The words “Hurricane Katrina” strike most of us with all the force of yesterday’s crumpled newspaper. Nearly three years after the storm smeared New Orleans across the map, the news has run its cycle, Congress has issued due lamentations and the American people mostly have moved on.

The city hasn’t. Devastation, disorder and government inertia still reign in the Ninth Ward, much as they did when the city first emerged from the floodwaters.

But for at least one month every year, hope erupts throughout New Orleans, thanks to dozens of USC Law students and hundreds like them who descend on the Gulf Coast during their spring break to provide legal aid, administer FEMA surveys and clean up neighborhoods. Organized by Legal Aid Alternative Breaks (LAAB), a USC Law student-run program founded in Katrina’s wake, in conjunction with the New Orleans-based Student Hurricane Network, the annual trip allows law students to immerse themselves in a crisis situation and address problems that aren’t being solved by federal, state or local government.

Andrew Miller ’08, who served on the board of LAAB and spent three spring breaks in New Orleans, said that residents’ needs haven’t changed.

“When I stepped into the Ninth Ward on my second trip, the only change I saw was that the grass had grown a little more,” he says. “The destroyed homes were still there.”

“The bureaucracy is getting worse,” says Stephanie Cirone ’09, who has now spent two spring breaks in the Gulf Coast region. “We have to conduct something of a shaming campaign just to move the government into action.”

Former LAAB president Christine Guillory ’08 says residents are still facing a dire situation. “It’s hard to see so many people trying to put their lives back together simultaneously,” she says. “At the same time, we’ve been consistently amazed by their resilience.”

Since its inception, the LAAB program has grown from a single trip for volunteers to a highly regarded and organized program that helps students visit not only the Gulf Coast but also other communities in need. Last January, LAAB sponsored a winter break trip to Tijuana so students could assist workers and immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Alumni Love a Challenge

BY LORI CRAIG

Alumni are getting into the spirit of competition — and philanthropy — in the third annual Law Firm Challenge.

More than 852 alumni working at 65 law firms and legal organizations have declared themselves up to this year’s challenge. The yearly contest seeks to boost alumni giving to the USC Law Annual Fund, strengthening the Trojan Network and improving the law school’s rankings.

“The purpose of the Law Firm Challenge is to increase our annual participation rate, which in turn improves our reputation,” says Emily Page, assistant director of development and graduate relations. “The Challenge is also a good way to inspire a sense of USC Law unity by creating a little friendly competition between our alumni at different firms.”

Firms win the Challenge if they reach 100 percent participation by June 20. As of mid-May, four firms had reached that goal. To even the playing field, firms and organizations are grouped based on the number of alumni.

Volunteers from each firm have stepped up as Challenge Representatives, charged with motivating their USC Law colleagues to participate. These representatives gathered for a kickoff reception in late March, held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in downtown Los Angeles.

“Without the support of alumni, USC Law would not be able to maintain the vast educational resources that enable it to offer such a diverse, challenging and cutting-edge learning environment to its students,” says Brandt Meni ’06, representative for Venable LLP, one of the Challenge winners among firms with two to 10 alumni. “Investing in USC Law is a way of investing in the future of the legal profession because it will better prepare USC Law students to make a positive and meaningful impact on the legal profession once they graduate law school.”

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JOSEPH ARELLANO ’76 was appointed by the Elk Grove City Council as the regional human rights and fair housing chair for Sacramento.

SHEW BOYNE ’91 has joined the faculty of Indiana University Law School – Indianapolis as an associate professor.

JEFFREY GOLDEN ’87 has been awarded the Peter M. Elliot Award by the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum. He is a partner at Weiland, Golden, Smiley, Wang Ekvall & Strok.

THE HONORABLE JOYCE KENNARD ’74 has been awarded the Emil Gumperi Judicial Services ADR Award from the Los Angeles County Bar Association’s Dispute Resolution Services. Kennard is an associate justice on the California Supreme Court.

RYAN LARSEN ’00 has been made partner at Katten Muchin Rosenman. He practices business litigation.

The Big Score

John Slusher ’94 is game to use his legal skills in global marketing

BY MARIA IACOBO

John Slusher’s job has a few perks: he traverses the globe, watches ESPN in his office and works with some of the world’s top athletes. He also attends every Super Bowl and, when China hosts the Olympics this summer, Slusher will be there.

As vice president for global sports marketing at Nike, Slusher oversees the myriad of relationships the company has with individual athletes, leagues and teams around the world. Whether clients are internationally known athletes, U.S. college teams or many of the world’s best performance products possible” and that the company provides athletes with “the John Slusher then practiced law at O’Melveny & Myers for three years, before looking at sports businesses that would be a good fit with his legal background.

Familiar with Nike’s philosophy and goals because his dad (Howard Slusher ’72) worked for the company, Slusher accepted a job in their marketing offices and moved to Oregon with his wife (Christine Carr ’94). “The analytical skills that you develop in law school are key skills needed in business,” he says. “Many of the people I work with have a legal background that John Slusher has been appointed director of pro bono outreach and externships at John Marshall Law School in Atlanta, Ga., where he is an associate professor. Prior to joining the John Marshall Law School faculty in 2007, she served as the project director for the Domestic Violence Project of the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation.

