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On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Board of Directors, faculty and administration of Lincoln Law School of Sacramento, I congratulate the Class of 2014. As with the previous forty-one graduating classes, you successfully withstood a rigorous academic program culminating with your graduation and the upcoming bar examination.

Those who choose an evening law program have to balance a job, family and difficult academics from which only the best succeed. You not only survived the challenge, you are better off because of it. You have learned to balance busy schedules and deal with conflicting priorities to achieve your desired goals. You have succeeded because of your talent, desire, drive and determination. Your success is also in no small part due to the first-rate legal education you received. The Mission of Lincoln Law School is “to provide an excellent legal education at an affordable cost to qualified applicants.” Since 1969 Lincoln has stayed true to this Mission and, as a result, you enter this honored profession with the training and ability to succeed.

I know that at times the task must have seemed impossible. You made it happen but you did not do so alone. You owe a great deal of your success to your loved ones who patiently supported your endeavor to attend law school and become a member of the California Bar. Take time to appreciate what you have done and to thank those who have helped you get to where you are today.

Congratulations are also in order for three of our very special alumni. Sacramento County District Attorney Jan Scully (Lincoln Law School ’78) will soon be leaving office. Since 1979, she has dedicated her career to serving residents of Sacramento County and since 1994 she has been our elected District Attorney. Because of her illustrious career and her dedication to and support of Lincoln Law School she has been selected as this year’s graduation speaker.

It is also noteworthy that Lincoln is honoring two other distinguished members of the District Attorney’s Office. Professor Steve Grippi (Lincoln Law School ’86) is Lincoln’s alumnus of the year. Professor Grippi holds the title of Chief Deputy District Attorney having received the appointment in December of 2013. Also, the Class of 2014 recently conducted its vote and elected Supervising Deputy District Attorney Rob Gold (Lincoln Law School ’86) as Professor of the Year. Clearly, the District Attorney’s Office is very well represented at this year’s graduation.

In writing this piece I thought about words of guidance that I may offer to law students in general and the Class of 2014 in particular. In doing so I thought it would be beneficial to research what Abraham Lincoln, the namesake of our school who frequently wrote and spoke about the law, had to say. One letter stands out. In response to a request from Isham Reavis asking Lincoln, then an Illinois lawyer, to oversee his study of the law Lincoln wrote: “If you are resolutely determined to make a lawyer of yourself, the thing is more than half done already. Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed, is more important than any one thing.”

And in a lecture Lincoln presented on the law he said; “The leading rule for the lawyer, as for the man of every other calling, is diligence. Leave nothing for tomorrow which can be done today.”

Thus, the best guidance I can provide is to heed the words of Abraham Lincoln. Be determined, diligent and have the resolution to succeed. Maintain the same dedications, drive and determination you had during school to prepare for the bar examination. Celebrating graduation is, of course, of great importance but I guarantee your celebration after passing the bar examination will be even better.

Congratulations to the Class of 2014. We confidently anticipate your success on the upcoming bar examination and in your careers.
Greetings and welcome to the spring edition of the Voir Dire! Our goal as editors was to expand the Voir Dire to include more legal articles and essays that would appeal to both current students and alumni of Lincoln Law School. As you may be able to tell from the length of this edition, we feel that we have exceeded this goal and we hope that you find this edition to be both educational and informative. However, we would never have been able to achieve this on our own. We are so thankful for the amount of support that we have received as editors. First, we would like to thank all of our authors and contributors. Your hard work truly made this edition great. We would also like to thank our faculty advisor, Professor Robert Gold, and Dean Schiavenza for their incredible help and guidance. Next, we would like to give a special thank you to Janine Baker for her invaluable assistance with editing and proofreading the articles. Lastly, we would like to thank the student body of Lincoln Law School for the privilege of serving as your 2013-2014 Voir Dire editors. It has truly been an honor and we thank each of you for the opportunity.

We would like to take this opportunity to officially welcome the Class of 2018! We wish you the best of luck as you begin your law school journey. Graduation may seem like a distant dream to you right now but we can assure you that it will be here before you know it. Your time at Lincoln will not be easy but you will grow and learn more than you can ever imagine.

To the Class of 2017, congratulations on completing your first year of law school. We know this year has been a huge challenge and each of you should be proud of making it this far. Make sure to take a moment to celebrate and then get back to work!

To the Class of 2016, you are officially half way there! The light at the end of the tunnel is starting to shine. Keep up your hard work and dedication. We are proud of you!

To the Class of 2015, let us be the first to congratulate you on making it to your last year of law school! Prepare yourself because the next twelve months will fly by and you will be graduating before you know it. Enjoy your fourth year but don’t forget to study from time to time.

Finally, to the Class of 2014, we did it! These four years have been quite a journey and we are truly proud to have taken it with you. Thank you for all of the support and fun times. We look forward to seeing each and everyone’s names on the bar pass list in the very near future. We wish you all the best of luck in the future!

In closing, we would like to congratulate Lucy Sarkisyan and Fatima Baig for being selected as the 2014-15 Voir Dire editors. We know you will be amazing and we feel so fortunate to able to leave this publication in such capable hands. Good luck next year!
With only 12.6 seconds left on the clock and the score tied, Noren Mathews (Class of 2017) planted his feet and just as he began to shoot a three-pointer he drew a foul. The sound of the whistle filled the entire gym. The spectators were either astonished or dispirited at what had occurred in front of their eyes.

Each year the Student Bar Association hosts the annual basketball game between the student body and the alumni/faculty team followed by an after-game pizza party. This year’s game was very special, because the faculty/alumni team brought in reinforcements and were fired up to take back the trophy from the student team. Taylor Herrlinger (Class of 2016) led the student team while Professors Wright and Rouse and alumnus Joe Caffrey led the alumni/faculty team. What was supposed to be a casual game turned into an incredible heart pounding, fist tightening, and jaw clenching contest.

As the fans made their way to their seats, they heard the bombastic voice of Chris Testerman (Class of 2016). Testerman did not just announce each player’s name, but he brought personality and pride helping to make this year’s basketball game memorable. Once both teams were introduced, the whole gym went silent as Cesar Perez led everyone in the National Anthem.

In addition to the fans, no one could miss the slam dunk by “The Gevercer”, Benjamin Gevercer, who was playing on the faculty team representing his father, Professor Gevercer. He was a strong force along with the alumni/faculty members in leading his team. Joann Larsen (Class of 2016) even led the 2L class in chanting, “STOP THE GEVERCER” each time he stepped onto the court.

The SBA reached out to the Sacramento Community and received many prizes to raffle off at halftime from BarBri, Themis, Raven Club, Chipotle, Round Table, and Sacramento Republic FC. Also, the SBA gave one randomly selected student a chance to make a half-court shot to earn either a test prep scholarship or two free tickets to Barristers’ Ball. Elizabeth Fortune-Handy (Class of 2016) was the lucky student who was chosen to take the half-court shot. Even though she did not make it, she still received the BarBri scholarship prize.

The pivotal point in the game occurred when both teams were tied at the end of the fourth quarter, 54-54, and the game went into overtime. Close to the end of overtime the student team was leading until Mathews fouled Professor Rouse. The students stamped their feet as Professor Rouse stood at the free throw line to attempt his two shots. He made both and once again the teams were tied. With only a few seconds left on the clock and everyone thinking a second overtime was inevitable, Mathews was fouled while shooting a game winning three-pointer.

With the weight of the win on his shoulders, Mathews stood at the line with the students cheering him on. After missing the first two free-throws, he was left with one more chance to win the game. Nick Pauli (Class of 2015) then turned and rallied the crowd. With everyone chanting, cheering, and screaming, Mathews took a breath, shot, and sealed the 61-60 victory for the students. As Testerman best said, “And the crowd goes wild!”

We would like to thank the faculty members and their families for volunteering and coming out to the game. Additionally, we would like to thank the large group of alumni who came out and supported the event. Finally, a special thank you to all the students both on and off the team who came out to support a classmate, a friend, a study buddy, or just wanted to get some pizza. We are truly thankful to you for making this year’s basketball game so memorable.

A special shout out to everyone who participated in the game, you all rock!
When a corporation makes a defective product that injures someone, and the injury is not the result of negligent use of the product, the injured person is entitled to compensation for their special and general damages. Usually factored into those damages is a nebulous calculation for pain and suffering. Since pain and suffering cannot be quantified in a material way, a qualitative review of the injuries results in number generated through arbitration, settlements, or jury verdicts. While policy considerations might necessitate an examination of ratios or the calculus used to arrive at these figures, a more pressing issue requiring immediate reform is the additional award of punitive damages in a personal injury case.

Punitive damages are designed to punish an offending business or manufacturer for gross negligence or not identifying and correcting a design flaw before introducing a product into the flow of commerce. While the punitive damages ultimately result in an award to the plaintiff, their purpose is to effect a change in business practices. However, a closer inspection of the efficacy of punitive damages is necessary in light of their unintended negative effect on commerce and society in general.

Before inappropriate criticisms can be made, it is important to distinguish punitive damages from compensatory damages. In *Birdsall v. Coolidge*, the court held that “damages are given as a compensation...for an injury...and the damages shall be precisely commensurate with the injury suffered, neither more nor less.” In modern parlance, the court has held compensatory damages are designed to make the plaintiff whole; they are precisely commensurate with the injury suffered, neither more nor less. In essence, the court transformed the role of trial courts from forums to adjudicate and resolve disputes, to enforcement agencies with power to extra-legislatively regulate misconduct.

To allay concerns about this transformative role the court in *State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co. v. Campbell* created some perceived limits on the amount of a punitive award and provided instruction about the appropriate ratio of punitive damages to compensatory damages. In that case, the court held, “courts must ensure that the measure of punishment is both reasonable and proportionate to the amount of harm to the plaintiff and to the general damages recovered...there are no rigid benchmarks that a punitive damages award may not surpass...the precise award in any case must be based upon the facts and circumstances of the defendant’s conduct and the harm to the plaintiff.” The essential holding in that case was that punitive damages rarely can surpass a nine-to-one ratio. Without much explanation, the court in *State Farm* gave passing reference and consideration to due process concerns related to punitive damage awards.

Due process concerns, while minimized in the *State Farm* holding, should be the foremost concern of the court. Enshrined in the 5th Amendment of the Constitution, the idea that no man shall “be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law,” is a fundamental protection afforded to every citizen of the United States. However, punitive damages are best a tenuously related penalty for bad behavior and at worst a completely arbitrary punishment. Corporations are unable to predict, and therefore incorporate into an effective business plan, the unforeseen and incalculable costs associated with punitive damages. The due process clause of the 5th Amendment is designed to protect against such costs. The court's response is to attach a limiting calculus to the punitive damage awards, but even the calculus is arbitrary and formulated less to ensure due process and more to not award egregious figures.

The court's attempt at reconciling the 5th Amendment’s protections and potentially grossly excessive punitive damage awards was unconvincingly articulated in *Pacific Mutual Life Insurance v. Haslip*. Referencing the 5th Amendment and its effect on punitive damage awards, the court held, “We cannot draw a mathematical bright line between the constitutionally acceptable and the constitutionally unacceptable that would fit every case...
general concerns of reasonableness and adequate guidance from the court when the case is tried to a jury properly enter into the constitutional calculus.\textsuperscript{6} The Haslip rationale gives far too much power to local courts and juries, while offering little guidance on how to properly assess punitive damage awards. State courts have held that the award of punitive damages is within the discretion of the jury.\textsuperscript{7} The lone exception is Nebraska, a state which has held that punitive damages are unconstitutional.\textsuperscript{8}

Outside of the due process conflicts, there is a major policy implication in reforming the calculus and method of punitive damage assessments. The purpose of civil court is to make a plaintiff whole.\textsuperscript{9} While compensatory damages achieve the desired effect by accounting for both general and special damages, punitive damages are outside the scope of this reimbursement. In fact, punitive damages are an award to the plaintiff, and her attorney, over and above any award calculated to restore the plaintiff to her original position. With this in mind, the policy implication is that punitive damages have become a bonanza for the plaintiff and stayed from their intended purpose.

The problem with the bonanza is twofold: it is an incentive for potential plaintiffs to avoid alternative dispute negotiation; and it is calculated by juries that do not understand or perceive the larger financial ramifications of their award. In the dispute resolution phase, a plaintiff and defendant will typically try to find common ground whereby the plaintiff can walk away satisfied that his damages will be recompensed and the defendant feels she has paid out an appropriate sum given the circumstances. However, punitive damages are not considered reasonable by a defendant and therefore rarely factor into the negotiations. Plaintiffs, urged on by lawyers who are eyeing deeper pockets, see the potential to be awarded a jackpot for their injury as a motivation to take their case to trial. The policy consideration here is that courts prefer parties resolve their own disputes, and the current punitive damage assessment and administration construct entices one party away from this approach.

The juries, who decide what amount fairly punishes a defendant, are not concerned with the larger economic impact of their decisions. While they may feel an award is just, a punitive damage assessment may put a company out of business, a company which provides a beneficial good or service to society as a whole. The award also may deter companies from innovating for fear that if a new product injures someone, the injured person can seek compensation above what their injuries dictate. Corporations, because of the volatility of punitive damage awards, cannot plan for the expense and thus will avoid the prospect of creating a new product all together or not be as creative in the design phase. The implication is that punitive damages punish not only the defendant, but society as a whole.

