Official Senate Announcements

2008 Graduation Speakers Announced.

Senators Devora Whitman '08 and Shawndra Jones '08, the chairs of the Graduation Committee, have announced the results of the student vote on this year’s graduation speakers. Brian Larkin of Suitland, Maryland, will represent his fellow J.D. candidates, and Thomas Krawitz, of Munich, Germany, his fellow LL.M. candidates, at CLS’s graduation ceremony on May 22. Cynthia McFadden ’84, co-anchor of ABC News’s “Nightline” and “Primetime Live” programs, was selected to give the keynote address. The ceremony will also feature a speech by Prof. Philip Genty, selected by the Class of 2008 as winner of the Willis Reese Teaching Prize, and remarks by outgoing Senate President Tope Yusuf.

This year’s graduation, held during the Law School’s 150th anniversary, will also honor the Class of 1958, which will celebrate its 50th reunion year. Members of that class include H.F. (Gerry) Lenfest, to whom Columbia Law School earlier this year gave its most prestigious award, the Medal For Excellence. Graduation this year will take place from 2 to 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 22, on the South Lawn in front of Butler Library.

New York Bar Exam Info Session on Tuesday.

If you’re graduating this year and you plan to practice in New York, you should definitely show up to JGH 104 at 12:15 p.m. this Tuesday, April 1. Senate is bringing you the Eastern Regional Associate Director of Bar/Bri to fill you in on changes to the New York Bar, the format of the exam, subjects tested, the MPRE, bar exam filing deadlines, taking two bar exams, and more! You don’t want to miss it!

Grad Ball Early Bird Special Ends Monday!

Monday, March 31, is the LAST DAY to buy grad ball tix at $100. If you wait until Tuesday, the price goes up to $125. Visit http://www.ovationtix.com/trs/pe/443161 to purchase your tickets right away.

CLS Diversity Council Applications Online.

Student applications for the CLS Diversity Council are now available. The application for the at-large positions is at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/law/senate/docs/clcdaatatlargeapp.doc and the senator application is at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/law/senate/docs/clcsenatorapp.doc. If you are not planning to run for Senate next year then please complete the At-Large application; however, if you are unsure or think you will run for senate (elections are April 9), then please complete both applications. If you would like to learn more about the Council or have any questions about the application process or duties of Council members, please feel free to contact Tope K. Yusuf at tky2103@columbia.edu. Applications are due at 5 p.m. on Monday, April 7, 2008!

News & Notes

The Stone Moot Court Preview will take place on Tuesday, April 15, at 12:20 p.m., in JGH 104. The finalists (Jordan Connors '08 and Christopher Hogan '08 for Appellees and Cross-Appellants and Mollie Kornreich '09 and David Scherr '09 for Appellant and Cross-Appellee) are going to explain the problem and their arguments, and there will be pizza and oral argument cheat sheets. It will be a good way to learn about the problem so that you’re not lost when the finalists start talking about “Gonzaga” and the Second Circuit strip search case,” and will be especially useful for 1Ls who have never been to a Stone final. The final round itself is set for Thursday, April 17, at 4 p.m., and will be argued before Chief Justice Roberts and Judges Motz (4th Cir.), Wood (7th Cir.), and McConnell (10th Cir.).

If you have a news item that everyone should know about, please email senate@law.columbia.edu.
The full Student Senate typically meets every other Monday at 9:10 PM in JGH 105. Meetings are generally open to the entire student body. The next and final meeting of the 2007-2008 Student Senate will take place next Monday, April 7, 2008.

The jam-packed minutes from our most recent meeting of March 10, 2008, are available for your perusal at http://www.columbia.edu/cu/law/senate/meetings/minutes031008.pdf.

Elections for the 2008-2009 Student Senate are set for Wednesday, April 9, 2008; please stay tuned for further details. We hope to see you running!
Get to Know Your CLS
Spotlight on Alison Wright

Alison Wright, J.D. '08, is Director of the Harlan Fiske Stone Honors Moot Court Competition.

Q. What inspired you to take on the role of Director of the Stone Moot Court? How did you go about applying for the position?
A. I was a moot court editor my 2L year and I liked writing a problem (plus, I wanted to meet the Chief Justice). So I sent in my 2L bench memo, interviewed with the Moot Court Executive Board and Professor Genty, and got the job.

Q. How would you describe the experience of running the Stone competition?
A. It’s been a lot of fun. Writing the problem and the bench memo was a huge, challenging project. But now I’ve got a pretty good idea of how to bring § 1983 and class action suits, which will be useful if I ever get involved in impact litigation. Once the competition started, I enjoyed watching the problem evolve in unexpected directions as 55 very smart competitors briefed and argued it.

