



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

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Vol. 6, No. 8

Friday, February 15, 2013 – Thursday, February 28, 2013

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Regardless of when you intend to apply to law school, it is not too early to start thinking about letters of recommendation (LOR). LOR are heavily weighted factors in any graduate school application. The more personal they are, the more persuasive they are. Get to know your professors better. Visit them during office hours, speak up during and with the professor following class. Ideally, you would have two LOR from professors as part of your law school application package. You should also aim to obtain a third LOR from a significant work, internship or volunteer experience. Start planning now!

2. LEGAL EDUCATION & THE LEGAL INDUSTRY IN THE MEDIA

The dramatic drop in law school applications and matriculation over the past few years has ramped up discussion of potential changes to the current U.S. law school education model and what should be required to sit for a state bar and become licensed to practice law. Also being discussed are ways to bring income and investment into the U.S. legal industry that is not exclusively client based, as dictated by current ethical standards of the American Bar Association. In an effort to address this, one lawsuit is underway to expand law firm corporate structure. Click on the four article links below to learn more about all these issues.

From *The New York Times*:

“A Call for Drastic Changes in Educating New Lawyers”

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/11/us/lawyers-call-for-drastic-change-in-educating-new-lawyers.html?emc=eta1>

From the February 2, 2013 edition of *The Economist*, a series of articles:

“Reforming America’s legal education

The two-year itch: Could law schools be ready to change their ways?”

<http://www.economist.com/news/business/21571213-could-law-schools-be-ready-change-their-ways-two-year-itch>

“America’s lawyers

Guilty as charged: Cheaper legal education and more liberal rules would benefit America’s lawyers—and their clients”

<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21571141-cheaper-legal-education-and-more-liberal-rules-would-benefit-americas-lawyersand-their>

“America’s legal industry

The case against clones: A lawsuit could lead to more competition and more choice”

<http://www.economist.com/news/business/21571132-lawsuit-could-lead-more-competition-and-more-choice-case-against-clones>

3. INTERNSHIP: SUMMER 2013 GUARDIANSHIP LEGAL INTERN, VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE, INC. GUARDIANSHIP PROJECT

Vera Institute of Justice runs an annual summer internship program for undergraduate, graduate, and law school students: <http://www.vera.org/project/guardianship>. Interns typically work full time in one of Vera’s departments or centers and programs; some part-time positions may be available. In addition to working on individual assignments, all interns participate in events organized by the internship coordinator. For example, last summer interns visited Rikers Correctional Facility, lunched with executive-level management, and visited Vera demonstration projects.

The Guardianship Project is one of Vera’s innovative demonstration projects. It was established to provide model guardianship services to people adjudicated by the courts as incapacitated. The agency serves a culturally diverse population in Manhattan and Brooklyn. The Project employs a range of professionals including social workers, lawyers, property managers, and financial managers who work as a team to provide efficient and effective service and advocacy for our elderly and disabled clients. Guardianship practice covers a wide range of issues, including foreclosures, public benefits, social security, landlord/tenant law, real estate management and transactions, medical decision-making, and elder abuse.

- Researching, drafting, and preparing motions and other court papers
- Providing support to all members of the Legal Department
- Maintaining court docket
- Serving and filing legal papers
- Preparing affirmations detailing services provided to clients
- Appearing in court for hearings and other proceedings
- Consulting with case managers and other staff when necessary
- Conducting legal research
- Identifying clients’ legal issues as they arise, and addressing them accordingly with supervisors
- Travel to clients’ homes and residential facilities may be required

Qualifications

- Priority will be given to Rising 3Ls, but 2Ls will also be considered
- Strong interest in social justice for underserved populations
- Dedication to public interest

- Passion for working with the elderly and/or people with developmental disabilities desirable
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Creativity, flexibility, patience, and follow-through
- Excellent organizational skills and ability to work in a team environment

Salary

Prospective interns are encouraged to seek independent funding either through their law schools, colleges, universities or public interest foundations, or through fellowship grants or internship programs.

Application Instructions:

To apply please submit a resume, dates of availability and cover letter, [here](#).

