

# U B L A W F O R U M

*The Magazine of the University at Buffalo Law School  
The State University of New York*

S P R I N G 2 0 0 9

*Meet the latest stars to join our faculty*



*Wentong Zheng*



*Tara Melish*



*S. Todd Brown*



*Michael Halberstam*



*Angela P. Harris*



**Lessons  
*of the*  
Balkans**



*Bridge-term learning experience  
in Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo  
proves life-changing*

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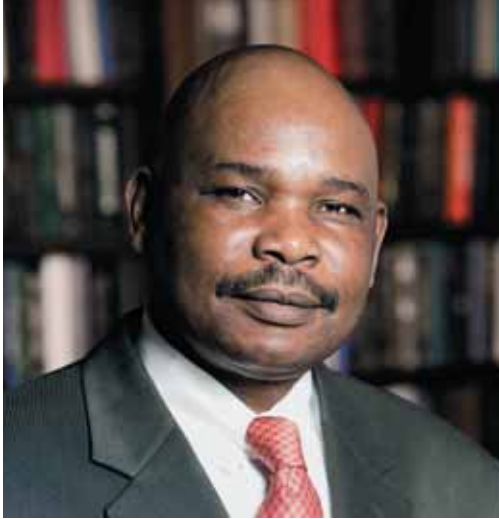


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# Message from the dean

## We want to be great – not just good



*The Law School of the future must have ambitions that are national and international in scope. Our curriculum and long-term planning reflect these goals.*

The spring is now in full bloom, signifying the vitality of the season. This is a great cue, because there has never been a better time to be a member of the larger UB Law community. Just as the change of the seasons reflects a new beginning, the reforms that are occurring at UB Law are nothing short of a renaissance. Over the past year, we have attracted an excellent student body, hired new faculty with star potential, brought good governance and accountability in the Law School, and forged deeper relationships with our alumni, the bench and the bar. And we have reached out to Albany to make our case for support since we are the only public law school in the SUNY system.

Commencement at UB Law this year will be very

memorable for our graduates and the community. It will be headlined by Prime Minister Raila Odinga of Kenya, who will deliver the Commencement Address on the rule of law. Prime Minister Odinga is one of the most charismatic politicians of our times. The commencement will also be special because SUNY will confer honorary doctorates to two prominent lawyers and global citizens. Irene Khan, the secretary-general of Amnesty International, the world's largest and most influential human rights organization, will be one of the honorees. The other will be J. Mason Davis Jr. '59, a civil rights attorney who played an important role in the desegregation of Alabama in the 1960s.

You will recall that last year's entering class was the most qualified in our history as measured by LSAT and GPA statistics. It was also diverse. As a result of that stellar class, the caliber of our applicant pool has gone up this year. We have every expectation that we will hold, and perhaps exceed, last year's achievements. The academic profile of our student body is a big factor in our standing among law schools, and is a central plank for our push to be a top 50 law school in the country. This is one of the measures of academic excellence, and we are pursuing it vigorously. But I want to assure you that we are doing so while constructing a law school that looks like America.

I could not be more

pleased with the new faculty that we have hired over the past year. We have hired six new faculty with star potential. Last fall, we hired Professor Stuart Lazar (JD Michigan) to teach tax and Professor Ruqaiyah Yearby (JD Georgetown) to teach public health law. Four new faculty will join us in this fall. Professor Michael Halberstam (JD Stanford, PhD Yale) for civil procedure and civil rights law; Professor Wentong Zheng (JD, PhD Stanford) will teach commercial law; Professor Tara Melish (JD Yale) will teach international law and human rights; and Professor S. Todd Brown (JD Columbia) for bankruptcy, torts and corporations. These new professors have practice experience in major firms or organizations.

We are also becoming a destination for renowned faculty around the country. Professor Angela Harris from Berkeley Law School, a nationally known scholar in criminal law, will join the Law School in the fall as a visiting professor and Baldy Center Distinguished Scholar for the year to teach criminal law. We know she will greatly enrich our law school, and look forward to welcoming her among us. Even though the economic crisis has hit us hard, we hope to hire several more faculty next year because of several departures. Professors Janet Lindgren, Judy Scales-Trent and Barry Boyer are retiring, and Professor Markus Dub-

ber is leaving for the University of Toronto.

