



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

\*Best viewed in HTML\*

**Vol. 7, No. 7**

Friday, December 6, 2013

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

This will be the final e-Newsletter of the Fall 2013 semester. Please note that the office remains open for appointments thru the months of December and January. To schedule an appointment with me, please visit the following link: <https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/vkb5m10/10>

To those that applied to law school this cycle, for matriculation the Fall of 2014, please keep me posted on your outcomes. I love to hear updates and can help you if you are placed on hold or a waitlist.

Best of luck to everyone on your finals and wrapping up the Fall 2013 semester. Have a wonderful holiday season!

**2. LEGAL EDUCATION & THE LEGAL INDUSTRY IN THE MEDIA**

*"Buyers market for law jobs in 2015?" -- predictions on when the legal job market may settle*

<http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/buyers-market-law-jobs-2015>

*"To Apply or Not to Apply? That's a Tough Question" -- discusses law school as an investment, in light of the current and projected legal job market*

<http://blogs.wsj.com/law/2013/11/27/to-apply-or-not-to-apply-thats-a-tough-question/>

*"Easy ways to network during the holiday season (and possibly land a job)" -- although geared toward law students, an undergraduate can easily apply these tips*

<http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/easy-ways-network-during-holiday-season-and-possibly-land-job>

**3. OPPORTUNITY: MID-ATLANTIC REGION WORKSHOP, CLEO CONNECTION**

CLEO is a non-profit project of the American Bar Association. Since 1968, CLEO has helped more than 7,000 low-income and minority students become successful members of the legal profession. The College Scholars Program seeks to continue this standard of excellence through a collaborative effort between CLEO and colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The [CLEO CONNECTION](#) program provides a person-to-person environment where under-represented students can:

- **Find answers** to important questions about law school,
- **Create a local network** of colleagues and legal professional guides, and
- **Develop an understanding** of the legal field culture

**The Mid-Atlantic region workshop will be facilitated in the “Nation’s Capital!”**

#### **Law School Admissions Panel\***

*Thursday, December 12, 2013*

[Register Now](#)

#### **LSAT Strategies & Techniques**

*Thursday, January 16, 2014*

[Register Now](#)

#### **Law Student Panel**

*Thursday, February 13, 2014*

[Register Now](#)

#### **Attorney Panel**

*Thursday, March 13, 2014*

[Register Now](#)

*\*Unless otherwise noted, all sessions will begin promptly at 6:00pm and last until approximately 7:30pm.*

#### **Area Law Schools**

- [American University – Washington College of Law](#)
- [University of Baltimore School of Law](#)
- [Catholic University of America – Columbus School of Law](#)
- [University of the District of Columbia – David A. Clarke School of Law](#)
- [George Mason University School of Law](#)
- [George Washington University Law School](#)
- [Georgetown University Law Center](#)
- [Howard University School of Law](#)
- [University of Maryland School of Law](#)

**4. INTERVIEW: MICHELLE TELLOCK '07, ASSOCIATE, EDUCATION PRACTICE, HOGAN LOVELLS US, LLP**

Michelle Tellock is an Associate in the Washington, D.C. office of Hogan Lovells, where she is a member of their Education practice. Her practice covers a range of regulatory, litigation, and transactional matters. She advises on a variety of issues for education institutions and associations, including K-12 school districts, colleges and universities, and accrediting organizations.

Ms. Tellock received her J.D. from Yale Law School in 2011. While in law school, she was a legal intern in the Yale University Office of the Vice President and General Counsel and a leader of the Education Adequacy Project, a clinic focused on school finance litigation. She was also on the board of Yale Law Women and served as an editor of both the Yale Journal of Law & Feminism and the Yale Law & Policy Review.

Ms. Tellock graduated with honors and Phi Beta Kappa from Johns Hopkins University (JHU) in 2007, where she received a B.A. in Cognitive Science and in Sociology. Throughout college, she conducted 10 hours per week of cognitive science research and worked in the admissions office. During her junior and senior year, she was a Resident Advisor. Ms. Tellock was an active member of the debate team, which had her traveling to tournaments most weekends and serving as president of the team during her senior year. Ms. Tellock held additional part-time jobs while at JHU including: work at the Homewood House Museum, in the Sociology Department office, for the Hopkins Symphony Orchestra, and for Stocks in the Future, a non-profit organization run out of the Center for Social Organization of Schools.

Michelle Tellock is licensed to practice in Maryland and Washington, D.C.

