

# Alex Vernon

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*For we are sojourners before Thee, and strangers...1 Chronicles 29:15*

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*A competent and compassionate advocate aiming to provide meaningful learning experiences for law students. Committed to social justice and service learning. Striving to integrate scholarship with pedagogy, practice and service in the field of human migration law.*

## **Employment History**

### **Director/Asst. Professor of Law**

University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, Immigration Law Clinic, *Detroit, Michigan*,  
June 2015 to present

- Teaching clinical immigration class
- Supervising clinical students on immigration cases.
- Representing migrants seeking asylum and other humanitarian protection for crime victims, unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable migrants and their families.
- Representing migrants seeking release from detention
- Providing information and representation regarding Canada /US cross border family reunification
- Coordinating outreach to vulnerable immigrant communities
- Coordinating with organizations providing social services to immigrants
- Representing school at recruiting events
- Faculty Advisor, Immigration Club, Hispanic Students Association.
- Committee Member, Diversity, and Mission and Identity

### **Acting Director/Visiting Asst. Professor of Law**

Ave Maria School of Law, Asylum and Immigrant Rights Clinic, *Naples, Florida*,  
August 2011 to June 2015

- Taught clinic class, Supervised students on immigration cases
- Expanded clinic outreach to underserved community
- Created intercession clinic practicum representing detained migrants
- Served as Interim Director of Alumni Affairs, 2012
- Faculty Advisor, Immigration Club, Black Law Students Association.

### **Attorney**

Siegel, Gross & Tou, P.C., *Clawson, Michigan*, November 2008 to August 2011(now of counsel)

Robert M. Birach, P.C., *Detroit, Michigan*, May 2008 to September 2008

Piston & Carpenter, P.C., *Troy, Michigan*, August 2005 to May 2008

- Specialized in Family Immigration, Removal Proceedings, Asylum/Humanitarian

- Relief, SIJS, VAWA, Private Bills and Prosecutorial Discretion requests
- Handled H1, J, TN, F-1, B-1, B-2, P-3 and other non-immigrant matters
- Argued before Federal District Court, Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals
- Member, American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Board Member, Strategic Partnership. (pro-se court orientation sessions.)
- Volunteer at Most Holy Trinity Legal Clinic, Freedom House
- Member, Windsor-Essex Anti-Trafficking Committee

## **Education**

### **Ave Maria School of Law, Ann Arbor, Michigan**

- Elected President, Alumni Association, November 2006
- Juris Doctorate, May, 2005

#### **Student Clinical Worker**

Ave Maria Asylum and Immigrant Rights Clinic, *Ann Arbor, Michigan*, 2004-2005

- Represented asylum claimants, VAWA self-petitioners
- Prepared brief to Board of Immigration Appeals

#### **Student Extern**

Freedom House, *Detroit, Michigan*, 2003-2004

- Successfully represented asylum claimants
- Collaborated on brief to Board of Immigration Appeals
- St. Ives award for defense of Catholic moral and social order, May 2005
- President, Human Rights Club, 2004, 2005
- Volunteered at Windsor-Essex Bilingual Legal Clinic, Spring 2004
- Awarded St. Thomas More Academic Scholarship (full tuition)

### **The University of Toronto, St. Michael's College, Toronto, Canada**

- Honours B.A. in Political Science (Christianity & Culture minor), June, 1998
- Focused on Politics of Developing World
- Volunteer with Peacegames
- Sr. St. John and St. George's College Old Boys entrance scholarships

## **Presentations**

Panelist, "Unique Opportunities of Immigration Law: Where Would You Like to Migrate", AILA Video Roundtable Session on Wednesday, November 29th at 1:00 PM Eastern titled

Presenter, Immigration and Refugee Law Careers Panel, University of Windsor School of Law, October 16, 2023

Presenter, "U.S./Mexico Border and U.S./Canada Border" 40th Anniversary Church Asylum Conference, Berlin, August 31, 2023, <https://amp.dw.com/en/germany-40-years-of-church-asylum/a-66682838>

