

## A Matter of Degrees

Alumni with terminal degrees combine law with a variety of disciplines

BY LORI CRAIG

PHOTOS: BILL YOUNGBLOOD



Brian Cook '09



Rosa Cumare '85



Don H. Mills '58

Rosa Cumare '85 was going to be a literature professor.

She had a master's and Ph.D. from Harvard and was teaching in the English departments at USC and California State University at Los Angeles when a friend decided to take the LSAT.

"At that time, there were not many tenure-track openings," Cumare says, so despite a lack of interest, funds or preparation, she took the test to support her friend. "I decided to apply to law schools, but go only if I got a scholarship."

A full scholarship to USC Law later, Cumare was on her way to a thriving career in employment and labor law, inspired by the same passion that drew her to literature.

"You're dealing with stories," Cumare says. "People, human interest, interactions, personalities, plots. Employment is an area of law that is constantly evolving, and I enjoy reading to keep up with what's happening."

Don H. Mills '58 was going to be a doctor. He earned his M.D. but was bored.

"Pathology is interesting, but deadly," says Mills, straight-faced. "I needed more excitement in life."

Upon graduation, Mills took over the job of the first doctor-lawyer he met, evaluating physician liability claims. The job was so decidedly non-boring, he's been doing it ever since. He is medical director of Sedgwick Claims Management Services' professional liability program for L.A. County hospitals and clinics.

Cumare and Mills are just a few of the USC Law alumni who entered law school with a doctorate in hand.

On its own, a J.D. opens the door to many possible careers; when combined with another advanced degree, the career possibilities are practically unlimited. Like Cumare, some come to law school holding a Ph.D. in another discipline; others, like patent attorneys Christopher Perkins '01 and Brian Cook '09, already had successful first careers. A few, like Mills, have added a J.D. to an M.D. and found unique ways to merge the disciplines. Others decide to pursue Ph.D.s following, or even during, law school, as did Georgetown University Law Prof. Kathryn Zeiler '00.

Zeiler was eyeing academia when she applied to law school. After working for five years in a Big Six accounting firm, she was studying for her master's in taxation when she decided that the work and lifestyle of a university professor were more appealing. Zeiler came to USC Law, where her studies found a new direction thanks to Prof. Matthew Spitzer '77, who holds a Ph.D. in Economics from the California Institute of Technology.

"He was the one who encouraged me to get a degree in Economics," says Zeiler, currently the only other USC Law/Cal Tech Economics Ph.D. besides Spitzer. "I worked for seven years as his research assistant and he took me under his wing and gave me great advice on scholarship, teaching and how to succeed on the law teaching market. I have a hunch he gave me certain assignments just to educate me on topics he thought I should be familiar with."

Zeiler joined Georgetown's faculty in 2003 and directs the Law and Economics Workshop Series. Her research focuses on behavioral economics — examining how people value goods and exploring the legal implications of factors that drive valuation — and health care law and economics. She is writing a paper assessing the ability of medical malpractice insurers to identify claims that will eventually close with no payment.

"I view economics as a set of tools I can use to help me analyze interesting questions in law," Zeiler says. "The tools help me design and execute research projects in a careful way. They also can be useful for constructing powerful legal arguments, so I make it a point to teach my Torts students a healthy dose of economics."

Like any discipline, engineering makes its own demands on the legal profession. Cook, an associate with O'Melveny & Myers in its Intellectual Property and Technology Practice, sees some crossover in interest between lawyers and engineers.

"The overlap seems to be in understanding how things work," says Cook, who holds a Ph.D. in experimental nuclear physics from Cal Tech. "In law school, I was interested in classes that taught me business and politics from a legal perspective and understanding how they work."

Before law school, Cook worked as an electrical engineer for eight years at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. He observed that the patent lawyers he interacted with were working at the forefront of a broad spectrum of technologies under development. Encouraged by his wife, USC Law alumna Nipa Cook '98, the father of four enrolled at USC Law.

For patent attorneys, particularly in a highly technical field such as biotechnology, an advanced degree is almost a prerequisite, says Perkins, an associate with Jenkins Wilson Taylor & Hunt in Durham, N.C.

"Usually, patent litigation will turn on a very subtle point of science, and if you're very familiar with it, you'll have a better chance of picking it up," Perkins says. "Even for a corporate lawyer, I can imagine there would be a huge benefit to having an advanced degree in the field you're going to work in because you're going to be speaking the language your clients are talking."

After obtaining his M.A. and Ph.D. in Genetics and Developmental Biology at Columbia University, Perkins wanted a way to "stay close to science" while pursuing a new discipline.

"I definitely enjoy seeing what people are doing in this part of the country, and I get to live vicariously through the scientists I interact with," Perkins says. "Preparing patent applications and trying to get people protection for their inventions is a lot of fun."

An advanced degree can benefit lawyers even during law school: research and stress management skills honed during years of postgraduate work take the edge off the 1L year, and work experience is a plus in job interviews. The adjustment to thinking like a lawyer doesn't come immediately, even for students with Ph.D.s.

Mills reflected on the contrary approaches of his two fields: "Medicine is a prospective science — you try to figure out what the patient has and go forward. Law is a retrospective science, and you look backward to figure out what the truth was. Doctors presume everything was done right; lawyers presume everything was done wrong. I have no presumptions."



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# HONOR ROLL

Do you have news you would like to share for the next Honor Roll? Please send an e-mail to [delib@law.usc.edu](mailto:delib@law.usc.edu). And find out what other alumni are up to by viewing Class Notes at (<http://law.usc.edu/classnotes>).

**Shannon Boyce '03**, was named shareholder in the Los Angeles office of Littler Mendelson. Boyce represents employers in a broad range of employment litigation matters.



**Sean A. Commons '01** was named partner in the Los Angeles office of Sidley Austin LLP. Commons is an attorney in the firm's Financial Services/Consumer Class Actions practice.

**Rubin E. Cruse Jr. '92** was appointed county counsel for the County of Shasta. Cruse previously was Shasta County's senior deputy counsel and has worked at the counsel's office since 1998.

**Lei Lei Wang Ekvall '92** was installed as president of the Orange County Bar Association. She is the first Asian-American president of the 7,500-member county bar. Wang Ekvall is a partner in the Costa Mesa firm of Weiland, Golden, Smiley, Wang Ekvall & Strok, LLP.

**Cynthia Fountaine '88** has been appointed dean of Southern Illinois University School of Law. She has served on the faculty of Texas Wesleyan University School of Law since 1997 and served as interim dean from 2006-08. She was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Bayreuth in Germany during the 2009-10 academic year.



**Vijay "Jay" Chand Gandhi '97** was sworn in as United States magistrate judge for the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California. He will sit in Los Angeles. Gandhi is the first Indian-American federal judge in the Central District and only the second Indian-American federal judge in the history of the U.S.



**Terry Kane '80** published *The Wise Planner: Safeguarding Your Family's*

*Wealth*, based on his years of estate planning.

**Margaret M. Mann '81** was sworn in as a judge of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of California. Mann previously was a partner in the San Diego office of Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton, LLP.



## 3Ls Make Pledge of Support

BY DARREN SCHENCK

For students who participated in the 3L Class Gift program, a pledge represents more than a commitment to support USC Law in the future: it is a vote of confidence in their own futures and the education they have received.

This spring, 3L Class Gift leaders Laura Riley '10, Lauren Fendrick '10 and Steffi Gascon '10 asked their classmates to make a pledge to give back to the law school beginning a year after graduation. Each student has been asked to make a pledge of any size, and to fulfill it by making one contribution a year for four years, beginning in June 2011.

"I think it's important that we stay connected with the law school and get in the habit of giving back," Riley says. "Small contributions a year or two from now will mean a lot to the law school and help us stay in touch with professors and programs we care about."

Riley emphasizes that donors are able to pledge to support programs of their choice.

"You can direct your gift to a specific fund, including a student organization," she says.

To make a pledge in support of the 3L Class Gift, contact Brooke Duebler at 213.743.1833 or [bduebler@law.usc.edu](mailto:bduebler@law.usc.edu). For more information on the class gift program, visit <http://law.usc.edu/3LClassGift>.