However, given that, in some circumstances, punitive damages are necessary as the only redress available to deter malfeasance, there are some modifications to how the damages are awarded and administered which might resolve some of the issues. One approach is to federalize the Connecticut rule relating to punitive damages; in that state, punitive recovery is limited to the expenses of bringing the legal action, such as lawyer fees, investigative costs, etc.\textsuperscript{10} However, a more effective and easily adoptable method would be to redirect the monies away from the plaintiff. Since the compensatory damages have served to make the plaintiff whole, the punitive damages serve no purpose when trying to make the plaintiff whole. Therefore, the money should be redirected to a non-profit entity whose mission is substantially related to the type of harm suffered by the plaintiff. For instance, if the plaintiff suffers an injury whereby she loses a limb, then the punitive damage award should be redirected to a non-profit corporation which provides artificial limbs and prosthetics to people in need. In this manner, the corporation still receives the punitive effect of the award while preventing plaintiffs from seeking the award for purely selfish motives.

An argument against redirecting the punitive awards is that plaintiffs will not seek the money and therefore their intended effect will never be effectuated. However, this assumes that plaintiffs only seek punitive damages for personal gain. If that is the case, the rationale behind punitive damages has been corrupted and their application does not serve its intended purpose. Moreover, because there is no predictability in terms of the amount of punitive damages, plaintiffs have still sought these awards with little assurance that the calculated amount awarded will have made it worth their while. A more persuasive argument against modification or reform if the option of punitive damages is not available, is attorneys will not spend the necessary resources developing cases against powerful defendants who can afford massive legal fees; and the attorneys who do pursue civil actions will not allocate time or energy to pursuing punitive damages because they will receive no benefit in exchange.

The most reasonable solution to the due process issue, the issue of plaintiffs receiving a bonanza, and the issue of deterring attorney involvement in pursuing the damages is to establish, publish and mandate the use of a single method for calculating punitive damages. The most reasonable calculation, which would avoid conflicting with case law and the due process clause, is to make punitive damages, when applicable, conform to a one-to-one ratio with compensatory damages, with the plaintiff’s attorneys receiving 10 percent of that award. The remaining percentage should go to the previously discussed related non-profit entity. Following this rationale and solution, punitive damages can still be awarded, achieve their necessary effect, and prevent abuse of the legal system by plaintiffs and plaintiffs’ attorneys.

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\item 5 USCA CONST Amend. V
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THE HOWELL DECISION: DEATH KNELL FOR THE COLLATERAL SOURCE RULE?

By Ivan Bucheli  |  Class of 2017

2014 VOIR DIRE WRITING COMPETITION SECOND PLACE

Tort law contemplates a principal on which a tortfeasor remains liable for the damages caused to a plaintiff regardless of whether the plaintiff has already been fully or partially compensated by other sources such as the plaintiff’s own insurance coverage. In this case the collateral source rule applies. The spirit of this doctrine is to ensure that a tortfeasor does not escape full responsibility for his or her wrongdoing. This rule provides that evidence of payments received by the plaintiff from independent sources is not admitted as evidence in court in order to determine the value of the damages. In the words of the court the collateral source rule “embodies the venerable concept that a person who has invested years of insurance premiums to assure his medical care should receive the benefits of his thrift,” and “[t]he tortfeasor should not garner the benefits of his victim’s providence.” (Helfend v. Southern Cal. Rapid Transit Dist. (1970) 2 Cal.3d 1, 6).

The latest decision in California regarding the collateral source rule: Howell v Hamilton Meals & Provisions, Inc., 257P.3d81- Cal: Supreme Court 2011, runs contrary to 160 years of established case law. It ignores the spirit of the collateral source doctrine and it gives an undeserved victory to wrongdoers while penalizing prudent and responsible people who pay health insurance premiums.

In the precedent setting case, Rebecca Howell, was injured by the negligence of a truck driver for Hamilton Meats Provisions, Inc. As a consequence of the accident, she accrued medical bills of $189,978.90. Howell had private health insurance through PacifiCare who had a contractual agreement with the health care provider. The health care provider discounted the cost of Howell’s medical care to $59,691.73 which PacifiCare paid. The health care provider wrote off the remaining balance.

The trial court awarded Howell medical damages in the amount of $189,978.90. Hamilton appealed. The appellate court upheld the ruling of the trial court in what appeared to be an appropriate application of the collateral source rule. The case went to the California Supreme Court and in 2011 the court issued its ruling on the application of the collateral source rule. The court ruled that Ms. Howell could only recover medical damages in the amount of $59,691.73 that amount that was paid by PacifiCare on her behalf. Though the courts would argue differently, it overrules or misapplies the collateral source rule.

The Howell ruling raises some interesting issues regarding the way in which the court applies collateral source rule. The current ruling benefits the tortfeasor with a fortuitous advantage specific to any liability insurance carriers involved. This runs contrary to the spirit by which the law was originally enacted. In their opinion the California Superior Court stated: “When a tortiously injured person receives medical care for his or her injuries, the provider of that care often accepts as full payment, pursuant to a preexisting contract with the injured person’s health insurer, an amount less than that stated in the provider’s bill. In that circumstance, may the injured person recover from the tortfeasor, as economic damages for past medical expenses, the undiscounted sum stated in the provider’s bill but never paid by or on behalf of the injured person? We hold no such recovery is allowed, for the simple reason that the injured plaintiff did not suffer any economic loss in that amount.” (Howell, supra)

Unfortunately, Howell did suffer an economic loss. She incurred a debt to the hospital for the services provided to her. How she paid for the bill is irrelevant to the fact that she incurred that debt. Having her health insurance pay does not eliminate the fact the hospital provided a service for which Howell was liable. An analogy is that of a person who eats at a restaurant. After she finish the meal, she is responsible for paying the bill. The fact that the customer pays the restaurant’s bill with a gift card or by cash does nothing to eliminate the fact that she incurred a debt with the restaurant for the full amount of the meal. Howell was not obligated to use her insurance carrier to pay the bill. She could have decided to pay it herself, or she could have waited for the result of her complaint against the tortfeasor in order to have the latter pay for the medical bills.

Here, the tortfeasor and the liability insurance carrier are receiving the benefit of the contractual relationship between Howell’s health plan with PacifiCare and the healthcare providers. If Howell did not have health care coverage, the tortfeasor would have been liable for the full amount of the medical bills. The ruling, however, is allowing the tortfeasor to access the benefit of the contractual discount provided by the health care provider to the health insurance. The tortfeasor becomes a non-intended third party beneficiary, who, in accordance to the rules of contracts, would not have enforceable rights.

The analysis of the court continues: “Helfend, like the present case, involved a health insurer’s
payments to medical providers on the plaintiff’s behalf. In these circumstances, we explained, the collateral source rule ensures plaintiffs will receive the benefits of their decision to carry insurance and thereby encourages them to do so.” (Helfend, supra, 2 Cal.3d at p.6)

Helfend says this rule encourages people to carry health insurance. The court’s decision in Howell implies the contrary; an uninsured person would be able to claim the full amount of the reasonable value of the medical bills, while a person with health insurance could only claim the discounted rate paid by their medical insurance. The contractual relationship between a health care provider and the health plan is a mutually beneficial relationship in which the health plan provides a discount in exchange for patients referred by the health insurance carrier. The court is allowing the tortfeasor to benefit from a contract between the health plan and the health care provider and at the same time penalizes the insured person by eliminating the contractual discounted amount from the full charges.

The decision clearly benefits the tortfeasor and ignores the principles of the collateral source rule, which are to ensure the tortfeasor remains responsible for the reasonable and customary value of the medical expenses caused by his negligence, regardless of whether the plaintiff has insurance coverage. The rational of the collateral source rule is to ensure the tortfeasor does not benefit from the plaintiff’s precaution and prudence in paying health insurance premiums.

With respect to a potential windfall for the tortfeasor the court states:

“Nor does the tortfeasor obtain a “windfall…””

“Analogously, if it were established a medical provider’s full bill generally represents the value of the services provided, and the discounted price negotiated with the insurer is an artificially low fraction of that true value, one could make a parallel argument that relieving the defendant of paying the full bill would result in underdeterrence. The complexities of contemporary pricing and reimbursement patterns for medical providers, however, do not support such a generalization.” (Howell, supra)

The Court attempts to explain that, in general, hospitals discount their fees, which in effect means these fees may be inflated and the only way to determine the true cost is to determine the value of the usual, reasonable and customary charges of the health care services. But they provide an excuse for not determining this value by saying that “pricing of medical services is highly complex and depends, to a significant extent, on the identity of the payer. In effect, there appears to be not one market for medical services but several, with the price of services depending on the category of payer and sometimes on the particular government or business entity paying for the services. Given this state of medical economics, how a market value other than that produced by negotiation between the insurer and the provider could be identified is unclear.” (Howell, supra) Thus, the court excuses the windfall to the tortfeasor by saying it is too complex to determine the true value of the usual, reasonable and customary charges of the health care services.

In reality determining the cost of reasonable and usual hospital care is not prohibitively complex. The Department of Managed Health Care indicates that the usual, reasonable and customary charge for services provided by a health care provider is determined by comparing that service against the cost of the same service somewhere else within the same geographic location, and the same type of provider. For example charges at a clinic may be lower than charges at a trauma center, or a hospital bill in El Centro may be lower than the charges at a hospital in Beverly Hills. California hospitals are mandated to provide a charge master to the Department of Managed Health care with a list of every charge of every service they provide. A comparison among local providers for the same service shows that the difference in pricing never varies more than 5 to 10%. Thus, the value of the usual and reasonable charges is easily determined.

With the advent of the Affordable Care Act, most people in the United States will have some kind of health insurance coverage. Many of these types of coverage will pay health care providers rates equivalent to Medicare, or Medicaid, which are only pennies on the dollar. If the tortfeasor is obligated to pay only the amounts paid by the health insurance carrier, then the amount of damages will be reduced considerably when those who are federally insured under this program are injured by the negligence of another. Despite what the Howell court contends, for liability insurance carriers this does represent a massive windfall.

Plaintiffs argue that the California Supreme Court decision has ignored the spirit of the collateral source doctrine. It has given an undeserved victory to the wrongdoers while penalizing the prudent and responsible people who pay health insurance premiums. This ruling will create a windfall for the liability insurance industry because plaintiffs are now awarded only the amount paid by the health plan instead of the usual and reasonable full value of the medical bills in cases in which the patient’s health insurance paid for the medical expenses.

Liability insurance companies argue that the collateral source rule is a vehicle for plaintiffs to defraud and profit through grossly inflated workers compensation claims, automobile accident claims, etc. Courts are already ruling against plaintiffs based upon Howell and the new holding has been applied to at least one workers compensation claim. Plaintiff advocates have unsuccessfully attempted to pass legislation overruling the decision. Defendants’ advocates are suggesting that the law should require that plaintiffs mitigate damages by using their medical insurance, rather than having the option to pay out of pocket. The Howell ruling is exactly the type of precedent sought by defendants.

Perhaps Howell shows that the collateral source rule is an archaic common law concept, outmoded by current generalized liability insurance. Perhaps this is merely a victory of big business based upon well placed lobbying. Regardless, California has become part of a minority of States who bluntly ignore the Restatement Second of Torts and the collateral source rule. With liability insurance companies lauding the opinion and with their ability to lobby for change, California may be a trend setter in what will become the eventual demise of the collateral source rule nationwide.
PERUTA V. COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO - DEREGRULATING GUN CARRY IN THE STRICTEST DISTRICT

By Nichole Dickinson | Class of 2016

2014 VOIR DIRE WRITING COMPETITION THIRD PLACE

The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States provides: “A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” Since inception, the second promise in the Bill of Rights has been controversial. The resolution to most disputes has resulted in courtroom duels, causing a plethora of cases before the courts. Challengers have sought to curtail the right, going so far as to seeking it all together eliminated. On the other end of the spectrum, proponents have found any restrictions imposed to infringe on a constitutionally proscribed liberty. Historically, litigation follows any decision on the issue and this proved true again in 2014.

In 2009, Edward Peruta filed a 42 U.S.C. 1983 claim against the County of San Diego after he was denied a concealed weapons permit. Mr. Peruta alleged several theories that amounted to harm caused by government actors interfering with the Constitutional right to bear arms. After surviving a motion to dismiss, Mr. Peruta was granted leave to amend the complaint to join additional plaintiffs in the suit in 2010. Shortly thereafter, United States District Court, Southern District of California Chief Justice Irma E. Gonzalez granted a motion for summary judgment in favor of the defendants. From this, plaintiffs timely appealed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

From the onset an array of interested individuals has sought to be heard through this litigation. Plaintiff’s ability to withstand the expense of the case is all thanks to the financial backing of the wealthiest pro-gun group in the United States: the National Rifle Association. Hogan Lovells, an international firm known for heavy-hitting litigation, are advocates for the defendants. Their fees and costs have been fronted by the wealthiest group in California: the tax payers. Amici after amici were filed. Friends of the court have been fronted by the wealthiest group in California: the tax payers. Amici after amici were filed. Friends of the court

Oral arguments were not presented to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals until December of 2012. While there was no particular delay in litigation, just the usual wait time that results from an impacted judicial system, a significant change in California law occurred at the beginning of 2012 that became the linchpin in this controversy. Penal Code section 26350 prohibits the “open carry” of an unloaded firearm in a public place. This, coupled with the longstanding prohibition on the open carry of a loaded gun, significantly narrowed a Californian’s ability to bear arms. Absent a handful of exempt individuals, people no longer had the ability to possess a firearm in public without a concealed weapons permit. California, being a “may issue” state, provided counties broad discretion to interpret who would qualify for a concealed weapons permit. Those who were not permitted were no longer able to bear arms as the result of the 2012 Penal Code modification. For plaintiff, the time could not be riper for an overhaul of the concealed weapon permitting process.

