

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

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Monday, February 2, 2009 – Sunday, February 8, 2009

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1. Message from Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.
 2. Letters of Recommendation: Guidelines & Tips
 3. Practice Area Focus: Entertainment Law
 4. Practitioner Interview: Joseph R. Molko, VP & Senior Counsel
MTV Networks, Business & Legal Affairs, Content Distribution & Marketing Group
 5. Upcoming Pre-Law Meetings and Program Announcements
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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Welcome back! I hope that everyone had a great break and holiday season, and that your first week of the semester went swimmingly.

For those taking the February 7th LSAT on campus, please note that there has been a last minute room change to Remsen 001.

For those who applied to law school this past Fall, hopefully most of you have received your decisions by now and are making final determinations. If you have not yet heard from some schools, be sure to follow up. And hang in there! You should receive most all admission decisions by early Spring. If you are waitlisted or put on hold, be sure to meet with me to discuss next steps and strategies. And please remember to keep me posted on all of your outcomes!

For those who are future applicants, letters of recommendation are an important - and usually mandatory - component of your law school application. Read below for a more detailed discussion on this item.

Finally, for those of you who intend to apply Fall 2009, be sure to meet with me to ensure that you are doing everything you can in the upcoming months to put your strongest application forward.

Remember, appointments are now made online, via the following link:

<https://www.securedata-trans10.com/ap/johnshopkinsuniversityofficeofpreprofessionalprogramsadvising/index.php?page=10>

2. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: GUIDELINES & TIPS

Recommendations can be difficult for an Admissions Committee to evaluate. It is necessary to have someone comment on your specific skills and abilities, problems you have dealt with or obstacles you have overcome. The recommendation carrying the most weight will come from a faculty member who knows you and your academic potential. Accordingly, it is in your best interest to visit faculty during office hours and make concerted efforts to get to know them outside of class.

There are a handful of law schools that do not require any letters of recommendation. However, most require one to two, and recommend three. As a result, it is advisable to secure three letters of recommendation, ideally two from faculty and one from a significant internship or work experience.

1. Choose a recommender who knows your academic work. It helps law schools to know how well you read, analyze and write, and if you will be able to adjust to the rigors of law school.

2. Generally letters from public officials will not be given much weight, unless the writer has actually worked with you and can attest to your skills and abilities.
3. Unless you are applying to schools with religious affiliations, letters from religious officials are also not given much weight.
4. If a letter writer is related to you, be sure to disclose this. If an admissions committee finds out indirectly, it may work against you.
5. Letters from coaches may be given some weight as long as they touch on characteristics of interest to admissions committees, such as leadership, discipline and determination. Coaches should refrain from commenting on specific athletic abilities.
6. If you know well an attorney who has graduated from the school to which you are applying, ask for a reference.
7. Waive your right to see the recommendation letter when executing the Law Professions Recommendation Form and any LSDAS form(s). Although not required, the admissions committee senses the author may be more candid if the applicant does not see the letter.
8. When it is time to apply, opt into & register for the Letter of Recommendation Service offered by LSDAS via your online account. Note that you will need to generate LSDAS Letter of Recommendation forms for each recommender/recommendation requested.
9. It may be helpful to provide your recommender with an unofficial transcript, personal resume, and a list of courses you have taken with the recommender (noting grades and/or outstanding work) to assist him/her in providing specific information about your academic skills and abilities. Advise the recommender to provide a copy of the recommendation to the Office of Pre-Professional Programs & Advising, or have the recommender hand deliver it, so that we may maintain a copy of the recommendation for our files. Be clear about when the recommendation is needed. Remember earlier is better. It is up to you to have the letters forwarded to LSDAS and copied to the Office of Pre-Professional Programs & Advising. Follow up with your recommenders until the letters are received.