## Calling all law school couples

Did you meet your significant other in a Con Law study group or swoon over your future spouse's law review note? We're looking for couples who met in law school for a story in an upcoming *Deliberations*. If you're interested in participating or just want to share your story, please contact Lori Craig at [delib@law.usc.edu](mailto:delib@law.usc.edu).

[ PROFILE ]

## The Appeal of Bankruptcy Law

BY MARIA IACOBO

Sarah Stevenson '01 enjoyed the more narrative and esoteric classes as a student at Wellesley College; she was a member of the Shakespeare Society and her history thesis focused on the German resistance to Hitler. (She jokes that it was a "short thesis.") Yet, it was a political science class on the American legal system that turned her on to law, a decidedly more rigid pursuit.

"I was surprised at how I enjoyed the practicality of the subject," Stevenson says. "It made me realize that I wanted to study law."

Stevenson surprised herself again when she found herself attracted to tax, commercial paper and bankruptcy law when she got to law school; she had expected to be more interested in areas that allowed for greater interpretation — such as constitutional law. Today, Stevenson is an attorney for the Ninth Circuit's Bankruptcy Appellate Panel, headquartered in Pasadena, Calif.

"I like bankruptcy because there are rules, numbers and codes that dictate how things work," Stevenson says. "These determine a decision, so it's a lot more precise than other areas of law. The interpretation of the rules by case law is interesting, but you always have the code to return to."

After law school, Stevenson clerked for two years, gaining trial court experience before progressing to work at the appellate court.

Given the difficult economy, Stevenson says it's not surprising that her court has seen case filings rise by 20 to 25 percent over the last year. Stevenson herself handles about 200 cases each year.

"A lot of what I do is jurisdictional screening — did they file the appeal in a timely fashion? Is it an appealable order? — before the cases go to a merits panel. It's an interesting mix of appellate and bankruptcy law, as well as a lot of *pro se* litigants."

Stevenson says she is pleased with the quality of education she received at USC Law and was very well prepared for her career. One important benefit from her law school years is the group of friends she made who, despite hectic lives, still stay in touch.

"I feel very lucky," Stevenson says. "We've scattered to all types of law, but if one of us has a question or needs help, we reach out to each other."

One thing she didn't expect was how "national the name USC Law is." With friends working in Georgia, North Carolina and Guam, Stevenson sees that her degree has a valuable profile around the country.

These days, Stevenson is on the other end of the clerkship system and works with new recruits every year.

"USC students are a pleasure to have as interns. I rarely see rookie mistakes. They do their research, they're very specific and they know what to ask for."

After having her daughter two years ago, Stevenson found the government to be a flexible employer; she telecommutes one day a week and takes her daughter, Vivian, to a nearby Pasadena pre-school the other days. Her husband is an attorney in a Century City firm.

Despite the structure of bankruptcy law, there is a human element to her work that reminds her how painful the bankruptcy process is for the litigants.

"No one really wants to file for bankruptcy," Stevenson says. "It can get very emotional for people. The three main reasons they file are: they lost their job, someone in their family got very ill or there is a divorce. These are personal tragedies, but we have a valuable system that allows people to get a discharge and move on with their lives."

Stevenson's penchant for interesting slices of history hasn't been lost among the structured legal rules within which she practices: "Thomas Jefferson filed for bankruptcy."



MARIA IACOBO



# Students Preview Entertainment Law Program

BY GILIEN SILSBY

John Schulman, executive director of USC’s new Entertainment Law Program, brought Hollywood to USC Law recently, giving students a rare look at how studio deals are made and broken.

Schulman, a former Warner Bros. executive, kicked off the Entertainment Law Program with the two-day clinic, “Talent Negotiations: From Screen Test to Settlement,” featuring an array of high-powered studio executives, attorneys and agents.

More than 130 law students signed up for the seminar, among the highest ever for a one-unit course at USC Gould School of Law.



PHOTOS: MARIA IACOBBO

The course provided a glimpse into the daily lives of studio and talent lawyers and showed students the importance of a lawyer’s image, the benefits of understanding corporate accounting, and the existence of multiple negotiation styles and strategies.

“I want to show you — up close and personal — the life cycle of a generic acting deal from casting to disputes over royalties,” Schulman told the students on the first day of the seminar. “You’re going to witness it all.”

Top entertainment attorneys and studio executives, including Maren Christensen ’76 of Universal Studios, Norman Aladjem of Paradigm and David Stanley of Weissman Wolff, role-played how talent negotiations are crafted, from the actor’s screen test to final financial settlements.

“There is no right or wrong in negotiating a deal,” Stanley said. “Sometimes the best outcome is making no deal at all... One of the hardest things you’ll have to face is the huge amount of paperwork. This comes before anyone has a chance to make a TV show or movie.”

After the paperwork is understood and digested, negotiating the best deal for clients often involves knowing what the person across the table is thinking, Aladjem said.

“There is a lot of psychology involved in negotiations,” Aladjem said. “The fun comes in figuring out their agenda and getting into the minds of the people on the other side. If you don’t treat them with dignity and honor, what are they going to try to do the next time? Kill you. So, it’s vital that the people you’re negotiating with believe they’re getting the better end of the deal.”

After students were introduced to negotiating techniques, they broke into pairs, and came up with contract terms for the fictional struggling veteran actress, Kim Kendall, in a movie called “My Avatar’s Blindside – The Musical.” They hammered out their own proposals and presented their deals to the studio executives and classmates.

“We were able to see how lawyers are utilized during each step of a contract’s formation and execution,” said Dan Koffman ’10. “It was a great look at how the entertainment industry works.”

Students also discussed disputes that arise after the fact, and the steps and issues involved in litigation.

“The seminar gave a broad look into different legal issues currently affecting the entertainment industry, including relationships between agents and clients and contract negotiations,” said Marat Massen ’10.

The two-day seminar is just a taste of what’s to come when the fully expanded Entertainment Law program launches this fall. Schulman plans to offer a combination of law, business and entertainment classes, which will be held at the law school, the USC School of Cinematic Arts and the USC Marshall School of Business.

“I want to give students practical information about the entertainment law world. The goal is for USC Law students to graduate with more context and perspective in the field of entertainment,” said Schulman, who oversaw the Warner Bros. legal department for more than 20 years.

# Pop Quiz

Last month USC Law celebrated its 110th commencement. Can you answer the following questions about our speakers at ceremonies past?

- 1. Howard B. Miller, the 85th president of the State Bar of California, presented remarks to the Class of 2010. When did Miller, a partner at Girardi Keese in Los Angeles, teach at USC Law?
- 2. Candace Cooper ’73, who addressed graduates in 2005, was appointed to the Los Angeles Municipal Court by then-Gov. Jerry Brown, USC Law’s commencement speaker in 2009. Cooper was admitted to the state bar and Brown was elected governor in which year?
- 3. In 2001, actor, writer and lawyer Ben Stein addressed the graduates. For which two U.S. presidents was Stein a speechwriter and lawyer?
- 4. The Stanley Mosk Courthouse, the main branch of the L.A. Superior Court, is named for the former California State Supreme Court justice and state attorney general who spoke at USC Law’s 1987 commencement. In what city is the Stanley Mosk Library and Courts Building located?
- 5. When he addressed the Class of 1969, Tom Bradley was an L.A. City councilmember. He was elected mayor in 1973. How long was Bradley’s tenure as mayor (the longest in the city’s history)?

To check your answers to this quiz, visit <http://law.usc.edu/quiz>.





