

A COMMUNITY OF JUSTICE

# CUNY LAW

SPRING 2007

Defending  
Immigrants'  
Rights

A man with a goatee, wearing a blue hooded sweatshirt and a brown textured sweater, is holding a white sign with both hands. The sign has the text "NO HUMAN IS ILLEGAL" in bold, black, serif capital letters. He is looking directly at the camera. In the background, there are bookshelves filled with books and papers.

NO HUMAN  
IS ILLEGAL

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*Cover photo: Valmiki Reyes, 3L, by Andrew Sta. Ana, 3L*



# Dear Friends,

As you know, CUNY School of Law is an academic institution devoted to the public interest. Our mission is to graduate highly skilled attorneys who will practice "Law in the Service of Human Needs." We are proud to send a greater percentage of our graduates into public interest work than any other law school in the nation. We are also proud to have an outstanding clinical program that is consistently ranked among the top ten in the nation.

At CUNY School of Law, we aim to help the legal profession better reflect the extraordinary diversity of New York City. We are one of the most diverse law schools in the country, and we have a special commitment to immigrant populations.

We ourselves are a multi-cultural community. Every year at graduation, for example, students welcome their parents and friends in their native languages. Last year, students spoke in Arabic, Creole, Danish, Farsi, French, Irish, German, Gujarati, Hebrew, Italian, Korean, Spanish, and Urdu.

Many of our students, faculty, and staff are first and second generation immigrants from all over the world. They hail from Afghanistan, Albania, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Gambia, Georgia, Guyana, Honduras, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, St. Lucia, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad, Uganda, United Kingdom, Ukraine, and Vietnam, among other countries.

Professor Sameer Ashar's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic, which you will read about in this issue, is one of the most popular in the Law School. Our Immigrant Initiatives program, also featured herein, helps thousands of people in the larger New York City metropolitan area navigate the immigration process and obtain United States citizenship.

In this issue of the *Magazine* you will read a lot of exciting news about CUNY School of Law. I encourage you to pay special attention to the story on page 11 about the Carn-

egie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which recently issued a national, book-length report on the status of legal education entitled, *Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law*. In its study, the Carnegie Foundation heralds CUNY School



Dean Michelle J. Anderson and a lion celebrate the Lunar New Year

of Law as an exemplar of the kind of legal education that effectively integrates theory and practice. We are the most frequently and favorably cited law school in the Report. This is excellent news that everyone in the CUNY Law family can take pride in.

Let me just highlight a few bits of faculty news that materialized as we were going to press:

The New York State legislature has just elected Professor Natalie Gomez-Velez to the New York State Board of Regents. Chief Judge Kaye also appointed Natalie to serve as a member of the Independent Judicial Election Qualification Commission.

Professor David Nadvorney is the new editor of *The Learning Curve*, the newsletter of law school academic support professionals. He is also the new editor of the Academic Support blog.

Professor Ruthann Robson will be the keynote speaker at an upcoming conference at the University of British Columbia entitled, "Standard Margin: Contemporary Issues in Canadian Law & Sexuality."

Professor Rebecca Bratspies has done a whirlwind tour of conference presentations this semester, what she calls the "thinking big thoughts marathon." First, she co-organized the Fifth Annual University of Idaho International Law Symposium entitled, "Free Trade or Fair: The Softwood Lumber Dispute and Beyond," and presented an article at it entitled "Can Fisheries Survive Free Trade." Seven days later she was at Yale Law School presenting another article entitled, "Rethinking Decision-making in International Environmental Law: A Process-Oriented Approach to Sustainable Development," at the Fifth Annual Young Scholar's Conference for the *Yale Journal of International Law*. Five days later, Rebecca was in Kansas presenting another article entitled, "The American Approach to Regulating GMOs," at the "Genetically Modified Organisms: Philosophy, Science, and Policy" Symposium for the *Kansas Journal of Law and Public Policy*.

Professor Sidney Harring will be the Fulbright-Lund Distinguished Chair in Human Rights Law at the University of Lund in Sweden next year as well.

Congratulations to these outstanding faculty members!

It is a great time for CUNY School of Law. As the new Dean, I was pleased to be able to participate in the CUNY School of Law's annual Chinese Lunar New Year celebration, which the above photo memorializes. This is the Year of the Pig, an auspicious time for everyone. I understand that the pig in the Chinese zodiac represents purity of heart, honesty, tolerance, loyalty, fertility, and patience. These are great traits for all of us to celebrate as we devote ourselves to public interest law and the strength of immigrant communities everywhere.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle J. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'S' at the end.

Michelle J. Anderson  
Dean and Professor of Law



## A Conversation with Clinic Director Susan Bryant on Immigration Programs at CUNY Law

**S**ue Bryant has led the clinical program at the Law School to national prominence. She is recognized as a leader in clinical legal education because of her scholarly work on cultural competence and collaboration and, more importantly, because she has been a kind and insightful mentor for generations of teachers in the field. In addition to founding the Battered Women's Rights Clinic with Maria Arias at CUNY Law and nurturing all of the other strong clinical programs through periods of transition and growth, Bryant has played a central role in the development of immigration offerings. In 1997, together with Janet Calvo and former Dean Kris Glen, and with funding from George Soros' Open Society Institute, she created Immigrant Initiatives as an umbrella organization for the immigration programs offered at the Law School, including the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic.

### **Q: Why did the Law School start Immigrant Initiatives?**

**A:** We recognized that we were accumulating expertise on how law schools could affect change in and on behalf of immigrant communities. We had a sense that students brought the modern immigrant experience to the Law School and would return to practice in their communities. We thought that it made sense to think conceptually about our educational offerings and the services we were providing as initiatives or models that could be replicated at other law schools and in legal services offices. For example, the work that I did with [Yale Law School clinician] Jean Koh Peters and others on cultural competence stemmed from Immigrant Initiatives. Also, the adoption of a community education and individual counseling model of service provision was the result of our work in this area. At the same time, former Dean Kris Glen was guiding the development of the Community Legal Resource Network, and the immigration practice group was a natural fit for our graduates and complemented what we were doing at the Law School. We hired CUNY Law graduate, Alizabeth Newman, '91, and Immigrant Initiatives was born.

### **Q: How has your work in this area stimulated your scholarship?**

**A:** One project of Immigrant Initiatives was the creation of models to integrate

immigrants' perspectives throughout the curriculum. Several CUNY faculty, together with faculty from other law schools, took responsibility for creating these models. I worked on how to integrate immigrant perspectives in clinical education. We sponsored a conference at the Law School and asked participants to present these teaching models. I worked with Jean on the model that eventually led to teaching materials and my article, *The Five Habits: Building Cross-Cultural Competence in Lawyers*, in the *Clinical Law Review*. Early in the course of developing the habits, Jean and I realized that negotiating language difference was a key component of cross-cultural competence, but we had to carve it out because it represented a project in and of itself. I recognized that lawyers were representing limited English proficiency clients in ways that undermined the cases and the relationships. As I have done more research on language access issues in recent years, it has become clear that professional interpretation is essential because students' or family members' language capabilities are outside the "domain" of law and legal process. My bilingual colleagues in the Clinic also raised the bar for how we ought to be providing services to immigrant clients. The profession as a whole has gotten more sophisticated in this area in recent years, and I have been happy to bring, through trainings and continuing

legal education, the CUNY experience to legal services, judicial organizations, and other law school clinics. It is essential that clinical legal scholars use their expertise and capacity to develop best practices and new models of service provision and I feel privileged to have been able to do so in this area.

### **Q: How are you re-visioning Immigrant Initiatives in 2007?**

**A:** The Law School can be at the forefront of immigrant legal services in New York City on at least two dimensions: first, we can be the preeminent community education provider as immigration laws are changed in Washington. Second, we can be a leader in developing effective models of service provision, including community education, partnerships with grassroots organizational partners, counseling and referral, policy advocacy, and individual casework. As the City Council disperses resources for immigrant legal services to numerous organizations throughout the city, there is great need for the development and sharing of best practices in this area. I hope that we can continue to provide good services through the Clinic and be self-conscious about ways in which our programs can help transform legal services elsewhere. We will continue to build collaborative programs between students, faculty, and alums to these ends.

—Sameer Ashar

## AALS Visits CUNY Law

From March 25-28, a site team of evaluators from the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) visited CUNY Law School as part of our application to become a member of the organization. The AALS site team visited classes and talked to students, faculty, and staff about the Law School.

The AALS, the national learned society for law teachers and law schools, and the principal representative of legal education to the federal government and other national higher education organizations and learned societies, is the central resource for the "improvement of the quality of legal education" (see [www.aals.org](http://www.aals.org)). Founded in 1900, the institution has been led by such progressive luminaries as feminists Deborah Rhode and Herma Kay Hill, critical legal theorist Mark Tushnet, and critical race theorists Gerald Torres and Emma Coleman Jordan.

The AALS has taken a leadership role in pursuing equality of opportunity in legal education and in the legal profession for all persons. It has been a leader in fight-

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ing for affirmative action in admissions and against the military's discriminatory policies on gays and lesbians. The AALS has issued a number of important special reports, including "Pursuing Equal Justice:

Law Schools and the Provision of Legal Services," "Learning To Serve" (promoting pro bono service in legal education), "Perspectives on Diversity: AALS Special Commission on Meeting the Challenges of Diversity in an Academic Democracy," and "The Racial Gap in the Promotion to Tenure of Law Professors."

Membership in the AALS will enhance the Law School's standing in the legal academy and will enhance the value of a CUNY Law degree. In addition, the presence of CUNY Law School as a full member of the AALS will further the influence that we can have on the direction of legal education across the country.

As CUNY Law School enters its 24th year, membership in the AALS will cement our important role in legal education, as reflected in the recently released Carnegie Foundation Report on legal education. It is a well deserved coming of age. ●

## Anthony Farley Named 11th Haywood Burns Chair



Anthony Farley, 11th Haywood Burns Chair  
Photo by V. Hill

Professor Anthony Farley of Boston College Law School has been named the 11th Haywood Burns Chair for 2006-2007. For over a decade, the Burns Chair has brought to CUNY Law distinguished scholars, practitioners, and activists whose work continues former Dean Haywood Burns' lifelong commitment to "Law in the Service of Human Needs."

Acting Associate Dean Pamela Edwards encouraged Farley to apply. "He is a dynamic teacher, and he brings a different perspective to our faculty and students in how he looks at race and class," said Edwards.

As Burns Chair, Farley teaches two classes: Critical Legal Theory, and Law and Psychoanalysis. "I am tremendously happy in the CUNY Law community and with the absolutely brilliant participants in the two classes."

Farley, likewise, made a strong impression on students when he spoke this past September on the current state of civil rights, using the federal government's in-

adequate response to Hurricane Katrina as a central theme. He argued that Amtrak could have been used to rescue many of New Orleans' poorer population. Instead there was great resistance to offer such aid to the dispossessed, and the roots of the Federal response reflect the class and race relationships of the nation.

Farley's work in legal theory, constitutional law, race, and slavery has appeared in numerous academic journals and anthologies. He hopes that his writings "show the ways in which law is implicated in the terrible suffering occasioned by the false freedoms of the present moment."

Asked what being the Burns Chair means to him, Farley says: "It means a great deal to me, personally and politically, to hold the Burns Chair. Haywood Burns was a beloved, brilliant scholar and activist who tragically passed on too soon. The Burns Chair is a way to carry on his work. I am very excited and proud to carry it on this year. There is no professional honor that has ever meant as much to me." ●



## An Evening with Theodore M. Shaw

*Director-Counsel and President of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)*

**T**ed Shaw could have talked about how instrumental his role was in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* case. He could have listed all his achievements as Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP LDF). But on the evening of January 30, 2007, Shaw humbly entered CUNY School of Law, luggage in hand, and apologized for being late. His opening statement:

"I'm ready," he said. "Tell me what is on your mind."

Shaw was interviewed by another notable advocate, NAACP - LDF Chair (and celebrity spouse of Spike Lee), Tonya Lewis Lee, Esq., on behalf of CUNY Law's Black Law Students Association. The interview covered much important historical ground,



Ted Shaw, Director-Counsel and President of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF)

from the *Brown* case to the Michigan affirmative action admissions case in which Shaw served as head counsel for a coalition that represented African-American and Latino student activists. In 2003, the U.S. Su-

preme Court heard that case (along with one challenging the use of affirmative action at the University of Michigan Law School) and ruled in favor of diversity as a compelling state interest. Shaw discussed the present Louisville and Seattle integration cases currently pending in the Supreme Court. He also spoke of his love for Haywood Burns and CUNY Law School.