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Serves them well in other professions.” Slusher points out that the current commissioners for the National Basketball Association and the National Hockey Association, as well as the recently retired commissioner of the National Football League, are all former attorneys. “It’s not the specific tort or contract law that you have to know; it’s how to think critically.” Slusher has been with Nike for 10 years and says he is passionate about his job. “We truly help athletes who just want to jog around the block as well as world-premiere athletes,” he says. Slusher takes pride in the fact that his company provides athletes with “the best performance products possible” and that the products include those playing for USC. He works with the university’s administration to retain Nike’s relationship with the Trojan teams.

His Trojan connection is also alive and well in Oregon. His three children “don’t miss many USC football games in the Pacific Northwest” and wear cardinal and gold to every game.
The Professional is Personal

Anita Famili Sabine’s development projects help shape neighborhoods and lives.  

BY GILR SILSBY

Recently she was able to help an elderly woman in South Los Angeles win back her home from an opportunist who duped the elderly woman’s 96-year-old mother into signing over the family home’s deed. And for the past few years, she has been working with a nonprofit to acquire and redevelop a dilapidated historical building in South Los Angeles for use as a community child-, health- and dental care facility.

Sabine said USC Law provided a well-rounded legal education that could have led her to a number of law careers. She left the law school with many life lessons as well.

“The law school gave me the tools to be rational, reasoned and sympathetic,” she says.

Sabine likes to think that not only did USC Law help shape her, but that she and her classmates helped shape the law school.

While a law student, she and other students worked with former Vice Dean Karen Lash ’87 to form the Middle Eastern South Asian Law Association (MESALA), which continues as a visible student group on campus today.

“It was empowering to form this group in particular because no law school at the time had done it before,” Sabine says. “I’ve always been a leader but that experience keenly demonstrated the power of the individual and our ability to impact others and institutions.”

Sabine remains active with the USC Law alumni network and is highly supportive of the USC Law Firm Challenge.

“I have an amazing life. I am challenged by my work, am supported by my firm and mentors and have a wonderful husband and family,” she says. “And the best part is that I learn something new every day, which keeps life refreshing.”

When Anita Famili Sabine ’01 started interviewing at big law firms, the USC Law graduate knew she couldn’t compromise when it came to participating in public service and striving for a work-life balance.

She found a perfect fit at O’Melveny & Myers in Los Angeles. She says she was attracted to O’Melveny & Myers not only because of its long-standing reputation as a leading national firm, but also because the firm truly respects diversity and allows its attorneys to devote a nearly unlimited number of hours to pro bono work.

“I really took my time deciding where to go,” she says. “I walked the halls here and saw that people really seemed happy. I didn’t want to lose myself in a big corporate environment, and it became clear to me when I saw a male attorney in the elevator with noticeably long hair that this was a place that allowed individuality. That’s important to me because one should be evaluated by the quality of her work and character rather than her appearance.”

Seven years later, Sabine is involved in high-level real estate transactions and participating in pro bono work that is changing lives and neighborhoods in Southern California. She also manages to spend time with her husband, serve on the board of a non-profit and pursue personal real estate projects with her husband.

Sabine calls herself a dirt attorney.

“Not only do I get to work with some of the most sophisticated real estate developers, hotel owners, REITs and lenders on complicated and challenging deals, but I get to drive by a completed project and know that I was a part of its development.”

Sabine says that some of the most satisfying projects she’s worked on are the pro bono cases.
ROBERT L. TSCHARNER ’35 died at his Glendora, Calif. home Nov. 19, 2007. He was 97. A Lemmon, S.D., native, Tscharnier joined ROTC while at Pomona College and was later called to active duty as a pilot for the Army Air Corps; he was stationed at Hickham Field, Hawaii, during the Pearl Harbor attack. After his discharge, Tscharnier worked as an attorney for the State Department of Veterans’ Affairs in Sacramento. After marrying Alice Garrett, the couple returned to Southern California, and Tscharnier joined his father’s legal practice. He was active in community affairs and helped establish Fleetwood Presbyterian Hospital. He is survived by his brother-in-law, Russell M. Hueckel, five nieces and two nephews.

SALLIE R. SPRINGMEYER ’36 died Dec. 25, 2007. She was 104. One of Nevada’s first female attorneys, Springmeyer moved in 1931 to Gardnerville, Nev., where she met attorney George Springmeyer, whom she later married. Springmeyer devoted her life to public service and was an active member of the Nevada State Board of Health. She is survived by her daughter, Sally Springmeyr Zanjani, a history professor emeritus at the University of Nevada, Reno.