## In Memoriam

**DOROTHY T. LODGE '38** died on January 3, 2010. She was 97. A native of Fullerton, Calif., she attended Pomona College before enrolling at USC Law. At the time, she was one of 11 women in her law school class. She initially worked in her brother Raymond Thompson's law office in Fullerton, and briefly as a public defender. Later, she served as Orange County's first woman deputy district attorney. When Raymond was appointed to the Superior Court, she took over his practice. She later served as general counsel and corporate secretary of Pacific Hawaiian Corporation. She also served on the Board of Directors of Fullerton Savings & Loan Association for more than 50 years. She was predeceased by her husband, Hilmer Gilbert Lodge. She is survived by sons Eric '68 and Raymond; daughters Elizabeth, Margaret Louise and Rosemary; 12 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**CHARLES A. BIRSCHBACH '54** died April 17, 2010. He was 92. Born in Kansas, he was a year old when his family moved to Glendora, Calif. Later, Birschbach, his sisters and his brother Robert '49 moved to Redlands, Calif. He served in the Navy aboard the USS Ahrens from 1942 to 1945. He returned to college and graduated from the University of Redlands and then from USC Law, after which he opened his law practice in Redlands. Birschbach was

appointed San Bernardino County court commissioner and was soon elected Superior Court judge. He retired in 1986. Birschbach was also a public accountant, an American Legion Post Commander and chairman of a local Red Cross chapter. He is survived by his wife, Margaret; a son, Mark; a daughter, Mary; and three grandchildren.

**CHARLES "CHUCK" GREENBERG '59** died April 11, 2010, at the age of 76. Born in New York City and raised in Washington, D.C., Greenberg graduated from Dartmouth College. He acted as the deputy city attorney for Los Angeles and Long Beach; specialized in environmental, real estate and energy law with Ball, Hunt, Hart, Brown and Baerwitz; and started his own practice in downtown Long Beach. He taught business law at California State University, Long Beach, and served on the city's Planning Commission. Greenberg helped bring the Queen Mary to Long Beach in 1967 by assisting with the negotiation for the purchase of the ship. He is survived by his wife, Carol; a daughter, Julie; a son, David; and three grandchildren.

**EDWARD "TED" W. KUHRAU '65** died on Feb. 11, 2010. He was 74. Kuhrau served in the United States Air Force from 1955 to 1958, and then returned to school while holding a full-time job at the Texas Department of

Public Safety. A career in sales took him to Los Angeles, where he attended USC Law at night. He was awarded the Order of the Coif and was the first night student to serve as an editor of the Southern California Law Review. He became a partner at the Seattle firm of Perkins Coie. Kuhrau loved to cruise the waters of the northwest, and to write fiction, children's books and poetry. He is survived by his wife, Sandy; sons Quentin and Clayton; and seven grandchildren.

**FANNIE S. FISHLYN** died Jan. 8, 2010, at the age of 90. After raising three children, Fishlyn earned a bachelor's degree at UCLA and a Master of Library Science degree at USC. Fishlyn served as the Circulation Librarian at USC Law Library from 1972 until her retirement in 1987. She developed the service model for the library's outstanding document delivery and circulation services. Her dedication to providing excellent service to students and faculty alike was rewarded when she became the first law librarian to receive tenure at USC. She loved music and attending the Philharmonic, and was an avid traveler, reader, and follower of the American political scene. She is survived by her son, Elliott; daughters Debby and Suzan; and a grandson, Alex.

## Breaking with Tradition

### Matthew Spitzer '77 finds a home away from USC

BY MARIA IACOBO

"It was a place that broke the rules in many ways."

That is how Matthew Spitzer '77 remembers USC Law when he started as a professor in 1981. Nineteen years later, Professor Spitzer served six years as dean. Now, the former dean — with a Ph.D. in Economics from the California Institute of Technology — will join the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin, where he will create a new department at the business school and teach at the School of Law.

It is not surprising Spitzer would take on a new challenge when he could return to a more routine schedule. Early on, he established a pattern of challenging himself, beginning his doctoral studies in lieu of his second year of law school and subsequently completing both degrees by taking economics at night and law during the day.

He then became the youngest professor in the history of Northwestern Law School; two years later he was thrilled to accept an offer from Dean Scott Bice to return to USC.

"The first day I showed up [to work at USC Law] I went to lunch with two [other law professors] and they proceeded to have a discussion about the relative merits of two different scales of moral development and how important they were for criminal law," recalls Spitzer. "This was so far ahead of anything I had heard at Northwestern. It was like going from undergrad to grad school."

Life at USC Law was "interesting and wrenching," Spitzer says. He loved teaching, but he saw many of his colleagues hired away by Stanford, Yale and other top-tier schools.

When the opportunity to become dean arose, Spitzer jokes that it was more of a calling than a career decision.

"It was sort of the family business," he says. "I had grown up hearing about university management for a very long time."

Spitzer's father, William G. Spitzer, was a professor emeritus and served USC at every academic post, including department chair, dean and provost.

The core of school management is recruiting high-quality faculty, something Dean Bice "had been doing beautifully," Spitzer says. "The ideas I had were ornamental ideas around that basic task. I tried to do as well as Scott did."

Spitzer introduced USC Law to an international audience and created a new revenue source by starting the Graduate and International Programs department. The program offers foreign lawyers an LL.M. or M.C.L. degree and J.D. candidates the opportunity to study at the London School of Economics or in Hong Kong.

Spitzer began many of the centers of study, capitalizing on the law school's strengths in the humanities and social sciences and enriching the program with professors from around the university. For example, the Center on Law, Economics and Organization and the Center for Law, History and Culture were started under Spitzer; he credits the quality of the professors that make the centers work so well.

Spitzer says he is very proud of helping the law school open the Immigration and Intellectual Property clinics, which provide students with a much more diverse educational experience. And, he's proud of the faculty he recruited, including Andrei Marmor, Elizabeth Garrett, Gillian Hadfield and Daria Roithmayr.

"One thing I really wanted to do but did not get done was change the look of the building from neo-brutalist to something else," he says.

He did, however, manage to make significant internal changes such as raising funds to expand and remodel the library and remodel the student café. Gone too are the exposed gray concrete walls throughout the building.

Architectural failings aside, Spitzer says, "I'll miss USC terribly."





[ PROFILE ]

Executive Decisions

BY GILIEN SILSBY

SCOTT ROBINSON



The day the House of Representatives passed health care reform, Alan Hoffman '91 couldn't help but notice that the sun was out, the skies were blue and cherry blossoms were beginning to flower in Washington, D.C.

"It was a gorgeous day and we had something amazing to celebrate," says Hoffman, deputy chief of staff to Vice President Joe Biden.

Hoffman watched the historic vote from the White House Roosevelt Room with President Obama, Biden and dozens of their close aids. Later that evening, Obama invited the group to the Truman Balcony for a toast.

"I've been given an unbelievable window seat on the making of history," says Hoffman. "Did I ever think I would be working for the vice president in the White House? Not a chance. But either government service is in your blood or it's not. It just happens to be in my blood."

It's been a whirlwind year for Hoffman, who thought he'd left politics for good after twice serving as chief of staff to then-Sen. Biden, from 1998 to 2003 and again from 2006 to 2008. But when Biden was tapped as Obama's running mate, Hoffman got a call asking him to return to Washington, D.C.

"When opportunities are presented, I really believe you should take advantage and make the most of them," says Hoffman. "I know the vice president and I understand him; he's a mentor and a good friend. I couldn't say no to him."

Two years after graduating from USC Law, Hoffman got his first Washington, D.C., job working with Hillary Clinton on health care reform. He never imagined he would be addressing the same issue 17 years later.

"I've been very fortunate to work in government and work for the American people in areas I'm passionate about," Hoffman says. "At USC Law I got a very sound and robust education and understanding for the law and the constitution. My law degree and my public policy degree from USC prepared me for the road ahead."

As deputy chief of staff, Hoffman manages the daily operations of Biden's office focusing on administration, the legislative agenda and outreach to groups around the country.

"I oversee the day-to-day management of the office and our outreach to Congress, local and state officials, public interest groups and trade associations," he says. "I also oversee the vice president's political activities."

After reading three newspapers each morning, Hoffman is briefed by staff about important developments. Although his office is in the Old Executive Office, Hoffman walks back and forth to the White House — sometimes a dozen times a day — for meetings and briefings.

Biden has described Hoffman as having a "sharp political sense, a keen sense of timing, a sense of what makes people tick, and a sense of humor."

In addition to his health care reform efforts, Hoffman, who worked at the Department of Justice, works on numerous legal issues, including closing the sentencing disparity between those prosecuted with selling powder cocaine as opposed to crack cocaine.

"I'm a former federal prosecutor and I believe in law enforcement, but we need to be fair and just," Hoffman says.

