

ST. THOMAS LAW NEWS

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 6 SEPTEMBER 23, 2011



A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN ABOUT CAREERS

Whether you are in your first year or your third, this is a good time to begin planning your career and building a marketable package of skills and assets.

One of the most important things you can do is meet lawyers from different practice areas and learn what they do. The more you learn about our profession, the better career choices you will make and the better informed you will appear during interviews. Among the ways to learn, you can

- Attend our Career Services Office Lunch and Learn Programs on different careers and on job search preparation.
- Join the ABA Law Student Division. You will receive the *ABA Journal* and the *Student Lawyer* magazines, both of which will have important information for your career, and you will gain access to various insurance packages and networking opportunities (information on the ABA LSD is contained on page 2 of this news letter).
- Networking at the state level can be facilitated by becoming a member of the St. Thomas Law Chapter of the Florida Bar, Young Lawyer's Division (information on the St. Thomas Chapter of the Florida Bar, Young Lawyer's Division will be featured in next week's newsletter).
- If you may stay in the area, join our new Student Chapter of the Dade County Bar Association. You will meet people and find mentors (information on the Student Chapter of the Dade County Bar Association will also be featured in next week's newsletter).
- Explore student memberships in state and local bar associations wherever you may plan to practice.
- Attend bar receptions and Continuing Legal Education Programs with lawyers, and introduce yourself to those around you. Go with the idea of learning from them, find out what makes them enthusiastic about their practice, and ask what law school courses and skills were helpful to their success. Get their names or business cards so you can follow up with a polite thank you that may lead to a further relationship.
- Join law student organizations here that focus on practice areas of interest to you. They will often bring in lawyers to discuss career success.
- Reach out to alumni in cities or specialties in which you are interested, and ask if you can come by for a twenty minute informational meeting.

I will be conducting two programs on job search skills the week of September 25. I invite you to join me.

Monday, September 26, at 5:30 p.m., Room A112

Thursday, September 29, at noon, Room A112

Finally, give some thought to using the holiday break for job search or informational interview scheduling, especially if you will be out of town in an area where you would like to work. By early November, contact lawyers to let them know when you will be in the area over the holidays and that you would enjoy meeting them at their convenience during this period.

BAR REVIEW AND PREPARATION PROGRAMS

One of the benefits of being a St. Thomas law student is that we automatically enroll you in BARBRI, Kaplan/PMBR, and Themis Bar Review programs upon your matriculation into the law school. All provide very useful materials to 1Ls, 2Ls, and students preparing for the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE), and they make all of these materials available to all our students. If you have any questions about what you should receive or how you can acquire the materials then please contact Ana Ramirez for the Kaplan/PMBR materials at ana.ramirez@kaplanpmbr.com, for the BARBRI materials contact Elyse Dubois at elyse.dubois@thomsonreuters.com, and for the Themis materials contact John Miquel at john.miquel@themisbar.com. You also can consult with their representatives in the breezeway. All students should take advantage of the easy access to all these materials, both because the materials may be helpful in class and examination preparation and the MPRE materials are especially helpful when you get ready to the MPRE. An additional benefit to acquiring and using the materials they provide is that it will enable to make a more informed decision regarding the ultimate Bar Preparation program you will select to take when you graduate. Students can elect to take BARBRI, Kaplan/PMBR, or a portion from each program, or students can elect to take Themis. Themis is an online bar preparation program.

Due to the fact that you are “registered” for all of these programs, they may treat you as if you have selected one of them for your actual bar review course. They may send out e-mails that seem to indicate you have selected one or the other. These e-mails are misleading. You actually will select one of the bar review programs in your **last** semester and provide that information to the Law School Registrar, and that is the program you will be enrolled in. So, you can disregard any e-mail you get indicating you are “enrolled”. You can receive information from any (or all) of the programs, but do not feel like that precludes the selection you will make in your last semester. If you have any additional questions about how the program works, please contact Assistant Dean for Student Affairs John F. Hernandez at jhernandez@stu.edu.

NETWORKING AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION–LAW STUDENT DIVISION

The American Bar Association (ABA) is the preeminent professional national organization of lawyers. According to its Website: “The ABA was founded on August 21, 1878, in Saratoga Springs, New York, by 100 lawyers from 21 states. The legal profession as we know it today barely existed at that time. Lawyers were generally sole practitioners who trained under a system of apprenticeship. There was no national code of ethics; there was no national organization to serve as a forum for discussion of the increasingly intricate issues involved in legal practice. The first ABA constitution, which is still substantially the charter of the association, defined the purpose of the ABA as being for ‘the advancement of the science of jurisprudence, the promotion of the administration of justice and a uniformity of legislation throughout the country....’ Today, the stated mission of the American Bar Association is ‘To serve equally our members, our profession and the public by defending liberty and delivering justice as the national representative of the legal profession.’”

Those of you who have studied Professional Responsibility know the ABA was the moving force behind creating a systemic set of rules that help establish the practice of law as a true profession. The ABA also has been at the forefront in standardizing and ensuring the quality of legal education in the United States. It is the accrediting agency recognized by every state bar. In almost every state, a person has to graduate from an ABA accredited school to sit for the bar examination.

Given its leadership in both professionalism and education, it is not surprising the ABA has created a special Law Student Division that allows law students to participate in the ABA and to realize many of the benefits associated with the professional interactions and networking facilitated by the ABA. The ABA-Law Student Division allows law student members to attend local, regional, and national events and to actually have leadership roles in the organization at all levels. Student members of the ABA also receive access to a number of professional resources and publications such as *The ABA Journal* and *The Student Lawyer*. ABA-Law Student Division members can participate in 29 ABA writing competitions and have an opportunity to pursue ABA judicial internships, clerkships, and scholarships. There are also a number of financial and economic benefits that inure to ABA-Law Student Division members including discounts on West Study guides, free or discounted membership in ABA specialty practice groups, the opportunity to select a health insurance plan provided by UnitedHealth Care, and even savings on clothing and merchandise at Brooks Brothers.

To encourage and enable students to be part of the ABA, it offers special student membership rates of only \$25.00 a year. If a student joins in his or her first year, he or she can pay \$60.00 for a three year membership and then once he or she passes the bar, he or she will receive a free one year membership as a regular member to the ABA. For more information, you can visit the ABA Website or contact our senior St. Thomas Law representative Raquel Moya at rmoya@stu.edu.