I believe that the mission of the Law School is to produce great attorneys and influential scholarship. In this regard, we are taking steps to create a rich and balanced curriculum. That is why we created this spring the Legal Skills Program to bring curriculum and administrative rationale, oversight and coherence to all skills offerings. The Legal Skills Program will be headed by a tenured faculty member. We are carrying out internal reforms geared to more accountability and transparency in all our operations – academics, teaching and scholarship by faculty, oversight and coherence in our adjunct faculty, faculty governance and quality control across the board. All the units in the Law School – admissions, technology, communications and alumni relations, the law library, development, placement and the registrar's office – are being capacitated to fulfill their missions. We have instituted town-hall meetings with students every semester to openly hear their concerns.

I believe that UB Law must be a national law school, not a regional one. The Law School of the future must have ambitions that are national and international in scope. Our curriculum and long-term planning reflect these goals. We are reaching out to all our alumni across the country to establish structures of support and advice. This is vital because no law school can aspire to greatness without the vibrant

support of its alumni. Our alumni are generous and must continue to support us at higher levels as we raise funds for tuition scholarships to compete for top-notch students and establish chairs and professorships to attract and retain star faculty. We are reaching out to the bar and bench – locally and nationally – to create strong bonds. It is these efforts that we hope will help us build a stronger school with an excellent reputation.

Last, but not least, I want to share with you some good news. My ambition for UB Law is not simply to be an *OK* or *good* law school. I want UB Law to be a *great* law school – among the top 50 in the country. You will remember the pain we felt last year when we fell to 100 in the rankings. Well – because of the reforms that we are undertaking – we had an uptick of 15 points to 85 this year. That was the second-highest gain in the country. While I continue to have serious concerns about the matrix and methodology used to calibrate the rankings, we would be foolish to ignore their impact. Even so, I am convinced that our rankings will continue to rise with your support and the hard work and shared commitment of many people. I wish all of you a great and relaxing summer!



**Court of Appeals justice Eugene F. Pigott Jr. '73 addresses faculty and judiciary.**

## Sharing a wealth of learning

As both a justice of the state Court of Appeals and a UB Law alumnus, **Eugene F. Pigott Jr. '73** has a foot in two worlds. He wanted those worlds to meet – and the result went beyond all expectations.

"We had sat in the 4th Department in the Letro Courtroom at the Law School," Pigott says. "But we were limited as to what we could and couldn't do. So I thought, maybe we want to invite the faculty to come to the mountain. We started talking about it, and once the dean got into it, it just seemed to click."

What followed was billed as "A Briefing for the Judiciary on Recent Law Faculty Scholarship." Held March 5 in the majestic wood-paneled Ceremonial Courtroom of Erie County Hall in downtown Buffalo, the gathering brought jurists of all levels together to hear brief presentations by six UB Law School faculty on their research. A copy of the Law School's 2008 Faculty Scholarship brochure was distributed. About 35 judges and faculty members attended, and following the presentation they enjoyed a reception hosted by Francis M. Letro '79.

"They knocked our socks off," Pigott says of the faculty presenters. "I have gotten so many responses from judges saying this was

an incredible thing to do."

Professor Errol E. Meidinger, vice dean for research and faculty development, spoke of the importance of research to the school's mission. "I firmly believe that research advances teaching," he said. "The more I grapple with trying to get insights into something, the better I am as a teacher, the less formulaic, the more I can push students to see where the soft spots are and where the hard spots are. A

strong research program is absolutely essential to respect in the world of law schools."

The faculty members who spoke were Professors Charles Patrick Ewing, Susan V. Mangold, Robert S. Berger, James A. Gardner and James Wooten,

and Associate Professor Ruqaiyah Yearby.

"What we have done here today is a down payment for what we will do in the future," Dean Makau Mutua said to the assembled jurists.

"Today we talked at you. In the future, we want to create opportunities for dialogue between us."



