

FALL 2009

IN THIS ISSUE Professor Saks wins genius grant
New vision statement
Tax law program to launch

USC | LAW Magazine



Ready, set, go!

Orienting new students to USC Law

USC | LAW Magazine

FALL 2009

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USC Law fosters a stellar reputation for community with an orientation program facilitating the transition to life in law school and those important first steps as a professional.

Cover photo: Chris Burt '11, Shawheen Moridi '12 and Liz Jiang '11 participated in a service project during orientation, joining nearly 200 other students to scour Venice Beach for debris.



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Answering *uncertainty* with *innovation*

As I write this column, it appears that the Great Recession is coming to an end. What remains uncertain is what will be its impact on our profession. The past year has been a wrenching time for many, including our current students, our alumni and our friends. Some predict that the business of law will undergo a major transformation in the coming years, while others assert that any changes will be incremental at best. Regardless of who is correct in this, I view it as imperative that our law school remains at the forefront of legal education.

To this end, I have engaged with our Board of Councilors in a discussion to ensure that we clearly articulate our core values. It is these timeless, core values that will guide us in the coming years. The process by which we generated the law school's vision statement is defined in greater detail beginning on page 3.

We have already taken the first steps toward implementing this vision. Our new Tax LL.M., headed by one of the top tax faculties in the country, will enroll its first students this coming fall. This program will allow our students to deepen their understanding of tax law and provide them with a foundation for a career in the tax field.

Along similar lines, we are exploring creation of programs to enhance the quality of our J.D. education. John A. Schulman, the long-time general counsel of Warner Bros., has joined the

"We are going to ensure that our students are the best prepared to handle sophisticated projects when they enter the profession."

law school as the executive director of our Entertainment Law program. He is spending this year putting together what I am confident will be the best such program in the country.

A third initiative that we are undertaking is the establishment of a business law program. This program will provide our students with the opportunity to learn the basics of business while in law school. Too many students from law schools enter the profession without an adequate grounding in business. We are going to ensure that our students are the best prepared to handle sophisticated projects when they enter the profession.

USC Law has always prided itself on providing the best students with the best education. The shock that our profession has received has only served to redouble our efforts on this score. With your support, encouragement and guidance, USC Law will remain a law school that continues to set the standard for innovation in legal education.

All my best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob".

Robert K. Rasmussen

Dean and Carl Mason Franklin Chair in Law

The University of Southern California Gould School of Law cultivates analytical ability, ethical values, and a spirit of collegiality that prepare our students for meaningful careers benefitting society. We enrich human knowledge and the principles of justice through superior scholarship.

— USC LAW'S VISION STATEMENT, ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 2009

Words to Live By

The vision that has animated USC Law's teaching and scholarship for generations has been boldly articulated in a new statement released by the school's dean, faculty and alumni leadership.

The vision statement formally positions USC Law as a center for exceptional scholarship that challenges students to think analytically, behave ethically and work together in a collegial environment so they are prepared for careers after graduation.

Created by Dean Robert K. Rasmussen and his 34-member Board of Councilors (BOC), the new vision statement will guide USC Law well into the 21st century.

"Our vision statement captures both how the Board views the law school and how we view ourselves," Rasmussen says. "We have had many wonderful discussions about the value of legal education and why we are committed to USC Law."

Stephen Rader '81, recently installed chair of the BOC, agrees, saying that the Board has been energized by the process of creating the vision statement. "We put all of our heads together and came up with a short vision statement which speaks volumes about USC Law and its outstanding programs."



Stephen Rader

The key to USC Law's success is to consistently keep up with changes in legal education and offer new programs that will help law students achieve in the classroom and long after they graduate, Rader says.

Under Rasmussen's leadership, three major programs have been developed, demonstrating the law school's commitment to change and investment in the future.

A graduate Tax LL.M., Entertainment Law program and Law and Business program will launch concurrently in fall 2010.

"Our goal is to ensure that students develop the skills that they will need,"

Rasmussen says. "In boom times, the common refrain from hiring partners was that they cared about grades and personality. Now, however, an increasing number of partners are looking more closely at what the student actually learned during law school. Have they taken a curriculum that will allow them to start adding value sooner rather than later?"

To that end, Rasmussen hired John A. Schulman, a former Warner Bros. executive for 25 years, to create and direct the new Entertainment Law program at USC Law. [See page 10.]

"This program has already attracted an enormous amount of interest among our alums and our students," Rasmussen says. "We have many graduates who are major players in the entertainment industry, and are eager to lend their credibility to our program. Similarly, a

number of students have approached me and asked me how they can get involved. Many students come to USC because they want to be entertainment lawyers, so this only makes sense."

Another program USC Law is implementing is the Tax LL.M. With such top tax faculty as Elizabeth Garrett, Thomas Griffith, Edward Kleinbard and Edward McCaffery, launching a program was a natural, Rasmussen says. [See page 8.]

"We have one of the top five tax faculties in the country," he says. "Our Tax LL.M is an opportunity to highlight what has traditionally been a strength of our law school. Moreover, this will allow those interested in tax to build their capital."

USC Law is also taking major steps on a third initiative that has been discussed for the past two years — a Business Law program. (See sidebar below for more information).

Prof. James Spindler of USC Law and Prof. Duke Bristow of the USC Marshall School of Business are working together to build a program that will provide students with a structured course of study for practice on the corporate side.

"Too often, students who want to be corporate lawyers fail to learn the basic skills they will need. While it is always a good thing to prepare students adequately, it is crucial in today's economic climate," Rasmussen says.

With an articulated vision and several new programs, Rader believes USC Law will continue to strengthen as an institution. "USC Law is an amazing school with a world class reputation," he says. "It is innovative and boasts amazing scholarship."

—Gilien Silsby

MAKING IT OUR BUSINESS

Few students entering law school realize how significantly business and law intersect in the real world — whether it is at big law firms, the district attorney's office or even at nonprofit companies.

To help prepare students for the array of business-related legal issues they will encounter in both litigation and transactional law, USC Law is launching a new business law certificate program in fall 2010.

The joint effort between USC Law and the USC Marshall School of Business will include core business law courses along with new courses taught at the law and business schools. The program is open to both law and business students.

"Part of the impetus for the program is to direct students to take courses that will have direct relevance for their future practice areas," says Prof. James Spindler, who is heading the business law program with Dean Robert K. Rasmussen, and coordinating with Profs. Duke Bristow and John Matsusaka at Marshall. "There are certain skills that all students should acquire by the time they graduate from law school, and that is what this program stresses. We want law students to be ready to work with clients and understand their business issues."

Several courses will focus on real world practice situations and expose students to issues in deal documentation, negotiation and planning. The goal is to prepare law students to work with clients and understand their business issues, Rasmussen says.

Another program goal is to bring law and MBA students together in the classroom. By encouraging dialogue and interaction, law students may appreciate the business perspective, as well as make important connections.

"As we know, the first step to being a good lawyer is to understand the perspective of your client," Rasmussen says. "You have to know how your client makes money, and what it needs to get out of any transaction. It is often the case that a client will forgo something to which it is legally entitled in order to get something else."

Spindler agrees, adding: "Part of the idea of putting law and business students together is that our law students may well be meeting their future clients."

—Gilien Silsby



USC Law's 2009 Board of Councilors

REWORKING A CLASSIC

At the heart of USC Law's curriculum lies Law, Language and Ethics, the course that challenges first-year students to work through questions about ethics and value judgments in a way that will inform the rest of their coursework and careers.

After 44 years, the course has been updated and overhauled into the new Law, Language and Values.

"We want to help students make connections between what they're learning in law school and everything that they have learned earlier and will continue to learn in their lives," says Professor Ronald Garett, who taught LL&E and now teaches LL&V. "The course also helps students work through whatever skepticism they may have about values, so they can better participate in reasoned debate over which course is better for society. LL&V highlights the question, 'What is the relationship between who I am and the legal arguments I make, the lawyering choices that I make?'"

The LL&V course materials reflect changes in scholarly literatures and include readings on statutory interpretation and the economic analysis of law.

"We feel this gives students a valuable supplement to the materials on interpretation, which have traditionally dominated LL&E," says Prof. Daniel Klerman, who also is teaching the course. "The name change reflects a somewhat broader selection of the normative considerations that would be taught, including law and economics, political philosophy, and other normative frameworks."

Garett notes that "the only way a course like LL&E could fulfill its teaching mission is through a renewal: there would have to be a process in which the whole law school would revisit LL&E, reaffirm it, reclaim it and reconceptualize it to meet the circumstances of our time."

A committee of faculty, administration and staff went through that process last school year, allowing a new generation of faculty to learn about the course's history and educational goals and to get excited about it.

Also teaching the newly revamped course is Prof. Scott Bice, who took the first LL&E from Prof. Christopher Stone. LL&V is two units instead of three and will be taught in smaller sections to encourage openness from students.

"The three of us are diverse in terms of our generation — we represent three generations of faculty — and in our methodologies," Garett says. "That creates a very exciting opportunity for learning from one another. A course that we can teach together from a shared set of course materials, with a shared syllabus, exchanging ideas about teaching techniques, is likely to succeed in its foundational goals because it's representative of a wide set of skills of our faculty."

—Lori Craig

NEW perspectives

USC Law's Board of Councilors welcomes four new members

GLENN SONNENBERG '80

Glenn Sonnenberg '80 joins the Board of Councilors with the goal of re-engaging USC Law alumni.



"We need to work on the reciprocal relationship between the law school and its alumni," he says. "The law school has a robust menu of continuing education options and can be a meaningful networking medium for the alumni. Conversely, the law school needs to better communicate how important alumni support is to its continuing mission. It does make a difference when someone is able to become an annual giver — at any level. Every contribution is meaningful."

Sonnenberg is no stranger to connecting with audiences. The president of Latitude Management Real Estate Investors, he has served on USC's Board of Trustees and as president of the USC Alumni Association.

He currently serves on the board of directors and executive committees of Bet Tzedek-the House of Justice, Stephen S. Wise Temple, Para Los Ninos and the board of the Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles.

His involvement in alumni and social organizations (he's doubly a Trojan, earning his B.A. in History in 1977) stems from his desire to add value to the community. He says many USC Law alumni share this philanthropic spirit but may not perceive the law school's need to have them involved in its growth.

"The alumni can play an integral part in the law school's development," he says. "People will answer the call, but I'm not sure they're asked as much as is needed. Whatever the stage in one's career, developing closer ties with, and support of, the law school, is enriching."