It has long been a requirement for the concealed weapon carry for an individual to justify the need for a concealed weapons permit. This element, frequently referred to as “good cause”, is only part of a process that seeks to determine an individual’s moral character and mandates a specialized course be taken. In addition, residency requirements must be satisfied and permits from other states are invalid. California affords counties the opportunity to interpret “good cause” as they see fit. Good cause is not satisfied in San Diego unless an individual can establish a “…set of circumstances that distinguish the applicant from the main stream and causes him or her to be placed in harm’s way.” This standard of proof bars most law abiding citizens from being authorized to carry a concealed weapon. It was this good cause requirement, accompanied by the newfound Penal Code section that led to the Ninth Circuit to overturn the District Court’s decision.
On February 21, 2014, the Ninth Circuit announced an opinion over a year in the making. Reliant upon stare decisis from the Supreme Court of the United States, the Ninth Circuit held the good cause requirement to be unconstitutional and removed the standard from the permitting process. District of Columbia v. Heller is a 2008 decision by the United States Supreme Court in which the Court dictates that handguns are arms for Second Amendment purposes and the right to be armed belongs to an individual. Just two years later, in McDonald v. Chicago, the Court clarified that the Second Amendment right to bear arms applies to one’s home and prohibited the states from infringing on this right by application of the Fourteenth Amendment. These two cases served as the Ninth Circuit’s guidepost throughout the lengthy decision.

The 2014 Peruta opinion begins with a historical walkthrough of weapon possession, tracing the right back to common law. It was not until post-Civil War that legislation began tailoring who could carry a weapon and for what purposes. Ultimately, the Ninth Circuit mirrors the analysis of the District of Columbia v. Heller decision — a handgun is an “arm” and the Constitution dictates a right to bear said. The second part of the Ninth Circuit’s opinion is formulaic in nature. The Penal Code prohibition plus the good cause requirement equals a prohibition on the bearing of arms. The McDonald v. Chicago standard requires a state not infringe upon this Constitutional mandate with such a prohibition. Thus, the Peruta Court decided to remove the good cause permitting requirement.

A short two weeks after the decision was announced and the San Diego Sheriff stated there would be no request for review, Kamala Harris motioned for intervention. As Attorney General, Ms. Harris argued that the primary parties to the action did not adequately represent the state’s interests and deregulation significantly impacts the state’s statutory scheme. Thus, the State of California should be allowed to seek an en banc review. Joining the State of California, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence also sought intervention.

On February 28, 2014, a mere day after those interested in intervening filed, the court issued an order granting the motions to extend time for filing a petition for hearing en banc and stayed the issuance of the mandate. This does not mean that intervention has yet been permitted, but such a swift turn around hints it may very well be. The right to request an en banc hearing will be considered timely despite the fact that the original defendants have abandoned the litigation. As such, there is a high possibility intervention will be permitted and the matter will proceed to the face yet another challenge – an en banc review.

The decision being challenged was a panel decision meaning only three justices entertained the argument and formulated an opinion. The potential interveners seek a secondary review still within the Ninth Circuit, but with additional judges present. This is known as an en banc session. En banc (normally referred to in California jurisdictions as in banc) translates to a hearing before all the judges of a court. However, the Ninth Circuit is unique in that all justices need not be pooled for an en banc.

As the Ninth Circuit presently has twenty-nine individuals holding judgeship, the Rules of Court permit an en banc court to consist of eleven judges. With such a wide array of conservative and liberal justices who can be potentially assigned to the task, the outcome of such a review remains unpredictable. Dependent upon the outcome of this session, this case has enough clout that the U.S. Supreme Court will likely take up review if so requested.

Legal theorists have speculated that prior United States Supreme Court’s decisions were so heavy throughout Peruta in order to persuade the highest court to not overturn the Ninth Circuit. While true, a court is designed to rely on the mandatory authority provided by SCOTUS and the Ninth Circuit judges were diligent in interpreting existing law. While there has been a slight change in the composition of the Supreme Court since the Heller and McDonald decisions, both of those cases were the product of a five justice majority debating a four justice dissent. Thus, should Peruta make it to Washington D.C., there is no predicting what the outcome will be.

After Peruta transitioned California into a relaxed standard of permit issuance, those counties with notoriously strict requirements experienced a flood of applications. For example, Orange County received over five-hundred applications for concealed weapons permits in the two week span following the decision being announced. Orange County received roughly five-hundred applications in all of 2013. In short, applications have inundated the permitting institutions. From this small sample, it would appear that there are many Californians who approve of and wish to exercise concealed weapons carry. Until now, they will have to keep their holsters hung up as a stay is in place until resolution. By looking to the amount of time it has taken the case to get to this point, and the likely long road ahead, concealed weapons carry law will remain in a state of flux for many more years to come.
Established in February of 2014 at Lincoln Law School, the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association (APALSA) is a professional, political, community service, academic, and social organization of law students interested in Asian-American legal issues and the growth of the Asian-American legal community. APALSA is dedicated to serving the Asian and Pacific Islander American communities at Lincoln Law School, in Sacramento, and in the greater community at large. Community is defined as broadly including but not limited to East Asians, Pacific Islanders, South Asians, and Southeast Asians, and including immigrants as well as those born in the United States.

On March 2014, APALSA affiliated with the National Asian Pacific American Law Student Association (NAPALSA). Since its inception in 1981, NAPALSA was the first national organization to connect with Asian Pacific American members of the legal profession. NAPALSA represents the interests of Asian Pacific American law students and provides advocacy, support, and career development opportunities for its members and continues to be the only national student-led organization to link affiliated Asian Pacific American law student organizations and law students across the country. In 1988, NAPALSA helped establish the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) and has coordinated an annual conjoint conference with NAPABA since 2002.

APALSA is committed to creating an environment that encourages professional development and promotes awareness and discourse on key legal Asian-American issues. For the upcoming academic year, APALSA plans to host three major events: a job/internship/law fair in the fall, a donation-drive for My Sister’s House’s shelter and Women to Work Program, and a networking event. APALSA will also sponsor mentoring and social activities, speaker series, professional development workshops, and community service events.

APALSA is open to all Lincoln Law School students and encourages any Lincoln Law School student or alumni interested in Asian-American legal issues to join. For additional information, please add APALSA on TWEN.
Lincoln Law School of Sacramento competed for its second time in the annual Asylum & Refugee Law National Moot Court competition at UC Davis on March 15th and 16th. Working with Zachary Varanini (3L) and Susanne George (4L), we prepared a brief and presented oral arguments against some of the top ABA schools in the nation. We immersed ourselves in a fascinating and complex area of immigration law, involving aspects of administrative and constitutional law.

At issue was a fictional resolution by the Supreme Court of two common issues faced in Asylum adjudication: whether or not a lower appellate court may consider duress and lack of voluntariness to avoid triggering a bar against persecutors, and whether it was erroneous to find that a particular social group, “wealthy landowners,” were persecuted because of their group membership as required by the Immigration and Nationalization Act (INA).

The “persecutor bar” generally prevents those involved in persecuting others from being admitted into the United States as a refugee. Much debate concerns whether a court may consider facts indicating whether their action was of their will or without a real choice. Persecution based on a “particular social group” on the other hand, evolved to consider whether the group considered has an identity based on traits that cannot or should not be required to change. Additional elements are that the proposed group offers an adequate benchmark for determining who the members are and that the group is recognizable as a distinct social group in their society. Lower circuit courts are split on how to handle social “visibility” and whether or not “wealthy landowners” can establish these elements. Proving persecution occurred because of a protected ground or that it was a primary factor is challenging when other motives might have influenced the alleged persecutory acts.

Our fact pattern involved an applicant living through a regime change in his home country, over a widespread platinum mining conflict. The new regime violently targeted dissidents and used forced-labor and coercion for their mining policies. The applicant argued he and his family were targeted as “wealthy landowners”, who lost their land and business and were forced to manage prisons and to design an infrastructure furthering political control of their peers.

Courts generally offer a certain amount of deference to agencies given authority by Congress to interpret the ambiguities in legislation. This is because they tend to have extensive experience to bear, but that deference can be removed or lowered under some circumstances, affording courts more ability to review.

As a member of the team, this has been quite a learning experience. New to this area of the law, this was quite a jump in practicing Professor Colombo’s legal research and moot court principles. Under the scrutiny of my peers, I realized what a challenge this was, especially in organizing all of the material and arguments in a short, coherent manner. Framing the facts and arguments into persuasive analogies required continuous editing and review for a final brief and approach to presenting oral arguments.

In preparation, the team reviewed briefs from other schools and Professor Colombo’s wise instructions from our Legal Research and Moot Court classes came back to mind. Just as attorneys and judges evaluate others by their pleadings, our team judged the competition from the quality of their pleadings. Naturally, some arguments and pleadings were better than others. Although we did not proceed to the next tournament stage our team certainly held up well against seasoned, Ivy league Moot Court teams. We were supportive of each other and had been preparing since December with research efforts and weekly meetings until competition day. Susanne’s prior competition experience and Professor Colombo’s litigation and appellate experience were tremendous help.

Congratulations to Professor Colombo and his team! They competed against sixteen teams from many highly-regarded ABA schools including the University of Michigan, DePaul University, UC Hastings, Pepperdine, Santa Clara, McGeorge, and New York University. Teams were scored on oral advocacy and a written brief. Zachary Varanini ranked 3rd of 37 competitors in oral advocacy scoring a 91 out of 100. He trailed only the first place finisher from the University of Michigan who scored a 91.5 and second place finisher from DePaul University who scored a 91.3. Lincoln’s brief ranked ahead of William and Mary, Western State College of Law, DePaul, Santa Clara, Tuoro, and San Joaquin College of Law.
Imagine living the life of a disabled person. Imagine having to push your wheelchair to the corner store just because you are not able to drive. Then visualize not being able to make it through the doors of the store without some sort of assistance once you finally get there. Imagine not only having to struggle up a steep walkway to enter the store, but once you are inside, not having access to half of the items or even the checkout counter because everything is out of your reach. It is a difficult life that is made worse because the world is not sensitive to the needs of disabled people. Because of these exact situations often taking place, thousands of people protested and took a stand for the passage of Title III of the American Disability Act, which was to guarantee equal treatment for all in regards to public facilities.

The purpose of the American With Disabilities Act (ADA) was to address the issues stated above from occurring over and over again. It aimed to provide those with disabilities access to the same amenities that are available to the general public. As stated by the U.S. Department of Justices Civil Rights Division, “People with disabilities have too often been excluded from everyday activities: shopping at a corner store, going to a neighborhood restaurant or movie with family and friends, or using the swimming pool at a hotel on a family vacation.” These seem like normal mundane tasks to many of us, but for those with disabilities these tasks can become troublesome and even embarrassing when these individuals are not able to be a part of or access these facilities. Scott Johnson, an attorney here in Sacramento, who is also a quadriplegic stated, “Being a quadriplegic, there’s nothing I can do about that... but these businesses that have structural barriers to access, that’s frustrating.” And he is right, business only need to make minor adjustments to their buildings in order to comply with ADA rules.

Unfortunately, making such changes to a business is much more burdensome and expensive than one would imagine. In order to make all the items in a store accessible to a person in a wheelchair, the entire store must be reorganized and often redesigned, which can become an enormous financial burden. In order to comply with ADA laws, often a business must replace the entrance doors to ensure a wheelchair can fit through it, construct a new counter that is shorter in height, install a wheelchair ramp, which can require a significant amount of concrete work, and lastly, ensure that their restrooms will be readily accessible to people with disabilities.

