

International Comparative Family Law Scholarship Testimonial by Bobby Dhiman



Aalborg Universitet (AAU),
Denmark



International Academy of Family
Lawyers



BOBBY DHIMAN'S TESTIMONIAL

What a time it has been. To say this summer school was a learning experience would be an understatement, it was, in every sense, a deeply transformative. Receiving this scholarship from the Academy is an honour that I will carry with me for the rest of my life. It still moves me to think that the academy believed in me enough to open this door, and for that, I remain forever grateful.

The program gave me so much more than knowledge. It invited me to question, to feel, and to grow. I found myself drawn into conversations that stretched my heart as much as my mind, mostly on surrogacy, parenthood, legal recognition of adult relationships, and legal gender. These were undoubtedly my favorite topics, as the eye-opening perspectives and debates during the tutorials challenged me to reflect critically on the regime of laws in our country and how, with changing times, they have to be reflected in our legal reforms. The facilitation of the comparative family law sessions from Prof. Jens Scherpe was exceptional, he is, I must say, as good as they can get, what a way of teaching and what a way to provoke thoughts!

This experience was wrapped in warmth. I am leaving with a heart full of joy, laughter, and memories that will last a lifetime. Having had doors and hearts generously opened to us. Sitting in homes and connecting with people whose incredible wisdom and perspectives has shaped me so dearly, their stories and kindness have become part of me. A truly humbling highlight of this journey was the privilege to meet Jens Røn, President of the Western High Court in Viborg. Learning directly from his vast expertise and witnessing such high-level judicial

leadership firsthand was an inspiring moment that left an indelible mark on how I will want to be a humanized colleague and leader in my legal path.

To the Academy- our sponsors, again, words cannot fully capture what this opportunity means to me, you nurtured a dream and gave me the courage to believe in myself. This ideally is not the end of a program, but the beginning of a lifelong bond; wherever life and our legal careers take us, we remain forever indebted to this institution.

And to the people who made every day feel possible, The Executive Director IAFL Ms Annie Dunster, Ms Ruth Juliet Gachanja (Associate Fellow-IAFL), and @Prof. Jens Scherpe (Fellow-IAFL)—thank you for your tireless coordination and for holding everything together with such grace. To Prof. Jens Scherpe , Agnete Rønne Stenholm (PHD fellow-Aalborg), and our loving and warm lawyers from Copenhagen Ms Anne Heide-Jørgensen(Fellow-IAFL), Ms Maryla Wroblewski(Fellow-IAFL), your extraordinary hospitality to us gave us more than comfort. You made us feel seen, cared for, and welcomed in a way that turned strangers into family.

Thank you IAFL and Aalborg University, from the deepest part of my heart. This journey has changed me, and I will spend my life paying forward the kindness and belief you have shown me. May this beautiful program continue to touch many more, open hearts, and shape the future of scholarship in family law.

ASANTENI SANA!

Academic Research & Mentorship



“
Standing before the Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg
quote wall



In the University's Library



 Engaging in mentorship and learning from Judge.
Jens and Prof. Jens



An unforgettable evening sharing Danish meals



CULTURAL SYNTHESIS

We highlighted and shared the traditional red-and-white Maasai Shuka cloth.

♥ Sincere Appreciation



🙏 Gratitude

Thank you **International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL)** for their generous sponsorship and support, and to **Aalborg University, Denmark**, for providing an incredible academic environment for comparative family law scholarship.

A REPORT ON MY TWO-WEEK COMPARATIVE FAMILY LAW EXCHANGE PROGRAMME IN DENMARK

BY: MAMPAI CHRISTINE

Greetings!

I write this report with a heart full of gratitude following my wonderful two-week experience in Aalborg, Denmark. From the application process to arriving in Denmark, attending engaging lectures, meeting wonderful people and experiencing a new culture, the entire journey was truly worthwhile.

I sincerely thank the **International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL)** and its partners for giving us this opportunity and for the support shown to us before, during and after the programme. This experience has contributed greatly to my academic growth and personal development.

