**La Trobe Law School programs – video transcript 19/4/12**

**Narrator:**

For over thirty years La Trobe University has pioneered socio-legal studies teaching about law in it’s social, political and economic context by offering the Clinical Legal Education program.

Following an intensive induction program, Melbourne students spend a day a week during the semester at places like the Preston office of Victoria Legal Aid, and the West Heidelberg Community Legal Service.

**Ben Walsh:**

The Clinical Legal Education program at La Trobe is about teaching students legal subjects in a clinical setting, so the idea behind the subjects at Preston is to teach them legal ethics and sentencing.

**Narrator:**

The program enables law students to see how the legal system operates in practice and gives them an opportunity, through classroom discussion and journal writing, to critically reflect on this experience.

**Shannon Dellamarta:**

Being a student in a placement gave me some exposure to the day to day activities of a lawyer, the material you would have to look at, make decisions on, how you can put that material together and advocate for your client and how you can make a real difference in your clients life.

**Narrator:**

The Clinical Legal Education program teaches ‘nuts and bolt’ skills but more importantly develops the student’s emotional intelligence.

**Nick Galle:**

The part I’ve enjoyed the most is interviewing the clients, I think it’s the most relevant and most practical skill that we need to learn, and during our time at University we don’t deal with anybody, we just deal with the theoretical work. I think it’s really good to actually interact with the client, here their point of view, here how to deal with them, here how we are to interact with those we should be representing.

**Narrator:**

Students not only work on 80 to 100 legal cases but research important legal and community issues.

**John Avtzalanidos**:

It’s a great opportunity to be able to critically assess and evaluate the operation of the Australian legal system in all its constituent parts, where as confined in a Law school environment your not able to do that. So I found that to be a real opportunity and a great experience over the course of the semester

**Nick Galle:**

It gives us quite a unique experience in that we are supervised in our job, we actually have a hands on experience to what we going to be one day working in, but its just the fact we get to be mentored during it. Its been quite a good experience and very useful.

**Narrator:**

Throughout the decades the program has seen many of its students go on to be professionals in Law through contacts in their placements.

**Shannon Dellamarta:**

Undertaking a placement crystallized that I wanted to become a lawyer, in particularly a criminal lawyer, it gave me a bit of a taste for what I could expect, the decisions I would need to make, the material I would be exposed to, so it was an invaluable experience.

**Narrator:**

Students have also received offers of seasonal clerkships and supervised workplace traineeships.

**Nick Galle:**

Having the hands on experience here and seeing what the criminal area is like, I think that this could be an area that would fit me well; this would be something that I would really enjoy to practice in.

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