He reminded us that race is still an issue – that even when an institution creates policies that address class-based inequalities, minorities are often still harmed in the process. He reminded us that CUNY could be like other schools and just be "good," or separate itself as Howard University Law School once did – and not get caught up in what more traditional schools deem as satisfactory, but he held the bar higher for us. Shaw inspired us to remember why we came to CUNY Law and of the legacy we will represent when we leave here to take up our work.

—Iffy Ike, 2L

## 2007 Lunar New Year Celebration



**T**he Law School hosted its annual celebration of the Lunar New Year on February 28, 2007, at a downtown Flushing restaurant. The luncheon was attended by over 200 members of the Flushing and Law School communities and honored Ti-Hua Chang, WCBS reporter; Peter Koo, President of the Flushing Chinese Business Association; and Hon. Toko Serita '89, Judge of the Criminal Court of the City of New York.

*Pictured from left to right are:* Helen Marshall, Queens Borough President; Mabel Law, Executive Director of the Downtown Flushing Business Improvement District; Peter Koo, President of the Flushing Chinese Business Association; Michelle J. Anderson, Dean, CUNY School of Law; Judge Toko Serita '89, Criminal Court of the City of New York, Kings County; Judge Randall Eng, NYS Supreme Court Justice, Criminal Term, Queens County; Ti-Hua Chang, WCBS reporter; Grace Meng, Esq.; and Frank Shih, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, CUNY School of Law. ●

# Rhonda Copelon Awarded 2006 Ruth G. Schapiro Memorial Award

**R**honda Copelon, a member of the CUNY School of Law faculty for over twenty years and co-founder and director of the International Women's Human Rights Clinic (IWHR), has been named the 2006 Ruth G. Schapiro Memorial Award recipient. Established in 1992 in memory of Ruth G. Schapiro, the first chair of the Committee on Women in the Law, the award honors a New York State Bar Association member who has made a remarkable contribution to addressing issues affecting women.

Professor Copelon explains that, in her advocacy for women's rights, she has sought to be responsive to the intersecting inequalities—such as race, poverty, and sexuality—that affect women's lives. Before coming to CUNY, Professor Copelon played a crucial role in the women's rights movement of the 1970s as a staff attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York. There, she worked on issues surrounding abortion and the prevention of sterilization abuse, as well as litigating both civil rights and international human rights cases, including several that most law students read: *People v. Liberta*, which invalidated NY's marital rape exception, and *Harris v. McRae*, which challenged the cut-off of Medicaid funds for abortions. Copelon also co-counseled cases challenging a broad range of issues including racism, governmental misconduct, and human rights abuses, leading to the landmark case of *Filartiga v. Pena*, which opened federal courts to international human rights claims.

Copelon co-founded the IWHR clinic in 1992 at CUNY in recognition of the fact that there was a need for legal support for a growing international women's human rights movement as well as a need to bring human rights into U.S. practice. IWHR works with activist partners here and abroad and is viewed in the international community as a non-governmental organization with legal expertise. At the same time, about half of the clinic's work involves challenging U.S. vi-



Rhonda Copelon, Director of the  
International Women's Rights Clinic

olations and resistance to applying human rights here. Under Copelon's direction and guidance, students involved in IWHR have worked on Alien Tort Claims Act cases, amicus briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court (*Bzonkala v. Morrison* and *Town of Castle Rock*

**“All our work has groundbreaking aspects and among our goals is to engage students in the process of lawyering to change both the law and the conditions of peoples' lives.”**

*v. Gonzales*) as well as before international courts and tribunals, such as the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and former Yugoslavia.

Professor Copelon has supervised a variety of work with human rights treaty bodies. The clinic's work has resulted in the

legal recognition of rape and sexual violence as crimes of genocide and torture. Copelon also supervised clinic students' assistance to the women's caucus at various UN conferences including the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing) and their drafting of the Judgement of the NGO initiated International Women's Criminal Tribunal on Japan's Military Sexual Slavery (“comfort women”). Copelon explains that, “All our work has groundbreaking aspects and among our goals is to engage students in the process of lawyering to change both the law and the conditions of peoples' lives.”

Professor Copelon is a board member of the Center for Constitutional Rights and the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative. She has served on the Advisory Board of the Women's Program of Human Rights Watch, and was a co-founder of and legal advisor to the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice. She has also given seminars in gender and international law for judges of the ICC, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, international prosecutors, and activists on the ground.

Professor Copelon has recently been awarded a Fulbright and will be teaching this semester at the Human Rights Center at the University of Chile Law School. There, she also plans on continuing her research on how legal changes that have resulted in understanding sexual violence as torture have affected policy makers and victimized women and will be working with an NGO on approaches to decriminalizing abortion in Chile. She will return to IWHR in fall of 2007.

On her experiences at CUNY and within the clinic, Copelon says: “I consider that one of the luckiest things in my life is that I am at CUNY Law School and I work with students who bring a genuine commitment to social justice. It is a privilege and part of my life's work to pass on what I have learned about being a movement lawyer so that students can carry the work on in their own lives, their own way, and their own time. —Joanna Donbeck, 2L



## Cuomo Appoints Jenny Rivera as Civil Rights Deputy Attorney General

Professor Jenny Rivera, a member of the CUNY School of Law faculty since 1997, has been appointed Special Deputy Attorney General for Civil Rights for Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo.

Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo could not have appointed a more qualified individual for the position. Professor Rivera, a native New Yorker and “Lower-Eastsider,” has both the passion and expertise to vigorously advance what she describes as an “aggressive, affirmative enforcement agenda.” Her public interest career includes legal work in women’s rights, education, employment discrimination, and language discrimination. Professor Rivera is a former member of the New York City Commission on Human Rights and was an administrative law judge in the New York State Division of Human Rights. In addition, Professor Rivera litigated federal and state class actions when she worked as Associate Counsel for the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund. She also clerked in the Southern District of New York for Judge Sonia Sotomayor, who currently sits on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. Professor Rivera has also received numerous awards for her service and advocacy work in the Latina community.

Rivera explains that there is a theme running through Cuomo’s ambitious civil rights agenda: “This is about making people’s lives better and is focused on enforcing laws to protect people who are targets of discrimination and violence: people of color, women of all colors, poor people, and sexual minorities.” Professor Rivera is optimistic about the work that will result from putting more resources into the Civil Rights Bureau and the creation of her position: “By creating this position and expanding the Civil Rights Bureau, Attorney General Andrew M. Cuomo has sent a message that civil rights is a priority, discrimination is unlawful, and he will vigorously enforce the laws.” —Joanna Donbeck, 2L

## CLRN is on the Move

Two thousand seven, a year of hope and uncertainty for immigrants, ushers in growth and enhanced programming at the Community Legal Resource Network (CLRN), especially for our many immigration lawyers and other members who benefit from access to this crucial field of public service law. The year began with welcoming Lisa Reiner-Sotelo as CLRN’s new, full-time Associate Director. A 1990 CUNY Law graduate, Reiner-Sotelo brings to CLRN her experiences as a staff attorney with a non-profit immigration legal services office and in her own community-based solo immigration law practice.

In the last several months, CLRN has

in different aspects of the law. We have members in solo practice and small offices and members running and participating in free legal service programs for immigrants. CLRN’s range of practitioners provides exceptional mentoring for our members, often realized on CLRN’s busy listserv.

Nearly 50 members make up the newly-configured Immigration Practice Group at CLRN. Led by Reiner-Sotelo, and attended by members who graduated in 1986 through 2006, the group met for the first time on February 8, 2007. We look forward to regular meetings of this group offering valuable Continuing Legal Education (CLE) programming and a forum for case discussions.

CLRN is offering its immigration lawyer members a variety of opportunities to provide much-needed legal services and to expose their practices to growing potential client bases. We are working on programming at trusted community sites, like schools and churches, where CLRN member attorneys provide informative talks to immigrant community members and individual counseling where needed. CLRN member attorneys are



Gurpal Singh, 2L, Acting Executive Director of SEVA Immigrant Community Advocacy Project and CLRN Associate Director Lisa Reiner-Sotelo '90

welcomed 40 new members from a variety of practice areas with differing levels of experience. Our member attorneys are CLRN’s lifeblood. We are an organization poised to provide vital support to our member attorneys who roll up their sleeves and serve communities-in-need by providing high-quality, affordable legal services.

Among CLRN members who devote their practices to serving the needs of immigrant communities, we have a wide range of experience and expertise. Some are brand new and some have practiced well over a decade. We serve different ethnic communities and specialize

also getting funding for representing clients-in-need. Please contact Reiner-Sotelo at [lisa.reiner-sotelo@mail.law.cuny.edu](mailto:lisa.reiner-sotelo@mail.law.cuny.edu) for further information.

*The Director of CLRN is Fred Rooney (CUNY Law 1986). CLRN was created by the Law School and supports graduates as they become solo practitioners or work in small community-based organizations. CLRN provides a range of services that include legal research and continuing education for members. It is one of the innovative ways the Law School provides support for its graduates in their mission to increase access to social justice. ●*



## Alumni/ae Reception

Marnie Berk '96 and her spouse, Jon Silvan, hosted an Alumni/ae Reception to welcome Dean Anderson to the Law School community on March 6, 2007, in a gorgeous loft at the Global Strategy Group in Manhattan. More than simply welcoming the new dean, the event was a chance to gather alumni/ae from every graduating class and celebrate CUNY School of Law and its recent accomplishments.



Denise Holzka '96, Joanna Piepgrass '96, and Host Marnie Berk '96



David Palmer '06, Professor Penny Andrews, and Iván Pantoja '06



Admarie Llewellyn '95, Gregorio Mayers '94, Maribel Martinez Gunter '95, Jehanne Black '97 and Guest



Arthur Aidala '92, Natalia Antrobus '92, Dean Michelle J. Anderson, and Josh Hanshaft '92

## Chris Nugent '96: Immigration Visionary

Chris Nugent is a graduate of CUNY School of Law, class of 1996. In more than 15 years in the legal profession, Nugent has established himself as a leading expert and practitioner in immigration and refugee law. Nugent is currently a Senior Counsel in the Community Services Team at Holland & Knight LLP, the largest full-time pro bono program of any law firm in the country, and in 2004, he was awarded the Daniel Levy Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement in Immigration Law.

Nugent's path to immigration and refugee law began when he moved from San Diego to the rough and tumble of Brooklyn with the sole purpose of attending CUNY Law because of its commitment to public interest law. "I pursued internships and summer clerkships in immigration law at Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York and the American Friends Service Committee in both Miami and Newark," Nugent says. "After graduating from CUNY, I relocated to Southern California to work for two years as a National Association for Public Interest Law Fellow in community economic development efforts with Mexican and Guatemalan indigenous farm workers in the areas of child care, interpreter services, food security, and education. It was inspiring to work so closely with members of the indigenous communities facilitating the tools to empowerment and self-realization. Together, we built community gardens for food security, provided the federal and state court systems with certified interpreters of indigenous languages, trained and licensed farm worker women as child care providers, and worked to prevent attrition of farm worker children from public education."

Eventually Nugent transitioned to the American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Immigration in Washington, D.C.,

as the Director. While at the ABA, Nugent finalized the negotiation of immigration detention standards with the Department of Justice for the burgeoning population of over 200,000 immigration detainees and engaged the ABA to focus its attention and work on the plight of over 8,000 unaccompanied refugee and immigrant children arriving on our shores without parents or guardians.



Chris Nugent '96 and Angelina Jolie celebrate the launch of the National Center for Refugee and Immigration Children, one of the pro bono projects Holland & Knight LLP supports.

Now at Holland and Knight, LLP, Nugent is involved, at any given time, in approximately 50 different matters with attorneys and paralegals in offices around the country. "We employ a two-part test for case/project acceptance," he says. "It must be both beautiful and impossible, and it must have a positive impact on law and policy. It has been a fascinating ride, from working on Capitol Hill on comprehensive immigration reform and other immigration legislation to individual client services including, for example, most recently, securing the release of a United States citizen falsely charged with terrorism in Vietnam; Iraqis seeking refugee protection in the United States or abroad from persecution by the insurgents; foreign

diplomats defecting to the United States based on their opposition to their governments; gays and lesbians fleeing life-threatening harm including execution and life-imprisonment because of their sexual identity; and helping unaccompanied non-citizen children facing uncertain fates if deported."

Nugent acknowledged how difficult it has been to deal with the Department of Homeland Security and the impact of the "War on Terror" on immigration policy in the United States. "Immigration law and practice have become immensely challenging post-9/11," Nugent says. "Criminal law practitioners now say that immigration law has become as challenging as death penalty litigation when considering how high the stakes can be for people fleeing persecution and torture, subject to what many experts consider an arbitrary and capricious administrative adjudication system."

