



Stand for Freedom Voting Rights Campaign

By Crie Spears-De Leo, Editor-in-Chief

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a landmark piece of national legislation in the United States that outlawed discriminatory voting practices, which had been responsible for the wide spread disenfranchisement of African Americans in the United States.¹

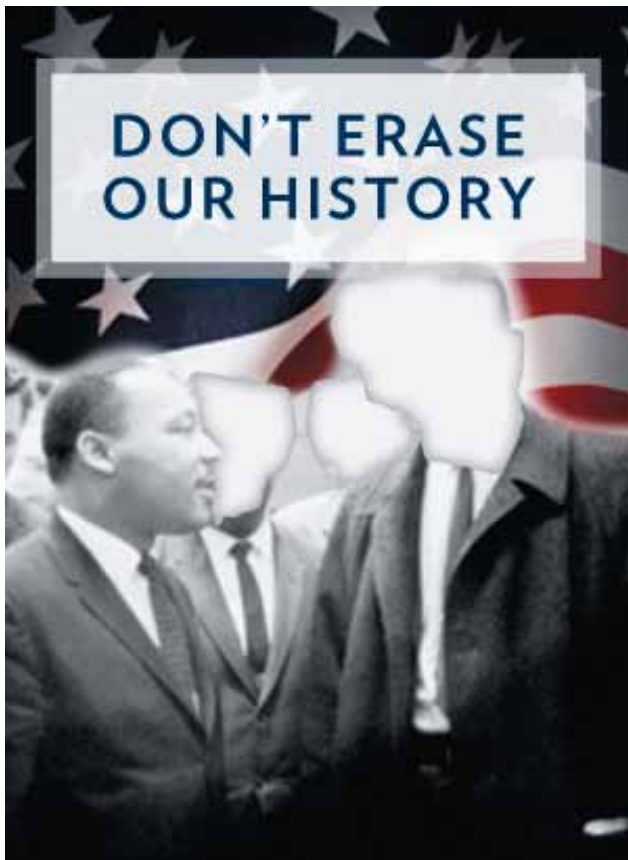
Echoing the language of the 15th Amendment, the Act prohibits states from imposing any “voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure . . . to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color.”²

There is nothing more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote. New laws surfacing around the country, which restrict the pool of eligible voters making it difficult for Americans to cast a ballot, represent a step backwards in a decades-long struggle to end voter discrimination in this country.

Stand for Freedom is an “aggressive nationwide effort”³ to obstruct changes to state election laws that would suppress the rights of millions of Americans to vote in 2012 and beyond.

“We are in the midst of the greatest coordinated legislative attack on voting rights since the dawn of Jim Crow,” proclaimed Ben Jealous, NAACP President and CEO. “Voter ID laws are nothing but reincarnated poll taxes and literacy tests, and ex-felon voting bans serve the same purpose today as when they were created in the wake of the 15th Amendment guaranteeing ex-slaves the vote—suppressing voting numbers among people of color.”⁴

“The so-called problem of voter fraud is a myth, the percentage is miniscule,” said George Gresham, President of 1199SEIU. “These new laws are suddenly being pushed after the historic 2008 presidential election when Americans headed to the polls in droves. Now as we prepare for the 2012 elections, it’s difficult to believe that this isn’t some kind of ploy to keep poor people,



working people, or people of color away from the polls.”⁵

In a number of states, new laws appear to have the effect of a modern-day poll tax by requiring voters to obtain and present official photo identification in order to cast a ballot. In many of these same states, new laws significantly reduce early voting and Sunday voting opportunities as well.

“National Action Network and I see the assault on voters with Voter ID laws, the end of early voting, and other measures as a blatant attempt to undermine the Voter Rights Act,” said Rev. Al Sharpton, President, National Action Network. “The Nation cannot honor Dr. King and undo his work at the same time. We will fight it in the courts and in the streets.”⁶

“We are standing up for the fundamental pillar of our democracy,” said Judith Browne-Dianis, Co-Director of the Advancement Project. “Election Day is the one time we are all equal in America- rich or poor, black, Latino, Asian, Native American or white, young or old, we can all cast an equal vote to determine the shape of our government. Next year, millions of people could be barred from the voting booth. We cannot allow our rights to be stolen.”⁷

African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, senior citizens, students, working women and immigrants will be disproportionately affected by the new laws, since many in these communities are less likely to have identification that complies with these strict rules.

According to a report recently released by the Brennan Center for Justice, advocates of the new legislation declare the new laws are necessary to prevent voter fraud,⁸ but it appears the rules create roadblocks to deter voters. For instance, it may be a difficult task for certain persons to obtain the necessary documents to obtain an ID. There is a fee associated with obtaining a birth certificate, a social security card, or other means necessary as proof to have an official identification card issued.

Additionally, the report contends at least thirty-four states are considering or have considered voter ID and/or proof of citizenship laws, including New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Delaware. The battleground states of Ohio and Pennsylvania were among those actively moving forward on voter ID legislation.⁹

Five states passed laws this year that reduced voters from casting their ballots before Election Day, the Brennan Center found.¹⁰ Ohio passed a law eliminating early voting on Sundays, and Florida eliminated it on the Sunday before Election Day — days when some African-American churches organized “souls to the polls” drives for members of their congregations.¹¹

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Get On the Bus!

By Yesha Pittman

As I sat in the Southern University Civil Rights Symposium last week, a compelling question was asked during the discussion on the 1961 Freedom Riders, “Would young leaders today be willing to get on a bus, believing that they would die, in order to fight for a cause or the rights of others?” I sat there stunned. Judging from the reaction of other student participants, this question was both a surprise and a reality check. Without a second thought I would sign my name to a petition, join a picket line, and boycott a business. But die for a cause? This would require a more thorough look into my passions and beliefs.

What does it mean to be truly passionate? Webster’s defines passion as, “an intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction,” and “the state or capacity of being acted on by external agents or forces.” I know with certainty that I am most passionate about my family, the rights of women, and as of this past summer, equal access to education for all children. I am passionate about “righting the wrong”. Too often I find myself in debates about crime and proper punishments.

