Trial Teams BIG WINNERS in National Competitions

Even before they leave law school, a group of Maryland students might already have faced the toughest jury of their careers.

Competing in the final round of the American College of Trial Lawyers' (ACTL) national trial competition, UMLaw's trial team had to argue before a federal judge and a jury comprised of eighteen ACTL members.

But the Maryland team was more than equal to the task: They finished second in the nation. The outstanding efforts of the Maryland competitors—David Chamberlin ('06), Sig Libowitz ('07), and Rachel Simmons ('07)—were put forth during the week of arguments last March in Dallas, Texas.

"This is an extraordinary accomplishment," says Professor Jerry Deise, the team's coach. "We can all once again be extremely proud of our trial team and our advocacy programs."

The ACTL's annual trial competition is one of the two most challenging and prestigious of national trial advocacy competitions. More than 600 students on 296 teams (from 150 schools) competed this year. The Maryland team advanced to the national level after winning its regional competition; they defeated teams from top schools in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. (including a win over rival Georgetown in the regional final).

Only 28 teams (with approximately 50 students) advanced to the national competition.

The team representing Maryland in the Association of Trial Lawyers of America's National Trial Competition, the nation's other most prestigious competition, also advanced to the final rounds. The team of Julia Carolan ('06), Veronica Jennings ('06), Andy Lopez ('07), and Jason Downs ('07) won a regional competition from a pool of sixteen schools; moreover, they were undefeated through all five rounds and remained in first place throughout the regional competition.

Seventy to ninety students try out each year for one of eight or nine slots on the team, which requires a two-year commitment. Alumni play a key in preparing the team, acting as volunteer coaches and judges, evaluating the team's performance in practice sessions and offering suggestions for improvement in their various competitions.

"The law school supports us in every way possible. It provides the resources and the commitment required for our team to be successful," notes Chamberlin. "Participation on the trial team was my defining experience as a law student."

Trial team co-captain David Chamberlin ('06) makes an argument during the final round of the ACTL national competition.

Students Make Best Case in Myerowitz Competition

"I'm jealous that I can't hear arguments like this every day in my courtroom," said The Honorable Eric T. Washington, Chief Judge of the District of Columbia Court of Appeals, one of three distinguished jurists sitting on the bench for the final round of arguments for the 37th Annual Morris B. Myerowitz Moot Court Competition.

Making their way through four rounds of oral competition, spanning the course of a semester, David Sharfstein ('07) (at left, with Judge Washington) took the prize for top oral argument, with Paul Spelman ('07) earning runner-up honors.

"That nervousness you felt today will be the exact same thing you feel the last time you argue a case," said The Honorable Richard Bennett ('73), District Judge, U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. "Hold on to it; control it; let it keep you razor sharp."

One of the most highly anticipated events of the year, the competition was created by the family of Morris B. Myerowitz to honor their son and nephew. Numerous members of the family attended the March 15 final round in the law school's Ceremonial Courtroom.

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—Jamie Smith
U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes (bottom, with Dean Rothenberg) delivered the keynote address at the School of Law's May 19 Hooding Ceremony, challenging the 228 members of the Class of 2006 to lives of service, regardless of the careers they choose.

"Public service is by no means limited to the public sector," Sarbanes told the graduates. "Too often a rigid line is drawn between the public and the private sectors, with responsibility for the public interest assigned exclusively to the public sector, while the private sector is reserved for the pursuit of personal ambitions, with little if any concern for their broader ramifications. There is what I would call public service in the private sector."

Following his address, Sarbanes—the longest-serving U.S. Senator in Maryland history—received the law school's Distinguished Public Service Award.

Photos by Thomas Gravey
As the cost of law school tuition continues to rise, many students graduate with the burden of significant loan debt. Recent graduates find that financial obligations constrain them from pursuing a desired career in public service.