3. PRACTICE AREA FOCUS: ENTERTAINMENT LAW

Entertainment law is a term for a mix of more traditional categories of law, with a focus on providing legal services to the entertainment industry. The principal areas of Entertainment Law overlap substantially with the well-known and conventional field of intellectual property law. Generally, the practice of entertainment law often involves employment law, labor law, immigration, securities law, security interests, agency, intellectual property (especially trademarks, copyright, and the so-called "Right of Publicity"), and insurance law issues. Much of the work of an entertainment law practice is transaction based, i.e. drafting contracts, negotiation and mediation. (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entertainment_law)

4. PRACTITIONER INTERVIEW: JOSEPH R. MOLKO, VP & SENIOR COUNSEL

MTV Networks, Business & Legal Affairs, Content Distribution & Marketing Group
Joseph R. Molko, Esq. has served ascending roles as counsel to Manhattan-based MTV Networks, Business and Legal Affairs, since 2002. Currently, Mr. Molko is the Vice President & Senior Counsel of the Content Distribution and Marketing Group. As one of two senior attorneys responsible for MTV Networks' content distribution business with approximately \$2 billion in annual revenues, he negotiates and drafts content license agreements for MTV Networks. In addition, Mr. Molko provides business development and strategic planning support for distribution business. Previous roles at MTV Networks have included Counsel, Senior Counsel and Vice President of the Intellectual Property and Litigation Group of Business and Legal Affairs. Prior to joining MTV Networks, Mr. Molko was an Associate Attorney with Fross Zelnick Lehrman & Zisso, P.C., a boutique law firm specializing in intellectual property law, an Associate Attorney with Simpson Thatcher & Bartlett, and a Law Clerk for The Honorable Kevin Thomas Duffy, United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Mr. Molko obtained his J.D., from Fordham University School of Law, where he was a Staff Member of the Fordham International Law Journal, a Teaching Assistant in the Legal Writing Program and recipient of the Corpus Juris Secundum Award, and his B.A., in Writing Seminars, from The Johns Hopkins University

('94), where he received the Student Excellence Award for Leadership and Service and was the Chairperson of the Milton S. Eisenhower Symposium.

Mr. Molko is a member of the Bar of the State of New York, the Copyright Society of the U.S.A., a former member of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York's Copyright & Literary Property Committee, and Johns Hopkins University's Second Decade Society Alumni Leadership Program.

Questions

Describe a day in the life of a VP & Senior Counsel to MTV Networks:

It's a cliché, but there is no "typical day" for this gig. Let's start with where I work. MTV Networks is a business unit of Viacom, and it includes the MTV, Nickelodeon, Vh1, TV Land, Spike and Comedy Central networks in the United States (we have in the neighborhood of 200 channels worldwide). The other business units of Viacom are BET Networks and Paramount Pictures. Within MTV Networks, there is a business group dedicated to ensuring that our content is distributed to domestic consumers on various platforms -- the group is called Content Distribution and Marketing (or CDM) and that's where I work. I am one of two lawyers that support CDM's business efforts. The primary focus of those efforts is managing our relationships with cable television and satellite video providers (like Comcast, DirecTV, etc.). We work with those traditional providers and others to ensure that our linear channels reach your television set, and we also work with traditional and emerging distributors to deliver our content to consumers in new ways (like VOD, download, streaming, etc.)

My responsibilities range from negotiating and drafting our agreements with distributors, to helping our business teams chart strategy as we move forward in the rapidly changing media landscape, to a recurring role on *The Hills* (that last one is a joke, obviously).

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

There was no grand plan, that's for sure. At Hopkins, I was a Writing Seminars major. I loved movies and television (and spent way too much time on the latter while at Hopkins, as any of my fraternity brothers can attest), and I really wanted to be either a screenwriter, an essayist or a journalist (or some combination of the three). I think it was in my Junior year, when a Writing Seminars professor who shall remain nameless (cough, cough Tristan Davies) complimented me on my writing and recommended that I consider law school. Upon reflection, I don't think that was the highest compliment for a Writing Sems major.