He is grateful to have his legal background when tackling these issues.

"My law degree gives me a greater perspective on all the different elements necessary to pass legislation and on implications for our society. At USC Law I was taught how to think outside the box and come up with solutions that are balanced and make sense."

OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY DAVID LINEMANN



[ PROFILE ]

Capitol Investment

BY GILIEN SILSBY

SCOTT ROBINSON



Nearly two decades ago, Margaret Cummisky '82 was at a professional crossroads.

The Honolulu attorney was in line to become the first female partner at her law firm, but she longed to get back to the legislative work she had done for Sen. Dan Inouye (D-HI) several years earlier.

Public service won out, and Cummisky says she has no regrets. The Hawaii native has worked for Inouye for 23 years, most recently as deputy staff director of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

"One of the things that brought me to Washington, and brought me back

again, is that I wanted to make a difference," Cummisky says. "My work is truly rewarding, and more fulfilling than getting a company out of trouble that probably shouldn't have been in trouble in the first place."

Yet Cummisky never planned to go into government service.

"It was sheer luck that I got my first job in Washington, D.C.," she says. "I approached Inouye's staff for leads, and the senator happened to be looking for lawyers and hired me."

She returned to Hawaii after several years to work in private practice and married her long-distance boyfriend, Curtis Anderson '82, who was working on a Republican congressional campaign in Oklahoma.

The couple finally settled together in Washington, D.C., when Cummisky was re-hired as Inouye's legislative director, while Anderson worked for the Bush-Quayle administration.

The highlight of Cummisky's Capitol Hill career thus far was her time as staff director of the Senate Commerce Committee, when she managed the passage of 34 new laws, including banning lead in toys, increasing automobile fuel efficiency standards, and strengthening port and aviation security.

Currently, as a top director of the Appropriations Committee, Cummisky works directly with Inouye, who chairs the committee responsible for funding all federal programs. The committee is working on 12 funding bills, as well as supplemental funding for disaster relief and the war.

"This job is about the prudent and responsible allocation of scarce resources," Cummisky says. "We have a vigorous ongoing debate about the pros and cons of earmarks. Ensuring transparency is critical to the process. Taxpayers need to know who's asking for what, and why taxpayers should pay for it. We also have to make sure the committee runs on schedule because otherwise the entire federal government could shut down."

Cummisky's job also offers the opportunity to work for a senator who is the second-most senior member of the Senate and the third-longest-serving senator in history, after Robert Byrd and Strom Thurmond.

"I work for a really great guy," Cummisky says. "He sets a great example of what should happen here."

It has been an exciting time to work in Washington, D.C. — especially as a Hawaii native, Cummisky says.

"The election of Barack Obama brought a lot of energy to town," she says. "Obama has a charisma about him. We saw that when he was a senator. The people of Hawaii have certainly claimed him as one of our own."

Cummisky's law degree and legal experience have helped her navigate the sometimes-tricky world of national politics.

"The skills you gain in law school are innumerable," Cummisky says. "Law school definitely prepared me to think quickly, analyze accurately, and write precisely. You're sitting at your desk monitoring bills on the floor when your senator needs you to draft a speech in a matter of minutes. So, your advocacy skills from law school come in handy, as well as the ability to digest large amounts of information in a short period of time."

Cummisky is eager to hear from USC Law students interested in working in the U.S. capital.

"They can call me any time. I'm happy to share what I know with them."



# Q&A

with Associate Dean Robert M. Saltzman

BY DARREN SCHENCK



MARIA IACOBO

Robert M. Saltzman has served as associate dean at USC Law since 1988. In this capacity, he oversees academic support, student affairs, career services, financial aid and scholarships, and registration and records. As an adjunct professor, he has taught courses on Legal and Professional Ethics and Responsibilities, Evidence, and Legislation (Statutory Interpretation). In 2007, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa appointed Saltzman to the Los Angeles Police Commission, which oversees the L.A. Police Department. He previously served as vice president of the L.A. City Ethics Commission. He serves as a trustee of the Law School Admission Council, where he helps oversee financial and legal affairs, issues relating to the LSAT, and other matters related to law schools and law school applicants. He holds an A.B. from Dartmouth College and a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

**You have been a member of the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners since 2007. Can you talk a little about the nuts and bolts of what you do on the commission?**

There are five members of the police commission, each appointed by the mayor. We are the civilian oversight for the LAPD, which means the chief of police reports to us, and we set policy for the police department. We also review every instance of an officer using deadly force, any officer-involved incident that leads to someone being hospitalized, and every instance when an officer fires a weapon.

We meet as a commission once a week on Tuesdays for about half a day. Some of that is public session; we deal with the use-of-force cases in private. We also spend time on the significant types of policy issues you would expect, such as racial profiling, implementation of placing cameras into the black-and-whites, and diversity in recruitment, among others.

**In addition to being a civilian, you’re trained as a lawyer. How does a legal education serve you in your capacity as commissioner?**

A number of the issues we deal with in the policy realm involve complex legal questions. A basic example of that would be determining when a police

officer is authorized to use deadly force. The rules governing uses of force come from Supreme Court cases, laws and interpretations of what the standards are; application of those standards entails legal analysis.

Another issue I’ve gotten involved in has to do with Miranda rights. For example, there are complex questions about how information can be used if the information comes from an in-custody suspect who has not waived his Miranda rights. It’s not that a non-lawyer can’t sort through these legal issues, but it’s easier for a lawyer to do it.

**In some ways, you’re fostering legal training for police officers.**

Yes. As a commissioner, I’ve come to appreciate just how complex the job of being a police officer is. Among other things, police officers need to have a working knowledge of the law — and in a variety of areas of law much broader than what a typical practicing lawyer has to have.

**As associate dean of student services and as a trustee of the Law School Admission Council,**

**you get a unique perspective on future practitioners in the legal world. How have students’ needs changed over the years, and what can you do to help them prepare for changes in the legal world?**

I’ve seen a variety of changes. The level of student interest in public service has gone up and down, now back up. The needs of the students have changed in the sense that the nature of students has changed. My sense is that current students are much more immediate in their expectations — how quickly they can get what they need, how quickly they expect us to be available. Partly it’s technology and partly it’s how they’ve grown up. We also have significantly more students with special needs and expectations, including those with disabilities or different learning styles, all of which we are better equipped to handle now than in the past. One very significant difference is the dramatic increase in debt incurred by many students.

**Why is diversity important, in both legal education and, for that matter, the LAPD?**

In the law school setting, I believe the most significant importance of having diversity in the classroom is that the mere presence of that diversity enhances the quality of education by enriching the discussion and broadening perspectives.

When it comes to law practice or law enforcement, it’s a little different. One of the things we’re training lawyers to do is represent other peoples’ interests, and to do that requires the ability to communicate with those people effectively, to understand them and to counsel them effectively. On the law enforcement side, it’s very similar — we expect police officers to understand why someone might be doing what they’re doing. We’re far more successful doing that if we have experience dealing with people of different backgrounds in our own educational background, whether it’s the LAPD Academy or law school. The bottom line is that by having diversity in legal education, we create better lawyers, and by having diversity in the police academy and law enforcement workforce, we have better, more effective police officers.

## Faculty Promotions

BY MARIA IACOBO

Promotions for four faculty members were recently announced by Dean Robert K. Rasmussen.

Kim Buchanan was promoted to Associate Professor of Law. Buchanan recently earned her J.S.D. from Columbia University; her dissertation examined race, gender and the rule of law in prison. Her current research addresses race, gender and prisoners’ rights against sexual abuse, and the sexual dimensions of gender equality.

Camille Gear Rich was promoted to Associate Professor of Law. Rich teaches Constitutional Law; Children, Sexuality and the Law; and Legal Profession. Her research interests include constitutional law, employment discrimination and feminist legal theory.

“Kim and Camille combine innovative scholarship with engaging classroom discussions,” Rasmussen said.

Heidi Rummel was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor of Law. Rummel is a co-directing attorney for the Post-Conviction Justice Project, a clinical program in which students advocate for the legal rights of convicted prisoners. She also teaches Criminal Law; Legal Analysis of Evidence; and Trial Advocacy.