Nugent's current work spans troubleshooting the perilous situations for refugees abroad, to advocating to Congress and the Executive Branch on immigration and refugee policy issues, to direct representation of individual clients in administrative and federal matters. "Each venue has its own set of challenges," Nugent says. "In international matters, real politics sometimes trump humanitarian concerns to the detriment of individuals and classes." In individual cases, Nugent believes, the adjudicatory system can appear arbitrary and capricious as applied to specific clients. "However," he adds, "the wide variety of my work and distinct venues keep me riveted. And in the end, Don Quixote is vindicated when we are able to achieve positive reforms in law and policy and justice for individual clients."

—Ting Ting Cheng, 1L





## Kavitha Pawria '03: On the Frontlines for Immigrants' Rights

**A** neighborhood in Jackson Heights bustles with vendors selling curried lamb, tacos, and Islamic books. Taxis scoot by and the 7 Train rumbles above ground on Roosevelt Avenue. Business owners, mostly Desi (of South Asian descent), open up their restaurants, sari, and gold shops for the day.

After an hour-long commute from Brooklyn, Kavitha Pawria climbs four flights of stairs to her small, cramped office at Desis Rising Up and Moving (DRUM). DRUM is a member-run, grassroots community organization of mostly women that advises and organizes low-income, primarily undocumented, South Asian and Muslim immigrants – most of whom have been affected by detention and deportation in the post-9/11 era of the United States' "War on Terror."

Pawria joined DRUM in 2004, when she received an Open Society Institute Community Fellowship to develop the "Azaadi Legal Defense Project," where she employed multiple strategies for fostering community-led policy change. She stayed on as Legal and Policy Organizer of the Immigrant Justice Program, which encompasses community organizing, leadership and campaign development, media work, legal referrals, local, national and international coalition work, and an Immigrant Resource Center. She also serves as part-time coordinator for Immigrant Communities in Action – a grassroots, New York City-wide

coalition of diverse immigrant communities, and is a consultant with CONNECT, an organization dedicated to the prevention and elimination of family and gender violence. Despite working long hours for little pay, Pawria's passion is sustained by her commitment to developing models of accountable community lawyering within movements for justice.

Pawria is from an East Indian immigrant family and grew up in Cornwall, a small city outside of Montreal, where she helped to run her family's small motel and restaurant business. She moved to the United States 12 years ago, where she graduated from Cornell University in 2000 and CUNY Law School in 2003 with a focus on international human rights law. As a law student, Pawria engaged in policy change with a law reform group in Australia focusing on indigenous rights. She also worked with the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York, where she focused on human rights litigation. Pawria received the Haywood Burns Award in 2001 and the National Association for Women Lawyers Award in 2003 for her dedication to civil rights work.

This tireless community lawyer and savvy political organizer is seemingly shy, until she begins talking about current government policies which she deems "outrageous," such as the conflation of "immigration procedures with Homeland Security." Pawria recalled her first case at DRUM of a woman who was detained and

deported after visiting the Department of Motor Vehicles to renew her driver's license because her Social Security number was invalid.

Pawria worked with the family to address their immediate legal needs and to "highlight patterns of inter-agency collaboration and launch a campaign to exert pressure on the DMV not to collaborate with Homeland Security, given the massive impact on immigrants who rely on driver's licenses to earn a living, and the devastating increase in detention and deportation resulting from DMV turning immigrants in to the Department of Homeland Security."

Pawria explained, "Outside of a grassroots context, this case would have been treated as just another deportation case, and no policy change could come of it. Even if an individual lawyer wanted to do something bigger with the case, they often don't have the relationships or experience to organize around it in the way a community-based organization does."

As a lawyer and policy analyst-cum-community organizer, Pawria has the relationships and know-how to exact policy change. Kavitha has many cases still to fight and sees her role this way: "Lawyers must not only understand the consequences of the law, but must also be deeply connected to the grassroots in order to move our communities from individual to collective action. Using the law is only one tactic of many." ●

## Hon. Bryanne A. Hamill '90: Giving Back to Move Forward

Judge Bryanne A. Hamill '90, entered CUNY Law at age 32 (while the mother of two young children), after a 10-year career as a psychiatric nurse, which included working in inpatient psychiatric hospitals and outpatient day hospitals in New Orleans and New York. During the mid 1980s, while raising a young family in Bermuda, Judge Hamill volunteered her services counseling victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, and was instrumental in founding Bermuda's first domestic violence shelter. Upon graduation in 1990, she practiced law as an Assistant District Attorney in the Bronx County District Attorney's Office, primarily investigating and prosecuting child abuse, domestic violence, and sex crimes. During her three years immediately prior to her 2001 appointment to the Family Court bench, Judge Hamill was law clerk to Bronx Supreme Court Justice Joseph Fisch. She currently presides over child protective and related proceedings in Kings County Family Court.

Judge Hamill has given back to the Law School in a multitude of ways over the years. Because she understands there are tight restrictions on funds from the public purse, she has donated generously to the general fund of the Law School. She has also given funds for specific purposes. She contributed toward the Elder Law Clinic. She donated funds over multiple years for the placement of a social worker to assist the entire Clinic. Judge Hamill appreciated that much of the legal work the students do for the Clinic clients requires a multi-disciplinary approach, which includes the services of a social worker. To honor the 20th Anniversary of the School, Judge Hamill funded a scholarship to help a student pursue a career in family law in New York. Most recently, she provided



Hon. Bryanne A. Hamill '90

**Judge Hamill wants to ensure the success of our young Law School so that it can continue to provide for others what it provided to her – an excellent public interest legal education.**

funds to establish a Family Law Summer Fellowship program.

Judge Hamill earmarks substantial portions of her funds for scholarships and fellowships in family law and court practice, because as a family court judge she is aware that this is hugely important, but not well-known, public interest work, representing some of our most vulnerable litigants in the court system (e.g., abused and neglected children, juvenile delinquents, vic-

tims of domestic violence, and parents whose children have been removed by the government). She recognizes that family law is typically not well-paid and hopes that her funds will help students be able to practice in it. Judge Hamill noted that she is particularly compelled to invest in CUNY Law students because they are dedicated to ensuring that under-represented groups have access to justice. Additionally, she finds the passion of our students inspiring.

Judge Hamill also contributes to the School in other ways in order to sustain its mission. She takes part in judging CUNY Law's Moot Court competition, works with CUNY Law students as interns, and has made the journey back to her alma mater to give a panel presentation on family law. She has also previously served on the CUNY Law Alumni Association and Foundation Boards, and now serves on the CUNY Law Board of Visitors.

Judge Hamill gives her time and helps fund causes that she believes in. She also feels grateful for the education she received. In addition, it makes her feel good to give so that students can access opportunities they may not otherwise have. Judge Hamill wants to ensure the success of our young Law School so that it can continue to provide for others what it provided to her – an excellent public interest legal education.

—Shelley-Ann Quilty, 2L

### DONOR REPORT

**Our deepest and most sincere gratitude to all our donors and supporters! The Donor Report for the 2007 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2006- June 30, 2007) will be available in the next issue of the CUNY Law Magazine.**



# CUNY Law Lauded by Carnegie Foundation

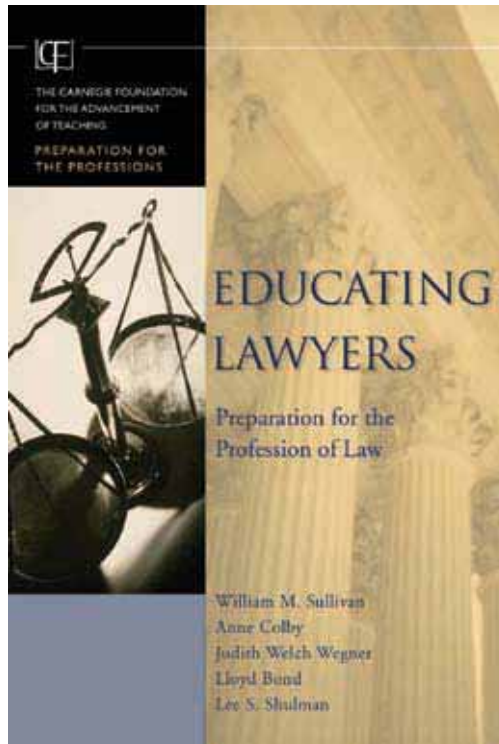
The prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has just completed a national assessment of the status of legal education. The comprehensive book, *"Educating Lawyers: Preparation for the Profession of Law,"* takes the legal academy to task for its over-reliance on Socratic, case-dialogue instruction. Law schools should teach students how to use their legal thinking in the context of the complexity of actual law practice. The Carnegie Foundation concludes, "Students need a dynamic curriculum that moves them back and forth between understanding and enactment, experience and analysis."

CUNY School of Law is the most cited exemplar of the best in legal education. It is lauded for providing students with what they need to become ethical practitioners in the profession. Along with NYU and Yale, CUNY Law is cited as employing a dynamic curriculum that engages both theory and practice. The Carnegie Foundation notes, "CUNY cultivates close interrelations between doctrinal and lawyering seminars in the first year and a heavy use of simulation throughout the curriculum. The school also provides extensive clinical experience linked to the lawyering sequence."

As a result of this study, various newspapers have reported on the new focus on clinical approaches to legal education. The *New York Law Journal's* headline read, "Report: Clinical Approach Is Cure for What Ails Legal Education," while the *Chronicle of Higher Education* read, "Carnegie Foundation Report Suggests More Focus on Clients, Less on Socratic Dialogues." The external world is beginning to share the visionary commitment to clinical education upon which the founders of CUNY built the Law School.

The Carnegie Foundation first describes our program:

*[W]hile their counterparts at the other schools around New York are typically in class with up to seventy or eighty of their fellow first-year stu-*



**Asked how CUNY, hardly a well-endowed, affluent institution, can afford to provide such an introduction to legal study when their more affluent competitor institutions obviously seek the economy of scale afforded by large first-year classes, CUNY administrators answered, "We cannot afford not to do it."**

—From The Carnegie Foundation Report

*dents, CUNY students spend much of their first year in seminar settings that are focused on linking legal theory to practice and in which contact between students and faculty is close and frequent. Asked how CUNY, hardly a well-endowed, affluent institution, can afford to provide such an introduction to legal study when their more affluent competitor institutions obviously seek the economy of scale afforded by large first-year classes, CUNY administrators answered, "We cannot afford not to do it." In part, they*

*"cannot afford not to" because CUNY was founded in 1983 with a vision ... to provide local students of limited means with access to a legal career, but particularly to serve the goals of social justice through the legal representation of the underrepresented, such as racial and cultural minorities and, increasingly, immigrant groups.*

The Carnegie Foundation then reports:

*At CUNY, the effort has been to devise means to equip students from groups underrepresented in the law to work effectively in a great cause: social justice and wider inclusion in U.S. society. ... At CUNY, individuals find their direction by contributing to a powerfully collective educational enterprise. ...[CUNY shows] the power of intentionally designed institutional pedagogy: for students, it is in both cases the school as a whole that educates, making teaching and learning more a shared concern than is typically the case in many other law schools.*

It concludes:

*From the student perspective, learning the law is an ensemble experience, its achievement a holistic effect. From the point of view of student learning, the apprenticeships of cognition, performance, and identity are not freestanding. Each contributes to a whole and takes part of its character from the relationship it has with the others. Because case-dialogue teaching is seldom explicitly connected with clinical teaching, few law schools achieve the full impact that an integrated ensemble could provide. ...[W]e believe legal education requires not simply more additions, but a truly integrative approach in order to provide students with a broad-based yet coherent beginning for their legal careers. It is the systematic effort to do this in their curriculum that makes programs like that at CUNY's law school so noteworthy.*

We are proud to be heralded by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for our innovative curriculum. A summary of the report is available at: [http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/files/elibrary/EducatingLawyers\\_summary.pdf](http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/files/elibrary/EducatingLawyers_summary.pdf).

# Guantánamo Bay:

## The Global Effects of Wrongful Detention, Torture and Unchecked Executive Power

### *A Symposium*



In many ways, it was a symposium about imaginary law: the Bush administration's willingness to invent or cherry-pick legal constructs to support legally unjustifiable behavior.

On Friday, March 23, 2007, the New York City Law Review along with CUNY School of Law; the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), which celebrated its fortieth anniversary; and the CUNY Student Senate presented the symposium, "Guantánamo Bay: The Global Effects of Wrongful Detention, Torture, and Unchecked Executive Power."

Over the course of four panels—International Law in American Courts, A War of All Dimensions, The Impact on Domestic Law, and Litigation in Progress—leading scholars and practitioners discussed the legal fiction under which Guantánamo Bay exists, the shifting justifications for its continued operation, and the impact of the "War on Terror" both at home and abroad, all of which have had devastating human consequences.