What do I believe? I believe in

the right to an education (although it is not expressed nor granted in the U.S. Constitution). I deeply believe in loyalty, hard work, and the notion of fairness in all dealing. I believe that I live in the best country in the world, but that morals in the American society are seriously eroded. I strongly believe in communities and entrepreneurship. After all, no civilized population can exist without them.

Is anything worth dying for these days? The instances of civil rights and human rights violations occur daily in our modern lives. There are Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) students in Gwinnett County, Georgia fighting for access to gay and lesbian “educational” websites at school. Access is blocked because the school system has deemed any entries of “gay” or “lesbian” in search engines as either “pornography” or “inappropriate”. For the student seeking an online support group or educational materials, access is not granted. With the 2012 election season quickly approaching, there are sure to be reports of voting misconduct, voter disenfranchisement, polls not adhering to posted schedules, and allegations of gerrymandering

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From left: Leaders in the workshop, “Strategies to obtain civil/equal/human rights,” are Dr. Franklin D. Jones (Chair of the Political Science Department at Texas Southern University), Atty. Edward “Ted” James (SULC and SUBR alumnus), Atty. Walter C. Dumas (SULC alumnus and member of the SU Board of Supervisors), and SULC Prof. Angela Allen-Bell, with workshop coordinator: SUBR Prof. Troy Allen.



From left: Leaders in the workshop, “How civil/equal/human rights are being eroded or denied,” are workshop coordinator, SUBR Prof. Albert Samuels, with leaders, SULC Vice Chancellor John Pierre, Atty. Tracie Washington, Larry J. Carter, SULC student Jamaal Chatman, and LA State Rep. Dalton Honoré, Not pictured is Atty. Cleo Fields.

International Law: The Growth Potential in Doing Business Abroad

Follow the Money

By Jammie Garrett

“Follow the money” is a suitable adage for legal marketing when it comes to business development in the international community. Recent graduates can set themselves apart by going into international law and gaining a competitive edge, while other areas of law are being hit hard by the economic crisis.

A day in the life of an international business attorney reads like the agenda of a high-ranking foreign diplomat. Whether one is representing defrauded investors against the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, a Chinese client in a multinational business deal, a Brazilian client in a trade dispute, or the victims of human rights abuses in Yemen, it is all in a day’s work for an international attorney.¹

In the past, international business was confined to a handful of highly specialized law firms. However, as more businesses recognize the growth potential in doing business abroad, the practice arena has undergone a considerable alteration. Once dominated by the demands of wealthy corporations and business executives, international business law now widely caters to the needs of smaller businesses and government agencies.²

Recently, several Southern University Law Center students were selected to attend the Thurgood Marshall College Fund’s 11th Annual Leadership Institute in New York, NY. At the leadership institute, the students had the opportunity to speak with Daniel B. Whitley,



From left: Maya Edwards, Yesha Pittman, Crie Spears-De Leo, featured with Daniel B. Whitley, Southern University Baton Rouge Alumnus and Deputy Director of Trade for the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, Jammie Garrett, and Ariel Dixon.

a Southern University Baton Rouge graduate and the Deputy Director of Trade for the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service. Whitley advised students on the many fields in international law that are in desperate need of young attorneys such as negotiation and mediation.

In part because of the Obama Administration’s recent signing of free trade agreements with Panama, South Korea and Colombia—the South Korea deal representing the biggest trade agreement since NAFTA—growth in the demand for international business attorneys is expected to continue.³ As these rising companies and newly created government agencies expand, they

will become engrossed in litigation and dispute resolutions that may not have been a part of their original business plans. When this happens, they will seek the help of someone like a recent Southern University Law Center graduate who is willing to “follow the money.” Are you ready?

¹ PR Newswire, International Business Law Thrives as Other Areas of Law Languish, (Nov. 1, 2011) <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/International-Business-Law-prnews-3389688904.html?x=0>.

² PR Newswire, International Business Law Thrives as Other Areas of Law Languish, *supra*.

³ PR Newswire, International Business Law Thrives as Other Areas of Law Languish, *supra*.

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Maine voted to stop allowing people to register to vote on Election Day — a practice that had been credited with enrolling some 60,000 new voters in 2008. Voters in Maine and Ohio are now seeking to overturn the new laws with referendums.¹²

The most significant impact, the Brennan Center asserts, will be from laws requiring people to show government-issued photo identification to vote. This year, thirty-four states introduced legislation to require it. Before this year, only two states, Indiana and Georgia, had “strict” photo identification requirements for voters. This year, five more states — Wisconsin, Kansas, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas — passed laws to join their ranks.¹³

The number of states with laws requiring voters to produce a government-issued photo ID has “quadrupled” in 2011. Consider this, 11% of American citizens do not have a government-issued photo ID; this equates to over 21 million citizens. Under the Texas law, licenses to carry concealed handguns would be an acceptable form of identification to vote, but not a student ID card.¹⁴

Rafael Collazo, Campaign Political Director for the National Council of La Raza (NCLR), added “It’s just plain dishonest to claim that you are cutting back the days people can early vote or eliminating them entirely to cut down on fraud—

there’s just no link between the two and we cannot allow the proponents of these laws to continue using false arguments with the American people.”

The Department of Justice has an obligation to fully enforce voting rights law. I urge you to aggressively scrutinize these laws for discriminatory impact, examine and object to pre-clearance submissions that have a discriminatory effect, and bring cases where necessary to stop these regressive voter laws.

¹ The Voting Rights Act of 1965, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1973–1973aa-6.

² U.S. CONST. amend. XV, § 1.

³ *Stand for Freedom Press Release*, (last visited Nov. 8, 2011) <http://www.stand4freedom.org/pages/stand-for-freedom-press-release1>.

⁴ *Stand for Freedom Press Release*, *supra*.

⁵ *Stand for Freedom Press Release*, *supra*.

⁶ *Stand for Freedom Press Release*, *supra*.

⁷ *Stand for Freedom Press Release*, *supra*.

⁸ WENDY R. WEISER & LAWRENCE NORDEN, BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW: VOTING LAW CHANGES IN 2012 2 (2012).

⁹ *Id* at 5.

¹⁰ *Id* at 30.

¹¹ *Id* at 30.

¹² *Id* at 2.

¹³ *Id* at 2.

¹⁴ *Id* at 2.