Presenter, “U.S./Canada Border and Irregular Crossers”, International Sanctuary Declaration Network delegation to Poland/Belarus border organizations, Podlasie, Poland, September, 2023

Presenter, “Safe Third Country and Irregular Crossers” Midwest People Of Color Conference, Detroit Mercy School of Law, April 22, 2023

Presenter, “Safe Third Country Agreement and Canada border crossings” Presented at Immigrant Advocates Response Collaborative, New York, NY, June 7, 2023

Presenter, “Safe Third Country and Irregular Crossers” at 77th Annual Midwest Legislators Conference, Detroit, Michigan, July 9, 2023

<https://csgmidwest.org/annual-meetings/mlc/presentations-from-2023-meeting-in-michigan/>

Presenter “Expansion of the Canada US Safe Third Country Agreement”, French language Podcast interview with Amjambo Africa on April 6, 2023 <https://www.amjamboafrika.com/la-frontiere-americano-canadienne-the-u-s-canada-border/>

Panelist “Refugees Are Welcome Here: Journeys to Justice and Joy”, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, April 3, 2023

Presenter “STCA and Canada/US Border issues”, Compass Refugee Centre AGM, January 21, 2023

Interview “Effects of the STCA and Update on the Supreme Court Challenge”,

[www.empoweryourselfnow.ca](http://www.empoweryourselfnow.ca) October 21, 2023. Available at:

<https://empoweryourselfnow.ca/2022/10/21/effects-of-the-canada-u-s-safe-third-country-agreement-and-update-on-supreme-court-hearings/>

Presenter “Practical Solidarity with Migrants and Refugees” Rehumanize International Conference, October 15, 2022.

Presenter “STCA and Canada/US Border issues, Center for Migration Studies 2022 Catholic Immigrant Integration Initiative (CIII) Conference September 13, 2022, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI

Presenter “Minors in Immigration Law”, Presentation to Debora Paruch’s Children in the Law Class, May 18, 2022

Presenter “Asylum Law”, Albion College students visiting Detroit Mercy Law, May 12, 2022

Co-Presenter “US/Canada Family Reunification Cases”, Young Center for Immigrant Rights, May 16, 2022.

Co-presenter “US/Canada Border issues” Jesuit Migration Network of US/CAN - March 23, 2022

Panelist “Bridges not Fences V”, University of Detroit Mercy, March 1, 2022

Discussion Group Moderator on "The US-Canada border in the age of COVID ", Canadian Council for Refugees, Fall Consultation, November 27, 2020

"How Does Trump Prevent Asylum Claims in the United States?" video for "Move in Generations" on US asylum restrictions.

<https://youtu.be/LrABf2A7pKQ>

Presenter, Multilingual Safe Third Country Video Series (for distribution to immigrant communities): July, August 2020 with upcoming revisions.

<https://www.amjamboafrika.com/15659/>

<https://youtu.be/xYjdBkxRXzU>

<https://youtu.be/MowjbnnqKc4>

<https://youtu.be/eybY0zbu93Q>

<https://youtu.be/XBlwsaVgEsw>

“Safe Third Country Agreement and the U.S. Canada Border”, interview with Amjambo Africa on November 5, 2020 <https://www.amjamboafrika.com/video-the-safe-third-party-agreement-and-the-u-s-canada-border/>

Panelist on "No Right Way for Asylum Seekers" Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice, October 26, 2020

[https://youtu.be/CG6F\\_oKRS5I](https://youtu.be/CG6F_oKRS5I)

Panelist on "VAWA, T, U Visas" Annual Conference, American Immigration Lawyers Association, July 20, 2020

Panelist on "COVID19 and Migrants in the Americas" Ignatian Solidarity Network, April 27, 2020

Panelist on “Border Issues, Rumours and Realities” Canadian Council for Refugees National Fall Consultation, Ottawa, November 29, 2019.