Joshua Coangelo-Bryan, attorney for detainee Jumah al-Dossari, described visiting his client in Guantánamo where he is kept in a nine-foot by twelve-foot sealed compartment with only one window, which is usually covered. The only way for his client to communicate with other human beings is by yelling through his cell's food

slot; al-Dossari has nothing to occupy his mind besides the Koran and a few letters from his family and attorneys. "What can I do to keep myself from going crazy?" al-Dossari asked Coangelo-Bryan right before al-Dossari's first suicide attempt, which Coangelo-Bryan witnessed. Al-Dossari has tried to kill himself three additional times and is now on suicide watch.

"The reality of Guantánamo now is that a majority of detainees are held in Supermax conditions," Coangelo-Bryan said.

Barry Kamins, President of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York, delivered forceful opening remarks, condemning the demonization of attorneys who represent Guantánamo detainees. "We should be embarrassed by our government's callous disregard of the rule of law and human rights," Kamins said.

Keynote speaker Jordan Paust, an international law expert and law professor at the University of Houston Law Center, noted that the countries involved with the War on Terror are already bound by treaties under which they can prosecute terrorists as war criminals. Instead of using these treaties, however, the Bush Administration has resorted to using "coerced interrogation, rendition, and forced disappearance—all of which are war crimes."

The Bush Administration has incurred criminal and civil liability through its actions, denigrated the United States' standing globally, and aided its enemies, Paust added. The documented use of dogs, cold cells, and waterboarding is "manifestly, patently illegal under international law," Paust said. "Are members of the executive branch above the law? Clearly, they are not."

Besides the monumental efforts of Law Review staff—including, most notably, Symposium Editor Muhammad Faridi—CUNY School of Law Professors Penelope Andrews, Ruthann Robson, and Sameer Ashar each chaired a panel, and Dean Michelle Anderson presented Shayne Kadidal, managing attorney of CCR's Guantánamo Global Justice project, with an award for CCR's fortieth anniversary.

"Don't forget that you could be my client," said Donna Newman, U.S. citizen Jose Padilla's attorney while he was designated an "enemy combatant" by the Bush Administration. "Don't forget that you could be taken off the streets."

For more information, please visit [www.nyclawreview.org](http://www.nyclawreview.org). If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the journal that will document this symposium, email [nyclr@mail.law.cuny.edu](mailto:nyclr@mail.law.cuny.edu) or call 718-340-4344.

—Paul Keefe, Editor-in-Chief,  
New York City Law Review



# Immigration “Reform”?

Congress and the President have promised immigration reform legislation. However, they have divergent views about what “reform” means, particularly regarding the estimated twelve million people in the United States who do not have permission to live and work in the U.S, sometimes referred to as “undocumented” aliens.

Demographic analysis reveals a complex and varied population. The Pew Center reports that 16% of the undocumented are children and 42% percent of undocumented adults are women. Many undocumented live in mixed-status families with citizens or legal permanent residents. There are 6.6 million families with an undocumented head or spouse; 41% of those families have children and 30% include citizen children. 56% of the unauthorized come from Mexico, 13% are from Asia, 6% from Europe and Canada, and 22% from other Latin American countries. The undocumented are employed in a variety of occupations: 10% in management, business, and professional occupations; 32% in service occupations; 12% in sales and administrative support; 19% in construction; 15% in production, installation, and repair; 8% in transportation and material moving; and 4% in farming.

While the undocumented constitute about 4.9% of the overall workforce, they constitute 21% of workers in private households, 14% in food manufacturing, 13% in farming, 13% in furniture production, and 12% in each of the following: construction, textiles, and food services.

Last year the House and Senate each passed immigration “reform” bills but did not agree on a final bill. This year the expected comprehensive immigration reform plan has yet to emerge. A major controversy is whether to provide a way for the undoc-

umented to obtain legal status. The bill that passed the House took an enforcement-only approach. It contained no pathway for the current undocumented to gain lawful status. Controversial provisions made mere unlawful presence in the United States a criminal, instead of a civil offense, and unlawful entry and presence were designated as felonies. It imposed criminal liability on persons or organizations that assisted unauthorized migrants, even on humanitarian grounds. Further, the bill mandated an employment eligibility verification system with increased penalties for employer violations.

The bill that passed the Senate included enforcement provisions, but also provided a way for undocumented persons to gain legal permanent resident status. It increased

gory for those who have been in the United States and employed since 2004. Those in this category would have to depart from the country if they wished to apply for legal status. The bill also created a new guest worker visa that would allow these workers to apply for resident status in the United States if they otherwise qualified.

President Bush’s 2007 State of the Union address outlined his proposal. He advocated measures for border security, criminal prosecution, forfeitures for the hiring of undocumented workers, and tamper-proof identification cards for employees. He urged the establishment of a temporary worker program tied to the needs of the American market that would bar those who did not return to their countries of origin.

He rejected an automatic pathway to permanent legal status for the undocumented, stating that the undocumented must pay a substantial penalty and go to the “back of the line” to apply for resident status.

Many advocates find flaws with all of these approaches. They argue that temporary worker programs create a population vulnerable to abuse and that a temporary status approach is unrealistic, particularly with regard to families that include citizen children. They urge a legalization program that eventually

allows resident status, citizenship and additional reforms in the current immigration system. Reform of family-based immigration requires expeditious unification for family members without regard to national origin or sexual orientation. Reform of employment-based immigration requires recognition of this country’s need for lower-skilled labor. Reform of refugee-based migration requires that the U.S. become a leader in providing asylum and refugee status grounded in humanitarian and not foreign policy concerns.

—Janet Calvo



Yogi Patel '06, Catherine Le '07, Iván Pantoja '07, Sunny Lee '07, and Jay Kim '07 at the April 10, 2006 New York City Mobilization Network for Immigrants Rights Rally

the number of people who could obtain legal status through family or employment in the future. It provided for eventual adjustment to resident status for two groups: those who entered the United States before the age of 16 and demonstrated certain educational or equivalent achievements, and persons who entered the United States before April of 2001 and demonstrated three years of employment between 2001 and 2006 and six years thereafter with payment of income taxes. It further established a three-year Deferred Mandatory Departure cate-







## The Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic

# Hands-On Clinic Fights for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

**T**he Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic (IRRC) is one of the many stellar offerings of the CUNY Law clinical program. The Clinic offers third-year students a chance to work on complex and challenging cases involving immigration and labor law and become grounded in the array of lawyering skills they will need to succeed. The Clinic is a busy and energized place, where students planning a deposition for a labor case sit alongside students compiling evidence for an asylum application, and where students brainstorming a safety plan for an abused immigrant woman overhear other students on a conference call with community organizations. "What sustains me and what I hope sustains our students is being connected to something larger, a political vision that provides a context for the work we do," says Sameer Ashar, faculty member and director of IRRC.

### The History of IRRC

Founded in 1993 by Professors Steven Loffredo and Janet Calvo, the Clinic initially focused on impact litigation. Gradually, the Clinic's docket expanded to include asylum and relief for victims of domestic violence. The students took on a number of asylum cases each year with the goal of pushing immigration courts to recognize women who are targeted for persecution because of their gender as being included in the definition of a "particular social group" and deserving of asylum. In 1997, CUNY Law Immigrant Initiatives (CLII) was created to alert law schools about the need for changes in lawyering for poor people in light of new

intrusive and punitive immigration laws and to model how law schools could work in affected communities through a variety of clinic and non-clinic programs. Professor Newman, an advocate for battered immigrant women's rights and founder of the Long Island non-profit, SEPA Mujer, joined the staff to direct CLII and to teach in the IRRC. When Sameer Ashar, IRRC Director, arrived in 2003, he expanded the mission again to include the labor rights of immigrants. The community work continues in several IRRC based projects.

The Clinic's docket currently includes employment discrimination, wage and hour, deportation defense, asylum, self-petitions, and other immigration applications under the Violence Against Women Act. In addition, students work with community groups such as Families for Freedom and the Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York providing intake, informational workshops, assistance with citizenship applications, and organizing support. Although the clinic has served immigrants since the early 1990's, as the issue of immigration comes to the forefront of national attention, more and more CUNY Law students are inspired to begin a career defending the rights of immigrants. "The Clinic has always had a healthy enrollment, but interest has grown in the past few years," says 10-year veteran Professor Newman.

### The Students

"This is more than a job for me and I think that is true of most of us. We aren't in it for the money, if we were, we could

have chosen any other law school. We chose to be here."

— Harlan "Sam" Dye

The IRRC students are defined by their strong commitment to lawyering both to meet individual needs and to promote systemic social change. Valmiki Reyes was born into an immigrant family and learning immigration law has been about "recognizing the reasons behind the mass migrations of the 1980's that affected my community – civil war and lack of economic opportunities." He is opposed to our immigration policies, which "treat immigrants as either people to exploit or exclude." "In the long run," Reyes says, "I don't want to be just an immigration attorney, but to use immigration law to educate and organize the immigrant community. As immigrants, we don't have anything to lose; if we don't stand up, we will always be a lower class subject to deportation and incarceration."

Eileen Choi was drawn to the Clinic after taking Professor Shirley Lung's Rights of Low Wage Workers class. She was moved by the fact that immigrants get the jobs no one wants and then are treated terribly by their employers: "What repulses me is the idea of people being used because they lack power." Andrew Sta. Ana, also a child of immigrants, was encouraged by his family to become a professional, but knew he had to carve out something sustainable and fulfilling for himself within a professional field. He found a way to bring activism and a career together in the IRRC Clinic. "I see the role of immigrant lawyers as facilitating freedom of movement and self-determination."

### The Docket

Rebekah Fletcher and Ailing Chia are working on a 212(c) application, a form of discretionary relief for a legal permanent resident who is being deported for crimes that were committed a long time ago. Their client is an older woman who has been in the United States as a green card holder almost her entire life. This case brought up a painful history for her; she was an addict for years during which she lost custody of her children and was convicted of some minor crimes. When she went to apply for citizenship, the INS put her in deportation proceedings. "It is an example of how the system is dehumanizing – there's very little room to acknowledge the fact that she's been here for 33 years, overcome an intense addiction, and has been sober for 10 years. Because she has a drug conviction, no matter how minor, all of the positive things that she's done with her life are ignored," says Fletcher.

One exciting aspect of the Clinic is the chance to work on cases that go beyond an individual situation. Andrew Sta. Ana worked with Rachel Spector on a case against a restaurant for treating its workers of color differently from its white workers. They argued that it is a practice very common to the restaurant industry – keeping darker-skinned employees in the "back of the house" as dishwashers and cooks. They worked as co-counsel with the Asian American Legal Defense Fund and in alliance with the Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York, of which their clients are members. Sta. Ana says, "There are challenges in working with so many players. You give up some control over the case when you involve organizers, but without them, there would be no publicity and no pressure on the restaurant own-



**"You read about strategy and techniques, but nothing compares to actually doing it."**

**—Eileen Choi**

ers, so you'd have less chance of success and effect on the industry."

### The Clinical Experience

The Clinic's docket is developed by weighing student interest, pedagogical needs of the Clinic, and how the case will build the capacity of the community groups with which the clinic is partnered. Ashar says, "We are providing a very limited amount of legal services, so we try to do so strategically, by taking referrals from groups based in immi-

grant communities, and doing what we can to build their capacity."

Dye says, "The cases we have are never slam-dunks. The professors choose cases that are complex and require original thought and advocacy." As Newman says, "Since we have the luxury of time and resources, we take the cases that community organizations can't handle." Once the students make contact with their clients, the professors mostly guide from a distance. "We believe that if we give the student the responsibility to build the relationship with the client, the client benefits. The team that feels responsible puts in the best work," says Ashar about this choice.

The bond between the students is also essential to the learning experience. Valmiki

Reyes says, "We genuinely care about each other's cases. We know the specific details of the area of law we need for our cases, but the only way we get a broader view of the field is to hear about one another's cases." Choi also appreciated the confidence that the Clinic builds: "I've also never faced a real adversary's lawyer before this experience, but I realized that, even though we are students, we know a lot about the law and our case. The adversary doesn't have anything over us."

From students' perspectives, it can be rough going, but they learn to appreciate this clinical pedagogical style. Fletcher and Chia were able to take their client through the process of writing the affidavit, assembling the application for relief, and oral advocacy at the hearing, and Fletcher now says, "I think I could start a job in any area that involves client work and legal strategizing. Before I wasn't sure, but now I know I'm going to be a good lawyer."