### **Questions**

#### **1) Describe a day in the life of an Associate in the Education Practice of the Washington, D.C. office of Hogan Lovells.**

There is no typical day--which is one of my favorite things about the job and also one of the most difficult things about it. I work in my firm's education law group, which is industry focused rather than specialized in one type of law (e.g., litigation, transactional work, or regulatory work); in other words, we help colleges, universities, school districts, state departments of education, accrediting agencies, and private equity firms with anything they need that is somehow education-related. As a result, I usually bill my time to somewhere between 4-8 different "matters" or projects on any given day. Sometimes I am researching applicable federal and state regulations and helping clients understand what they need to do in order to comply with those rules. Sometimes I am drafting court filings. Sometimes I am conducting due diligence or revising transactional documents to help one of our clients enter into a contract. Sometimes I am doing an internal investigation to help a client defend itself against a government investigation. I read a lot and write a lot--but usually my writing is short, in the form of an email to a client or a short memo to a partner. I also talk with the partners throughout the day to update them on the status of my work and to brainstorm together about how to proceed, and I often participate in telephone calls with clients to provide them with advice. Although there are some long days (18+ hours, if I'm flying to and from a client for a day of meetings), there are also some short days (where I get into the office at 10 and leave by 5); I also have the flexibility to work from home whenever I want/need to do so.

#### **2) What did you pursue during your law school summers and before beginning your current position? How did you go about researching these opportunities?**

During the summer after my 1L year, I worked for the Kauffman Foundation in Kansas City. I worked in the Foundation's general counsel's office and assisted with a wide variety of legal research and drafting projects. I discovered the opportunity by regularly checking the job postings on my school's career services office website.

During the summer after my 2L year, I was a summer associate at Hogan Lovells, my current firm. I met a partner in the firm at a conference I attended for my legal clinic during my 1L year, and she recommended that I do some research into the firm's education practice; when it came time to do on-campus interviews in the fall of my 2L year, I knew that it was my first-choice firm.

### **3) What initially attracted you to your current field?**

I have had a lot of experience working with education institutions, and I find them fascinating organizations. I love being able to help institutional leaders make decisions that are in the best interests of their students, faculty, and society at large. It's an exciting time to be in the field--more students than ever are going to college, and there are lots of innovations in K-12 and higher education that have legal implications. There is always something new to learn, and I generally feel like I am working for "the good guys".

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

I'm not sure that I had any "picture" of what law school was like--I purposefully shied away from watching "The Paper Chase" or reading "One L", for example. But I thought that law school would involve a lot of reading, and it certainly did! I also thought that law school would teach me to be a more critical reader and a better writer and thinker, and it did.

I started law school before the economic downturn, and my class (2011) was caught up in the thick of the ensuing chaos in the legal market. I was blessed that opportunities for jobs remained relatively plentiful for Yale students, and I am grateful that I was able to secure a position at the firm I aspired to join.

### **5) What was your favorite law school class, and why? How did you go about choosing classes after your first year of law school?**

My favorite law school class was a two-semester seminar in behavioral economics. It was a topic I had dabbled in at Hopkins, and I was excited to read more primary material and to have the opportunity to discuss with others in a small-group environment. I also enjoyed my courses in "work and gender", "the organization and regulation of higher education", and "challenges of a general counsel."

At Yale, we were able to choose our courses after our first semester, which was one of the reasons why I decided to go to YLS--like Hopkins, it provided a great deal of flexibility to delve into things about which we were passionate. For example, I joined a legal clinic (the Education Adequacy Project, which served as chief counsel to a coalition of school districts and municipalities suing the state of Connecticut about its school funding formula) my first semester and stayed in it for five semesters. My clinic provided an opportunity to be involved in real litigation, including selection of expert witnesses, taking depositions, and making strategy decisions. I otherwise tended to select courses that were relatively small and offered the option to take an exam (rather than writing a paper, which some other students preferred). I

picked courses based on topics I thought would be interesting, but I didn't stay in a course if I didn't enjoy the professor's teaching style.

**6) 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?**

At Hopkins, my involvement with the Wodrow Wilson Debate Council certainly influenced my decision to apply to law school: I knew lots of former debaters who had gone to law school, and I thought that law school--and, in turn, being a lawyer--would provide my continued opportunities to engage in thoughtful conversations of the type that intercollegiate debate offered. My summer internship with the Maryland Department of Education also exposed me to the field of education law; I worked with the general counsel on some projects, and I thought the type of work that she did was interesting and impactful.

I think my application was strengthened by the fact that I was deeply committed to several different activities throughout my time at Hopkins, and I held leadership roles in several organizations. A review of my activities would show that I had diverse interests and would bring a relatively unique perspective to a school's student body. However, all of the pieces fit together into a cohesive narrative: although I was a cognitive scientist, many of my other activities were education-related in one way or another, and I wrote some of my application essays about how those together things influenced me and my goals.