Q. Could you describe the process of developing this year’s problem?
A. “Grueling” is the best word I have for it. I threw out at least a dozen drafts—frozen embryo contract problems, pedophile free speech problems, enrolled bill rule problems . . . A lot of it was either too controversial or too likely to make it to the Supreme Court this term. Once I settled on the legal issues, I had to choose a circuit and create my facts and parties. I ended up calling a lot of Illinois bureaucrats to figure out the state Medicaid plan amendment process. Then I had to make sure the court’s opinions were drafted so that the problem was evenly balanced.

Q. What was the most interesting or unexpected thing that has happened over the course of the competition?
A. Quite a few judges complained to me that the problem was too hard. I just smiled and said, “That's funny, the law students seem to be doing just fine with it.”

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about your own personal background?
A. I’m from southern California, and I went to college in Peoria, Illinois.

Q. Why did you decide to come to law school?
A. I got really interested in international human rights in college, and I thought a law degree would help me make more of an impact.

Q. What are your plans for after law school? What are your goals in life?
A. I'll be working for the U.S. Senate Office of the Legislative Counsel once I graduate. I'm looking forward to having an awesome job that lets me work 9-to-6 and gives me weekends off. After that, who knows?

Q. What has been your favorite experience at law school thus far?
A. Representing teenagers in foster care in the Child Advocacy Clinic has been alternately heartbreaking and frustrating, but I think it's taught me the most about what it means to be a good lawyer.

Q. What is the one piece of advice you would give to people thinking about coming to Columbia Law School?
A. I've got two. First, get involved with a project that lets you use the law to make a real difference in someone's life, like a public interest summer or a clinic. Second, don't let anyone convince you that you have to work at a law firm, because it's just not true.

Q. How did it feel to have your picture featured on the CLS homepage?
A. It was pretty cool, but also kind of embarrassing. Especially for the first day, when the page was formatted so that it looked like I was Chief Justice Roberts.
This Week at CLS
March 31 – April 6, 2008

Monday
- CPIIL/DVP: Info Session—Internships at the Domestic Violence Bureau of the Queens DA’s Office. 12:15 - 1:00 PM; WJW 103.
- Legal Theory Workshop: “Acting White?” with Prof. Devon Carbado. 4:10 PM; JG Case Lounge.
- Defending Humanity Conference. 5:00 - 7:00 PM; JG 103. Reception follows.
- CJAN/CalSoc/Amnesty International: The California Prison Crisis. 6:00 - 7:00 PM; JG 101. Dinner.
- BLSA: Meeting. 8:10 - 10:30 PM; JG 106.

Tuesday
- Koleinu: “How Much Free Will Do We Really Have?: Some Approaches in Jewish Philosophy” with Dr. David Shatz. 12:10 - 1:00 PM; JG 807.
- Student Senate: NY Bar Exam Informational Session. 12:15 PM; JG 104.
- KCLMA: Manges Lecture—“A Lay Perspective on the Copyright Wars: A Report from the Trenches of the Section 108 Study Group” with James G. Neal. 6:00 PM; JG 103.

Wednesday
- CCLS: “The Legislation of Tort Law in China” with Yu Fei. 12:05 - 1:00 PM; JG 546.
- CPIIL: Skadden Postgraduate Fellowship Program Presentation. 12:15 - 1:10 PM; 10th Floor Little Warren Hall (Levien).
- Clinical Faculty Presentation. 12:15 - 1:15 PM; JG 106. Pizza.
- CPIIL: Overview of Postgraduate Fellowships and Public Interest Jobs. 4:00 - 5:45 PM; JG 105. (This event will be repeated on April 8th.)
- Panel Discussion: “Insider Trading: Insights & Lessons.” 6:00 PM; Uris Hall 301.

Thursday
- CGLS: “Investment Treaties: Why (Not) Consider the Public Interest?” with Charles H. Brower. 12:05 - 1:05 PM; WJW 103.
- HRI: “The Torture Team” with Philippe Sands. 5:00 - 6:30 PM; JG 106.
- Christian Legal Society: Dinner & Bible Study. 6:15 - 7:15 PM; JG 546.
- ALSA: AFROFEST. 7:00 - 10:00 PM; Lenfest Café. East and North African food.
- DeVinimus: Scotch Tasting. 7:30 - 10:00 PM; JG 103. RSVP to devinimus@gmail.com by Mon. at noon.

Friday

Saturday & Sunday
- Everybody’s working for the weekend.

Event information is taken from the Advisor, a Student Services e-publication. To have your event listed, follow the link below and submit the on-line form. These must be submitted by 10am on Thursday, the week BEFORE your event. http://www.law.columbia.edu/current_student/studentorgs_abcs/studentorgevent/eventform.