**— Sienna Baskin, 3L**





IRRC Faculty: Donna Lee, Alizabeth Newman, Liliana Yanez and Sameer Ashar

# IRRC Faculty: Building a Movement

**F**aculty at CUNY Law started one of the first immigration law clinics in the country, well before the subject matter was regarded as essential for law studies. The current incarnation of the clinic, the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic, continues to put immigration law and the client population at the forefront of clinical legal education in the United States. Shelley Ann Quilty, 2L, had a chance to talk with the IRRC faculty about what it means to be part of the Clinic.

**Why did you decide to get involved in the field of immigration law, especially at CUNY Law in the IRRC?**

**Sameer Ashar:** I wanted to do public interest law and poverty law. I grew up reading about the labor, civil rights, and other social movements, and I wondered where the “movements” were in the late 1990’s. It appeared to me that immigrant worker centers constituted the movement of the times.

I always had it in my imagination that I wanted to come to CUNY Law because I knew it was a special place. It seemed to me to be a place where people care about the concrete, not the abstract; where people care about the right ways to practice as a lawyer. It was great to come to a law school where people really believed in the Clinic, from the Dean to the staff.

**Donna Lee:** I initially got involved in the IRRC because the Clinic had become so popular with students, and they needed more faculty resources. There was a lot of overlap between clients in the Battered Women’s Rights Clinic, where I also teach, and IRRC clients.

**Alizabeth (Liz) Newman:** I couldn’t imagine teaching anywhere other than CUNY Law. When I came here to study, I was a “frustrated activist” who wanted more clout to work for immigrants’ rights. It was never my intention to end up in academia, but the

opportunity to train new community lawyers has won me over.

**Liliana Yanez:** As the child of immigrant parents from El Salvador, I was aware of the types of difficulties and struggles that immigrants face. As a graduate of Brooklyn College, I benefited from the CUNY system, which provided me with an affordable, quality education and working at CUNY Law was my opportunity to give back.

**What do you like most about working at the IRRC?**

**Sameer:** The sense of solidarity with my students and colleagues. I enjoy working with, and for, the clients, both individuals and organizational partners. I feel a strong sense of mission; it’s what keeps me coming into work.

**Liz:** Students come into the IRRC already equipped with skills and polish them

here. I enjoy helping students see that there are many creative ways to make an impact apart from one-on-one representation. I am delighted to see our graduates find jobs they love, using the skills they worked on in the Clinic.

**Immigration law has become a particularly hot political topic as of late. What do you see as the most damaging myth being propagated regarding “immigrants” at present?**

**Sameer:** The most damaging myth is the demonization of undocumented workers, who are largely people of color from the global south who do “dirty” work here in the United States and are exploited. A secondary part of the problem is how law is constructed. How can people be “illegal”? Yet that’s how the law defines them. The law creates a sub-class of people who are sub-human in the eyes of the state.

**Donna:** The myth that immigrants today are very different from immigrants in the past. I think this myth is premised in racism and classism. Another myth is viewing immigration as a drain on the economy and on society, as opposed to a resource.

**Liz:** The most damaging myth is that immigration is “just” a civil matter. The misperception is that because it’s civil, there is no liberty interest at stake, and the consequences are not grave. People are not entitled to assigned counsel. But what could be more serious than months of detention, uprooting lives, and breaking up families.

**What direction would you like to see the law take in terms of addressing the pressing issues pertaining to immigration in the United States?**

**Sameer:** Corporations and capital cross borders freely, so why isn’t labor able to move across borders? The global economy is intentionally structured so that the exploiters can roam free, but the exploited are fenced



**“I always had it in my imagination that I wanted to come to CUNY Law because I knew it was a special place.”**

**—Sameer Ashar**

in. Having more open borders and enhancing people’s paths to citizenship would represent some positive steps. Also, the immigration detention complex needs to be challenged. It is counter-productive, unnecessary, and essentially about something other than security. It is about corporate profits and scapegoating.

**Donna:** One thing that’s striking to me is the huge delay involved in the process. It takes months for documents to be looked at and for decisions to be made. I would like to see the law change in a way to ensure that more humane decisions are made and

in more reasonable timeframes, instead of making people wait so long.

**Liliana:** I’d like to see what was called in the past an “amnesty,” but might perhaps be called a statute of limitations, whereby if you’re here in the United States for 10 years and can prove it, then you could become a lawful permanent resident without having to rely on anyone else for sponsorship.

**What do you hope to achieve through your work at the IIRC?**

**Sameer:** I hope to support grass roots organizations and movements, while serving clients. I hope to train public interest lawyers to go out and challenge structures of oppression.

**Donna:** I want to assist the client who needs legal services, and, at the same time, nurture a new lawyer. I hope to guide students into the profession – into being the excellent public interest lawyers that they want to and will be.

**Liz:** I hope to inspire students that they can have deeply satisfying careers that don’t have to look one certain way; they have more options than just “finding a job.” I hope students graduate knowing that that they never have to lose their humanity. I hope some will identify a need and will link with community members and activists to creatively address that need. I hope to help students become lawyers who appreciate the tremendous difference their law degrees can make in the communities they serve.

**Liliana:** I hope to be a resource for students both professionally and personally and contribute to the shaping of future lawyers who work for change through their service to individual clients and communities.



## Serbian Activist Finds Freedom

In January 2004, at the age of 27, Dusan Vujovic arrived in the United States seeking the safety and freedom that his own country could not provide. Dusan comes from the northern region of Vojvodina, where the overwhelming majority of people are Serbian Nationalists who still support the views of Slobodan Milosevic, a man responsible for committing some of the worst atrocities of our time. Dusan disagreed with the majority and was very outspoken about his support for democracy and equal rights. He wrote articles and speeches, spoke on a student radio show and attended political meetings.

His activism made him a target. Dusan was repeatedly threatened and spat upon in the street. His home and vehicle were vandalized on several occasions and he was severely beaten. In spite of everything, Dusan continued to speak out. Then, in the fall of 2003, he was fired from his teaching job for "traitorous activities." Shortly thereafter, his dog was grotesquely murdered and left with a message that he would end up the same. It was then that Dusan felt he had no choice but to flee.

When Dusan arrived in the United States he was traumatized and suffered from depression. He applied for asylum, but was not represented by legal counsel at his asylum interview. The

asylum officer decided against granting asylum and referred Dusan to the Immigration Court. It was at this point that Dusan came to the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Clinic at CUNY School of Law.

With the support of his student attorneys, Heather Madey '06 and Marina Meyerovich '06,

Dusan was able to articulate the persecution he had endured. "I was thrilled that someone finally cared enough to put so much effort into fighting for my case," said Dusan. On May 8, 2006, he was granted political asylum.

Today Dusan is working two jobs and plans to pursue a degree in Childhood Behavior at a CUNY graduate school. He says, "Day by day, I'm improving my life. I feel like I'm becoming a regular American." ●



## Survivor Looks Towards the Future

When Joanna Morales and her two children left the Dominican Republic, they were not unlike most immigrant families who come to the United States hoping to make a better life for themselves. Joanna was fortunate to find work at the Belmont Race Track, where she fell in love with a man whom she later married. It seemed as if the "American Dream" was starting to come true for her.

But after the wedding, conditions began to rapidly deteriorate. Her new husband became angry and aggressive towards her. Verbal and physical abuse became the norm and he threatened to have her deported if she reported him. When he began abusing her children, Joanna knew that she had to leave.

Joanna was referred to the IRRC by SEPA Mujer, a domestic violence organization founded by IRRC's Alizabeth Newman. Students at the IRRC assisted her in filing a self-petition application under the Violence Against Women Act, which, if granted, would allow her to obtain legal status independently. But her husband was not about to let Joanna leave. One day he

followed her to a store and attacked her with a knife, stabbing her numerous times in the neck, shoulder, and chest.

Joanna survived the attack, but she had another fight ahead of



her. Immigration authorities started questioning the validity of her marriage based on the fact that she had been married only a few months before the abuse began. Her student attorney, Iván Pantoja '06, delved into the case, working long hours compiling evidence to prove that her marriage was valid. "It was a tough case and I could have lost, but he worked so hard. He wasn't like other lawyers. Iván treated me like I was family," says Joanna.

In September 2006, Joanna's petition was approved and she was finally able to return to the Dominican Republic to visit her family. Joanna now works two jobs, as a billing clerk

and a computer consultant, to save money for her children's education. Yet, she still finds time to volunteer at SEPA Mujer, counseling other victims of domestic violence. Although Joanna is still haunted by memories of abuse, she says, "I am lucky. I have hope. I will continue to tell my story to help others." ●

## “ACE” Program to Offer Legal Aid

*Reprinted with permission from the November 27, 2006 issue of the Queen's Courier.*

If Glenn Crutch has learned one thing from his day job as the Public Safety Supervisor at CUNY Law School for the past 12 years, it's that legal services are in short supply for the underserved community of South Jamaica where he grew up.

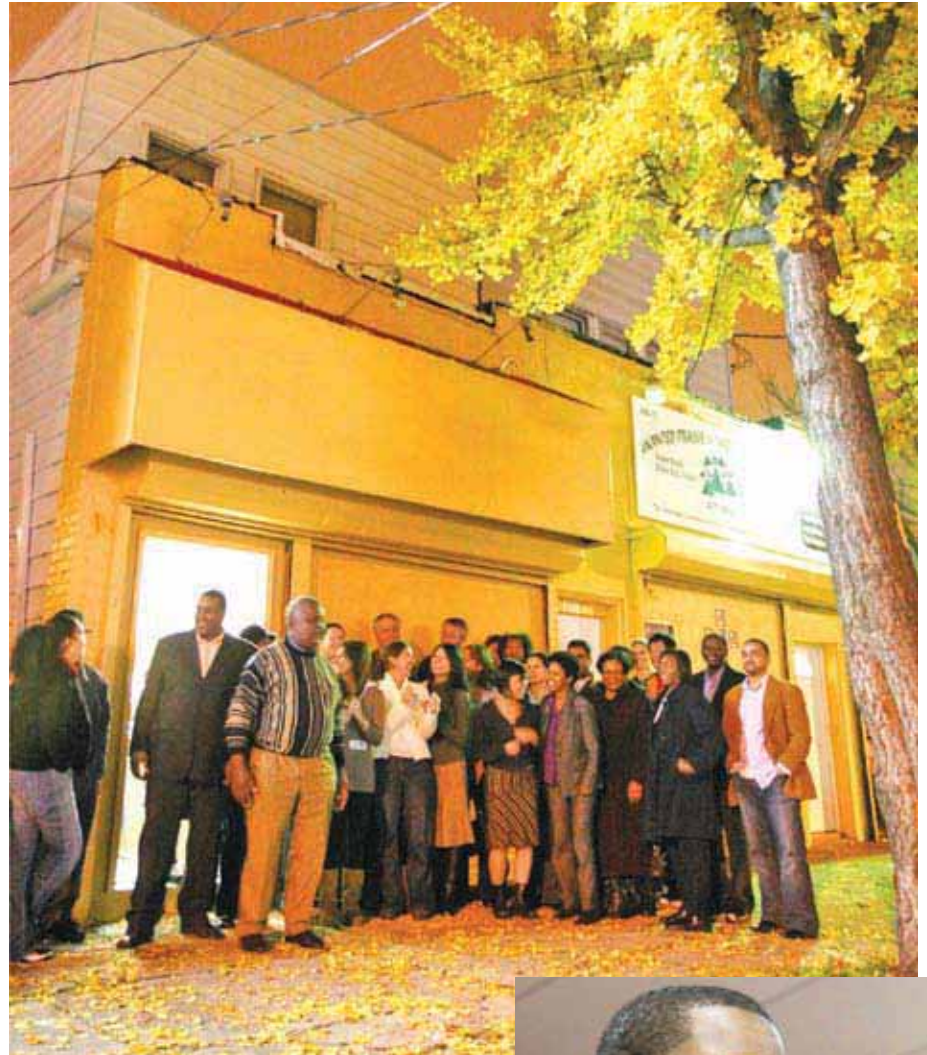
So, after three years of planning, it was a special moment for Pastor Glenn Crutch, as he is better known to congregants at the Anointed Praise and Worship Center in South Jamaica, when he officially opened his Anointed Community Empowerment (ACE) Program Center on Wednesday, November 15 and with it, the promise of good things to come for the disenfranchised he serves, including access to sound legal advice.

Aimed at reaching those whom Crutch believes need help most of all, the working poor who earn too much money to qualify for government assistance yet not enough to escape poverty, the center is now not only the permanent home for the food programs, clothing drives, employment assistance, health counseling and after-school programs the church has provided since its founding three years ago, but also of a new joint-venture between ACE and the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law.

“It's a perfect match,” said Fred P. Rooney, Project Director of the school's Community Legal Resource Network, explaining that the school's purpose is to provide justice for the people who can least afford it. “It gives us an opportunity to put our mission into practice.”