Sonnenberg says alumni can find many ways to support the law school, including mentoring students, visiting as a guest lecturer or providing financial support.

"USC Law has always been a highly regarded law school and an integral part of the fabric of Los Angeles. I think there's an opportunity now to make it really one of the world class law schools in the country. And, alumni play an important part in achieving this."

—Maria Iacobo

KEN DORAN '81

When Ken Doran '81 graduated from USC Law, he didn't know where his education would take him, but he felt prepared for the journey.

"If you had asked me what I thought I'd end up doing, I thought I'd practice for a few years, then go into business," he says. "USC gave me great training, and that training continued at Gibson Dunn. I loved practicing law, and I've never looked back."

Today, Doran is chairman and managing partner of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. He says that as an attorney, he is able to learn more about different types of businesses and industries than he ever could have had he gone to work for one company.

"As a corporate lawyer, you're very much at the business center of a company," he says. "I like being a counselor, helping guide clients through challenging issues and helping CEOs execute business plans. There is true excitement and a learning experience that is pretty special."

Doran's legal education has also brought him back, time and again, to USC Law, which remains an important school for his firm's recruiting.

"I've always been loyal to the school," he says. "Many of our lawyers are USC alumni."

Doran considers his recent appointment to the school's Board of Councilors an extension of this lifelong relationship.

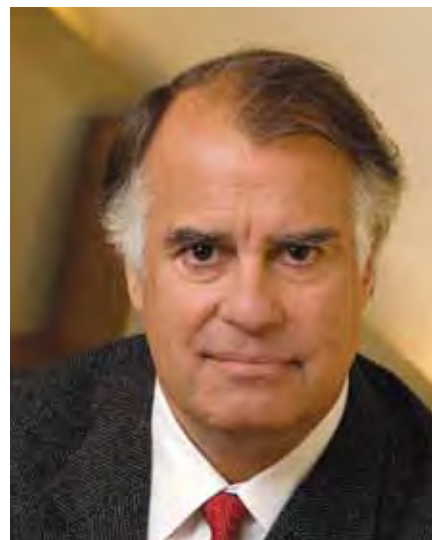
"The world is changing quite markedly and dramatically," he says.

"I want to stay current with the school, and offer observations from our practice. I'll do whatever I can to help."

Doran says he wants to help ensure that USC Law continues to be a school of choice for top students and for first-rate and up-and-coming faculty members.

"USC has always focused on quality, investing in the students and the faculty, and I'd like to see that continue."

—Darren Schenck





EDWARD G. LEWIS '70

Edward G. Lewis '70 says participating on the Board of Councilors is just another way to give back to an institution that shaped his career. After 28 years with a successful solo corporate and real estate practice, Lewis retired in May 1998 to focus on his investments.

"I look back on where I've been, and the education that the law school provided me opened so many doors," Lewis says. "My USC Law education

was absolutely first-rate and taught me so many things in an analytical way that helped me to achieve things I never thought possible. I just thought it was important to give back a little of what I received."

He now divides his time between homes in Century City and Rancho Mirage, Calif., and Paris. In the past, Lewis organized class reunions and raised funds for USC Law; in 2003, he endowed the Edward G. Lewis Chair. He and his wife, Marie, also are active in politics and several charities.

Looking to his BOC tenure, Lewis says he has big plans for the board, Dean Rasmussen and the law school.

"I'd like to see a new law school building — yesterday," says Lewis, whose law school years were spent in the building that currently houses the Leventhal School of Accounting. "We've outgrown the building we're in. Dean Rasmussen has some very ambitious plans and I'd like to accommodate them with a new facility that will house what he wants to do now and in the future."

Lewis also hopes to secure more full-tuition scholarships to continue attracting the brightest students from all backgrounds.

"The best way to attract future talent is with a bountiful supply of complete scholarships," Lewis says. "With the cost of higher education increasing, it's even more important."

He looks to his tenure on the board as an opportunity to build stronger ties to his alma mater and the Trojan Family.

"I very much enjoy the group," he says. "It's an exciting team and I'm honored to be a part of it."

—Lori Craig

KATHRYN SANDERS '85

Kathryn Sanders '85 wants to help USC Law continue to improve its standing while keeping in front of changes affecting the legal profession.

"It's a challenging time for the law profession and law schools need to be thinking about how they can best position their people for the profession and where the profession is going," Sanders says. "I'm excited to have a chance to be a part of that."

A partner at O'Melveny & Myers LLP, where she has worked since graduating, Sanders has a transactional practice focusing on money managers and private equity fund formation. As part of the firm management, she also is keenly aware of shifts in the profession. She is a member of the firm's Partner Compensation Committee and has served on its Policy Committee and Diversity Task Force.

"We're seeing changes in the marketplace in terms of what clients are willing to pay for legal services," Sanders says. "We as a law school need to think about that and whether it warrants any changes in the curriculum to adapt."

Amid layoffs and downsizing, firms also are changing the way they recruit law school students. With firm clients and management

scrutinizing first-year salaries, law schools must be prepared to adapt to changes in the way their graduates are hired and compensated.

"I don't know that there's a right answer to these issues, but it's something that needs to be thought about," Sanders says. "I'd like to see the law school focus on what we can do in terms of producing not just top-quality students, but students who can handle the current realities of the workplace."

Whether these or other issues dominate the Board of Councilors' agenda, the revamped board will provide an opportunity for Sanders and others to guide the law school.

"It sounds like an interesting board, and I'm excited to be a part of something that's looking to be a little more proactive and strategic in its thinking."

—Lori Craig



Tax Law Program expands graduate opportunities

As with many disciplines, specialization provides a greater command of and appreciation for its subject. This is the case with tax law, one of the most complex and evolving areas of the legal practice. USC Law will launch a new graduate program in tax law next year for practicing attorneys and recent law graduates. The rigorous and highly selective LL.M. in Taxation provides an advanced study of tax laws, giving students an advantage in the legal and business worlds; degrees are conferred upon completion of 24 units.

Applications are currently being accepted for fall 2010 enrollment on a full-time or part-time basis.

"We are very pleased to add this exciting new degree program to our repertoire," says USC Law Dean Robert K. Rasmussen. "Through our program, students will gain a deep understanding of the policies that form the basis of tax laws. And in these tough economic times, lawyers will definitely benefit from specializing in this key area."

The LL.M. in Taxation program includes a variety of courses ranging from Bankruptcy Taxation and Tax Policy to International Taxation and Income Tax Timing Issues.

"Tax issues intersect so many areas of law and business, and graduates of our LL.M. in Tax program may decide to pursue, or continue, careers in the private practice of tax law," says Deborah Call, associate dean for graduate and international programs at USC Law. "They may seek employment within the tax departments of a variety of companies or pursue positions in academia. The possibilities are endless."

Some of the nation's most esteemed tax scholars teach at USC Law, creating an ideal setting for a new tax program. These scholars include Elizabeth Garrett, a member of the 2005 Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform; Edward McCaffery, a fellow at American College of Tax Counsel;

Edward D. Kleinbard, former chief of staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation; and Thomas Griffith, who has written extensively on tax matters and is the winner of the USC Law William A. Rutter '55 Distinguished Teaching Award.

"USC Law has a stellar tax program, enhanced now by its LL.M. in Tax program," Garrett says. "No doubt we will attract the nation's best law graduates interested in tax law and policy at the federal and state levels."

Because tax law is continually changing, attorneys will greatly benefit from USC Law's Tax LL.M., Kleinbard says.

"The economic climate for lawyers is increasingly competitive, and genuine expertise will be valued more than ever. The quickest way to gain authentic expertise in the tax law is through a quality Tax LL.M. program like the one USC Law is offering," Kleinbard says.

USC Law is the only top 20 law school on the West Coast and one of only six of the top 20 law schools in the nation to offer an LL.M. in Taxation.

To find out more about USC Law's Tax Law program, please call 213.821.5916 or e-mail taxllm@law.usc.edu.

— *Gilien Silsby*



Elizabeth Garrett



Thomas Griffith



Edward Kleinbard



Edward McCaffery

TOP TAX EXPERTS

USC Law is home to some of the nation's most respected tax scholars. These experts serve on government commissions, have written extensively on tax law issues and have been recognized for their stellar teaching.

ELIZABETH GARRETT is one of the nation's leading budget and tax policy experts. She served on President Bush's 2005 bipartisan Advisory Panel on Federal Tax Reform and was tax counsel and legislative director for U.S. Senator David L. Boren. She recently was appointed to California's Fair Political Practices Commission by Secretary of State Debra Bowen.

Garrett is co-director of the USC-Caltech Center for the Study of Law and Politics and is on the board of the Initiative and Referendum Institute at USC. Garrett is co-editor of *Fiscal Challenges: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Budget Policy* (Cambridge University Press), which brings together experts to explore the problems of budget, tax and fiscal policy at the state, national and international levels. She has also written articles on topics related to tax and budget policy, and about the effect of the initiative process on policy at the state and local levels.

Garrett clerked on the U.S. Supreme Court for Justice Thurgood Marshall and on the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit for Judge Stephen Williams. She joined USC Law in 2003, and is the Frances R. and John J. Duggan Professor of Law, Political Science and Public Policy.

THOMAS GRIFFITH, a nationally respected tax law professor, teaches Contracts, Corporate Taxation and Federal Income Taxation. Griffith has written extensively on tax matters, including *Progressive Taxation* and *Happiness and Federal Income Tax: Examples and Explanations*.

"I truly enjoy teaching tax," Griffith said. "I believe that sound tax policy is critical to the future economic health of the United States."

Griffith was recognized with the 2009 William A. Rutter Distinguished Teaching Award for his exceptional abilities in the classroom. He was nominated by alumni, students and faculty members.

Griffith joined USC Law in 1984 and is the John B. Milliken Professor of Taxation.

EDWARD KLEINBARD, one of the nation's top tax attorneys, was recruited in 2009 while he served as chief of staff of the U.S. Congress Joint Committee on Taxation in Washington, D.C.

"I came to USC Law because of its superb academic community and traditions in all the legal disciplines, including, in particular, tax law," Kleinbard said.

At the Joint Committee on Taxation, Kleinbard assisted Congress in every aspect of the tax legislative process. Kleinbard was also a partner in the office of Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP in New York. His focus covered federal income tax matters, including taxation of new financial products, financial institutions, and international mergers and acquisitions.

