



**The Pre-Law e-Newsletter from Pre-Professional Programs & Advising**

\*Best viewed in HTML\*

**Vol. 4, No. 9**

Friday, February 18, 2011 – Thursday, March 3, 2011

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**1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.**

For those that took the February 12th LSAT, I hope it went well! For those deciding when to take the LSAT in the future, remember that the February administration is the only non-disclosed LSAT. This means that your test will not be returned to you in conjunction with your official score. This is important to know, because, if you need to take the LSAT again, it is helpful to have the test to review to pinpoint weaknesses. Remember you can always schedule an appointment with me to strategize the best time for you to take the LSAT:

<https://www.securedatatrans10.com/ap/johnshopkinsuniversityofficeofpreprofessionalprogramsadvising/index.php?page=10>

With so much discouraging press about law school and the legal market, it is important to remember that persistence and initiative significantly impacts your chances of success. Below is an article addressing what other factors law firms and legal employers look for when hiring, as well as one JHU alum's experiences as a 2L and path to a summer associate position at White & Case in NYC.

**2. WHAT LAW FIRMS CONSIDER WHEN HIRING**

Traditionally, grades, class rank, law school prestige and other academic pieces have been the key credentials considered for big firm hires. Increasingly, employers are also focusing on softer factors, including life experience and emotional readiness.

In Chris Mondics' November 8, 2010 article in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* entitled, "Law Firms Are Looking For More Than Good Grades From New Hires," recruiters say they "tend to look extra hard at students who have some business experience before entering law school." Additionally, "interviews are less free form" instead attempting to determine whether the interviewee has the "grit needed to overcome hurdles," and to gauge if they can "understand what the client is trying to accomplish..." Law firms are looking for employees who will not spend hours hypothesizing over creative solutions for a client -- and racking up a large bill. Knowing the client's end goal and accomplishing it in as effective and efficient a manner as possible is key.

This should encourage those interested in pursuing a career in law to take some time off between undergrad and law school. Gaining more life experience and a better understanding of people and situations -- outside the classroom -- will enable better insight of the big picture as a future or first year associate.

To read the article in full, visit:

[http://articles.philly.com/2010-11-08/business/24954987\\_1\\_law-firms-250-lawyer-firm-summer-interns](http://articles.philly.com/2010-11-08/business/24954987_1_law-firms-250-lawyer-firm-summer-interns)

### **3. INTERIM YEAR(S) OPPORTUNITY: CITY YEAR**

“City Year unites young people of all backgrounds for a year of full-time service, giving them skills and opportunities to change the world.”

#### **Description**

City Year corps members serve full-time as tutors and mentors in schools, running after-school programs, leading and developing youth leadership programs and vacation camps, to make a difference in the lives of children and their communities. Although most corps experience is working with kids, members also help rebuild neighborhoods and perform a variety of transformative physical service projects.

#### **Locations**

City Year corps members serve in one U.S. location for the duration of their service year. City Year operates in 20 locations within the United States and in Johannesburg, South Africa and London, England (residency and citizenship restrictions apply for international locations).

#### **Deadlines**

Spring Application April 1, 2011

Rolling Admissions Begins May 15, 2011

#### **To Apply Online**

<http://www.cityyear.org/applynow.aspx>

**For Complete Information on City Year, Visit the Following Link:**

[http://www.cityyear.org/default\\_ektid13307.aspx](http://www.cityyear.org/default_ektid13307.aspx)

### **4. INTERVIEW: RAFAEL ROBERTI (JHU '08), 2L, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW**

Rafael Roberti was a double major in Cognitive Science and Italian Studies and graduated from Johns Hopkins University in May 2008 with a B.A. While at JHU, Rafael was a member and captain of the Johns Hopkins Tennis Team, earning the Southern Region ITA/Arthur Ashe Award for Leadership and Sportsmanship in May 2008.