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candidates and/ or incumbents). Congress’s latest attempt to end unemployment benefits for many Americans, and the disproportionate levels of unemployment among the races clearly outline the need for civil rights advocacy in the unemployment/ underemployment arena of America lobbying efforts. Then there was Troy Davis, the prisoner executed despite numerous pleas for clemency, petitions, and recanted statements by witnesses. For Mr. Davis, this was not just a human rights violation, but definitely a failure of the criminal justice system.

After much thought, I have concluded that I too, would have boarded the bus. As a Christian, mother, and law student, too many of the issues resonate within my core. Last Spring, I began to navigate my legal career towards Civil Rights Litigation. I worked as a law clerk for the ACLU this past summer and saw firsthand the direct benefits of my involvement. I have also accepted the call of Dave Dennis (author, Civil Rights leader, and speaker at the Symposium) to pick up the torch and continue advocating for those with silent voices. The recipe for a future civil rights leader: dash of belief, sprinkled with passion, mixed thoroughly with faith. I am 100% ready. I am looking for others to stand beside me. Who is willing to get on the bus?

THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

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Law & Order

The Phenomenon of Social Networking: The Next Era of the Legal Field?



By Seanice Étienne,
Staff Writer

The information age and the phenomenon of social networking have forever changed the face and pace of global communication. The power of instantaneous information dissemination and global networking is readily apparent, as even traditional media have become more interactive. This phenomenon has placed a burden on legislators and courts to keep pace with the times and has opened the way for a new era in the legal field.

The information age is well underway and is proceeding at a tremendous rate of speed. A new generation has emerged, smartphones in hand, redefining culture as we know it—again. Amidst tweets, status updates, blogs, online forum posts, and the transfer of digital media, a change has come; and it may be easy to get caught up in the shuffle. The phenomenon of internet social networking has ushered users into a brave new world of instantaneous communication (both business and personal), information dissemination (some useful and some, well, not so much), and online marketing and networking opportunities. At the same time, web sites such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, and other more specialized social media sites have opened what may seem to be a Pandora's box of potential liabilities, particularly under criminal, labor, employment, copyright and tort law.

The intricacies of social media have also raised issues—and more than a few eyebrows—as relates to privacy, professional responsibility, and the global political and social order. Precisely what changes in the legal field ultimately will emerge from the fray remain to be seen. What is clear, though, is that the world gets smaller by the minute and those of us in the legal field struggle to keep up with the pace of change.

There exists a litany of cases that demonstrate the potential for exposure to criminal liability as a result of content shared on social media websites. The two main ways in which one can be subject to criminal liability as relates to social media are through the posting of damaging evidence of crimes committed offline, such as photographs or video, and by posting or otherwise transmitting or downloading content that constitutes the crime itself, as in child pornography, cyberstalking or cyberbullying, for example. However, sex crimes committed with the aid of social networking sites often tend to combine both aspects of liability, since in some cases, pornographic material is shared and/or sexually suggestive statements are made online in combination with offline sexual contact or attempts to establish sexual contact. Of course, these acts constitute a crime in and of themselves if a juvenile is the subject of the material or the object of the statements. Furthermore, trends in jurisprudence seem to suggest that in most cases, social media content will likely be discoverable (and admissible, as long as it is authenticated and can be offered

in such a way as to qualify under a hearsay exception). It is interesting to note that Facebook, in particular, has added a feature that allows users to download their account history and save it to the computer's hard drive or other storage device, thus giving the user control over the content and shifting the burden of responding to discovery relating to the content.

While the advantages of social networking are fairly obvious, what lurks beneath the veneer of safety behind the computer screen is the ugly reality that many people are unwittingly exposing themselves and their employers and/or business contacts to potential liability. Let's take Susie, for example. Susie called in to work yesterday, claiming illness. Later that day, Janie saw Susie's post on Facebook about the wonderful time she was having sipping margaritas at the beach with her "besties." Janie then reports this to Sammie, the boss, and Susie is summarily fired. What about the employee who discusses confidential or potentially damaging information about his or her employer, rants about the supervisor or the job? What if an employee leaks proprietary information about a company, a product, or a business relationship? Careless or malicious posting of these types of information can result in job loss and litigation in tort for quasi-offenses ranging from defamation to interference with business relations (or potential business relations) and could amount to violations of laws and policies relating to intellectual property. Furthermore, there has been much debate over the ethical considerations of viewing

potential employees' social media profiles. Undoubtedly, employment decisions might be based, in part, on information found in those profiles, such as political or religious views and sexual orientation, which could cost the applicant a job and expose the company to liability under labor law.

In a similar vein, searching through social media profiles has become part of practice norms for many attorneys. Even judges have joined the fray. One form of social media mining in the practice of law is searching for the wealth of information that might assist in jury selection. Attorneys might also use information gleaned from social media profiles to assist in litigating a case. Imagine finding a video of a personal injury claimant jumping and flipping about on a trampoline after he or she claims to have suffered severe back injuries as a result of an automobile accident. Would the video be valuable evidence to the defense of that claim? It could be. And, even judges have been known to stalk the profiles of parties to cases in order to gain further insight. Moreover, legal practitioners are increasingly creating their own blogs, Twitter accounts, Facebook pages, and such, where there might not be a disclaimer or the "information" could constitute "advice." Not to mention the advertising regulations that must be taken into account if the page, blog, etc., can be classified as such.

Notwithstanding the above issues, privacy concerns over the collection, use, and storage of data on

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EI INCUMBIT PROBATIO QUI DICIT, NON QUI NEGAT

By Tori Howze

Social media and public opinion are destroying the criminal justice system, taking away the defendant's innocence in the presumption of innocent until proven guilty. In a society where it seems like everyone is using social media as a means of communication, those means have had a negative impact in the criminal justice system. Because of social media communication and public opinion, defendants on trial are often guilty until proven innocent. This is incorrect and not in compliance with the justice system. A defendant does not have to prove his innocence. Instead, it is the prosecution's burden to prove guilt.

In order to understand this concept, we must first learn about the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. The presumption of innocence is a legal right granted to all individuals accused in a criminal trial in the United States. The prosecution has the burden of proof to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is in fact guilty of said crime. Whatever evidence is collected and presented by the prosecution must leave the jury or judge to believe without a doubt in their mind that the defendant did in fact commit the said crime. If there is any doubt for whatever reason, the defendant should be acquitted and let free.