Now imagine a different scenario. Imagine a small burger joint that has been in business for dozens of years. It’s a small mom and pop operation, which is not extremely profitable, but makes the owners enough money to scrape by every month. The business is a landmark of sorts for many local patrons, who regularly come to visit the friendly owners just to chat and grab a bite to eat. Now imagine the burger joint shuts down because it was sued by an ADA lawyer who only went to the business on one occasion, simply to determine if the restaurant was in compliance with ADA laws. This scenario is often a reality for many small businesses. A quadriplegic attorney sued Ford’s Real Hamburgers because he could not access their bathroom in a wheelchair. Ford’s was forced to shut down because no settlement was reached with the attorney, and it was too expensive to bring the 60-year old building up to code. Jill Pollock, the owner of Pony Expresso, a small café, was also forced to close because she could not afford to make the sizable changes to her café’s building in order to comply with ADA laws. The same attorney sued both of these businesses, as well as over 1,000 other businesses in northern California. As stated in “ADA attorney forces out small business Pollock,” by Wendy Schultz, “While the law is designed to give disabled [people] full access to public and private businesses, it has also become a lucrative business for attorneys... [One attorney alone has filed] more than 1,079 ADA lawsuits since 1996.” Although these suits seem justified because they are upholding civil rights of the disabled, critics claim they are a form of legal extortion. Small business owners are forced to comply with ADA rules, come to a settlement with the suing attorney, or fight the case in court, all options being financially burdensome. This often leads the small business owners to close their doors instead.

As explained in the article, “Attorney sues Lodis businesses over disability laws,” business owners are simply handed several pages of ADA law informing them about the act and how to comply with ADA standards; their alternative being sued in court. Even if the small business settles the case, there is still a risk of being sued again for the same violations by a different attorney. Fighting the case in federal court is not a viable option for many because the small business usually cannot afford to pay an attorney to fight the legal battle, which will likely end up costing more than the settlement itself. The Americans with Disabilities Act was enacted to provide the disabled with the same opportunities as the general public, however, small business associations claim this law is being used by attorneys as a form of legal blackmail. ADA laws have received a lot of backlash from business owners, and from regular citizens alike because of some attorneys abusing the law for personal financial gains. As broad as the American Disability Act is, the gravity of businesses being affected by the ADA under Title III of this act requires some evaluation for this is an issue that is still greatly affecting our Sacramento community.
What is DACA?

Have you heard the recent radio ads and testimonies of immigrants being brought to the United States as young children and growing up thinking they are U.S. Citizens? DACA was created for those situations. Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, better known as DACA, was introduced by the Department of Homeland Security, announced by the Obama Administration and enacted on June 15, 2012. If one is undocumented and subject to deportation, the government can defer action to remove undocumented individuals who entered the United States as children. According to the Department of Homeland Security, if DACA is granted one can be allowed to apply for work authorization and be able to defer deportation. To qualify for DACA certain requirements must be met as have been outlined by the Immigration Legal Resource Center and the Department of Homeland Security: One must be under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012, had to enter the United States before the age of 16 and maintained continuous residence in the U.S. from June 15, 2007 through June 15, 2012 with a physical presence in the United States on June 15, 2012. Their entry was one without inspection or lawful immigration status expired as of June 15, 2012. To apply one must currently be in school, graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, obtained a GED certificate, or were honorably discharged from the Armed Forces or Coast Guard. Applicants to DACA cannot have been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, three or more other misdemeanors, and do not pose a threat to national security or public safety.

What forms must be completed to apply for DACA if the above requirements are met?

2. Obtain supporting documents demonstrating each of the eligibility requirements;
3. Obtain two identical passport-style photographs;
4. Make a fee payment of $465, which cannot be waived;
5. G-1145 (optional)
All forms can be downloaded at: www.uscis.gov/forms.

What are the benefits of applying for DACA?

The Legal Resource Center has outlined benefits from DACA including protection from deportation for two years, receipt of a work authorization document, and a social security number. One may also request consideration for a two-year extension of deferred action as long as one is under the age of 31 on June 15, 2012. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has reported that in the 2012 fiscal year there were 152,420 requests followed by 427,601 requests in the 2013 fiscal year, and to date in fiscal year 2014 there have been 30,673 for a total of 610,694 requests. The cumulative requests that have been thus far processed resulted in 521,815 cases approved with 15,968 denials.

If one has questions about DACA whom can they contact?

Resources that can be utilized consist of calling the National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833. Licensed attorneys in California who give immigration services can be accessed through the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) and through the American Bar Association. To research other immigrant policy issues affecting California’s immigrant population information can be obtained from the California Immigrant Policy Center at caimmigrant.org.
A COMPARISON OF BAR PREPARATION COURSES

By James Pearson and Jennifer Van  |  Class of 2017

After graduating from law school, your focus will no doubt shift to preparing for and passing the California State Bar examination. Due to the fact that there are thirteen different subject matters tested, it is nearly impossible to remember everything you learned in law school by the time you graduate. For this reason, there are a number of companies that have developed bar preparation courses to help guide you in your preparation. These are typically three to five month courses that systematically take you through a refresher of what you spent the last four years studying. There are many courses to choose from, but we have chosen to compare the five most popular companies. For more detailed information on each course, the website for each company is listed below as well as contact information for the respective representative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KAPLAN</th>
<th>THEMIS</th>
<th>CAL BAR</th>
<th>BARBRI</th>
<th>FLEMINGS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost at the Time of Publication</strong></td>
<td>Live Streaming: $4,285</td>
<td>$1,595</td>
<td>$4,350</td>
<td>Long Term class: $3,195</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On Site: $4,285</td>
<td>Themis will honor any payment up to $250 that has been made to another bar review company</td>
<td></td>
<td>Short Term class: $2,995</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On Demand: $3,965</td>
<td>Another bar review company</td>
<td></td>
<td>Payment plan available</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation Method</strong></td>
<td>On-Demand (online), Live Streaming (In classroom), On-Site (classes in Sacramento)</td>
<td>Flex Study—course material available to students at any time Directed Study—creates a to-do list every day</td>
<td>Mentoring process available in both a class setting and individual one/one component.</td>
<td>Live classes at McGeorge, or online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time Commitment</strong></td>
<td>May 28th - Exam (July 29-31) 6 days of online only pre-work must be completed by May 28th, 8 weeks long</td>
<td>Varies, online access anytime</td>
<td>Varies, some start bar prep years before they take the bar</td>
<td>Live classes in Orange County or online</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deadline</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>No deadline, but no access until paid in full</td>
<td>Registration is ongoing</td>
<td>May 15 recommended, but can enroll as late as June 15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Law School Success</strong></td>
<td>1L lectures, practice questions, outlines Upper Level Review lectures, flashcards, practice essays, and outlines MPRE prep included</td>
<td>Free assistance to all students from 1L to graduation “Law School Essentials” contains commercial outlines, online lectures and practice essays as well as a free MPRE course</td>
<td>Integral part of the program is working to reinforce through law school the same test-taking skills that will produce success on the statewide Bar Exam</td>
<td>BARBRI uses a rigorous weekly study regimen with extensive hand graded essay feedback. For the MBE Barbri uses AMP, a Nobel Prize winning technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuition Assistance</strong></td>
<td>$500 rebate available. Tuition assistance available. No-interest payment plans</td>
<td>$150 discount if paid in full by April 1st. Discounts to students in student organizations (Delta Theta Phi, BLSA, APALSA, military spouses) may take $100 off their course</td>
<td>Discount based on volunteer work. The student may be or have been involved with over the years (a “Pay-it-forward” policy)</td>
<td>None, but the cost of the course may be significantly reduced if student enrolls in course years in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact Person</strong></td>
<td>Kelly Phillipson</td>
<td>Donovan Hunter</td>
<td>Paul Pfau</td>
<td>Alicia Luchetti at <a href="mailto:Alicia.luchetti@barbri.com">Alicia.luchetti@barbri.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Kelly.philippson@kaplan.com">Kelly.philippson@kaplan.com</a></td>
<td>Director of CA/OR</td>
<td><a href="mailto:arcadiasteno@yahoo.com">arcadiasteno@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(415) 314-3702</td>
<td><a href="mailto:donovan.hunter@themisbar.com">donovan.hunter@themisbar.com</a></td>
<td>(800) 783-6168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Website</strong></td>
<td>kaptest.com</td>
<td>themisbar.com</td>
<td>cbtronline.com</td>
<td>Barbri.com</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Refund policy</strong></td>
<td>Must cancel within 48 hours of enrollment to receive refund</td>
<td>Partial refund within five days of registration</td>
<td>Refund under a “pro-rata” approach based on class attendance, materials, etc.</td>
<td>No refunds after course materials received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guarantee</strong></td>
<td>Pass bar or free repeat</td>
<td>Free repeat for the next administration of the exam if a student completes 75% or more of the course and does not pass the exam</td>
<td>There is a retake fee, although it is minimal</td>
<td>Pass bar or free repeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May give discount to repeat course</td>
</tr>
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THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERNSHIPS

By Jennifer Rivers | Class of 2014

When we first started law school, most of us did not yet know what we wanted to do after graduation. During our first couple of years, our time and thoughts were spent on studying, exams, and just staying above water. This is, of course, to be expected. With third year of law school, however, a new idea should begin creeping into your mind: What do I want to do with this education and how do I get there? If you think that passing classes and the bar exam is sufficient to achieve whatever legal aspirations you may have, brace yourself—you are wrong. It is a competitive world out there. You are competing with thousands of other graduates who also passed the bar exam and may come from big-name schools. Earning good grades, scholarships, and awards are all helpful, but arguably the best way to secure future success is to get experience in the field. How do I get experience if I am not yet an attorney, you ask? Simple: Participate in an internship.

I began interning with the Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office in January of 2013, halfway through my third year of law school. I will begin another internship with the Nevada County District Attorney’s Office in February of this year. The wealth of experience I have gained as an intern is priceless. I have been introduced to real-world lawyerly work. I have argued preliminary hearings and motions to suppress evidence before a judge. I have written juvenile competency briefs and oppositions to appellate briefs. I have learned how to prepare offers, and speak on the record in open court. I am talking about real life cases here! Nothing compares to the feeling that my work will influence the outcome of a case. It is exhilarating and, more importantly, I compare to the feeling that my work will influence the open court. I am talking about real life cases here! Nothing learned how to prepare offers, and speak on the record in competency briefs and oppositions to appellate briefs. I have worked materializes into what you are really after: a job. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon to be an unemployed law school graduate start thinking outside the box now. The first thing to realize is that there are plenty of internships that only require a minimum of one day per week per semester. If you can financially afford to be off one day a week, ask your employer if they are willing to work with you and adjust your schedule. My job did not have part-time positions available, but I asked anyway and one was created for me. If you cannot afford to forgo a day of pay, you may be able to substitute annual leave or vacation time to meet the one day requirement. Even this amount of time can offer you experience to boost your resume and help you stand out when it comes time to find a job.

Aside from learning what you can do, an internship offers you the invaluable experience of figuring out, early on, what you do not want to do. It is far better to figure that out now, while you are still in school, than later, when you are anxious to get your career off the ground. In speaking to several attorneys over the years, I have learned an important lesson: without a plan, it becomes easy to get pigeonholed into an area of law right out the gate. Attorneys tend to specialize and your very first job as a lawyer may be what determines the direction the rest of your career is going to take. For this reason, you should try to find out what area of law you want to practice as soon as possible. Internships offer you the insight needed to assist you in this decision. I suggest you start looking into an internship as soon as possible and if you find that you do not like what you are doing you can look for something that may interest you more.

Finding a place to intern is easier than you might think. A lot of private firms and governmental organizations offer them. If you are interested in working for a company, but you are unsure if they offer internship opportunities for law students, reach out and ask them. Also, if you enjoy what you currently do, ask your employer if they have legal internship positions available. You never know what they might say and it does not hurt to ask.

As I said, finding a place to intern is easier than you think. The harder part is finding the time. Most Lincoln students have full-time jobs that do not offer part-time positions or, if they do, you cannot take advantage of them because you have families to support. Do not give up. Remember, this is an important step in seeing that all of your hard work materializes into what you are really after: a job. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon to be an unemployed law school graduate start thinking outside the box now. The first thing to realize is that there are plenty of internships that only require a minimum of one day per week per semester. If you can financially afford to be off one day a week, ask your employer if they are willing to work with you and adjust your schedule. My job did not have part-time positions available, but I asked anyway and one was created for me. If you cannot afford to forgo a day of pay, you may be able to substitute annual leave or vacation time to meet the one day requirement. Even this amount of time can offer you experience to boost your resume and help you stand out when it comes time to find a job.

I wish you luck in your search for an internship! To help you get started, below is a list of agencies that offer legal internships. Realize there are many more out there—this is just a sampling.

Sacramento County District Attorney
sacda.org/office/Employment/interns.php
Sacramento County Public Defender
publicdefender.saccounty.net/Pages/EmploymentOpportunities.aspx
Solano County District Attorney
co.solano.ca.us/depts/da/volunteer_program/default.asp
Solano County Public Defender
solancoounty.com/depts/pubdefender/internship/default.asp
Yolo County District Attorney
yolocounty.org/Index.aspx?page=745
Yolo County Public Defender
yolocounty.org/Index.aspx?page=2036
California Attorney General’s Office
oag.ca.gov/careers/students
US Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of California
justice.gov/usao/cae/careers.html
Federal Public Defender’s Office, Eastern District of California
cae.fpd.org/employment.htm
The graduating class of 2014 selected Robert Gold, professor of Legal Skills and Criminal Law, to receive the coveted Lincoln Law School Professor of the Year Award. This is an honor that Professor Gold is proud to accept, considering the 2014 class was the first year he taught Criminal Law.