Fall of his junior year, Rafael “had no major and decided to study abroad in Florence, Italy” thru New York University. When he returned to Baltimore, Rafael “took more classes in the Cognitive Science department and realized he enjoyed the research and case studies.” However, recognizing that he “would not be able to get through Organic Chemistry or seven years of medical school,” Rafael “took the LSAT his senior year as a backup plan.” While in college, during his freshman and sophomore year summers he was a volunteer at St. Barnabus Medical Center in Livingston, NJ, interned for the New Jersey State Senate Campaign of Gina Genovese the summer of his junior year, and simultaneously instructed tennis during all of his summers. Additionally, Rafael co-founded and coordinated an annual fundraiser for a spinal stroke patient entitled, “Concert for Gabe.”

After graduation, Rafael returned to his home state of New Jersey and taught tennis fulltime. In the early fall of 2008, he realized that “while he enjoyed teaching, he needed to get back to school.” After discussing with his family and friends the various graduate programs available, “like most students, [Rafael] felt that a law degree would be the most beneficial in any sector.”

In 2009, Rafael began pursuing his JD at American University, Washington College of Law. Continuing with his general admiration of the health field, Rafael worked as a *Rogers Scholar* at the National Coalition on Health Care the summer of 2010. Currently, Rafael is a Staff Member of the *Journal of Gender, Social Policy and the Law*, serves as Competition Director and Team Member of the Moot Court Honor Society Executive Board, and is a Member of the Latino Law Students' Association. He also serves as a Legal Rhetoric Dean's Fellow for incoming 1Ls.

This summer of 2011, Rafael will be a summer associate at White & Case LLP in Manhattan. While there, he hopes to continue studying all practice areas, including transactional work and litigation.

### **Questions**

#### **1) Describe a typical day as a 2L at American University, Washington College of Law (WCL).**

A typical day as a 2L at WCL is busy. It is amazing how many activities are going on at once and how many overlapping deadlines a 2L has. I typically arrive at school by 8:30am, finish preparing for the day's classes, and then spend most of the day either in class or in the library reading. Most nights I try to leave school by 7:30pm, to get home and relax. It is a long day but it allows me to get most weekends free and to keep all my work at school. One of the great things about 2L-year is that you can have some days off from classes: this semester I have class only Tuesday through Thursday.

#### **2) To date, what has been your favorite law school class, and why? How have you been choosing classes after your first year of law school?**

My favorite class has to have been Criminal Procedure. Although I do not think I will go into criminal law, the class was interesting and made me aware of my constitutional rights. The professor was also outstanding and was very engaging with the entire class. After my first year, I have been choosing classes based on whether it will be useful for my summer employment, whether it will be on the NY bar, and whether I have heard good things about the Professor. While my classes this semester seem more appropriate for a business degree, (Advanced Corporate Law, Securities Regulation, Corporate Bankruptcy, and International Business Transactions), I have enjoyed them tremendously.

#### **3) What made you choose WCL, and has it meet your expectations? What do you see as the primary pros and cons of law school, and, particularly, WCL?**

I chose WCL because I wanted to experience a new city and explore D.C. I think WCL offers a great blend of public interest law, international law, and private law. The students and faculty at WCL are incredible and you really do feel part of a community. WCL is renowned for its clinical program that allows students to take on clients, and for its human rights work.

However, I think the school has outgrown its current building. Compared to last year, the hallways, classrooms, and cafeteria are too full and the school needs to limit the number of enrolled students in order to ensure that the school's resources are not overburdened. I believe that the school is considering moving to Tenley Campus near the Tenley Town Metro Station, which would also solve the location problem. Currently, the school is too far from a metro stop and at times inaccessible; however, a new location will help greatly.