**Professor Robert S. Berger talks with Family Court Judge Lisa Bloch Rodwin '85.**

*Continued ...*



**Raila Amolo Odinga,**  
prime minister  
of the Republic  
of Kenya.

## A world of influence

*Kenyan prime minister delivers Commencement address*

**W**hen Dean Makau Mutua invited Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Amolo Odinga to address the Law School's 2009 Commencement on May 23, he cited the tie between the school's tradition of teaching and scholarship in human rights law and Mr. Odinga's embodiment of the power of the rule of law to create and safeguard human rights.

"Prime Minister Odinga is one of Africa's celebrated human rights and pro-democracy leaders. He is certainly the most prominent and electrifying politician in Kenya, and is regarded as the center of gravity of that country's politics. He holds the distinction of having been Kenya's longest-serving political detainee because of his opposition to tyranny. He seemed a natural choice given our law school's tradition in human rights and his life's epic struggle to bring democracy, the rule of law and hu-

man rights in Kenya."

In the East African nation's 1997 general election for president, Mr. Odinga finished third out of 15 candidates as the candidate of the National Development Party. As the candidate of the new Orange Democratic Movement, he ran for president again in 2007. Following the disputed general election, a coalition government was formed, and Mr. Odinga became Kenya's second prime minister, with the authority to coordinate and supervise government functions.

Born in Maseno in Kenya's western Nyanza Province, Mr. Odinga attended high school in Kenya and then earned bachelor's and master's degrees in mechanical engineering in Germany. He then returned to Kenya, where he taught in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Nairobi.

From 1975 to 1982, Mr. Odinga served as deputy director of the Kenya Bureau of Standards. He has studied at

the British Standards Institution in London, the National Bureau of Standards in Washington, D.C., and the University of Denver.



**Khan**



**Davis**

### Honorary degrees for Khan, Davis

The Law School conferred honorary degrees on two lawyers who are influential advocates for human and civil rights.

**Irene Zubaida Khan** joined Amnesty International as secretary-general in August 2001. Ms. Khan is the first woman, first Asian and first Muslim to head the world's largest human rights organization. She has led the organization through challenging developments in the wake of Sept. 11, 2001, con-

fronting the backlash against human rights, broadening the organization's work in economic, social and cultural rights, and initiating a process of internal reform and renewal to enable the organization to respond flexibly and rapidly to world events. She has also focused attention on women's human rights and violence against women.

Irene Zubaida Khan studied law at The Victoria University of Manchester, UK, and Harvard Law School, specializing in public international law and human rights.

**J. Mason Davis Jr.** '59 was the first African-American to practice as a senior partner of a major Alabama law firm, Sirote & Permutt. As the attorney for a number of students who participated in the Huntsville lunch counter sit-ins during 1961 and 1962, Mr. Davis played a key role in the desegregation of Alabama. He argued and won every matter at the Court of Appeals and as a result of those legal victories and others, the state of Alabama desegregated all public facilities, including its schools.

Mr. Davis was an adjunct faculty member at the University of Alabama Law School for 25 years. Active with the Alabama Democratic Party, he was selected by Gov. Bob Riley to serve on the state's Citizens' Constitution Commission.



## The road to reform

A capacity crowd of law students, faculty, media and officeholders was on hand in the law library on Feb. 19 as New York State's chief law enforcement officer introduced his sweeping plan to simplify and reform government.

### Attorney General

**Andrew Cuomo** called his presentation "The Empire State Strikes Back: A Plan to Reform New York State Government."

The nation's economic crisis is the perfect occasion to take bold steps to streamline government, the attorney general said: "New York's governments are too big, they are too many, and they are too expensive." Private companies are scrambling to reorganize, modernize and



find efficiencies in their operations, he said, and the public sector should do the same. "When the numbers change, the reality changes," he said. "And government should be doing the same exercise today."

One problem, Cuomo

said, is the sheer volume of local governments operating in New York State – by one count there are 10,521, including nearly 7,000 "special districts" formed to levy taxes for specific services such as fire, sanitation and lighting. That bloated bureaucracy, he said, is why New York State residents pay the highest local taxes in the country – about \$73 per \$1,000 of property valuation, where the national average is \$43.