Kleinbard has published extensively on tax matters in academic and professional journals, and he received a 2006 Burton Award for Legal Writing for his article on the Business Enterprise Income Tax. Kleinbard was listed in *The International Who's Who of Corporate Tax*. He teaches Corporate Taxation.

EDWARD MCCAFFERY has been widely cited by economists, government officials, journalists and policy analysts. Among his publications are his recent books, *Behavioral Public Finance*, *Fair Not Flat: How to Make the Tax System Better and Simpler*, and *Taxing Women*. McCaffery has several books in progress, including *A Short Introduction to Tax*, *The Case Against Waste: A New Understanding of Property*, and *Fiscal Confusion: How Citizens Misunderstand Tax Spending Programs and Why it Matters*.

McCaffery studies tax policy, tax structures, public finance theory, property law, intellectual property, and law and economics. He teaches Federal Income Taxation, Property, Intellectual Property, and Tax Law and Policy.

McCaffery joined USC Law in 1989 and is the Robert C. Packard Trustee Chair in Law and Professor of Law, Economics and Political Science. He is also a Visiting Professor of Law and Economics at the California Institute of Technology.

— Gilien Silsby

BRINGING THE INDUSTRY to the Classroom



John A. Schulman

Entertainment law program will offer courses at USC business and cinema arts schools

Former Warner Bros. executive John A. Schulman has joined USC Law as executive director of its new entertainment law program. Schulman, who retired from Warner Bros. last year after serving as executive vice president and general counsel for 25 years, will launch the program in fall 2010 for J.D. students interested in specializing in entertainment law.

The program expects to involve a combination of law, business and entertainment classes. In addition to the law school, courses will be offered at the USC School of Cinematic Arts and USC Marshall School of Business.

"I hope to create a program that will 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," Schulman says.

Recruiting Schulman to USC Law is a major coup, says Dean Robert K. Rasmussen, who led the effort to bring an entertainment law program to USC.

"There is no more accomplished lawyer in the entertainment industry than John Schulman," Rasmussen says. "USC Law is fortunate to have John take the leadership in developing and enhancing our entertainment law program. I am confident that with John's vision, we will have a program that is second to none."

Schulman is the ideal director of the program, according to USC Trustee Stanley Gold, who serves on USC Law's Board of Councilors. "He is experienced with respect to everything that is going on in the industry. USC is very lucky to have him."

Schulman is familiar with creating highly successful programs in the legal entertainment industry. When he joined Warner Bros. in 1984, Schulman was assigned to build and staff the studio's legal department. When he left, the legal department was considered among the best in the industry with Schulman overseeing a legal department of 150 attorneys. During his tenure, he was involved with a number of high-profile cases, including a breach-of-contract case against Francis Ford Coppola over the production of a Pinocchio movie, a suit in which the plaintiff claimed that Oliver Stone's "Natural Born Killers" was responsible for a copycat killing spree, and a suit for murder arising out of the "Jenny Jones Show."

Bruce Ramer, an entertainment attorney at Gang, Tyre, Ramer & Brown, has worked with Schulman both in his private practice and while he was at Warner Bros.

"We have struggled through many difficult negotiations, and I have the highest respect for his abilities, his experience, his knowledge, his determination and his integrity. I can say USC Law and its students are blessed to have him. Besides, I really like the guy," says Ramer, a member of USC Law's Board of Councilors.

"This is part of my next adventure," Schulman says. "I am very excited about being at USC Law and working to create one of the nation's best entertainment law programs."

— Gilien Silsby

As Unique as DNA

Associate Dean Reid designs the Class of 2012

Each fall, on the morning of the first-year students' first day at USC Law, Associate Dean Chloe Reid looks into the sea of faces she knows best and introduces the classmates to each other.

Fulbright Scholar, meet ballerina. Legal secretaries, meet teachers. Coal miner, meet songwriter.

By the time they step into Town and Gown for their law school welcome, it has been nearly a full year since Reid, the school's chief admissions officer, and her staff began reading applications. Each of the 6,024 applications for 215 spots in the J.D. Class of 2012 was read at least once; many were read more than that.

"I'm like an artist: my job is to create a mosaic of a class with lots of different shapes, hues, colors, sizes and intensity," Reid told the new students during their August orientation. "Each of you with your unique talents and gifts will contribute to the vibrancy of our community."

Made up of a record 54 percent women and 46 percent men, the Class of 2012 boasts a median LSAT score of 167 (96th percentile) and undergraduate grade-point-average of 3.6. Thirty-seven percent are from out of state, 31 percent identify with a minority group, and 10 percent are economically disadvantaged. While 22 are USC graduates, 25 hail from the school across town and others are from Yale, Chicago, University of California at Berkeley, Georgetown and Cornell.

The process of creating each new J.D. class is methodical beginning with thousands of qualified applicants and ending with a diverse and academically exceptional class. Yet, there's a fair amount of magic and luck involved as many top candidates have multiple schools from which to choose.

Reid, along with Director of Admissions Julia Castellon Cogan, Associate Director of Admissions Brenda Cortez-Martin and Assistant Director of Admissions Amy Stevens, starts by reviewing the previous year's class to see if some group was underrepresented. They consider specific parts of the country or colleges where they'd like to emphasize recruitment efforts, mailing brochures and application fee waivers to LSAT stand-outs. Also considered are gender, sexual orientation and work experience. Grades and test scores weigh heavily, too.

"We're looking for as broad a spectrum of experiences as possible, while the bottom line is, you've got to be able to academically compete here," says Reid. "We don't want to bring somebody in for the sake of adding to the diversity of the class and they're not able to compete, nor continue the program. I've not done my job if I'm ushering them in the front door and they're going out the back door shortly thereafter."

Applications were up almost 8 percent for USC Law in 2009 and are still on the rise, a trend attributed to the recession. One upside to this is an increase in the number of students with work experience: 25 percent of the Class of 2012 graduated from college three or more years ago.

"We value their experiences in the real world," Reid says. "Going to an office from nine to five, you have to be responsible and accountable. When you get in the law school classroom, you're going to be able to reflect on your past experiences and have questions or probe issues a little differently than had you not had that experience at all."

— Lori Craig



Associate Dean Chloe Reid

THE CLASS OF 2012

54% are women

3 are from other countries

35% are from out of state

2 have Ph.D.s

2 are Eagle Scouts

Have been teachers, interpreters, forest firefighters, paralegals and members of the U.S. armed forces and worked on political campaigns, TV shows and criminal grand juries

Languages spoken: Spanish, French, Italian, Hebrew, Farsi, Thai, Punjabi, American Sign Language



Orienting new students to USC Law

Ready, set, go!

by Maria Iacobo

USC Law has long prided itself on fostering a collegial environment for students as they undertake the rigorous training to become lawyers. Highly motivated, academically serious students attending a top 20 law school expect their legal education to be intellectually rigorous. At USC Law, that education comes with an emphasis on learning to work collaboratively — a trait of any successful lawyer.

USC Law's Office of Student Affairs has spent the last year strengthening its efforts to facilitate the transition to life in law school by underscoring the value of a mutually respectful and friendly community for students taking those important first steps into their profession.





Office of Student Affairs (from left): Linda Bassett Puertas, Gabriela Ryan, Liam Gillen, Debra Barnett

“Some people don’t consider law school a place where you can make friends,” says Lee Linderman ’11. “But USC is a place where you can actually make friends. The community aspect of the school is one of the reasons I came here.”

community and make personal connections with their peers early on so that once classes begin, their focus can shift more to their academics.”

With this sensibility as a point of reference, Ryan and her staff re-evaluated the orientation program USC Law had in place. They reviewed several years’ worth of surveys from past orientations, comparing how incremental changes had been received each year. Gillen also surveyed how other top law schools conduct orientation and attended a conference focused on the orientation experience.

“Studies show that student engagement and activities translate into success; if you’re not engaged in the school, you’re detached from it,” Gillen says. “If you’re detached, you may not perform as well academically.”

Linda Bassett Puertas, a 2006 UCLA School of Law alumna, joined the office as director of academic support and student affairs last year and brought another perspective to the project.

“As a new law school student, I received information about the administrative tasks I needed to complete over the summer so that when I arrived for orientation, I could focus on meeting classmates and faculty,” she says. “In re-vamping our orientation, one of our goals was to move away from those tasks and allow students to focus on building the community spirit USC is known for.”

Student surveys revealed three clear requests from students: more faculty interaction; more community-building activities; and more time

“Being a law student here comes with the responsibility of carrying on USC’s tradition of a supportive family atmosphere.”

The 2L says the orientation program he experienced in 2008 took “some of the edge off” his first few days of school and he found his peer mentors so helpful that he “wanted to be part of that.”

Gabriela Ryan’s ’04 orientation to USC Law was mostly “a blur.”

“I remember the lunch being very formal and a keynote address by a faculty member that was very impressive,” she says. “We received a lot of helpful information, but the format didn’t lend itself to active participation — or to getting to know each other.”

Fast forward several years: Ryan returned to USC Law in 2006 and is now dean of students. Under her direction, the Office of Student Affairs spent this past year evaluating suggestions regarding orientation, the program that welcomes new students and sets the tone for their years studying law.

“Students have expectations of what law school is going to be like,” says Liam Gillen, associate director of financial aid and student affairs. “In addition to the common anxieties associated with beginning a professional program, some students may also feel uneasy and worried about the social aspects. Living in a new city, making new friends and starting a new chapter in one’s life can be a very challenging experience. It is important that new students feel part of our

with the entire incoming class. The survey of other law schools showed that USC Law had a much shorter orientation program than others.



Ryan says that several comments repeated in student surveys rang true for her introduction to USC Law in 2001.

"I had never lived in L.A. prior to coming to USC," she says. "Many students cited that their orientation didn't involve any activities in the city. Another comment was that students wanted to feel like part of a bigger whole before classes started."

That meant designing more activities in which students could engage with each other — on campus and off.

PEER MENTORS

One last piece of orientation remained to polish: the peer mentor program. In place under various titles over the past years, this program underwent a major overhaul under Gillen's direction last year; he tweaked it a bit more for the Class of 2012.

"Effective mentoring can only happen if it's a trusted relationship and the mentor is extremely committed," Gillen says. "The first-year students need a real connection with their mentor."

USC Law's peer mentor program has traditionally been an opportunity for any and all 2Ls to participate. Most years saw at least 90 students sign up for the role in which they were introduced to their mentees during orientation.

"The intent of the program was that it would last all year," Gillen says. "The reality was that, for some students, their interaction with their peer mentors began and ended on orientation day."

