

Sunday River Ski Club



Suffolk Law's Ski & Snowboard Club hosted a weekend trip to Sunday River last month through the BSSC. Pavan Nagavelli, 3L and ski club VP, and Adam Harki, 3L and club President, (far left) report that the skiing was great, the lodging at Sunday River's slopeside hotel was luxurious, and Saturday night at Shipyard Brewery (right at the bottom of the access road) was a blast. For more photos of the trip you'll need to friend Pavan on Facebook.

Health Care, the United States and "Ideational Shift"

By Alex Maur
Staff Writer

The recent debates surrounding the government shutdown and the debt ceiling helped bring the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or "Obamacare" back into the spotlight in Washington and across the country. The American population is clearly divided on the issue of how to address the rising costs of health insurance and medical coverage.

The United States is somewhat of an anomaly in its approach to health care coverage, in comparison to similarly developed countries in Europe and Canada. Many proponents of the ACA urged that changes were needed, due in large part to medical bankruptcies associated with rising medical insurance costs. Opposition to the law is fierce, however, with left-wing Democrats believing that the ACA ultimately fell short of their goals of universal health coverage, and with many Republicans arguing that the new law is unconstitutional, ineffective, and costly.

In Canada there is near universal health care coverage, with approximately 70% of all costs paid by public resources from the provinces and the federal government. This includes most of what are considered fundamental health care services, such as all doctor visits, surgeries, and basic care. While most Canadians view this system as a source of pride, it is still not without its problems – wait times and the quality of services are often debated, especially when individuals are forced to wait months for routine surgeries. Despite these critiques, the idea of going bankrupt because of a trip to the emergency room remains a very foreign

Careers: Now for the Hard Part . . . Finding a Job

By Andrew Di Iorio
News Writer

Navigating the waters of career planning is a tough task for any law student, no matter the caliber. The majority of freshly-minted first years, no doubt, do not know how they will fully enjoy the legal profession after graduation. Even in the first weeks of class, professors are invoking the pitfalls of lacking writing skills come interview time or your Contracts professor, eh hem Professor Wittenberg, may give some early pointers

for the bar exam. I hope this article will provide some hints on how to find that first legal career opportunity. No matter your self-assured attitude and thoughts of professional grandeur, a fruitful job hunting process will always require solid and continuous effort in the classroom.

With that said, students will do themselves a favor by dusting off that old law school application resume, which is probably seven or eight months old by now. The eyes of a legal practitioner will be different for resumes than previous readers. Find time with the Office of Pro-

fessional and Career Development, a professor, or an accessible lawyer; these folks can give your resume careful review and suggestions. You must be able to hold a reader's attention for at least half of the page through the format, style, and content of your resume. Always bring a hard copy to an interview and have stories for each job that is outside your bullet points. Also, writing samples will be requested regularly, so sharpening these pieces will be critical.

Career | Page 2

Healthcare | Page 4

Dicta's Tips for Succeeding in Today's Legal Market

Career | cont'd from Page 1

Always be an informed consumer as it relates to what options are available to you for non-classroom settings. There are ample businesses, firms, non-profits, and government offices that can provide some guidance on what is possible as it relates to your career interests. These range from international studies and local internships, to public interest opportunities to big and small firms. It is a blessing to be in Boston because of the high concentration of legal forums within a very small radius. My mindset has always been to think outside the box, when possible. Is there a small business that could benefit from a legal perspective? What about that startup company you heard about at a party? Never dismiss any opportunity that may come across your desk.

Fourth year evening student Kelly Bogue noted that career-building resources can be right in front of you. During her three years at Suffolk, she has observed that "many of our classmates are currently working in interesting jobs and internships, or bring with them prior careers or work experience...and likely will be honest about the pros and cons of their job, industry, or employer."

During those first few interviews you may face seemingly intimidating employers. Usually, these interviewers are new associates and recent graduates. They have been asked by their firms to fill summer associate spots. Even though some might be sympathetic towards a young student, they are serious about finding the best for their firms. The most popular [interview] question was "why I went to law school and what my career goals are" said Bogue, who went through the On Campus Interview process ("OCI") prior to the summer of her last year of school.

A recent graduate who is now gen-

eral counsel for a major satellite company relayed a memorable anecdote at a presentation this past September. R. Stanton Dodge, who studied Accounting in college, talked about his first interview experience. After being asked why he wanted to work in the Accounting industry he remembered saying to himself, "I don't, I hate this stuff." He managed a response but his lack of enthusiasm

was telling. He swore that he would never feel dispassionate about a job interview again and sought out a position that would drive him everyday. Find ways to put yourself in a position to get credentials for a dream job down the road, you don't need to find it right away.

That strange and often awkward concept of networking is daunting for many of us, especially new law students. A 2012 graduate noted how important a role it plays in your professional life. "Devote time to building a solid network – a major component to career building" recom-

ommends Nina Dow, an attorney at a downtown firm, adding, "A mentor once said if by the time you graduate you can name five professionals who would recommend you, you've networked well so far." Be creative here as well. Staff offices throughout the school are filled with attorneys who all went through this journey and have helpful stories to guide you.

A few programs are worth mentioning, briefly. These have proven to be great avenues to explore the practical side of the law and include: the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project; Suffolk's clinical programs, internships, or study abroad; researching for a professor; and working for the research librarians. There are many more opportunities that have been omitted here. Regardless of the experiences you inevitably choose to build your legal credentials, remember to take the time to ask a lot of questions.

The Suffolk Law Paper

D I C T A

Volume XV No. 3
February 2014

thesuffolklawpaper@gmail.com

Editor-in-Chief
Jennifer Faillace

Managing Editor
Alexandra Hassell

Art Director
Yuen Yi Chung

News Editor
Andrew K. Di Iorio

Layout Editor
Hillary S. Cheng

Opinion Editor
Alex Zamenhof

Staff Writers & Copy Editors
allie deangelis Jeff Gangi Shannon O'Connor
Lucas Oliver Alex Maur

Board of Publishers
Jennifer Faillace
Alexandra Hassell
Melanie Klibanoff
Casandra Medeiros

Dicta is the official student newspaper of the Suffolk Law School community, existing solely to help foster a sense of community through communication. The goal of Dicta is to educate, inform, enlighten, and entertain the student body through outstanding reporting and editorials on news, events, trends, sports, arts, food, and popular culture.

The opinions and views expressed in Dicta are not necessarily those of the Dicta staff and are not the opinions of Suffolk University Law School or the student body. Suffolk Law School students control and conduct all facets of this paper. Dicta does not discriminate against any persons and complies with the university policies concerning equality.

Dicta encourages students, alumni, faculty, and administrators to submit letters to the editor and articles for publication. Submissions should include the author's name, class and/or position at the university or in the community. Dicta reserves the right to edit and publish all submissions. Anonymous submissions will not be published.

Dear Readers,

Contrary to popular belief, Dicta (The Suffolk Law Newspaper), has not been disbanded, disbanded, or dismembered. Rather, being a student-run operation, we decided to take a brief hiatus during finals. Fear not, we have returned in full force ready to take Spring semester down into the history books. What does that mean exactly? You'll just have to stay tuned to find out!

Like what you see? Hate what you see? Using this paper to line your parakeet cage? Pretty bird! We're always craving feedback, so don't forget to drop us a line at thesuffolklawpaper@gmail.com

This just in—Dicta has gone digital! Look for our announcement in the next campus announcement email courtesy of Lou Brum.