Michael Chasalow also was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor of Law. Chasalow founded and directs the USC Small Business Clinic, where students gain hands-on experience handling transactional legal problems and providing basic corporate legal assistance to small businesses, entrepreneurs and nonprofit

organizations. His scholarly interests involve the development and structure of business ventures as well as corporate governance issues and issues relating to the governance of partnerships and LLCs. Chasalow also teaches Counseling the Start-up Company; Partnerships and Limited Liability Companies; and Business Organizations.

“Our clinics provide tremendous opportunities for students to serve real clients under faculty supervision,” Rasmussen said. “Heidi and Michael shape the legal and advocacy skills students need to complement their classroom studies.”

# FOR THE RECORD

Last fall, USC Law introduced Law, Language and Values, a revamped version of its cornerstone first-year course Law, Language and Ethics. How was the new course developed and what is its role in the USC Law curriculum?

**RONALD GARET**

Carolyn Craig Franklin Professor of Law and Religion



LL&E was conceived as a Humanism. It opened a way for young lawyers to take ownership of their personal and professional commitments passionately, reasonably and meaningfully.

The materials that Profs. Bill Bishin and Christopher Stone created for LL&E were meant to guide students through a sequence of stages, more or less as follows:

1. We begin with a common assumption that while ordinary choices are made subjectively, adjudication is highly structured, rule-based, predictable, almost mechanical.
2. But it turns out that choices in adjudication depend upon the same considerations and frames of reference as ordinary choices. Legal reasoning now looks surprisingly subjective.
3. The appearance of subjectivity is deepened when we consider strong arguments for skepticism about the meaningfulness and rationality of moral statements and judgments. Law's apparent rigor and reasonableness are highly deceptive.
4. But skepticism is itself one theory among others. Subjected to critical inquiry, it is revealed as surprisingly unpersuasive.
5. We can make reasoned arguments responsive even to hard issues in hard cases.
6. Therefore, we can advance to our work with useable tools at our disposal, having grown out of our initial uninspected dualism (subjective personal/moral/social choice v. rigorous, reliable, self-contained legal choice).

Though students in LL&E learned concepts and skills that recurred across the curriculum, the course was foundational in a deeper sense. It occasioned real-time reflection on the experience of becoming a lawyer, culminating in self-aware capacity to deal responsibly with the lawyer's burdens of duty and choice.

There were two turning points in our discussion of the past, present and future of LL&E. One was our students' articulate declaration of the value they place on the LL&E forum for such real-time reflection. The other was when a half-dozen of our faculty, representing diverse generations, scholarly interests, and teaching styles, volunteered to teach the course. Out of this double testimony, LL&E was reborn as LL&V.

It was a privilege to share with Profs. Scott Bice and Dan Klerman a first round in the renewal of LL&E as LL&V. We stayed in step with one another as we developed the course materials, syllabus, teaching notes, exercises and final exam. Chris Stone and the great USC tradition of LL&E supplied destination, map and compass.

**SCOTT BICE**

Robert C. Packard Professor of Law



Teaching Law, Language and Values this past year was a "come home" experience for me. The class was first taught in the fall of 1965, when I was a first-year student. Chris Stone was my teacher; I found the course fascinating. Although I did teach the course a few times after I joined the faculty in 1969, I had not taught it for more than 35 years.

Over the years, the course had evolved into several different offerings, depending on the emphasis of the various faculty who taught it. When the faculty as a whole decided to ask the professors teaching the course to use a common syllabus to ensure that each section covered the same core concepts, I was asked, and happy to agree, to take up the course once again.

The basic design of the course remains the core of the offering: the basic elements of statutory interpretation and common law adjudication and the necessary relevance of social values in the resolution of any "hard cases." The change from "ethics" to "values" reflects the recognition that these social values include not only "ethics, morality and fairness" but also the concepts of "efficiency and wealth maximization."

Ron Garett, who has taught the course for many years, added an additional element to the course: serious consideration of

how one's own set of values impacts his or her responsibilities as a lawyer. For example, how does a lawyer reconcile his or her responsibility as a district attorney in a death penalty case with his or her own opposition to capital punishment? This was new territory for me. Fortunately, our Academic Associate Dean, Dan Klerman, suggested that the course be taught in small sections of no more than 36 students. This proved to be a great benefit to generating discussions about personal values and their relevance to the materials we were studying.

For those who know me from taking Torts, this was no doubt a "gentler, kinder" version of the first-year experience. Frankly, that made "coming home" a uniquely rewarding experience. (No fear, however: Torts remains the same.)

**DANIEL KLERMAN**

Associate Dean and Charles L. and Ramona I. Hilliard Professor of Law and History

We introduced a number of important changes to the course this year. Perhaps most importantly, the three faculty members teaching the course worked together to create a com-



mon set of course materials so that students could be sure that the concepts they were learning represented a consensus view of what all law students really need to know. These materials continued Law, Language and Ethics' traditional focus on statutory and common law interpretation, but added new materials on normative reasoning, with particular attention to economic analysis. Adding the materials on normative reasoning was especially challenging, because the Law, Language and Values is only a two-unit course (whereas Law, Language and Ethics had for many years been a three-unit course).

The principal goal of Law, Language and Values is to provide a foundation of concepts that students can use in all of their classes and which other faculty could build upon in their classes. Preliminary reports from both students and faculty suggest that students' familiarity with concepts such as the textualism and the Coase Theorem has enabled faculty in courses as diverse as Property and Constitutional Law to teach more sophisticated versions of their classes and for students to learn at a higher level. In addition, we are listening carefully to feedback from faculty and students so we can continue to improve the course.

# Marmor Earns Faculty Recognition Award

BY GILIEN SILSBY



Andrei Marmor, an internationally recognized legal philosopher at USC Law, has received the 27th Annual Phi Kappa Phi Faculty Recognition Award for his book, *Social Conventions: From Language to Law* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

Phi Kappa Phi Faculty Recognition

Awards are given to faculty for recent scholarly,

scientific or creative works that make a contribution to their respective disciplines. Each year, four outstanding recipients of the award are recognized.

Marmor, Professor of Philosophy and the Maurice Jones Jr. - Class of 1925 Professor of Law, was honored at an April awards dinner at Town and Gown at USC.

"I am truly honored yet humbled by the prize," Marmor said. "A book in philosophy may be the product of a single author, but in substance it always reflects the academic environment in which it is written. I could not have completed this project without the help and encouragement of my colleagues at USC, and I am very grateful to them all."

In his book, Marmor reconfigures the view of social conventions that has dominated scholarship for decades. He provides original analysis of the rules and

norms governing human conduct.

"His ideas challenge our seemingly well-established perspectives about the role of semantics, pragmatic reasoning, and morality in our everyday lives," said Alison Renteln, president of Phi Kappa Phi and a USC political science professor, in awarding Marmor his prize.

USC Law Prof. Alexander Capron, president of the USC Faculty, said Marmor's work offers "path-breaking contributions to moral and legal theory.

"Prof. Marmor treats this complex, multi-disciplinary topic in an extraordinarily lucid fashion," Capron said. "The book will not only be of great interest to philosophers but will cement Prof. Marmor's reputation internationally as one of the most thoughtful and original thinkers working in jurisprudence today."



# Alumni Honored at Judges and Lawyers Night



Richard Chacon '99, Judge José Sandoval and George Gascón

USC Law's Latino Law Students Association (LLSA) honored Richard Chacon '99 and Judge José Sandoval at its annual Judges and Lawyers Night.

Chacon received LLSA's Inspirational Alumnus

Award. He runs his own criminal defense practice, where he charges reasonable rates to provide access to representation to those who otherwise could not afford it. While attending USC Law, Chacon was a leader on the boards of PILF and La Raza (now LLSA) and a volunteer at the Neighborhood Resource Clinic, and was a teaching assistant for the late Prof. Charles Whitebread.

Sandoval was named the Judge Alberto Armendariz '50 Award winner for his dedication to civil rights. Sandoval is a felony trial court judge of the Los Angeles Superior Court, Central Criminal Division. He worked for the U.S. Department of Justice and the Democratic National Committee before moving into private practice. He was senior counsel to Nissan North America before being named to the bench in 2001. Since 2006, he has presided over Roosevelt High School's Teen Court,

an early intervention program for first-time juvenile offenders.