Cuomo is building support for a plan – not yet introduced in the State Legislature – that would enable local governments to reorganize to eliminate redundancy and waste. Consolidation, he said, could reduce property taxes from 5 to 22 percent. As an example, he said that if the village and town of Seneca Falls were to consolidate, the owner of a \$100,000 house could save \$978 a year in property taxes.

The major impediment, he said, is an "antiquated" set of laws that make it "virtually impossible" to accomplish such reforms. Reform, Cuomo said, would empower local governments – for example, the county executive and county legislatures – to make governments smaller. And it would make it possible for citizens, with petition signatures from 10 percent of voters, to force change onto the ballot if their elected officials balk.

And to those who say reform legislation is a pipe dream, Cuomo pointed to New York's system of school districts. "In the 1930s, there were over 10,000 school districts," he said. "Now there are fewer than 700. If you can tackle and manage the consolidation of school districts, you can do this."

For video on Attorney General Andrew Cuomo's presentation, go to [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/cuomo.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/cuomo.asp)

## The Rochester difference

A Thruway alliance of sorts, now entering its fifth year, has proved its worth in a big way by making one legal community more diverse – and offering a crucial first step for UB Law students.

In its first four years, the Minority Clerkship Program of the Monroe County Bar Association has placed 31 UB Law students in internships during the summer following their first year of legal training. The placements are with law firms, corporations and public agencies, and come with a minimum salary of

about \$700 a week – unusual for first-year legal internships.

"We have been very pleased," says **Michael Wolford '68**, of the Wolford Law Firm in Rochester, who instituted the program when he was president of the bar association. "There just are not a lot of minority lawyers in town, so we decided that one way of trying to increase the number is to start early and try to attract law students who might be willing to relocate and practice in Rochester."

Though the "vast majority" of applicants to the program come from UB Law, Wolford says, it is open to first-year students at all law schools. For this coming summer, Wolford says, 21 students



Wolford '68



Smith '07

applied for eight available slots.

In addition to learning on the job, the interns have weekly "Lunch and Learn" presentations at which they hear judges and practitioners talk about their areas of expertise.

One UB Law product who took part in the program in its first year is **Jacia Smith '07**. She worked for Wolford in the summer of 2005, and now is an associate in the

Rochester office of the Harris Beach law firm.

Smith says she had been intending to seek employment in Washington, D.C., or New York City before the Minority Clerkship Program changed her mind. "It did take some convincing to keep me at home," says Smith, a native of Rochester. "This program is a way to get minorities who traditionally wouldn't look at a smaller city like Rochester to do so."

Now, as a member of the bar association's Diversity Committee, she helps review applications and serves as a mentor to some of the law students who have followed her into that critical summer job.

*Continued ...*

Dean Makau Mutua gave the keynote address in Buffalo's City Hall in honor of Black History Month.



## History and hope



Dean Mutua with Donna Brazile.

**M**akau W. Mutua, the first person of African descent to serve as dean of UB Law School, found himself in demand during Black History Month. Organizers called on Mutua to give context and inspiration to two major events – one at UB, the other in downtown Buffalo.

On Feb. 12 at UB's Center for the Arts, Dean Mutua gave the University welcome before an address by political powerhouse Donna Brazile. Brazile's appearance, part of the University's Distinguished Speakers Series, was celebrated as the school's 33rd annual Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Event.

Mutua noted the connection by saying, "We celebrate the legacy of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in the backdrop of the most historic year since he was taken

from us. A significant part of the dream of Dr. King has been fulfilled by a black kid born in the era of the civil rights movement. That kid – now President Barack Hussein Obama – sits in the White House and occupies the most powerful office on Earth."

But, Mutua said, "much more remains to be done before we can get to Dr. King's mountaintop. Because public universities mirror the complexity of the world around us, they are ideally positioned to provide a forum where key social issues and ideas may be productively and freely examined, questioned, debated, discussed and interrogated."

Also in February, Dean Mutua stood with Buffalo's first African-American mayor, Byron Brown, to honor "the change makers" – people of color who have made life in the Queen City better. "Although Buffalo has not been spared the torment

of race in America, it has been a major contributor to the struggles for racial and social justice in this country," the dean said at the City Hall ceremony. "African-Americans, particularly through the African-American church and their civic and political organizations, have long played a leading role in the search for equity, inclusion and justice in this city."