Stay thirsty, my friends,
Dicta 2014

Congratulations to the McLaughlin 2013 winners!



McLaughlin winners: From left to right, Moot Court Honor Board President Sammy Nabulsi, Runner-up Susan Campers, Champion John Scannell, and Moot Court Chief Competition Director Kate Mathison.

Comparing Bar Prep Options

By Samantha Kemp
Staff Writer

I attended Vendor Week last semester to speak to the Bar prep vendors in order to compare and contrast the programs. After spending a half hour with each of the vendors, here is what I found for Barbri, Themis, and Kaplan.

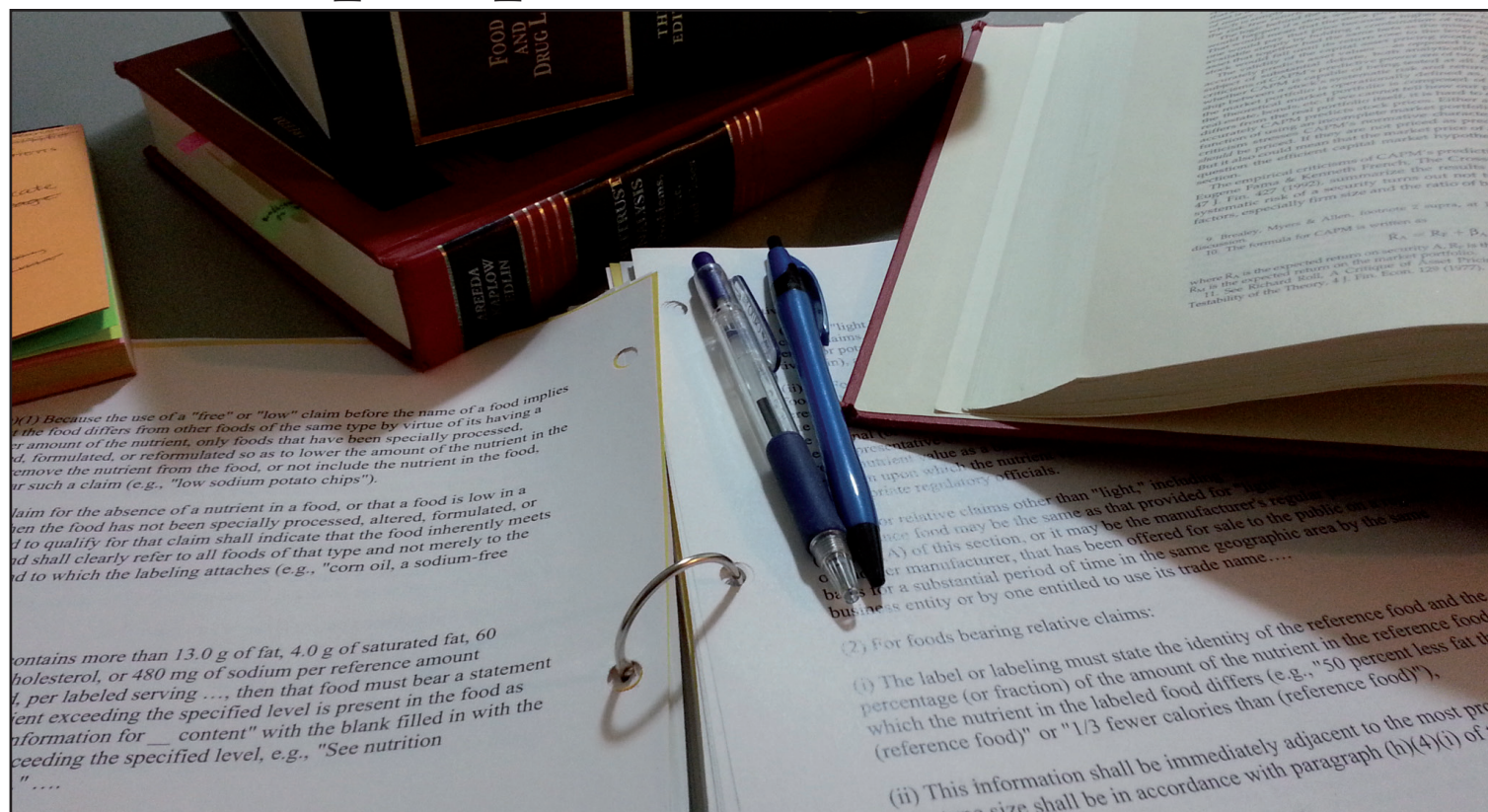
For Barbri: the earlier you sign up, the better the price, which also depends on jurisdiction. They also offer tuition assistance based on which is a grant instead of a loan so you don't have to pay it back. As for classes, their offerings differ by location, though they have the most comprehensive bar prep both by jurisdiction and location. Based on location, you can attend classroom-taught courses with real, live professors or online classes with pre-recorded streaming video. When professors are not available to come to your location for specific topics, you may end up watching a pre-recorded video of a recent lecture given in another state. And you may be eligible to mix-up your prep with some days learning online and other days attending the live-classroom courses. The current price to take the Massachusetts course is \$3800. Note: They have a tuition assistance program.

Need Help? Unfortunately, if you have a question during a video or online class, you can't ask the professor. You will have to ask a question through email, or in their online portal. You can call Barbri's main office with a question, but it seems as if you must go through the other two options first. The turn-around time for answers is either same day/next day.

Online Access & Server Reliability. If you are taking an online class, it is important to note that the servers were only down for two hours during the 2013 summer course.

Teaching / Learning Style. Here are a few takeaways from their teaching process: Barbri has the "AMP program" that adapts to your mastery of the material. Their AMP program won't keep giving you the same questions you have mastered. (This means that you have previously answered the question correct twice.) Essays are unlimited, and the turn-around for critique is usually within one week.

Course Length, Passage Rate, and Jurisdictions. The course in Massachusetts is six weeks long, and at the end they rent out a huge space and give a simulated bar exam. The pass rates for Barbri are close to the state passage rate. They also offer multistate deals that vary by jurisdic-



Photograph by Yuen Yi Chung

tion. For example, for MA plus NY it's only \$125 extra; MA & RI \$250 extra; NJ & NY \$75 extra. The rep for Barbri stated that they "set the curve" for bar review classes. When choosing a bar prep course, 88 percent of law students choose Barbri.

Themis, on the other hand: it costs \$1,595 dollars, but they have multiple discounts available based on club affiliations, students going into public interest law, early payment incentives and other offers. If you are a member of the American Bar Association Law student division, Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity International, National Black Law Students Association, or a Military spouse JD network, you will receive \$100 dollars off your tuition. If you have a job lined up in public service, they will take \$500 dollars off your tuition. Unfortunately, they only offer online pre-recorded lectures, so you can't ask questions during the lectures. However, their server did not have any outages or scheduled maintenance so they are always online. If you decide to go with Themis, you will also get a supervising attorney, who will check in on you and help you throughout the program. Also, the state director will call you at three different scheduled times over the program to check on your progress. If you cannot get in touch with your su-

pervising attorney (which is rare), there's a portal to ask substantive questions. The learning style puts an emphasis on the questions you get wrong. For the questions you get right, they make the subject matters more challenging. As for essays, you will do one essay per week, but you have the option to do more if you choose. The attorney advisor grades this for you, but if you would rather do it yourself, they also offer self grading for essays and model answers. As for questions, they are licensed with the Multistate Bar Examiners, so they use old questions, and have the National Conference of Bar Examiners write new questions. The course is 8 weeks long and is self-directed. You can go at your own speed with a checklist of tasks, or you can do the standard course which tracks your work for you. If you take some time off, the standard schedule will adjust so that you complete the course on time. Themis boasts the highest published passing rate, at 91 percent in Massachusetts. This is based on Themis first time takers who completed 75 percent or more of their course assignments and on state bar exam first time takers. They also have multistate deals. To take an additional state's class in addition to your own will cost \$200. Although Themis is only online, it has a more personal touch than Barbri or Kaplan. They

seem genuinely concerned about their students passing the bar since they check on you and are available if you need them.