The ACE Program law outreach will provide legal representation by way of CUNY law students supervised by faculty members. Additionally, the outreach will offer legal clinics to the broader community such as the one on elder law held a few days prior to the official opening of the center.

According to Joseph Rosenberg, supervisor of CUNY's Elder Law Clinic, about 20 people attended seeking information on power of attorney, wills, reverse mort-



Members of the CUNY Law community attend the opening of Glenn Crutch's ACE program center

gages and other issues of particular concern to seniors. The new Medicare prescription drug benefits inspired many questions, Rosenberg said. “People are getting notices that are difficult to understand, they're concerned about losing benefits.”

Only recently did Crutch understand that the stated goal of the law school where he works is so relevant to the community he pastors. When he understood that, he approached the school and asked for help. “I said, ‘Why not me?’” Crutch explained. “I have somebody who needs the help that they offer.” ●







## Beloved Staff Member Retires After 22 Years of Service

**T**he phones ring off the hook and last-minute applications try to beat the deadline. Yes, it is crunch time in the Office of Admissions, but something is different. It must be the absence of one of CUNY Law's beloved staff members—Annette Flood Liberta.

Annette decided that it was time to retire so that she could lavish her family with more of the care, love, and warmth that she gave everyone at CUNY. As a family member said at Annette's retirement party in December 2006, "Thank you for giving her back to us."

At a recent Admissions staff meeting, there was a lull and sadness we referred to as: "that missing place at the table;" "the person with the uncanny ability to make things smooth and right;" and "gentleness, kindness, and fun." Applicants remember a kind, motherly voice on the phone and a person who would take an admitted student to a health clinic so a required immunization report could be submitted on time. In Admissions since August 1984, Annette has touched everyone who has applied, en-

rolled, and graduated from the School of Law through 2006.

From her morning caffeine-induced chatter, Annette initiated the awarding of the "tiara" for the person who found the lost document, file, or message and "the new word of the week" (terpsichorean became one of her favorite words—please look it up in her honor). Annette's buoyancy and search of the "other" did rub off on the rest of us – "down dog" and "the mountain" did not refer to animal rights nor the environment, but to yoga.

Everyone at the Law School misses Annette, especially the Admissions staff. So from Christine, Debbie, Jane, Marilyn, Nancy, and Yvonne, we offer you this reflection: "Thank you, Annette, for being mother, sister, friend, confidante, teacher, counselor, therapist, and wonderful you. We wish you, Tony, and your family much good health, happiness, peace, and love. Thank you for showing us that we, too, can continue to create the environment that we so enjoyed while you were here with us! Happy Life!" ●

## Laura Kotkin: New Director of Development

**I**n my role as Director of Development, I am charged with increasing private philanthropy at the Law School. My job is fascinating --- I am part detective, searching for potential donors who believe in our mission; part ambassador, sharing the excitement of all the achievements of our alumni, faculty and students to a variety of external audiences; and part conductor, conceiving and executing special events that draw in new potential supporters. The role is always interesting, and I never go home at night having "finished the job," because there are always ways to improve an operation. Development is a delightful web of interconnected relationships which are complex, intricate and delicate. If approached too forcefully (think the overly aggressive solic-

itation) the structure collapses and bad will erupts. Carefully built, it can slowly be spun into the strongest fabric --- a committed family of donors who identify themselves as stakeholders in the institution. Here at CUNY Law, the anchors of our web are beginning to take hold. I look forward to working with many of you as we look toward celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Law School and beyond. ●



Laura Kotkin, Director of Development

## Prestigious Fellowships Awarded for Innovative Projects

**SIENNA BASKIN, 3L**, was awarded a two-year Equal Justice Works Fellowship, funded by the law firm Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, LLP, to work on a Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center in the fall after her graduation. Baskin's project is the first of its kind in the United States that focuses specifically on the needs and rights of women who have been trafficked into the United States. Baskin examines the issues that trafficked women face through the lens of domestic violence. Framing trafficking as a form of do-



Yasmin Tabi, 3L

ect from the Manhattan office of Sanctuary for Families, an organization where he spent last summer working as an intern. This project will be the first of its kind in the United States, highlighting the overlooked issue of domestic violence within the LGBT community, a community that must challenge a legal and social system that actively denies its rights. The overarching goal, according to Sta. Ana, is to empower domestic violence victims through education, advocacy, and direct legal representation. Sta. Ana particu-



Andrew Sta. Ana, 3L

able Tabi and the rest of the HLP team to establish a vocal, national presence on HIV-related women's issues through a network comprised of women's rights advocates and HIV advocates. This network, once created, will facilitate capacity-building, the sharing of best practices, and policy advocacy centered on key areas affecting women with HIV on a national level. Although the Fellowship commences in the fall, Tabi has already begun to intern with the HIV Law Project, so that she can be fully integrated into the or-



Sienna Baskin, 3L

mestic violence, Baskin explains, is the key to understanding these women's experiences. Surprisingly, this approach has not previously been adopted. Baskin hopes to shed light on the plight of immigrant women, primarily from Mexico, who are falsely lured into a life of prostitution in the United States by men who pose as caring boyfriends or husbands in their native Mexico. Although these women have been victimized, Baskin also recognizes their strength. Her project aims to ensure the provision of greater legal protection to this marginalized population.

**ANDREW STA. ANA, 3L**, was awarded a two-year Equal Justice Works Fellowship, funded by an anonymous donor. Sta. Ana's project will partner with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) community to confront domestic violence issues faced by this community. He will undertake this proj-

ect from the Manhattan office of Sanctuary for Families, an organization where he spent last summer working as an intern. This project will be the first of its kind in the United States, highlighting the overlooked issue of domestic violence within the LGBT community, a community that must challenge a legal and social system that actively denies its rights. The overarching goal, according to Sta. Ana, is to empower domestic violence victims through education, advocacy, and direct legal representation. Sta. Ana particu-

**YASMIN TABI, 3L**, has received the HIV Law Project (HLP) Staff Attorney Fellowship. She will be working at the downtown Manhattan office of the HIV Law Project for the next two years. This Fellowship will en-

able Tabi and the rest of the HLP team to establish a vocal, national presence on HIV-related women's issues through a network comprised of women's rights advocates and HIV advocates. This network, once created, will facilitate capacity-building, the sharing of best practices, and policy advocacy centered on key areas affecting women with HIV on a national level. Although the Fellowship commences in the fall, Tabi has already begun to intern with the HIV Law Project, so that she can be fully integrated into the or-

—Shelley-Ann Quilty, 2L

### CUNY Law Students Lead the Revson Pack

CUNY students outdid themselves this year in winning an unprecedented 33 Charles Revson fellowships totaling \$132,000 in summer funding. Only 80 Revsons are awarded each year statewide, and they provide a \$4,000 stipend to work in public interest/service employers in the greater New York City metropolitan area. CUNY students vie with hundreds of students from over 12 other New York law schools for these fellowships. "Our students have done well in previous Revson competitions, but we did extraordinarily well this year," said Sam Sue, Director of Career Planning. CUNY students will be working in internships with public interest offices that include the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, which works on civil rights issues facing the transgendered community, the Employment Law Project at the Legal Aid Society, and a legal research position at the New York City Council.



## BLSA Gala: From Civil Rights to Civil Responsibility

Valerie and William Bell, the parents of Sean Bell, and other Bell family members were guests of honor at the annual gala dinner of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) chapter at CUNY School of Law. At the March 1st event, which this year had the theme "From Civil Rights to Civil Responsibility," BLSA presented the Bell family with \$1,256 that students had raised for the Sean Bell Benefit Fund, an award of honor for the family's courage, and also a birthday cake to mark the occasion of Mrs. Bell's birthday. Mrs. Bell told the students she had spent much time at CUNY Law as a junior high school student when it was formerly J.H.S. 218. Sean Bell's cousin, Aretha Anderson announced that beginning March 5th, Bell family members would be leading a vigil each day from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in front of the Queens Criminal Court as the



family and community await the findings of a Queens County Grand Jury in the shooting of Sean Bell by undercover police early on the morning of his wedding day.

*Pictured are (front row left to right): Ify Ike, 2L, Lourdes Guillaume, 2L, Sean Bell's parents, Valerie Bell and William Bell, Tiane Patterson, 2L, and Michelle Burrell, 2L, (back row) BLSA faculty advisor Victor Goode and three other members of the Bell family.*

*Photo by Kelechi Onwuchekwa, 2L.*

## Mississippi Project Celebrates 15th Anniversary

The Mississippi Project, a student organization at CUNY School of Law, marked its 15th anniversary with a reception at the Citibank Tower in Long Island City, New York. The project has sent students into the Mississippi Delta and Deep South each year during the winter break to represent indigent clients and work with civil rights organizations. This year fifteen students worked with three organizations: The Mississippi Workers' Center for Human Rights, the ACLU of Mississippi, and the Innocence Project in New Orleans. The students engaged in various projects such as "Housing as a Human Rights Campaign" with the Workers' Center, interviewing residents in their homes and documenting the impoverished conditions in which they live; a teen sex education program with the ACLU, working hands-on with teens who volunteered to become peer-educators so as to inform their peers of their reproductive rights; and compiling evidence for the Innocence Project in their efforts to exonerate people who have been



*Students and Workers from the Mississippi Workers' Center Engaged in the "Housing as a Human Rights" Campaign. Pictured from left to right: Courtney Henry, Workers' Center staff member, Jaribu Hill '96, Executive Director of Workers' Center, Shelley-Ann Quilty, 2L, Ting Ting Cheng, 1L and Steve Rutkowski, 1L.*

wrongly convicted of crimes they did not commit.

Students who participated this year are: Chris Burt, 1L, Ting Ting Cheng, 1L, Farah Diaz-Tello, 1L, Leah Foster, 2L, Atif Hasni, 1L, Deenita Lake, 2L, Christel Matala de

Mazza, 1L, Lisa McClurkin, 1L, Therese McNulty, 1L, Thuy Pham, 1L, Shelley-Ann Quilty, 2L, Stephen Rutkowski, 1L, Rebecca Sanborn, 1L, Maria Thukral, 1L and Jayna Turcek, 1L.

## 1986

**Pico Ben-Amotz** has been appointed Deputy Commissioner of Labor for Worker Protection, New York State Department of Labor. He was with the Labor Bureau of the New York State Attorney General for 18 years.

**Steven Godeski** recently received The Legal Aid Society's 2006 annual Orison Marden Award for his outstanding dedication and service.

**Celeste Lacy Davis**, former Director of Alumni/ae Affairs and External Relations of CUNY Law, recently became the new Executive Director of the Funding Exchange (FEX). FEX is a national network of 16 community foundations that supports constituency-led activism for progressive social change.

## 1987

*20th Reunion in 2007*

**Hon. Margaret McGowan** was appointed to the Family Court. She served as a Housing Court Judge for eight years and, prior to that, was a court attorney for New York City Civil Court.

**Jan Perlin** is currently directing a project on indigenous access to justice and torture prevention at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Mexico.

**Cindy Stagoff** celebrated MLK Day "On," not off, at a local Montclair public school. Cindy has served as co-chair of this service and celebration project for the past five years. In the spirit of Dr. King's belief in community service, the program features the delivery of food to 50 homebound seniors in Montclair by public school students, along with a day of modern dance, African drumming, and educational activities for children. This year's speaker, Yanada Essex, shared her experiences as a survivor of Hurricane Katrina and explored the economic and racial injustices of FEMA's relief efforts.

## 1988

**Hon. Edwina Richardson-Mendelson** and her courtroom were profiled on the *New York City Public Radio* piece entitled, "A Day in Family Court," on February 6, 2007.

**Iyanla "Rhonda" Vanzant** is currently residing in Upper Marlboro, MD, and working on her fourteenth book to be published in spring

2008. Vanzant traveled to South Africa in February 2007 to conduct workshops and classes addressing the rise of Domestic Violence.

## 1989

**Kimberly A. Ayoung** is the owner of Cobblestone Mortgage Company, Inc. and Scott Abstract, Inc., both located in Rockville Centre, NY. She continues to enjoy teaching as an Adjunct Professor at New York City College of Technology, teaching Business Law and Management. As an African American teacher, she became a role model for some students who never saw anyone who looked like them in certain kinds of roles. She believes that she holds a special responsibility to her students to teach more than just the subject matter of the course.

**Kari Caulfield** announces the publication of her debut fiction novel entitled, *Pretty Blue*, which is available at Amazon.com, Barnes&Noble.com, and select stores. In addition to promoting the book, Kari is still engaged in general practice. Visit her new web site at: [www.karicaulfield.com](http://www.karicaulfield.com) or send an e-mail to [karicaulfiend@optonline.net](mailto:karicaulfiend@optonline.net). She'd love to hear from you!

