

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

Vol 1, No. 18

Monday, April 21, 2008 – Sunday, April 27, 2008

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Many of you have expressed interest in applying to law school and then automatically deferring for a year. Read below for more information on this. If you have further questions, or would like to discuss your individual situation, be sure to schedule an appointment with me. Remember that the office is open over the summer.

Also, as the majority of you are IR majors and/or have interest in international law, this edition features an interview with Dalmau Garcia, Esq. who practices corporate law on an international level at a large law firm in Manhattan.

As this is the final e-Newsletter of the academic year, best of luck to everyone finishing up this semester, and, to seniors, wrapping up your undergraduate career – (an early) CONGRATULATIONS!

2. DEFERRING A LAW SCHOOL ACCEPTANCE

The law school application process can be tedious and time consuming. As a result, you may plan to apply while still in school even though you intend to take a year off upon graduation. The assumption being that you will simply defer for a year once accepted. Should the law school accept your request for deferral, you are spared the anxiety of facilitating the application cycle during your time off – and graduate knowing where and that you will be attending law school.

Though this seems like a reasonable plan, is it advisable?

The short answer is no. Generally, deferrals are not automatically granted by law schools. There are some schools, such as Columbia Law School, which have liberal deferral policies. However, most law schools make the determination on a case-by-case basis and require a good reason substantiating the request submitted in writing.

Deferral policies are individually set by each law school. Each law school decides and has policy on whether:

- 1) it grants deferrals;
- 2) it has deadlines to apply for a deferral;
- 3) it places conditions on the deferrals (i.e., one year, two year, or indefinite time limitations, what constitutes a viable reason, should one be required, increased deposit requirements, etc.); and
- 4) the deferral is binding.

Even law schools with liberal policies have deadlines and procedures to adhere to when requesting a deferral. Most require the submission of an additional, larger deposit to be applied to your first year's tuition.

For those law schools with less liberal deferral policies, some legitimate reasons for deferral include AmeriCorps, Teach for America, or Peace Corps program participation, Rhodes Scholarships, Fulbrights and other prestigious fellowships or awards, and select other unforeseen opportunities or circumstances.

Though there is no reapplication for admission procedure to endure the following year, financial aid packages do not carryover. As a result, applicants need to reapply for financial aid the year of intended enrollment (usually by mid-March) and may sacrifice institutional awards previously granted.

Also, keep in mind that if admitted from the waiting list, you are usually ineligible for deferral.

For a law school to grant a deferral request, another deserving candidate will be denied the opportunity to attend the next year. Because of this, most law schools grant deferral requests with the understanding that an applicant will:

- 1) withdraw all pending applications to other schools;
- 2) not defer admission at another law school; and
- 3) not apply for admission to another school.

Some law schools even require a signed statement indicating all of the above which renders the deferral binding.

As a result, an accepted candidate who seeks deferral should be unquestionably confident that he or she wants to attend that particular law school.

Finally, it is important to remember that your application upon graduation may read very differently from your application while still a student. First, if your GPA is on an upswing, you will have one more year of grades (your senior year) to include in your UGPA. Second, assuming your time off is productive (which it should be!), this experience should be included in your applications as well, and may render you a more distinct candidate. Third, the act of taking time off usually indicates a more directed, thoughtful and committed decision to attend law school, which may also render you a stronger applicant.

Concluding Advice: apply to law school for the year you wish to matriculate; do not plan to defer. When asked, law school admission representatives continually give this advice.

In the event that you still opt to apply and then defer, be sure to carefully research individual law school deferral policy to ensure you are compliant.

3. PRACTICE AREA FOCUS: INTERNATIONAL LAW

International law is a term of art that means, in essence, the law among nations. International law has grown significantly as a field of practice, reflecting the increasing interdependence of nations and economies. Public international law provides a limited range of job opportunities, particularly with national governments (such as the State Department) or international institutions (such as OAS) or with public interest bodies. Immigration and refugee law also assumes increasing importance as more people move more frequently across national boundaries for business, tourism, or permanent resettlement. Private international law may offer more extensive employment opportunities, either through law firms or for corporations, banks, or telecommunications firms. Many students who say they want to pursue "international law" simply mean that they want to work overseas. If you have interest in working overseas

for a private U.S. law firm, there is a strong chance that you will not practice international law. Instead, you will likely focus on contracts, real estate deals, and other types of business law in a foreign setting.

Fluency in another language or familiarity with another culture (obtainable through study or travel abroad experience) can be a decided advantage for law school graduates who seek to practice in the international arena.

4. PRACTITIONER INTERVIEW: DALMAU GARCIA, ESQ., INTERNATIONAL CORPORATE ASSOCIATE

Background & Bio

Dalmau García is an associate based in the New York office of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP. Cleary Gottlieb employs approximately 950 lawyers from more than 50 countries and diverse backgrounds who are admitted to practice in numerous jurisdictions around the world.

Mr. García's practice focuses on corporate transactions in Latin America, including mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, capital markets transactions and debt restructurings. Mr. García also advises private investment funds, including hedge funds and other types of alternative asset management vehicles, in their formation and organization as well as in their investment activities, particularly in Latin America and other emerging markets. Mr. García has co-authored a number of articles on various topics relating to debt restructurings and capital markets transactions in Latin America.