As for Kaplan: if you signed up before November 12, 2013 the cost was \$2,765 for live a course in Massachusetts and if you plan on taking the bar exam in more than one state, it is an additional \$150 for that state's class. They offer live, in-class and online programs. Kaplan bar review courses are always live if select the "classroom" option - some classrooms, however, have the professor streamed-in via live video, with a proctor in the class, so if you have a question during the lecture, you can ask it at the break. To note, the server was down for 1 hour and 40 minutes during last summer's program. If you have a question outside of class, you can call and speak to an attorney and usually get a callback that day as their call centers are open late. The learning style is adaptive. This means that whenever you get a question right or wrong, the curriculum will adapt to what you know and do not know to avoid repetitive questions in areas you are already confident in. Essays offered are unlimited, and it takes 3-5 business days for a response. The class takes an estimated 8 weeks, and begins with an online MBE review. Questions are written by people who have studied the previous year's Bar questions

and study the trends of the MBE. Kaplan appears a little more personalized than Barbri, and it seems as if asking questions and getting answers would not be too difficult. Like Barbri, they also offer tuition assistance.

Local to Suffolk: Professor Janda offers a Saturday course throughout the semester as a weekend bar prep. This is something you sign up for on Campus Cruiser when enrolling in your semester's classes. Going to class is helpful, but you can also treat it like an online class. Each week you will get multiple choice questions and slides to review. You can then watch the lecture online. Suffolk has a license with the MBE, so Professor Janda uses practice questions taken from past Massachusetts Bar exams. Professor Janda really knows his stuff when it comes to Bar prep, and his course is definitely something to look into during your last semester of law school.

Trouble Choosing?

Some vendors offer free trials of their prep programs, so be sure to ask.



Photograph by Yuen Yi Chung

Talking Back: Bar Prep Reps Respond

In response to our article "Comparing Bar Prep Options," we gave bar prep companies the chance to talk back. Here's what they said.

Content collected & edited by Jennifer Faillace, 4LE.

THEMIS BAR REVIEW

Jamie Molbreak, Regional Director

We offer early payment incentives ([as of October 2013 there was] a special for \$350 off of the cost of a course) in addition to club affiliation discounts and reimbursement of competitor deposits (up to \$250). All of these discounts can be combined, but the cost of the course cannot fall below \$1095 (this is also our public interest scholarship rate).

Our Attorney Advisers are licensed in the exam jurisdiction and grade all of the students' essays from start to finish. They will grade unlimited essays and the turnaround time is 48 business hours. Students get the continuity of having one person look at their essays throughout the course, so the Attorney Adviser is well-acquainted with a particular student's strengths and weaknesses and can tailor his/her comments accordingly. Students are assigned to complete both graded and practice essays throughout the course. We track the students' progress and if someone is

falling behind with the course calendar, he/she will definitely be contacted. You are correct that we reach out to every student multiple times throughout the course.

Students can ask questions of our staff attorneys through the learning portal at any time; in addition, they can reach out to the State Director or the Attorney Adviser anytime.

We have licensed our MBE questions from the NCBE and supplement those with questions that we draft ourselves—we don't have the NCBE write new ones for us.

The course is 8-10 weeks depending on the jurisdiction(s) the student is taking. Combination courses (two jurisdictions) are \$150 more, not \$200 more.

Our learning portal tracks a student's progress no matter if they are working in Directed Study (our assigned calendar of tasks) or Flex Study mode.

Finally, Themis rents out a classroom to administer a live MBE so that students can experience what it will be like on test day[;] to worry about logistics, trying to concentrate in a room full of people, etc. These are very well attended and in fact, students are welcome to attend no matter where they are studying or for what jurisdiction. Themis students can prepare for their bar exams from anywhere in the world!

KAPLAN

Ari R. Gottlieb, Esq., Regional Director, New England

Kaplan offers live (in-class) and online programs. Kaplan bar review courses are "always live" if you select the classroom option. If you attend a class other than the one with a live professor in it, Kaplan streams that professor's lecture to your classroom site in real time. A proctor is in the class and is in touch with the professor so you can ask questions during the breaks.

Kaplan's server downtime last summer was for scheduled maintenance, and the site was otherwise available to students 99.92% of the summer.

When students have questions outside of class, they can email their staff attorneys via the online syllabus for an answer. You can also, at times, speak to those attorneys for particularly difficult questions.

The adaptive learning style lets you focus on your weak areas.

Practice essays, which you can submit an unlimited number of, are graded and returned within 3-5 days.

Kaplan also offers tuition assistance.

BARBRI

No comments were received.

Health Care, the United States, and the "Ideational Shift"

Healthcare | con'td from Page 1

concept.

Regardless of your take on the health care issue in the United States, there are many different theories on how and why these political shifts concerning health care occur. One political scientist, Joseph Wong, studied health care reform in Taiwan and Korea in his book *Healthy Democracies*. In his study, he found that changes in health care policy were more easily accomplished in these newly democratized (and previously authoritarian) states, where health reform had already begun, and helped establish what he calls an "ideational shift in values" across the country. Wong explains that the historical lack of 'the left' in politics allowed health care to be designated as a democratic right by all political parties.

While this is only part of the answer to the health care question, it is nonetheless helpful in studying the issue and understanding why the United States' policy differs from that of other countries.

In long-standing democracies like the United States, where democratic values are entrenched, so are the views held by political parties, interest groups and big business. This can inevitably make any kind of large-scale political change difficult to achieve, when most actors are looking to preserve the status quo and promote their own interests.

This is clear when you look at a number of other social issues that have recently divided the country. Same-sex marriage, however, seems to be just one example of how this kind of 'ideational shift' described by Wong can still occur, even in an entrenched democracy like the United States. With the Supreme Court's recent DOMA decision and an overall push towards legalization of gay marriage, it appears as though this issue is becoming less and less divisive. So, while it might feel like the answer to health care reform remains unanswered, it's hard to tell when an "ideational shift" could occur that could change the nature of the debate for good.

c a s i n o a d d i c t s



Photograph by Yuen Yi Chung, Art Director.

By Yuen Yi Chung
Art Director

It all started when I saw the beautifully angled glass towers overlooking the Thames River at sunset. Situated on an Indian Reservation, the Mohegan Sun Resort and Casino brings Native American legends to life. Tribal lore and nature's elements, such as earth, wind, fire and water, are seamlessly transformed into modern environments throughout the entertainment complex. The facility also includes a shopping mall, several restaurants, and a large concert arena. I enjoy coming here with friends and look forward to each visit even though I am not a big gambler.