PHYLLIS N. COOPER ’38 an attorney and the first female president of the USC Alumni Association, died Dec. 5, 2007, at a hospital in Burbank, Calif. She was 92. Cooper and her husband, prominent attorney Grant B. Cooper, defended Siahri Siahri, among many other clients. Cooper enrolled at USC at the age of 16 on a debating scholarship and was the first surviving charter member of the American College of Trial Lawyers. She is survived by her three daughters, Judy Tracy, Natalie Wallace, and Meredith Worrell, two sons, Grant B. Cooper, Jr. and John Norton Cooper, 12 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

ROY B. WOOLSEY ’42 died Aug. 28, 2007. He was 90. A successful attorney who practiced in Newport Beach, Calif., he was also a competitive sailor who owned and raced a Lido 14 for more than 50 years. Woolsey entered USC Law in 1939 and in 1942 was commissioned as an ensign in the Navy Supply Corps. After the war, he worked for O’Melveny & Myers for several years before opening law offices in Newport Beach and Costa Mesa. He lived with his wife, Louise, on Lido Isle since 1952. He is survived by his wife, son, Roy Jr.; daughter, Barbara Nordstrom; brother, Robert; and grandson, Eric Nordstrom.

ROBERT L. TSCHARNER ’35, a native of Grove, Okla., died in his home on Dec. 10 after struggling with Alzheimer’s disease. He was 82. After graduating from USC Law in 1949, Hampton began private practice as a trial attorney for the Los Angeles Superior Court. His area of practice was litigation in the field of medical malpractice. He is survived by his wife, Margaret.

VOLNEY V. BROWN ’51, retired U.S. Chief Magistrate Judge, died Feb. 22, 2008, at his home in San Cnt, Calif. He was 81. A fourth-generation Californian, Brown had a long and distinguished career working in private practice and for the federal government. He was an attorney in the firm of Gordon, Knapp & Gil, served as president of his own real estate loan company, and had his own law firm, Brown & Caplow. He joined the Federal Indigent Defense Panel, and in 1972 was appointed the Western Regional Director of the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement. In 1975 he became head of the Justice Department Freedom of Information Appeals Unit until in Washington, D.C. He was named as a U.S. Magistrate Judge in 1994. Brown had an amateur radio license and a pilot’s license, and he was also a published songwriter and a skilled guitar player. He is survived by his wife, Margaret; sons Tyler and Todd; and four grandchildren.

THOMAS P. BRESLIN ’60 died Dec. 20, 2007, at the age of 75. The youngest of six children and a descendant of early Californians from Ireland and Scotland, Breslin grew up in Los Angeles and graduated from Loyola University. He served as a second lieutenant in the Air Force in 1954 and ’55. After law school, he practiced criminal law as a Los Angeles deputy district attorney and in private practice. He completed his legal career with the Los Angeles County Public Defender’s office, where he was the second attorney and a skilled trial lawyer. He is survived by his wife, Margaret; sons Tyler and Todd; and four grandchildren.

DOROTHY L. SCHECHTER ’64 died on Nov. 16, 2007, at her home in Ojai, Calif. Born in Oklahoma City, Schechter went to work as an deputy district attorney for Ventura County after law school. In 1973, she became County Counsel for the County of Ventura, the first woman in the state to hold such a position. She served as president of both the statewide County Counsel Association and the Ventura County Bar Association. After retiring from the county in 1985, she went into private practice with her husband, Thomas L. Schechter, until they both retired in 1993. In retirement, she enjoyed riding her Palomino, playing music and bicycling. She is survived by her husband, her sister-in-law, a brother and his wife, two nephews and a niece.

DENNIS C. TULSIK ’85 died on Dec. 30, 2007. He was a successful attorney who worked for a number of well-known construction firms, including: Monteleone & McCrory; Accret, Groepman & Turner; Brown & Brown; and Hartnett & Tulsiak. He graduated magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, from Yale University School of Law; in 1985, he was an All Ivy League defensive tackle in 1980 and ’81. At USC Law, he served on Southern California Law Review and Moot Court. He is survived by his parents John and Doris Tulsiak; his brother, John; two brothers and their wives, his 6-year- old goddaughter; two nieces and three nephews.

ALBERT HAMPTON ’47, a native of Grove, Okla., died in his home on Dec. 10 after struggling with Alzheimer’s disease. He was 82. After graduating from USC Law in 1949, Hampton began private practice as a trial attorney for the Los Angeles Superior Court. His area of practice was litigation in the field of medical malpractice. He is survived by his wife, Margaret.

Wish You Were Here, continued from page 1

Lauren Bartlett, a staff attorney with the Louisiana Justice Institute, can attest to the value of the trips. “The USC lawyers at our firm are ardent USC Law alumni and featured during fall On-Campus Interviewing. More information, or watch the Challenge progress in real time, at the Law Firm Challenge website, law.usc.edu/LFC.
In the 20 years since the Baby M case was decided, what are the continuing legal issues? Should surrogate contracts be recognized legally as binding prenatal “adoption” or otherwise be made “enforceable” and “legally recognized”?