Most recently, with the help of social media, many have questioned the presumption of innocent until

proven guilty because it is not explicitly stated in the Constitution of the United States. However, it is implied in the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution. The Fifth Amendment of the Constitution reads in pertinent part, "No person shall be ... deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law..." where Due Process of Law is the right to a fair trial. This clause means that you cannot be executed, imprisoned, or fined without proper course of justice taking place and it still be considered constitutional.

Guilty before proven innocent, was very broadly depicted in the social media trial of the century", as Time magazine describes it, *State of Florida v. Casey Marie Anthony*. In *State v. Anthony*, 22-year-old Casey Anthony was on trial for the killing her two-year-old toddler. Ms. Anthony was acquitted of all charges with the exception of lying to police. There was much evidence pointing to Ms. Anthony's guilt. In this case, the media slaughtered her character and credibility, calling her all kinds of horrific names, such as "tot mom." With all of the social media attention and public opinion, you would have thought Ms. Anthony had already been convicted. However, Ms. Anthony was acquitted of all serious charges because the prosecution failed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that she was in fact guilty. Although she has not been found guilty by the

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The Casey Anthony Trial

By Jarrod D. Mumford

During the Casey Anthony trial, there was a public hearing months before the actual trial. The public's perception was that Casey Anthony was guilty of all counts and should receive the harshest penalty allowed under Florida law. Florida's harshest penalties range from life imprisonment to death. Casey Anthony was acquitted of the serious charges concerning the death of her daughter but was found guilty on four counts of providing false information to a law enforcement officer.

As law students, what lessons may be learned from this case? How are the evidentiary guidelines from this case applicable to our studies? The lessons we learn as future legal practitioners are that we must remove ourselves from becoming involved in the public trial process and engulf ourselves in the American judicial process. We must remember that each defendant is innocent until proven guilty. Therefore, there is a lengthy process that must occur before a guilty verdict can be given.

As we know, in our judicial system, the essential protection given to our citizens is that the prosecution is required to prove their case against the defendant beyond a reasonable doubt. This must take place before a guilty verdict may



be given. This implication states that, if the prosecution cannot show the jury or the judge that the accused committed the act beyond a reasonable doubt, the accused may be exonerated on some or all charges. The difficulty of its applicability in this situation was that the public wanted to diminish Casey Anthony's right to a fair trial. The

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Project Salute: Veteran's Overcoming Legal Issues

Remembrance Day: A Time to Honor Those Who Made the Supreme Sacrifice

By Crie Spears-De Leo,
Editor-in-Chief

A moment of silence is commemorated at the 11th hour, on the 11th day, in the 11th month, recognizing the end of the First World War.

In honor of veterans who serve America, let us each recognize the sacrifices of past and current veterans, and the men and women currently serving in the armed forces.

I encourage everyone to take the time to take part in an act of remembrance this November by simply taking a moment of silence to recognize those soldiers that never returned home and by acknowledging SULC's very own veterans and expressing your thanks for all they have done.

I salute you:

Chancellor Freddie Pitcher, Jr.

U.S. Army
1967-1969

Vice Chancellor John Pierre

U.S. Army
1986-1990

Professor Donald North

U.S. Army
1977-Present

Professor Arthur Stallworth

U.S. Army
1975-1996

Professor Mark Thurmon

U.S. Navy
1985-1990

Tavares Walker, Class of 2008

U.S. Army: National Guard
2008-Present

Aaron Dutsch, Class of 2012

U.S. Air Force
2002-2006

Crie Spears-De Leo, Class of 2012

U.S. Navy
2003-Present

John A. Willis, Class of 2013

U.S. Air Force
1997-2001

Chauntelle Wood, Class of 2013

U.S. Air Force
2005-Present

Shawn Garner, Class of 2013

U.S. Army
2000-2003

Jean-Pierre Marquet, Class of 2014

U.S. Army; and National Guard
2003-2008



Senior Airman Dutsch, Republican Guard Bldg.



Lieutenant Spears-De Leo, Mount Iwo Jima

Devin Zito, Class of 2014

United States Marine Corps
1994-2002

Joe D. Connelly, Class of 2014

U.S. Army

Eugene Martin, III, Class of 2011

U.S. Navy

Karlus Cozart, II, Class of 2012

U.S. Air Force
2002-2007

The American Bar Association on Veterans Advocacy

By Cleveland Patterson,
Staff Writer

On November 11, 2011, our nation paid tribute to the countless men and women who have put their lives on the line to protect the liberty and security of America. Unfortunately, many of those who answered the call of duty will be unable to access needed services upon their return home. Many will lack the resources to hire an attorney. The American Bar Association has stepped up and is organizing efforts to address the legal issues typically facing veterans, including the challenges of obtaining medical care, disability benefits, re-employment, consumer needs, housing, criminal justice issues and family law matters.

The ABA Commission on

Homelessness and Poverty has partnered with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Veteran Affairs to launch a national pro bono project providing critical legal assistance to our country's more than 100,000 homeless veterans. This initiative is cited as Signature Initiative #1 in the Administration's plan to end homelessness.¹

The ABA Section of Administrative Law & Regulatory Practice's Veterans Committee is currently working alongside the National Veterans Legal Services Program and the Department of Veteran Affairs on efforts to improve administrative procedures in the Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC). Current efforts are

aimed at methods to streamline the appeals process, eliminate lengthy delays in decision-making, and reduce the number of remands to the Board. There are also several proposals under consideration for the expansion of the jurisdiction of the CAVC to provide for de novo review of fact finding by the Board and the Federal Circuit, and to provide class action authority for the CAVC.²

The Young Lawyers Division has launched Project Salute: Young Lawyers Serving Veterans, a public service initiative that will feature legal clinics throughout the country helping to educate veterans on their legal rights and assist them in obtaining benefits.