**Hon. Toko Serita** was the recipient of the Distinguished Alumni/ae Award at the Law School's Lunar New Year Celebration for the Flushing Community on February 28, 2007.

## CUNY LAW RAISES THE BAR

CUNY School of Law posted a 77% first-time passage rate for the July 2006 New York State Bar Examination. This is the highest bar pass rate in the 23-year history of the School. This number is a testament to the Class of 2006's hard work and the strategic and concerted effort by the Law School to prepare students for the Bar Exam.

## 1990

**Shoshanna Malett** left her job of over eight years as an Asylum Officer with the Department of Justice/Department of Homeland Security in January 2006. She is currently in private practice concentrating on immigration law, having lots of fun publishing legal articles, living and working in New York with husband Peter and children, Noah Morris (8) and Sophie Estefany (3), and spending lots of

time bending the ears of CUNY alumnae **Evelyn Tossas Tucker '90** and **Katya Plotnik '94**.

**Michael C. Taglieri**, an appellate lawyer for The Legal Aid Society, was featured in the January 31, 2007, *New York Times* article, "Jurors Can't Be Excluded by Nationality," for a suit he filed on behalf of his client, a West Indian man who had been denied justice in his criminal trial because the prosecution excluded prospective jurors due to their national origin.

## 1991

**Gilma Camargo** is currently the co-host and director of a radio program in Panama called *JORNADA*. Her co-host is attorney, Alexis Sinclair, and together they provide information, analysis and training in the exercise of participatory democracy and freedom of expression for a community seeking to overcome governmental oppression. Camargo is also organizing an NGO to continue her work on international human rights which concentrates on Latin America.

**Eduardo Capulong** will be joining the clinical faculty at the University of Montana in Missoula starting the next academic year. He is presently a lawyering professor at NYU Law School.

**Rosemary Lategano** is currently the Legislative Aide to New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey of Queens.

**Jolynne Miller** is senior counsel at the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, D.C. and an adjunct professor at George Mason University School of Law. She is a contributing editor to two treatises, *The Developing Labor Law* and *How Arbitration Works*. Recently, she was selected as a government fellow by the Labor and Employment Law Section of the American Bar Association.

**Jeffrey Reed** is the managing attorney of the Olean, New York Office of Legal Assistance of Western New York, Inc. Cases of interest include a decision by the Appellate Division of the Fourth Department reversing a Child Support Magistrate's finding that a recipient of SSI could be ordered to pay child support of more than the statutorily defined amount of \$25 per month (*Allegany County Department of Social Service* ex rel, 273 A.D.2d 916, 710 N.Y.S.2d 745). Reed also writes a monthly birding column for the *Olean Times Herald* and wrote and published, *Where to Find Birds in Cattaraugus County, Allegany State Park to Zoar Valley*.



## 1992

15th Reunion in 2007

**Peter Thomas** is still working as a trial lawyer with an office in Forest Hills, Queens. Thomas reports that his brother, **Daniel A. Thomas '92**, has produced a movie (in which he also has a small part as an attorney) starring Bruce Willis and Halle Berry, entitled *Perfect Stranger*. The movie will be released on April 13, 2007.

## 1993

**Stephen Bergstein's** appellate victory in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit was featured on the front page of the *New York Law Journal* on February 8, 2007. The case, *Lusk v. Village of Cold Spring*, 2007 U.S. App. LEXIS 2060, involved a First Amendment challenge to a prior restraint on political speech.

**Hon. Vanessa Bogan**, appointed as a Syracuse, New York City Court Judge, took the Oath of Office on December 29, 2006. Bogan expects to run for election in November 2007.

**Pearl O. Murphy, Esq., P.C.**, 1 East Main Street, Suite 1, Bay Shore, NY 11706, Phone: (631) 665-9251, Fax (631) 665-9262, zeskendren@aol.com.

## 1994

**Daniel Flanzig** was featured in the January 11, 2007, *The National Law Journal* article, "For Some Firms, Law is All in the Family," regarding working with his sister, Cathy Flanzig, at their personal injury firm, Flanzig & Flanzig.

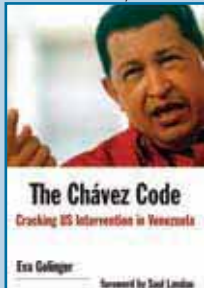
**Nora Marino** was featured in the March 8, 2007, *TimesLedger.com* article, "How's Business? An Attorney You Can Trust," as an example of a trustworthy attorney.

**Michael J. Meehan** was quoted in the November 2006, *ABA Journal* article, "Asylum Ordeals," regarding the ability to predict the outcome of an asylum application based on immigration judges' decision histories.

**William Petrillo's** law office, The Law Offices of William Petrillo, P.C., is based out of Rockville Centre. He specializes in criminal defense. Many of his cases have been covered by every major television network and newspaper. He is often quoted in the newspapers as an expert on issues related to criminal law and trials. Petrillo recently procured an acquittal of all charges in a high profile murder trial in Nassau County, the dismissal of all charges

## NEW TITLES BY CUNY LAW ALUMNAE

**EVA GOLINGER '04**, *The Chávez Code: Cracking US Intervention in Venezuela* (Olive Branch Press, 2006). Using documents obtained under the U.S.



Freedom of Information Act, Golinger lays out irrefutable evidence of the United States government's knowledge of the plot to overthrow Chávez and its continued efforts to destabilize Chávez's presidency. Noam Chomsky says, "[T]his book is essential reading for those who seek to understand the conflicted relations between Washington and Venezuela and the means of subversion being adopted by Washington."

**KARI (CAROLINE) CAULFIELD '89**, *Pretty Blue* (Outskirts Press, 2006). Nominated for a 2007 Evvy Award, Caulfield's de-



but fiction novel tells the story of Faye Mercury, a young woman's emotional search for her birth mother. *Adoption Crossroads* says, "In this well written novel, Caulfield has captured the intense emotional issues of adoption search and reunion. You will not be able to put *Pretty Blue* down until you finish the last page of this gripping work."

**JENNIFER LOUISE JEFFERSON '98**, *Defending Violet* (Thomson Gale, 2006). Ginger Rea Reddy, a street-smart lawyer in gritty Port Grace, is drawn to criminal law when she agrees to help nineteen-year-old Violet, who is accused of mistreating her baby. Jim Fusilli, author of *Hard*, *Hard City* and *Tribeca Blues*, says, "A crackling good crime story that springs from Jefferson's understanding of the criminal justice system and her compassion for the people it is intended to serve."



against a New York City school teacher charged with rape, the dismissal of all charges against a New York City police officer facing bribery and grand larceny charges, the dismissal of all charges against a Nassau County school principal facing felony drug possession charges, and a very favorable disposition for an accountant indicted in the Roslyn School District multi-million dollar fraud case. Petrillo has been retained by law firms as a trial expert to provide assistance on trial issues. He is scheduled to start lecturing at CLE seminars on trial advocacy. He reports that his pride and joy in life are his wife and two sons.

**Bob Rose** is a Supervisory Attorney in the New York Office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), where he focuses primarily on litigating class and policy employment discrimination cases in the ("often hostile!") federal courts. He spent much of the latter half of 2006 preparing for and trying a class action sexual harassment case which resulted in a jury verdict on all counts for the EEOC. Rose stays in touch with CUNY Law through CUNY interns at EEOC, friends, and professors. At home, he and his spouse, Liz, who is

an immigration lawyer with the 32BJ Legal Fund, now have "two wee ones — Elyas (4 years) and Solana (7 months), which can make the zany world of litigation seem almost tranquil by comparison."

After four years serving as the Director of Constituent Services for former Prince George's County Council Member Douglas Peters, **Todd M. Turner**, moved to a new position as a Legislative Officer with County Council. Turner serves as an attorney for the Council, which includes legislative drafting, budget oversight, and work on the legislative agenda with the Maryland General Assembly. He also continues to serve as a member of the Bowie City Council since his election in November 2005.

**Adriana Vieco** is still on detail from the Justice Department to the US Embassy in Bogotá, Colombia. She is serving as a Resident Legal Advisor to the Ambassador and is actively involved in training Colombian judges and prosecutors in their new accusatory system. Vieco's tour should be over this summer, and she'll be back at the Civil Rights Division in Washington, D.C.

## IN MEMORIAM

These names have come to our attention, since the last memorial notice was published in spring 2006.

Frances Boehm  
Robert Boehm  
John Lowenthal  
Arthur Patterson  
Haripaul (Paul) Ramkirpal  
Fran Raskin  
Joe Savino  
Rodney Arthur Sindab '92  
Robert J. Tadler '96  
Becky Zalewski '00  
Robert Zuss '86

**Neal Wiesner** was featured in the March 8, 2007, *Wall Street Journal* article, "The High Bar for Redemption," regarding his 12 year campaign for admission to the NY Bar which refused to admit him nine previous times because of his criminal record.

## 1995

**Sylvia Alexander** is a Development Officer in Foundation Relations at the Wildlife Conservation Society. Her interest in birds led to her to work in conservation, but as a writer rather than a lawyer, although she says that her legal training has certainly been a bonus. Her focus is Asia and Wildlife Health – so, at any given time, she might be researching and writing about anything from dolphin conservation in Burma to human/tiger conflict in China to saiga migrations in Mongolia to diverse strains of avian influenza. She reports that she couldn't be happier.

**Jedd Hall** and **Sandra Hall** welcomed the addition of Gabriella ("Ella") Hall to their family on September 15th 2006! They are enjoying every moment with "the world's happiest baby" and the new love of their life. Jedd continues to work as an Assistant District Attorney for the Berkshire County DA's Office, and Sandra is still working as a Certified Massachusetts State Interpreter (Spanish/English) in the beautiful Berkshires.

**Harlene Katzman** was named Dean of the Center for Public Interest Law at Columbia Law School in 2005. She and her husband welcomed

their son Reuben in August. She reports that she is a happy Mom and a happy lawyer!

## 1996

After eight years at The Legal Aid Society, **Tracey Bing-Hampson**, returned to Harlem Legal Services. She began her legal career at HLS as an IOLA Fellow, where she implemented the Domestic Violence Project. In her new role as the Director of the Family Law Unit/Domestic Violence project, she assists survivors of domestic violence in family court matters, including orders of protection, custody/visitation, abuse/neglect, and child support. She is thrilled to return to the Harlem Community and to work with Lenina Trinidad, Class of 2000. Her daughter Kia is now 14 years old and doing great at the Horace Mann School.

**Hon. Robert Spergel** was recently appointed Judge in The District Court of Nassau County. He will be running for re-election in November 2007.

## 1997

*10th Reunion in 2007*

**Patricia Murrell** is busy running The Law Offices of Murrell & Associates, LLC, and a real estate firm, MJ Realty Enterprises, LLC, both businesses serving clients statewide. Murrell found time to teach a Bankruptcy Law course as an Adjunct Professor at CUNY Law School in fall 2006. It is anticipated that she will return in fall 2007 to teach Basic Bankruptcy Law and/or Advanced Bankruptcy Law. Murrell can be reached at (845) 567-0177.

## 1998

In 2001, **Andrea Costello**, returned to Gainesville, Florida to do civil rights litigation at a non-profit public interest law office and continues to organize for women's liberation with the National Lawyers Guild. As part of an Equal Justice Works Fellowship, she filed and settled a class action suit on behalf of hundreds of low-income persons with disabilities in Florida that needed home healthcare related services to prevent them from being forced to live in nursing homes. She is currently one of the lead counsel in a lawsuit to challenge the mass arrests of hundreds of activists at the protests against the Free Trade Area of the Americas in Miami during 2003. As of February 2007, Andrea is on her way back to NY to begin working as an attorney with the Center for Constitutional Rights. The best way to reach her is: [andreahope@mindpspring.com](mailto:andreahope@mindpspring.com)

**J. Matthew Donohue** recently joined a Portland litigation firm, Markowitz, Herbold, Glade & Mehlhaf as an associate attorney. His focus is on complex commercial litigation, with an emphasis on entertainment and sports law.

**Jeff Schwartz** has taken a sabbatical from his legal practice and his duties on the Board of the Alumni Association of CUNY Law School to pursue more worldly and personal ambitions. By "worldly" he means that he has been living in Mexico for the last 10 months, attempting to embrace another culture and language (with mixed results, "verbs in Spanish are HARD!"). By "personal" he means that he has gotten married, "nearly completed construction of a lake house in Mexico," and, in December, he and his wife Silvia welcomed their daughter, Natalia Imani, into the world (photos commemorating each event are available for viewing online, of course). This year, he is looking to start a business ("or several!") in Mexico, as well as looking to return to his practice as a Real Estate/Community and Economic Development attorney back in the U.S. Although he is in Central Mexico and not near the beaches, Jeff welcomes anyone from the CUNY Law School community to pay a visit.

