable by issue, venue, and year
- Provided training and resources on specific veterans law issues to UC Berkeley Veterans Law Clinic

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students, created project outlines to develop new self-help guides for veterans, provided students with feedback on work product

## **American Bar Association's Military and Veterans Legal Center, Chicago, IL**

*Veterans Pro Bono Coordinator, January 2018 - December 2019*

- Acted as Chief Counsel to the Armed Forces Law and the Veterans Benefits and Services Committees by planning meetings and CLE events, monitoring advocacy projects, presenting comments on relevant laws and statutes to the ABA House of Delegates, and managing budgets
- Implemented the VetLex legal referral project by selecting and deploying new pilot sites, providing technical assistance, coordinating outreach and support of the ABA network, co-created website
- Operated the Veterans Claims Assistance Network by executing and developing training, attorney recruitment, and community outreach, screened and placed cases with pro bono attorneys

## **Jewish Child and Family Services, Chicago, IL**

*Legal Advocacy Center Staff Attorney, December 2016 - January 2018*

- Represented individuals with disabilities in contested special education, school disciplinary and adult guardianship matters, attended Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) meetings and 504 meetings
- Provided intake, consultation, and referral services to individuals in the areas of civil rights, mental health, and disability law
- Conducted trainings on special education, mandatory reporting, and disability laws to schools, companies, academics, and legal professionals
- Filed due process complaints in written briefs alleging noncompliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), first chaired administrative hearings and negotiations with school districts

## **ADMISSIONS AND ACCREDITATIONS**

Illinois Bar, 2016 - Inactive

Michigan Bar, 2022 - Current

VA Accreditation, 2018 - Current

Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, 2021 - Current

## **SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

**National Law School Veterans Clinic Consortium Bootcamp, Fall 2025**

*VA Service Connection Basics*

**American Association of Law Schools Clinical Conference, Spring 2025**

*Intergroup Dialogue Faculty Training; A Case Study*

**Detroit Mercy Law Review Symposium, Spring 2025**

*Advocating for Veterans Across Broken Systems*

**Detroit Bar Associate Pro Bono Webinar, Spring 2025**

*Veterans Law Clinic Pro Bono Work*

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**University of St. Thomas Law Journal's Veterans Law Symposium, Fall 2023**  
*Invisible Injuries and Restorative Justice for Returning Vets*

**BEAM Inc., ADA Anniversary Panel, Summer 2022**  
*History of the Americans with Disabilities Act*

**Legal Help for Vets Training, Summer 2022**  
*Military Discharge Upgrades and VA Character of Discharge Determinations*

**National Law School Veterans Clinic Consortium Bootcamp, Fall 2021**  
*Reviewing and Summarizing Veteran's Records*

**Practising Law Institute Annual Veterans Law CLE Training, Fall 2020**  
*Veteran Cultural Competency: Combat to Community; Demographics, Cultural Characteristics, Myths and Stereotypes about Veterans; Legal Interviewing Tips*

**Practising Law Institute, Pursuing Justice: The Pro Bono Files Podcast, Fall 2020**  
*Bad Paper*

**Legal Services Corporation Veterans Task Force Field Hearing, Fall 2020**  
*Pro Bono Engagement Strategies*

**Practising Law Institute, A Guide to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for Advocates: How to Effectively Address PTSD in Matters Involving Veterans and Others Affected by Trauma, Summer 2020**  
*Working with Clients and Developing Relevant Information about PTSD*

**American Bar Association Equal Justice Conference, Spring 2018**  
*VetLex - An Innovation for Connecting Veterans to Lawyers*

## **SCHOLARSHIP**

**The Scarlet Letter Plaguing Black Veterans: Racial Disparity and the Pursuit of Restorative Justice for Veterans with 'Bad Paper' Military Discharges** (*Upcoming UCLA Law Review Discourse, Spring 2026*)

The military discharge process is not impervious to institutional racism and implicit bias. However, proving discrimination and successfully obtaining military discharge upgrades remains an uphill battle, especially given the presumption of regularity in governmental affairs. This article poses potential avenues to address this issue such as class action lawsuits and issuance of Department of Defense guidance.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

**National Law School Veterans Clinic Consortium, Scholarship Committee member**  
**Michigan Veterans Legal Services Training Group, Member**  
**Lakeshore Legal Aid and Detroit Mercy Law Expungement Clinics, Volunteer Attorney**  
**Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity International, Alumni Member, Volunteer Judge for Mock Trial**