

2012

A Tribute to Professor Chisolm

Daniel Van Grol

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/caselrev>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Daniel Van Grol, *A Tribute to Professor Chisolm*, 62 Case W. Rsrv. L. Rev. 641 (2012)

Available at: <https://scholarlycommons.law.case.edu/caselrev/vol62/iss3/10>

This Tribute is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Journals at Case Western Reserve University School of Law Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Case Western Reserve Law Review by an authorized administrator of Case Western Reserve University School of Law Scholarly Commons.

A TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR CHISOLM

Daniel Van Grol[†]

I am fortunate to count myself among the lucky one-third of Case Western Reserve University School of Law's 2009 graduating class that had the distinction of taking Property with Professor Chisolm.

As someone who needed extra attention in the subject, she always made time to meet after class, in her office (if you could find a place to sit), in the hall, in line at Schticks (the law school's in-house restaurant), or wherever. She always welcomed questions and debate on issues, although it is hard to call any conversation I had with Professor Chisolm much of a debate, as she was always right. Her dedication to her students was admirable to me then, and, as I look back to everything else that was going on in her life in the Spring of 2007, it is downright remarkable.

I was privileged to have the opportunity to get to know Professor Chisolm in a different capacity when she selected me as a Fellow for the Center for Social Justice in the summer after my graduation. Under Professor Chisolm's leadership as Director, the Center has helped fund dozens of unpaid summer public interest internships, allowing law students to volunteer and experience opportunities that they may not have had the financial capability to do otherwise. To say that through these magnificent students, Professor Chisolm's influence has traversed continents and oceans is no exaggeration. For example, one recipient spent the summer in Nairobi, Kenya working on child sexual assault, illegal detention, and police brutality issues, while another worked at the Appalachian Citizens Law Center in Whitesburg, Kentucky helping to resolve issues raised by coal miners that ranged from black-lung benefit claims to retaliation claims for reporting unsafe mining conditions. Several others were given the opportunity to work for various Public Defenders Offices and Legal Aid Clinics, both here in Cleveland and as far away as California and

[†] J.D., 2009, Case Western Reserve University School of Law.

Florida. These are just a few examples of students whose work in the area of public interest was made more easily attainable with the help of Professor Chisolm's leadership.

Many of the projects undertaken by the Center under the directorship of Professor Chisolm were often daunting, but her brilliance and encouragement were unrelenting. I personally witnessed her actively engaged in the establishment and fostering of the Social Justice Alliance at Case Western Reserve University. The Alliance is an interdisciplinary group comprised of distinctive faculty and staff from the greater University with the intention of building collaborations to tackle various issues relating to the Center's goals. Through her vision and help, the University held meetings with civic leaders in East Cleveland with the goal of establishing ties with our municipal neighbor to combat social justice problems on our home front. The Center also established a successful and ongoing working relationship with the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences Poverty Center.

Professor Chisolm was my law Professor, my first boss as a law school graduate and attorney, a mentor, and a friend. To know Laura was to respect and admire her. By my estimation, her kindness and generosity were the only things capable of living up to her genius. I was a better student because of her, am a better lawyer because of her, and continue to strive to be a better person because of her.