To re-focus the program on developing long-term peer mentor relationships, Gillen developed a set of programmatic goals by which peer mentors could understand the objectives and fully engage in their responsibilities. This year, 65 members from the Class of 2011 applied for the 24 mentor spots available; two mentors for each section of 17 to 20 students. This intimate structure affords the opportunity for each mentor and first-year student to really connect with one another. Top of his mind was finding the most committed and active mentors so that the relationship would last throughout a 1L's first year.

"Not everyone wants to make this kind of commitment and take on this level of responsibility," he says. "Each year I am so impressed with the quality and dedication of the mentors."

Ramon Ramirez '11 was eager to sign on.

"I wanted to be a peer mentor because my own peer mentor was great last year," Ramirez says. "She was a great resource and I still ask questions of her. That, along with the supportive family atmosphere of USC makes you want to get involved and return the favor. Being a law student here comes with the responsibility of carrying on USC's tradition of a supportive family atmosphere."

ASISTing Students

Success in law school is not guaranteed by top LSAT scores or excellent undergraduate study habits. Approaching the material and studying for law school exams can be a daunting challenge for the most gifted student.

"There is a lot of research on how to be successful in law school and even the top law schools are realizing that, even though we recruit brilliant students, the study of law requires different skills than studying for other subjects," says Gabriela Ryan '04, dean of students.

That was true for Jose Rodriguez '11, who double-majored in nuclear and mechanical engineering. He recognized he had a steeper learning curve than others when he came to USC Law.

"Engineering is straightforward as to what they're asking," Rodriguez says. "With law, you read a case and you have no idea what you're looking for. Through the ASIST workshops, I learned how to single out the important information. It helped me transition between an engineering way of thinking and getting a legal rule out of a judicial opinion."

To support every student's academic success, the Academic Support Program launched the Assistance by Students for Improving Skills and Techniques (ASIST) program last year. Under the direction of Linda Bassett Puertas, director of academic support and student affairs, the optional program is designed to aid students in learning methods of studying law. Four upper-division

students, with prior teaching experience, guide first-year students as they develop their legal and academic skills.

"Our theme for the fall workshops is helping students pace themselves," Puertas says. "For example, most first-year students stress about when to start outlines for upcoming exams and how to create them. ASIST helps them develop the skills in the appropriate order, so that they learn how to read a case first and then how to consolidate that information and make it useful for exams."

Tutors remind students that, no matter what they say, students should always defer to what academic tactics their individual professors may provide. Some professors provide specific suggestions for how to prepare for their exams while others do not.

Tutors also send weekly e-mail tips on relevant topics. For example, during the second week of classes, the e-mail covered the topic of study groups. It's not true that success in law school relates to whether or not a student is part of a study group, says Ryan.

"The tip gives the pros and cons of whether membership in a study group is the right choice for them," she says. "This alleviates the anxiety of 'Oh my gosh, I have to form a study group' and they're empowered to make their own decision."

Rodriguez is an ASIST tutor this year and is enjoying the experience.

"I thought I'd be an effective tutor because of how the program helped me," he says. "I wanted to show to other students that they could do well with the right study habits."

—Maria Iacobo

ORIENTATION 2009

This year's revised orientation program consisted of four days, with one full day for off-campus activities.

"We saw 'Day One' as the first day of their legal careers, not just the first day of orientation," Ryan says.

To that end, new students were asked to dress in business casual attire and participate in an opening convocation. Justice Candace Cooper '73 spoke to the class in a morning session and delivered an oath that committed students to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and ethical practice throughout their years of legal study, as well as their careers.

The new class met their peer mentors for lunch on the law school lawn. Over sandwiches, each section's mentor team worked with their students to "break the ice" and get the new students to relax. Their approaches were creative and different from each other. The mentor team of Bryan Wasser '11 and Lauren Wright '11 offered a roundtable game for introductions that drew more quirky than routine details about the new classmates. One young man noted he has "a healthy obsession with Jimmy Buffet," another mentioned he was a former opera singer; and one woman recounted how she managed to break both arms at the same time while playing soccer. The new students began to know each other as people.

Causing some widened eyes and nervous laughter was the visit to the campus bookstore, where they found their law books lined floor to ceiling. Mentors reviewed their mentees' list of books, helping them identify what was required for their first semester. Overheard more than once was the confirmation that, "yes, these are just for your fall classes."

The activities on day two were designed to cover the "student experience" and included library and campus tours as well as panels of

current and former students providing perspectives on what to expect as a first-year student, including participating in student organizations, managing stress and balancing one's academic and personal life. The financial planning workshop was a hit.

"We wanted them to understand responsible borrowing," Puertas says. "In three years they are going to start managing other people's affairs, so we wanted them to see that now is the time to start managing their own. We also want students to minimize their borrowing to help them avoid the financial need to find part-time jobs while they are in their second and third years so they can focus on school."

By the second day, peer mentors began to get the kinds of questions they were familiar with — having asked them themselves just 12 short months ago. Alison Gomer '11 found practice tests and outlines on many of her mentees' minds.

"I told them it's okay if you haven't thought about preparing for your practice exams before your first day of classes," she says with a laugh. "The first year is very stressful, but the right kind of support can make it less so."

Ramirez says he was happy to be able to facilitate students meeting and making friends. The initial questions he fielded were "life stuff in general," such as where to shop for groceries and restaurant suggestions.

"As the week progressed, their questions started to be focused on the long term," says Ramirez. "We had to temper that and tell them not to get ahead of themselves. It's funny to see them already wonder how they can get on an honors program for their second year. We tell them 'let's just get through the first year.' Classes haven't even started and they're already thinking about next year."

The third day of orientation was orchestrated to provide a taste of what Los Angeles has to offer, in venues that encouraged interaction among all students.



The morning began with a service project organized with the nonprofit Surfrider Foundation. After a presentation regarding the impact trash has on the local marine life, nearly 200 students convened on Venice Beach to scour the sand.

“These clean-ups provide a social network of environmentally conscious people,” says Surfrider volunteer Sekita Grant ’08. “Because the beaches are so important to Californians, it’s important to teach people what they need to do to take care of them.”

After collecting several 30-gallon bags filled with debris, they wandered among the eateries, shops and sights along the famed boardwalk.

Says Gillen, “The aspect of ‘community’ was one of the biggest things we wanted new students to feel instantly. It was important to us to find an off-campus activity that would allow them to take pride in the city they live in as well as give them a forum to informally interact with classmates, faculty and staff — a night out with the Dodgers seemed like a perfect fit.”

That evening the Los Angeles Dodgers hosted the Chicago Cubs and 233 new J.D. and foreign LL.M. students convened in the right field grandstand. It wasn’t the game they came to watch as much as enjoy a cold beer, hot dog and chat with the dean and each other as the sun slipped into the Pacific, the lights of Los Angeles giving them an expansive view of their new home. A grand slam by the Dodgers’ Russell Martin gave everyone except the Cubs fans a chance to dance.



Support Workshop taught by the ASIST Tutors [see: “ASISTing 1Ls” on page 15].

Associate Dean Robert Saltzman has overseen the Office of Student Services for 21 years and witnessed the evolution of USC Law’s orientation program. While he notes that it’s important to introduce new students to the culture and diversity of USC Law — which many consider the school’s biggest strength — he believes the orientation experience reassures incoming students about what will actually go on during their first year of law school.

“It’s important that new students feel part of our community and make personal connections with their peers early on so that once classes begin, their focus can shift more to their academics”

The time spent off campus paid off. Peer mentor Rebekah Wise ’11 says that mentees who were not in her section have been approaching her with questions over the first few weeks of school.

“I wouldn’t have been that comfortable going up to a 2L who wasn’t my peer mentor,” Wise says. “But, all of the students got a chance to be with the peer mentors at the beach and at the Dodgers game, which were fun, casual activities for everyone to get to know each other.”

The last day of orientation was designed to gear students for their first day of school. Ryan and Puertas set up five faculty presentations, from which students could choose one. The five provocative topics culled from current events allowed students to hear from and engage with faculty on their topics of expertise.

Dean Rasmussen hosted a barbeque on the law school grounds with faculty mingling with the new class. After lunch, students attended an Academic

“They are familiar with negative portrayals from movies and on television,” Saltzman says. “As a result, some of the incoming students are unnecessarily anxious. By taking time in orientation to allow the students to learn from their faculty and other students, we help them be better prepared for the actual experiences they will have beginning the following week.”

While there will be the surveys from the class of 217 students to measure the success of the new orientation program, Gillen spoke with a few students on the bus ride returning from Venice Beach.

“They were telling each other how happy they were to get to know their classmates and see parts of Los Angeles with classes still days away. It was everything in my mind we were trying to achieve and yet they didn’t even know that that was our goal,” he says. “I was very happy to get that feedback without having to ask for it.”

Students swap spots to study overseas

A broad view of



by Darren Schenck

Your pet food comes from China, your Levi's are made in Mexico, and your Japanese "import" was built in Kentucky. If the economy is global, and the Internet makes neighbors of far-flung acquaintances, might a law student wish to learn about another country's legal system?

Such inquiries were on the mind of former USC Law Dean Matthew Spitzer when he established the school's study-abroad program six years ago.

"USC Law's study abroad program grew from the school's need to adapt," says Prof. Spitzer. "Some other top law schools had started such programs, and students were asking for one here."

Creating a successful study abroad program required several components, Spitzer says: strong partner institutions, situated in countries where students would want to live; English-language instruction; and visits abroad to spread the word about USC Law.

To negotiate the details and navigate the various bureaucracies, Spitzer tapped Graduate & International Programs (G & IP) Associate Dean Deborah Call, who helped create partnerships with the University of Hong Kong and the London School of Economics; competition for the four spots at each school gets more intense every year. Call has worked with Prof. Edwin Smith to build the program, and G & IP Assistant Director Anne Marlenga manages it. Their goal is to expand the program in the coming years with the addition of more partner institutions.

"Many of our students want to do something in the international arena," says Marlenga. "They're coming to us to gain that international experience."

GOING ABROAD

Alan Tse '09 intended to study law abroad even before enrolling at USC Law.

"I think having the program shows a commitment to providing as many possibilities for law students to understand how the American legal system fits in the world," says Tse, who practices IP law for O'Melveny & Myers LLP in Los Angeles. "Without such a program, it would be easy to forget that the rest of the world can and does look at similar social and political problems and comes up with different answers."

Tse says he studied at the University of Hong Kong because of the international perspective to be gained and the contacts to be made.