Professor Gold attended UC Davis, and is a Lincoln Law School graduate (Class of 1986). He started his career at the Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office after passing the Bar exam, and has advanced through the ranks as a prosecutor. He is currently the Supervisor of the Adult Sexual Assault Prosecution unit (ASAP), which is tasked with prosecuting suspects charged with assaulting victims 14 years of age and older.

He enjoys working as a DA because the position allows him the freedom to always do the right thing, for the right reasons. As a prosecutor, “you are doing something you believe in. It’s not always easy because there is a lot of pain and misery with people going to prison, but there is a sense of satisfaction that you did the right thing. If I could play first baseman for the Giants I’d rather play first base, but if I have to be a lawyer, this is the job for me.”

Professor Gold decided to attend Lincoln Law School to honor his father, who had passed away before he began his study of law. His father had aspirations of becoming a lawyer as well, but enlisted in the military at a young age, and received medical training instead. During a shopping trip at Safeway, Professor Gold’s wife encouraged him to visit Lincoln Law School.

Teaching also came naturally for Professor Gold. His father was a professor, and both his mother and his wife were teachers. He became a professor because he enjoys the law and wanted to stay close to Lincoln. “I feel very blessed by Lincoln because it gave me an opportunity, and I wanted to give something back to the school.” Although grading is not his favorite part about teaching, Professor Gold takes pride in helping students achieve their dreams, and help the next generation of attorneys.

His passion for helping students realize their full potential is evident when talking about his goal in writing exam questions:

“The goal is to make it challenging enough to reward the students who worked the hardest, know the law, practiced a lot of exams, and can issue spot. I think they need to be rewarded to be distinguished from the students who didn’t prepare enough. You don’t want to make it too hard, but you can’t make it so easy that everyone gets through, because I’m preparing you for the Bar exam. I don’t want to give you a false sense that you are okay because you passed this one test. In reality, you’re in for a long way ahead, and you still have to work hard. In the end, it doesn’t do you justice to pass law school, but not be able to pass the bar.”

As a student at Lincoln Law School, Professor Gold experienced the challenge of encountering difficult exams firsthand. But it was this experience that helped him gain respect and appreciation for the hard work and dedication needed to succeed.

“My most challenging professor, but the one I respected the most, was Judge Peterson, who taught Evidence. He had the hardest tests, and hardly ever gave As. I felt that if I could do well in his class, I have earned it. Ironically, the year I took the Bar, the first question was an evidence question and I looked at it and said ‘thank you, Professor Peterson’ because I felt really prepared for it. I want to make it so my students can say ‘that felt good, I earned that.’”

Studying law is not just about proving that you can do it, says professor Gold, it’s about whether or not you want to dedicate your life to it. His advice for first year students is to be fully committed to the study of law.

“Anyone who is accepted into Lincoln Law School is capable of passing law school. The real challenge is ‘are you going to commit to this profession, and honor this profession with your blood, sweat, and tears?’ Like being in the military or being a doctor or an officer, you are dealing with people’s lives and they are depending on you to solve very serious problems in their lives. If you are not fully committed, you are not doing it justice.”

He applauds the Class of 2014 for the hard work they already completed to be eligible to graduate. But he cautions that graduates must put themselves in the best position in order to pass the Bar the first time. “Whatever it takes, if it means being selfish, or depending on others during this time, do it.”

After the smoke clears, Bar results are in, and law practice becomes a reality, professor Gold’s advice is to make a difference in people’s life. “A lawyer has a genuine opportunity to transform a client’s life by achieving a good result for them. When you’re able to do that based on your hard work your clients will be forever indebted to you. So work hard and make a difference in your client’s lives.”

Finally, to bring closure to a long debated topic among class of 2014 students still haunted by the mysterious mongoose who appeared in the final exam, Professor Gold offers some insight: “The mongoose was intended as an animal, with analysis for larceny with the wild animal rule. But as long as students did a good kidnapping analysis, I was okay with that.”

Congratulations to Robert Gold, Professor of the Year!
I had the distinct honor to interview Professor Steve Grippi, Lincoln Law School 2014 Alumnus of the Year.

Professor Grippi entered the legal field by happenstance. After graduating from Sacramento State University with a degree in Environmental Science Biology, he worked for the Department of Water Resources and at the Graduate as a bartender. Remembering an Environmental Law class he had taken and found interesting, he decided to become a lawyer.

After completing the LSAT, he did not know what school to attend. All he knew was that he wanted to attend a school with an evening program. A friend’s father, who was at the time with the University of California Regents and later became a Dean, adamantly recommended Lincoln Law School of Sacramento telling him that he would not be sorry. He signed up and found that once he started, it was a “welcoming, let’s do this together” kind of school.

The education he received at Lincoln prepared Professor Grippi to be an attorney better than most other schools could have. He had great professors who not only knew the subject they were teaching, but also taught what the students needed to know once they left law school. Because he had Judge Peterson as his Evidence professor, he knew evidence better than most judges and people who had been practicing for years. His superior education became very clear to him, and his confidence increased when, during his bar preparation classes, he overheard two graduates from UC Davis talking about being scared to have a Wills, Trusts or Community Property question on the bar because they had not taken those courses. Of course, he had. His Lincoln Law School education formed a foundation for later success.

After he graduated from Lincoln and passed the bar, he did not immediately go to work at the District Attorney’s office. Although he initially enjoyed environmental law, he found himself working for Victor Bertolani, one of the founders of Lincoln Law School, in his personal injury law firm. Despite the fact that he really enjoyed that job, there was not enough work to keep him on full time. Lincoln Law School classmate Professor Robert Gold was working at the District Attorney’s Office and knew they were looking for a new lawyer. He recommended Professor Grippi to the hiring attorney and based solely upon that recommendation, he was hired over the phone! Professor Grippi emphasized that the hiring process is so very different now and he probably would not have been hired if the environment were the same then as it is now.

Professor Grippi is very grateful for finding his calling at the District Attorney’s Office. In 2002, he was named Sacramento County Prosecutor of the Year, which reflects his love for the job. He has handled some of the most troubling homicide cases with the utmost attention to the law and yet with a seemingly overwhelming concern for the victims. In 2013 he was appointed to the position of Chief Deputy District Attorney.

Professor Grippi decided to teach at Lincoln Law School so he could have an impact on his students like his professors had on him. Professors Victor Bertolani, Judge Peterson and Rick Frank, among others, “knew their stuff,” and seemed to have it all together. Once he began teaching at Lincoln it became about not only giving back, but about remaining a part of the school. Professor Grippi currently teaches Introduction to Law and has been a member of the faculty since 1987.

One of his pet peeves is when students are not prepared for class. He does, however, understand that students may not always have time to prepare for class due to their jobs or personal responsibilities. He advocates, “It is all a balancing act." Professor Grippi advises law students to have a plan, organize one’s studying and do more than just try to fit the studying into whatever time may present itself. Through scheduled study times, one benefits by having time to spend with family and friends. Ultimately, Professor Grippi believes students should “separate your law studies from the rest of your life.” Further, he believes that some people just “kind of study” but that in order to make it through law school, “you really have to work hard.”

Professor Grippi continues to have an impact on students after they graduate. He advises new lawyers to be open to different things. Being open to different career options, each new lawyer can find something he loves and as they say “never work a day in your life.” According to Professor Grippi, “if you love something, you will work at it and get better at it!” Also be open to surprises, he said, for even he had no idea that he would ever be in the District Attorney’s Office – even a month before he was hired!

Professor Grippi feels very fortunate and thankful for Lincoln Law School. He attributes his success to his education at Lincoln Law School and the influence of several people including Rob Gold, Victor Bertolani and the Smolich family. He believes he would not have really developed the skills necessary for his current position if he did not have the atmosphere that exists at the school. “It was perfect for me and I am really grateful,” he said. When asked about how he felt on being named Alumnus of the Year, Professor Grippi responded that he was very surprised. In fact, he was “completely blown away” and he is honored and humbled by the recognition.
Following nearly 36 years in the Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office, the last 20 years as the District Attorney, Jan Scully is now heading toward retirement. Before she returns to private life, Ms. Scully has a special function to attend as the commencement speaker for the Lincoln Law School Class of 2014.

A Lincoln Law School graduate (Class of 1978), Ms. Scully first caught legal fever while taking a Constitutional Law class taught by Professor William Dillon at California State University, Sacramento. “Professor Dillon gave us an assignment to write our own legal opinion and it was through the research and writing of this opinion, that I felt I wanted to pursue a legal career.” Shortly after graduating from CSUS she decided to head to Lincoln Law School. Initially Dean Victor Bertolani (1969 to 1985) felt that she was possibly too young and naïve for the Lincoln Law School environment as the student body was older with more life experience, but she persisted and convinced him simply saying “I can do this.” By her third year she was elected student body president and was instrumental in the development of the Voir Dire publication and also selected its first editor.

Like many Lincoln students, Ms. Scully worked full time while attending law school. She worked at CalTrans and felt that since they had a large legal department, she would most likely move in that direction. However, she was able to get an up close and personal view of the Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office by way of an internship at the firm where Lincoln Law School’s Evidence professor Patrick McCarthy was practicing. Ms. Scully initially felt drawn to the defense side of the courtroom during her internship, but had an epiphany when it seemed to her that everyone in the courtroom worked primarily to protect the rights of the accused but only the prosecutor spoke for the victim.

After graduating from Lincoln Law School and passing the bar exam, she interviewed with the newly-elected District Attorney Herb Jackson and later accepted a position as a deputy district attorney. She found that victim advocacy appealed to her and from then on the die had been cast for Ms. Scully and she found a passion for criminal law as she embarked on her career as a prosecutor and advocate for the victims.

One of the things she loves most about the law is that it is not black and white and that there is not always a correct answer. The strong morality and high ethical standards demanded by the public for attorneys who work within the District Attorney’s Office also drew her in. In her career she has had many moments of great satisfaction for doing the right things for the right reasons, but she is proudest of the moment the people of Sacramento County put their faith in her and elected her as District Attorney in November, 1994. It is also not lost on her that with each successive re-election (this is her fifth and last term) that the people continued to place their trust in her and her administration.

The District Attorney’s Office is quite different today than it was when Ms. Scully first began her legal career nearly 36 years ago. In 1979, she was one of only eight women in an office of 80 prosecutors. Today’s Office is more gender balanced, closer to 50/50. It is also better balanced both ethnically and culturally which she believes provides for better decisions and more sharing of ideas.
This was achieved through a very competitive merit based process. She is very proud of today’s office. She has tried to develop the best people by utilizing the right kind of leadership and believes that she has accomplished that goal and now it is time to move on to new challenges.

As Ms. Scully contemplates leaving the DA’s Office, primarily to spend more time with her family and on other personal matters, she reflected upon some of the problems faced today by Sacramento County. Two of the most prevalent issues are gang activity and domestic violence. However, she stresses that Sacramento County isn’t the only place facing these challenges. Education of the citizenry can help build support in the community and to that end she has helped foster education through the Citizens Academy which, since its inception in 2002, has graduated more than 900 students. The Citizens Academy provides a 10 week overview of the core elements of the criminal justice system including the roles of the law enforcement, district attorney, and judiciary.

Another area that Ms. Scully will be investing a considerable amount of her newly gained personal time in is the new Regional Family Justice Center (www.hopethriveshere.org) which is scheduled to open soon. Building upon the success of other such facilities, she passionately believes that this facility will become a hybrid model for victims of domestic violence. It will be a comprehensive center that will assist victims of domestic violence with almost any support service they may require during recovery. Some of these services are Legal Services - criminal, civil, immigration, stalking support and forensic services; Housing – emergency shelters, hotel vouchers, transitional and long term solutions; Medical/Mental Health - basic medical evaluations, peer support, mentoring, and group therapy. Ms. Scully firmly believes that the RFJC will help break the cycle of violence in the home, making Sacramento safer for everyone.

Her advice to Lincoln Law School students is to work hard, and although she realizes that law school is a huge sacrifice, students must also work hard to pursue extracurricular activities. "It’s no longer good enough to graduate and just have a law degree. You need to bring more to be the most competitive candidate these days.” This means that law students must search out as many internships as they can handle because “…today’s firms and businesses are looking for the most competitive candidates and those are the ones who have more experience and are more capable.” Ms. Scully also believes it may help shape the kind of law one chooses to practice once becoming lawyer. For instance, an internship at the DA Office gives one an opportunity to get into a courtroom sooner than most. “We get a sense of you and you get a sense of whether you like the courtroom.” Being a trial lawyer is a fast paced environment and brings with it high pressure. An internship can be a tool to help a law student discover his or her true passion.

Lincoln Law School is proud to have Sacramento County’s District Attorney Jan Scully as the 2014 commencement speaker. We would like to congratulate Ms. Scully on her achievements, thank her for her contributions to the school and to the community, and wish her well on her retirement.
Completing all these years of law school will inevitably turn in to the most difficult academic venture any of us have ever undertaken. What is the key to success? How do you tap in to that part of your brain that once unlocked, everything then ‘clicks’ and you just get it? Throughout my time here I’ve found myself being asked by several people, “How do you do it? How do you make sense of what we’re being taught in law school so quickly?” There are many things that have helped me, but there is one in particular that I don’t believe many people would have ever considered. If you are not familiar with the musical stylings of The Black Dahlia Murder, do yourself a favor and go on the internet and listen to the song, “Hymn for the Wretched”. Done? Now let’s talk about the four minutes and nineteen seconds of pure madness you just listened to, and how for me it made everything just ‘click’.