Panelist on “Take Back the Night and Day and Night” Domestic Violence Prevention and Awareness Across Cultures, Detroit Mercy School of Law, October 22, 2019.

“Asylum and Refugee Law,” Albion College visit to Detroit Mercy Law, 1/09/2019

Panelist on “Borders and Black Asylum Seekers”, University of Toronto Caribbean Solidarity Network, March, 29, 2018.

Panelist on Project Ploughshares/Canadian Council of Churches Immigration Engagement, Waterloo, Ontario, April 10, 2018

Panelist with Detroit Mercy ACS and HiLSA Immigration Event/ April 11, 2018, Detroit Mercy Law

Presenter on US Immigration and US Canada Border issues at Interclinical Meeting, Neighborhood Legal Services, Toronto, April 13, 2018

Presenter on US Immigration and US Canada Border issues at Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Toronto, April 25, 2018

“Seeking Refugee Status in Canada,” African Bureau of Immigration & Social Affairs, 1/13/2018

“Asylum and Refugee Law,” Albion College visit to Detroit Mercy Law, 1/10/2018

“Irregular Crossings from the US”, Canadian Council for Refugees Fall Convening, 11/02/2017

“Deferred Action on Childhood Arrivals”, Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry, 9/25/2017

“Advising Students During Uncertain Times.”, Mid-West Association of Pre-Law Advisors (MAPLA) Conference Wayne State University, 9/22/2017

Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers - Windsor Chapter, Panel Discussion “American vs. Canadian Immigration Law”, University of Windsor, 2/6/2017

Oakland County Bar Association, Pro-Bono Mentor Match Training, “Visas for Crime Victims”, 1/27/2017

Detroit Mercy Faculty of Law, “Know Your Rights Panel”, University of Detroit Mercy main campus, 1/19/2017

“Sanctuary Teach in”, Panel Discussion, Department of History, University of Michigan, 1/11/2017

“Immigration Law as Vocation”, Ave Maria Fall Fest, Ann Arbor, MI, 11/19/2016

Detroit Mercy Law, Dean’s Advisory Board Presentation by new faculty, 10/22/2016

“Asylum and Refugee Law, with Acid Survivor Nurjahan Khatun”, Detroit Mercy Law, 1/6/2016 Albion College, Albion, MI, 10/13/2016

University of Detroit Mercy, Mission Micro-grant presentation, 09/22/2016

National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month Seminar presentation: “Working with Victims of Crime”, Presentation to Law Enforcement Agencies, Homeland Security Investigations, Detroit, MI 1/28/2016

“DHS Deferred Action Programs”, Presentation to Mexican Consulate-Detroit’s “Labor Week” program, 9/3/2015

**Media:**

“Court denies Safe Third Country Agreement appeal: But advocates vow to continue ways to nullify refugee agreement”, By Michael Swan, The Catholic Register,  
<https://news.rcdos.ca/2023/06/21/court-denies-safe-third-country-agreement-appeal/>

“Crisis? What crisis?” BY MICHAEL SWAN, THE CATHOLIC REGISTER, March 23, 2023,  
<https://www.catholicregister.org/item/35373-crisis-what-crisis>

“Safe Third Country Agreement before Supreme Court” BY MICHAEL SWAN, THE CATHOLIC REGISTER, October 9, 2022  
<https://www.catholicregister.org/item/34848-safe-third-country-agreement-before-supreme-court>

“Safe third country appeal heading to Supreme Court” BY MICHAEL SWAN, THE CATHOLIC REGISTER, December 17, 2021  
<https://www.catholicregister.org/item/33849-safe-third-country-appeal-heading-to-supreme-court>

“Asylum seekers and the U.S./Canadian border” By Kathreen Harrison, ANJAMBO AFRICA, Nov 30, 2021 |  
<https://www.amjamboafrika.com/asylum-seekers-and-the-u-s-canadian-border/>