As we dilly-dallied on our way to one of the restaurants, I could not help but

notice all of the miserable elderly people sleeping in the bus waiting area. Some of them slept on the floor, others curled up on the cold, plastic benches. Mr. Chen, a retired middle school teacher, showed me his stack of food and slot credit vouchers. "You can take the Fat Choy (translation: "Struck it Rich") bus for free from Boston to the casino as a member. The casino gives you \$15 for food and \$20 for slot play when you get off the bus. Then you can just wait here for the next bus back to Boston with your vouchers" said Chen. According to Chen, each bus trip can net around \$25 just in free vouchers.

It felt strange to know that under the same roof, we have some serious gambling

The irony lies in the fact that casinos often advertise the relaxed and luxurious life, yet frequent casino-goers are typically *anything but glamorous.*

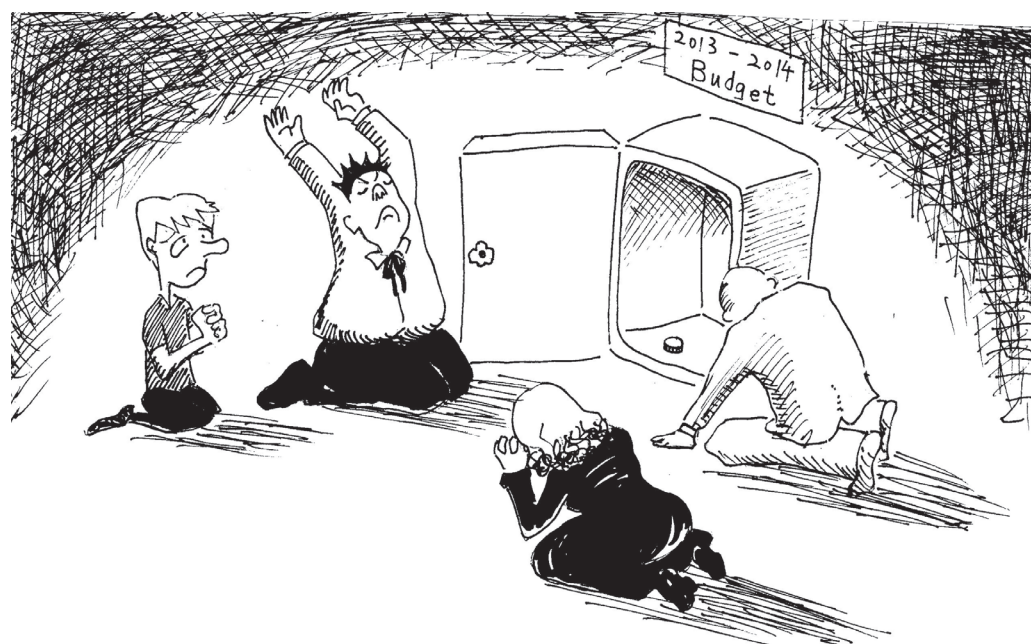
that casinos often advertise the relaxed and luxurious life, yet frequent casino-goers are typically anything but glamorous.

Another frequent commuter, Mr. Mei, shared his reasons for making the two-hour trip three times a day. "My son is having twins and we need the extra money. With my back injury and poor English, this is the only thing I can do to make money." Some of Mr. Mei's friends proudly admit to riding buses to casinos in Atlantic City and Pennsylvania as well.

"When you don't gamble, you have nothing to lose," they laughed.

addicts and some who are simply addicted casino-commuters who travel back and forth to the casino without ever actually gambling. The irony lies in the fact

SBA Budget 2013-2014



Artwork by Yuen Yi Chung, Art Director.

SBA ACCOUNTS		BUDGET AMOUNT
Sections		
1A		\$ 500.00
1B		\$ 500.00
1C		\$ 500.00
1D		\$ 500.00
1L Cup		\$ 3,000.00
2L at Large		\$ 3,000.00
3L at Large		\$ 3,000.00
4A		\$ 500.00
4L/7L at Large		\$ 1,000.00
Liaisons		
Bar Associations Liaisons (ABA, BBA, FBA, MBA)		\$ 2,000.00
OPCD Liaison		
Admissions Liaison		
Rappaport Liaison		
Honor Boards Liaison		
Committees		
Diversity and Inclusion Committee		\$ 2,000.00
Graduation Committee		\$ 5,000.00
Academic Affairs Committee		\$ 2,000.00
Alumni Affairs Committee		\$ 4,000.00
Appropriations Committee		\$ 500.00
External Affairs Committee		\$ 3,500.00
Student Affairs Social Committee		\$ 67,000.00
Student Affairs Concerns Committee		\$ 200.00
General		
Technology		\$ 400.00
Council of Presidents		\$ 400.00
Operations		\$ 5,000.00
Orientation		\$ 2,000.00
Reserve		\$ 10,000.00
Student Competition Travel Fund		\$ 3,000.00
Supplemental Fund		\$ 38,547.89
Sustainability Initiatives		\$ 500.00
SBA ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNTS TOTAL		\$ 158,547.89
Student Organizations		
Alternative Dispute Resolution		\$ 733.50
American Constitution Society		\$ 1,035.00
Asian Pacific American Law Students Association		\$ 2,395.00
Bearing Witness: A Journal on Law and Social Responsibility		\$ 3,080.00
Black Law Students Association		\$ 4,500.00
Business Law Association		\$ 2,000.00
Child and Family Law Student Association		\$ 1,000.00
Christian Fellowship		\$ 1,200.00
Cultural Heritage Law Association		\$ 1,810.00

Dicta Board of Publishers	\$ 3,750.00
Federalist Society	\$ 2,345.00
Health and Biomedical Law Society	\$ 1,520.00
Hellenic Law Society	
Human Rights Law Society	\$ 1,450.00
Human Trafficking Students Organization	\$ 1,335.00
Humanitarian Law and American Red Cross Society	
Immigration Law Association	\$ 830.00
Intellectual Property Law Student Association	\$ 2,633.40
International Law Society	\$ 2,310.00
Irish American Law Society	\$ 1,310.00
Jewish Law Students Association	\$ 2,750.00
Joint Degree Law Student Association	\$ 900.00
Latin American Law Students Association	\$ 3,474.00
Lebanese American Law Students' Organization	\$ 990.00
Massachusetts Academy of Trial Attorneys	\$ 1,300.00
National Italian American Bar Association	\$ 495.00
National Lawyer's Guild	
Native American Law Students Association	\$ 3,960.00
New England First Amendment Coalition	\$ -
Phi Alpha Delta	\$ 750.00
Phi Delta Phi	
Queer Law Alliance	\$ 1,100.00
South Asian Law Students Association	\$ 2,935.00
Sports and Entertainment Law Association	\$ 2,260.00
Suffolk Law Armed Services and Law Enforcement Association	\$ 510.00
Suffolk Law Football Club	\$ 1,026.00
Suffolk Law Ice Hockey Club	\$ 2,800.00
Suffolk Law Intramural Basketball Association	\$ 3,151.25
Suffolk Law Muslim Students Association	\$ 2,345.00
Suffolk Law Racquet Club	\$ 2,000.00
Suffolk Law Rugby Football Club	\$ 2,405.00
Suffolk Law Ski Club	\$ 2,882.00
Suffolk Law Softball	\$ 3,025.00
Suffolk Public Interest Law Group	\$ 4,948.00
Suffolk Real Estate Law Association	\$ 800.00
Student Animal Legal Defense Fund	\$ 1,200.00
Suffolk Gaming Law Association	
Suffolk University Law Golf Club	\$ 859.35
Suffolk Women of Color Law Students Association	\$ 1,680.00
Women's Law Association	\$ 3,000.00
STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS TOTAL	\$ 88,782.50
SBA TOTAL	\$ 247,330.39

SBA's Opening Season

FY 2014 Budget Approval and Club Budget Appeals

By Jennifer Faillace
Editor-In-Chief

Sunday, September 29, was a rough evening for many members of the SBA. The evening started well with pizza and soda, introductions by various SBA committee directors and assistant directors, and fun facts about their favorite karaoke songs.

