



NORTH CAROLINA
BAR ASSOCIATION
SEEKING LIBERTY & JUSTICE

LAW STUDENT DIVISION BULLETIN

Published by the NCBA's Law Student Activities Committee January 2010 www.ncbar.org

The Chair's Comments

A Word from Craig D. Cannon

Greetings from the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of the North Carolina Bar Association (NCBA)! As the 2009-2010 YLD chair, it is my honor and privilege to write to you about the YLD – what it is, what it does and how you can participate in its activities.



Craig Cannon

What It Is

With more than 5,000 active members located throughout North Carolina, the YLD is the largest division of the NCBA. The NCBA is a voluntary professional association, in contrast to the North Carolina State Bar, which is the state body that licenses and regulates North Carolina lawyers. Young lawyers constitute roughly one-third of all NCBA members. Membership in the YLD is auto-

matic for NCBA members who are 36 years of age or younger or in their first three years of practice.

What It Does

As the public service arm of the NCBA, the YLD is generally tasked with performing service related projects that meet the needs of the legal profession and the public. The YLD's projects and activities are planned and implemented through its 24 standing committees. Each of these standing committees has its own focus. For example, the YLD's Military Issues Committee is generally tasked with developing and implementing projects that assist active and retired military personnel. Similarly, the YLD's Pro Bono Committee is generally tasked with developing and implementing pro bono projects that assist low income North Carolina residents in obtaining access to free legal assistance.

The following exemplify some of the recently completed YLD projects and activities:

Joint Socials

On June 4, 2009, the NCBA YLD held a joint social with the Wake County YLD. The event was held at the Cardinal Club located in downtown Raleigh and was designed to allow young lawyers to network with each other and with more senior members of the NCBA. Nearly 300 lawyers attended the event.

Bar Examination Assistance

On July 28 and 29, 2009, the YLD continued its bi-annual tradition of providing educational materials, refreshments and support to bar examination candidates in Raleigh. Thanks to the efforts of the YLD's Bar Examination Committee, hundreds of stressed bar examination candidates had the opportunity to gather themselves and take a well deserved break. Following the results of

the bar examination being released last fall, the Bar Examination Committee has now shifted its focus to providing tutoring services to repeat bar examination candidates.

Law School Presentations

Between Aug. 17, 2009 and Oct. 20, 2009, the YLD participated in a series of presentations at the seven law schools located in North Carolina. These presentations included speeches by NCBA and YLD officers, including the NCBA President and the YLD Chair. One of the primary reasons that the YLD participated in these presentations was to inform law students about the YLD's incredibly successful mentorship program that pairs practicing attorneys with law students and young lawyers.

Leadership Conference

On Aug. 22, 2009, the YLD held its annual Leadership Conference at the Bar Center located in Cary. The conference provided an excellent opportunity for young lawyers from across the state to meet, network, share ideas and discuss the YLD's ongoing and new projects. Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Edmunds, Jr. opened the conference by leading an interactive discussion about leadership, work-life balance issues and professionalism. The conference then kicked into high gear with a series of leadership presentations that were followed by small group sessions that focused on developing new YLD projects.

Meeting with Argentinean Attorneys

On Oct. 2, 2009, the YLD held its first quarterly meeting at the McGuire Woods office located in Charlotte. The quarterly meeting was timed to coincide with a visit to North Carolina by a group of attorneys from

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LAW STUDENT DIVISION BULLETIN

JANUARY 2010

Published by the NCBA's
Young Lawyers Division
Law Student Activities Committee
for the Law Student Division

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Comments *from page 1*

Buenos Aires, Argentina, including the Chair of the Buenos Aires YLD. Prior to the quarterly meeting, several YLD leaders led the Argentinean attorneys on a tour of the Western District Federal Courthouse located in Charlotte and facilitated a series of meetings with the federal judges that reside in Charlotte. After the tour was concluded, the Argentinean attorneys attended a series of YLD sponsored seminars on anti-trust and employment law. The formal YLD quarterly meeting followed the seminars and included reports from various committee chairs and officers. Once the formal YLD quarterly meeting was finished, the YLD led a panel discussion with the Argentinean attorneys regarding the differences and similarities between practicing law in Argentina versus the United States. Following the panel discussion, the YLD council attended a joint social event at the BlackFinn American Saloon located in downtown Charlotte with law students from the Charlotte School of Law.

