

GABRIELLA GARBERO

EDUCATION

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

J.D., anticipated, May 2021

Honors/Activities: Elizabeth Pendo Faculty Fellow (Disability Law); *Journal of Health Law & Policy*, Staff Editor; Frankie Muse Freeman Trailblazer Scholarship & Dean's Select Scholarship recipient; Health Law Association

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI – COLUMBIA

B.A., Film Studies with a Multicultural Certificate, May 2013

Honors/Activities: Film Production Club: Vice President of Production; Implemented the Valentine's Day Film Festival

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

LEGAL SERVICES OF EASTERN MISSOURI

Legal Intern

May – Aug. 2019

- Worked in the Legal Advocacy for Adults with Mental Illness department, advocated for clients involved in divorce, name change, identity theft, and custody/guardianship.

PARALEX, LLC

Assistant Legal Researcher

Sept. 2017 – May 2018

- Performed legal research to aid various different law firms to provide background support on their cases.

MURPHY & COMPANY

Assistant Video Editor

Nov. 2015 – June 2018

- Edited and included closed captioning on 60+ videos for the firm's bank clients.

MAGNETIC ARTS, LLC

Freelance Video Editor

Jun. 2012 – Sept. 2016

- Projects included: "Conversations about God" featuring Dr. Norris J. Chumley and actor and musician Jonathan Jackson; Promotional videos for University of Missouri's Summer Seminars in Greece study abroad program.

KSDK NEWSCHANNEL 5

Intern

May – Aug. 2011

- Wrote and produced the local promo for the 2011 MDA Labor Day Telethon and a 2-minute adoption segment on the 10 o'clock news.

THE GIRL WHO SITS

Blogger

Jan. 2017 – Present

- Created and maintain a blog exploring various aspects of disability, from how to report abuse and neglect and other practical life skills to more philosophical and abstract issues, such as bodily autonomy and mental health. (thegirlwhosits.com)

SAINT LOUIS DISABILITY MAVERICKS

Founder and President

Jun. 2016 – Dec. 2019

- Started a Meetup/support group for people with disabilities in the St. Louis area to help each other navigate community supports and become more successful, self-sufficient persons.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

NDRN'S 2019 P&A/CAP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Jun. 2019

- Participated in workshops beneficial for lawyers and other professional advocates in the disability field, such as "Sexual Consent Issues in a 'Me Too' World," "Advocating for Migrant Children with Disabilities," and "Working with Clients Exhibiting Challenging Behaviors."

MDA'S 2017 PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY CONFERENCE

Apr. 2017

- Received training and guidance on how to navigate the current political and social landscape to help people with neuromuscular diseases live meaningful and productive lives.

ABLE - MARYVILLE UNIVERSITY

Oct. 2017

- Spoke at an intersectionality panel at Maryville University. Topics included gender issues, discrimination, and media representation of people with disabilities.

STATEMENT

I am a woman who was born with a neuromuscular disability called Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2 (more commonly known as SMA). I am missing a protein in my muscles that normally accepts messages from the spinal cord and “tells” the muscles to move. Being born with SMA caused me to start using a motorized wheelchair to get around at two years old, and it has led me through a few interesting speed bumps and obstacles on my life journey. This disability is one of a few reasons that I would be a perfect fit for the role and responsibilities of the ABA Delegate of Diversity and Inclusion. Most importantly, my disability infused in me the personal motivation and determination necessary to not only be successful in law school, but to also allow me to bring a unique and stimulating perspective to others, both inside and outside of the field of law.

Growing up, I felt and looked different from everyone around me. And, being from the Midwest, it felt like I was constantly bombarded with platitudes about how to handle the only challenge anyone thought I had. “The only disability is a bad attitude!” “Stay strong! You inspire everyone around you!” and my personal favorite, “Wow, when I’m with you I almost forget you’re disabled!” When I was young, those kinds of statements annoyed and frustrated me. I knew that my disability was the first and last thing anybody noticed about me and I hated it. There were so many other parts of me and aspects of my personality that I wanted people to notice. There were so many things that I wanted to bond and connect with people about. When people made comments about my disability, it felt like they were adding another brick to the wall that seemed to exist between myself and everyone around me. As I got older and started thinking a little more globally, I realized that the people saying those things were trying to connect with me.

From the time I realized that these interactions were an opportunity for connection, I learned to teach others through advocacy. And I learned not only to teach others, but to learn from them as well. Learning to speak a different social or cultural language helps me do my part to make the world a richer, more interesting place through understanding and tolerance. Those imaginary bricks that I thought were stacked between me and other people could be used to build a house big enough for everyone.

The field of law should be custom-built from diverse interests and life experiences. A lawyer is an advocate and by promoting diversity, we teach ourselves to advocate for others by adding to our own understanding. I am thrilled to bring my unique perspective and skills to the ABA and I eagerly believe that I have as much to contribute to the Law Student Division Council as I have to gain from it. I hope to advocate for the voices of others within the field of law, as I have learned that diversity is rewarding for its own sake. I came to law school to learn to stand up for other people and prevent perspectives from being silenced. As the ABA Delegate of Diversity and Inclusion, I plan to amplify diverse voices within the field of law.