He added that Mayor Brown is "a critically important role model for our youth who live under challenging conditions but who aspire to live a life of dignity. The mayor – with a plethora of prominent politicians, leading clerics, successful professionals such as lawyers and judges, and diligent parents, all drawn from communities of color in this city – is working hard to give our young men and women a reason to hope and dream big."

## The real maverick

*Ralph Nader talks tough in UB Law appearance*

**Ralph Nader's** reputation preceded him, and the crowd started lining up early for the political activist's appearance at UB Law School.

They were not disappointed. Nader – a Harvard-trained attorney – entertained and challenged especially the law students in his audience with frank words about legal education, the legal profession and lawyers'



responsibility to work for the public good.

True to form, he used his bully pulpit to encourage students to find a way to make a difference in the world, not just serve the economic interests of those in power. Practicing law, he said, is a profession, not a trade, and "a profession has an obligation to prevent that which it is skillfully trained to deal with. You are going to be going into a profession that has a monopoly, and there is a moral imperative accorded to that.

"What is the demand for justice in this country, and to what extent are lawyers representing those who are in a position to have to demand justice because they are being ripped off so badly or being subject to the corrosive effects of power or simply being mistreated by other people?"

*For video on Ralph Nader's presentation, go to [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/bhm.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/bhm.asp).*

*For a Black History Month slideshow, go to [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/bhm.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/bhm.asp)*



## Early to court

*A record of success in student Moot Court competitions*

It was another year of think-on-your-feet experiences for UB Law students who took advantage of the school's array of opportunities to hone their legal skills in moot court competitions nationwide.

From Boston to Cleveland, Toronto to Sacramento, students defended briefs and argued both sides in competitions.

Melinda Saran, vice dean for student affairs, provides administrative support to the moot court and trial technique program, which is overseen by the student-run Buffalo Moot Court Board. Erie County Court Judge Thomas P. Franczyk leads the school's Trial Teams.

"Our students continue to work hard and have success at these competitions," Saran says. "The number of competitions has grown tremendously, and our faculty who are teaching in applicable content-specific areas have become involved in working with our students and helping them to perform to the best of their ability."

Among the highlights of the moot court year:

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In February, a case brief by UB Law's international-law **Jessup Moot Court Team** bested those of teams from 23 other law schools, including Harvard, Columbia, NYU, Cornell, Boston College and Boston University, in a Northeast regional competition in New York City. The team's brief advanced to the international competition, to compete

against the top briefs from every U.S. regional competition as well as the national competitions of countries worldwide.

The Jessup team consisted of Melanie Beardsley, Pasquale Bochiechio, Kathryn D'Angelo and Max Lafer, and was coached by Darice Dinsmore and Kevin Espinosa.

Also in February, UB Law was represented by six teams at the **Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition** in Springfield, Mass.

First-year student Anant Kishore was named Best Oral Advocate in the Northeast Region. Two UB Law teams – Jonathan Pollard and Jawziya Zaman, and Tinu Awoyomi and Irina Barahona – advanced to the quarterfinals of the competition. UB Law student Siana J. McLean was Northeast Region director for the competition.

In late February, UB Law's Trial Team of Josh Agins, Kristina Russell and Scott Iseman advanced to the **National Trial Competition** regional semifinals in New York City before being eliminated by the host school, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law. Mark Foti, a member of UB's second team, was named Best Advocate in the preliminary rounds.

• • •

In the **Albert R. Mugel National Tax Court competition**, hosted by UB Law School, Sam Feuerstein tied for the second-best oralist and Darice Dinsmore was named fifth-best oralist.

In March, UB Law's team of Erin Cody, Tom Lang and Taiymoor Naqi, coached by Professor and Vice Provost Lucinda Finley, did extremely well at the **American Bar Association National Appel-**



UB Law competitors in the Albert R. Mugel National Tax Court competition. From left to right, Gregory Verdibello '09, Darice Dinsmore '09, Jesika Gonzalez '09 and Samuel S. Feuerstein '09.

**late Advocacy Northeast Regional competition** in Boston. This is the largest and most prestigious appellate moot court competition in the nation.