Wills for Heroes Project

On Oct. 17, 2009, the YLD held its 11th Wills for Heroes clinic in Asheville. The event was held at the Pisgah Legal Services office. As a result of this event, 48 wills and 96 powers of attorney were drafted for 48 first responders and their spouses. Since 2007, 1848 first responders and their spouses have now received pro bono legal assistance through the YLD's Wills for Heroes program. These numbers make the YLD's Wills for Heroes program one of the most successful pro bono legal assistance programs for first responders in the entire country.

Project Grace

On October 31, the YLD's Law and Aging Committee sponsored a free legal clinic providing healthcare powers of attorney and living wills at the Downtown Health Plaza in Winston-Salem. Approximately twenty volunteers served over 85 individuals including many elderly and those utilizing government healthcare services.

USERRA Project

Since the beginning of 2009, the YLD's Military Issues committee has led a successful pro bono project designed to educate North Carolina based employers, national guard members and military reserve members about

their job protection and reinstatement rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act ("USERRA"). Members of the Military Issues committee have also helped to mediate numerous job protection and right of reinstatement disputes.

These projects and activities represent a small fraction of the work that the YLD completes on a yearly basis. However, I hope that you have come away thinking that the YLD is an organization that both works hard and plays hard. For more information about the projects that are being completed by the YLD this bar year, you may visit the YLD's Web site at <http://younglawyers.ncbar.org/>.

How You Can Participate

The first step towards participating in YLD activities is to join the NCBA as a law student member. A law student membership is provided free of charge. The law student membership application form may be downloaded by accessing the following Web site: <http://www.ncbar.org/membership/join-renew/downloadable-applications.aspx>.

Once you have joined the NCBA as a law student member, the next step is to reach out to a YLD leader to let them know that you are interested in participating in YLD activities or to attend a YLD event. A list of the YLD's leaders may be found by accessing the following Web site: <http://younglawyers.ncbar.org/leadership/division-council.aspx>. A sampling of the numerous activities planned for the remainder of the bar year include additional Wills for Heroes clinics, more joint socials and quarterly meetings in Greensboro (January 23 at 9 a.m. at the law offices of Brooks Pierce), Winston-Salem (March 6 at 9 a.m. at Old Salem) and Wilmington (June 25-26 at the Hilton Wilmington Riverside).

If you are interested in participating in these activities, or you just want to learn more about the YLD, please contact me via e-mail (ccannon@bbandt.com) or telephone (336-733-2545). ■

Craig Cannon is an in-house litigation attorney with Branch Banking and Trust Company in Winston-Salem and the 2009-10 YLD chair.

The Bar Exam

by Corinne Jones

Congratulations to the Class of 2010. With five semesters down, the light at the end of the tunnel is close in sight. While 1Ls and 2Ls register for their fall classes, you will be reserving tickets for graduation. It's time to celebrate . . . well, almost.

The blurred line between law school and studying for the bar can be quite overwhelming. Over the next few months you are going to hear all kinds of meltdown stories – some will be reassuring, others will scare the living daylights out of you. It is time to separate the realities of the bar exam from all the hype.

The best piece of advice I received was to approach the bar like a full-time job. The key is to map out a realistic study schedule and stick with it. Put in your hours each day, but remember that it's quality time, not quantity, that counts when you are studying, so take time to relax and recharge.

Enroll.

Review courses are pricey, but so was law school. Why skimp now? The amount of material you are responsible for learning is daunting. Take advantage of the materials and study structure that a review course provides. There is no need to reinvent the wheel when a team of professionals has already done the legwork for you.

Trust Yourself.

You just finished three years of law school. You know what works best for you. If you study best solo, then study solo. If you learn best by making flash cards, then make flash cards. Don't think that you are on the wrong track based on the behavior of those around you. Everyone handles stress differently. Recognizing what study habits work for you is an important step in channeling your stress into something productive.

Practice.

