A Student's Perspective

BY RAJ K. GOEL, CLASS OF 1998

As I count down the number of days to graduation, I often reflect upon my past three years in law school. Despite the endless amount of studying, the challenging questions posed by Socratic professors, the anxious moments during exams and the arduous task of finding jobs, law school provided me with an extremely rewarding and exciting experience.

The University of Maryland School of Law enabled me to grow in different ways. Professors developed my analytical, advocacy and communication skills to new heights through demanding and challenging courses. Professors such as Joan O’Sullivan enabled me to appreciate the important role of law in society and how the law can be a useful tool for social change. In addition, law school has been an exercise of immense intellectual exploration, allowing me to pursue all of my academic interests. I honestly believe that the knowledge and skills I have gained will allow me to pursue any direction in life.

Finally, I developed personally through meeting and learning from my classmates: a diverse group consisting of the most articulate and gifted individuals I have ever met. My learning of the law and life was deeply facilitated through the variety of life experiences, opinions and perspectives they provided in the classroom or during friendly chats in the courtyard.

Law school also provided me with opportunities that I never dreamed of during the orientation program. I prevented the unfair discharge of a nursing-home patient through the Clinical Law Program; I drafted legislation as a legislative aide in the General Assembly through the Asper Program; I had the opportunity to feel like a Thurgood Marshall arguing before the Supreme Court through the Moot Court Program; and based upon my involvement in student government, I was provided with the opportunity to enhance higher education as a member of the University of Maryland Board of Regents. These experiences have shaped and affected my life in such positive ways.

Law school has challenged me and taken me further than I could have ever imagined. The lifetime skills I developed in law school will allow me to achieve any endeavor I wish to pursue in the future. The friendships I developed will last a lifetime. Although I cannot wait to receive my diploma on graduation day, a part of me wants to stretch this semester a bit longer.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS EXCEL

US News and World Report named the School of Law’s Clinical Program, Environmental Law Program, and Law and Health Care Program each within the top 10 in the country.

MOOT COURT FINISHES SECOND

Last year, the School of Law’s International Moot Court team finished second at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Competition of the Philip C. Jessup International Moot Court Competition. The team leader was Helmut Gerlach. Members of the team included Inci Yalman, Rodin Kooyan, Michael Hannagan and Gordon Knox.

TRIAL ADVOCACY TEAM HONORED

The School of Law Trial Advocacy team finished second in the nation in the prestigious ABA National Trial Advocacy Competition in Chicago. Team members included Ann Grillo, David Harak, Tami Howie and Jean-Marie Sylla.

LAW JOURNALS IN TOP 40

The School of Law is the only law school in the country with two student-edited law journals ranked in the nation’s top 40, according to an article recently published in a Chicago-Kent Law Review. The article, entitled “The Most Prolific Law Professors and Faculty,” was based on rankings derived from Shepard’s Law Review Citations (Shepard’s). According to the Shepard’s results, the Business Lawyer ranked as the 15th-most-cited law journal in the country. The Maryland Law Review ranked as the 35th-most-cited law review.

NEW LAW JOURNAL DEBUT

In the fall, the School of Law hosted a new journal dedicated to health care law and policy issues, The Journal of Health Care Law and Policy (JHCLP). JHCLP publishes articles covering a diverse range of health care topics written by legal scholars, policy makers, practitioners and law students. The first issue was published in December.
Senior U.S. District Judge John R. Hargrove, who blazed a trail for blacks in Maryland’s legal community, died of a heart attack at his home in Ashburton on April 1, 1997. He was 73.

After graduating from the School of Law in 1950, he spent five years in private practice before being hired, in 1955, as the first African-American prosecutor in the U.S. attorney’s office in Baltimore. Three years later, he was the first black to be named deputy U.S. attorney.

In 1962, the Baltimore native was appointed to the old People’s Court in Maryland and, in 1971, was the first administrative judge of the newly created district court system.

One of the first blacks to be admitted to the Maryland Bar Association, Judge Hargrove was named to the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City (now the Circuit Court) in 1974.

In 1983, Judge Hargrove, a liberal Democrat, was nominated by President Ronald Reagan to fill a U.S. District Court seat vacated by Shirley B. Jones. His nomination was confirmed by the Senate on Feb. 9, 1984, and he became only the second African-American to sit on the federal bench in Maryland.

During his nearly 40 years in the legal system, he served as a mentor and teacher to a number of aspiring lawyers, among them Maryland Chief Judge Robert M. Bell and U.S. District Judge Andre M. Davis ’78.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Shirley Hargrove, two daughters, two sons, four sisters, five brothers and two granddaughters.