San Francisco Police Chief George Gascón gave the keynote address. A proponent of civil rights and constitutional policing, Gascón has also served as police chief in Mesa, Ariz., and as assistant chief of the Los Angeles Police Department under William Bratton.

The Latino Law Students Association last fall changed its name from La Raza Law Students Association. LLSA believes its new name will further the group's commitment to building a sense of community and belonging for all Latino law students.

-Jason Finkelstein

# PILF Auction Supports Summer 2010 Grants

While students, alumni and faculty enjoyed an evening with a "Great Gatsby" theme, they kept two important ideals in sight: advancing the educational interests of students and fostering an ethic of public service.

The Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF) raised \$17,000 for three summer grants at its 20th annual auction. Los Angeles' historic Union Station, with its grand mission and colonial revival architecture, befitted the elegant event as students tended bar, entertained guests and auctioned off a variety of items.

This year's auctioneers, Laura Riley '10 and Ben Rubinfeld '10, entertained the crowd while promoting some of PILF's fantastic trips and off-campus events with faculty.

"This year's auction was a really fabulous event," says PILF President Alison Gomer '11. "We were a little worried that moving it off campus would reduce the number of attendees, but more than 300 people attended and I think the historic venue added a lot to the atmosphere."

PILF grant recipients typically work for nonprofit organizations and government agencies. Past recipients have worked throughout the state, country and even internationally.

This year, PILF alumni donated more than \$5,000 to create the first PILF Alumni Grant. Danielle Hammond '12 is the recipient of this grant and is working at the East Bay Community Law Center in Berkeley, Calif.

"Even in these tough economic times, people generously donated to support PILF's fundraising efforts," Gomer says. "We're so pleased that our law school community remains committed to supporting students doing public interest work."

-Maria Iacobo



Top: The annual auction was held in Los Angeles' Union Station. Above: Auctioneers Ben Rubinfeld '10 and Laura Riley '10

# Networking Begins With Lunch



Left: Jyoti Mittal '12 and Dan Cathcart '57 Above: Jennifer Baer '12, Diana Cox '12 and David Booher '04

Before coming to USC Law, Ryan Wolfe '12 had heard much about the vaunted Trojan network of law school alumni. He experienced that network firsthand when he joined some 130 students and more than 100 alumni at the annual Mentor Lunch, held in USC's Town & Gown.

"I want to get into public interest, so I really wanted to connect with alumni in that field," says Wolfe, who with his wife has worked with the homeless in Venice, Calif., where he lives. "I thought it would be a great way to make an unconventional connection that I might not get by my own efforts."

At USC Law, first-year students quickly learn that networking is among the most important skills they must cultivate as young attorneys. Although the law school offers other networking opportunities for 1Ls, Mentor Lunch remains the most prominent such event. Alumni and students are seated at tables of eight according to shared career interests; the format allows each student to meet and potentially connect with several alumni.

Zachary Crowley '12, who sat at a criminal law-themed table, recognized Mentor Lunch as a networking opportunity.

"These events are important because you get out of it what you put in," he says. "If you're willing to make the conversation and sell yourself, you get so much further."

At the lunch, Crowley met Valerie Salkin '92, a former Los Angeles County deputy district attorney who in June was elected to the L.A. Superior Court. Salkin, who has attended five Mentor Lunch events, says she likes talking to students because they bring great enthusiasm and energy.

"Most people have someone who helped them along the way," she says. "Mentor Lunch is a tremendous opportunity to build relationships that can last throughout a student's law career and beyond."

Peter Rosen '78, an attorney in the Los Angeles office of Latham & Watkins, where he has chaired the firm's local recruiting committee, agrees that Mentor Lunch is a great way for students to begin to understand the value of networking skills, and understand what will be expected of them as attorneys.

"The point of networking is to build relationships," he says. "If you maintain them over many years, you never know where they're going to end up."

-Darren Schenck



## Innovation Born From an Afternoon in Traffic

Thousands of Angelenos sit frustrated in traffic each day. For one USC Law alumnus, though, an afternoon of gridlock was the birthplace of an idea that would forever change the legal profession.

It was 1995 and Mark Wapnick '72, a real estate and business attorney, had just made a court appearance best timed with a stopwatch. Yet the speedy appearance still required Wapnick to commute through 40 miles of traffic each way to the courthouse, a trip that cost him plenty of time and his client plenty of money.

"I thought there had to be a better way," said Wapnick, who shared his story with the USC Law community during a recent installment of the "Conversations with the Dean" speaker series, hosted by Dean Robert K. Rasmussen. "I wondered 'why couldn't we have done this by telephone?' It was only a two-minute appearance."

An entrepreneur at heart, Wapnick began investigating ways to launch a business called CourtCall that would allow attorneys to do just that – call into a court remotely and participate in a hearing just as they would in person.

With a mix of skill and luck, Wapnick and his business partner landed their first contract with the Los Angeles Superior Court. Nearly 15 years later, CourtCall has handled nearly 2 million appearances and serves more than 1,500 state and federal courtrooms in 42 states.

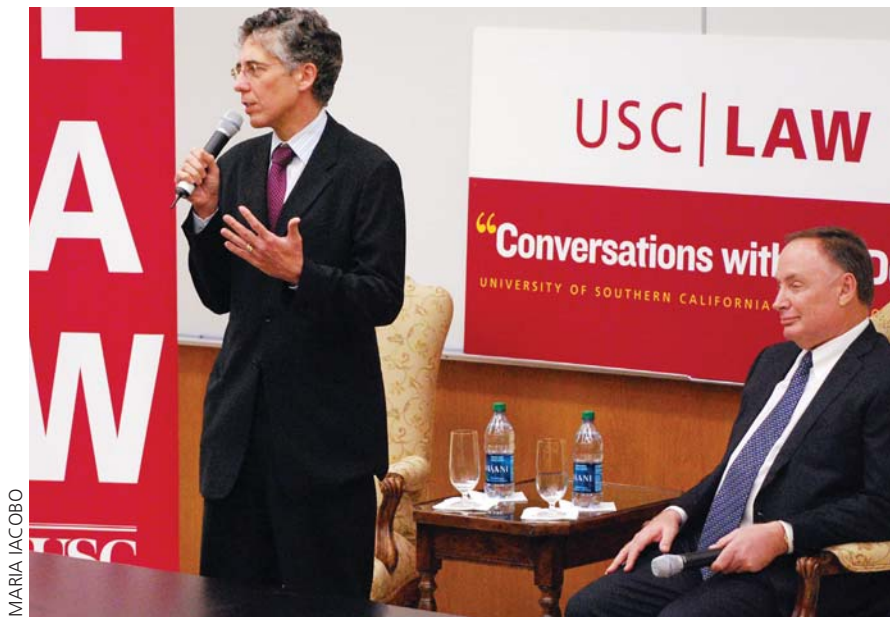
Wapnick believes most of his success is due to his work as an attorney.

"I'm really proud that we've done something that has changed the way people practice law," he said.

Wapnick's USC Law education gave him several skills he continues to use today in business.

"The critical thinking and writing were invaluable," he said. "There's no education better than at USC Law."

-Gilien Silsby



Dean Robert K. Rasmussen sat down with Mark Wapnick '72.

## Students Bring Legal Aid to Border, Gulf Coast

On break from classes and studying, USC Law students brought their legal skills to two locales where they're most needed.

The United States-Mexico border was the scene of the Legal Aid Alternative Breaks (LAAB) winter trip. Just after 1 o'clock on a chilly January morning, 13 students teamed with California Rural Legal Assistance to survey farm workers about how their working conditions have been affected by the use of quotas in the field.

Paid per piece of produce rather than at minimum hourly wage, farm workers labor at breakneck pace and often without rest. Students asked the workers about their access to shade and restrooms, breaks and pay issues.

"It's especially tough right now because the economy is bad down there, too, so there's an overabundance of people who are looking for work," said Whitney Fair '11, co-vice president of LAAB. "The problem is, when you don't have enough work and there are too many workers, then who's going to speak up and say, 'I need a break?'"