Studying for the bar is more than memorizing black letter outlines. Answering 12 essay questions over a six-hour period requires an organized approach and effective time management. Working through actual essay questions will be an essential part of your preparation. Copies of questions from past exams are available on the North

Carolina Board of Law Examiners website. In addition, the YLD's Bar Exam Committee has compiled materials to help you develop a plan of attack for the essay portion of the exam. These materials are available on the NCBA Web site at <http://younglawyers.ncbar.org/media/300925/09draftingexamanswer.pdf>.

When it comes to the MBE, there are only so many ways they can test you on the same issue. Working through practice questions is a great way to learn the law and to improve your time management. On Day Two, you will be facing two hundred MBE questions. The more comfortable you are with the testing format, the better.

Exercise.

Create a positive outlet for your stress. Physical exercise increases your body's endorphin levels and improves the blood flow to your brain, which helps you think more clearly. Exercising regularly will help you make the most of your study time and sleep well at night.

No Surprises.

Knowing what to expect reduces your anxiety and allows you to put your best foot forward on game day. You will have enough on your mind as it is without the added

stress of getting lost on your way to the test site or having your watch confiscated at the door. To help your bar experience go more smoothly, the YLD has published an informational booklet on the procedural and practical aspects of the bar exam. A copy of the North Carolina Bar Examination Survival Guide is available on the NCBA Web site at <http://younglawyers.ncbar.org/media/300929/09survivalguide.pdf>.

Other Resources.

Still feeling overwhelmed? Have no fear. The Bar Exam Committee is holding two free clinics for July 2010 test takers. The clinic in June will focus solely on the essay portion of the exam. Participants will have the opportunity to learn more about how bar exam questions are selected and scored and will receive great tips on how to improve their essay writing skills. A video clip of last year's clinic is available online at <http://diversity.ncbar.org/resources/videos/mip/bar-exam-writing-clinic.aspx>.

The YLD also offers a one-on-one tutoring program to assist bar exam applicants. If you are interested, please contact the N.C. Bar Center in Cary at 1-800-662-7407.

Corinne Jones is a law clerk at the North Carolina Business Court and co-chair of the YLD Law Student Activities Committee.

Important Dates

April 10, 2010
YLD Bar Exam Clinic

June 2010
YLD Writing Clinic (TBA)

July 27, 2010
N.C. Bar Exam – Day 1

July 28, 2010
N.C. Bar Exam – Day 2

Pro Bono Opportunities for Law Students

by Rich McPherson

The life of a law student is full of commitments. Chief among those commitments is attending classes and keeping up with the massive amounts of readings assigned each week. Some students add to their commitments by joining a study group. Other students have part-time jobs or lead student organizations. On top of all these commitments is the attempt to maintain a social life and develop more meaningful relationships with family and friends. All of these commitments make it difficult to find time to do pro bono work or give back to your local community.

The good news is that there are plenty of pro bono opportunities that allow you to give back to your community and build lasting career skills. For those with limited time, there are pro bono and service opportunities that don't even require you to leave campus. For those with more time, there are pro bono opportunities that can last the length of your entire time in law school. As the adage goes, these opportunities are what you make of them. Here are just a few ideas of pro bono and volunteer opportunities for law students.

Wills for Heroes

The Wills for Heroes program is one of the flagship NCBA pro bono programs. Attorneys, paralegals, law students and volunteers partner to provide free wills for first responders and their families. Law students are trained on the day of the event (usually a Saturday), meet and work with local attorneys, and serve first responders in our community.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance ("VITA")

Several of the law schools in North Carolina partner with their local legal aid office to provide free income tax advice to senior citizens and other people in need of extra assistance. Tax season is coming up and many of the programs require a training session before you are able to help out. Contact your school's NCBA law student liaison for details.

Habitat for Humanity

If you want to get away from books and

"the law" spending a day swinging hammers or painting homes is a great way to give back to your local community. The Law Student Activities Committee of the YLD is organizing two Habitat days for the spring:

- February 6 – Durham, N.C.
- February 20 – Greensboro, N.C.

