



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

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Friday, September 23, 2011 – Thursday, October 6, 2011

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Hope everyone's semester is moving along well and that mid-term and/or paper preparation is not too daunting this weekend and in the upcoming weeks.

I was glad to see so many of you turn out for the program on Tuesday, September 20. The Admissions Deans from Tulane University Law School and Washington University Law were also impressed. This Monday/September 26 is the personal statement workshop. I hope turnout will be equally good!

Finally, I am securing the details of an individual interview program with George Washington University Law School for the afternoon of Tuesday/October 4. Sign-ups will be required, and the program will most likely be open to current applicants only. Additionally, Yale Law School will be hosting a webinar with prospective law school applicants from Johns Hopkins, Duke, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Carolina Maharbiz, Director of Recruitment, will be on hand to answer questions about legal education, the application process, and life at Yale Law School. For additional details and to sign up for the webinar, see Section 5 below.

2. MEDIA WATCH: THERAPY DOGS IN COURT

On August 8, 2011, *The New York Times* published an article by William Glaberson entitled "By Helping a Girl Testify at a Rape Trial, a Dog Ignites a Legal Debate." The article focuses on a recent case in Poughkeepsie, New York and the first judicially approved courtroom dog in New York State, Rosie. The therapy dog was present and in frequent physical contact with a 15-year-old girl in the witness box, as she testified that her father had raped and impregnated her.

Rosie and the general concept of having therapy dogs in court has caused a legal debate and ignited claims by defense attorneys that their allowance is prejudicial to jury members and, as a result, a trial's outcome. Rosie was permitted in the Dutchess County Court under a June ruling that deemed the teenage traumatized and the defendant threatening. There had been no precedent on this issue in New York, but, "Judge Geller ruled that Rosie was similar to the teddy bear that a New York appeals court said in 1994 could accompany a child witness."

The defense raised objections to the dog's presence in court throughout trial and will appeal the ruling on similar grounds.

Arguments against having therapy dogs in court include that therapy dogs respond to stress only, which may come from false testimony being given under oath and that therapy dogs prejudice jurors with their

cuteness, spurring jurors to conclude that a testifier's distress and resultant canine comfort come from the truth being told. Arguments for having therapy dogs in court include that they act as crucial, comforting facilitators for traumatized testifiers, especially minors.

One of the biggest things you will learn in law school is how to build an argument on both sides of an issue. When you have read the article in full, ask yourself the following questions:

Regarding the ruling permitting the therapy dog in court

Do you think a teddy bear is similar to a dog, in this instance? How? How is a dog different from a teddy bear -- what are the key distinctions?

Regarding the arguments against having therapy dogs in court

If a therapy dog responds to stress only, can you think of any examples/instances when they may comfort a lying victim? If a juror/jury becomes enamored with a therapy dog in court, how might this sway their judgment of the case and the facts presented to them in court? Do you think it matters that a therapy dog cannot be cross-examined? Why and why not?

Regarding the arguments for having therapy dogs in court

How do you think a therapy dog may enable a testimony? Does your opinion of whether therapy dogs should be permitted in the witness box hinge on whether the testifier is incapacitated (a minor, developmentally disabled adult, etc.)? Why and why not?

To read the article in full, visit:

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/09/nyregion/dog-helps-rape-victim-15-testify.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all

3. INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY: ACLU's YOLANDE GREGORY STUDENT INTERN AND YOUNG VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The ACLU of Maryland (ACLU-MD) is the Maryland state affiliate office of the American Civil Liberties Union. Their mission is to ensure that all people in the state are free to think and speak as they choose and can lead their lives free from discrimination and unwarranted government intrusion. The ACLU-MD engages in constitutional and civil rights litigation, legislative analysis and lobbying, and public education on a wide range of issues.

Beyond the defense of First Amendment rights for which the ACLU is best known, the ACLU-MD has taken on major initiatives on behalf of citizens who are racially, politically and economically disadvantaged. The ACLU-MD is pursuing precedent setting lawsuits challenging segregation in Baltimore's public housing, inadequate funding of Baltimore's public schools, and racial profiling by the Maryland State Police. Beyond those lawsuits, the ACLU-MD's docket addresses almost every area of constitutional and civil rights law, including freedom of speech and association, freedom of religion, race and gender discrimination, privacy, police misconduct, the right to vote, due process, lesbian and gay rights, prisoner's rights, the rights of persons with disabilities, criminal procedure, and access to public records. (For more complete information, visit: <http://www.aclu-md.org/>)

THE YOLANDE GREGORY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Yolande "Lon" Gregory was a long-time volunteer at the ACLU-MD. Lon loved working with the ACLU staff and had a particular fondness for our student interns and young volunteers. Our internship and young volunteer program has been named in her memory.

Interns benefit from a convivial and participatory environment, learning by working closely with ACLU staff; they work to protect civil rights and civil liberties in Maryland. Undergraduate interns at the ACLU-MD perform a variety of tasks depending on the requirements of their internship (all internships are unpaid but we can work with schools to arrange credit if desired). Interns work with legal staff to help process requests for legal assistance by fielding phone calls on the complaint line (Tuesdays and Thursdays 1-3pm), help with general case investigation and research, and provide general office support. Start/end dates and hours are flexible. A commitment of at least 8 hours/week for at least 10 weeks during the school year is preferred. Summer interns are expected to work at least 2 or 3 days a week, but full-time interns are preferred.