However, when the meeting turned toward budget appeals, the fun stopped. The Appropriations committee was not prepared for the amount of clubs appealing their SBA-issued budgets to the Board of Governors.

Given the voting process that requires three votes to get to the merits of the appeal, the review of club appeals took four hours.

For all the potential SBA presidential candidates out there and Appropriations' committee hopefuls, please find a way to streamline this process and convey your reasoning for determining approved

budget amounts in a transparent and consistent manner.

Clubs need to have realistic expectations about their budget requests and be able to provide a track record of responsible spending and influential programming that bolsters their budget requests. With those watermarks met, we may be able to prevent frivolous and lengthy appeals in the future.

SBA President Sammy Nabulsi is expected to release a statement to the clubs who appealed to the SBA's Board of Governors ("BOG") for additional funds that exceeded the amount recommended by the Appropriations Committee.

Student organizations requests totaled over \$200,000 this year; the SBA had about \$90,000 to allocate to all clubs.

Towards the end of the night, the steadily declining number of exhausted representatives present made it likely that an adequate quorum was not present to vote on the appeals and that proxy votes were not being clearly kept.

3:03 Certification/Clinics

By Alexandra Hassell
Managing Editor

Are you interested in obtaining experience as an attorney while you're still in school? Look no further than one of Suffolk Law's ten in-house clinics. Areas of law include Education Advocacy, Family Advocacy, Health Law, Housing, Immigration, Indian Law and Indigenous Peoples, Intellectual Property and Entrepreneurship, Juvenile Defenders, Defenders, Prosecutors, and Landlord-Tenant for the evening program. The clinical program at Suffolk is currently ranked 17th in the country by U.S. News and World Report.

Applications are available in February and can be submitted in person for students in their last two years of law school. Additionally, applicants must be in good academic standing and have completed and received a satisfactory grade in Evidence. Acceptance is based on a lottery system, but preference may be given to those in their last year of school or those who are fluent in foreign languages or have completed courses relevant to the clinic for which they have applied. Once

a student has been accepted into a clinic, he or she will submit an application for certification under Rule 3:03 of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. This rule allows law students to represent indigent clients or the Commonwealth under a supervising attorney without receiving compensation for said services.

Student Attorneys will be responsible for client intake, counseling, correspondence, pleadings, and appearances on behalf of their clients. While the supervising attorney is there to advise, the students do all the heavy lifting.

Clinics provide practical experience and allow students to apply what they have learned in the classroom to the cases they receive. Day students receive eight credits for full year clinics while the evening clinic is six credits for the year. Completion of a clinic satisfies the skills requirement that is necessary for graduation as well. Participating in a clinic is a rewarding experience and a great way to assist those in need while honing your own skills.

The info session is Thu., Feb. 20, 2-4pm in the Function Room. More info: <http://www.suffolk.edu/law/6728.php>.

Notes from the Back Row: The MPRE

By Andrew Power, 3LE (Class of 2012)
Reprint from *Dicta* (Oct. 2010)

On a sunny Saturday morning last summer, I sat down to take the MPRE, a sixty-question multiple-choice test that probed my understanding of the legal profession's core values.

No, MPRE does not stand for Money, Power, Real Estate. Nor is it an acronym for Many Practitioners Retire Early. Rather, MPRE is short for Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination. It's a legal ethics test.

As I was blacking in the ovals under the proctor's watchful eye, an Elvis Costello song kept popping into my head. The song was "(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding?" Except in my head it was called "(What's So Funny 'Bout) Professional Responsibility?"

Because, let's face it: something about the very notion of legal ethics makes people laugh.

Last spring, when I was taking Suffolk's mandatory Professional Responsibility course, I'd tell people what I was studying and they'd invariably chuckle. The responses would be along these lines: "Are you kidding me? Ethics for lawyers? Ah-ha-ha-ha-ha!"

Clearly there's a perception problem here. Lawyers for the most part are not demonstrably more dishonest than the average American (how's that for a ringing endorsement?). And yet the stereotype of the ethically challenged attorney persists. (E.g.: How can you tell it's really cold outside? When you see a lawyer with his hands in his own pockets.)

As a result, the legal profession has gone out of its way to emphasize ethical behavior. For example, most states, including Massachusetts, require every would-be lawyer to pass the MPRE before taking the bar exam. It's given three times a year, and it ain't easy.

Some people go in cold, relying on their innate sense of right and wrong—their ethical compass, if you will—to guide them through the maze. I needed more, so I took an MPRE prep class taught by a lawyer who made off-color jokes about "mandatory withdrawal."

I found the course to be helpful, particularly the practice questions. (And yes, to paraphrase the Beatles, I passed the audition.) So here, as a public service to my fellow wannabe attorneys, is a typical MPRE practice question I created just for you.

Fonda Cash, a law school student at

Watsamatta U., gets a coveted summer associateship at the big-money law firm of Shiftrom Shinola (motto: "If you don't know Shiftrom Shinola, you should"). Her supervisor, attorney Rich Duphus, thinks Fonda shows potential and soon has her negotiating settlements. After one particularly fruitful negotiation, Fonda collects a substantial check and brings it back to attorney Duphus. He congratulates Fonda and instructs her to deposit the check into a special fund labeled "OPP." He then proposes, as a reward for her good work, that she join him for what he terms an "IOLTA weekend" in Vegas. She's not certain this behavior is ethical, but Duphus assures her it's OK, saying, "Trust me. I'm a big-money attorney. I know the law."

Fonda asks you what she should do. What advice would you give her?

- Play along in expectation of a full-time offer from the firm.
- Use the incidents as leverage to secure a full-time offer from the firm.
- If no offer is forthcoming, report the incidents to the appropriate authorities.
- None of the above.

Wasn't that fun? By the way, the MPRE is apparently emphasizing judicial ethics a bit more these days, so here's another one on the house. Good luck on the exam!

Judge Gil T. Vurdick is running for re-election to the state supreme court. Before ascending to the bench, Judge Vurdick was a partner in the personal injury firm of Slypton Felle (motto: "Negligence is our specialty") and still has many friends there. A member of the firm, Phil McCoffers, is chairing Judge Vurdick's re-election committee. One day, after wrapping up his oral arguments before Judge Vurdick, McCoffers stops by the judge's chambers. He mentions that his client in the case is a strong supporter of the judge's candidacy and would like to make a large contribution in exchange for "a little love" on the matter before the court. Judge Vurdick simply smiles and holds up six fingers. Then they head over to the local men's club to drink and talk football before going home.

Is the judge subject to discipline?