MY ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

During our time at Aalborg University, we attended lectures on many interesting topics, including surrogacy, children's rights, parental responsibility, legal gender, same-sex relationships, divorce, marriage, cohabitation amongst others.

The lectures made me realize that there is still so much to learn about family law as it touches on people's everyday lives.

I am especially grateful to Professor Jens for his thoughtful and engaging lectures, Ms. Marylla and Ms. Anne (IAFL Fellows), who joined us in class and shared their knowledge and experience in their areas of expertise.

The University was also very welcoming and hospitable. We were assisted in navigating the campus and attending our classes with ease. I particularly enjoyed interacting and engaging with students from Aalborg University, as we were able to share ideas and learn from one another.

CLASS PRESENTATIONS

One of the parts of the programme that stood out most for me was the individual class presentations. Some topics were unfamiliar to me at first, and they challenged me to conduct deeper research. However, the experience made me more confident in my research and presentation skills.

This taught me that it is important to understand and acknowledge differences in the various family structures.

VISIT TO THE WESTERN COURT OF APPEAL, DENMARK

Another memorable part of the programme was our visit to the Western Court of Appeal Denmark. The President of the Court welcomed us and took us around the court while teaching us about the Danish legal system. What stood out for me was the swiftness of their court proceedings and the different approaches used in dealing with various cases.

CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

My experience in Denmark was not only about academics. I also had the opportunity to learn about Danish culture.

I enjoyed the meals, the beautiful shores and harbours and the natural beauty of the country. The students also shared more about their culture with us, which made the experience even more meaningful.

WHAT THE PROGRAMME MEANS TO ME

This programme has had a great impact on me.

Before this experience, I had not seriously considered family law as a possible career path. However, the lectures, discussions and research have changed my thinking. I now have a strong interest in exploring family law as part of my future legal career.

The programme also taught me to be more open-minded. I learned that although countries may have different laws and approaches, there is always something to learn from different jurisdictions.

I have returned home rejuvenated, more open-minded and willing to learn from different people, cultures and legal systems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely thank the International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL and its partners for making this programme possible.

A special thank you goes to Miss Annie, the Director of IAFL, for her support during the application process and for the work she put into organizing the programme.

I am also very grateful to Miss Juliet from Kenya, who held our hands and guided us throughout the journey.

My sincere appreciation goes to Professor Jens, Marylla and Anne, Aalborg University, its students and everyone who contributed to making our stay educational and enjoyable.

Finally, I thank my entire team from Kenya. Sharing this journey with them challenged me, encouraged me and helped me grow in many ways.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

I strongly recommend that IAFL continues with this programme. I am sure that this kind of exposure can benefit more students than we can imagine.

Giving young law students the opportunity to learn from different legal systems, interact with legal professionals and experience new cultures can greatly influence their academic and professional journeys.

With Gratitude,

Mampai Christine

University of Nairobi

christinemampai@gmail.com



“I was convinced I had family law at heart. Until I was introduced to the comparative family law course by Professor Jens M Scherpe at Aalborg University. I was challenged to view family from the traditional aspect to different perspectives; through surrogacy, blood relations, adoption, that parentage, parenthood and parental responsibility do not have the same meaning. Marriages and registered partnerships can coexist and when there threats to laws or abuse of law policies and regulations should be implemented.

I was made to understand differences in sex development and deconstruct the concept of gender based on societal truths. I had the opportunity to learn the history of divorce, how different jurisdictions deal with divorce and matrimonial property. Professor Jens pushed me intellectually to embark on a paper with the theme being autonomy and protection in family law. After that experience I am acquainted with aspects of family law in Denmark, Hong Kong, China, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Greece and Belgium.

I was opened up to view Marital agreements: prenuptial and postnuptial agreements just like wills set to save the future. I am hoping Kenyans would one day be open minded to view things as you do, that laws do not shape society rather, society shapes laws.

I am glad I had the privilege to be part of the summer exchange program and do sincerely thank the entire International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL) for their profound support.

This was not just a summer exchange program it was an invitation to think differently about family law and people's rights in general.”