#### **4) What types of undergraduate opportunities did you pursue that led to your decision to apply to law school? Were there any experiences that you felt were particularly helpful in strengthening your application to law school?**

Everything! I went into Hopkins not having a clue about what I wanted to study. After taking classes in nearly every subject, I still did not know. I started out as an Economics Major, and then found myself walking down the Pre-Med trail, only to end up studying Italian and Cognitive Science. My senior year, I realized, like most future law students, that I enjoyed being a nerd: constantly reading, researching, and writing. Realizing that I did not want to study medicine, I decided to take the LSAT just to have it in my back pocket. I knew that I wanted to take a year off to decide whether I was actually going to pursue a law school degree.

One of the strengths of my application was the variety of activities and classes that I took. In the end, the variety allowed me to enjoy my studies. You have to enjoy what you study.

#### **5) What did you pursue during your interim year(s)/before beginning law school, while in law school and during your law school summer(s)? How did you go about researching these opportunities?**

During my one year off, I taught tennis. Although I enjoyed the experience, I missed the academics. Missing the reading, writing, and researching, made me realize that I would thrive in law school.

This past summer I interned at the National Coalition on Health Care, in D.C. I found out about the opportunity on a job-posting site that WCL offers its students. Although this site is the predominant way students find jobs, the school hosts a variety of job fairs, allowing students to interact with employers. The most important thing when searching for these opportunities is not to limit yourself.

**6) How would you compare the reality of law school and the ensuing job search to the picture you had of it while an undergraduate?**

It is unimaginable; however, I think Hopkins prepares students as best as possible. As a tennis player at Hopkins, the "school-day" is shortened due to practices, matches, and traveling; therefore, you learn to manage your time and efficiently finish your class work. Now, since I no longer play a collegiate sport, that time is used to survive the copious amount of schoolwork, bundled with extracurricular activities, and applying for jobs. As everyone says, applying for a job is a full-time job. As a law student, you have to somehow manage two full-time jobs. The biggest thing is to take a break from both; if you do not, it can be an extremely stressful process.

**7) Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in pursuing law school and a career in law given your experience in today's legal market and now as a current law student?**

Work, manage your time, and relax. There are always shortcuts you can take in classes (not reading all the pages, getting someone else's outline, etc.), but the only way to actually learn the material and succeed is to put in the time. Again, I typically work twelve-hour days: I arrived at 8:00am this morning, it is currently 10:45pm, and I am in the library making sure I have finished all my work. However, I make sure to relax on the weekends. I was proud that my entire 1L-year, I never did work on the weekends. You have to be able to get away from your work and relax, because if you stress yourself out and worry, you will not be successful. In addition, I think the legal market is improving and firms are increasing their summer associate pools. Do not worry about the lack of jobs; a great work ethic, and a desire to succeed will prevail in any market.

**Contact Information**

If you would like to learn more about being a 2L, WCL or have additional questions for Rafael, you may reach him via email at: [raffro7@gmail.com](mailto:raffro7@gmail.com)

**5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Upcoming LSAT Administration for 2011**

**Location:** Check with LSAC for testing locations (next on campus/JHU LSAT administration – Monday, June 6, 2011).

**Date:** Monday, June 6, 2011

**Time:** Registration begins at 11:30am for the June exam -- consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

**DC-Metro Area Law School Admissions Panel**

**Location:** TBD

**Date:** Wednesday, April 13, 2011

**Time:** 12:00pm to 1:00pm

**Description:** Admissions representatives from George Washington University Law School, Georgetown University Law Center and American University, Washington College of Law will be discuss their law school and application strategies.

**The Insiders Scoop: JHU Alums/Current Law School Students & First Year Associates**

**Location:** TBD

**Date:** Thursday, April 14, 2011

**Time:** 5:30pm to 6:30pm

**Description:** JHU alumni will discuss what it is like to be a law student at their respective school, summer experiences while in law school and what it is like to be a first year associate at a large firm.

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**STAFF IN THE OFFICE OF PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS AND ADVISING**

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The Administrative Coordinators are available to answer questions regarding your file:

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For students whose last name begins with A-L, contact Mrs. Krause.

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Please feel free to use the resource library between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. every day or visit our website <http://web.jhu.edu/prepro/> for additional information.

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