SCOTT ALTMAN
Vice Dean, and Virginia S. and Fred H. Bize Professor of Law

Surrogacy’s legal status varies by state. In California, it was transformed by both technology and by law. At first a surrogate mother would be artificially inseminated with the intended father’s sperm and would then allow the father’s wife to adopt the child. Over time, artificial insemination gave way to in vitro fertilization, which was becoming less expensive and more often successful. Using in vitro, infertile couples wanting to hire a surrogate could acquire a baby genetically related to both parents. In 1993, Johnson v. Calvert accelerated the trend toward in vitro by holding that a surrogate who had no genetic connection to a child could not back out of her commitment to hand over the baby to its genetic parents. Surrogacy will not disappear. Although it would not appeal to most women, enough women want extra income and an opportunity to help others. More importantly, the demand for infertility solutions is growing. The perceived problems of surrogacy—exploitation of poor women, commodification of reproduction, eugenic impulses—lead some to oppose surrogacy. Opponents also suggest that preventing surrogacy will lead infertile couples to consider adoption, providing homes for children in need. I doubt that banning surrogacy would encourage adoption. Most people strongly prefer to rear their own genetic children. Even if some academics regard this impulse as unfortunate, it will not likely disappear just because we ban surrogacy. Furthermore, I do not think it fair to regulate this impulse only among the infertile. We would as unfortunate, it will not likely disappear just because we ban surrogacy. Further—prefer to rear their own genetic children. even if some academics regard this impulse back out of her commitment to hand over the baby to its genetic parents.

MICHAEL SHAPIRO
Dorothy W. Nelson Professor of Law

The practice of surrogate motherhood has certainly not died away. The practice and the critique continue because of the pull of at least two vectors. One is the urge—whatever its source, whatever its rationalization—for women to become mothers, to create new life. One reason for this is that the legal and moral conduct of reproduction is undergoing profound change. Traditional marriage, for example, permits not only single women but gay parents, the surrogate who gestates the child, and the woman whose egg is used. Yet, full artificial gestation is development of in vitro fertilization, when combined with other aspects of in vitro fertilization, the existence of surrogacy reinforces the sense that childlessness is a problem which can be overcome in ways that prevent clear legislation. Should they be regarded as heroines, helping “sisters in need”? Or are they Western women being marketed as a multi-million-dollar global business. Surrogate motherhood is big these days—at the box office of “Boy Mama” and as a multi-million-dollar global business. It has grown despite being illegal in several states and poorly addressed in many others, including California.

Why has the law done such a poor job of resolving the issue raised by the new reproductive technologies in general and surrogate motherhood in particular? Part of the reason may be cultural, including the distaste some people feel for any departure from traditional nuclear families that are as close as we can get them to the prevailing ideal: mom, dad (imamind and preferred), child formed from the genes of both parents (sexual recombination), child borne by mom, child raised by both. Surrogacy, for example, is resistant to this ideal because it is the genetic offspring of the intended custodial mum and dad; regular surrogacy approaches the child (the genetic offspring of the father). Although this urge to form genetically connected families is resistible, it is widely not resisted, will continue to be so indefinitely and, this is, all things considered, fine. The other vector is the insistence that human reproduction vary from the ideal as much as surrogacy is thought to—especially where surrogates are paid (which is usually) — either it, or causes, evil. It turns babies into fungible objects and women into mere things whose reproductive capacities are rented out. Although there is something to these arguments (so annoying when one’s opponents have something worth saying, it’s not very much. Why would people fight over custody of a child if surrogacy rendered them fungible?). This insistence against allowing surrogacy’s departure from the ideal shows no signs of abating, and continued efforts to persuade the critics otherwise will continue to fail. So, rather than to resist force of gravity, to resist the pull of surrogacy, on the one hand, against the unbinding insistence on the purity of ideal-procreation- or-nothing, on the other, we have moved public discussion to the less- or subvisible. But when fully artificial gestation is developed—it seems to be a long way off—that will become one of the major reproductive issues of the time, and the issues involved in that realm have yet to be adequately examined.

ALEX CAPRON
University Professor; Scott H. Bize Chair in Healthcare Law, Policy & Ethics

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Why these candidates and why now?

Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are here both because of their particulars and the times in which we are living. Clinton is the wife of an ex-president, who lends her candidacy and legitimacy. This association comes at a cost; people are able to dismiss her candidacy, by saying it’s just because of who she is married to. But for her to be in the position to launch a run, she needs connections, money and campaign staff, and her husband’s presidency helps her with that. She is also a smart political player in her own right. She built the organizational infrastructure she needed and won the blessing of the party leader- ship. She has done an amazing job getting past many liabilities— including the “stand by your man” problem— to run a successful senate campaign in a state where she did not live for very long. She also has an incredible appeal with the working class. Obama is here for a different reason. In his case, he has the kind of charisma and star power that make the party leadership sit up and take notice. Also, he has pitched the right message at the right time: it’s time for a change, and get out of the war. He’s not going to beat anyone on experience—certainly not Clinton or McCain. He wins if you want change, charisma and someone who voted against the war. The fact that he’s African-American perhaps also signals his ability to make change. He might be the perfect candidate in these terms: the right messenger, the right message, and the right timing.

How do race and gender play a role in this year’s presidential race?