However, if necessary, materials may be mailed or faxed to

Summer Internships: Guardianship Legal Internship

Vera Institute of Justice

233 Broadway, 12th Floor

New York, NY 10279

Fax: 212-941-9407

Applications received after the deadline will be considered if internships remain unfilled after all on-time applications have been considered. The Vera Institute of Justice values diversity and is an equal opportunity employer. Please visit www.vera.org for information about Vera.

Contact Information:

Vera Institute of Justice

Fax: 212-941-9407

233 Broadway, 12th Floor

New York, NY 10279

Application Deadline: 02/28/2013

4. INTERVIEW: GISELLE CHANG '11, UCLA SCHOOL OF LAW 2L

Giselle Chang is currently a second year law student/2L at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Law. She is a 2L Moot Court Participant, was a Jones Day 1L Moot Court Participant, and was a member of the Honorable Mention Mock Trial Team. Giselle is also Comments Editor of the Asian Pacific American Law Journal and Secretary of the Asian Pacific Islander Law Student Association.

The Fall of 2011, Giselle assisted individuals in wage claim issues and denial of unemployment benefits as a volunteer for the UCLA Worker's Rights Clinic through Bet Tzedek. The Summer of 2012, Giselle was a law clerk for the Office of the City Attorney's Office, where she conducted interviews of witnesses and victims in various cases before trial; prepared cases for trial by contacting police officers, securing pertinent videos, subpoenaing witnesses; and drafted motions for deputy city attorneys. This Spring 2013, Giselle is a Law Clerk with the Office of the District Attorney's Office, where she assists Deputy District Attorney Robert Grace in the Major Crimes Division and drafts motions, contacts witnesses, etc.

Giselle graduated *Phi Beta Kappa* from Johns Hopkins University in 2011 with a B.A. in International Studies & Romance Languages (French and Spanish) and as a member of Omicron Delta Kappa and Sigma Delta Pi (National Spanish Honor Society). From 2010 to 2011, she was company president of

Hopkins Modern Dance; from 2007 to 2011, she was a founding member of JHU Jaywalk Dance Team, and, the Spring of 2011, she was News & Features Editor of the JHU News-Letter.

Fall 2009 to Spring 2011, Giselle was a Recruit Assistant at the *Johns Hopkins Career Center*, and the Summer of 2010, she was an Editor and Writer of the *The Baltimore Brew*, where she wrote and edited news and features articles about local issues in Baltimore. The Summer of 2009, Giselle was a publications intern for the *United Nations Association of the USA* in New York City, where she attended UN conferences and interviewed UN personnel to write articles about the United Nations for the UNA-USA's biweekly e-newsletter, the *World Bulletin* and focused on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UNICEF. For seven Summers, from 2006 to 2012, Giselle was an international volunteer for The Thanksgiving Studio in Guizhou, China, where she taught English grammar, conversation & American culture to over 200 orphans of various ages in a Guizhou province coal mining village of China.

Questions

1) Describe a typical day as a law student.

I can't speak for a typical day for every law student, so I will describe my typical day this semester. I wake up around 6:30 AM because I like to go to the gym in the morning. Then I shower, eat breakfast, pack lunch, and maybe do some reading before my first class at 10:50 AM. UCLA Law provides a shuttle from the graduate housing where I live to the law school. I'm in class most of the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays with a lunch break. After class I go home and do reading, eat dinner, and maybe watch some television to unwind. On Mondays, I only have one class that ends at 12:00pm and then I go downtown to the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office where I am interning in the Major Crimes Division. On Wednesdays, I'm at the DA's Office for a full day.

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?

To date my favorite law class has been Evidence. I really believe that whether or not you will like a class depends largely on whether your learning style matches that of the professor. My Evidence professor is also in charge of the academic support program at UCLA and is just overall a really great teacher: he's funny and witty and makes the subject matter interesting while also being super clear in all of his explanations. The textbook was also one that he personally wrote. Similar to a hornbook or supplement there were 2-4 problems at the end of every chapter to help students think through and apply the material learned. I am in the Business Law Specialization, as well as the Critical Race Specialization, so I have been choosing classes that mostly fulfill the requirements in the two specializations. I have also been trying to take as many Bar classes as possible.