- Yes. For running for re-election instead of giving someone else a turn.
- No. The judge didn't really do anything mean.
- Yes. For belonging to a men's club.
- It depends...

MARCH 2014 MPRE

The next MPRE is March 29, 2014. The Later Registration Deadline is February 20th. The next test date is August 9, 2014.

Courthouse Dog Visit Sparks Interest in Juvenile Criminal Justice

By Jennifer Faillace
Editor-in-Chief

BOSTON, Mass. -- Suffolk Law School received a visit from a courthouse facility dog last semester. On the Monday before finals, Wena, a black lab, and her handler Laurie Myers, visited with students for a study break sponsored by Dicta and the Suffolk Animal Legal Defense Fund.

The impact that a courthouse facility dog can have on the legal process is substantial. "Using a facility dog during a forensic interview has reduced the time it takes by as much as forty-five minutes" explained Myers. Wena assists abused children while they are working with the district attorney's office. She also comforts teens in community support groups and has cheered up victims at local hospitals.

Laurie Myers demonstrated Wena's discipline and talked about the training required to become certified by Canine Companions for Independence (CCI), the organization that trained and donated Wena. CCI assistance dogs undergo training for six to nine months before they meet their potential handler. Myers and Wena worked and lived with each other for two weeks before both of them graduated from CCI's program as a certified Facility Dog Team.

During their visit to Suffolk, Wena took a break from her role as courthouse facility dog to enjoy lots of attention from students. As a service-trained dog, she showed us a few of her commands.

This included carrying items, pushing chairs, and "visiting" (jumping onto the lap of people who are in wheelchairs or in hospital beds).

Myers told us that "courthouse" or "comfort" dogs have been well-accepted by the legal community for several years. In November of 2011, the National District Attorneys Association passed a resolution supporting their use "to aid in the investigation of crimes involving young or vulnerable victims." The resolution included Best Practices guidelines to assist district attorneys offices and courthouses around the country in establishing their own courthouse facility dog programs.

Wena was donated to Laurie Myers and the non-profit Community VOICES of Chelmsford to offer assistance and support to victims of crime within the criminal justice system and community.



Myers is working with district attorneys offices throughout the state that are interested in getting their own facility dog. Another courthouse facility dog may be coming to Massachusetts this year.

This spring, the SBA is interested in hosting another event with Wena, and we are looking forward to seeing her again soon.



New Clubs Approved

By Jennifer Faillace
Editor-in-Chief

Two new clubs were authorized last month: The Law Innovation and Technology Student Association (LITSA) and a Suffolk University Chapter of the Association of Latino Professionals in Finance and Accounting (ALPFA) Law. Their mission statements are below. We are looking forward to some great events from both clubs this Spring.

The Law Innovation and Technology Student Association (LITSA):

LITSA will be dedicated to raising an awareness of how technology is advancing the delivery of legal services. Through guest speakers, demonstrations and possible hands-on application, LITSA will create an open forum where students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other members of the community can not only gain an understanding and appreciation of how technology is transforming the legal marketplace today, but also gain a competitive edge to meet tomorrow's demand.

ALPFA Law, Suffolk University Chapter:

"To leverage the access and resources of a national organization, ALPFA, to facilitate professional development and networking opportunities for law students seeking legal careers in private and public industries and championing diversity in the legal sector."

Additional information from <http://www.alpfa.org>: ALPFA is a Latino association for business professionals and students with chapters nationwide. Their aim is to enhance opportunities for Latinos and build leadership and career skills.

The clubs were required to submit their mission statements, constitutions, member lists, planned activities, and budgets to be considered for authorization. The Council of Presidents (COP) voted on authorization, and the Board of Governors had the opportunity to overturn or ratify the COP vote.

For more information on the club authorization process, please contact Morvarid (Michelle) Bagheri, Council of Presidents Liaison, Student Bar Association, via sulscop@gmail.com.

Massachusetts Bar Exam Results for July 2013

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF BAR EXAMINERS

July 2013 Massachusetts Bar Examination Results by Law Schools

The law school bar exam results reflect the performance of individuals on the July 2013 Massachusetts Bar Examination. The overall passing rates and the passing rates at the law schools vary from year to year. The statistical data does not represent an evaluation of the listed law schools.

BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	167	158	94.6%
Second Time Takers	0	0	
Third Time or More	4	3	75.0%
Total Examinees	171	161	94.2%

BOSTON UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	149	142	95.3%
Second Time Takers	1	0	0.0%
Third Time or More	1	1	100.0%
Total Examinees	151	143	94.7%

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	82	79	96.3%
Second Time Takers	0		
Third Time or More	0		
Total Examinees	82	79	96.3%

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL OF LAW

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	66	39	59.1%
Second Time Takers	24	4	16.7%
Third Time or More	34	4	11.8%
Total Examinees	124	47	37.9%

NEW ENGLAND LAW

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	220	201	91.4%
Second Time Takers	3	2	66.7%
Third Time or More	10	4	40.0%
Total Examinees	233	207	88.8%

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	145	128	88.3%
Second Time Takers	3	2	66.7%
Third Time or More	3	0	0.0%
Total Examinees	151	130	86.1%

SUFFOLK LAW SCHOOL

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	352	299	84.9%
Second Time Takers	16	6	37.5%
Third Time or More	17	5	29.4%
Total Examinees	385	310	80.5%

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL OF LAW - DARTMOUTH

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	58	42	72.4%
Second Time Takers	7	3	42.9%
Third Time or More	5	2	40%
Total Examinees	70	47	67.1%

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL OF LAW

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	53	39	73.6%
Second Time Takers	8	3	37.5%
Third Time or More	6	1	16.7%
Total Examinees	67	43	64.2%

ALL OTHER LAW SCHOOLS

	Number Taking	Number Passing	Percent Passing
First Time Takers	702	621	88.5%
Second Time Takers	19	7	36.8%
Third Time or More	40	11	27.5%
Total Examinees	761	639	84.0%

Kahalas Scholarship Winners



Pictured above is Jah-Asia Nuru, 2LD, recipient of the first Kahalas Scholarship Award.

By Melanie Klibanoff
Dicta Secretary

Thanks to the generosity of Howard M. Kahlas and his wife, Judith, the Kahalas Term Scholarship Fund totaling \$100,000 provides scholarship grants of \$10,000 for up to two students per year. Applicants must show demonstrated service to their communities, demonstrated leadership and other extracurricular activities evincing the potential to be strong law students. Such students also must demonstrate financial need and have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher upon graduation from a four-year accredited college or university. Preference for the Kahalas Term Scholarship will be given to students who are members of

historically underrepresented groups in law school education. In addition to the financial element, Howard Kahalas will provide personal mentorship to scholarship winners to help with the difficult decisions required to be successful in the legal field.

Having earned his law degree from Suffolk University Law School in 1972 following his graduation from Boston University's College of Liberal Arts in 1969, Howard M. Kahalas is a well-established Boston attorney. After several years as a sole practitioner specializing in criminal trial work, personal injury and workers compensation, Howard M. Kahalas became the principal of the Law Office of Howard M. Kahalas, P.C. in 1981. His more than 35 years of experi-

ence as a Boston personal injury attorney include being awarded several multi-million-dollar verdicts or settlements for his clients. Mr. Kahalas is a past member of the Judicial Nominating Commission, serving more than eight years under three governors.

