

**Caroline Bettinger-López**

Professor of Clinical Legal Education & Director, Human Rights Clinic

J.D. 2003, Columbia Law School
B.A. 1997, University of Michigan

Caroline Bettinger-López is a Professor of Clinical Legal Education and Director of the [Human Rights Clinic](http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/clinics/human-rights-clinic) at the University of Miami School of Law. She also serves as an [Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations](https://www.cfr.org/experts) and is a recipient of a [Roddenberry Fellowship](https://roddenberryfellowship.org/) for her [COURAGE in Policing Project](https://www.law.miami.edu/press/2017/december/university-miami-law-professor-wins-roddenberry-fellowship) (COURAGE=Community Oriented and United Responses to Address Gender Violence and Equality).

The Human Rights Clinic, under Professor Bettinger-López’s leadership, and three South Florida-based community organizations are the joint recipients of a grant from the [TIME’S UP Legal Defense Fund](https://nwlc.org/press-releases/times-up-legal-defense-fund-awards-grants-workers-experience-sexual-harassment/) to start the [Voces Unidas/Vwa Ini Project](http://communityjusticeproject.com/vocesunidas), to support low-wage immigrant women workers who have experienced workplace sexual misconduct or related retaliation.

From 2015 to 2017 Professor Bettinger-López worked in the Obama Administration, where she served as the [White House Advisor on Violence Against Women](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/03/04/vice-president-biden-announces-new-white-house-advisor-violence-against-), a senior advisor to Vice President Joe Biden, and a member of the White House Council on Women and Girls. At the White House, her responsibilities included co-chairing the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, chairing the U.S. Government Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women, co-coordinating the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative, and developing the cabinet-level North American Working Group on Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls (whose inaugural meeting in October 2016 included the participation of all attorneys general and indigenous affairs cabinet members from the U.S., Canada, and Mexico).

Professor Bettinger-López’s scholarship, practice, and teaching concern international human rights law and policy advocacy, violence against women, gender and race discrimination, immigrants’ rights, and clinical legal education. She focuses on the implementation of human rights norms at the domestic level, principally in the United States and Latin America. Professor Bettinger-López regularly litigates and engages in other forms of advocacy before the Inter-American Human Rights system, the United Nations, federal and state courts, and legislative bodies.

Professor Bettinger-López is lead counsel on [Jessica Lenahan (Gonzales) v. United States](http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/clinics/human-rights-clinic-gonzalez-usa) (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2011), the first international human rights case brought by a domestic violence victim against the U.S. She has [worked extensively with advocates and government officials in Canada](http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/clinics/human-rights-clinic-canada) on issues of violence against Indigenous women and girls, challenged [Stand Your Ground laws](http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/clinics/human-rights-clinic-projects#gender_justice) before the United Nations and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, collaborated with advocates in Miami and Haiti to [stop U.S. deportations to post-earthquake Haiti](http://www.law.miami.edu/academics/clinics/immigration-clinic-stop-deportations-to-haiti), and [litigated against the Dominican Republic](http://media.law.miami.edu/human-rights-clinic/pdf/2013/102813-Amicus-Press-Release.pdf) for its mass expulsions of Haitian nationals and Dominicans of Haitian descent.

Her work has appeared in numerous journals, law reviews, and online and traditional media, including: *Harvard Human Rights Law Journal, Columbia Human Rights Law Review, American Journal of International Law, the New York Times, the Miami Herald, National Public Radio, Huffington Post, Clearinghouse Review: Journal of Poverty Law and Policy, and Jotwell*. She is the recipient of the Woodhull Foundation’s Vicki Sexual Freedom Award and was named a Champion of Change by the University of Colorado Denver’s Center on Domestic Violence, alongside her former client, Jessica Lenahan.

Prior to joining the Obama-Biden White House, Professor Bettinger-López was the founding Director of Miami Law’s Human Rights Clinic (2010-2015). Before that, she was Deputy Director of the Human Rights Institute and Lecturer-in-Law and Acting Director of the Human Rights Clinic at Columbia Law School (2006-2010). There, she helped to coordinate the Human Rights in the U.S. Project and the Bringing Human Rights Home Lawyers' Network, a network of over 900 lawyers who are actively involved in domestic human rights strategies in the U.S. In fall 2014, she was a Visiting Associate Clinical Professor at the University of Chicago Law School, where she taught and directed the International Human Rights Clinic. Earlier, she was a Skadden Fellow at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Women’s Rights Project, where she focused on housing, employment, civil, and human rights of domestic violence survivors (2004-2006). From 2003-2004, she served as a law clerk for Judge Sterling Johnson, Jr. in the Eastern District of New York.

Prior to her legal career, Professor Bettinger-López worked as an AmeriCorps member in the Miami Beach public schools, where she engaged in social services advocacy and youth education centered on women and girls’ empowerment, as well as anti-violence programming. She also lived and worked in and Croix-des-Bouquets, Haiti as a secondary school teacher.

Professor Bettinger-López earned a J.D. from Columbia Law School, where she was a Harlan Fiske Stone scholar; and a B.A. from the University of Michigan, where she studied cultural anthropology and earned Highest Honors for her senior thesis, which was later published as a book, Cuban-Jewish Journeys: Searching for Identity, Home, and History in Miami (Univ. of Tennessee Press, 2000). She is a Miami native, and a proud alumnus of Palmetto High School, Palmetto Middle School, and Pinecrest Elementary School.