

Let me introduce myself. My name is Krystsina Kananchuk – a law student at NIU College of Law. Since I was a little child I had a dream – becoming a lawyer. I am coming from “historically underrepresented” group – the former Soviet Union and the family who has experienced political and KGB abuse. I was born and raised in Belarus – the last soviet-style dictatorship in Europe. During the time of my childhood my country was going through many political changes. So I witnessed fraudulence, negligence of the law and power abuse. Even though I didn’t understand the whole thing and heard the information from here and there, I realized how it all intrigued me in a comprehensive way. My love for the law was abundantly clear at a young age same as my dislike for totalitarian regimes.

About seven years ago I moved to the United States by myself. I am the first one from my family to move away to a different country. I was the visible representation of a first-generation child of immigrants, branching out into a new environment. I was nineteen and I didn’t know how American society functioned. I didn’t really understand the community, but I had been forced to explore it. Being part of a minority was very conflicting for me as I felt both empowered as a part of the former Soviet Union minority community but also disconnected from my non-immigrant peers. Coming from a background of poverty, I knew that, even at young age, had to be a good student in order to succeed. We all – immigrants, people who came to America to fulfill their “American Dream” – came here to pave ourselves and our families a better future. Having been exposed to totalitarian regimes and political abuse as a child, help me understand my passion for democracy and human rights. I have met a lot of people from various cultures, nationalities, and religions – immigrants like me – with the same kind of experience. Their stories and struggles made me even more passionate about advocating human rights as a lawyer.

Having a lot of experience in handling stressful situations and working with people from

various cultures, nationalities, and religions will be beneficial for the law career. I am not afraid of challenges and always thrive for knowledge. This is my goal to make steps that will change the way society see groups of people, I have described above, differently. I would like to grow into someone who is loved and remembered by people who are not my immediate family. I don't want to be glorified, but I want to be much more than a nonentity in this huge world. I hope that if I can inspire the change that I want to make, I can leave a legacy that that continues to influence and shape the generation and the world that follows me.