"In a global economy, having an idea of how only the American legal system works is very short sighted," he says. "Although lawyers can't give advice outside their jurisdiction, it's much easier to provide a good referral to a client given some basic understanding of how foreign laws tend to work."

Andrew Coffin '09 spent his 3L year at the London School of Economics, where he focused on international law. He joined the Navy JAG Corps. in August 2009.

"During the summer before I left for London, I worked in the Department of Education in D.C. and often attended lunch talks where government employees describe what they do," he says. "On a lark, I went to one on the JAG Corps. and heard from a woman who had been



LEGAL EDUCATION

involved in Saddam Hussein's trial. After going to London, I fell in love with international law."

Coffin found that LSE offered not just a different perspective on law, but also a teaching model far different from that of American law schools.

"Your class meets once a week, and you have 200 to 500 pages of reading per class," he says. "Also, there isn't as much differentiation between the undergrads and grad students, and topics in one class bleed into another. When my U.N. course had a class on armed conflict, a professor specializing in armed conflict taught the class. There was less compartmentalization."

Of course, even with the intensive studying, students find time to explore their temporary new homes.

"London is a fabulous city — a painfully expensive city, but a wonderful city and a lot of fun," Coffin says.

Spending a semester or year abroad means time away from classmates and student organizations, but both Tse and Coffin found that they made new friends and that social media sites allowed them to stay in close touch with classmates back home.

"Did I miss out on anything?" says Coffin. "I'd be lying if I said no. When I returned from LSE, my friends had already graduated. But student orgs are led by 2Ls, so by spending your 3L year abroad, you don't miss out on leadership positions."

COMING FROM ABROAD

What about the law students who come from London and Hong Kong to study at USC Law?

Toronto native Noemi Blasutta '09 spent two years at the London School of Economics, earning an LL.B., before spending two years at USC Law. She was enticed by the reputation of both schools and the prospect of earning a double-degree.

Living abroad in London and Los Angeles didn't hurt, either.

"I loved the idea of being in London; it's such a world-class city," she says. "But after two years in rainy London, I adored the weather in Los Angeles."

Blasutta enjoyed LSE's perspective on the law.

"The school looks at how law and economics and society work together," she says. "It also focuses on an international perspective."

She says that at USC Law, she was able to take advantage of all that is offered to J.D. students. Beginning in January, she will be working in litigation for the Los Angeles office of Proskauer Rose LLP.

Gladys Moon '09, who was born and raised in Hong Kong, said that the American perspective on law is what drew her to USC Law.

"It's easy to let yourself be confined to your current experience," she says. "I wanted to broaden my horizons at USC."

Moon faced a training regimen far different than that offered in Hong Kong, which comprises four years of undergraduate work in law, followed by a one-year professional certification course and then two years of on-the-job training.

Moon will be working as a solicitor in a law firm beginning in 2011. (In Hong Kong, an attorney traditionally begins work two years from the date of the job offer.)

"I loved L.A. — I've missed it so much," she says. "It is a cultural melting pot and is full of fun places to go."

Opposite page (from left): Hong Kong Botanical Gardens; Giant Buddha statue; Marie Kobler '08 in Ubud, Bali, on a break from studies at the University of Hong Kong [photos by Marie Kobler]

This page (from left): Joshua Kroot '09 and Warren Williams '09, on break from the London School of Economics, outside St. Albans Cathedral; Williams and friends at Stonehenge; winter in Bloomsbury, London

USC Law hosts the Conference on Empirical Legal Studies

Empirical studies *take a front seat*

by Gilien Silsby

Legal scholars, political scientists, economists and psychologists from around the world will gather at USC Law in November for the 4th annual Conference on Empirical Legal Studies (CELS). Attendees will present papers analyzing real-world data and experimental evidence exploring a variety of legal questions from the effectiveness of corporate governance reforms to the operation of property law in Africa.

“Empirical studies is the hottest trend in legal scholarship,” says Prof. Gillian Hadfield, a member of the CELS organizing committee. “Scholars are discovering very meaningful applications to legal studies. It’s an exciting time in the law community.”

The goal of the conference, which will be held on Friday, Nov. 20, and Saturday, Nov. 21, 2009, is to give professors an opportunity to present, discuss and debate their work with an interdisciplinary group. Although the conference attracts many of the nation’s leading empirical legal scholars, submissions from junior scholars were also encouraged.

“Hosting the CELS conference is a great way to demonstrate USC’s commitment to empirical scholarship,” says Prof. Daniel Klerman, one of the conference’s co-chairs.

“It provides a wonderful platform for our faculty to present, comment on, or just listen to cutting edge research. It also puts USC among a select group of law schools — including Cornell University, New York University and University of Texas — which have hosted this important conference.”

The empirical-research movement has become particularly popular in the past decade as legal researchers have turned to statistical analysis to investigate trends and patterns.



Professor Daniel Klerman

Scholars are slowly shifting away from theorizing about the effects of legal changes or relying on empirical data gathered and analyzed by others. The Internet has made it much easier to conduct empirical research and gather much-needed statistical analysis, says Prof. Thomas Lyon, who is presenting a paper on abused children and telling the truth.

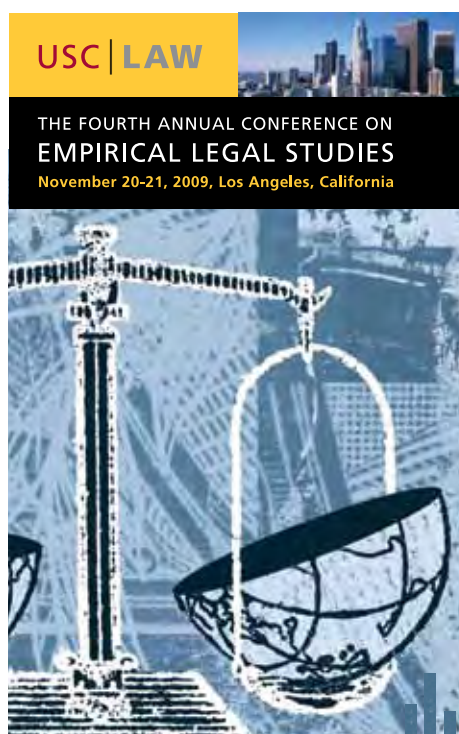
"The Internet makes it possible to collect information from large numbers of people with diverse backgrounds, and statistical software makes it easy to crunch huge amounts of data," Lyon says. "But the best work recognizes that it's not about how easy empirical work has become, it's about how much more relevant and applicable legal scholarship can be."

The Society for Empirical Legal Studies launched CELS four years ago at the University of Texas. Since that time, the number of papers submitted has mushroomed, a testament to the growing popularity of the empirical studies movement.

"The Empirical Legal Studies meetings have turned out to be a treasure of knowledge for all empirical legal scholars," says Prof. Dan Simon, who is on the CELS organizing committee. "Legal-psychologists have probably benefited most. For legal academics interested in psychological analyses of the law, this meeting has become the most important academic forum, with a broader array and higher level of papers than any other conference."

This year at USC Law, 425 papers were submitted — up from about 250 submissions when the conference was held at Cornell last year. In 2007, 367 papers were submitted at the NYU CELS.

"The USC Organizing Committee had the difficult task of selecting 132 papers for oral presentation and a further 80 for display at a poster session," says Klerman. "Nearly all the papers were of high quality, so competition for slots was intense. The number of submissions set a record."



USC Law is a rising star in empirical work. Six USC Law professors are presenting papers at CELS on topics such as how political candidates deal with consultants and the relationship between legal origin and economic growth. An additional five USC professors from economics, political science, accounting, and policy, planning and development are also presenting papers.

In Prof. Nina Walton's paper *Managing Moral Hazard: How Political Candidates Manage Relationships with Consultants*, she investigates the relationship between candidates for political office and their campaign consultants. Using data from five election cycles, the researchers examine how likely it is these relationships will endure over time, as well as the types of candidates consultants can attract depending on their past experience and success rates.



Prof. Mathew McCubbins is presenting the paper, *Opting in or Opting Out: The Conditions for Developing Consensus*. His research finds that even when individuals have similar preferences, consensus can be difficult to achieve. The basic principles of economics — the allocation of scarce resources and uncertainty — make consensus tricky. Furthermore, the communication process that underpins consensus creates a strategic game between senders and receivers of information. In his paper, researchers develop an experiment to understand the conditions under which humans can actually reach a consensus.



Lyon is presenting the paper, *The Effect of Rapport Building and Putative Confessions Upon Maltreated and Nonmaltreated Children's Disclosure of a Minor Transgression*. The goal of the study is to figure out techniques that are successful at getting children to tell the truth about negative events they have experienced. By attempting various interviewing techniques, the researchers are able to understand what sorts of questions are successful at getting children to be honest about these events. Their findings can then be applied to interviewing children about actual abuse.



Simon's paper *Partisanship and Prosecutorial Decision Making: An Experiment* examines the effect of partisanship on the objectivity of the assessment of evidence. In a second experiment, the researchers tested how anger plays a role in determination of blame. "The study was designed also with a basic-psychological objective in mind," Simon says. "Specifically, it was designed to explore the underlying cognitive mechanism by which 'hot' and 'cold' cognitions interact." Simon added, "This issue has not been fully explored in the psychological literature."



—Gilien Silsby

Former PILF presidents blaze public service trail

Supply *in* demand

by Darren Schenck

In Los Angeles County, thousands of lawyers would like to give away their services.

Sometimes they have trouble finding takers.

When public service organizations need volunteer attorneys, they inquire of large firms almost exclusively, even though these firms employ only 15 percent of the Los Angeles County Bar Association's 27,000 members. These same firms must turn down many of the requests due to conflicts of interest that crop up with their corporate and bank clients.

In other words, most of the nearly 22,000 L.A. County attorneys who work in small firms or solo practice are rarely offered public service opportunities.

Through their work with the Los Angeles County Bar Association Barristers, former PILF presidents David Swift '04 and Jennifer Flory '05 are changing that. Swift, an attorney with the litigation firm Kinsella Weitzman Iser Kump & Aldisert, LLP (KWIKA), serves as president of Barristers, the organization representing more than 7,000 young attorneys (defined as attorneys 36 years old and younger, or those who have been in practice for 10 years or fewer). Last spring he recruited Flory, an attorney with the Western Center on Law & Poverty, to lead the Barristers' newly created pro bono committee.