Muthoni Mwangi



Testimonial – Comparative Family Law Course

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to participate in the Comparative Family Law course in Denmark. It was an enriching experience, both academically and personally, and one that has broadened my understanding of family law and the different realities within which family law operates.

The course provided a unique opportunity to examine family law through a comparative lens and to engage with questions that are often approached very differently across jurisdictions. Our discussions on **surrogacy, cohabitation, gender and the law, changing family structures, and the rights and interests of different actors within the family** challenged many of my assumptions and pushed me to think beyond the legal frameworks I am accustomed to.

What I particularly appreciated was the recognition that there is rarely a single, universal answer to complex family law questions. The different perspectives and lived experiences brought into the classroom demonstrated how culture, history, social structures and legal systems influence the way we understand family, rights and justice. As someone working in child justice, these conversations were especially valuable because they encouraged me to think more critically about how family law decisions ultimately affect children and families in different contexts.

I am also deeply grateful to **Professor Jens** for his warmth and hospitality throughout the course. His lectures, facilitation and willingness to engage with different perspectives created an environment where we could ask difficult questions, disagree respectfully and genuinely learn from one another. The quality of the lectures and the openness of the discussions made the experience particularly memorable. Special thanks to Ms. Anne and Ms. Maryla for their warm hospitality and for making our stay away from home even better.

Perhaps one of my biggest takeaways is that **comparative learning is not simply about understanding how another jurisdiction approaches the law; it is also about holding up a mirror to our own legal systems and asking what we might be missing.**

I left the course with new questions, new perspectives and a much deeper appreciation for the complexity of family law. I am immensely grateful to the International Academy of Family Lawyers for making this opportunity possible, and I sincerely hope that many more students will have the opportunity to benefit from similar experiences.

Thank you for investing in my learning and exposing me to a different way of thinking about family law. I am excited to carry these lessons into my work and cannot wait to see more people benefit from opportunities such as this one.

With Sincere Gratitude,

Belinda Mwende Nthiga.

Youngreen Peter Mudeyi

IAFL Aalborg Family Law Summer School Report

Attending the Comparative Family Law Summer School at Aalborg University in Denmark was an academically transformative experience. I was privileged to participate through the **International Academy of Family Lawyers Comparative Family Law Scholarship**, which enabled me to attend the programme from **13 to 21 August 2026**. The opportunity exposed me to comparative approaches to family law and encouraged me to think about family law beyond the Kenyan legal system. **Professor Jens Scherpe** was exceptionally receptive, engaging and generous in his teaching, and I particularly appreciated the way he encouraged discussion and critical reflection. Tansel was equally welcoming and supportive throughout the programme. The course broadened my understanding of how different jurisdictions approach questions of marriage, relationships, parenthood and emerging family forms. I was especially fascinated by our discussions on **surrogacy**, which sparked a deeper interest in the legal, ethical and human-rights questions surrounding assisted reproduction and parenthood. I also had the opportunity to make a class presentation on ***Vallianatos v Greece*** before the European Court of Human Rights. Preparing and presenting the case strengthened my interest in the relationship between family law, human rights and comparative legal reasoning.

Our experience in Denmark extended far beyond the classroom. The stay was wonderful, and we interacted closely with fellow students whose different backgrounds brought fresh perspectives to our discussions. We visited different places, spent time along the **North Sea**, enjoyed a Picasso-related visit, took walks and experienced Danish culture in a way that made the programme especially memorable. One of the most enjoyable moments was preparing **Kenyan dishes for our Danish counterparts**, creating a warm cultural exchange outside the classroom. This experience has strengthened my desire to pursue a career in family law and to develop as a scholar in **international and comparative family law**. I hope it will be a stepping stone towards further study, collaboration and engagement with members of the International Academy of Family Lawyers, and perhaps, in time, towards becoming a member of the Academy myself.

My sincere gratitude goes to the **International Academy of Family Lawyers**, **Ms Juliet Gachanja and Annie Dunster** for ensuring that everything, from travel arrangements to our stay, was well coordinated. The work of the IAFL is touching lives, widening horizons and shaping

professional interests. **Kudos to the Academy**, and I look forward to many more opportunities to learn, collaborate and engage with the IAFL.