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

I chose UCLA School of Law because I knew that I wanted to practice law in southern California and UCLA is the top ranked law school in southern California. Primary cons: law school is a lot of work, and it is very difficult, as people are competitive, and it is an extremely high stress environment. Furthermore, even after struggling through three years of law school, you still have to deal with the struggles of finding a job, so you can pay off the huge amounts of student loans you've racked up. And there's no guarantee you'll find a job even if somehow you've managed to best 90% of the student population and

have an A- GPA. Pros: the subject matter is inherently interesting and important. I enjoy every single class and love what I am learning. It gives you the skills necessary to be a lawyer! If you want to be a lawyer, go to law school!

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?

I actually did not pursue any undergraduate opportunities that led me to apply to law school. I really think that law school is made up of completely diverse individuals and that no one thing will make you a standout candidate. Before applying to law school, I did not have anything legal related on my resume. I think the fact that I was a good student who scored well on the LSAT and had expressed passion in a few areas helped. I think law schools want to see that you've been devoted and invested in something regardless of what that is. For me it was journalism and foreign relations/languages, which don't have much to do with law school but it demonstrates drive, persistence, and my ability to work hard.

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?

I didn't take any time off after graduating from JHU and going to law school. Last summer I worked at the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office helping in the prosecution of misdemeanors. This coming summer I will be up in San Francisco at the District Attorney's Office. As a 2L who has taken evidence I will be able to be certified and go on the record before judges. I came to law school thinking I wanted to be a prosecutor, so I naturally applied to prosecutorial jobs for the summers. I also spoke with my UCLA Law career counselor (every 1L is paired with one) to discuss possible opportunities and to get the contact information for agencies for which I wanted to apply.

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?

The reality is harder than the picture I had as an undergraduate. As an undergraduate I thought, "oh sure law school is hard, blah, blah, blah, I'm a Hopkins graduate, I can study hard and do well." Law school is infinitely more difficult than anything else I've ever done with my life. I've never before been subjected to a forced curve (as a professor aptly put "Even if you write a great paper, if it's the worse one in the class you will get a C), which makes students very competitive. Furthermore it's imperative to emphasize the importance of first year grades. If you don't have good grades your first year, you will not get interviews for second summer jobs that translate into a full-time job. Law school and the job search are more stressful and harder than I thought while an undergrad.

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?

Think seriously about whether or not you want to go to law school. If you're not sure about what you want to do after graduating and think law school is the answer because all English majors or political science majors go to law school, think again. It's a lot of money, and it's a lot of work, and you're not even guaranteed a job after you graduate from law school. If however you know you want to be a lawyer (whether for public interest reasons or corporate ones), then you should go for it. Just be aware of the situation you're getting yourself into.

Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about being a 2L, UCLA School of Law, or if you have additional questions for Giselle Chang, you may reach her by using the following contact information:

giselleaubreychang@gmail.com

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW STUDENT MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming LSAT Administration

Location: Check with LSAC for testing locations (next on campus/JHU LSAT administration – Monday, June 10, 2013).

Date: Monday, June 10, 2013

Time: Registration begins at 11.30a for the June exam – consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

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

Ana L. Droscoski, J.D., Associate Director, Pre-Law Advisor, Pre-Dental & Pre-Health Advisor

David Verrier, Ph.D., Director, Pre-Health Advisor

Ellen Snyderman, M.S., Assistant Director, Pre-Health Advisor

Katie Cruit, M.S., Assistant Director, Pre-Nursing & Pre-Health Advisor

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.

LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, [ladytee@jhu.edu](mailto:ladytee@jhu.edu) 410-516-4140

For students whose last name begins with M-Z, contact Mrs. Sanders.

Angie Decker, Office Manager, [decker@jhu.edu](mailto:decker@jhu.edu)

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.

Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.  
Associate Director  
Office of Pre-Professional Programs & Advising

Johns Hopkins University  
Garland Hall Suite 300  
3400 North Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
Tel: 410.516.4140  
Fax: 410.516.4040  
email: [adrosco1@jhu.edu](mailto:adrosco1@jhu.edu)

[web.jhu.edu/prepro](http://web.jhu.edu/prepro)