The ACLU-MD seeks interns with excellent research and writing skills, a commitment to public interest work, and a healthy sense of humor. Candidates with office experience will be given preference. Interns should be comfortable communicating with clients from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds with a wide range of needs.

TO APPLY FOR AN INTERNSHIP

Interested applicants should send a resume, short writing sample (1-2 pages), and a cover letter explaining why you want to intern with the ACLU-MD and what sort of time commitment you can offer. It should highlight what you can offer the ACLU, and whether there are any issues you are particularly interested in.

Applications are considered on a rolling basis throughout the year. Recommended application deadlines for semester long internships are: Fall (Sept. 15, but rolling); Spring (Dec. 1); Summer (Apr. 1).

Send all inquiries and materials to Angad Singh, Legal Program Associate, at:
singh@aclu-md.org.

4. INTERVIEW: AMANDA LEESE (JHU '06), 2L, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

Amanda Leese is currently a second year law student at Northwestern University Law School and a 2006 graduate from Johns Hopkins University (JHU), where she studied international relations and economics. Amanda was a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, graduating with Honors and earning Distinction for her Senior Honors Thesis in International Relations. During her undergraduate years, Amanda was awarded a Provost Undergraduate Research Award to observe trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, studied abroad in Bosnia and Croatia, and was active with the Hopkins Undergraduate Research Journal and the Foreign Affairs Symposium. While at JHU, Amanda played for the JHU Women's Basketball Team, co-captaining the Lady Jays her senior year.

After graduating from JHU, Amanda worked for the Corporate Executive Board in D.C. as a research analyst, then as the supply chain analyst for the Clinton Foundation in Monrovia, Liberia. Before entering law school, Amanda worked for U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen from New Hampshire. Following her first year of law school, Amanda interned with a federal district court and the U.S. Tax Court.

1) Describe a typical day as a 1L.

During 1L, my typical day involved a great deal of reading and reviewing class notes, as one would expect. I had four classes my first semester and three my second, in addition to a year-long writing class (a relatively common schedule). Though each course may involve only 3-4 hours in class, per week, I easily put twice that (probably more) into reading and preparing for each class, and reviewing notes afterwards. As a general rule, I had my reading done for classes the night before, and used thirty to forty five minutes ahead of class to review. I also tried to take an hour or two after classes were finished for the day to reorganize my notes. And, I tried to do a more "macro review" of material covered in the course whenever we finished covering a major issue. I found the learning curve during 1L to be pretty sharp; reading assignments and briefing cases were very slow processes at the outset, but became much faster and more comfortable exercises after a couple months.

That said, everyone needs to find her/his own study strategy, so it's important to identify what works for you. For me, it's important to create a balanced schedule that allows for time to work out, attend to errands, get a reasonable amount of sleep, and enjoy getting to know folks in my class. I think remembering to stay balanced is an important part of succeeding in 1L and law school. Grades for most classes are based entirely on a final exam, so lighting the candle at both ends doesn't render good results if you're burned out by finals time. And equally important, you'll learn a great deal by getting to know your classmates, professors, and others within the law school community – so it's constructive to engage and enjoy opportunities to do so.

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?

I appreciated the foundational information presented in all of my classes during 1L, but favorites were probably Constitutional Law and Contract Law. It's an exciting time to study Constitutional Law and I enjoyed taking a closer look at the primary sources behind contentious public policy debates (an immediate example would be debate surrounding the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act). Contract Law was a favorite, as much for practitioner insight our professor shared as for the raw substance of the course. I generally think that any opportunity to gain a practitioner's insight into certain legal fields hugely improves a student's understanding of that issue and ability to apply that understanding in a real world scenario.

As much as I enjoyed 1L, I'm looking forward to my 2L schedule and the chance to dig into topics that have been personal interests for a while. I entered law school knowing I wanted to explore corporate law and tax law, and suspecting I would pursue transactional rather than litigation opportunities. With my 2L course selection, I'm making an effort to do that: I'm taking Business Associations, Federal Income Tax, Federal Jurisdiction, Intellectual Property, and Finance (Finance is a course actually offered at Kellogg, Northwestern's business school). In choosing these courses, my goal was lay the groundwork early for more advanced corporate and tax work and to open the door to explore complimentary interests.

3) What made you choose Northwestern University School of Law? What do you see as the primary pros and cons of law school?

Northwestern is an ideal fit for me for several reasons. First, it offers an impressive faculty and rich academic opportunities in corporate and tax law (two of my main interests). The availability of courses at Kellogg and the opportunity to write onto journals that have published extensively on those topics are among other reasons I've found Northwestern to be a good academic fit. Second, Northwestern has clinical opportunities that compliment academic work in these areas, and give students a chance to gain legal experience during the year (examples include the Entrepreneur Law Center and the Investor Protection Center). Third, the community at Northwestern is a good fit for me, personally. I had four years of work experience before entering law school, and it was important to me to have the chance to connect and study with others with similar paths to law school. Northwestern values work experience in its admissions process (3-4 years of work is common) and interviews each applicant (which is rare, if not unique among law schools). Each of these factors led me to feel that Northwestern was a good fit for my background and interests.