"Some people say lawyers at small firms don't have the capacity to do pro bono work, because of the overhead and the need to focus on their paying clients," Swift says. "I don't think that's necessarily true. It's simply harder at a small firm because you have to go out and create your own pro bono opportunities."

Swift speaks from experience. After graduating from USC Law, he worked for Munger, Tolles & Olson before joining KWIKA.

"One of the things I noticed moving from a big firm to a small firm is how difficult it is to do pro bono work at a small firm, even a very supportive one," Swift says. "At a big firm, it's easy: there's a pro bono coordinator, you get billable hour credit for the work and there are always interesting pro bono opportunities from public service organizations coming across your desk."

The Barristers' new pro bono committee is charged with vetting public service opportunities available through existing public service organizations and matching them to volunteers among the Barristers' and Bar's memberships. The idea is a new one for the Barristers, says Swift; in the past, the organization staged its own pro bono events, to limited success.

FROM IDEA TO ACTION

The opportunity to put this idea to the test came last spring, when the Barristers typically plan pro bono events for Law Day.

Dissatisfied with previous years' Law Day events, Swift and Flory cast about for an idea that would generate greater interest among attorneys. In a nod to the day's headlines, they decided to hold foreclosure prevention clinics in partnership with three of L.A.'s most prominent public service organizations: Public Counsel, Neighborhood Legal Services and the Legal Aid Foundation.

Then came their crucible: Swift sent out a call for clinic volunteers to all members of the Bar. Colleagues thought him optimistic for expecting to sign up 60 attorneys for two clinics.

Within an hour of sending the e-mail, 200 attorneys had volunteered.

"We thought, 'What are we going to do with all these attorneys?'" Flory says.

They closed the clinic sign-ups to more volunteers, then re-opened registration after adding another clinic location. By the end of the day, 250 attorneys had signed up to participate.

The clinics ran into some problems — one facility became unavailable just before the event, and the Central and South L.A. events could have served many more people, had there been more time to publicize them — but the events helped hundreds of homeowners seeking loan modifications while laying the foundation for future clinics.



David Swift '04 and Jennifer Flory '05

“The important thing is, at the end of the day, we have 250 attorneys trained to do this work,” says Swift. “They received intensive, three-hour training, and are now qualified to counsel homeowners facing foreclosure. We were also able to pull together three premier public interest organizations that don’t normally work together for a joint program.”

Chancela Al-Mansour, directing attorney for NLS’s pro bono program, says her organization used the foreclosure clinics as a model for biweekly clinics now held at their Pacoima office in the San Fernando Valley, where the foreclosure rate is particularly high.

Al-Mansour says that using the Barristers as a clearinghouse for volunteers for organizations such as hers is “a fabulous idea.

“They receive the inquiries and forward them to me. It serves a tremendous need,” she says. “We like a mix of attorneys: those with experience and those without. We’re happy to provide training.”

RECALLING THEIR ROOTS

Swift and Flory are now focused on building effective relationships with public interest agencies like Al-Mansour’s.

“They’re the ones on the ground seeing the problems people are having,” Flory says. “They have an idea of what projects should be done; it’s a matter of giving them a pool of volunteers that they can streamline into the processes they have.”

By using the Barristers as a means of fostering pro bono opportunities, Swift and Flory essentially are reprising their roles as USC Law PILF presidents.

“This is what we did at PILF,” Swift says. “We are taking the things we did for USC and doing them for L.A. County. We used to set up clinics for 600 students at USC, and now we’re doing it for the 27,000 lawyers in L.A. County. But it’s the same basic thing.”

Faculty

*Footnotes (a selection of recent faculty activities)

LAW AND ECONOMICS SPOTLIGHTED

Seven USC Law professors presented at the 19th annual meeting of the American Law and Economics Association in San Diego, tying with Yale Law School and UC Berkeley Law School for the fourth highest participation rate. USC Law Prof. Daniel Klerman, who was elected to the board of director of ALEA in May, was one of the presenters.

"I think this is a testament to the strength of our Law & Economic group as well as our commitment to scholarship more generally," Klerman said. "Our faculty is known for stellar scholarship that is well respected across the country." The following papers were presented by USC Law faculty at ALEA:

- Jonathan Barnett, "Property as Process: How Innovation Markets Select Innovation Regimes"
- Gillian Hadfield, "Higher Demand, Lower Supply"
- Ehud Kamar, "Bundling and Entrenchment"
- Daniel Klerman, "Legal Origin and Economic Growth"
- Robert Rasmussen, "Anti-Bankruptcy"
- James Spindler, "Litigation Risk, Informational Asymmetry, and IPO Underpricing"
- Nina Walton, "Gatekeepers and CEO Reputation"



GARRETT APPOINTED TO STATE COMMISSION

USC Law Prof. Elizabeth Garrett has been appointed to the state's Fair Political Practices Commission. Selected by Secretary of State Debra Bowen, Garrett will serve on the five-member commission until 2013.

"I wanted to appoint someone who reflects my values of transparency, integrity, independence and pragmatism," said Bowen, the state's chief elections officer. "Beth has it all, bringing a breadth of experience that will help the FPPC keep pace with the ever-changing campaign and lobbying landscapes 35 years into the Political Reform Act."

Garrett is the Frances R. and John J. Duggan Professor of Law, Political Science and Public Policy at USC Law. She co-directs the USC-Caltech Center for the Study of Law and Politics (CSLP) and serves on the board of directors of the USC Initiative and Referendum Institute, which is affiliated with the CSLP.



CAPRON ELECTED USC FACULTY PRESIDENT

USC Law Prof. Alexander Capron has been elected President of the USC Faculty for the 2009-10 academic year. In that role, he will preside at meetings of the Academic Senate and its Executive Board and set the agenda for the Senate and its committees meeting regularly with President Steven B. Sample, Provost C.L. Max Nikias and other university officers.

"I am honored to serve in this position," Capron said. "I hope to continue the Senate's 'Wellness Initiative' and its focus on promoting research collaboration. I plan to emphasize more effective faculty participation in governance and to enlist the faculty in making USC what I call 'The Living University,' a place that is a vibrant, sustainable, and engaged residential community."

MULTIPLE AWARDS FOR GROSS' BOOK

USC Law Prof. Ariela Gross has won three prestigious awards for her book *What Blood Won't Tell: A History of Race on Trial in America*, which chronicles racial identity trials in American courts. The awards include the 2009 Lillian Smith Book Award, the James Willard Hurst, Jr. Prize and the American Political Science Association's award for the best book on Race, Ethnicity and Politics.

"I am so grateful that *What Blood Won't Tell* has been awarded these esteemed prizes," Gross said. "I'm especially honored that such diverse organizations — not only my colleagues in legal history but political scientists and non-academics — have recognized the book."





Elyn Saks awarded MacArthur “Genius” Grant

One early September morning USC Law Professor and Associate Dean Elyn Saks was about to leave home for work when she answered her phone. The voice on the other end identified himself as director of the fellows program at the MacArthur Foundation.

“Do you know of us?” he asked.

It took a few seconds for the foundation’s name to sink in after which Saks says she found herself saying “Oh my God” over and over.

The MacArthur Foundation selects a handful of people every year to receive its prestigious fellowship, informally referred to as the “genius grant.” Saks was awarded a 2009 fellowship — one of 24 chosen for this year’s award and the first ever selected from the University of Southern California’s faculty.

“I could only tell my husband and my analyst until the public announcement,” says Saks. “It was torture for one week.”

Saks, who joined the faculty in 1989, is a nationally recognized scholar in mental health law, criminal law and the ethical dimensions of medical research. She also has battled schizophrenia and acute psychosis. In 2007, after decades of hiding her illness, Saks published a memoir about her struggles and successes called “The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness.” The book won considerable acclaim from literary critics and advocacy groups.

“I’m thrilled and honored,” says Saks. “I feel that the law school shares in this award, especially the deans under whom I’ve worked. I needed a supportive environment to be able to work and function, and the law school is a very accommodating work place with nurturing colleagues.”

Saks was in her 40s before she was able to admit to herself that her illness was not going away and that medication and psychoanalysis would be necessary for the rest of her life.

“For 20 years I struggled with acceptance,” says Saks. “Ironically, the more I accepted I had a mental illness, the less the illness defined me.”

The MacArthur Foundation provides unrestricted fellowships to talented individuals who have shown extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits and a marked capacity for self-direction. Each fellowship comes with a no-strings-attached stipend of \$500,000 to the recipient, paid out in equal quarterly installments over five years.


Saks knows exactly how she will begin spending her award; she plans to write a general interest book profiling others who function at a high level while suffering with schizophrenia.

“When my book came out people would tell me, ‘Elyn, you’re unique.’ I’m not unique. I want to get the word out that there are other people like me and there is hope for everyone who suffers from this mental illness.”

Saks is currently working with USC and UCLA medical schools on a project identifying how other high-functioning people with schizophrenia manage their symptoms. A second research project underway with UC-San Diego will compare Saks with 10 other patients on psychiatric measures, neuro-psychological functioning and brain imaging. Ultimately, they hope to design interventions that will effectively help others with schizophrenia operate at higher levels.

“The psychotherapy and medications have made it possible for me to have the good life that I have,” says Saks. “But, the law school has intellectually challenged me to do my best work. The law school is home.”

—Maria Iacobo



National tax expert Edward Kleinbard
joins USC Law

AT HOME in academia

Edward Kleinbard didn't set out to move to Los Angeles. But, after 30 years in private practice with Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton in New York and two years as chief of staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) in Washington, D.C., he sought a "congenial academic home" where he could pursue his academic interests previously subordinated by practice.

"I did a good deal of academic writing over the years," he explained, "but it was always stressful to balance practice and the demands of scholarship, and I missed not being part of a full time community of legal scholars."

"In talking to several schools, I was impressed by the extraordinary collegiality of USC, its relatively small size and its high academic standards," Kleinbard says. "But its most distinguishing feature was its openness to an experiment of taking someone with a background like mine as a faculty member."

The "experiment" is an opportunity for Kleinbard to bridge the gap between teaching students the dynamics of tax planning and policy and pursuing the more abstract inquiries that dominate legal scholarship.

"It is very difficult for law schools to balance the pedagogical agenda on the one hand and the research agenda of the faculty on the other," says Kleinbard. "The experiment is to see whether I can straddle the gap — teach at a level that a sophisticated practitioner would recognize as useful training for new lawyers, and, at the same time, contribute to broader academic inquiries in my discipline."

