Lisa M. Fairfax: Business Unusual

She’s traveled to Europe and Japan, ran varsity track and exercised her vocal chords with the Kuumba Singers. She’s a poet who is influenced by Alice Walker and Langston Hughes. She’s twice a Harvard honors graduate and a high-powered corporate attorney who has come to Maryland with business on her mind. She’s Lisa M. Fairfax, JD, new on the campus as assistant professor of business law.

Fairfax joined the faculty in December 1999, after having been recruited by five law schools, including her alma mater. She previously worked for Ropes & Gray as an associate. Fairfax served corporate clients through public and private offerings, mergers and acquisitions, and venture capital transactions. It is this foundation that leads her to exclaim, “I want to bring the practical elements of law together with theoretical aspects.”

With a work background based in law firms, she is quick to accentuate her varied interests and activities. This is her strongest point. She came to Maryland with academic excellence as her flagship. Summer internships, a research assistantship, summer associate positions, all come together as glimpses of the individual. Her love for writing, which is what prompted her to pursue teaching, has produced two articles published in Columbia Business Law Review and Temple Political and Civil Rights Law Review, both in fall 1999. She stresses that students need variety—variety in educational styles and in their outlets to allow them to stray from strictly the intellectual. Perhaps she knows best. It’s only been five years since she was a cum laude graduate from Harvard Law School.

Fairfax draws on her fresh perspective and energy to help expand the business law program at the School of Law. “I am excited about all the possibilities,” says Fairfax as she counters her perspective on teaching with how she was taught. “I learned it by the book. If we change book knowledge to learning by experience or through someone with actual experience, then this will say a lot about the students we produce.”

Fairfax teaches the basic business associations course and an advanced course in securities law. She sees a strong program expanding upon intellectual property, offering securities courses, packaging and grouping courses together, hosting seminars and conferences to bring outsiders—firms, in-house counsel—together with students. “Many students are exposed to firms through internships, but a conference or seminar would provide a holistic view, joining the outside world with the university setting.”

While at the Boston office of Ropes & Gray, Fairfax served as a committee member for the Boston Law Firm Group. She organized and served on a panel for a conference on retaining minorities in law firms. Since September 1995, she was a member of the groups’ mentor program. “I am overjoyed that someone of Lisa’s caliber has joined the faculty and I am excited about her commitment to the business program,” comments Dean Karen H. Rothenberg.

For all of her educational and professional accomplishments, she’s not one to drift too far from that which anchors her. Fairfax undeniably confirms that her two daughters (ages 4 and 2) are her greatest achievements. She, her husband and daughters live in Silver Spring, Md.

PATRICIA YOUNG
José Bahamonde-González, assistant dean for administration, finance and technology, was elected to the Board of Directors for the National Association for Law Placement.


Brenda Blom, assistant professor, presented “What is Community Lawyering?” at a Symposium on Community Oriented Lawyering and Legal Strategies: Emerging and Essential Tools, held at the University of Maryland School of Law in June. (See related story on page 16.)


Christopher Brown, associate professor, was elected into the American College of Trial Lawyers, a national organization of select trial attorneys.


Douglas Colbert, professor, presented “Race and Overincarceration, Justice Under the Law Campaign” to the Law and Justice 2000 Legislative Committee in February.

Abraham Dash, professor, presented a panel on “Defense Lawyer Ethical Problems” to federal public defenders at the Federal Court House, Baltimore, in May.


Deborah Hellman, associate professor, presented “Genetic Discrimination and an Expressive Theory of Equal Protection” at the University of Toronto Law School in April; and “The Moral Significance of Epistemic Choices in the Design of Clinical Trials” at the Joint Centre for Bioethics at the University of Toronto, also in April.


Stanley Herr, professor, presented “The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Disability Discrimination Act in Comparative Perspective” to the Ministry of Health, in London in April; and “Working for Justice for People with Learning Disabilities” at the University of Bristol, Bristol, England in May.

Diane E. Hoffmann, associate dean for faculty and external affairs, professor, and interim director of Law and Health Care Program, co-authored “Regulating Research with Decisionally Impaired Individuals: Are We Making Progress?,” 3 DePaul Journal of Health Care Law 547 (2000) (with Jack Schwartz and Evan G. DeRenzo); and “Are Ethics Committee Members Competent to Consult?,” 28 Journal of Law, Medicine and Ethics 30 (2000) (with Anira Tarzian and J. Anne O’Neil). She also presented “Legal and Institutional Barriers to Pain
Treatment” at the Annual Health Law Teachers’ Conference, Case Western University School of Law in Cleveland in June.

Susan Leviton, professor, published “Children: Wards or Waifs of the Court,” 33 Maryland Bar Journal (March/April 2000). She also presented “Making a Difference” to the National Association of Women Business Owners, Baltimore Regional Chapter, in April; and “Diversion and Alternatives to Incarceration for the Mentally Ill” to the Judicial Institute, Judiciary Training Center in April.

Dana Morris, assistant dean for career development, was elected to the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) National Nominating Committee (2000). She also was appointed vice-chair of the Employment Diversity Committee, NALP Mid-Atlantic Region.

Joan O'Sullivan, assistant professor, presented “Voting and Nursing Home Residents: Practices and Policies” to the Health Law Teachers Conference in Cleveland in June; “Informed Consent and People with Mental Retardation II: Applications in Real Life” at the American Association on Mental Retardation Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., in May; and “Drawing on the Culture of Other Disciplines in our Legal Work” at the Conference on Clinical Legal Education, Association of American Law Schools in Albuquerque in May.

Suzanne M. Parker, visiting professor, is currently a member of the U.S. Women’s National Rugby Sevens Team. Most recently, she competed in the World Championships in Hong Kong in March.


William Reynolds, professor, presented “Conflict of Laws and Multijurisdictional Practice” at an ABA-sponsored Symposium on Multijurisdictional Practice in New York City in March.

Karen H. Rothenberg, dean and professor, presented the Cyril H. Wecht Distinguished Lecture on Legal Medicine at the 40th Annual Conference of the American College of Legal Medicine in San Diego, Calif., in March.

Jana Singer, professor and associate dean for academic programs, was a panel facilitator and presented “Perspectives on Open Adoption: Privacy vs. the Right to Know,” at The Dave Thomas Center for Adoption Law at Capital University Law School, Second Annual Symposium in Columbus, Ohio in May.

Rena Steinzor, professor, presented “Myths of the Reinvented State” at the Symposium on the Second Generation of Environmental Law, at Capital University Law School in Columbus, Ohio in April.

Jan Stokely, assistant professor, presented “University/Community Partnerships” at the national conference of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, in Washington, D.C., in March; and “Public/Private Partnerships for Financing Child Care” at the San Mateo County Progress Seminar in Monterey, Calif. in April.

Marley Weiss, professor, team-taught a two-week comparative labor law course in the summer university program at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary in July. She also presented “The Right to Strike in Essential Public Services in the U.S.” at the International Seminar on Labor Law in the 21st Century, co-sponsored by the Institute for Legal Research of the National Autonomous University of Mexico and the Department of Labor and Social Security.