**7) What made you choose Yale Law School (YLS), and did it meet your expectations? What do you see as the primary pros and cons of law school, and, particularly, YLS?**

As mentioned above, I knew that YLS would provide a lot of flexibility to its students--we could select our own courses after first semester. The "no grades" grading system (students are graded pass/fail first semester, and nobody fails; after first semester, the grading system is honors/pass/low pass/fail, and the distinction between "honors" and "pass" is left to the professor's discretion--in other words, there is no curve) was also a huge plus. Small, interdisciplinary courses were attractive, as was the possibility to join legal clinics beginning in the first year. Ultimately, when I visited my top choices, I felt most "at home" at YLS; I felt like the other students were people with whom I'd want to be friends and classmates.

YES -- YLS met my expectations. Although lots of people say they disliked their law school experience or that it was just something they had to "get through" in order to be a lawyer, I really, truly enjoyed my time at Yale. I made amazing friends, had the opportunity to study things I found interesting, and had lots of time to do meaningful things outside of class. The environment was about as stress-free as law school can be, so we were free to prioritize our activities and commitments in whatever way we wanted to; having "no grades" meant that unless one wanted to be selected for a "feeder" clerkship (the most prestigious federal clerkships with judges known to have their clerks selected to clerk for the Supreme Court), grades truly didn't matter as far as employment was concerned. It would be almost impossible to overstate the value of the YLS "no grades" system. One "con" of YLS is that all of the professors are brilliant academics; sometimes that means that they are not terribly effective teachers.

**8) 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 an associate?**

Go to law school if you really want to go to law school. That means *you* -- not your friends, not your parents, not other people with your major. It might mean having at least an inkling of what type of law you might be interested in, although you certainly don't have to have it all figured out. (After all, that's what law school and summer jobs are for, and even then you may need some time after graduation to figure out what area of law is the best fit.) But don't go to law school just because it seems kind of cool (it is!) or because you don't have a job or any other plan. Talk to lawyers in the city in which you might like to live, ask them about their careers and what a "day in the life" is like for them, including their "best" day and their "worst" day. This is especially true for those students who don't have friends or family members who are lawyers. The vast majority of lawyers aren't spending their time like the characters on *Damages*, *Law & Order*, or *Suits*. You should find out what we do do before you blindly decide to spend \$200k to do the same!

You should also clearly understand the reality of the current legal market: if you aren't accepted to one of the highest-ranked law schools or given a renewable-without-restrictions scholarship at one of the top-tier law schools, you may find yourself with burdensome debt (upward of \$2,000/month) and without the job that you envisioned. It's critical to know how much you will owe in student loans and what students graduating from your law school earn in their first job after graduation. It's also critical to know what percentage of the graduating class is able to obtain employment in full-time jobs requiring a JD degree. Even (especially!) for those people who know that you don't want to go into BigLaw, you should do some research into salaries and job availability in the city/region you intend to live after graduation; and ask the law schools to which you're admitted about their job placement into that city/region. You may be shocked to learn that prestigious public interest jobs in New York City pay only \$40,000/year; you'll have to decide for yourself whether that's workable.

All that said, and the gloomy press coverage of the "law school bubble" notwithstanding, law is a challenging and noble career, and it is one that many Hopkins students will find intellectually stimulating and extremely rewarding. Although the industry continues to change and there is some degree of uncertainty in the market for law school graduates, I think law school is still a great option for students who have seriously considered their options and decided that yes, they would like to spend a great deal of time reading and writing and thinking about important issues.

### **Contact Information**

If you would like to learn more about Yale Law School, education as an area of practice, and/or the DC office of Hogan Lovells US, LLP, you may reach Michelle Tellock at the following email address [michelletellock@gmail.com](mailto:michelletellock@gmail.com). Additionally, Ms. Tellock recommends to those who think they may be interested in "biglaw" read [Above the Law](#) and the Wall Street Journal [law blog](#). For anyone considering applying to law school, she recommends reading "[Don't Go to Law School...Unless](#)" by Paul Campos, and for insight into the admissions office at a highly-selective school, the YLS "[203](#)" [blog](#) is a "can't-miss."

## **5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW STUDENT MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Upcoming LSAT Administration**

**Location:** Check with LSAC for testing locations.

**Date:** Saturday, December 7, 2013 / Saturday, February 8, 2014 / Monday, June 9, 2014

**Time:** Registration begins at 8:30 am for the October exam -- consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

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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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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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