“Haitian Americans in Michigan protest U.S. policy on migrants at border”  
Niraj Warikoo, Detroit Free Press, September 26, 2021  
<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2021/09/26/haitian-americans-michigan-protest-border-policy-migrants/5845157001/>

"Safe Third Country rules remain in place" BY MICHAEL SWAN, THE CATHOLIC REGISTER, October 29, 2020  
<https://www.catholicregister.org/item/32295-safe-third-country-rules-remain-in-place>

“Asylum seekers deserve better, say advocates” BY MICHAEL SWAN, THE CATHOLIC REGISTER, March 26, 2020  
<https://www.catholicregister.org/item/31340-asylum-seekers-deserve-better-say-advocates>

“Seeking asylum in Canada, some end up in a Clinton County jail cell instead.” (10/4/17). North Country Public Radio.  
<https://www.northcountrypublicradio.org/news/story/34795/20171004/seeking-asylum-in-canada-some-end-up-in-a-clinton-county-jail-cell-instead>

“Demandeuse d’asile libérée après 10 semaines de détention aux États-Unis” (Asylum seeker freed after 10 weeks detention in the United States) <http://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1059857/sheila-prevost-detention-plattsburgh-etats-unis-traversee-canada>

“Alex Vernon explains Marriage and Citizenship”, One Detroit Explainer, DPTV, <http://www.dptv.org/blogs/one-detroit/marriage-and-citizenship-a-one-detroit-immigration-explainer/>

“Guest column: Ending the 287(g) Program” by Alex Vernon, Acting Director, Asylum and Immigrant Rights Clinic, Ave Maria School of Law Published on: 12/7/2012, Naples Daily News <http://archive.naplesnews.com/opinion/perspectives/guest-column-ending-the-287g-program-ep-385612087-342315851.html/>

“Ave Maria law clinic aids youths seeking right to stay in U.S. under new program” Victoria Maachi, August 22, 2012, Naples Daily News <http://archive.naplesnews.com/news/education/ave-maria-law-clinic-aids-youths-seeking-right-to-stay-in-us-under-new-program-ep-387797238-342428471.html/>

“Undocumented immigrants allowed to stay in Collier as crime victims, witnesses” Victoria Maachi, November 25, 2012, Naples Daily News <http://archive.naplesnews.com/community/undocumented-immigrants-allowed-to-stay-in-collier-as-crime-victims-witnesses-ep-385768381-331579421.html/>

### **Research Interests:**

Irregular Crossings into Canada and the Safe Third Country Agreement  
Coercive Population Control and Asylum Claims

### **Professional Organizations**

American Immigration Lawyers Association  
Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers  
Canadian Council of Refugees  
State Bar Michigan Immigration Law section

### **Admissions**

State Bar of Michigan  
Federal Court, E.D. of Michigan  
Federal Court, W.D. of Michigan  
United States Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit

## **Community Service**

Michigan Immigrant Rights Center- volunteer attorney  
Freedom House-volunteer attorney  
Justicia for Migrant Workers-volunteer  
Detroit Mercy Ad Hoc Sanctuary Committee  
S.E. Michigan Catholics for Immigration Justice (Strangers No Longer)  
Canada US Cross Border Network founding member  
Canada Sanctuary Network Member  
International Sanctuary Declaration Network member  
Canadian Council for Refugees member  
Board member of the Southwest Detroit Immigrant and Refugee Center  
Board member Organización Internacional de Latinos en el Exterior (OILE SW Florida)  
Board member of the Deported Asylum Seekers Advocacy Project  
Board member, Rehumanize International  
Ignatian Solidarity Network/Jesuit Migration Network Advocacy Dimension Member  
McAuliffe Park Soccer Club- Coach  
Detroit Clark Park Coalition-Hockey/Learn to Skate program  
Coach, Riverside Minor Hockey Association

## **Languages**

French, fluent  
Spanish, reading and listening  
Jamaican Creole, speaking and listening