Mr. García joined Cleary Gottlieb in 2002. From 2001 to 2002, he served as law clerk to the Honorable Martha B. Sosman of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

Mr. García is a member of the Bar in New York. His native language is Spanish, and he is fluent in English.

Questions

Describe a day in the life of an International Corporate Associate:

It is difficult to describe a "typical" day because each day is truly different. Given that my practice focuses on cross-border transactions, oftentimes the time at which my workday begins is dictated by the deal on which I am working the most. For instance, recently I worked on an acquisition of an Argentine oil company where the seller was a Spanish company and the buyer (our client) was an Argentine investment group. Because of the time difference among New York, Buenos Aires (2 hours ahead) and Madrid (6 hours ahead), I was forced to begin work much earlier than I am normally accustomed to (which in New York means 8:30 or 9:00 am) so that I could keep up and deal with the seller's lawyers in Madrid. With the advent of the blackberry, I often begin receiving emails even before I wake up in the morning. As such, I usually spend my first hour of the morning responding to the most urgent (or chaotic) emails before I even head out to the office (on a "regular" day, I usually get to the office around 10:00 am). I normally spend part of the day, usually the morning and early afternoons, either answering emails or participating in conference calls. I would say that about half of my calls are in Spanish; this is because a lot of my deals involve representing U.S. investors who are making investments in Latin America or the Latin American companies in which such investors are investing. I spend a lot of time either talking to the Latin American clients or coordinating with local counsel in Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, Spain or anywhere else where the transaction happens to be taking place. Now that I am a bit more senior, I find that I also spend a significant part of the day supervising and mentoring the junior associates who are working on my deals. Consequently, I am spending less time drafting agreements and documents from scratch and more time revising and marking up a document that someone else prepared. Because the conference calls and emails usually take up most of the morning and early afternoon, the drafting and revision of documents are usually done in the late afternoon and/or the night. In addition to the substantive work, there are also client development events and assignments (such as the preparation of "pitches" for new

clients or transactions) as well as some firm administrative matters (e.g., revision of client invoices, firm committees, etc.) for which I am responsible and that usually take up some of time on a regular day. Because of the international nature of my practice, I also tend to travel relatively often (mostly to Spain and Latin America). Although traveling could get a bit hectic sometimes, I normally look forward to the opportunity to be outside the office. I usually plan to leave the office around 7:00 or 8:00 pm ("plan" being the operative word), even if there is still some work left to do (I prefer to finish the work from home). There are some days, of course, when I don't leave the office until 3:00 or 4:00 am (and those are probably the days when I need to be back in the office for a 9:00 am conference call!), but I'd like to think that those days are more the exception than the rule.

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

I have always been interested in international relations and how legal developments in one country could affect the jurisprudence of other countries. By focusing on cross-border transactions (especially in Latin America), I have been able to see this process take place many times (and, in some cases, to be part of it). For instance, following the Argentine economic crisis of 2001-2002, I was involved in the debt restructurings of several of the largest energy companies and utilities in Argentina. By restructuring their financial debt (which had been in default as a result of the dramatic devaluation of the Argentine peso and the macroeconomic downturn in Argentina), those companies were able to slowly get back to financial soundness and regain access to foreign investment (which is vital to their operations). As a legal matter, such restructurings would not have been possible without the adoption of significant changes to the Argentine insolvency law, which changes in turn had been largely influenced by the U.S. bankruptcy code. Seeing such process up close (and, even better, being part of it) can be incredibly rewarding.

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

I would say that the biggest downside is the unpredictability of one's schedule, especially when you have to factor in the different time zone of your counterparts or clients. Other than that, the long hours and excessive traveling can take a huge toll on your attitude (and personal life!).

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

My main advice for someone who would like to pursue international corporate practice is to take as many business (and even accounting) courses as possible, as well as any courses in international relations and politics. Understanding the business background and political/economic environment of the transactions in which one is working is vital for the relationship with one's clients and counterparts and therefore for the success of the transaction itself. Of course, speaking another language could be very handy (though not necessarily required).

Contact Information

If you would like to learn more about international corporate law, or have additional questions for Mr. Garcia, you may contact him directly via email at: dgarcia@cgsh.com and by phone at 212.225.2277. Mr. Garcia's firm's website is www.cgsh.com

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Presentation by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia
Sponsored by the University of Baltimore
Location: Lyric Opera House, 140 W. Mt. Royal Ave.*
Date: Thursday, April 24, 2008
Time: 3:00pm

Description: Join others in Baltimore's legal community for the unique opportunity to hear U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia speak. Chief Judge Robert M. Bell of the Maryland Court of Appeals will introduce Justice Scalia.

For more information or to R.S.V.P, e-mail Mark Bell at mkbell@ubalt.edu or call 410-837-4464.

*Parking for attendees will be available in UB's Bolton Yard Lot and Maryland Avenue Garage

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: Monday 10:00am to 11:30am

Appointments: Monday/Thursday 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am to 11:30am & 2:00pm to 3:00pm

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

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

Appointments: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 1:00pm to 4:30pm

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

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

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

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

##### **Lena Harding, Administrative Secretary, [lhardin7@jhu.edu](mailto: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](mailto:ckrause@jhu.edu) 410-516-6744**

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

##### **LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, [ladytee@jhu.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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.