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?

Hopkins offers enormous opportunities for those eager to explore legal interests, and the internship and research experiences I gained during undergrad have certainly informed both my work, after graduation, and my law school experience. I had three experiences at Hopkins that were particularly formative: first, was the chance, through a Provost Undergraduate Research Award, to observe and report on the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia; second, was the opportunity to study abroad in Croatia and Bosnia, where I was able to research a topic that grew into my senior thesis; third, was the chance to intern with the Department of State in Baku, Azerbaijan. These were all diverse opportunities that shaped my understanding of various legal roles and opportunities. But, whatever a person's legal interests may be, she/he can hugely benefit by exploring those interests early, reviewing those experiences critically, and using lessons learned to determine the best path for her/his interests and skill set.

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)?

I had four years of work experience between Hopkins and law school that I've found consistently contribute to my law school experience and post graduate opportunities and interests. I spent my first year out of school as a research analyst for a corporate strategy firm in D.C., and my second year out of school as a supply chain analyst in Monrovia, Liberia. For the two years prior to law school, I worked for a U.S. Senator from my home state of New Hampshire. Each of these experiences has been critical factors in my growing understanding of the legal issues I hope to work on after law school.

Equally, my summer externships during 1L summer have enabled me to gain greater insight into the federal court system. I split my summer, spending the first half at a federal district court and the second half at the U.S. Tax Court.

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?

Well, certainly the realities of the legal market have changed significantly over the past few years, as with many industries. These changes reinforce, for me, the value of entering law school with an understanding of one's own strengths and interests. Whether that understanding comes from rich undergraduate experience, work or research, travel, or other opportunities, I think it's important for students entering law school to have focus. That's not to say that students need to know what they want to do after law school before they enter; to the contrary, I think most students benefit from the flexibility to explore during law school and a willingness to see where their talents and interests may develop. But, a great deal of the learning experience in law school comes in the form of competitive externships as well as clinical and journal opportunities. Consequently, having the focus to identify and successfully pursue these opportunities is a major factor in maximizing the value of law school.

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?

Consistent with the above, I think it's important for a student interested in law school to vet her/his interests a bit, before applying. I personally found great value and satisfaction in working before law school, but that's certainly not the only route. Prospective law school applicants should be energetic about reaching out to friends, family, colleagues and mentors who can offer insight into the day-to-day realities of practicing in particular legal areas. And, cast a wide net. Some of the best professional opportunities I've had began through online research or cold calls – so I'd recommend reaching to folks who are doing work you find interesting, even if you don't have a connection to them. Most importantly, students should avoid self-selecting out of competitive opportunities. There is a myriad of options available to undergraduates, especially at a place like Hopkins. Students interested in law school should explore their academic and professional interests early and often – that energy and tenacity is an important part of getting into and doing well in law school.

Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about Northwestern University Law School or have additional questions for Amanda Leese, you may contact her at: amanda.leese@gmail.com.

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Personal Statement Workshop

Location: Gilman 17

Date: Monday, September 26, 2011

Time: 5.30p-6.30p

Description: Robert Condlin, Professor of Law, University of Maryland School of Law, will offer a general overview of the “sleeper” in the law school application process. Obtain suggestions and tips on how to draft your best personal statement.

Upcoming LSAT Administration for 2011/2012

Location: Check with LSAC for testing locations (next on campus/JHU LSAT administration – Saturday, October 1, 2011).

Date: Saturday, October 1, 2011/Saturday, December 3, 2011/Saturday, February 11, 2012

Time: Registration begins at 8.30a for the October exam -- consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

George Washington University Law School Individual Interviews

Location: Levering, Conference Room A

Date: Tuesday, October 4, 2011

Time: 12noon-2p

Description: Sophia Sim, Associate Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, George Washington Law, will conduct individual interviews with prospective current applicants. Advanced sign-up required; additional details to follow.

Yale Law School Admissions Office Video Webinar

Date: Monday, October 10, 2011

Time: 2.00-3.00 EDT

Description: Carolina Maharbiz, Director of Recruitment, Yale Law School, will be on hand to answer your questions about legal education, the application process, and life at Yale Law School. The event is open to current students, alumni, and staff of Duke, Johns Hopkins, North Carolina State University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. No special computer hardware or software is required to attend the webinar, just a modern web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, etc.) and a recent version of the Adobe Flash plug-in. After you register, you will be sent a link through which you can test your computer and Internet connection prior to the event. If you are unable to join the webinar at the above date and time, it will be recorded and made available to individuals who registered for the event.

The format of the webinar is question and answer, so be prepared with questions.

Advanced registration is required. To register for this event, please visit:

law-yale.adobeconnect.com/dukejhuncsuunc11/event/event_info.html.

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

Carolyn Mae Krause, Administrative Coordinator, [ckrause@jhu.edu](mailto:ckrause@jhu.edu) 410-516-6744

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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