Please contact Corinne Jones (corinne.b.jones@gmail.com) or Mital Patel (mitalpatel@gmail.com) for more information.

Domestic Violence Clinics/ Children's Law Center

Most North Carolina law schools have an affiliation with a domestic violence shelter or children's law organization. Working with one of these organizations can come in the form or work as a Guardian ad Litem or simply volunteering to help at a shelter.

Coaching

Is law school getting in the way of you becoming the next Dino Gaudio, Coach K or Roy Williams? Even if it is not, coaching a youth sports team is a great way to serve the local community. Contact your local YMCA or youth sports league to get involved.

Drive!

Even if you are too busy to engage in pro

bono opportunities outside of school, you can serve your local community by organizing or participating in a blood, food, or toy drive.

Veterans Assistance Programs

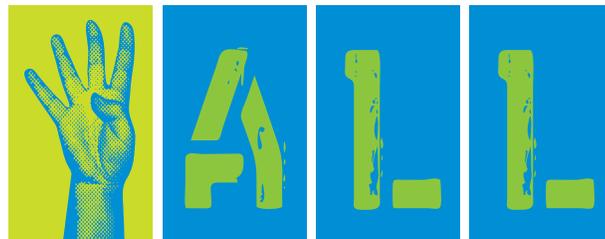
Several law firms and legal aid offices help military veterans obtain medical and other benefits. Law students can partner with attorneys and gain valuable advocacy skills while helping someone who has served our country.

Choose Your Own Adventure

Do you have a passion for helping a certain group of people but are unable to find an organization or law school program that helps this group? Look no further than yourself. Starting your own group or creating a program that helps a certain group is a great way to give back to the community and develop valuable leadership skills.

These are just a few ways that law students can get involved in pro bono work. For more opportunities, contact your school's NCBA law student liaison or a member of the YLD for more information. ■

Rich McPherson is a third-year law student at Wake Forest University and President of the Wake Forest Chapter of the North Carolina Bar Association. He can be contacted at mcphtr7@wfu.edu.



NORTH CAROLINA BAR ASSOCIATION

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Social Networking for Law Students

by Mital Patel

It's Here to Stay

Generally, the legal community is slow to adopt emerging technologies, but social networking is here to stay and must be embraced more effectively. Law students and lawyers will have to effectively use social media to best serve and understand their clients because not doing so will leave them with a competitive disadvantage.

There are thousands of social networks available to participate in, but the most essential for law students are:

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a career-oriented network and allows you to make “connections,” recommendations, and even see if any of your connections may be able to help you get a job. There are thousands of lawyers on LinkedIn and the professional nature of the site makes it a must-have. You can sign up for a LinkedIn account at www.linkedin.com.

Facebook

Most law students already have a Facebook account, but have limited its use to staying in touch with friends and family. It's probably best to keep Facebook usage for personal contacts, but it can also be used effectively for professional purposes. You can sign up for a Facebook account at www.facebook.com.

Twitter

Twitter allows you to send and receive short, 140 character messages (about one sentence) about something you are doing or have learned. It is admittedly difficult to grasp the potential of Twitter without actually using it. The possibilities are endless. The following real tweets display some of the possibilities:

From Eric Goldman, a law professor at Santa Clara University School of Law: “Bara v. Google: Wiccan ex-Gogler sues Google for religious/gender discrimination & retaliation”

From Erik Mazzone, Director, N.C. Bar Association Center for Practice Management:

“Moderating a panel on alternative careers for lawyers; preparing questions now. Got any good ideas?”

Dean Cynthia Nance, University of Arkansas (Fayetteville) School of Law:

Looking forward to seeing all my academic buds at the AALS Conference in N.O.”

You can sign up for a Twitter account at www.twitter.com.

Be smart!

For better or worse, technology facilitates the sharing of our most seemingly private activities. Fortunately, this allows us to display our knowledge and skills to the whole world and gain instant credibility. Unfortunately, it can also instantly share our biggest mistakes and embarrassing “transgressions” if we're not careful. Some Career Services offices advocate staying away from social networking sites completely, but students that do so are missing out on rich opportunities.