Kleinbard says his time with the JCT provided him with a more sophisticated understanding of policy issues, public finance and how laws are made. This knowledge has bolstered his interest in capital income taxation, the intersection of budget and tax rules, and the Constitutional limits of Congress' taxing power, and he plans to pursue these areas of study at USC Law.

Right now Kleinbard is focused on his first semester class in corporate taxation.

"It's a little intimidating, but very exciting," he says. "My view is that if you're not slightly terrified then you're not trying hard enough."

— *Maria Iacobo*

LEGAL *lives*

A new course examines the relationship between big firms and in-house legal departments

The relationships between big law firms and their corporate clients have never been under more stress — as both sides respond to the current recession and align themselves for the future. The study of these two important legal institutions — of how they do business, how they relate to each other and how they affect the overall legal marketplace — is the subject of a new course at USC.

“Traditionally, law school courses haven’t given much attention to what is taking place in the law firms and their corporate clients, where in-house law departments are now making key decisions on how much legal work will be given to the law firms,” says Bryant Danner, a USC Law adjunct professor. “USC Law is one of the very few schools that have added the study of these two groups, which are very large and powerful influences on the profession. These two entities — the firms and the clients — need each other.”

With the enthusiastic support of USC Law’s administration, Danner last spring introduced the course, “Law Firms and In-House Law Departments: Decision Points.” The course examines the status and possible trajectories of large firms and in-house law departments. Studying current developments in the legal profession, the course considers issues relating to the internal functioning of both organizations — basic business models, career progression, and expectations regarding work quality and quantity — and issues that arise when the two organizations meet on the playing field, such as when and how in-house law departments hire or fire law firms, and the relative importance of expertise, reputation, billing practices, conflicts and diversity.

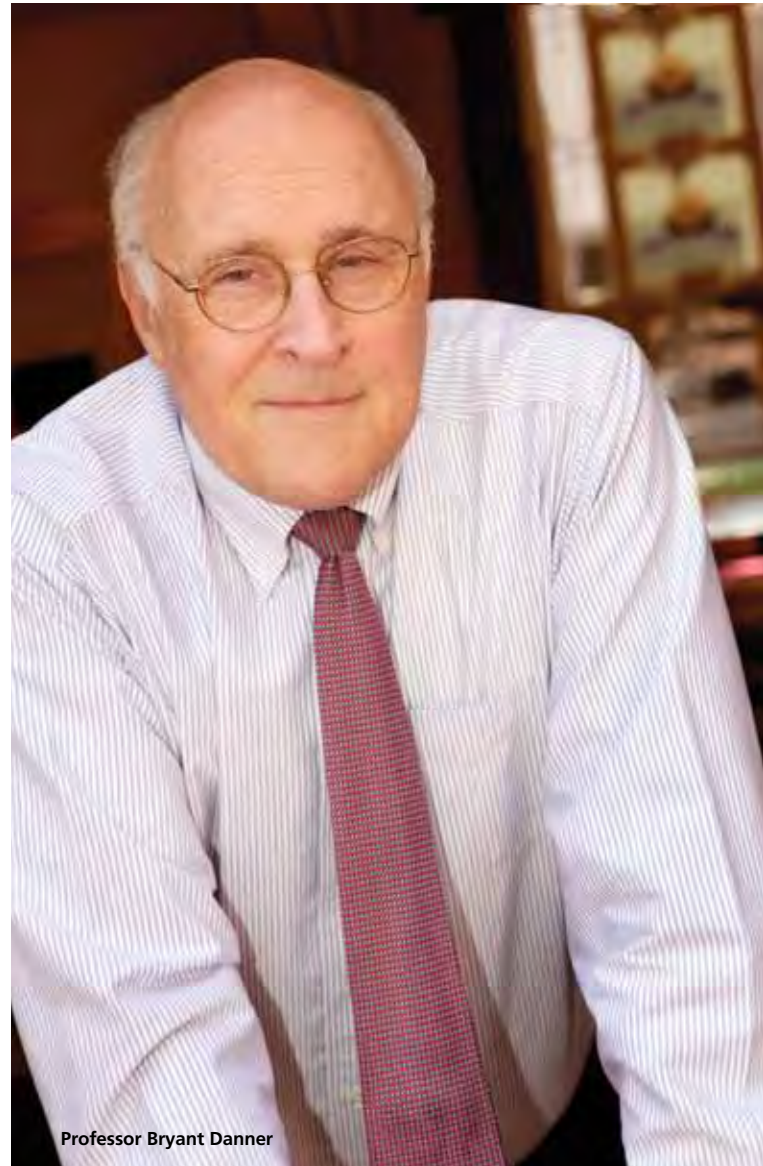
“Students take away a realistic sense of what big firm life is like,” says Greg Keating, USC Law’s William T. Dalessi Professor of Law and Philosophy. “Bry’s class gives students the tools they need to navigate these two worlds and a balanced sense of the pluses and minuses of careers in big firms and in-house legal departments.”

USC Law students are in the enviable position of learning under a professor whose career is tailor-made to teach this course. Danner spent nearly 25 years as a partner at Latham & Watkins before serving as general counsel at Edison International, the parent company of Southern California Edison, for another dozen years.

“Very few law schools can find lawyers with the background required to teach this class at the level that Bry does,” Keating says. “He’s worked at the pinnacle of the profession in both areas.”

The course attracted a near-capacity enrollment, which surprised and delighted Danner, who will teach it again next spring.

“I was told that the class might be populated with students experiencing the third-year doldrums, but that wasn’t the case at all,” Danner says. “It was rewarding to see the degree of engagement by the students.”



Professor Bryant Danner

Danner says that professors now beginning to teach similar courses at other top tier law schools report the same response from their students.

“There is a great desire on the part of students to learn what is going on out there,” Danner says. “They want a better understanding of the economic and other dynamics that drive law firms and their clients.”

—Maria Iacobo

Seize the day

*A brush with violence inspires
Marc T. Little '94 to enrich his life*

Walking home from a grocery store just off USC's campus on July 31, 1987, undergraduate Marc T. Little '94 was robbed and blasted with a shotgun. He lost his right leg and nearly his life.

The attack and grueling recovery merely added to the motivation of the big-dreaming 22-year-old who had been raised in Connecticut by a single mother. He set his sights on learning to walk again and applying to USC Law.

"It took me four years to get accepted," says Little, who was able to attend thanks to a USC Physically Challenged Athletes Scholarship Fund, supported by the annual Swim With Mike fundraiser. "You can be smart, you can be talented, you can even look good, but you have to have perseverance in life in order to succeed. That's the common denominator with everybody who has been a success: they're not quitters."

After graduation, Little decided to immediately open his own practice.

"After being shot, my perspective on life became that tomorrow's just not promised," Little says. "I live every day as if it could be my last, and I didn't see the investment in working for a firm to be a wise one. I was more interested in an investment in me and in my family and what I was trying to do."

Little aimed to build an entertainment practice handling the kinds of cases he wanted to and, eventually, indulge his inner entrepreneur. Little built his practice, representing record labels, recording artists, and athletes including boxer "Sugar" Shane Mosley. He considered the venture a natural fit, given his Los Angeles location and famous father, National Football League Hall of Fame nominee Floyd Little. The elder Little did not raise his son, though today they are "best friends."

In 2002, Little stepped back from his practice to dedicate more time to his leadership roles with the Faithful Central Bible Church in Inglewood. He was named chief operating officer and general counsel of the church shortly after it purchased the Great Western Forum, a 17,505-seat entertainment venue that recently housed a wildly successful Remote Area Medical Foundation free clinic that provided dental and medical care, prescriptions and testing to 8,000 patients from across the region and Nevada.



"We bought the Forum to be a tool in the community, to touch lives," Little says. "The free medical clinic was the absolute epitome of why we bought the building."

Last spring, Little was appointed to Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families and recently was named vice chair. He also is studying for his master's in divinity.

The newest project giving him "the fuel to get up in the mornings" is Crown Preparatory Academy, a charter school for grades five through eight for which Little is a founding board member. The Leimert Park campus is slated to open next fall.

On top of it all, Little is writing a book, *The Prodigal Republican*, examining the history of the party and how it relates to African-Americans. Little and his wife, Tegra, are fiscally and socially conservative and active in Republican politics.

"My goal is not for people to be Republicans; my goal is for people to be thinkers and to align themselves with representatives that represent their interests," Little says. "The black community is a hardworking community, but they have this idea that somebody owes them something. As long as they believe that, they will continue to sit and wait. There's nothing that we can't do as individuals and as a community, but we have to get up and go get it."

— Lori Craig



Indispensible *insight*

In boom times and bust, Harriet Alexson '83 thrives on change

The nation's economy has been on a roller coaster this past year and Harriet Alexson '83 finds the ride exciting. A transactional attorney, Alexson has consistently shifted the focus of her legal career to keep abreast of economic changes and, in doing so, has built a highly successful practice in the financial services industry. Her experience from the real estate booms and collapses over the past 25 years give her the insight needed to advise her clients during today's rough times.

"I think it's really important when you're at the table with clients and adversaries negotiating loan workouts in this economy to be sensitive to the concerns of all parties," Alexson says. "And you can do that when you've represented the financial institutions and the developer/borrower business community."

Alexson began her career in downtown Los Angeles working with financial institutions. When commercial real estate woes beleaguered Southern California in the early 1990s, Alexson shifted her work to represent real estate promoters and developers. Her years of experience at large firms proved to be excellent training for her when she stepped out on her own in early 2005.

"Having an institutional practice as a sole practitioner is unusual," she says. "I considered how I could deliver legal services attuned to the same complexities that a large firm partner delivers, and do it cost-effectively."

Ultimately, Alexson found that advances in technology and the contacts she developed over her career provided the foundation for the boutique environment she wanted her clients to experience. Legal research tools, referrals for specific services and "of counsel" relationships have all supported her busy practice.

"You can't be comfortable referring attorneys to your clients without having worked with them," Alexson says. "When you're in the trenches with someone negotiating and documenting complex transactions, you learn how good they are. I think my institutional clients understand that I can be a great triage officer and place litigation cases with the right attorneys."

Alexson's energy level — she has studied ballet and other dance forms since grade school — and her experience developing business early in her career are other elements that allow her to thrive. Although her practice is based in Irvine, her clients are located throughout California.

There are aspects of a solo practice that were new to Alexson, such as keeping abreast of her website traffic, attending to accounting and payroll chores and managing office equipment.

"I've been frustrated with the administration aspects of the business," she says with a laugh.

