

ST. THOMAS LAW NEWS

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TAKE TIMELY STEPS TO APPLY TO FLORIDA BAR

The most recent results from the July 2011 Florida Bar Examination for St. Thomas Law graduates were encouraging. We continue to make improvements in our bar passage rate, and 77.9% of first-time takers passed the examination. However, admission to the Bar is a two-step process. Graduates must not only pass the examination but also be cleared on the character and fitness application. It is disappointing to see a number of St. Thomas Law graduates pass the examination but still awaiting clearance for authorization to be sworn in. As indicated below, under ideal circumstances, it can still take eight months (or more) for applicants to receive clearance. It is in every applicant's best interests to complete the bar application as soon as possible. If you believe you may confront character or fitness issues, you should consult with Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, John F. Hernandez, or Assistant Dean for Academic Support, Barbara Singer, and they can help guide you through the process. The Florida Board of Bar Examiners closely reviews applications. You may need to seek outside legal assistance if you anticipate any obstacles to admission.

The Executive Director of the Florida Board of Bar Examiners forwarded information for distribution to 1Ls, 2Ls, and 3Ls, respectively, and that information was sent out by e-mail. Below you can also find the information relevant to your current class status and expected graduation.

1L Students

Information provided at Orientation in the PowerPoint presentation to 1L students is available on the Florida Board of Bar Examiners Website in PDF format. You also should visit the Website and get the checklist for registering as a first year student. If you plan to seek admission in Florida, you should file a student registration no later than **January 17, 2012**, to take advantage of the maximum discounted fees. You should file a CLI registration only if you are certain that you do **not** intend to apply for admission to The Florida Bar. The length of the investigation will be the same, regardless of the type of registration you file, and clearance of either registration will meet the requirement to apply for certified legal internships.

2L Students

For those of you who plan to seek admission in Florida, you should file your Student Registrant Bar Application as soon as possible. If you plan to participate in a Certified Legal Internship, you must receive a notice of registration clearance from the Florida Board of Bar Examiners prior to participating. Waiting until the Spring semester of your second year means there is a greater likelihood the investigation will not be completed in time to apply for a Certified Legal Internship for the Fall 2012 Semester. Please visit the Florida Board of Bar Examiners Website and refer to the checklist of information you need to get started on filing your application.

3L Students

For students graduating this year who have filed a student registration, you may have received a letter telling

you how to convert your student registration to an application for admission to The Florida Bar. There is a process through which you have to convert your registration as a student to pursue full admission. You can find on the Florida Board of Bar Examiners Website a checklist that will assist you in converting your student registration to seek full admission.

If you have not previously filed a student registration, but you do want to apply for admission to The Florida Bar, you are encouraged to apply now. The background investigation can take six to eight months to complete. The sooner you start the process, the more likely your background investigation will be completed prior to the administration of the July 2012 examination. Please refer to the checklist to file a bar application, which will guide you through the process of completing and submitting the application.

FINGERPRINTING SESSION

L-1 Identity Solutions will be on the STU law campus on November 4, 2011, to capture your fingerprints. The capturing of your fingerprints is part of the bar application process. The fingerprinting company will be here from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., in the Career Services Conference Room (located immediately next to the Career Services Office, on the second floor of the main law school building). You must make your fingerprinting appointment in advance; you can schedule your appointment by going to www.L1enrollment.com. If you have any questions about the fingerprinting appointments, please contact L-1 Identity Solutions at 1 (800) 528-1358.

PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS IN 5 EASY STEPS

The University of Miami has invited St. Thomas law students to a lecture given by Heather Jarvis. Ms. Jarvis, has dedicated her expertise to helping student loan borrowers make better decisions so that higher education can be a reality for all, not just those who can afford it. Her lecture is entitled *Public Service Loan Forgiveness in 5 Easy Steps*.

This event will take place at the University of Miami Law Library D201, on **Monday, October 24, 2011**, at 6:00 p.m. It is sponsored by the University of Miami Financial Aid Department in collaboration with Hope Public Service Resource Center.

Students interested in attending the lecture must RSVP via the following link, sites.google.com/a/g.law.miami.edu/hope-cdo-rsvp/. For assistance with directions to the University of Miami School of Law or a campus map, please visit www.lawmiami.edu/campus/directions.php. If you need additional assistance, please feel free to contact Ms. Wendi Owens at (305) 284-3115.

DONOR SCHOLARSHIP REMINDER

Descriptions and applications have been emailed out to all J.D. students with regard to the 2011-2012 Donor Scholarships. **The deadline for the applications will be October 31, 2011.** Donor scholarships are monies donated by alumni and others to provide scholarships to current students. The amounts of the scholarships and the eligibility criteria vary. The amounts are generally between \$500 and \$2,500 for the school year, and the awards are generally split between the fall and spring semester. In some cases, the award is given entirely in the spring semester. Students are encouraged to apply for any (or all) scholarships that may be applicable. If a student is already receiving the maximum amount of cost of attendance by a combination of loans or scholarships, or both, then receipt of a donor scholarship acts to reduce outstanding debt; otherwise, the scholarship will result in a refund to the student (usually in the spring semester). Decisions regarding recipients are made by a committee, and the recipients will be notified mid-November.