

2025 Summer Fellowship

Final Report

In-House Fellowship

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This summer, I had the privilege of serving as an In-House Fellow with the International Human Rights Program (IHRP). Throughout the term, I engaged with a diverse range of legal projects, which allowed me to both explore new areas of law and delve more deeply into issues I'm especially passionate about. It was an incredibly rewarding experience to collaborate with dedicated peers and supportive supervisors who challenged us to take on complex, meaningful work.

The main project that the Fellows focused on throughout the summer was the Prison Labour project. Our report was focussed on finding connections between prison-produced goods coming from the United States and entering the Canadian supply chain. In the report, there were two sections that I focussed on primarily. First, companies known to use incarcerated labor, and companies that purchase from these companies, therefore being connected to prison labor through their supply chain. When we identified these companies, I looked into whether there was a potential connection to the Canadian supply chain—and more often than not, there was. Some of these companies were large, multinational corporations with clearly visible and significant ties to Canada. But even small companies, such as a little-known auto parts retailer, could turn out to have a surprising connection to Canadian imports.

Second, I examined prison labour programs within Canada. This area is significantly less studied than its U.S. counterpart, which made traditional research methods less effective. Instead, I sought out experts—including a professor, a PhD candidate, and a human rights lawyer—whose insights were invaluable in helping me understand the Canadian context more deeply.

As part of our research, the IHRP team traveled to Alabama to speak with individuals directly involved with or affected by U.S. prison labour programs. These in-person conversations gave us critical insight into the conditions of incarceration, the structure of prison labour systems, and the disturbing historical ties between these programs and slavery. One particularly impactful moment was observing a parole hearing—a process which, as our report discusses, rarely results in release, especially in Alabama.

Another project I focussed on, involved conducting research on potential legal avenues through which to hold a Canadian resource extraction company accountable for human rights abuses alleged to have been perpetrated abroad. I was tasked with researching various mechanisms for accountability that exist within Canada, as well as the host country, and researching past cases that have been successful or not—and why.



Team photos from Alabama

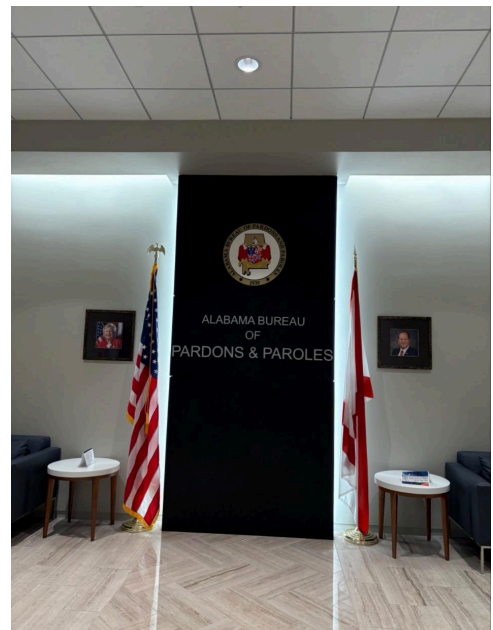
A third project that I focussed on involved an area of law that I am particularly interested in— Indigenous rights. To assist a firm in determining the likelihood of success of bringing a claim against the Crown, I did in-depth research into almost every Act in

place in Canada that addresses Indigenous rights or relations— and there are many! I compared previous versions of these acts to the versions now in place, noting key changes and what these changes could mean for a claim. Even a small change in language could be the difference between a successful claim and an unsuccessful claim.

My time as a summer Fellow with the IHRP has been rewarding, educational, and inspiring. Working with this organization has solidified my commitment to working in human rights law, and shown me that there are many avenues through which to do so. I'm happy to be continuing my work with the IHRP in the fall as a clinic student, continuing some of these projects and beginning new ones.



A picture from Sloss furnaces, a National Historic Landmark in Birmingham



The Alabama Bureau of Pardons & Paroles