

Pre-Law E-Newsletter

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Monday, March 17, 2008 - Sunday, March 23, 2008

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Copies of Official LSAT PrepTests, dated from December 2001 to June 2007, are now available in our office library for your retrieval and use. Be sure to take advantage of this great resource – especially if you intend to sit for the June LSAT administration.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy Spring Break!

2. CHOOSING A LAW SCHOOL: DECIDING BETWEEN MULTIPLE ACCEPTANCES & COMPETING SCHOLARSHIP OFFERS

First, if you have been accepted to multiple law schools, congratulations! You are already in a great starting position.

If you have been offered scholarships in addition to law school acceptances, you may be debating how to weigh these various factors. For example, you have been accepted at law schools A & B, but only law school B has offered you a considerable scholarship. Law school A has not presented any scholarship offers. However, law school A is ranked higher and has a stronger national reputation than law school B.

Though it is important to recognize the difference in reputation between law schools, it is perfectly reasonable to be concerned about debt issues as well. Generally, a law school admission office would want to know if money was keeping an applicant from choosing their school. As a result, it is acceptable to contact the admissions offices of each school under consideration and to speak frankly about your concerns. Should you choose to take this step, tact and honesty are very important.

Depending on how competitive you are for each law school, how many applications the law school receives, etc., you may receive a matching offer from law school A, or an improvement on your existing scholarship offer from law school B. In the end, your existing acceptances and offers may remain the same. By contacting the schools, however, you would have at least attempted to point the situation more in your favor and made your law school choice that much easier.

An important item of note:

Returning to the example above, you approach law school A, indicate that it is your first choice, etc. and law school A matches your offer from law school B. Assume that law school B's offer remains the same. To reject law school A after they eliminated the one item you stated was preventing you from matriculating to their school would be bad form. Advice: be prepared to follow through on your arguments when taking the above described steps.

3. PRACTITIONER INTERVIEW: PATRICIA MCGOWAN, ESQ., CORPORATE PARTNER

Background & Bio

Patricia McGowan (JHU Class of 1992) is a partner in the nearly 600-lawyer firm of Venable LLP, with offices in Baltimore, Los Angeles, New York and Washington.

Ms. McGowan represents publicly- and privately-held REITs and other entities in securities offerings and other financing transactions. In the past three years, Ms. McGowan has served as Maryland counsel to Lexington Properties Trust, Huntington Bancshares Incorporated, Starwood Hotels & Resorts and Spirit Finance Corporation in their recent mergers, to Hanesbrands, Inc. in its recent spin-off from Sara Lee Corporation and to CareFirst, Inc. in its recent corporate restructuring. She has also represented several private companies in recent formation, sale and dissolution transactions. Ms. McGowan regularly serves as counsel to the boards of directors and board committees of REITs and other major U.S. corporations in connection with major transactions, stockholder litigation, conflicts of interest and corporate governance issues.

Ms. McGowan is a member of the American Bar Association, Business Law Section and the Business Law Section of the Maryland State Bar Association, where she serves on the Section Council and is the Vice Chair of the Committee on Corporation Law. Ms. McGowan is also the Chairman of the Board of the Parking Authority of Baltimore City.

Questions

Describe a day in the life of a Corporate Partner:

There really is no typical day. I usually begin checking e-mail around 8:00 am before heading to the office between 9:00 and 9:30 am. During the course of the day, I usually receive 40 or more e-mails and several phone calls requiring some action (responding to a question, reviewing attached documents, etc.) on current matters. I tend to have about a dozen matters, such as a merger, a corporate governance review, a securities offering or a financing transaction, on-going at any one time. Right now, we are in proxy season, when many public companies are drafting the proxy statements and preparing for their annual meeting, so along with my colleagues, I am reviewing a number of proxy statements before they are filed with the SEC and mailed to stockholders. Several times a week I may also be asked to participate in a conference call, which can last from 30 minutes to several hours, depending on the purpose of the call - a client's board meeting, a strategy discussion for a strategic transaction, advice on corporate governance, a drafting session for a securities filing or another matter. In addition, there are several associates working on various projects under my supervision, so I also need to check in with them as to the status of each transaction and review their work. My preference is to leave the office between 7:00 and 8:00 pm - I stay late more often than leave early, however. Today, in no particular order, I reviewed a memo prepared by an associate on a stockholder proposal, reviewed a proxy statement, revised two opinions and reviewed several loan documents for a financing transaction, participated in a conference call to negotiate a management agreement, answered a client's question about a bill, reviewed a company's governing documents to determine if it could take a particular action, which led to an interesting discussion with several colleagues about the meaning of "not entitled" with respect to dividends (really, we can spend twenty minutes discussing how to interpret a phrase), provided some information for a client presentation to one of my partners, reviewed a prospectus for a debt offering, filled in a timesheet (tracking time - the bane of private practice), answered questions about some articles of merger and completed this interview. Tomorrow may be completely different.