The UB Law team had the fourth-best overall brief and reached the final round, where it actually earned more points from all the judges than its opponent. But due to a scoring change that was instituted last year, our team was officially declared the runner-up.

Naqi also earned one of the highest oral argument scores in the competition, and both he and Lang earned perfect scores from some of the judges.

• • •

In the **Fasken-Martineau International Law competition**, held in Toronto in March, UB Law's team of first-year students was commended by several different judges for its level of preparation, complexity of argument and command of in-

ternational law principles. In addition, team member Michael Gellar was recognized with an honorable mention award as Best Oralist.

Also in March, in the Ceremonial Courtroom of State Supreme Court in Buffalo, the **Herbert J. Wechsler National Criminal Moot Court Competition** was held. The Buffalo Criminal Moot Court Society was praised by participating teams for the well-run competition and the strength of the competition's judges. In the final round, the judges panel included Justice Eugene F. Pigott Jr. '73 of the state Court of Appeals; retired Court of Appeals Justice George Bundy Smith, now a partner in Chadbourne & Parke in New York City; U.S. Magistrate Judge Jonathan Feldman of Rochester; and State Supreme Court Justice Kevin M. Dillon '76.

*For slideshows of the competitions, go to:*

**Desmond Moot Court Competition Finals:** [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/desmond.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/desmond.asp)

**Albert R. Mugel National Tax Court Competition:** [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/mugel.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/mugel.asp)

**Wechsler Law Moot Court Competition:** [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/wechsler.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/wechsler.asp)



# Alumni Profiles



*"When I did open my office finally, the people came in, they thought that I was the secretary or stenographer or something. They didn't expect to find a woman as a lawyer. When they began to talk to me, they realized that I was on a different level."*

## A 'lady lawyer's' life

*Bella Maisel Goldin '31, an early Buffalo attorney, turns 100*



Bella Maisel Goldin as a graduate in 1931.

When Bella Maisel Goldin was at UB Law School, tuition was \$250 a year – a bargain, until you remember that she graduated in 1931, in the depths of the Great Depression. "Bread was 5 cents a loaf, and day-old bread was 3 cents. We ate day-old bread – 2 cents was a lot of money," Goldin says. "People today don't know what a real depression is like."

One of only five women in her graduating class of 54 students, Goldin was a pioneer – one of the first female lawyers in Buffalo. Pretty good for a young woman who came out of Cornell University and decided to shelve her interest in medicine because going to law school was quicker and cheaper.

Goldin, who now lives in Charlotte, N.C., celebrated her 100th birthday on March 14. She has three children, five living grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren – a family she calls "my proudest accomplishment."

But she made her mark in Buffalo legal history by graduating third in her Law School class ("I never found Law School that difficult," she says), passing the bar exam on the first try, and taking cases as a "lady lawyer" on Buffalo's East Side.

"You were supposed to put in six months" as a clerk for a practicing attorney, she says, and so she did, working with a fellow UB Law graduate named George E. Phillis '15. But after she applied for some legal jobs and was offered only legal-secretary positions, she decided to open a practice in partnership with her mentor. Her father, Samuel, owned a building at 913

Broadway (near the Broadway Market), where he had a jewelry store and later a dress shop, and that was where she set up shop under the name Maisel and Phillis.

Not that it always went smoothly. "When I did open my office finally, the people came in, they thought that I was the secretary or stenographer or something," Goldin says. "They didn't expect to find a woman as a lawyer. When they began to talk to me, they realized that I was on a different level."

Word-of-mouth brought her some general-practice cases. "You'd take anything if it came in," Goldin says. "My father would always talk me up if he had a customer in his store. I wound up with accident cases, anything that would come my way."

She tells with delight of the time she was in her father's dress shop when a customer came in. "I was waiting on her," Goldin says, "and she was buying hosiery, and she kept saying, 'You remind me of somebody.' She had come into my office at one time, and I recognized her, but I didn't say anything."

"Oh, I know!" the woman said. "You remind me of that lady lawyer." "Really?" Goldin said. "Was she any good?"

"Oh, she was a smart one, that one," the woman said.