At your first listen, it probably sounds like a pure cacophony of noise, as much indecipherable as it is intolerable. For many students, myself included when I first began law school here at Lincoln, that is how the law came across to me. When UCC 2-207 was first explained, and I saw on paper how gargantuan a rule of law it was, I literally thought to myself, “Can I really do this?” And that is where I began to see that like music, the law has all these components to it, and once you start to put the puzzle together and understand each piece you can put everything together into an understandable, digestible, and cohesive whole.

Even though this piece of music, by this unbelievably deranged sounding band, sounds the way it does, like rules of law it has an incredibly key characteristic. That important characteristic is structure. There is a discernable introduction, verse, chorus, bridge, interludes, and an ending. I’m sure this may be hard for you to believe but that song you just listened to does have structure to it and it is not simply four minutes of constant, insufferable noise. For me, the way I would structure rules of law would be paramount to the way in which I learned it, and contributed greatly to the speed at which I would become fluent in its meaning and applicability. Understanding why and how a rule is formed in the way it is, helps in putting it in a light much easier to comprehend. Over time after many listens to the song, and others similar to it, you become more and more familiar with the structure and the way that the song progresses. Learning law is exactly the same. In my experience there are no geniuses or savants that get everything the first time around. It requires repetition to acquire familiarity, and only when you become familiar with how rules tend to be structured and how their logic progresses, will you be able to wrap your head around the concepts and be able to apply them properly.

The actual music in this song: the guitars, bass, and drums, likely only sound pleasing to very few ears. But that is very much how the law can be at times as well. When was the last time you were excited about the terminology of warranties or the rule against perpetuities? The music created by the instruments is what gives substance to the structure of the song, and is what I liken to the words and phrases that constitute the rules of law. As any law student can attest at times that material can be difficult to grasp, and not everybody enjoys it, much like metal music! In terms of the law it is those words and phrases, and the meaning behind them that creates the legal authority of those rules. When the music (or law) combines with the imposed structure, the subject matter to me then starts to become clearer and much easier to understand. The flow of how the music goes from section to section throughout the song is not unlike how you would approach issues that would arise in a factual situation and flow through the applicable law.

Lastly and most importantly you are probably thinking, “Yeah, the song has structure, and obviously it has music, but what is going on with that guy’s voice? Are those even words?” And here is where I think most law students run into issues with the application of the law. The application of the law to facts can lead to a lot of what is begrudgingly called, the “grey area”. That vast, middling, intellectual wasteland where theories of the case are sent to die and your mind winds up in a state of indecisive purgatory. Facts are simply flying off the page in to your face, literally screaming at you, and you have to determine do these facts place the situation in this legal category or another? Those grey and difficult to define areas when facts applied to the law have an opportunity to go either way, for or against a party in the dispute, tend to be the bane of our existence because most everyone always wants a definite answer. It is up to us as law students to analyze those facts and draw that line and say “it is this because of that”. So what is the singer saying throughout this song? I honestly haven’t the slightest clue…and that is how the application of the law can be. It is grey and sometimes you have no idea what something will actually materialize in to. As a law student the burden is always upon us to show that we can see and appreciate all the areas within that grey, and make the legal arguments for and against a case, concluding which one we think is the stronger argument and why. I’d suppose this gets easier when out in actual practice, since it is our ethical duty to argue in favor of our client. For now though, much of it tends to come off like the incomprehensible lyrical styling of a possessed individual.

This all may sound utterly ridiculous to you and you’re likely thinking, “Yeah it was satanic sounding heavy metal music that made it click, not the hours of reading cases, writing and studying outlines, and writing practice exams…”. It’s not to say that those other things aren’t all equally important to being a successful student, which hopefully also translates into being a successful attorney. The fact of the matter is though, that for this to become more than just a “job” and for you to dig your teeth in to this vast amount of legal knowledge, you need to find your ‘metal’. I found mine, and it’s rocked me all the way to graduation. Find yours, and soon enough all this time in law school will be a foregone event, and you’ll simply be rocking out to the tune of being an attorney.
Everybody knows the disadvantages of law school: the hard work and time commitment. Four years is quite a while, especially when there are only so many good years left before the nursing home beckons. However, there are substantial rewards to be had, especially that you will be smarter than all or most all of your friends (if that is not the case already). But how does one get through it successfully, perhaps even overachieving in the process? The big things are obvious: there really is no “secret” to being a good student, other than studying a lot and developing some analytical skills beforehand. The real trick is psychological - you have to show that “law stuff” that there is nothing it can do that you will let get to you. The law is similar to some kind of dark energy that could potentially ruin you if you don’t get out in front of it. You never, ever want to descend to the point where you are having erotic dreams about Justice Ginsburg or thinking about character evidence at your grandfather’s funeral. The following is a random sample of some of the things I did in order to achieve maximum ironic detachment while learning the law. Note that this may not work for you, especially during bar preparation.

First Priority – Attend Lincoln Law School. Yes, the building architecture and design are “interesting,” and you will never, ever be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. However, it is almost impossible to justify spending your life savings or more to go somewhere and learn the same things you can learn just as well here from a more than competent faculty. “The law” might not know where to find you because (1) you are in Sacramento, (2) you are a part-time student, and (3) you followed the rest of this list.

Parking - Everyone knows that Lincoln’s parking lot is woefully inadequate. It would be fine if there were 10 students at the school, but there are over 200. Also, there are always vague threats about somebody towling you if you park in the wrong spot. Parking can be a nightmare in other venues as well. The law is just waiting for you to screw this up. Find good, solid parking places that you can return to regularly without incident, at school, work and elsewhere. Once you have parking figured out, negotiating the relationship between the Establishment Clause and free expression won’t get you down.

Sitting - Typically, after the first couple of classes in a particular classroom, everybody picks their seat and sticks with it. The question is, where to sit? I say keep it all up in the back. The stereotype is that troublemakers or really dumb people sit in the back. However, while this may be true in many cases, why not be an exception? The law will assume you are an imbecile and then you can move in for the kill. As a bonus, you can lean back in your chair, nobody can see your computer screen, and you have a good view of everyone. Proper sitting technique is also crucial at home, work, the library, and elsewhere and is a prerequisite to comprehending a “fee simple subject to an executory limitation.”

Working/Living – These are big barriers to conquering the law. The law thinks you will fail because it assumes that it is impossible to work and go to school simultaneously, while also dealing with whatever else you have going on. However, the law doesn’t realize that average people spend most of their time Facebooking and staring off into space, and are not actually “too busy” to do anything. It turns out that when you discipline yourself you can go to school, work, and still watch all those TV shows on Netflix if you want. Just pick the activities you want to stick with and discard everything else, particularly things that are challenging. If you try to learn guitar or Portuguese along with law, the law will devour you.

Reading - You can’t read anything but casebooks and rules and expect to stay on top of your game. You have to diversify to keep your mind sharp. Most justices and judges just repeat the same words and phrases over and over, things that don’t make any sense like “bright-line rules,” “piercing the corporate veil,” and “substantive due process.” The law designs these things to make your head explode. You have to mix it up with some other reading that is more easily comprehensible, so that you can prevent law stuff from taking up all the intellectual space in your brain and eventually pulling you under. Make the law think that it’s just another thing you’re reading for the time being.

Music – Here is a vastly underrated strategy for attacking the law. Studying while listening to music increases informational retention. Not only that, but you can easily fool the law into thinking that you aren’t really that worried about it, because you’re doing something else. The best kind of music to listen to while studying does not have lyrics. If you are trying to memorize the rules for res judicata and collateral estoppel, you can’t have someone speaking or rapping in your ear. So go with something wordless or unintelligible, like classical, electronic dance music, ambient nature sounds, Asian death metal, et cetera. Rule 10B-5 goes down much easier with musical accompaniment.

So there it is. Following these simple guidelines is a ticket to spending thousands of hours studying while maintaining your sanity. The next thing you know you will graduate, pass the bar, and become a lawyer, thus beginning the battle all over again.
Megan Allred

I would be lying if I said there weren’t numerous times I thought I’d never make it through law school but here I am. I don’t owe any of my success to my own determination, discipline, confidence or study methods, but instead I owe them to God, my family and friends. Without the support network I had to keep me accountable, going to class, and most importantly, to love and support me in being a parent, I would have failed after day one.

To Andrea- Si Sé Pudo!! We may have encountered obstacles, most self-imposed, at every turn, but it made for a hilarious and successful time here. To my sweet Natalie thank you for being my daily motivation to get this done and over with, I love you more than life.

Neil Amos

Dean’s List: 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, Moot Court: Best Brief

Thank you to the school and the professors for providing highly effective yet inexpensive instruction, and to Kyle Monson for his prodigious outlining ability. I apologize to anyone in my life who was offended over the last four years when I was thinking about rules rather than paying attention to them.

Given the looming bar exam, I don’t want to engage in too much self-congratulation. However, I commend the dedicated and hard-working class of 2014 and wish everyone success in their future endeavors.

James-Phillip Van Maren Anderson

Perfect Attendance

“Going to Law School doesn’t make you a law student, it’s the time you put in that makes you a law student”. This was said to us in pre first year and stuck with me all the way. It always reminded me that it was the work I did outside of class that would make or break me. Thank you to my family, friends and girlfriend who supported me through my long hours of studying but more so dealing with my incredible moodiness during exam times. Law School is one incredible journey and I am so thankful I made it through and even more thankful it is over!

Janine Marie Baker

Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Member, Superior Court Judge Mentorship Program: 2013-14

To Adam, my husband, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for being my number one fan, my best friend, for standing by my side and waiting up for me to get home from class. You gave me the strength to continue when I wanted nothing more than to quit. I know the last four years haven’t been easy and I missed out on a lot, but thank you for enduring this with me. This is not just mine, it belongs to you as well. I love you.

To Samantha, Rebecca, and Melissa, my dear friends. The last four years have been bearable because of you. Thank you for helping me maintain my sanity, for all of the laughs, smiles, “Starbucks” cups, running group text messages, girl’s nights, study sessions just minutes before an exam, and, of course, extended class breaks at Raven. Words cannot express how grateful I am to have you all in my life. You unfailingly gave me encouragement and support when I needed it the most.

To the Class of 2014, thank you all for the memories! I wish you all the best and good luck on the Bar!
Shane P. Bradley

Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Dean (2011-12), Vice-Dean (2012-13), Clerk of the Exchequer (2013-14), Dean’s List: 2010-11,
Faculty Achievement Award: Legal Skills and Agency

“The elevator to success is out of order. You’ll have to use the stairs…one step at a time.” –Joe Girard

I would not be the man I am today without the friendship, patience, love and support of God, my lovely wife Alanna, my son Haydn, Mom and Dad, my little brother Seth who convinced me to go for it, with whom I have both suffered and celebrated, and the rest of you that have made this journey with me. Thanks to all who believed and helped me achieve this triumph so that I may open the door to more opportunity to pay it back in kind.

Seth R. Bradley

Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Member

Tia: I would like to thank you for supporting me throughout this hard long process. I truly could not have done it without you and you are the most amazing wife anyone could hope for. I love you so much. This degree is as much yours as it is mine.

To Ryan, Violet, and Alice: I want to thank you three for being the best distraction ever from the daily drag of work and school. You three were my true motivation to graduate. I love you all.

Mom and Dad: Where would I be without your love and support? Dad, you made this journey possible and I can never repay you. Mom, without your help with the kids and your daily motivational support and love, I would probably have skipped all my classes. You both have made me the man I am today. Thank you.

Shane: Well big bro, we made it! I’m blessed that you came on this journey with me and I look forward to many years of continuing to work and learn with you.

Chee Chang

It was a long four years, but worth it. Thanks to my family who encouraged and supported me.

Good luck to all my classmates!

Melissa L. Chaquica

Faculty Achievement Award: Introduction to Law and Legal Skills, Toaster Trials: Most Persuasive and Most Entertaining, Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Member

It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are. – e.e. cummings

Four years later, and we’re still standing! I wish the Class of 2014 my most heartfelt congratulations. It’s been a wild ride, and I’m so happy to have shared it with you. I also can’t thank Lincoln Law School enough for giving me the opportunity to better myself, and for providing me with such an invaluable education.

I am forever grateful to my amazing parents and husband, who have seen me at my best (and worst) throughout law school. Because of their love, encouragement, and unwavering support, this dream became a reality. You put your own lives on hold so that I could live mine, and I am so incredibly thankful for everything you’ve done. And to my two “babies,” Jake and Natalie, who have grown so much since my first night at Lincoln, you are my shining stars. Thank you for your patience, understanding, and wonderful senses of humor. I love you so much.