To apply for the Kahalas Term Scholarship applicants must submit a personal essay of no more than 500 words and two recommendations from college or university faculty. The first recipients of the Kahalas scholarship are Thomas Davis JD '15 and Jah-Asia Nuru JD '15. Ms. Nuru has plans to work for the San Francisco Public Defender's Office this summer. She stated that she is "extremely thankful for the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Kahalas and the Suffolk Selection Committee.

Law school is an expensive endeavor, especially for those of us who want to pursue public interest law. To be afforded such a huge contribution to defray some of the costs, as well as a mentorship, is beyond helpful." – Jah-Asia Nuru

In a time of grave and scarce availability of paying legal jobs for law students, every charitable donation or scholarship that becomes available goes a long way. As Suffolk Law students, we are very lucky to be a part of such a strong and caring community. As Dean Camille A. Nelson stated, "We're grateful to the Kahalases for their generosity, both in terms of scholarship funds and Attorney Kahalas' time in mentoring students through the ups and downs of law school and beyond."

Working for the Innocence Project

By Alexander Zamenhof
Opinion Editor

The New England Innocence Project (NEIP) is part of a nation-wide, non-profit endeavor to give incarcerated people a chance at proving their freedom.



Since DNA evidence and testing has become increasingly more accurate and reliable, there are literally thousands of convicted

prisoners who are claiming that with the application of current DNA testing, they can be found to have been innocent all along.

I got involved with NEIP about a month ago – part of my effort to get pro-bono hours, as well as to get some criminal legal experience. Here is what I can say about the project to date:

1. I've been assigned, along with a classmate, to review a specific case.
2. We may be required to go find any missing evidence, interview witnesses, request documentation under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), etc.
3. Everything about the current case is considered classified, and may not be



discussed outside the confines of those of us involved.

At this point, that's all I can say. We've received our case file, and will start going through all the evidence in the coming weeks. We have to write a preliminary recommendation during the winter, and then present our final findings to the

board of NEIP in the spring.

Professor Stephanie Hartung runs the program Suffolk-side, and took the three of us to the orientation meeting at New England Law.

Students from all of the participating schools (BU, Harvard, New England, Northeastern) came together and lis-

tened to an emotional talk from an exonerated who had been in prison for 19 years as an innocent man. That's what NEIP is all about: getting innocent people the hell out of prison who have been almost forgotten.

SBA Treasurer: New Procedures for Accounting

By Svetlana Revina
SBA Treasurer

The Student Bar Association (SBA) is implementing a change to our accounting procedures. As of October 1st, the Suffolk University Business Office has taken over the responsibility of issuing checks for the SBA. Our independent accounting system will still be managed, monitored and controlled within the SBA and by the SBA Treasurer. The part of the process that is now different is the printing of the checks and maintenance of the vendor database.

Here is how this change will affect the Student Organizations, Clubs, Committees, SBA Departments and other members of the student body submitting

check requests for vendor payment or their own reimbursement:

- 1) Timing of submissions and check issuance - You must submit a check request to the SBA Treasurer by 6 p.m. on Tuesday to get reimbursed during the same week. The check runs are done every Friday and you can either request to hold the check for pick up or have the check mailed to any specified address. If you request to hold the check, the check will be available at the Suffolk University Business Office (73 Tremont Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02108) after 2 p.m. that Friday or in the Treasury Outbox drawer in the SBA suite on Monday of the following week. If you intend to pick up the check on Friday at the Business Office, call (617) 573-8404 first to make

sure your check is ready before heading over.

- 2) We have a new Check Request Form that is available in the SBA suite (Suite 450).

Note that the treasurer of each student organization should be responsible for maintaining financial records, keeping track of expenses and deposits and regularly providing the rest of the e-board with accurate account balances for that organization. It is highly recommended that the treasurer fills out the financial forms or is at least informed of all the check requests, deposits and transfers submitted to the SBA Treasury. At the end of the year, the SBA will be asking each organization for a detailed annual report and it is in the best interest of

each student organization to keep detailed records otherwise they risk de-authorization.

Please let us know if you have any questions and/or concerns. In addition to being reachable by e-mail, Svetlana Revina, SBA Treasurer will be available during office hours on Wednesdays from 2-4 pm in the SBA Suite on the 4th Floor.

Treasurer Contact Information:
Svetlana Revina
Student Bar Association, Treasurer
Suffolk University Law School
srevina@suffolk.edu
sbatreasurer@yahoo.com

Not Your Older Brother's Civil Procedure

By Andrew DiIorio
News Editor

It seems like a decade has gone by since I took civil procedure with Professor Thomas Finn. However, during the 2010-2011 school year I was able to learn much from the course. Many of us were extremely pleased with Professor Finn and took some great points from his lectures. In a conversation last fall he informed me that my orange colored civil procedure “E and E” is now out of date on some issues. There have been some changes issued to the approaches that attorneys must take towards the requirements of venue and removal. The Federal Courts Jurisdiction and Venue Clarification Act of 2011 (JVCA) was the legal instrument for the changes. Additionally, there may be more adjustments to come as a comment period has been initiated by the Standing Committee on Rules of Practice and Procedure. George Vairo commented on the general outcome of the legislation in his piece in the *National Law Journal* titled, “Congress clarifies some removal and venue issues; Federal Courts Jurisdiction and Venue Clarification Act revolves split over 30-day removal period for multiple defendants.” He observed, “The JVCA...clarifies several issues that had divided the courts on removal...and cleans up several issues with the general venue statute.”

In January 2012, the process for asserting venue and removal motions officially changed. In regards to venue, §1390, the changes set general definitions and parameters. The case law rule for venue was codified, which mandates that venue for removed actions will be set by the removal statute, not the general venue statute. Also, §1392 was replaced by §1391(a)(1), eliminating the distinction of “local actions” where state law was supposed to be used in federal courts. The legislation streamlined §1391, making venue proper in a defendant’s judicial district only when all of the defendants reside in that district’s state.

Removal received adjustments which were seemingly straightforward. The JVCA preserves the requirement that all defendants must consent to the removal under §1446(b)(2)(A). Defendants will also have 30 days to file a notice of removal and have the opportunity to join the removal action if he or she didn’t do so

Courthouse Dog Visits Suffolk Law



Photograph courtesy of SALDF photographer Jacqueline Chen

originally. These actions are empowered under §1446(b)(2)(B) and under §1446(b)(2)(C), respectfully. Under §1446(c)(1), if the plaintiff acts in bad faith to prevent removal within the one-year time frame, the time limit will not be honored. Additionally, the one-year clock will not be taken into account if there was bad faith during an amount-in-controversy found analysis through §1446(c)(3)(B).

The proposed rules, which are currently open for public comment, will have an impact on the practice of law for all litigators. The scheduling and pre-trial factors of a lawsuit are the prime focus of these changes. Two of the most significant alterations would include a reduction of time for service of summons and complaints (Rule 49m) and a limitation

of days for judges to issue scheduling orders after appearance and service to defendants (Rule 16(b)(2)). Another proposed amendment would require a judge to issue scheduling orders at scheduling conferences, which must be conducted in person, rather than by telephone or mail.