## 1999

**Kim Allen** has joined Legal Services for Eastern Missouri and works on Immigration and Human Trafficking Law.

**Heidi J. Henle** recently opened her own law office. She specializes in wills/trusts/estates, matrimonial/family law, and real estate law. Her office is in Bayside and she can be reached at 718-766-9427 and 914-239-3218.

**Michael Tillman-Davis** recently had his article, "My Time on Rikers Island," published in the current issue of *Law Library Journal*, 99 LLJ 151 (2007). The article describes his time working as a legal coordinator at the jail facilities on Rikers Island.

## 2000

**Victoria Michel Williamson** previously, Victoria Michel, relocated to Washington, D.C., where she welcomed her beautiful daughter, Maxime Elizabeth Williamson, into the world on June 1, 2006.

**Maria E. Osorio** and her husband are expecting their first child in August of 2007.

**Dr. Martha M. Rumore** recently published two chapters in *Pharmacy Law-Desk Reference* published by Hawthorne Press. The Chapters are entitled "The Function, Evolution, and His-



torical Development of the Law" and "Patent Law, Trademarks and Copyrights."

**Suzanne Tomatore**, Director of the City Bar Justice Center's Immigrant Women and Children's Project, was recently featured in "The Back Page" of the *New York Law Journal*, Friday, November 24, 2006, in an article entitled, "Our Outreach is Never Done: Attorney-Social Worker Team Advocates on Behalf of the Seriously Ill." She was also featured on *National Public Radio* on March 1, 2007, regarding a report about foreign diplomats' abuse of domestic servants on American soil.

## 2001

**Tina Minkowitz** has been involved in the drafting and negotiation process of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* for the past five years, as the lead representative of the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry. On December 13, 2006, the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* was adopted by the UN General Assembly. Minkowitz states that their main achievement was a provision guaranteeing legal capacity to people with disabilities on an equal basis with others, which marks a paradigm shift in the way that law and society deal with disability. For the full Convention see <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/convtexte.htm>.

## 2002

### 5th Reunion in 2007

**Natasha Godby** has been appointed Deputy Public Administrator in and for the County of Kings. As Public Administrator she is responsible for estates of persons of the county who have no heirs or no qualified heirs.

**Ian F. Hinonangan** will celebrate his fourth year as a solo practitioner. Established in the heart of Jersey City, on Newark Avenue, his solo practice specializes in criminal defense, deportation and residential real estate. Through these years, Hinonangan has successfully represented undocumented immigrants and permanent residents from all over the U.S. He recently won an asylum claim for a citizen from Cote-d'Ivoire based on tribal membership. His practice remains committed to the belief that justice is the fulfillment of all laws.

## 2003

Inspired by his successful completion of the marathon last summer at the Gay Games in Chicago, **Ed Campanelli** is now training for the

2007 NYC Triathlon. Come down to the Hudson River on July 22 to cheer on the participants!

**Savina P. Playter**, formerly a Court Attorney for the Honorable La Tia W. Martin at the Bronx Supreme Court, recently joined the law firm of Rodriguez and Fuentes, PC, where she handles trials and appeals in the Matrimonial/Tort Departments. She recently published an article entitled, "Navigating the Matrimonial Part in Supreme Court," in the *New York State Bar Association New Lawyer Section*. Additionally, Ms. Playter, formerly with Marymount College, joined the adjunct faculty at Hunter College.

**Odella Woodson** is a sole practitioner based in Manhattan. She loves seeing her classmates in Court. "It was especially fun seeing **John Whitlow '03**, and **Joe Davidson '03**, in Bronx Housing Court on Halloween when I appeared as Tina Turner—they didn't bat an eye." Woodson is forever grateful to **Ed Campanelli '03**, for giving her his great Aunt's cheese grater allowing her to end her search for the perfect one. **Eric Torres '99** a superb appellate attorney, is her chief sounding board and advisor (i.e. bails her out of jams). Woodson is a big fan of *Home Exchange.com* and spent some time in Italy, where thanks to David Nadvorney, she met **Michael Nunziata '06**, who acted as her tour guide around Rome. Nunziata held her hand crossing the street which she was not ashamed of needing. Woodson is getting married in the fall. She reports that her partner thinks a private wedding is two people and she thinks it is fifty. There is room in between those numbers. Non-negotiable is that her niece is going to be a flower girl and her favorite saxophonist will be playing the music. "So there might only be four people at this wedding."

## 2004

**Michele Domingo** is the attorney for the Access to Justice Institute's Immigration Court Project at the Seattle University School of Law. The Immigration Court Project works with pro-bono attorneys and law students providing direct representation for battered immigrant women in removal proceedings. She represents women in removal proceedings and clients in adjustment of status matters, and organizes and teaches CLEs focusing on immigration relief for battered immigrant women. She is living in Seattle, WA with her partner, Minh Carrico.

**Irma E. Dominguez** was recently admitted to the United States District Court of the Eastern District of New York. She is the Director/Attorney for the Justice Project and the Immigra-

tion Program in Circulo, Hempstead, NY. After three years of courtship, she is very happy to announce her upcoming wedding to her best friend, John Volpe, on August 12, 2007.

**Kara Lee-Brunton** and her husband, David, welcomed their first child, three weeks early, on December 30, 2006. MacKenzie Paige Brunton was born at 7:48 pm and weighed 6 pounds, 6 ounces and measured 19 inches. Both mother and baby are doing well.

After completing her clerkship with the Honorable Roberto Alcazar, J.S.C. in Family Court in August 2005, **Elizabeth A. Ramsey** has been working for the State of New Jersey Office of the Public Defender, Union County Trial Region in Elizabeth, NJ. Ramsey also got married to Ray Howell on October 14, 2006, in her hometown of Marshall, Illinois. "We were lucky enough to have three CUNY Law alumni attend and celebrate with us."

## 2005

**Richard M. Goldman's** wife Bridgit Goldman, recently gave birth to their daughter, Ayla Sky. Goldman joined the board of Cantorum Virtuosi, Inc., a non-profit arts organization dedicated to the performance of classical and contemporary choral music.

**Raha Jorjani** is an attorney working at the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project, a non-profit agency that provides free legal services to detainees in Arizona. She was

### Corrections: From the Fall 2006 CUNY LAW Magazine

The article about David Nadvorney (Page 14), written by Tally Goldstein, '06 misidentified Goldstein as a 2004 graduate, when in fact, she graduated in 2006. Additionally the article misspelled the name of the firm where Goldstein is currently employed. The correct spelling is "Shearman & Sterling LLP."

The caption of the photo on page 13 titled "CUNY Faculty and Staff who were at the Law School in 1986," mistakenly omitted Beryl Blaustone from the list of those not pictured. Blaustone is one of the founding faculty members and has been with the school since it first opened its doors in 1983.

recently quoted in the February 25 2007, *Stamford Advocate* article, "Detained but not deterred U.S. Army veteran endured harsh treatment in 18-month ordeal," for her successful representation of a U.S. Army veteran who was wrongfully detained by immigration officials.

**Jaimee Nelsen** was recently promoted to Attorney I with the Brooklyn Family Court Legal Services Division of the Administration for Children's Services.

**Kimberly Tate-Brown** has returned to public interest advocacy as an attorney at Mental Hygiene Legal Services in Queens and has recently purchased her first home in Riverdale, Bronx with her husband, Rex.

**RJ Thompson** was admitted to the Georgia State Bar and moved back to Atlanta in October to accept a position as National Program Coordinator with the National Coordinating Center of the US Human Rights Network (USHRN). USHRN is a national network (which includes the CUNY Law International Women's Human Rights Clinic) whose mission is to bring people together to build a human rights culture in the United States. For more information, please contact [rthompson@ushrnetwork.org](mailto:rthompson@ushrnetwork.org).

**Rita Verga** was appointed to the Board of Directors of Common Roads, a non-profit working with and in support of LGBTQ youth in Central Pennsylvania. Her article entitled, "Policing Their Space: The First Amendment Parameters of Student Cyberspeech," is forthcoming in the *Santa Clara Computer and High Technology Law Journal*. In addition, she recently authored a series of articles entitled, "Queering the Immigration Debate: The Intersection of Immigrant and LGBT Rights," for Pennsylvania's *Central Voice* newspaper, and her update of the "Right to Strike and Other Forms of Economic Action" chapter of the *National Lawyers Guild Employee and Union Member Guide to Labor Law* is forthcoming in the fall of 2007.

## 2006

### 1st Reunion in 2007

**Mark Bissada** is an associate at Neil A. Weinrib & Associates in Tribeca, working primarily on employment and family based immigration cases. Although he reports that he is missing student life a bit, he is "loving work" and is happy to apply the creative lawyering skills that he learned at CUNY Law.

**Jota Borgmann's** article "Hunting Expeditions: Perverting Substantive Due Process and Undermining Sexual Privacy in the Pursuit of Moral Trophy Game," was recently published in the *UCLA Women's Law Journal*, 15 UCLA Women's L.J. 171 (2006).

**Cynthia H. Conti-Cook** is an associate at Stoll, Glickman and Bellina, LLP, a small law firm in downtown Brooklyn specializing in police misconduct, civil rights, criminal defense and campaign finance reform.

**Heather Cook's** article, "Service Before Self? Evangelicals Flying High at the U.S. Air Force Academy," was the lead article in the January 2007 issue of the *Journal of Law and Education*. Cook's article looks at the recent controversies at the air force academy which were reported in the press, and argues that Establishment Clause doctrine should be strictly construed in the academic /military arena.

**Maritza Hernandez** is currently working as a staff attorney at the Nassau County District Attorney's Office in Hempstead, NY.

**Tara Jensen** was awarded the Bernabei Civil Rights Litigation Fellowship, a one-year fellowship with Bernabei Law Firm, PLLC, in Washington, D.C., a civil rights firm specializing in representing plaintiffs in employment discrimination cases.

**Kelly Kuterbach** is a staff attorney in the Consumer Unit at South Jersey Legal Services, working in the area of consumer fraud and identity theft.

**Carla P. Moniz** is a staff attorney at Greater Boston Legal Services.

**Rachel Nicotra** is Founder and Executive Director of Wage to Live, a new not-for-profit organization funded by a grant from the Initiative for Public Interest Law at Yale. Nicotra runs the organization with fellow classmate and Director, **Nikki Zeichner '06**. Wage to Live is a conscientious consumption campaign established to raise the wages of workers in NYC's restaurant industry. It employs the same model as Fair Trade coffee to certify and promote responsible business practices. The organization hopes to demonstrate that paying well is financially feasible and potentially beneficial. Visit [wagetolive.org](http://wagetolive.org) to learn more. "We appreciate all the support that we have received from the CUNY Law community!"

**Dave Palmer** of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI), currently represents the Bronx Committee for Toxic Free Schools and a

coalition of community residents, teachers, and parents in the South Bronx. He's been working to ensure that contaminated land in the South Bronx, upon which the City is proposing to build four new schools, is sufficiently cleaned up before the schools are built. His work, which has been covered widely in the press, has led the City to commit to fund an independent environmental assessment of the cleanup plan, conduct more testing on-site, craft a long-term maintenance and monitoring program, and facilitate a unique public process for addressing the remaining environmental concerns. Palmer was recently given an official commendation by the New York City Council and the local South Bronx Community Board for his work.

**Ivan B. Pantoja** is a staff attorney for The Legal Aid Society, Criminal Defense Division, in Brooklyn.

**Stelio Papadopoulos** is a staff attorney for Central Jersey Legal Services, Domestic Violence Unit.

**Altagracia B. Pierre** is currently pursuing an MBA degree at Baruch College. She was recently sworn into the NJ Bar and is awaiting admission into the NY and DC Bars.

**Lara Rabiee** is currently working as a Judges' Researcher Assistant in the Federal Court of Australia, Sydney Registry. As a general researcher at the Federal Court, she works with many of the judges, providing research assistance and in-court work. She also works closely with the Judges' associates (equivalent to law clerks in the U.S.). Recently, she worked on a decision concerning a native title claim by a number of Aboriginal groups in Western Australia.

**Sarah Radcliffe** is currently working as a staff attorney at the Oregon Law Center in Portland.

**Farwah Raza** recently appeared on UPN's news concerning a racial profiling event.

**Amy Roehl** was awarded an Equal Justice Works Fellowship funded by the law firm Greenberg Traurig. This Fellowship will underwrite a MFY Legal Services family law related project scheduled to begin in Fall 2007. Roehl is presently clerking for New Jersey Superior Court Judge Bernadette DeCastro in the Bergen County Family Court.





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