Race and gender play an interesting role here. Will Latinos vote for a woman or a black man? The popular wisdom is that black-white relations are complicated. But there is also the stereotype that Latinos will not vote for a woman. In the primary, each candidate enjoys both a position of privilege and one of privilege. Clinton is a woman, but she’s white. Obama is black, but he’s a man. In terms of gender, Clinton has to answer gender-focused questions: “Is she human? Does she have a soft side?” And she has to dance a fine line to get it right. When she cities, people find her human but potentially weak. When she’s tough, she’s called “impenetrable.” Women have a tough time being seen as both competent and likable. Then, there’s the focus on her appearance: her ankles, hair and clothes. She has to endure criticisms about her appearance and Obama does not. But, Obama has to play against the stereotype that he is focused on race. He is the first African-American national candidate not running on race; Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton were identified with this single issue. Obama avoided the subject until he was forced to discuss the Rev. Wright controversy. Like Clinton, he has to walk a fine line: he can be black, but not “too black.” I call both of these fine lines the “Goldilocks Theory:” not too hot, not too cold, but just right. Does this campaign season have implications for future elections? Whether or not a Democrat wins doesn’t tell us if we’re going to see either a woman or a black man in front-runner positions again any time soon. If, however wins, the issue of outsider electability, at least with regard to race and gender, has moved forward.
Two alumni recently were recognized for their dedication to community service and the Los Angeles community during the La Raza Law Students Association’s Judges and Lawyers Night. The Honorable Gregory Munoz ’63, Orange County Superior Court judge, received the Judge Alberto Armendariz ’50 Award for Community Service. Ileana Hernandez ’98, a partner at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips in Los Angeles, was honored with the Inspirational Alumnus Award.

Leap Into Public Service

A bar exam preparation course and two tickets to the Playboy Mansion were the big-ticket items at the annual Public Interest Law Foundation Auction, held on Leap Day. The BAR/BRI course went for $2,000 during the silent auction, while tickets to Hef’s home sold for $1,500 during the live auction, held at the California Science Center. All told, the auction, titled “Leap Into PILF,” raised more than $40,000 through ticket sales, auction bids and cash donations to fund grants for students doing public interest work this summer.

MEMBERS OF THE USC BLACK LAW Students Association gathered with alumni and friends in April for the BLSA Annual Alumni Banquet. Held at the Davidson Conference Center on the USC campus, the evening featured a keynote speech by Professor Camille Gear Rich and the presentation of the Crispus Attucks Wright ’38 BLSA/Public Interest Law Foundation grant to first- and second-year students who will spend this summer pursuing public interest work. Recent graduate Doreen Anthony ’08, past BLSA president and recipient of this year’s Mason C. Brown Award, was recognized for her commitment to BLSA, public interest and the local community. BLSA also presented the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year Award to the Honorable Bobbi Tillmon ’77, one of the first black women to win a judicial seat in any Los Angeles countywide election, who has consistently served the community and remained an active alumna.

Rebuilding 3L Class Gift

Members of the Class of 2008 made a record-setting commitment to their law school when 93 percent of them contributed to the 3L Class Gift program. Under this program, 35 members of the graduating class encouraged their peers to pledge to make an annual gift to USC Law during each of the three years after graduation. When the program began in 2003, 43 percent of graduating students made such a commitment.

“Participating in the Class Gift is a way to show we support USC Law,” said Shiri Klima ’08, one of the Class Gift co-chairs. “It does unify us as a class. I’m donating to the Class Gift because I’m proud of our class and what we’ve accomplished and what we will accomplish in the future.”

Every pledge is significant because it represents a commitment from a graduating student to continue to give back to their law school, just as alumni and friends before them have done.

“One of the things that makes USC Law exceptional is the commitment of its alumni and friends to continually support the school,” said Emily Page, assistant director of development and graduate relations.

To see a list of students who made a pledge, visit: http://law.usc.edu/3LClassGift.

La Raza Judges and Lawyers Night

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(Above): Dean Robert K. Rasmussen (left) with Gregory Munoz ’63 (second from right) (Right): Ileana Hernandez ’98 (center) with her husband, Tomas Ortiz ’95, and Diana Iketani ’97, Manatt’s chief recruiting officer.
Habitat for Humanity

USC Law's newest alumni helped a neighborhood family make much-needed home repairs through a project with Habitat for Humanity. In February, third-year students got their hands dirty digging ditches, power-washing stucco, creating window screens and painting at the South Los Angeles home. A group of USC undergraduate students helped complete the work the following day.

Dean Rasmussen thanked the alumni for not being the law school that we are without our alumni. “Our alumni help students in law school in some ways you see and in some ways you don’t see,” Rasmussen said. “Student groups like the Public Interest Law Foundation foster an emphasis on how you can be professionally involved in giving back to your community.”

Activities such as this remind you that you are first and foremost a member of your community.”

BAR TRIP!

After commencement, with the notes of “Pomp and Circumstance” still reverberating in the spring air, most California law school graduates are back in class, taking BAR/BRI and other courses in preparation for the California bar exam in late July. After taking the bar, and before they embark on their legal careers, many of these newly minted alumni partake of a far more enjoyable tradition: the bar trip. With countless billable hours ahead of them, these graduates take advantage of what is likely the last large swath of free time they’ll have for years. Many of them book a lengthy holiday, often abroad, and usually an adventure.

In recognition of this tradition, we asked a few graduating USC Law students about their bar trip plans.

KATHARINE HEITMAN ’08

“I’m traveling to Germany for a five-year reunion with my study abroad program friends. We are meeting up in Freiburg, Germany, just outside the Black Forest, in order to re-live the good ole days of study abroad, including pretending to be able to speak German and frequenting bar gardens.”