For that and other reasons, I applied to law school my senior year, though I can't say I did it with any great enthusiasm. Ultimately, I chose to attend Fordham Law School primarily because I wanted to live in New York City and I didn't get into Columbia or NYU. But I have to say, I really enjoyed Fordham, and while there I became interested in being a litigator. I enjoyed legal research and writing, and my education at Hopkins prepared me well. I had good fortune to work with some wonderful professors in law school, and ultimately I had the amazing good fortune to be accepted to clerk for a United States District Judge in Manhattan -- Kevin Thomas Duffy. That was the best professional/academic experience of my life. I spent just under two years with Judge Duffy, and I worked on civil and criminal matters (including terrorism prosecutions arising from the 1993 World Trade Center bombing).

Following my clerkship, I worked as litigator at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett (recruited by a great lawyer and my good friend Jonathan Paikin, A&S '93), and then left Simpson in 2001 to join a boutique law firm in New York City -- Fross Zelnick Lehrman & Zissu. While at Fross Zelnick, I litigated copyright, trademark and other intellectual property related cases, and a big chunk of my work was on behalf of MTV Networks. So in 2002, familiar with my work, MTV Networks invited me to take an in-house position. I had never really considered an in-house job, but I loved MTV and felt like this was an opportunity I couldn't pass up. I spent my first five years at MTV Networks managing litigations in all areas for the company, as well as providing intellectual property and assorted other legal advice. In late 2007, I was offered my current position -- and interested in something new, I decided to take the plunge.

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

Lifestyle is definitely an issue. Whether you are at a firm or in-house, today, particularly in New York City,

the hours are grueling and your time really is not your own. So it's really essential that, before you commit to law school, make sure that you want to be a lawyer -- because you will be dedicating huge amounts of time to it. And if you don't at least enjoy the subject matter, no amount of money can really fill the gap.

When I was at Hopkins, I had absolutely no idea -- none -- what the profession was really like. I got lucky and managed to fall into a string of jobs that worked for me. But I would strongly urge anyone considering a career in law to do their homework. Reach out to lawyers in fields that might interest you, take an internship, consider a legal assistant job. Make sure you know what you are getting into. Ultimately, if you choose to follow through with law school, you may end up in a totally different area of the law (or out of the law altogether), but it makes absolutely no sense to commit the time, energy and money to law school if you would be miserable as a lawyer. It's a great, great profession -- but it is not for everyone.

Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in pursuing this body of law?
Study whatever interests you as an undergraduate -- it doesn't matter at all for law school (in my humble opinion). Law schools are looking for academic excellence, not specific majors. Spend your free time doing productive things that you enjoy. And take time off between college and law school! In fact, unless you are absolutely convinced that being a lawyer is your purpose in life, don't even think about law school as an undergraduate. Just focus on succeeding academically and having a good, well-rounded experience. Take some time after college to do something meaningful -- as long as you can explain why it was productive in a law school essay, it will only better your application.

Contact Information

If you would like to learn more about entertainment law, or have additional questions for Mr. Molko, you may contact him directly via email at Joseph.Molko@mtvstaff.com. If you are interested in the cable business, Mr. Molko recommends *Cable Cowboy* as "a great biography of cable pioneer (and Hopkins alumnus) John Malone -- it tells the entire fascinating story of the industry." Mr. Molko also reads and recommends the Wall Street Journal Law Blog, Talking Points Memo and all The Atlantic Monthly blogs.

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Additional Spring Programming - Coming Soon!

Upcoming LSAT Administration for 2009

Location: On campus, Remsen 001 - check with LSDAS for additional testing locations

Date: Saturday, February 7, 2009

Time: Registration begins at 8:30a - 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/Thursday 10:00a - 11:30a

Appointments: Monday/Thursday 2:00p - 4:00p

Wednesday 10:00a - 11:30a & 2:00p - 3:00p

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

Walk-ins: Wednesday/Friday 10:00a - 12:00p

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

Walk-ins: Tuesday 10:00a - 12:00p & Wednesday 1:30p - 3:30p

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 410-516-6744  
For students whose 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.