- Use the “front page of the newspaper” test. If you wouldn't want it to appear on the front page of the New York Times or the News and Observer, think twice before saying or posting it! Think of everything you do on social media as a “text message to the world.” It should go without say, but details from your night at a bar probably don't need to be shared with the entire world.

- Actively set your privacy settings. All social networks have controls that will help you from broadcasting information you do not intend to make public. Don't rely on the default settings to protect your private information. Utilize these settings and be mindful of the opportunity to update your settings as privacy policies change.

- Proofread your posts. A spelling or grammatical error may just be a typo, but taking a second to proofread your posts before you submit them can save you from a reputation of being careless.

- Balance professional and personal. You should aim to simultaneously share your interesting personality and your professional endeavors and insight.

Who to follow / connect with:

- Law professors/school administration – It's always good to know what's going on at your law school and following or connecting with your law professors only helps you to get to know them better.

- Potential Employers – Following a potential employer's moves on social media can be a great way to gain insight on their philosophy, culture, and attitudes both before and after your interview.

- Other law students – Other law students often share great ideas, study approaches, and resources via social media. At the very least, they share your stress, anxiety, and may be able to offer some humor to lighten your spirits when you need it the most.

Follow through!

Despite its many advantages, there is no substitute for connecting with someone in real life. After you make a contact, stay in touch, but eventually try to convert your relationship to a real-life connection. Make it known that you've enjoyed getting to know them and invite them to coffee or lunch. ■

Mital M. Patel is an attorney in Raleigh, N.C. and co-chair of the YLD Law Student Activities Committee. Follow him on Twitter at @mitalpatel.

Graduating Out of the Frying Pan

by John Derrick

Wow! You mean I get my diploma AND a bowl for the soup line? Gee – law school’s paying off already! Yeah, I managed to graduate during the darkest days of the current economic unpleasantness, but by tooth, nail, and contract work I’ve survived and may have a few useful tips and observations for 3Ls with their backs to the wall nervously eyeing the law school door.

It’s my free advice based on my short experience from a biased source that thinks I’m doing a great job of things. Your mileage will vary, but when has remembering to keep your wits about you, have backup plans, and get by with a little help from your friends ever been bad counsel?

Don’t Panic

That’s more than just good advice from *The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* – Douglas Adams’ masterpiece five-part trilogy – it’s also something to keep in mind as we navigate the currently scary job market. Keep your chin up and you’ll be surprised how many fallback opportunities you see and connections you make.

Pretty much everyone I know is finding work of some variety, and the vast majority is even legal (in terms of the occupational field). Some of us may have to tighten our belts a bit, but how many starving lawyers have you ever met? Personally, I didn’t know I was moving back home until I did, but the rent is right, the roommates aren’t bad, Mom is a wonderful cook, and Dad has got great taste in beer.

Some of us have additional variables in our lives, such as families and especially large amounts of debt. Certain circumstances may be beyond the scope of what this article can deal with, but as hard as things are these days, I don’t know of any recent graduates having as rough a time as our grandparents’ generation did during the Greater Depression. They made it and so can we.

And just think of the folks who are having an even harder time these days.

Have Dreams (And Fallbacks)

I bet my friends thought I was kidding when I suggested piracy, but I’ve found this is a great time to know about a couple fallbacks in terms of making ends meet.

But really, I came from a journalism background and always said that if the law didn’t work out, I could go back to newspapers. Well, maybe not. But having other options and ways to get by are useful. The good news is you’ve got some fallbacks and there’s actually a lot of legal work out there for recent graduates if you know where to find it. One old stalwart is getting on court appointed public defender

“Keep your chin up and you’ll be surprised how many fallback opportunities you see and connections you make.”

and guardian ad litem lists. Do be sure to check which counties have the most cases.

I’ve done some contract document review work – maybe not quite as glamorous as arguing before the Supreme Court, but we’ve all got to start somewhere and it pays well enough (certainly better than journalism did) that I know folks who do it long-term. Ask around for a local company that staffs large-scale projects.

One buddy of mine has found work teaching community college classes – students want to learn about the law and he just spent all summer studying it.