Rebeca C. Christianson

Toaster Trials: Most Lucid

What a ride it has been. This whole experience has been an incredible journey and one that I would have never completed without my family. I want to give special thanks to my parents. Thank you so much for the incalculable amount of support you provided to me throughout law school and especially for “puppet duty!” Also, I want to thank my husband. I am so grateful to have been able to share this experience with you. Congratulations to everyone!
Kimberly Shannon Clyma

“All The Woulda-Coulda-Shouldas
Layin’ In The Sun,
Talkin’ Bout The Things
They Woulda-Coulda-Shoulda Done…
But All Those Woulda-Coulda-Shouldas
All Ran Away And Hid
From One Little Did.”
- Shel Silverstein

We did it!

I want to thank my family for, well, everything. I can only begin to express my gratitude for your support and encouragement. I’d particularly like to thank each of you for your patience and understanding of my preexam “I haven’t studied enough” jitters. Turns out you were right (gasp!), I did in fact know something and somehow managed to pass all those exams.

Garin, we did it! What an eventful five years! I couldn’t have asked for a better partner in crime to go through this with. I love you. Mom and Dad, thank you for your never ending encouragement, support, and patience. You instilled in me my entire life that I could be anything that I wanted and always pushed me to be better - it’s starting to pay off. I love you both. Clymas, I am so happy to become a part of your family, thank you for the love and encouragement.

Samantha Rene Cypret


Mom & Dad: “I want to thank my parents for somehow raising me to have confidence that is disproportionate with my looks and abilities. Well done, that is what all parents should do.” – Tina Fey

Thank you just doesn’t seem like enough for everything you have done for me. Every success I have in my life is yours as well because I would not be here today without your constant love and support. I know that I will never be able to repay you for everything you have done for me but I look forward to being able to try. I am truly honored to be your daughter.

Curtis: “A guy and a girl can be just friends, but at one point or another, they will fall in love with each other...maybe temporarily, maybe at the wrong time, maybe too late, or maybe forever.” - Dave Matthews

Thank you for taking this journey with me. I could not have made it through law school without you. I am so lucky to have you by my side. Thank you for always reminding me that you’ll still love me even if I flunk out of law school... good news, I didn’t! Loves you!

Jamine, Rebecca, and Melissa: “Honey, tact is for people who aren’t witty enough to be sarcastic.” – Karen Walker

I am so lucky to have the three of you as friends. Thank you for all of the support, venting sessions, and last-minute cramming. We did it!

Class of 2014: “To those of you who received honors, awards and distinctions, I say well done. And to the ‘C’ students, I say you too may one day be president of the United States.” – President George W. Bush

Congratulations and best of luck on the Bar!

Rebecca Deane-Alviso


This would have been an impossible feat without the constant encouragement of my mom, dad, and sister. Thank you to my wonderful bff for putting up with all the law school craziness for the last 4 years. Maybe now you won’t have to eat pb&j’s for dinner every night...maybe. Thank you all for your unwavering love and support. In the words of the great Alice Cooper “School’s out for summer, School’s out forever.”

Matthew J. DeCaminada

I would like to thank those who supported me, especially my parents Randy and Diane DeCaminada. Thank you for encouraging me and never wavering in your support of any of my endeavors.

Thank you to the Lincoln faculty, staff, Dean Schiavenza and Mr. Smolich for your dedication and commitment to providing a quality legal education without forcing students into insurmountable debt. I am extremely proud having graduated from Lincoln and will represent the school with integrity and professionalism.

To the class of 2014: Never commit to the status quo, follow your convictions and go out there and be badasses.
Kenneth Dell

Dean’s List: 2011-12, 2012-13, Moot Court: Best Overall, Voir Dire: Second Place, Writing Contest (2013), Martin Anderson Scholarship

Thanks to Lincoln’s founders, faculty and staff for providing a great opportunity to those with lawyer dreams. Seems like just last week I couldn’t decide whether to go to this school. Life may be sweeter for this, I don’t know. See how it feels in the end. Thanks to my wife Sharon for your love and support. To classmates, may a breeze be at your back.

Andrea Doria

I dedicate this accomplishment to my mother. Education was always key and I am thankful every day for her guiding light. I know she is looking down from heaven proud. To Ji, Johnny, Gabriel, and Elso, I thank you for all of your support through this long road and hope that this accomplishment will set the bar for my wonderful nieces and nephews. I’ve hoped for nothing more than to set the best example for their educational goals. To my Samuel and Samuel family, through all our ups and downs and all the headaches—both ways, I could not have done this without your mentoring. To Marie, I wish you the only the best as you begin your legal career. I am so proud to call you my friend and cannot thank you enough for all of your support. To Megan, I don’t know how I could have survived this without your countless comical study nights. You have been a great study partner, but an even greater friend. Law school IS NOT for everyone, but I think that we have proven that we are capable of this and much more. “Sí Se Pudo!”

Through adversity comes great success.

Ed Fong

To my biggest supporter, my beautiful wife Jenn, without your unconditional love and encouragement I could never have made it. I appreciate the sacrifice you made everyday for four years. My beautiful kids, Evan and Ella, Daddy will be home to read to you soon. My sister Eva, I cannot thank you enough for all the help you have given me it made a world of difference. My Parents and other mom Lenore for all the help you have given me these years thank you!

Big thanks to Sergeant Gail Vasquez, Sergeant Sam Rivera, Retired Deputy Chief Robert Denham and my family at SSD who always supported and encouraged my endeavor.

A special thank you to: DDA John Pezone, Professor Darrel Woo, CSUS Professor Donald Seney, Judge Bob Bryant, Michael Heenan, and Dean James Schiavonza, who always supported me from the very beginning and believed in me when sometimes I had doubt. I no longer have doubt.

Lastly, my friends that I have made at Lincoln: Celeste, Melanie, Sara, Kyle, Shane, Melissa, Seth, Carly, Sunny, Jenny, Max, and Susanne, who shared their time and effort with me on this journey, I am very proud to call you my friends.

Christopher J. Fry

Student Bar Association Writing Scholarship: 2011

So now you know exactly what it feels like to be an obstacle in my way.

Susanne L. George

UC Davis School of Law: Asylum & Refugee Law National Moot Court Competition (2013 & 2014), Little Voice Project: Legal Research Intern (2013-14), Sacramento County Family Court, One Day Divorce Clinic: Volunteer, California Third District Court of Appeal, California State Fair project, Let Freedom Ring: Volunteer, and Voir Dire: First Place, Writing Contest (2009)

Abraham Lincoln is quoted to have said, “I am a success today because I had a friend who believed in me and I didn’t have the heart to let him down…” I share this same sentiment as I graduate from law school. I am so grateful for the steadfast support of my husband Warren and my children. Their love, belief in my dream, patience, and encouragement are instrumental to my having reached this milestone. I am blessed to have gained a friend for life in my study partner, Karen. Without her and Ashley (our honorary law school study partner), and the countless hours of studying, this journey would have been much harder to bear. I wish many thanks to my family, friends, and coworkers who cheered me on. To my fellow graduates, it is an honor to have worked along side you and best of luck in your endeavors. In reflection as well as hopeful anticipation, I can truly live out Philippians 4:4-9, and knowing that I can do all things through Him who gives me strength.
Jamil Radwan Ghannam

Faculty Achievement Award: Contracts, Criminal Law, Torts, Civil Procedure, Real Property, Constitutional Law, Dean’s List: 2010-11; 2011-12; 2012-13; 2013-14, Summa Cum Laude

I would like to give a huge thanks to my wife Meili, my mom Teresa & dad Radwan, my brothers and sister Mohammad, Ted and Hana. And also my new family Sam & Mei Ou-Yang, Kathy, Paul, Howard, Nabila and baby Jalal. I wouldn’t have been able to accomplish what I have, and pursue my dreams and exceed as well as I have if it wasn’t for all of you (especially my wife). I don’t know if I was any fun before law school, but during law school I feel that I became incredibly boring so I apologize to my wife and family for that! That should change!

I would also like to thank all of my classmates, professors and school staff. This has been an incredibly difficult four years but it’s made a little better having to go through it with all the personalities and smarts each of you all brought to the table. I wish the best of luck and success to every person in our graduating class, and I have no doubt that we all will surpass any expectations we have set for ourselves.

Diego A. Heimlich


First and most importantly, all the praise goes to God for giving me the strength to get through this time and complete this journey. Andie: the award for “best wife” goes to you for putting up with my tantrums (especially during midterms and finals) for the past four years. Thank you for your selfless love and encouragement.

Kamryn: you are the most kind, smart, and beautiful girl a dad can ask for! Seeing you smile every time I came home from school made this journey worth it. You can do anything you set your mind to.

Mom and Dad: thank you for sacrificing so much so that I could have a better life and education. I am eternally grateful for your support.

Duane and Cheryl: you have done so much for me, and I will always owe this accomplishment to you. Hopefully your “retirement” investment pays off!

Finally, thank you to all my family and friends, who stuck with me through the last four years and offered encouragement, support, and sometimes a much-needed distraction from studying.

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.” - Colossians 3:23 (NIV)

Kristofor K. Helm

First, thank you to my fiancee. You suffered through all the turmoil that is law school, and you deserve a long vacation. Second, thank you to my mom, dad, and two brothers. Without your support this would have been a much rougher journey. Lastly, thank you to those special few who inspired to me start this crazy ride. Love you all.

Christopher Owen Holleran

Thanks to my family and friends. I love you and without you I could not have made it through this.
Melanie Jackson

“Without ambition one starts nothing. Without work one finishes nothing. The prize will not be sent to you. You have to win it.”
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Thank you to all who understood, supported and encouraged my journey through law school.

Celeste Jennings-Macaluso

To my Classmates, Professors and Faculty/Staff at Lincoln Law School, I wish you all love and the ultimate success throughout your lives.

To Duncan, thank you for being my brilliant friend, confidante, and tower of strength during this shared endeavor. It has been an honor sitting beside you and I expect only great things from you as an attorney. The truth is that I simply adore everything about you and I will miss you so much.

To Eddie, thank you for your kindness and generosity. I don’t know where I would be without your superior networking skills. More importantly, thank you for being my trusted friend, motivator and a true inspiration. Much love to you and your beautiful family.

To my husband, Peter, you already know how much I love you and how much I appreciate your hard work and the many sacrifices you’ve made helping me achieve this dream. After twenty years, you are still absolutely everything I desire in a man.

Finally, to my son, Adam, because you are the love of my life and everything I do in this world is for you.

Kyle Jones

Dean’s List: 2011-12, 2011-12 , Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Clerk of the Exchequer (2011-12), Faculty Achievement Award: Evidence and Civil Procedure

Megan, I could not have asked for a more supportive wife. You deserve years of relaxation for everything you did for me over the past four years, not that you will get it with Grayson around. I love you and am very grateful for your patience and understanding.

To my friends and family: Thank you for your unwavering support. I am lucky to have people in my life that gave me the strength and confidence to reach my goal. The past few years have been difficult and I am quite sure that without you I wouldn’t be here today.

And yes, you can call me Doctor Jones if it feels right.

Sara S. Kenny

Dean’s List: 2011-12, Faculty Achievement Award: Criminal Procedure, Wills, Remedies

Thank you to my husband Bill for encouraging me and believing in me during this adventure. I could not have made it through these past four years without you by my side. You were always there to offer words of encouragement and push me forward when I needed it. You even put up with my “freak outs” prior (and after) each test. Thank you in advance for being there for me during what will most likely be the biggest freak out of all, the Bar exam. Prepare yourself. Words alone cannot thank you enough. As this chapter closes there are many more wonderful journeys that await us. I cannot wait to share them with you.

Thank you to my family and friends who stuck by me even though I was not present. Your support and encouragement allowed me to focus on the end goal and make it through these past four years.

To the class of 2014, these past four years have been incredibly challenging and rewarding wrapped up together. I am thankful for the friendships that have developed and I wish each of you success as we move past law school and on to our next chapters in life.

Saveel Khan

I would like to thank my parents first and foremost for helping me financially to be able to attend law school and for encouraging me to do so. I would also like to thank friends that I made from the class of 2013 who were instrumental in helping me get through the first year of law school. There is no substitute for hard work, focus, and dedication. All of these qualities which I do not possess, so if I can get through law school in 4 years while working, I think anybody can. “Whether you think you can, or whether you think you can’t, you are right.” - Henry Ford
Jason D. Lee

**Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Tribune (2012-13; 2013-14)**

I would like to thank my Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother-in-Law and my grandmother in helping me through law school. You guys have always been my rocks and I thank you for the love and support. Shawn O'Brien, I would like to thank you for being a great study partner and friend. You have helped me through a lot of tough times in these past four years and I want you to know I appreciate your friendship. To my classmates, thanks for the memories and the great times. Go Class of 2014!

Brandon Leibrock

“You see the opportunity for victory; you don’t create it.” - Sun Tzu

Max Steven Lemon

**Faculty Achievement Award: Professional Responsibility, Family Law, Workers Compensation law**

To my family: I would first and foremost like to thank Loralee Lemon, my wife and best friend of 34 years; my children and my parents for all of their enduring encouragement and support. My transition back to the world of academia was a challenge. This achievement has been a sacrifice of shared time and family activities for each of you.

I find the following two quotes to provide a true and accurate perspective of the most important focuses of life.