There are several procedural hurdles that face these changes. Hearings have already commenced throughout the country, allowing members of the bar to speak on the issues. The Standing Committee will close the comment period in February and will vote on the changes. If passed, the Judicial Conference will take them up. The Supreme Court would be next for approval and finally, Congress. Raymond Ripple and Rachel Caldwell wrote about these issues in an article ti-

tled, “How proposed amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure could change your practice.” They wrote for in-house attorneys, pointing out, “This means that you will have to be prepared to advise internal stakeholders and business contacts more quickly...It would become even more important for you to have access to the stakeholders in your company so that you can obtain any and all key underlying documents in a case;... develop background information regarding key facts to support claims or defenses; and engage outside counsel to handle the case.”

It is also worth noting that Civil Procedure will begin to be tested on the multi-state bar exam in February 2015.

There's a Month for That



By allie deangelis
Staff Writer

As you become inundated with paperwork for your 2013 tax filing, I'd like to share a piece Dicta intended to publish in the November issue:

Were you aware of what you were supposed to be aware of this past October? 'Twas the season for breast cancer awareness, domestic violence awareness, bullying prevention, dwarfism, depression, and national cyber security. The list goes on and the months go by. Once the name recognition wears off, as it tends to do, I am struck by the fact that this cyclical ode becomes a little arbitrary. Why is it that we dedicate months to certain causes or problems and not others? I've never heard of National Debt month. It seems we are not committing ourselves or our resources to moving beyond a stage of awareness of these causes but merely declaring war on their namesake. This approach is both dangerous and apathetic. It triggers a sense of collective powerlessness and legitimizes empty gestures by individuals or corporations who actually have the money and the power to make a real impact.

Compounding this phenomenon are the corporations who exploit the world's problems for commercial gain. Take a look at an NFL game earlier in the season, a Yoplait yogurt lid, Gap's RED campaign, or any other blue, pink, or purple item you may have purchased

based on its color-coded cause classification. With little research you will find your hard earned cash evaporated into a thinly-veiled marketing campaign rather than the intended charitable contribution—a contribution that may have motivated the purchase in the first place. How clever.

Some people will say 'it's a free market', and 'let industry alone'—consumers should have the freedom of choice and any spending is good spending (for the economy's sake!). I think it's more useful, or perhaps more realistic, to picture economic growth as not the addition of new money but an increasingly more practical (egalitarian) diversion of existing funds. Consumers may 'control' the market, but enterprise creates it. That's what makes it so profitable. Free enterprise is not the problem—but the true colors brought out by free reign are. If we haven't got a way to mitigate the greed instinct of the biggest targets, then what's the point of collecting taxes? Not only are these companies making money off of cancer and disease, they aren't even paying their fair share that would contribute to their eradication.

Much as there are but two certainties in life (death and taxes), there are two major camps of thought on this topic. There are some that would prefer to see these funds collected by the big targets diverted back into the common pool. Then there are some that prefer to see the funds diverted into whoever's pocket is wide enough to catch them. In our democracy, for the rest of our lifetime

at least, this tug of war will always take place, there's no denying that. But it's time to decide whether there are some things worth paying for regardless of political affiliation and without a shouting match. There's got to be a stronger commitment to the pockets of those who are not so self-interested. Aren't those the people we pledged we'd be aware of in the first place?

Listen dude, you've got a lot on your plate. I'm not asking you to cure cancer. I'm not even asking you to brush your teeth. But if you don't believe in national health care or more funding for medical research and you're wearing a blue rubber bracelet or pink Nike Shox, then you are as irrelevant and misinformed as Jose Canseco's twitter page. Just because something is one way does not mean it must stay that way forever. At best, higher education compels us to ask better questions—and at worst to trust, then verify.

SUFFOLK FUTBOL CLUB FALL 2013 SEASON SHOUTOUT

SUFFOLK LAW FUTBOL CLUB would like to thank Melissa Joyce from LEXIS for her support. With LEXIS support SLFC was able to raffle off 4 New England Revolution Tickets to Lexis training attendees! Thank you Melissa and LEXIS!

The Whole World's Gone to Pot



Art by Yuen Yi Chung

By allie deangelis
Staff Writer

The two teams facing off in Superbowl 2014 hail from states where weed is legal. The sporting event that gets the most media attention has inadvertently (if you ask the NFL, unwillingly) become the symbol of the rising tide in pot politics. State-level recreational legalization finally happened, is promised to happen in other states and the marijuana debate is finally getting the media attention it deserves. Unfortunately the quantity of the attention doesn't reflect the quality of coverage - and if the talking head collective treated anything else so crassly, I'd like to think we'd stop watching them. Or at least blog about it.

Imagine Anderson Cooper giggling while interviewing a man walking out of a clinic with his free Viagra prescription thanks to the Healthcare Reform bill. You can minimize the story (and the stoners) all you want, but at the end of the day the President of the United States took time out of his day to remark that marijuana is no more dangerous than alcohol. You may re-

call we used to have a prohibition against that, too. But what we did to the bootleggers is nothing compared to Reagan's war on drugs.

President Obama has also remarked that his administration is going to take a harder look at income inequality here in the U.S. A recent Oxfam study stated that the wealthiest people on the planet, all 85 of them, own nearly half of all the wealth in the world. Now if you narrow that focus to the richest country in the world, you'd be right to assume that those statistics get even worse. The U.S. far surpasses any other country in the share of national income going to the richest one percent. Income inequality, i.e. the gap between what the richest person makes and the poorest person makes, hasn't been this wide since good old Prohibition-era 1928.

To ameliorate all this inequality, the President has declared that we need to get more people from the bottom to positions at the top. But pulling kids up out of poor neighborhoods and giving them the best education money can buy just isn't going to cut it. Take a look around this law school. The Dean's Office has succeeded

in tipping the status quo in the direction of a more diverse student body, and more power to them. But what happens when the gig is up? If we haven't solved the problem with jobs, diversifying the graduating class or the boardroom isn't going to help, or, it's but one prong of a multi-dimensional approach. Obama's vision of opportunity is what we want, but what we need is meaningful tax reform on the country's wealthiest corporations, a National Labor Relations Board that will stand up to the nation's largest employers (Wal-mart), and more power to the watchdog Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to teach the big financial institutions who swindled billions from the American taxpayers how to heel. Too much big government interference for you? I guess it's too bad the market forgot to correct itself.

The difference between the weed debate and the inequality story is one of appeal. We like to hear the pundits make their silly dated Cheech jokes. It's a bit more sobering to hear just how steep the climb out of the ravine really is.

Questions or comments? The author can be reached at ajdeangelis@suffolk.edu

Higher Pass Rates

JULY 2013 PASS RATES	THEMIS PASS RATE*	STATE PASS RATE*
California	81%	68%
Florida	86%	77%
Illinois	95%	89%
Maryland	93%	83%
Massachusetts	98%	88%
Michigan	80%	67%
New Jersey	95% [†]	80% [†]
New York	93%	86%
Ohio	95%	87%
Pennsylvania	90%	83%
Texas	91%	86%
Virginia	86%	80%
Uniform Bar Exam States (AZ, CO, DC, IA, ID, MO, MT, ND, NE, NH, UT, WA, and WY)	90%	

For more information on Themis jurisdictions, visit ThemisBar.com.

* Based on Themis first-time takers who completed 75% or more of their course assignments and on state bar exam first-time takers.

† Number denotes the overall state pass rate and Themis pass rate. New Jersey does not provide their first-time taker pass rate.

Connect with us!



ThemisBar.com

1-888-843-6476

Themis
BarReview