Through the Leadership Scholars Program, now in its second year, the School of Law is ameliorating this situation, offering financial assistance that is helping attract some of the nation's most qualified law students to Maryland. In addition to furthering the law school's nationally recognized commitment to diversity and enabling public service-minded individuals to live their dreams, the Leadership Scholars Program also will have a long-term impact on the regional legal community as these highly talented students pursue careers here.

The program recognizes outstanding incoming students with accomplishment in academics, in professional life, community work, and overall public service. Twelve have already earned graduate degrees—including one medical doctor and one PhD—in fields ranging from genetics to math to fine arts.

"On behalf of the students who have received these scholarships, and the entire law school community, which has benefited from the Scholars' contributions, I extend thanks to the generous donors who have made it possible to provide these opportunities for financial support," says Dean Karen Rothenberg.

In the past year, gifts have enabled several new named scholarships, including the Anne B. Gallagher Memorial Scholarship, the DLA Piper Scholarship, the Paul Bekman Leadership in Law Scholarship, the Samuel & Anne Hopkins Scholarship, and the Joseph R. Hardiman Scholarship.

Kelly T. Moore, a 2005 graduate of Maryland-College Park, was awarded the Hardiman Scholarship, for aspiring law students who are graduates of the University of Maryland School of Business. "I will dedicate my legal studies and my life's work to the advancement of the underrepresented people of our nation."

"Considering the impact that my volunteer work as an English-as-Second-Language instructor had on a small group of first generation immigrants in College Park," she says, "I am fascinated by the potential ability of legislators, judges, and attorneys to empower the underrepresented and marginalized people of our country."

Moore follows in the footsteps of last year's Scholars, who are already making their own mark on the world.

—By Jamie Smith
Student on a Mission

Dorcas Gilmore is out to change the world, one community at a time.

Dorcas Gilmore is a planner. In the spring semester, the Mead Scholar worked on organizing the annual banquet for the Black Law Students Association, helped the Maryland Public Interest Law Project raise $41,000 at its annual auction, took the GRE exam, and applied for a master's program in public policy that she plans to start this fall during her third year at UMLaw. Oh, and she went to classes, and allowed herself a few dinners with her husband (who also attends the law school).

Armed with a psychology degree from Rollins College, the Florida native says, "I have my ten-year plan. Law school was part of it, always." In the short term, Gilmore plans to gain hands-on experience in Baltimore. After that, her long-range plan takes her back home to Florida, with a PhD, to teach, write, and start up an organization to empower low-income minority communities through legal representation and policy development.

Her ideal centers on "grassroots lawyering," with a litigation agenda driven by needs in that community." She's most interested in an organization whose close relationship with the community develops through community education.

Auction Supports Summer Public Interest Work for Students

The lucky winners got lunch with Dean Karen Rothenberg, a week in a Martha's Vineyard cottage, or other of hundreds of items up for bid. But the community at large got much more as the Maryland Public Interest Law Project (MPILP) raised a record $41,000 at its annual benefit auction. The March 11 event attracted more than 300 alumni, students, and faculty to Westminster Hall.

"There's been a major increase in first-year students participating in the Maryland Public Interest Law Project—they're beating down our doors to help with social justice initiatives and fundraising," says Alex Freemire ('06), co-president of the student-run, nonprofit organization.

The funds raised will support MPILP grants, enabling students to receive a $4,000 stipend for ten weeks of summer work at local public interest programs, such as the Legal Aid Bureau, the Homeless Persons Representation Project, and many others. This year, MPILP funded thirty summer placements, up from nineteen a year ago.

BLSA Students Honor the Best and Brightest

Stressing the strides that have been made to place African-American lawyers into positions of prominence and authority, and reminding students that their actions will be as important to future lawyers as the accomplishments of giants like Thurgood Marshall are to today's legal students and practitioners, Craig Thompson ('95) captivated an audience of almost 200 attendees as he accepted the Alumnus of the Year Award at the 32nd Annual Black Law Students Association Banquet on March 4.