Goldin practiced for "three or four years," she says, and "I guess I did very nicely." What did she like about it? "If I made a buck. That was a lot of success in those days."

Then in 1935 she married her Cornell sweetheart, Robert Goldin, hav-

ing postponed marriage so she could help support her parents and younger sister and brother. He taught high school mathematics in Brooklyn, and "I thought, when I married, the wife should follow the husband," Goldin says. So she moved with him to New York City.

"I was going to be a housewife in New York," she says, "but I became bored, because I had been so busy all the time between my law office and the store downstairs. I knew I had to do something, but you don't open a law office unless you have connections."

She went to the Board of Education, where the interviewer asked, "What's your background?"

"I'm a lawyer," she said.

With a dismissive wave he replied, "We don't need lawyers."

But along the way Goldin had picked up typing and shorthand, and so she worked her way into the teaching ranks in the New York City schools. "I thought I'd teach for maybe a couple of years and go back to law," she says, "but it suited my purpose very well, and so I stayed with the teaching." She ended up teaching at Central Commercial High School in Manhattan (now Norman Thomas High School) for about 35 years, inspiring generations of young women.

"When an airplane would fly by, you would rush to the windows and watch. It was an event," she remembers. "When radios came in, that was something. I've gone through and seen a lot of changes."

## D. Christopher Decker '98 works for human rights

**T**he capital of Kosovo is called Pristina, but there is nothing pristine about it. The city is a living laboratory for implementing the rule of law, and D. Christopher Decker '98 sees that process from the inside.

Decker works with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the world's largest regional security organization. At OSCE's mission in Kosovo he oversees the Human Rights and Communities Department, which trains and monitors police officers and judges around human rights issues, helps to draft legislation on fair treatment of minority populations, works to ensure property rights and fights human trafficking.

The seeds of this important and challenging work were sown in his experience at UB Law. Decker had an international law fellowship in Istanbul, with a group that worked with torture victims. "I saw firsthand the psychologi-

cal and medical effects of torture," he says. "It certainly did mentally prepare me to go out to Kosovo."

When he left Buffalo, he earned a master of laws degree at Essex University in England, and then plunged into the world of international human rights. He first went to Kosovo – the disputed region in the Balkans, smaller than the state of Connecticut, that last year declared its independence from Serbia – in 1999, with the International Crisis Group. The assignment immediately followed the end of the Kosovo War. "We took about 6,000 statements from witnesses and victims in an attempt to map or re-create how the conflict occurred," Decker says. "One of the tasks was to go to exhumations of graves. I did see my fair share of dead bodies."

He eventually was asked to join OSCE in 2000, and except for a two-year stint as a researcher at the European Center for Minority Issues, in

Germany, he has been part of the organization ever since.

"It is a bit like a mini-United Nations," Decker says of OSCE. Formed at the end of the Cold War as a security conference between the United States and the Soviet Union, OSCE now has 56 member states. The mission in Kosovo is its largest.

In his department's legislative work, Decker says, the goal is enforcement. "For the most part, Kosovo has quite decent legislation, drafted by or with the international community," he says. "Now it is a question of getting the authorities to implement it in a meaningful way."

Everyday life in Pristina is tricky; one never knows when the electricity will go out or the water will stop flowing. "It can be demoralizing," Decker says, "when you get home from work and it is dark and your power goes off for three hours, and by then it is time for bed. When you lose the ability to take a shower and shave, it becomes quite difficult to live with."

"But the city itself is absolutely booming. Pristina has a huge café culture – they smoke and drink coffee like crazy."



"We took about 6,000 statements from witnesses and victims in an attempt to map or re-create how the conflict occurred."

## Dennis Patterson '80 joins elite European institute

**D**ennis Patterson '80 was in Italy, on the train from Florence to Milan, when the message came on his BlackBerry: He got the job.

That would be his new appointment as professor of legal theory at the European University Institute, an elite institution run by the European Union countries to provide training to the best and brightest European legal scholars. "Basically, it's a little piece of Brussels dropped into the Tuscan countryside," he says.

