

Rachel C. Mathews

Acting Director • Animal Law & Policy Clinic • Harvard Law School
1585 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA, 02138
she/her • rmathews@law.harvard.edu
Licensed to practice law in Massachusetts and Virginia

EDUCATION

Tulane University Law School, New Orleans, LA

Juris Doctor, *cum laude*, and Certificate in Environmental Law, May 2011

Awards: Dean's Scholarship; CALI Excellence for the Future Award, Const. Crim. Procedure

Activities: President, Student Animal Legal Defense Fund; Notes & Comments Editor, Tulane Environmental Law Journal; Public Interest Law Foundation; Environmental Law Society

The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA

Bachelor of Arts, *magna cum laude*, History and French, May 2007

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Harvard Law School Animal Law & Policy Clinic, Cambridge, MA, August 2022 – Present

Acting Director & Lecturer on Law (July 2023 – Present)

Clinical Instructor (August 2022 – Present)

The clinic introduces law students to a broad range of legal strategies to advance the interests of animals and allows students to gain direct legal advocacy experience. My responsibilities include:

- ❖ Developing a broad docket of student-driven animal law projects, establishing and sustaining relationships with clients and partners, and implementing long-term strategic project goals.
- ❖ Guiding and supervising student work, including weekly student project meetings, reviewing and editing students' written work, and providing regular performance feedback.
- ❖ Establishing best practices and standard operating procedures to enhance virtual collaboration, ensure project continuity over time, and protect security of clinic records.
- ❖ Co-teaching a weekly two-hour clinic seminar and developing the syllabus each semester.

PETA Foundation, Washington, D.C./Richmond, VA, May 2013 – August 2022

Director, Captive Animal Law Enforcement (May 2020 – August 2022)

Deputy Director, Captive Animal Law Enforcement (May 2018 – May 2020)

Associate Director, Captive Animal Law Enforcement (May 2016 – May 2018)

Counsel, Captive Animal Law Enforcement (May 2013 – May 2016)

Co-directed a 16-person, multidisciplinary team of lawyers, veterinarians, captive wildlife specialists, and other professionals to advance PETA's mission to end the use of wild animals in entertainment, including in circuses, traveling shows, and roadside zoos. Key accomplishments:

- ❖ Led a successful campaign to secure the seizure of Nosey, an elephant neglected by a circus; supported local authorities throughout the trial and appellate process to defend the seizure; persuaded federal authorities to terminate the Animal Welfare Act license of the circus.
- ❖ Conceptualized, researched, and factually developed novel litigation and regulatory strategies to advance PETA's captive wildlife campaigns.
- ❖ Advanced legislation across the country to ban the use of wild animals in circuses and the cruel weapons used to train them. Led PETA's successful campaign to pass California's Circus Cruelty Prevention Act, which bans the use of animals in circuses.
- ❖ Secured favorable media coverage of animal rights issues in local, national, and international news outlets.

READ Center, Richmond, VA, June 2021 – Present

Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutor

Provide weekly volunteer classroom tutoring via Google Meet to help low-literacy adults improve their reading, writing, math, and digital skills.

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, Richmond, VA, August 2012 – May 2013

Adjudication Specialist

Prepared and presented disciplinary cases at administrative law hearings before regulatory board members. Analyzed evidence, identified regulatory violations, and recommended appropriate dispositions. Communicated with investigators, complainants, licensees, attorneys, and regulatory board members throughout the administrative disciplinary process.

Animal Legal Defense Fund, Cotati, CA/Richmond, VA, May 2012 – July 2012

Remote Litigation Clerk

Developed legal strategies to advance the interests of animals. Analyzed impacts of potential campaigns and proposed legal and policy alternatives. Drafted federal legislation and successfully lobbied for its introduction into the House of Representatives. Prepared briefs, motions, and memoranda for state and federal litigation.

Animal Welfare Institute, Washington, D.C., August 2011 – May 2012

Policy Associate, Farm Animal Program

Analyzed state and federal legislation impacting animal welfare. Developed and implemented legal and public policy campaigns to advance animal welfare. Advocated in favor of legislative and regulatory measures targeting unnecessary and inhumane practices. Engaged key policymakers through public comment and meetings. Pursued alternative dispute resolution to promote truth in food labeling.