What initially attracted you to this field? What are some of the rewards of this area of law?

I like helping companies do business. Seeing a deal through from beginning to end can be tremendously rewarding. Sometimes, it is the little things, too - buying a purse or a t-shirt made by a company that I represent, reading about a deal that I worked on in the newspaper.

I discovered early on in my legal career that I was more of a transactional attorney than a litigator - nothing interested me less than going to court, except the work that has to be done before court - depositions, writing briefs, etc. In addition, and somewhat to my surprise, the classes in law school that I preferred were the business courses - securities law, business associations, even tax. There is also part

of my nature that likes having rules and knowing them. While business lawyers can be tough negotiators, there is usually a common goal on both sides - getting the deal done, unlike litigation which is more adversarial. While a transactional career was a strong preference, specifically being a corporate lawyer was a combination of interest and luck - that practice area was hiring when I was looking, I could have just as easily been a real estate, securities or other transactional lawyer.

What are some of the downsides of this area of law?

Business, and the business of law, has become 24/7. Availability and responsiveness are requirements of the practice. It is not just long hours, but the unpredictability of the hours that can take a toll. Transactions move ever faster and deadlines are short. There can also be a lot of pressure - a tremendous amount of money is at stake in these transactions, and there are not always clear answers.

Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in pursuing this body of law?

I find the work that I do very interesting, and it provides a great opportunity to work with really smart people on complicated issues, which fewer people experience professionally than you may realize while in college. I would suggest exploring the practice area through classes in law school, usually elective, and take the opportunity for internships and summer associate positions in the field. Having some business background can be useful, even just to learn the vocabulary, but is not necessary. Even just reading the business news can be helpful, although not always accurate.

Contact Information

If you would like to learn more about corporate law, or have additional questions for Ms. McGowan, you may contact her directly via email at pmcgowan@venable.com or by phone at 410.244.7539. You may also visit her firm's website at www.venable.com, where you can find an overview of her firm, or visit <http://dealbook.blogs.nytimes.com/>, which is a blog that provides summaries and links to the top business and legal stories happening around the world.

4. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Breaking the Ice: Networking Reception - Nonprofits, Public Service, Government, & Law

Location: Glass Pavilion

Date: Monday, March 25, 2008

Time: 6:00pm to 8:30pm

Description: Second annual networking reception to educate undergraduates about opportunities in nonprofits, public service, government, and law. This is an opportunity for students thinking about careers in nonprofits, public service, government, or law to learn more about these fields, including the recruiting process, and connect with welcoming alumni.

JHU Alumni Panel: Insider's Guide to Law School

Location: Maryland 110

Date: Thursday, April 10, 2008

Time: 5:15pm to 6:15pm

Description: Hopkins Alum Justin Chan '04, a 3L at Georgetown University Law Center, Peter Hwang '04, a 3L at American University, Washington College of Law, and Adriana M. Verleysen '04, a 2L University of Maryland School of Law, will discuss their experiences in preparing for and while attending law school.

LSAT Administration for 2008

Location: On campus, Hodson 110 - check with LSDAS for additional testing locations

Date: Monday, June 16, 2008

Time: Registration begins at 12:30pm - consult with LSDAS for all controlling details

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

**Ana L. Droscoski, J.D., Assistant Director, who advises Pre-Law students:**

Walk-ins: Mondays 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Appointments: Mondays/Thursdays 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Wednesdays 10:00 am to 11:30 am & 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

**David Verrier, Ph.D., Director, who advises Pre-Health students:**

Walk-ins: Friday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Appointments: Mondays/Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

**Kirsten Kirby, M.S.Ed., Assistant Director, who advises Pre-Health students:**

Walk-ins: Tuesday/Thursday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Appointments: Monday/Wednesday: 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

**The Administrative Coordinators are available to answer questions and schedule appointments:**

**Lena Harding, Administrative Secretary, lhardin7@jhu.edu 410-516-6743**

For students whose last name begins with A-G, contact Ms. Harding.

**Carolyn Mae Krause, Administrative Coordinator, ckrause@jhu.edu 410-516-6744**

For students whose your last name begins with H-O, contact Mrs. Krause.

**LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, ladytee@jhu.edu 410-516-4140**

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

**Angie Decker, Office Manager and Staff Supervisor, decker@jhu.edu**

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