While you’re thinking outside the box in terms of the work you can do, don’t forget to think outside the box geographically – some rural counties, still within commuting distance of N.C.’s major population centers, are having a hard time attracting new lawyers and many of the older ones are retiring.

These ideas won’t work for everyone. Moving in with my folks wouldn’t fit

everybody – for one thing, my room’s not big enough and it’s already full of all my stuff.

Know People Who Need Lawyers

Just think – if you’re into criminal law and have plenty of really sketchy friends...you’ve got a law practice!

Remember – you’re going to be a legal gun for hire. You’ll have a degree, a license, and abilities that people will pay good money for. Have some friends who are recent business school grads and need some corporate work done? A friend who just got married or had a child and needs a will? Knocking on doors may be against the rules of professional conduct, but at some point they’ll remember they’ve got a friend who is a lawyer...they’ve got demand and you’ve got supply.

And you’re going to know a lot of established lawyers who can maybe use a little help digging through their file cabinets. That case your buddy’s never going to get to...well, maybe you can help. All that grunt work a more experienced lawyer you know doesn’t want to do anyway? Well, that’s an opportunity.

So the more people you know, the more you network, the better. Do some volunteer work, be active within the bar, and write a column for a newsletter!

I’ve even used at least some of my own advice, and so far I’m having a great time (until the project runs out). I’m working on a research project collecting and coding North Carolina capital cases for statistical analysis to help determine what constitutes sufficient judicial racial inequity to commute a death sentence under the Racial Justice Act. I’m getting to learn all sorts of fun stuff about (alleged) crime and punishment.

For starters, never shoot at a police helicopter – you probably won’t bring it down, it probably won’t be a mitigating factor, and you may give away your position. ■

John Derrick is a journalist turned attorney and 2009 graduate of UNC Law.

The Sky is the Limit:

Alternative Careers for JDs

by DeWarren K. Langley

We are living through the most profound changes in the economy since the Industrial Revolution. Technology, globalization, and the accelerating pace of change have yielded chaotic markets, fierce competition, and unpredictable staffing needs. All of these trends are freeing work from the confines of the old-fashioned job where you would go to work every day to the same organization in the same building during the same hours and perform the same tasks and responsibilities in the same position for a stable chain of command. The transformation in the economy and work environment is affecting lawyers at all levels. Many law students complete law school and pass the bar exam only to ask themselves, now what?

Most commonly, law school graduates work as associates at a law firm, a clerk for a judge, legal counsel to a legislative representative, prosecutors, public defenders or corporate counsel. While those career fields are traditional options for individuals with Juris Doctorate degrees, the shifting economy and changing career interests are expanding the options for law school graduates. So, what alternative career opportunities are there for Juris Doctorates? The career opportunities for individuals with a Juris Doctorate are only limited by a person's imagination.

Relatively little is known about the career paths of lawyers. While anecdotal information abounds, no systematic national investigation of the patterns and trajectories in lawyers' careers has been undertaken. Developing a career plan requires self-analysis. Career planning is a process of continual assessment and planning for improvement. A career plan allows you to discover the skills, interests, values and motivators that will help you identify a good career fit for you.

An essential part of career awareness, purpose and planning is the ability to make good career decisions. Career decision-making involves developing a rational series of steps designed to help achieve your career goals. Choosing a career is not easy. However, you can streamline the process by focusing on three key points: what you do

best, what you like to do and what your priorities are. Clearly defining each of these areas will assist you in identifying which opportunities coincide with your career goals.

For example, Sue Wasiolek completed her J.D. and L.L.M. at Duke University in 1994. In 1994, Wasiolek joined the law firm of Maxwell, Freeman & Bowman in Durham where she practiced law for nine months. Although practicing law was challenging and interesting, Wasiolek found that she truly missed working with students. Returning to Duke University in 1995, Wasiolek is an Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students overseeing new student and family programs, judicial affairs, fraternity and sorority life, community housing, alcohol and substance abuse prevention, mediation, and crisis response.

After law school, a graduate may forgo the practice of law altogether. Such was the case with Reginald Johnson. Johnson is the Senior Assistant to the City Manager for the City of Durham.