Alexson found it more practical to delegate the aspects of her practice she doesn't have time for, allowing her to devote her time to her clients and enjoying new experiences, such as hiring staff.

"I've learned a lot about people," she says. "I realize now that people have different skill sets. If you're going to nurture and develop your staff and attorneys, you have to appreciate the positives."

Reflecting on the momentous turns the world of financial services can take, Alexson is keen to write a book about her experiences.

"I think many lawyers want to write the Great American Novel," she says. "Whether non-fiction or fictionalizing some of my experiences and using the current economy as the backdrop, the book will be exciting."

Alexson is married to Mark Sugar, M.D., and has four children. She resides in Villa Park, Calif.

—Maria Iacobo



WHEN CHALLENGE is its own reward

Arthur Tuverson '70 is most at home in the courtroom

For Arthur Tuverson '70, the allure of law is courtroom contretemps. Since graduating from USC Law, the Pacific Palisades, Calif., and Las Vegas resident has found satisfaction in the chess-game-with-consequences that is arguing a client's case at trial.

"The courtroom is where the drama and excitement is," says Tuverson. "You're up against lawyers who are challenging you intellectually, strategically, legally, even theatrically. There's such stimulus in the courtroom."

Tuverson found himself before the bench early in his career. Within three months of his passing the bar, the insurance defense firm for which he worked gave him a case to argue in appellate court.

"I went in there, scared to death. Then I saw three or four of my former classmates there to watch one of the attorneys in their law firm argue the case," he says. "They were very surprised to see me walk past them and into the well, get up and argue my case. That was a great experience."

Tuverson soon grew more comfortable in the courtroom, and after eight years with the insurance defense firm, he decided to put out his shingle. He contacted several clients, all of whom expressed enthusiasm for his career move, and then he arranged for other attorneys to join him once the business was up and running.

He says the biggest challenge in starting his own firm was overhead.

"After the initial hires, business continued to do well, so I had to hire more attorneys than I could afford, which meant I had to borrow money," he says. "That was in the early 80s, and interest was 21 percent on my business loan. That gave me a lot of impetus to keep working hard to pay it back!"

Tuverson's firm grew larger than he had ever anticipated: as recently as 10 years ago, he employed 75 attorneys. Today, his firm is home to a handful of lawyers, and most of his work is in Las Vegas, where higher state statutory limits and a smaller bench provide for an intriguing practice.

"It's been a lot of fun. The courts are a lot different, and the cases are more challenging," he says. "You have to be more prepared in Vegas. With 10 or 12 judges who do civil trials, you get to know them on a first-name basis. It's much more collegial there than in L.A."

Tuverson credits much of his success to his USC Law education, which served as the foundation for his evolving legal skills. In return, he generously supports the school with his time and resources.

"I was convinced that I wanted to be a trial lawyer by a former professor, Gary Bellows, who was heading up the Western Center on Law & Poverty," he says. "After spending some of his day in court, arguing for a client, he would come into class so enthusiastic and so full of excitement for what he was doing. For him, it wasn't the win or the loss; he enjoyed the work and the people he was doing it for."

"I decided that I wanted that kind of excitement in my practice and profession."

—Darren Schenck

STATE *of* PLAY

Laine Wagenseller '93 starts, and stars for, his own legal team

For his personal trainer's birthday, Laine Wagenseller '93 gave a copy of Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* and a pair of Nite-Finder Nerf guns. In a Spider-Man gift bag.

Striking a balance between assiduous work performance and a penchant for play is inherent in Wagenseller and how he manages his five-year-old law firm.

"I always tell my assistants we need to work like a basketball team," he says. "Sometimes things are going to happen really fast and, like a team running down the court, we need to communicate quickly and clearly and pass the ball to each other, and we may not have a lot of time to stop and have a meeting."

For Wagenseller, a graduate of Duke University, choosing USC Law was an easy decision; he grew up in Los Angeles in an 'SC family and remembers his father and grandfather attending football games. After clerking for the Los Angeles Superior Court, Wagenseller worked at Los Angeles firms for the next 10 years "learning everything there is to learn about being a practicing lawyer." Finding satisfaction working with clients and solving their problems, Wagenseller says his entrepreneurial side began to emerge.

"My dad had his own business as a real estate developer, and that was the model I knew," he says. "I wanted the freedom and challenge of building a business."

After he read a book on how to start a law firm, the decision to go out on his own was tempered a bit.

"Among other things, the book said you needed to have one year's income put aside and I thought, 'I can't do that,'" he says, laughing. "Then you start thinking, 'How am I going to pay my mortgage?' 'Where am I going to get clients?'"

The breakthrough moment to move ahead came when he thought about some of the lawyers he had cases against.

"I thought to myself, 'If they can do it, I can do it.' It wasn't so much having a certain amount of money in the bank or having a number of clients already on board. It was making the mental decision that I can do this; I can build a business and do it better than a lot of people out there."

When the "next big obstacle" arose — whether or not to hire another attorney — Wagenseller experienced *déjà vu*.

"There were the same arguments as for going out on my own," he recalls. "All the same questions and doubts versus how much

faith do you have that if you hire someone, you'll bring in enough work to keep an attorney busy."

Today, Wagenseller has two attorneys and two assistants at work. He has a vision — to be Los Angeles' top boutique real estate law firm — and studies business principles and models to grow his firm and shape the manner in which the office's legal work is conducted.

"People are hiring me because of my standards. I want to build a law firm where I've set a high bar of how the work will get done and have my clients trust that I will uphold those standards and they will receive a good product."

Wagenseller plays competitive volleyball on the beach twice a week — a practice he has maintained since law school graduation — and shares his passion for a team approach at work with his office mates. Recently, he closed the office early and took everyone bowling.

"I want the workplace to be fun and people to enjoy coming to work. Bowling was a way to reward everyone for their hard work and get us all closer as a team. You know, a team is going to work much better than any individual can."

— Maria Iacobo



Teaching law, *one celebrity crime at a time*

by Jean Rosenbluth '93

Professor of Law

I love traveling by air. A prisoner in my seat for the duration of the flight, I can't do anything but catch up on my *New Yorkers* and watch movies. To make sure I'm not interrupted in my mindless revelry, I generally put in ear buds and pull out reading material as soon as I sit down.

On this particular flight, in February 2006, my armor didn't shield me from the inquiries of the woman sitting next to me, a schoolteacher from Covina. I was reading the *Los Angeles Times* and listening to my mope-rock playlist, holding the paper up in such a manner, I knew from experience, as to foreclose even the possibility of conversation. Wrong. That day, the front page of the *Times* carried articles about the war in Iraq and the drop in cancer deaths. But she didn't want to know about any of that.

"What's going on with Britney's case?" she shouted over the music.

In fact, I knew the answer to that one: I make it my business to keep up on the latest celebrity legal entanglements, and in early 2006, photographs of pop singer Britney Spears driving with her baby in her lap, not in a car seat, were splashed across the pages of every publication less lofty than a law review. As a law professor and former federal prosecutor, I am regularly contacted by the media to comment on these high-profile cases. I've always been a fan of all things pop culture, so I confess that in part I talk to the press about celebrity miscreants because I enjoy it.

But I make myself available to the media for another, more important reason: celebrity cases represent one of the few opportunities we law professors have to educate the broader public about the law at a time when they are actually engaged and listening.

Some object that there's something tawdry about fueling the media hype concerning celebrity cases, particularly when there's often



little of legal significance about them. I don't see it that way. The media will report on any criminal charges surrounding Michael Jackson's death whether I comment or not, so I try to make the best of it. We might wish that Jane Doe down the street and John Roe around the corner were reading the latest law review articles we write or attending our workshops, but they're not, and they never will. If they are to learn about the law, it will be either as a result of their own experiences with the court system or through responsible, informed commentary offered by legal experts on high-profile cases in the news. For instance, from the legal experts commenting to the media on whether Jackson's personal physician will be charged with a crime stemming from the singer's death, millions of people have learned that laws prohibit doctors from prescribing drugs to a known addict, to someone using a false name, or in quantities greater than necessary. That can only be a good thing.

So when I was interrupted that day on the plane, I didn't really mind. I explained that it looked like no charges would be filed against Spears because police lacked eyewitnesses to the incident, and Spears claimed that she had had to flee quickly because paparazzi were threatening her and her child. The woman asked questions about why the photographs themselves weren't sufficient proof, and we talked for a few minutes about what constitutes legal evidence and why. She nodded. One more person who understands the law a little better, thanks to Britney Spears.



LAW FIRM CHALLENGE 2009

In the spirit of competition and philanthropy, 596 alumni at 70 firms, corporations and organizations demonstrated their support of USC Law by participating in the 2009 USC Law Firm Challenge. Alumni in participating firms, companies and organizations competed and encouraged 100% of their colleagues to make a gift. We are proud of the loyalty and generosity of our graduates and friends and thank them for their support.

The Winners: Firms Achieving 100% Participation

Group 1 (30+ alumni)

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher

Group 2 (11-30 alumni)

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld

Bingham McCutchen

Hahn & Hahn

Littler Mendelson

Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy

Munger, Tolles & Olson

Rutan & Tucker

We invite you to join the Challenge!

Please contact:

USC Law Development & Graduate Relations
at 213.743.1713 or alumni@law.usc.edu

For a complete list of participating firms,
please visit: <http://law.usc.edu/lfc>

Group 3 (2-10 alumni)

Arent Fox

Crowell & Moring

Feinberg, Mindel, Brandt & Klein

Fisher & Phillips

Folger Levin & Kahn

Greenberg Glusker

Gunderson Dettmer Stough Villeneuve

Franklin & Hachigian

Hodel, Briggs & Winter

Holdsworth & Hagopian

Jackson Lewis

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Lagerlof, Senecal, Gosney & Kruse

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4th Annual Conference on Empirical Legal Studies
USC Law and Town and Gown

Monday, November 30

Bar Admission Ceremony
Town and Gown

Tuesday, December 1

Institute for Corporate Counsel (CLE program)
Jonathan Club, Los Angeles

Monday, January 25 through

Wednesday, January 27
Tax Institute (CLE program)
Wilshire Grand, Los Angeles

Wednesday, January 27

Annual Scholarship Luncheon
Town and Gown

Thursday, February 25

Mentor Luncheon
Town and Gown

Saturday, February 27

PILF Auction
Union Station, Los Angeles

Friday, March 5

Moot Court Final Round
Norris Theater

Friday, April 16

Law Day
USC Law

Friday, May 14

Commencement
McCarthy Quad

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