JEANNETTE MEXDARA ’08

“We’re planning to go to Thailand and Laos. We plan to scuba dive off the Thai islands, then go for a four-day elephant trek in Chiang Mai. After that, we’re going to Laos. After some time in the capital, we’ll head to Luang Prabang, an ancient royal city that’s been named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I don’t know what I’m more excited about—spicy Laotian food or the Thai beaches!”

JOSH CAVINATO ’08

“I am planning to first spend some time exploring Argentina and Brazil. I then plan to head over to South Africa to visit some friends living there while meeting up with my girlfriend, who hopefully will have some R&R time from humanitarian work in Sudan. It has been about 12 years since I last visited South Africa, so I am excited to see the changes. It’ll be winter in the Southern Hemisphere, so there probably won’t be much beach time until I return to sunny L.A., but it should be a wonderful trip!”

CHARLOTTE DECKER ’08

“I’m traveling to Germany for a five-year reunion with my study abroad program friends. We are meeting up in Freiburg, Germany, just outside the Black Forest, in order to re-live the good ole days of study abroad, including pretending to be able to speak German and frequenting bar gardens.”

Mentor Lunch

Alumni working in different fields returned to campus this spring to share tips on law school, exams and careers with first-year students at the annual Mentor Lunch.

USC Law grads turned out in droves to the event — outnumbering the 1L students — and joined Dean Rasmussen and members of the law school faculty at the luncheon, held in Town and Gown. This year, Mentor Lunch participants were grouped at tables based on their professional interests, rather than paired one-on-one, which allowed for more interaction between students and alumni.

Dean Rasmussen thanked the alumni for giving their time and expertise to the benefit of the next generation of USC Law grads. “We could not be the law school that we are without our alumni,” Rasmussen said. “Our alumni help students in law school in some ways you see and in some ways you don’t see.”

Moot Court

Matthew Larson ’09 was named champion of the 59th annual Hale Moot Court Honors Competition in February after arguing against a special probation condition before three Court of Appeals judges. Also participating in the competition were runners-up Wende Nichols-Julien ’09, Matthew Bennett ’09 and Danielle Kudla ’09.

Larson protested a probation condition that prevented his client from using a computer capable of accessing a network or the Internet unless approved by her probation officer. “The sentence should be clear to the defendant at the time of the sentencing hearing,” Larson said. “This condition presents an overbroad deprivation of liberty.”

The final round was dedicated to the memory of Justice Paul Boland ’56, who for years has mentored Moot Court participants as a quarterfinal-round judge. Boland served on the California Court of Appeal, where he supervised the Judicial Externship Program.

Dear Friends and Alumni,

As I approach the one-year mark of being a part of the USC Law community, I am constantly impressed by the commitment to excellence that our faculty, students, staff and alumni demonstrate on a daily basis. After talking with students and reading evaluations, I can proudly report that the teaching in our classrooms and clinics continues to meet the high standards that have always been a hallmark of a USC legal education. Our students, who as a group are the most diverse of any top law school, continue to impress all those who meet them. Whether it be arguing at the finals of the Hale Moot Court, volunteering in public service across the country, or discussing their student notes, our students demonstrate the talents one expects to see in lawyers of the first rank. On the research side, our faculty continue to explore ways to better understand and improve the legal system. Their scholarship influences the thinking of academics and policy-makers alike. This is, as one leading scholar who recently visited USC Law for the first time remarked to me, “a jewel of a law school.”

However, perhaps the best evidence of our law school’s quality are the alumni and friends who serve as ambassadors for USC Law in all they do. Every time an alum makes partner, starts a business, publishes a book or does anything else of note, it is a testament to the value of a USC Law education. Our alumni comprise an exclusive and influential professional network of which I am very proud. I look forward to meeting more of our graduates and friends in the coming year as I continue my travels to cities across the country. As good a school as we are now (and we are very good), with the support of our alumni and friends, we will be even better.

Robert K. Rasmussen
Dean and Carl Mason Franklin Chair in Law

Scholarship Unwrapped at Farewell

After 27 years at USC, 12 of which were at the law school, Associate Dean Tom Tomlinson departed in March for the position of vice president of Occidental College, where he will oversee development and alumni efforts. In addition to raising funds for the law school, Tomlinson has chronicled the school’s history and profiled notable alumni for USC Law Magazine. His articles and essays will be collected in a book titled A Law School of Permanent Quality.

At Tomlinson’s farewell party, Dean Robert K. Rasmussen announced the creation of the John C. “Toni” Tomlinson, Jr. Endowed Scholarship Fund. Established at the endowed level, the scholarship will support deserving USC Law students every year.

If you would like to make a contribution to the scholarship fund in honor of Toni Tomlinson, please call the Office of Development and Graduate Relations at (213) 740-6143 or send an e-mail to alumni@law.usc.edu.

A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

BY AMANDA PEIFFER

University of Southern California Law School recently received a six-figure disbursement from the Arthur Groman Living Trust to benefit the Arthur Groman Endowed Scholarship Fund. This gift will enable the law school to offer additional Arthur Groman Endowed Scholarships to deserving students for years to come.