Finally, the ABA is planning to host a Leadership Summit on

Veterans Advocacy at a future Annual Meeting to provide a forum to learn more about best practices for serving the legal needs of veterans, presenting an opportunity for ABA members to get involved and give back to those who have given so much. ABA President, William T. (Bill) Robinson, encourages everyone to answer the call to help a grateful nation show its appreciation in action—not just words—and honor the sacrifices that countless men and women have made to preserve our liberty.³

¹ Letter from W.m. T. (Bill) Robinson, President, American Bar Association, to Colleagues, American Bar Association (Nov. 11, 2011) (on file at http://www.americanbar.org/groups/leadership/office_of_the_president.html).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

Seriousness of Purpose



First row, from left to right: Sawyer Halbrook, Donecia Banks, Victoria Minor, Kirschelle Williams, Thea Scott, Crie Spears-De Leo, with Advisor Tavares Walker, Brittany Bell, Jammie Garrett, Amanda Henderson, Kimberly LaMotte, Markita Hawkins, and Kourtnei Mason. Second Row, from left to right: Amber Owens, Jared Evans, Jeremy Bazile, Cleveland Patterson, Carla Guillory, Jason Bendford, and Adrianna Williams. Third row, from left to right: Brady Skinner and Christopher Dassau.

Congratulations to SULC's Recently Chosen American Inns

By Crie Spears-De Leo,
Editor-in-Chief

American Inns of Court (AIC) are designed to improve the skills, professionalism and ethics of the bench and bar. An American Inn of Court is an amalgam of judges, lawyers, and in some cases, law professors and law students. The Mission of the American Inns of Court is to foster excellence in professionalism, ethics, civility, and legal skills.

On November 1, 2011, twenty-two

students were inducted by Professor North and Professor Mencer into this prestigious organization and swore to rise to higher levels of excellence, professionalism, and ethical awareness as they recited the Professional Creed, pledging to honor its principles and practices.

Under the advisement of Professor North, Professor Mencer and Career Counselor, Tavares Walker, these future attorneys pledged to value their integrity above all, promising, "My Word is

my bond." Additionally, pledging to, "... serve as an officer of the court, encouraging respect for the law in all that I do and avoiding abuse or misuse of the law, its procedures, its participants and its processes."

As Student Attorneys, having begun representing clients, the majority of these students have already fired up their commitment to make the legal system more accessible, responsive and effective. I encourage you to do the same.

SULC Health Law Society

By Virag Davé, Director of
Information, Health Law Society

The purpose of the SULC Health Law Society is four-fold: to provide a forum from which to gain an introduction into the field of health law; to explore careers and employment opportunities within the field of health law; to develop relationships with academic and nonacademic organizations in the field of health law; and to promote the holistic development of the membership and Law Center Community as a whole by providing opportunities for both professional and personal growth.

"Because health law is so dynamic, there is always room for creative and often unprecedented applications and interpretations of the law. In fact, experts have predicted a rising need for health care services as Baby Boomers are projected to have entered



retirement by the year 2030. In turn, many lawyers expect the need for legal guidance for both health care providers and consumers to also increase".¹

In other words, health law is only expanding, and the practice is not ending anytime soon.

Health Law Society seeks to provide lectures and networking opportunities from professionals in several areas of health law, such as Medical Fraud, Insurance Law, Public Policy, Risk Management, Medical Malpractice, etc. For

anyone interested in learning more about health law, the HLS welcomes you.

¹ Julie C. Allen, *Health Law's Dynamic and Changing Practice*, The National Jurist (Feb. 2011), <http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/employment-insider/health-laws-dynamic-and-changing-practice>.

Seriousness of Purpose

The Law, Dancing and Parenthood with Professor Nedzel

Submitted By Crie Spears-De Leo,
Editor-in-Chief

If you are a law student balancing the rigors of law school with the task of raising children, this article is for you. I had the opportunity to meet with Professor, Nadia E. Nedzel with plans of discussing her remarkable biography. Our interview was scheduled for the purpose of noting her triumphs as somewhat of a documented, informal mentorship to law students.

During our interview, we discussed the benefit that SULC derives from its diverse student body. We agreed the culmination of each student's race, socioeconomic background, and culture creates a model of integration and realm of academia that is distinct and matchless to its counterparts.

The distinction of SULC's population lies in varied stories of perseverance. Here, our conversation unexpectedly took a turn toward discussing students who are balancing the rigors of law school with family problems. As a mother herself during law school, Professor Nedzel detailed a journey of a law student who was responsible for balancing the unavoidable trials and tribulations of law school with those of parenthood. Based on experience, she proffered a few rules that you will not come by in the Civil Code:

Rule 1: Have faith in God;

Rule 2: Have confidence in yourself;

Rule 3: Learn to balance priorities;

Rule 4: Treat law school like a job;

Rule 5: Be disciplined with your time.

Upon request, Professor Nedzel submitted a short biography. She wanted to emphasize that the difficulties she faced were not unusual, and in fact are typical of many of SULC's students, and her success was (and is) a result of Rules 1-5 above (plus a lot of help from friends and family). What follows is in her own words (she felt uncomfortable writing about herself in the first person).

Professor Nedzel was born to eccentric middle-class Russian immigrants in Chicago. As a child she was shy and severely asthmatic, which led to her developing a love of two activities: reading and dancing. A nerd by high school, she was one of only two girls in college-level math, chemistry, and physics. At Northwestern University in Chicago, she majored in French, Spanish, and Russian in addition to English literature. Her grades were good, but not brilliant. Professor Nedzel did a number of things after college to get over her shyness, including managing restaurants, modeling, local theater, and ballroom dancing. As a ballroom dancer and instructor, she won national and regional awards, and was able to support herself (barely). She was a good but not brilliant dancer, so when she fell in love with one of her students, they married.

Ultimately the marriage ended tragically, but the struggles she faced gave Professor Nedzel strength and self-knowledge. Because her husband's emotional issues meant he did not work, Professor Nedzel realized that she needed to support the family (2 kids). Moreover, after defeating

cancer, she realized that she wanted to contribute. By chance, she took a pre-MBA course in Business Law, then the LSAT. Although it was 15 years since college and she would be 40 years old when she graduated, Professor Nedzel became a night student at Loyola in New Orleans. She finally had found something she had a passion for and could really be good at. It seemed that God had pointed her in this direction.

Law school at night was difficult, and she had two toddlers and an impossible situation at home, but again it seemed that the Divinity was at her side. Professor Nedzel rigidly organized her study time, was mentored by two professors, and graduated in the top 2% of her class. From her first semester, she wanted to become a law professor because 1) whatever she did, she always ended up teaching, 2) she'd be able to research complex legal issues at length, 3) she'd have time for her children.