“No matter what you’ve done for yourself or humanity, if you can’t look back on having given love and attention to your family, what have you really accomplished?” - Elbert Hubbard

“The most important work you or I will ever do will be within the walls of our own home.” - David O. McKay

To Faculty and Staff: I would like to thank each of you for your personal commitment and efforts on my behalf. Special thanks to Dean Smolich for his time and encouragement.

To Classmates and Friends: Thank you for sharing in the journey and experience of law school.

Gabe Erik Liberman

**Student Bar Association: Secretary (2012-13; 2013-14)**

I can still remember how I told my family and friends I was going law school… by announcing it at my wedding… Surprise!!! My wife, Nicole and a friend were the only ones in on it. Four years later, I can’t believe the love and support I have had from everyone close to me. My poor wife has had to endure the trenches with me from pretty much the start of our marriage. I’m extremely lucky and thankful I have someone willing to give it 100% on the other side. The guys in class would always joke about my packed lunches and dinners Nicole would make me. They would always say “Must be nice, four course meal today.” Yes, I never went hungry in class! I would also like to thank my long time friend Anthony, would helped guide me to this path. I am excited for what the future brings. I would also like to thank my parents for encouraging me to never settle, work hard for wanting more than mediocre and never giving up on life’s dreams. Thank you for instilling this passion in me, to pursue greatness, from love, greater education to career changes. Benjamin Franklin said it best, “We are all born ignorant, but one must work hard to remain stupid.” Cheers to working hard!

Karen A. Lyons

**Sacramento County Family Court, One Day Divorce Clinic: Volunteer**

Law school has strengthened my resolve to live a life I love. A life that is filled with family and dedicated to repaying the love and support I received during the last four years. Without the strength and encouragement of my family I would not have realized my dream of attending law school.

Jim, you are the husband of my dreams and my best friend. You are the reason I successfully survived this journey! Thank you for believing in me and forcing me to take the leap to do something I had always dreamed of. Thank you for every night you drove me to school in silence while I read and book briefed in preparation for class. Thank you for listening to me talk about school and cases and for never making me feel boring. Thank you for building me up before every test. Most importantly, thank you for the sacrifices you made to ensure I was successful. I love you.

Ashley, it is not easy having a Mom in law school. I am so proud of you. You inspired me when you graduated from high school early and I am so impressed you are graduating with two AA degrees this year! Thank you for being supportive, cleaning, cooking, shopping, and doing more house work than most teenagers in the last four years. Thank you for celebrating your birthday after final exams for three years, too! I love you Poogie.
Keith L. Miller

Martin Anderson Scholarship: 2010-11

“At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us.” - Albert Schweitzer

A special “Thank You” is owed to my biggest supporter, and the light of my life, my wife Kelly. Without your love, encouragement, and constant support I never would have made it this far. I feel blessed that I have such a wonderful partner in this rollercoaster ride we call “life”. This has been a tough four years that has taken more dedication and hard work than I could have ever imagined. If it was easy, anyone could do it. But WE did it!

Thank you Mitch and Kyle for your support and encouragement during the good times as well as the tough times. Our many dinner discussions (typically regarding “the law”) have been entertaining and sometimes exasperating. I can’t wait to see where your lives lead you.

Thank you Mallori and Mellani for understanding that this journey was important to me and encouraging me to tackle the challenge.

Thank you Mikaila, Jaiden, Andrew, and Ryan for always putting a smile on my face. I love each of you dearly and completely.

Ali Gexiafong Moua

Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Member, Asian Bar Association: Member, Asian Bar Association Scholarship: 2012

To my wife & kids: Sorry for the past four years of pain and agony! You all have been my source of motivation throughout this journey. I am the luckiest man in the world to have you all in my life.

To my mother: I never say this enough, but thank you for everything! Your strength and support to your kids remained strong even through your toughest battles. I am proud to be your son.

To my comrades at Lincoln: “It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end.” - Ernest Hemingway. Good luck and Congratulations!

Shawn O’Brien

Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Member

I’d like to thank my chattle for all of her support. Thank you to the family for your help, support, and patience. To all my friends, good luck on the bar.

Meredith Bennett Parkin

Nelson Mandela once stated “It always seems impossible until it’s done.” Having a family, working full-time, and going to law school seemed impossible. I am so appreciative of the many people who provided much needed love and support during this seemingly impossible journey. First and foremost my wonderful husband, Brian, and my beautiful children, Maxine and Hartley, for loving me through this process and lifting me up to succeed. Second, my in-laws, Bill and Darlene Houston, for providing neverending support to our family; my mother, Pam Bennett, who gave me unconditional love and encouragement to keep going; and my father, Max Bennett, who has always been with me in spirit. Third, my dear friends Sandra Engel, Katie Day, Sherri Smith and Megan Harte who kept me laughing and provided much needed respite from my busy life. Last, but not least, my co-workers Kari Shively, Vanessa Nishikawa, and Mary Paasch, who I work with day-in-and-day-out and who are my family away from family. Thanks to you all, it does take a village!

Quoc T. Pham

Justice Thomas once said that you are fortunate to have your misfortunes. I am fortunate to get a legal education from Lincoln Law School. I am grateful for our professors who gave us the knowledge and the power to make the world a better place. I am glad to make new friends who come from all walks of life. Many thanks to the support from my parents, friends and especially to my son Raphael who inspired me to take up the law. I will always look back at these four years as some of the best years of my life.
Duncan J. Purcell

Voir Dire: First Place, Writing Contest (2013), Faculty Achievement Award: Legal Research, Moot Court: Honorable Mention, Best Brief, Dean’s List: (2011-12)

Thank you to Janet, my wonderful wife and the love of my life, for your patience and endurance as I’ve completed this madhouse project. It’s been an arduous mountain to climb. Your love and late night dinners have meant everything to me. I couldn’t have done it without you.

To my dad, thank you for your enthusiastic support throughout this four-year endeavor. Sadly, the free drinks for having a son who’s enrolled in law school had to come to an end sooner or later.

To my mom, to Grace, and to my brothers, Doug, Don, and Ray, thank you for your confidence over these four years. All of you have contributed to my success in both tangible and intangible ways, and I’m truly grateful.

Thank you to my boss, Robert Childers, for supporting this effort from the start. And a big thanks to my mentors, Donna Fernandez, Edward Kunnes, Jeff Boas, and especially to Douglas Borchert and Robin Smith: you have all inspired me along the way with your wisdom and encouragement. I owe you all a debt of gratitude.

And finally, thank you, Dean Schiavenza, and to all of my professors and classmates. Celeste, you have been a sensational partner, classmate, and friend. Your generosity and positive outlook leave me uncharacteristically speechless. I’ve been so proud to soldier through this with you. And Erik, keep playing and writing those killer songs. All of you have had an enormous impact on my life. I will never forget you.

Excelsior.

Atish Ram

Thanks to my parents, friends, siblings, and definitely to my lady for understanding the sacrifice I was making and helping me through it with financial and moral support! You guys are the best, and hopefully I can give back to you what you’ve given me over the last several years

Jennifer Rivers

Moot Court: Best Oral Argument

Thank you to my family and friends whose love and support kept me going these last four years. Bottom line: I love you all and I am blessed to have you in my life.

Thank you to my Bankruptcy Court friends for your support and encouragement.

Thank you Dean Schiavenza and the Lincoln Law School faculty for all that you do to see that we students become the best lawyers we can be. We appreciate your long hours and hard work.

Congratulations class of 2014! It has been a pleasure to be on this very wild ride with you and I look forward to seeing what great attorneys you will make!

Jonathan P. Rotondo

Toaster Trials: Most Persuasive

Thank you to everyone in my life that pushed me to this point. I would not have made it to graduation without the love and support of my family and friends. A special thank you to my wife who makes me push everyday to be the very best version of myself. Congratulations class of 2014.

Shahed Shaari

I would like to thank my parents, Maryam and Saeed, for helping and supporting me throughout this law school journey. Also, thanks to my classmates, who are probably the best group of classmates I have ever been associated with. Finally, thank you to the professors and faculty for patiently and diligently guiding me these four years. I appreciate this school taking a chance on me, and giving my life a positive direction.
James Schaefers

Student Bar Association: President (2012-13), Vice President (2011-12), Class Representative (2010-11), Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Class Representative (2012-14), Perfect Attendance

I would like to thank all my family and friends. This adventure has truly been one of the greatest challenges I have ever experienced, and it would not have been possible without all of your love and support.

Carly Stockman

Student Bar Association: President (2013-14), Vice President (2012-13), Class Representative (2011-12), Delta Theta Phi Law Fraternity: Class Representative (2012-14), Moot Court: Honorable Mention, Best Oral Argument

Congratulations Class of 2014! It’s been quite the journey and I am excited for our next chapter. To my family: Mom – Thank you for taking my calls every day, watching Brody, and being there for me throughout this crazy ride. Dad – Your advice/guidance is priceless and helped me get through the last four years more than you will ever know. Jamie – You have been my best friend and cheerleader through it all. Thank you for attending my school functions, understanding any last minute cancelations, and always being available to help celebrate midterms/finals and any free time I had (no matter how little notice I gave you)! Eddie and Madeline – Thank you for being a support system and outlet whenever I needed one, regardless of how late I called! Without my family, none of this would be possible. Love you!

Sandeep K. Uppal

When I embarked on this law school journey, I had no idea what I was in for. These past four years have been the best years of my life!

I want to take this moment to thank my wonderful parents from the bottom of my heart for everything they have done. Dad, you are my hero. You have shown me, that hard work and a strong work ethic will always prevail. You have shown the importance of commitment and loyalty; and you have shown me that integrity is making sure that the things you say, and the things you do are in alignment.

Mom, words cannot explain how thankful I am to Waheguru for giving me you. You have helped me through this journey and without your continued support this would not have been possible. Thank you so much for always being there for me. I love you so much!

Deya- Your Mom and Dad are two of the greatest people on this planet. They are my best friends. They have shown me continued support. They have shown me what it means to love unconditionally. They are truly the best! And I want to thank them for bringing you into my life. You are one of the best things that have happened to me. You are a true blessing from God.

Himmath- You dad, is a man of few words and I love him for that. He means what he says, and says what he means. He is a true saint and wonderful brother. Your mom is my other best friend. She has listened to my “lectures” and actually sat through me talking about contracts, torts and even real property. She has always been there for, and most of the time with yummy food in hand. Thanks, Sandy! And again I thank the two of them for bringing you into my world. Your smile got me through a lot.

Lastly, I want to thank my grandparents for their love and support. I want to thank Manji for continuing to watch over me. I have the best family and friends! Thank you all and see you again after the Bar.

Erik Watkins

The 1872 Learned Hand Award of Judicial Excellence (2011)

First and foremost I want to thank my wife Natalie for supporting me through law school. I am so grateful to have your love and support, I could not have done it without you. I want to thank my family and friends for being understanding of my lack of social interaction these past four years. At times, it’s hard to believe it has been 4 years, but to my classmates, Congratulations!! For future litigators just remember the wise words of the great Mike Tyson, “Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the face.” And my new favorite quote, “games are won by those who focus on the playing field-not by those whose eyes are glued to the scoreboard.”- Warren Buffett.
Sara F. Zahbihi

I would like to dedicate my degree to the following individuals whose unconditional support, wisdom, comfort and love allowed me to pursue and accomplish this goal. First of all, I would like to thank my beautiful, brilliant sister Najj for being my strength, my psychologist, my best friend, and for always being there for me no matter what. To my parents, in particular my dad for patiently listening to my craziness, and for calming me down before every midterm and final. To my wonderfully witty brother Z for always making me laugh, and for his words of wisdom. To my smart, sophisticated sister Najma for always being present to help. To my lovely, clever, charming, brilliantly wonderful daughter Emma, who always reminds me to live in the present and believes in me wholeheartedly. To all of my friends whom in one way or another kept me sane during all these years. To my boss and friend Freeman for putting up with me, and being ever so understanding. To the brilliant professors, and in particular Dean Schiavenza for always being available to counsel and assist.

To you all, I just want to say: THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!

Caritas Elbert

Not Pictured
After listening to the requests of many, the SBA changed the location for our Annual Barristers’ Ball to the Embassy Suites in Old Sacramento. The venue not only had the intimate atmosphere we always appreciate, but its location also provided many activities for everyone to enjoy before or after the Ball.

Our efforts have not stopped with the Barristers’ Ball. The SBA will continue to provide some end of the year fun with a River Cats Game on Saturday, May 17. By this time, we will have finished our finals and should be ready to celebrate. I encourage everyone to bring your family and friends for an evening filled with America’s best pastime, coupled with an all-you-can-eat buffet.

Finally, I want to say Congratulations! Whether you are a 1L or a 4L completing a year of law school is an accomplishment. To the Class of 2017 – you finished the most difficult step in your law school journey! I promise, it gets less overwhelming as you continue. To the Class of 2016 – you are officially half way through law school; there’s no time to burn out! To the Class of 2015 – Enjoy 4L… you’ve earned it! To my class, the Class of 2014 – It has been quite the experience! I sincerely appreciate all the different personalities in our class and couldn’t imagine the last four years with anyone other than you!

To my fellow SBA officers Vice-President Lucy Sarkysian, Secretary Gabe Lieberman, and Treasurer Jackie Jaynes-Creel, thank you for all your help and making this year such a success!