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Dean Logan's Blog

Immigration Law Clinic Notches First Victory in a Liberian Asylum Case

Posted by David Logan on 11/13/2009 at 12:00 AM

Our fledgling Immigration Law Clinic has hit the ground running, winning the freedom of a 27-year old Liberian college student who suffered the horrors of the Liberian civil wars, who came to the U.S. as a refugee, then became a permanent resident. The Department of Homeland Security sought to deport him because of two offenses in RI for which he received no jail time (a receipt of stolen property and assault). He had spent 10 months in jail before the RWUSOL Immigration Clinic got involved in his case.

3Ls Jessica Grimes and Ashley Ham Pong represented the client in his application for withholding of removal, in which they had to prove to the immigration judge in Boston that it was more likely than not that he would suffer persecution in Liberia because of his ethnicity. They successfully conducted a trial on the merits and argued that he would face such persecution, and the judge agreed. The government waived appeal, and the client was released the next day. And here is the final—happy—chapter of the story: because of the hard work and skill of two Roger Williams law students (and their supervisor Professor Mary Holper) he can celebrate the holidays with his girlfriend and daughter, who was born while he was in detention.