Professor Nedzel's first job after law school was a tremendous honor. As clerk to Hon. Carl E. Stewart of the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, the cases she worked on were cutting-edge, the topics varied. From there she returned to Chicago for an LL.M. in International Commercial Law at Northwestern,



and then back to Louisiana to take the Bar and work as a Staff Attorney with the U.S. Fifth Circuit (she was their first choice of 800 applicants). She was at the Fifth Circuit only 9 months when Tulane Law School recruited her, first as a Forrester Fellow, and then as Director of its LL.M. programs. Finally the knowledge of languages had some purpose! Professor Nedzel stayed at Tulane for 6 years, writing the bulk of her Legal Reasoning textbook, which is now used widely throughout the U.S. and abroad. (She's been told that she is famous in Afghanistan because of this book.)

Professor Nedzel left Tulane to

work for Preis, Kraft, and Roy, a Lafayette firm specializing in Admiralty Insurance Defense, in its New Orleans office. There she practiced international trade and corporate compliance in addition to admiralty. As with the Fifth Circuit, Professor Nedzel was with Preis, Kraft, Roy only one year before SULC recruited her. At SULC, Professor Nedzel has been able to realize her dreams. She loves teaching commercial law subjects and enjoys working with fellow SULC faculty. She is able to pay-forward the mentoring she received and finds SULC students inspiring. She has taught in Chile and Mexico, and has lectured in Guatemala, Singapore, and England. And she has continued her scholarship, receiving an SULC Junior Scholar award, as well as a Fellowship at Cambridge University. This coming semester she'll be on sabbatical, working on her Rule of Law book and (of course) doing some ballroom dancing. The study of law has enabled Professor Nedzel to achieve things she never dreamed of in her 20s. It has enabled her to provide a positive example for her kids, both of whom are finding their own successes, and it enabled her to meet and marry her (second) husband, another scholar.

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social media sites abound. Notably, Facebook is at the center of the firestorm of concern. Privacy controls allow users to adjust the level of publicity of their information, but this may not be enough. A recent change to Facebook accounts displays virtually every move a user makes on the website to all other users who are in their zone of privacy ("Friends," "Friends of Friends," etc.). Stories of Facebook accounts being hacked into or spammed abound, and there is no measure in force to protect stolen information. Perhaps the caveat should be: if you do not want your information revealed to your enemies, do not reveal it to your friends on Facebook.

As it was demonstrated in the Epsilon debacle, where thousands of users had personal data stolen due to a security breach, the concern might not be toward the company with which the information is shared. Rather, the major concern is (or should be) toward the potential illegal breaches of security and illegal uses of private information. On a smaller scale, perhaps, is the stalker who hacks into his ex-girlfriend's social media account, tracks her location, and lies in wait to commit murder—not so small a scale for the victim of such a crime. On a broader scale could be the non-democratic government under which there is no such thing as freedom of speech, religion, press, and assembly, that stalks its citizens, seeking to crush any dissent it may find. This could have implications on a global scale, possibly coming under the purview of international law. With the increasing awareness of terrorism and paranoia toward potential terrorist threats, though, perhaps users should be more concerned (Not in America,

though, right? Right.).

For a shining example of how social media can be used to affect political and social change, we need only look to their use in the recent "Arab Spring" demonstrations in the Middle East and North Africa. Facebook and Twitter allowed users to harness the power of their collective courage to withstand and topple regimes that they found to be unfit to govern. While it may be appropriate to celebrate the marriage of modern technology with age-old gumption, it must also be noted that several of those Arab governments, notably Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and Bahrain, interfered with the digital media outcries by slowing down or shutting down connections and using the same tools to hunt down the opposition.

Certainly there are numerous benefits and risks to the new age of telecommunication and information. It is precisely these risks and benefits that those of us in the legal field must weigh, mitigate, and navigate through the systems of justice. New paradigms are emerging, and with them come new challenges and promises. Many of our laws that are currently in place will have to be modified, for example portions of evidence codes, and some new bodies of law are emerging. In many cases, laws emerge as a response to changing times. The phenomenon of social media and its myriad effects are no exception. As the fields of law governing internet communications, social media, and the various aspects of daily life that are affected, it should be interesting to explore and witness the international implications of a broader, virtual global society, as well.

TRIAL: continued from page 3

media assumed that she was guilty and wanted her to be sentenced to life in prison or given the death penalty. Generally, when society learns of children being wrongfully slayed by an ostracized mother, or that an ex-NFL husband killed his wife who was often abused, the social order calls for medieval justice rather than American justice. However, in our legal community, it is our duty to have a free interpretation of the laws by not merging our feelings and other emotional sentiments into it. We must be able to represent our clients efficiently. This can be done by not becoming a part of the public trial process. Our view of the trial process must be marginally different from how society views it. As future attorneys, our view must encompass the unsettling notion that justice will prevail despite our emotions. We are taught that justice is blind; however, the courts sometime hear the blistering outcry of society, which prefer a witch's hunt instead of due process.

As advocates of the law, society relies on us to keep humanity's morals in order. They rely on the judicial system to right their wrongs and to punish those that hurt others. Lawyers are the representatives of those who cannot speak for themselves. So, any foreign object that interferes with that could be detrimental to our client. Thus, to have a fair and efficient judicial system, we must follow the lead of our forefathers and remember that justice is blind, and that lady justice only tilts over when the evidence pushes her that way. In closing, unlike society, our opinions should not lead us to the fact; the facts should lead us to our opinion.

Seriousness of Purpose

Alumnus Spotlight Richard Z. Johnson, Jr.

Richard Z. Johnson, Jr., is the first elected district attorney for the newly created 42nd Judicial District of Louisiana which consists of DeSoto Parish. He is only the third African-American to be elected district attorney in the State of Louisiana and currently the only one serving. He was elected as district attorney on October 4, 2008. Johnson is a May, 1988 graduate of Southern University Law Center where he graduated cum laude with a class ranking of 7/104. He was managing editor of the Southern University Law Review and was a member of the first Southern Law Center moot court team to compete in the National Moot Court Competition.