As a first step to determining what to do with your Juris Doctorate tally your accomplishments, your strengths, your shortcomings, and your likes and dislikes. You must look within yourself before you can realisti-

cally examine various alternatives and possibilities. Upon understanding your skills, interests and goals, examining career opportunities which fit those skills, interests and goals is essential to discovering a career path.

The career options for Juris Doctorates depend on an individual's skills, passions and priorities which are not limited by career fields.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics produces the Occupational Outlook Handbook which provides career information, designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. The Handbook is located at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>. The Handbook outlines the diverse facets of the nature of work, working conditions, skills required and pay for various career fields and great resources for researching alternative career paths.

After deciding on a career path, you have to find a job, which is easier said than done in the current economy. ■

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Cultivating Diversity in the Law School Classroom

by Hasina Lewis

From the time I was a young girl, I have watched the face of the legal community transform before my very eyes. From the first white male-only law schools to the first law school to admit women to law schools that embraced people of all ethnicities, the American legal system has slowly progressed to embody the essence of American history, cultural diversity. What I love most about my law school is the many faces that our students represent. To me, these faces not only represent future lawyers, but future clients. It is imperative that lawyers and law students alike embrace and understand not only the importance of, but also the need for, cultural diversity in our lives and our profession. We can nurture cultural diversity both in and out of the classroom with the help of these three tools:

Knowledge

Each year thousands of scholarship funds are wasted. Sadly, many of these opportunities go unnoticed – not due to unqualified participants, but because participants did not know about the scholarship in the first place. Equipping minority students with the knowledge about various academic opportunities would allow them to become successful lawyers and citizens. It is vital that the academic community, as well as fellow students and lawyers, keep one another informed. Knowledge is power and it is imperative that minorities stay abreast of scholarships and other programs that can assist in their professional and personal development.

As a scholar of the Council of Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO), a non-profit organization that seeks to diversify the legal community, I am constantly spreading the word about CLEO to all minorities interested in the law. I know the more students I reach, the more lawyers will be produced. Knowledge will diversify our legal community because the more exposure students have to programs like CLEO and other legal education scholar-

ships, the more our profession will start to resemble the many faces of America.

Mentoring

Every successful person has had help along the way and many times it was with the guidance of a mentor. Mentors are important vessels for law students because they can relate to the rigors of law school as well as function as great resources for internships and jobs. It is crucial for minority law students to have access to mentors due to the scarcity of minorities within our profession. As well as a similar legal educational experience, the relationship between law students and lawyers provides a support system that integrates experiences both in and out the classroom, to help optimize students' academic, professional, emotional and social success.

Even as a law student, I recognize the importance of mentoring high school and undergraduate minority students in their quest to become members of the legal community. Through guest speaking at college law organizations to speaking to the youth of my church, it is important to me that I open up the doors to a profession that would otherwise be closed off to many young students in my community.

Empathy

Good lawyers analyze both sides of a case, looking at all angles and perspectives to reach a just outcome. Before we start to diversify our legal classroom, we must first diversify our personal outlook. Everyone must be willingly to listen to and understand the lives and experiences of people from different cultures for us to reach a common ground. Diversifying our minds will help us understand the law better and that understanding will assist in our practice of law. Understanding the cultural and social differences between us will help us to not only succeed in the classroom, but will improve the way in which our legal system responds to its diverse clientele.

Through cultural diversity, we, as law students, can change the face of our profession. For too long the world around has changed and the legal profession has continued to look the same. It is our generation and the responsibility of all generations to come to continue to put forth the effort to include in our profession faces that mirror the world around us so that we can continue to act as drum majors for justice to all. ■

Hasina Lewis is a first-year law student at Elon University School of Law.

Want to Know More?

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Or, check out the Young Lawyers
Division Web site at
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You must be enrolled in an ABA-accredited law school in the United States to be eligible for membership.

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Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Law School: _____

Law School Entry Date: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

Current Permanent

Gender & Race/Ethnicity (optional):

For demographic purposes only, please identify your gender and race/ethnicity below:

Female Male

African-American

Asian-American

Caucasian

Hispanic

Native American

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Sections Affiliation Dues* (Please check the sections(s) you wish to join.)

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