During spring break, 55 LAAB members traveled to New Orleans to work with six agencies in desperate need of volunteers, including the New Orleans City Attorney's Office and Juvenile Regional Services, which was formed in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to provide legal assistance to juveniles. The trip was LAAB's fifth to the Gulf Coast in as many years.

Aysha Pamucku '11 and seven other 1Ls and 2Ls volunteered with Orleans Public Defenders, where they committed five full work days, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and took on substantive legal work. The office is "absolutely overburdened and understaffed," she said.

The resounding sentiment: the city has come a long way, but it still has a long way to go. Homes and schools in the Ninth Ward, the low-income neighborhood hardest hit by Katrina, remain boarded up, a sign that some residents still haven't returned and funds to rebuild are lacking.

At one of those schools — George Washington Carver High School — a fraction of the former student body attends classes in temporary trailers as the school's permanent building sits in shambles nearby. A dozen USC Law students visited the school and gave the students advice on applying to and affording college — goals that few pursue, given the obstacles.

"I think it's important for us to go back every year to give them hope, to let them know there's more available to them than what they see every day," said Ryan Estes '12.

-Lori Craig

## BLSA has 'Visions of Unity' at Annual Banquet



BLSA members and officers

Where there is unity, there is victory.

That was the message Rosezetta Upshaw '11 and Najeh Baharun '11, co-presidents of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA), chose to highlight at the group's Annual Alumni Banquet, held at USC's Davidson Conference

Center.

BLSA students and alumni reflected on a year of collaboration with both on- and off-campus organizations that was designed to create unity within USC Law and the Los Angeles legal community.

One of this year's highlights was the creation of the Legal Ambassadors program, founded in conjunction with the Latino Law Students Association. Each month, USC Law students, staff and members of the community visit local middle schools to teach a law and justice curriculum designed specifically for young minority students.

Students hope the Legal Ambassadors program might inspire some youths to become the next Judge Candace Cooper '73.

Cooper, named BLSA Alumnus of the Year at the banquet, is a Los Angeles native who received her undergraduate and J.D. degrees from USC. In 1980,

she was appointed to the Los Angeles Municipal Court. She has since ascended to the benches of the Los Angeles Superior Court and the California Court of Appeal. Along the way, she has been active in several national, state and local bar groups.

Among the other highlights of the banquet were the announcement of finalists for the Crispus Attucks Wright '38 PILF Grant, the introduction of the 2010-11 BLSA Executive Board and a keynote address by current Los Angeles City Councilman, and former Los Angeles Chief of Police, Bernard Parks.

-Jason Finkelstein

Candace Cooper '73





# Making Law Their Business

BY LORI CRAIG

In Prof. Gillian Hadfield’s Advanced Contracts class, students role-play as both lawyers and clients to approach contract problems from both sides of the table. Hadfield’s student Philip Castro ’11, president of the Gould/Marshall Alliance, a club that builds relationships between USC law and business students, thought the latter might be better suited for the role of client and further challenge the law student “lawyers.”

He pitched the idea, and an interdisciplinary, interschool collaboration was formed: J.D. students from Advanced Contracts would sign up for an extracurricular case study in which they and volunteer MBA students would find a solution for a real company facing a very real business challenge.

“We thought the business students would be able to bring a large amount of expertise to role playing as clients,” Castro says. “They could bring the marketing or finance issues they were worried about to the table. It was also a chance to get the two groups together to learn how to work together and compel the law students to explain and pitch their ideas in a way that their non-lawyer clients could understand.”

The project involved a Toronto company whose complex and lengthy contract was delaying or preventing clients from signing on. The 13 J.D. students formed three “law firms” while 11 MBA students took the role of the company’s executive team. In the first two-hour session, the students brainstormed about what the executives wanted from a new contract and how the law firms might provide that. In the second session, each firm pitched its new and improved contract to the executives, who selected the best proposal.

“My goal is to have students who know what the conventional contract looks like and why it looks like that, who can think up 11 ways to do it differently and who can cogently work with a client to decide what the real risks, tradeoffs and rewards are of the full set of alternatives,” Hadfield says.

Things got a bit tense when the business students had some trouble understanding complex contract issues, says Paul Del Piero, a J.D./MBA student who helped organize his business school classmates’ participation.

“But at the end of the day, everyone came together with the understanding that we were all on the same team,” Del Piero says. “So then the question was: ‘What was the best way to leverage our knowledge — both legal and business — to solve this problem?’ MBAs and J.D.s are going to be working together for the rest of their lives, and the better the two groups learn to communicate with each other now, the better that work relationship will be in the future.”

“This was a successful experiment because I learned a lot about what we need to teach, and the challenges of accomplishing that,” Hadfield says. “The law students did a great job taking what they had learned about contract drafting and applying it to this problem. And the MBA students pushed hard to get what they needed in an innovative approach to contracting. The great challenge is to get each of these groups to understand more about how the other side works and to innovate new solutions to old problems. I’m very enthusiastic about the prospect of developing a full-semester course with law and MBA students that accomplishes this. This was a great first step.”



Rishi Wadhvani ’10, Kim Bui ’10, Philip Castro ’11 and Blake Horn ’11



# Show of Excellence

BY DARREN SCHENCK

Under a polished blue sky in April, the USC Law community gathered to celebrate the achievements of students, faculty and staff. Dean Robert K. Rasmussen and Student Bar Association President Jameil Johnson ’10 bestowed recognition on some of the law school’s highest achievers.

Johnson presented the SBA Outstanding Staff Member of the Year Award to Malissa Barnwell Scott, acting director of the Office of Public Service. The Outstanding Adjunct Professor of the Year Award went to West Hollywood Mayor John Heilman, who teaches Community Property and a bar prep course.

The Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year Award went to Prof. Niels Frenzen, director of USC Law’s Immigration Clinic. Johnson praised Frenzen for his “dedication to student learning outside of the classroom as well as for the practical skills students learn through the Immigration Clinic.”

Dean Rasmussen then took over award-presenting duties, beginning with the William A. Rutter Distinguished Teaching Award, given to a faculty member who is an exceptional classroom teacher. The winner was Prof. Ron Garet, the perennially beloved professor of Law, Language and Values, among other courses.

Shattuck Awards were bestowed on 3L students who “demonstrate the greatest potential for becoming outstanding members of the bar.” The winners were: Anna Faircloth, Steffi Gascón, Abigail Greenspan, Jessica Hewins, Jameil Johnson, Rebecca Raizman and Benjamin Rubinfeld. Special recognition was also given to two international students “who have demonstrated outstanding dedication, involvement, and significant contribution to the law school community”: Kazuki Inoue of Japan and Yu-Chen Lin of Taiwan.

Next came the Miller-Johnson Equal Justice Prize, which went to Laura Riley, and the Mason C. Brown Award, which went to Adam Reich. Dean Rasmussen closed the ceremony by recognizing students who have secured judicial clerkships: Saurabh Anand, Dani Cepernich, Vincent Chuang, David Clark, Anna Faircloth, David Lourie, Marat Massen, Dana Peterson, Laura Riley, Rachael Greene Sokoloff and Kevin Spark.

# Dual Champs in Verbal Duel

BY JASON FINKELSTEIN

Before them, three of the nation’s pre-eminent federal appeals judges sat ready to pounce at the tiniest misstep in their arguments. Behind them, hundreds of their peers, professors and family members looked on intently. It was enough pressure to make almost anyone buckle.

Yet, the finalists at the 2009-10 Hale Moot Court Honors Competition were so excellent that even the panel of federal judges couldn’t pick just one winner.

Sam Alavi ’11 and Jenny Farrell ’11 were named co-champions of this year’s competition after a spirited hour-long round of arguments held at USC’s Norris Theatre this spring.

The other finalists were Cristyn Chadwick ’11 and Vanessa Roman ’11. Along with Alavi and Farrell, they emerged from a field of 40 2Ls that began the competition at the beginning of the academic year, which was eventually cut to 16 quarterfinalists and 8 semifinalists before the final round of competition.