Arthur Groman’s wife, Miriam, established the endowed scholarship in 1994 in her husband’s name as a gift for his 80th birthday. Groman’s longtime client Occidental Petroleum Corp. was also instrumental in the fund’s creation, matching Mrs. Groman’s initial gift. The scholarship fund was further augmented by gifts made in memory of Groman after his death in 1998.

Born in 1914, Groman graduated magna cum laude from USC in 1936 with a degree in economics. He attended USC Law for a year before transferring to Yale University Law School, from which he graduated first in his class. Upon his return to Los Angeles in 1943, he embraced the law school of his alma mater as if it were his own.

A renowned trial attorney and a dedicated mentor to young attorneys at his firm, Groman joined Mitchell, Silberberg & Knupp in 1944 and worked there for over half a century. Described as a “godfather” to the firm, Groman counted Howard Hughes, Norton Simon, Judy Garland, Warren Beatty, Paul Newman and Mick Jagger among his clients. He served as a trial lawyer for a number of studios, including RKO Pictures, Columbia Pictures, Paramount and MGM. He was also on the legal team that represented the Fred Goldman family members in their civil case against O.J. Simpson.

Among his many civic involvements, Groman served on the board of directors of Occidental Petroleum Co. since 1957, was secretary of the Armand Hammer Museum board, served eight years on the board of directors of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where he was a lifetime trustee, and was president of the California Institute for Cancer Research. An active member of the local Jewish community, he served as chairman of the Los Angeles Jewish Foundation and president of the American Jewish Committee (L.A. Chapter). He was also a fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and editor of the USC Tax Institute.

Groman served on the law school’s board of councilors from 1968 to 1991 and was the recipient of USC’s 1992 Alumni Merit Award.

“Through his bequest, Arthur Groman has enabled the law school to extend even more support to our excellent students,” says Dean Robert K. Rasmussen. “All of us at USC Law are grateful to the Groman family for their generosity, which will continue to touch the lives of countless students for years to come.”
Most of them have law degrees, and many of them have advanced degrees in other disciplines. They are highly successful attorneys and business professionals, experts in their fields. They also have a lot to learn. Or at least, USC Law’s Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program has a lot to teach them. 

By Assistant Dean Leeanna Izuel, CLE offers first-rate educational programs to established legal professionals from across the nation. From recent law school graduates working in corporate counsel to chief operating officers of real estate development firms, thousands of individuals each year turn to CLE to learn the latest developments in areas ranging from entertainment law to intellectual property. “There are a lot of organizations in Southern California, both academic and for-profit, that offer continuing legal education programs,” says Izuel, who spent 11 years working in corporate law before joining USC Law three years ago. “To stand apart from the others, we have to put on Mercedes-Benz-level programs. They’re bigger, better and feature renowned national experts.”

In 2007, CLE hosted six conferences: the Tax Institute, the Intellectual Property Institute, the Real Estate Law and Business Symposium, the Entertainment Law and Business Institute; the Probate and Trust Conference, and the Institute for Corporate Counsel. Each offers Mandatory Continuing Legal Education and other continuing education credits for nonlawyers. Every conference has to be first-rate, says Izuel, so that attendees will not only come back the following year, but also recommend CLE conferences to peers. Behind each conference are a volunteer committee of top-flight industry experts, USC Law stakeholders and a wide range of contacts that Izuel has made during her years in private practice.

One such luminary, Glenn Sonnenberg ’90, a member of the USC Board of Trustees and president of Legg Mason Real Estate Investors, Inc., participates in the planning of the Real Estate Law and Business Symposium. “CLE helps USC Law remain at the forefront of the areas of practice most critical to our region’s economic and social health—real estate, intellectual property, entertainment, business, litigation,” says Sonnenberg. To help manage the committees, the events, compile written materials and generally pull off each conference, Izuel relies on her small but hard-working staff. They are: Office Manager and Program Event Manager Queenesci Taylor, Special Events Program Coordinator Wendy Wiley and Program Assistants Emily Ogle and Brian Kim.

All the hard work pays off not only for conference participants, but also for USC Law. In addition to providing great publicity for the school, net revenues generated by the conferences are used to support student scholarships. Often, half of those revenues come from sponsors—more than 149 of them in 2007, according to Izuel. Over 245 speakers participated in CLE conferences in 2007, more than 60 of whom were from outside the Los Angeles area. They included Barry Diller, seven judges and the IRS chief counsel.

To learn more about CLE, visit http://law.usc.edu/acadcelc.cfm.

USC Law jumped from 20 to 14 in an annual ranking of the number of graduates getting jobs at the nation’s top 250 law firms (as determined by the National Law Journal). Of the school’s 195 J.D. graduates in 2007, 85—or 43.6 percent—ticked jobs with top 250 firms, compared with 38.3 percent in 2006. The school’s web site, as well as other marketing and recruitment materials, will be getting a makeover later this year, according to Associate Dean of Admissions Chloe Reid and Executive Director of Public Relations Maria Iacobono. The redesign will be led by Beverly Hills-based firm Adams Morioka, whose clients include The Gap, ABC, Target and The Disney Company.