He was sworn in as a practicing attorney in October 1988 and began work as an assistant district attorney that same month. Johnson was the first African-American Chief Criminal Prosecutor selected for the 11th Judicial District Attorney's office which then consisted of DeSoto and Sabine Parishes.

Johnson is a native of Monroe, La. and the eldest son of the late Richard Z. Johnson Sr. and the late Cloteal Varner Johnson. He graduated from Richwood High School in 1974 and later received a bachelor of science degree from the then Northeast Louisiana University in 1979, now the University of Louisiana at Monroe. Johnson served in the United States Army as a field artillery officer on active duty for four years. Three years and four months of those four years were served in West Germany. He was awarded the Army Service Ribbon and the Overseas Medal. Johnson also was a member of the United Army Reserve while he attended law school. He attended law school on academic scholarships and worked as a law clerk for the Louisiana Department of Labor



while attending law school.

He has been married to the former Fredrena Marie Freeman for the past 29 years and they are the proud parents of two lovely daughters, Jessica and Mighan, who have both recently received professional degrees from Southern University. Jessica graduated from the Law Center in May, and has since passed the Louisiana Bar Examination. Mighan graduated in July from Southern University with honors, receiving a Masters Degree in Mass Communications, and is currently pursuing a PhD in Mass Communications at Southern University.

District Attorney Johnson is a member of the Mary Evergreen Baptist Church in Mansfield, Louisiana where he serves as a deacon and as a lay minister for Children's Church. He has served as President of the Kiwanis of DeSoto Parish, DeSoto Parish Library Board, DeSoto Parish Council on Aging and DeSoto Association of Retarded Citizens.

He is an avid musician and belongs to several community bands. He is a trombonist for the Shreveport Metropolitan Concert Band, Shreveport Regional Jazz Ensemble and the Port City Big Band. He has also performed professionally with Percy Sledge on two occasions.

“Seriousness of Purpose, where art thou?”

By Shermarial A. Levine

As I walk through the atrium, library, and hallowed halls of this law center, I find myself in awe at the state of our student body. With finals quickly approaching, one would expect to see 1L's reading, worried law students, and stacks of books. Instead there are lounging 1L's, groups of giggling students, and a sense of whimsy flowing through the student body. That finals time blanket of silence that usually coats the library and common areas has been replaced with music, loud conversations, and distractions. So I ask my peers, “Seriousness of Purpose, where art thou?”

Former Chancellor Louis Berry, “initiated the “seriousness of purpose” axiom for law students” to be “demonstrated through class attendance, preparation, and participation in the academic life of the law school” between 1972 and 1974.¹ Today our professors have given us all the speeches about preparation and absorbing the material. Chancellor Pitcher and our Administration has stressed the importance of learning the skills needed to pass the bar, and our student leaders have showered us with emails about candor and professionalism. However, it seems as if all of their guidance has fallen on deaf ears.

Ramman Kenoun said, “All it takes is a single act of aggression to permanently wound a nation's reputation,” and over the course of this

semester our student bodies' reputation has become black and blue. There have been reports of disrespect of staff, a surplus of students being unprepared for class, and a disregard for the prestige of this institution. But it is not too late to tend to the wounds of our reputation.

With a little under 4 weeks of school left in this semester there is still time to turn things around. 3L's & 2L's let us become the change we want to see, and an example for the 1L's. It has been said, “A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.”² The First year class is the future of our institution and it is our duty to ensure that Southern University Law Center's future is a bright one. We challenge all 1L's to embrace the motto of a seriousness of purpose. Law school is more than the grades you get; it is also about establishing your reputation in the legal community, a reputation for being prepared, insightful, and respectful.

As this semester comes to a close I hope to see changes within the halls of our law center, and I know that the New Year will be one enriched with a “Seriousness of Purpose”. Good Luck on Finals.

¹ Southern University Law Center Website, “Former Leaders” (<http://www.sulc.edu/about/formerLeaders.htm>).

² John C. Maxwell Quotes (<http://thinkexist.com/quotation/a-leader-is-one-who-knows-the-way-goes-the-way/535658.html>).

CLINICAL EDUCATION NEWS BRIEFS:

Law Clinic Wins Case and Respect of Local Judge

By Crie Spears-De Leo, Editor-in-Chief

If you have ever wondered what are the advantages afforded to Student Attorneys under the leadership of legal practitioners such as Professors: North, Nash, Jackson, Washington, Burden, Listach, Burrell, and Fasullo, then this article is for you.

The students of Southern University Law Clinic recently won their first trial this semester. Following the presentation of the state's case, students Christopher Barcelona and Tiffany Clark immediately moved for Directed Verdict of Not Guilty. Relying on his partner's cross of the state's only witness, Mr. Barcelona, flushed with butterflies and nervousness (for those of us who know Barcelona, this is a first!) humbly approached the lectern to argue his motion. Needing a few deep breaths and encouraging words from Miss Clark, Mr. Barcelona successfully argued his motion. Following the trial, Judge Bonnie Jackson offered practical advice for both Clark and Barcelona as well as acknowledged the hard work and effort that Southern University Law Clinic has provided for the community.

Clinical Education Current Events

By Yoursheka George

Southern University Law Clinic is always looking for new, innovative ways to service our school. As such, we proudly introduce the Credit Report Clinic. This service is exclusively for law students. The clinic is designed to administer assistance in credit repair to aide with submission of Character and Fitness applications. Please visit the Department of Clinical Education for assistance.

Several students of Southern University Law Center's Clinical Education department have taken a keen interest in the area of domestic violence. In the very near future these students are looking to partner with local organizations with hopes of bringing awareness to this issue. These students have committed themselves to hosting seminars, preparing brochures for the general public, and researching ways to combat future occurrences. Additionally, these students are working tirelessly to develop more effective means of deterring domestic abuse batteries.



Congratulations

Congratulations to Professor Cynthia Reed who was recently honored by the Baton Rouge Bar for reaching the Quadruple Century Level for 500 hours plus of pro bono service.

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jurors, she is still guilty in the eyes of the public. Ms. Anthony has failed to gain employment and has enrolled in school as the release of her probation records reveals.