The fictitious case the students argued involved a complex factual scenario about a woman being surveilled and pulled over by police officers, who eventually found a box in her possession containing illegal sex toys.

Judging the competition were the Honorable Rosemary Barkett of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals; Theodore A. McKee of the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals; and Stephen F. Williams of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Each finalist spent 15 minutes before the panel, deftly navigating the judges’ barrage of pointed questions and challenges, before the judges retired to make their decisions.

“It is really an unbelievably difficult task when you have the level of presentations that we had here today,” Barkett said of choosing the winners.



# Marriage Equality as Democratic Ideal

BY LORI CRAIG



Shannon Price Minter

Amid the continuing legal battle over Proposition 8, the California voter-approved initiative banning same-sex marriage, nine legal scholars and gay marriage advocates met at USC Law recently to discuss marriage equality and debate how best to fight for it.

*The Southern California Review of Law and Social Justice* annual symposium, “Proposition 8 and Marriage Equality,” featured keynote speaker Shannon Price Minter, legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

Minter was lead counsel for same-sex

couples in *In re Marriage Cases*, which held that same-sex couples have the right to marry, and was part of the legal team that fought against Prop. 8 before the California Supreme Court last year.

He took issue with the argument from both Prop. 8 advocates and opponents that the same-sex marriage debate hinges on the question of individual rights versus the democratic process.

“Rather than being in conflict, the values of democracy and marriage equality are interdependent,” Minter said. “Gay people seek the freedom to marry because that freedom to choose is essential to the principle of equal citizenship that is at the heart of democracy. Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are calling on the court to live up to its democratic ideals by exposing the gap between the ideal of equality and our failure to reach it: that is the essence of democracy.”

After Minter’s talk, USC Law Prof. Clare Pastore moderated a panel that included USC Law Prof. David Cruz and Loyola Law School Prof. Douglas NeJaime. The second panel, moderated by USC Law Prof. Rebecca Brown, featured Prof. Judith Halberstam, director of the USC Center for Feminist Research; John Henning, co-founder and executive director of Love Honor Cherish; Jennifer C. Pizer, senior counsel and marriage project director for Lambda Legal; and Robert Bradley Sears, executive director of The Williams Institute at UCLA Law School.

# Boarding Pass: Promoting USC Law Overseas

BY ANNE MARLENGA

Where else in the world can you surf in the morning, ski in the afternoon, and enjoy world-class cultural events at night?

I often portray Los Angeles this way to prospective LL.M. students when recruiting overseas.

When the LL.M. program was launched nine years ago, former Dean Matthew Spitzer formed relationships with law firms in Asia to cultivate interest in USC Law. Today, we hold information sessions in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China and India, with as many as 50 prospective students attending each. In addition, we participate in law school fairs in Europe. USC’s international offices in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, China and Mexico also assist in the promotion of USC Law.

Unlike J.D. candidates, most LL.M. applicants will never visit Los Angeles – some have never even been to the United States — before attending USC Law. So, the impression we give prospective students at admissions events is very important. One highlight of these events is the participation of our LL.M. alumni. They provide their personal perspectives on life at USC and answer questions about our faculty, the campus, weather in California, and career prospects. Our alumni also are a great source of applicant referrals.

The 120 students in our 2010 LL.M. class represent 23 different countries and have work experience in law firms, international companies, governments and universities. Our students include lawyers from DLA Piper and Sharp Corporation, Korean prosecutors, students sponsored by their governments’ ministries and a Japanese judge. We plan to further increase the diversity of nationalities represented at USC Law as we expand our recruiting efforts to Central and South America and beyond in the coming year.



Anne Marlena, third from the left, dined with USC Law alumni in Taipei, Taiwan.

# HEARD IN THE HALLS...

Roy P. Crocker Professor of Law Jody Armour participated in “From Bebop to Doo Wop to Hip Hop,” a “Visions and Voices” event held at USC’s Bovard Auditorium January 21, alongside saxophonist James Moody, songwriter and producer Lamont Dozier and Leila Steinberg, rapper Tupac Shakur’s mentor and manager. Autograph seekers can find Armour in his fourth-floor office... The law school this spring held its first movie studio screening, celebrating the beginning of the Entertainment Law Program. The film was “Alice in Wonderland,” and more than 100 friends of USC Law attended ...Larry Flax ’67, co-CEO of California Pizza Kitchen, and Chris O’Brien ’91, CPK’s general counsel, kicked off the semi-annual “CEOs and their General Counsels” lunchtime series, hosted by Dean Robert K. Rasmussen. No word on whether the CPK fare served at the event was a factor in the standing-room-only attendance...

...At this spring’s Real Estate Law and Business Forum, George Lefcoe, the Ervin and Florine Yoder Chair in Real Estate Law, moderated the opening session, “The Real Estate Picture: Demographics, an Economics Forecast and a Look at Global Trends in Real Estate Transactions;” and Edward J. McCaffery, the Robert C. Packard Trustee Chair in Law and Professor of Law, Economics and Political Science, presented the lunchtime keynote address, “The Impending Fiscal Crisis and What it Means to You”... Prof. McCaffery and fellow tax expert Prof. Edward Kleinbard provided separate luncheon addresses during the three-day 2010 Tax Institute in January... The Intellectual Property Institute in March featured Second Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Pierre N. Leval and Federal Trade Commissioner Thomas Rosch...

...Prof. Ehud Kamar’s article, “Going-Private Decisions and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002: A Cross-Country Analysis” (co-authored with Pinar Karaca-Mandic and Eric Talley), has been selected by the Corporate Practice Commentator as one of the 10 best articles on corporate and securities law for 2009... Fair Political Practices Commissioner Elizabeth Garrett, Frances R. and John J. Duggan Professor of Law, Political Science and Public Policy, and University Vice President for Academic Planning and Budget, co-chaired a commission subcommittee hearing in USC Law’s Ackerman Courtroom in March to examine the current trends of paid political activity on the Internet, e-mail and social networking sites... Street Law, the venerable youth-oriented law education program, has partnered with Sheppard Mullin. The firm’s attorneys will join USC Law students in visiting local schools to teach young people about the law. Word on the street is alumni at other firms plan to follow suit ... Speaking of Street Law, the group was named a USC Neighborhood Outreach Signature Program. Street Law and the USC Law Legal Ambassadors Program both received UNO funding for the 2010-11 academic year ... Follow USC Law on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/USCGouldLaw> ...



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## Caps Off to Grads

BY DARREN SCHENCK

More than 300 USC Law graduates walked off the law school stage May 14 and on to the next act of their promising legal careers during a joyful and poignant commencement ceremony.

USC Law Dean Robert K. Rasmussen congratulated the Class of 2010 and offered praise and encouragement for the nearly 200 J.D. candidates, 120 LL.M. students and two M.C.L. graduates. USC President Steven B. Sample, who concludes his 19-year tenure as university president this summer, handed diplomas to the newly minted J.D. and LL.M.s as a boisterous crowd of friends and family members cheered.

“For the past three years, we have taught you to question how results could be better, more just, more efficient or more socially desirable,” Dean Rasmussen told the graduating class. “We have taught you to be creative in your approaches to every challenge, every policy, every assumption. Those instincts will serve you well in the present climate; in fact they are essential.”

2010 Class President Laura Riley addressed the graduates, urging them to thank the family members, friends and faculty members who helped lead them to this occasion. Speaking on behalf of the LL.M. students, Venezuela native Moises Amsel expressed his gratitude to USC Law and encouraged graduates to remember the many wonderful moments that law school provided.

The commencement address was delivered by California State Bar President and former USC Law Prof. Howard B. Miller, who spoke of the scores of conversations he has had with attorneys over the years, as both a law professor and practitioner.

“The most striking thing about the conversations with the young lawyers, was when they began to sense... the enormous responsibility that you have for others when you become a lawyer,” Miller said. “You have people’s lives in your hands. And sometimes that comes as a bit of a shock.

“I say that because that’s what it means to be a lawyer. Lawyers exist to help clients, to help others, to act in the public interest. There’s no other reason for our existence.”

PHOTOS: Z. SANTOP - STEVE COHN



Howard B. Miller



Dean Robert K. Rasmussen  
congratulates an LL.M. graduate.