BLSA awarded the 2006 Practitioner of the Year honor to Kenneth Ravenell ('86), a criminal defense lawyer with the Baltimore firm Schulman, Treem, Kaminkow, Gilden & Ravenell. Named Baltimore magazine’s “Top Criminal Lawyer” in 2005, Ravenell argued Maryland v. Blake before the U.S. Supreme Court last year.

Lisa Fairfax followed up her 2003 Teacher of the Year honor (voted by the students) with the 2005 BLSA Professor of the Year title. The A.J. Cooper Award, named in honor of the BLSA’s national founder and given each year to an outstanding graduating member of the BLSA went to fourth-year evening student Muyiwa Bamiduro ('06), a former BLSA president, who recently began a clerkship with the Honorable Damon Keith on the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.
Words were flying when the panel of former Maryland Law Review editors discussed the past and future of scholarly legal publishing at the law journal’s 50th anniversary gathering. More than 100 alumni, faculty, and students—past and present members of the Review staff—came together Oct. 6 in Westminster Hall to celebrate the accomplishments of this nationally recognized quarterly publication.

William Pittler ('59) made a generous gift to the journal in recognition of its golden anniversary.

Clockwise: Panelists included former Law Review editors Roger Redden ('57); Ann Hoffman ('72), the journal’s first female editor; and Donald Judges ('83), the E.J. Ball Professor of Law at the University of Arkansas; Teresa LaMaster ('95), the law school’s new assistant dean for institutional advancement and a former editor of the Law Review, moderated the panel discussion of former editors.

Teresa LaMaster ('95), has been named the assistant dean for institutional advancement. In her new role, LaMaster now leads the varied advancement activities of the law school, including development, alumni relations, communications, and academic and special events.

“We are very fortunate to have an alumna of such ability dedicate her career to advancing our law school,” says Dean Karen Rothenberg.

LaMaster joined the law school in 2003 as managing director of the Clinical Law Program. She had spent eight years prior to that in private practice, concentrating in business and intellectual property litigation. She continues to teach in the areas of professional responsibility and intellectual property.

Dean LaMaster spent a decade working in arts and museum management. She followed that real-world experience with her law school education, marked by her position as editor-in-chief of the Maryland Law Review, election to the Order of the Coif, and receiving the School of Law’s Samuel Allen Prize for outstanding leadership and scholarship.

More than 150 alumni gathered at the School of Law on April 27 for the Alumni Association’s 15th annual Honors Banquet. The Distinguished Graduate Award was presented to Joanne Pollak ('76), Vice President and General Counsel of Johns Hopkins Health System. Patricia Gatling ('82), chair of the New York City Commission on Human Rights, received the Benjamin L. Cardin Public Service Award. The Star Award was presented to Col. Edwin J. Wolf ('27), retired counsel emeritus for the firm Eccleston & Wolf, a former Circuit Court judge, and decorated veteran of D-Day.

From left: Comptroller William Donald Schaeffer was on hand to celebrate the presentation of the Star Award to Col. Edwin J. Wolf ('27); Patricia Gatling ('82) received the Benjamin L. Cardin Public Service Award from The Hon. Marcella Holland, Administrative Judge for the Circuit Court of Baltimore City; Roger Redden ('57) presented Joanne Pollak ('76) with the 2006 Distinguished Graduate of the Year Award.
The annual fall Alumni Weekend kicked off with its traditional Friday night Wine Tasting, hosted by the Environmental Law program. This year's festivities celebrated the milestone anniversaries of the classes of 1955 (the big 5-0), 1970 (thirty-five), and 1995 (a slim decade).

Plans are currently underway for the reunions of this year's milestone celebrants; to better fit the school's academic calendar, reunions will move to the spring semester. This year, they'll be held on the weekend of May 5.

Get Involved!
Reunion committees are now forming for the gatherings of the Classes of 1956, 1957, 1981, 1982, 1996, 1997 and all class years ending in 1, 2, 6, and 7. To serve on your committee, call 410-706-2070.