Also getting a makeover this summer are digs for the school’s Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program and the Office of Development and Graduate Relations (DGR), both of which will be moving to downtown Los Angeles in August. CLE and DGR join staff from other USC graduate programs in the AT&T building, located at 1150 South Olive Street. The move won’t disrupt CLE’s plans for its 50th anniversary Entertainment Institute, to be held in the fall. Two new faculty members join USC Law in the fall: Rebecca Brown of Vanderbilt University Law School and Nina Walton, currently completing her Ph.D. in economics at UCLA; the school will also host visiting professor Ron Harris of Tel Aviv University.

USC Law faculty continue to impress. Professor Charles Whitebread, the George T. and Harriet E. Pfleger Chair in Law, has won the school’s 2008 William A. Rutter Distinguished Teaching Award. Established in 2007 by William Rutter ’55, founder of the Rutter Group, the award comes with a smart-looking $50,000, payable over five years. Orrin B. Evans Professor of Psychology, Law, and Psychiatry and the Behavioral Sciences Elyn Saks, whose memoir, “The Center Cannot Hold,” has garnered rave reviews in such publications as the New York Review of Books, won the 12th Annual Books For A Better Life Award in the inspirational category. She has also received USC’s Ph Kappa Phi Faculty Recognition Award.

Carolyn Craig Franklin Professor of Law and Religion Ronald geared ’81 received the Distinguished Facility Service Award from the USC Academic Senate for his “furnishings of ethics and faculty rights, and for distinguished service as president of the Faculty Senate.” Also in April, Lindsay Toczykowski ’08 received a Volunteer of the Year 2008 Award at the County of Los Angeles Volunteer Recognition and Awards Luncheon. Also in April, Olivia Gonzalez ’08 won a Fulbright Scholarship.

USC Law continues to host distinguished guests. This spring, David Simon, creator of HBO’s “The Wire,” and Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) dropped in to chat with students and faculty. “T o stand apart from the others, we have to put on Mercedes-Benz-level programs. They’re bigger, better and feature renowned national experts.”

Lord’s wiki lists hundreds of published and digitized online medieval documents, including court records, royal charters and proclamations, and the official records of the meetings of parliament.

“There are a tremendous number of legal documents from medieval times,” says Lord. “The medieval kings and their courts were incredible record keepers, and most of the documents which have survived are housed in the British National Archives in Kew Gardens, London. In addition, manor houses, cities and boroughs, and churches and cathedrals throughout England have their own archives, often containing legal materials. Originally, you would have to go to the British National Archives or to the archival collections in the various English counties to study these sources.”

With her wiki, Lord is hoping visitors will find a complete guide to English medieval legal documents in published or online form. Since no comprehen-

sive bibliography of this material has been published since the 1990s, Lord’s wiki is intended to bridge this 60-year gap and give scholars a resource that lists publications to present day.

With the organization and precision librarians are known for, Lord has divided the material on her wiki into broad categories, such as court records and statutory records. Within these categories, entries are arranged by material type, plea rolls, courts and calendars, and then chronologically by regnal year.
Shaded by an expansive canopy from 95-degree heat May 16, nearly 300 students officially became alumni of the USC Gould School of Law as they received their diplomas before a hundreds-strong crowd of family, friends, faculty and staff.

In his address at USC Law’s 108th commencement ceremony, Erwin Chemerinsky, inaugural dean of U.C. Irvine’s Donald Bren School of Law, urged graduates to find joy in their careers, maintain integrity and pursue justice.

“As lawyers, especially as you advance in your careers, you will have tremendous power: The power to take away people’s lives or to protect them, the power to enhance freedom or diminish it, the power to protect the environment or participate in defiling it,” said Chemerinsky, who served on the USC Law faculty from 1983 to 2004. “Here at USC Law, you’ve been taught so well how to think critically and how to contemplate. I want to remind you to care. To care about what the effects of your actions are on others and on our society.”

USC Law conferred 210 Juris Doctorate, 84 Master of Laws and two Master of Comparative Law degrees during an afternoon ceremony held in USC’s McCarthy Quad. Chemerinsky told the graduates that it’s possible to find enormous pleasure in the practice of law. If the first job after law school doesn’t provide happiness, he said, change jobs, and change jobs again if need be.

“Don’t stay in a job because you think you should like it – because it’s prestigious or lucrative. Focus on what you actually do feel about it,” said Chemerinsky.

“We simply spend too much of our lives at work, we’ve all worked too hard to get here, to be satisfied with anything but joy in this chapter of our lives.”

USC Law Dean Robert K. Rasmussen congratulated the first class to graduate since he joined the law school almost a year ago. He saluted the legacy of the Class of 2008 and its contributions to the law school: excellence inside and outside the classroom; contributions to student groups, law journals, Moot Court and public interest; and new traditions, including an Empowerment Day for local high school students and the Legal Aid Alternative Breaks project.

“We already are a better place because of your time here,” he said. “We will also become a better institution because of your accomplishments in the future.”

The full USC Law commencement ceremony was webcast live during the event and may be viewed at http://law.usc.edu/grad2008.