In another case of “guilty before innocent”, Louisiana State University football player, Jordan Jefferson fell victim to the criminal justice system. On August 18, 2011, Jordan Jefferson was involved in a bar fight in which many eyewitnesses came forward stating that Mr. Jefferson did not initiate the fight but was only defending himself and his teammates. This bar fight was a result of Mr. Jefferson being called a nigger and a continuance of harassment from the individual, as told by eyewitness testimony. Even with this testimony, legal authorities seized over forty pairs of Mr. Jefferson's tennis shoes. Is this upholding the presumption of innocent until proven guilty or is this favoring “guilty until proven innocent?” Mr. Jefferson was originally charged with serious offenses, one being a felony offense of second-degree battery. Mr. Jefferson has not yet been convicted of any crime but his charge of second-degree battery has been lowered to a misdemeanor, simple battery. However, his life will never be the

same because of this negative social media attention and public opinion. When the serious charges against Mr. Jefferson were amended, Mr. Jefferson was allowed back on the football team and was even allowed to play in the next home game. When Mr. Jefferson ran onto the field, he received “boos” and a very unfriendly welcome back. Since then, his treatment has gradually been changing for the better.

So, how do we fix this? How do we maintain the presumption of innocent until proven guilty? We must first realize we are all guilty of participating in the unjust and unfair treatment. Once we realize that, we can then place ourselves in the accused's shoes and it is at that moment we realize our participation in such activities not only harms that one individual but society. When we realize that, we can then avoid engaging and actively participating, and instead encourage one another to not use social media to pull others down. It is then that the defendant will truly receive a fair trial. Until then, we will all continue to suffer from the consequences of allowing the social media to interfere with the proceedings of the criminal justice system.

Seriousness of Purpose

The Real Estate Law Society



By Paul Hanchett, President

The Real Estate Law Society is a professional student organization dedicated to serving its members, Southern University Law Center, and the surrounding community. Our mission is to provide our membership with opportunities to explore real estate legal interests with practical, live examples including, but not limited to,

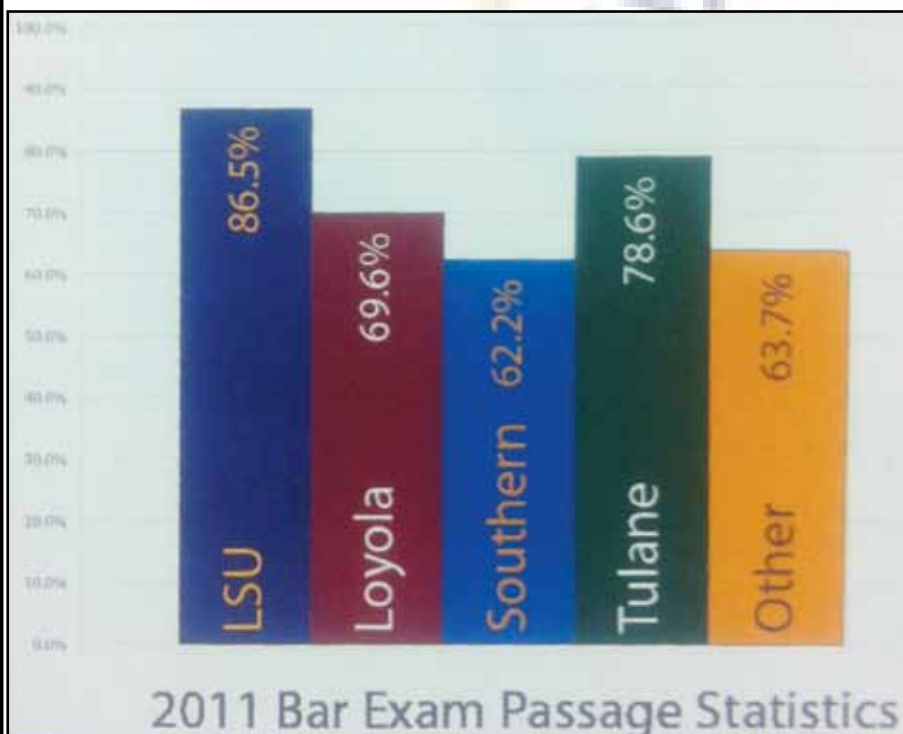
interacting with real estate attorneys and other professionals involved in land use, financing, investment, litigation, policy and development. On September 27, 2011, The Real Estate Law Society had its first Real Estate Development Symposium. The symposium focused on the development process from start to finish and the attorney's role in the process. Guest speakers included Mr.

Mike Juneau, Mr. Neil Juneau and Mr. Ryan Juneau of the Le Triomphe Property Group. We received great feedback from this event and look forward to further enhancing the student body's knowledge base as it pertains to the real estate industry. Future events will include a tour of the clerk of court's office, an exclusive networking event, and a Real Estate

Finance Symposium. We are excited about the opportunity to provide a substantive contribution to Southern University Law Center's mission. If you have any questions about the organization or would like to join, please email Paul Hanchett – President at phanchett@sulc.edu, or Rachel Chandler – Secretary at rhandler@sulc.edu.

TRENDING TOPICS

2011 BAR EXAM PASSAGE STATISTICS



law schools surveyed in *U.S. News and World Report* (2011)

- Ranking in the top 20 percent of the nation's accredited law schools in favorable student/faculty ratio (13:1)
- Ranking in the top ten among law schools for competitiveness and diverse faculty and student body in the 2000 edition of *The Princeton Review: The Best Law Schools*.
- Ranking third among institutions awarding law degrees to African Americans by *Black Issues in Higher Education* (2000)
- Ranking first among accredited law schools in the country for women-friendliness in a *Woman's Guide to Law Schools* (1999).

SERVICE TO VETERANS NEEDED

Unfortunately, too many of those who answered the call of duty find themselves unable to access needed services or lack the resources to hire an attorney. Our assistance is required to set right this wrong. On behalf of the American Bar Association, I urge you answer this call.

If you are interested in serving the legal needs of veterans please show your appreciation in action, not just words, by visiting the ABA website or forward an inquiry via email to volunteerforveterans@americanbar.org.

Graphic by Hayne Caliva, *The Civilian*

If the data noted on this chart concerns you, I urge you to examine the resume of SULC:

- Ranking in the top 10 for most popular law schools out of 190 law schools surveyed in *U.S. News and World Report* (2011)
- Ranking number one for most financial value at graduation out of 190