Tulane Civil Litigation Clinic, New Orleans, LA, August 2010 – May 2011

Student Attorney

Pursued constitutional claims in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana to challenge the state's funding of public defenders through the imposition of fees on convicted indigent defendants. Argued motion in federal court. Prepared pleadings, motions, briefs, and memoranda. Developed case strategy and conducted legal research on equal protection, due process, right to counsel, mootness, and class certification.

Earthjustice, California Regional Office, Oakland, CA, June 2010 – August 2010

Law Clerk

Prepared memoranda on federal and state environmental laws, attorney's fees awards, and civil procedure. Wrote portions of brief filed in state court under California's Endangered Species Act.

Farm Sanctuary, Watkins Glen, NY/New Orleans, LA, May 2009 – August 2009

Law Clerk

Prepared memoranda on novel approaches to animal protection involving federal and state law, animal cruelty, consumer protection, and torts. Monitored proposed legislation and regulations.

Tulane Legal Assistance Program, New Orleans, LA, September 2008 – April 2009

Law Clerk

Conducted client intake. Prepared demand letters for housing, contract, and family law issues.

PUBLICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Participant, Cambridge Centre for Animal Rights Law, 2023 Law Lecturers' Workshop in Animal Rights Law, Burlington, VT (May 8-12, 2023)

Guest Lecture, *Captive Wildlife Law*, in Professor Elan Abrell's Animal Law and Policy course, Wesleyan University (April 25, 2023)

Guest Lecture, *The Animal Welfare Act*, in Professor Kristen Stilt's Animal Law course, Harvard Law School (February 28, 2023)

Book Review, 25 J. Int'l Wildlife L. & Pol'y 187 (2022) (reviewing Rosemary-Claire Collard, *Animal Traffic: Lively Capital in the Global Exotic Pet Trade*, Duke Univ. Press 2020, ISBN 978-1-4780-1092-0)

Speaker, *Status of Elephants in Entertainment*, Performing Animal Welfare Society's International Captive Wildlife Conference, Sacramento, California (November 2022)

Panelist, *Elephants in Tennessee: A First-Hand Account of the Fight for Nosey's Freedom*, Tennessee Bar Ass'n Animal Law Section CLE (December 2020)

Speaker, *Elephants, Captivity and Conservation*, Performing Animal Welfare Society's International Captive Wildlife Conference, Burbank, California (November 2018)

Pro/Con: Are zoos and public aquariums harmful to animals?, CQ Researcher (July 2018)

Panelist, Free the Elephants International Conference and Film Festival, Portland, Oregon (April 2018)

Speaker, *Protecting Animals, Protecting Workers: Making Occupational Health and Safety Work for Animals*, Lawyers, Tigers & Dogs, Oh My CLE, Louisiana State Bar Ass'n Animal Law Section (December 2014)

Humanewashed: USDA Process Verified Program Misleads Consumers About Animal Welfare Marketing Claims, Animal Welfare Institute (March 2012)

Recent Development, *Apollo Energies, Inc. v. United States*, 24 Tul. Env'tl. L.J. 195 (2010)

Note, *Summers v. Earth Island Institute: Injury, Precedent, and the Environmental Standing Saga*, 23 Tul. Env'tl. L.J. 171 (2009)

SELECT MEDIA INTERVIEWS, STATEMENTS, AND COVERAGE

[Ringling Circus Is Returning. Lions, Tigers and Dumbo Are Not.](#)

New York Times (May 18, 2022)

[Wild Things: Siegfried & Roy](#) (Episode 6, “White Tiger Conundrum”)

Apple TV+/At Will Media (February 9, 2022)

[USDA accused of ignoring animal welfare violations in favor of business interests](#)

National Geographic (October 13, 2021)

[Can Elephant Tourism Be Ethical? PETA Weighs In.](#)

Fodor’s Travel Guide (December 9, 2020)

[PETA claims Pittsburgh Zoo sought to import 13 young elephants from the wild last year](#)

Pittsburgh’s Action News (February 27, 2020)

[PETA raises concerns over baby elephant’s treatment](#)

Associated Press (December 14, 2018)

[Ringling Elephants Retire to Florida for Cancer Research](#)

NPR Weekend Edition Sunday (May 8, 2016)