The appointment is for five years and can be renewed for an additional three. Patterson will take an extended leave of absence from Rutgers University School of Law at Camden, where he holds a Board of Governors professorship and teaches international trade

and legal philosophy as well as a basic contracts course. He will return to teach at Camden in the summers.

"Everybody, myself included, wants to live in Italy," Patterson says. "Now I get to live there and have a nice academic job. I can't imagine a job teaching anywhere that I would want more than this. To sit and look at the skyline of Florence, it's just like it is in the movies."

One advantage of interviewing for a position in Europe, he says, is quick decision-making. "In the U.S., hiring decisions drag out for months. In Europe, the hiring committees almost all have external members, people in the field from outside the school who read all the application packages, do the interviewing and vote. Since these people are brought in for a one-day meeting, everything has to be done at the end of the day." He was offered the position on

the same day he interviewed.

At the institute, Patterson will be teaching master of laws and Ph.D. students, nearly all, he says, from Europe, but also some from Russia, South America and Africa. He will teach an introductory course in jurisprudence and another in the foundations of international law.

"I've taught in Europe for last 20 years," Patterson says. "I'm very familiar with the students and the environments that they come from. This is a very elite place. They get the best students, and a lot of people want to go there. It's a very prestigious degree."

A native of Manhattan, Patterson went from UB Law to a judicial clerkship in Maine, and then into private practice for six years. Since then he has traveled the globe in his teaching, including visiting professorships in Australia, London, Germany, Italy, Austria and Washington, D.C. He has been at Rutgers since 1995 and was named Board of Governors professor, an honor recognizing a scholar's international reputation, last year.



"Everybody, myself included, wants to live in Italy."



# Law School Report

## LESSONS OF THE BALKANS



L to R:  
Serra Aygun '09,  
Sarah B. Brancatella '09,  
Professor Isabel Marcus,  
James T. Farrell '10,  
James J. O'Shea '09,  
Jayme L. Feldman '10,  
Jennifer Rizzo '10

For six UB Law students and their professor, the January bridge term brought them face to face with the harsh realities of war and its aftermath. For a seminar called "Identities, Nationalities and the Rule of Law," they traveled to Bosnia, Serbia and Kosovo in a three-week learning adventure that left all involved both sobered and inspired.

The students say nothing can compare to meeting the people whose homelands were so deeply affected by the 1999 war and the mass killings of citizens in Kosovo, which last year declared its independence from Serbia.

"We read a stack of material. We had an important reading group," says student Jayme Feldman. "But it was like Risk, the board game – pieces on a playing board. It was statistical and removed. Then we got to the country and met people, made friends our age, and those who experienced personal grief and loss. For me, I learned the importance of things you can't read in books."

That, says Professor Isabel Marcus, who led the seminar and the trip, was largely the point of the experience.

"I have been going to the Balkans since the middle of the 1990s and have spent a lot of time standing in solidarity

with the protest group Women in Black in Belgrade," Marcus says. "The purpose of this trip was to try to listen, and hear, and learn from people from numerous sectors, especially non-governmental organizations, which have played major political roles."

While they were there, the students – all in their second or third year at the Law School – decided to make a film documenting their experiences and the voices of some of the people they met. The 23-minute film covers Serbia and the breakaway republic of Kosovo. (The video can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/UBLawSchool](http://www.youtube.com/UBLawSchool).)

The images and voices are striking: a cemetery where the war dead are buried; a sad-eyed gray-haired woman from the Mothers of Srebrenica, a group that seeks to give voice to the survivors of genocide; a warehouse full of green and blue duffel bags containing the bones of unknown victims; the ornate University of Pristina.

To a one, the students said the experience was life-changing.

"I am writing my seminar paper on the International Commission on Missing Persons, and in particular the human rights aspects of being able to identify human remains and provide that, at the very least, for their family members," says Serra Aygun. "One thing the ICMP will never be able to give the families is an understanding of how their family members died. Most of them were fleeing through the mountains or en route to other areas of Bosnia. They don't know exactly how they died or when they died."

"I got a more expansive view of the society and government than you would get as a tourist," says James Farrell. "I could see the entirety of the societies in this country, how the government works and how it doesn't work, the operation of NGOs, and intergov-

ernmental work through the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe."

The experience also led the students to examine their own attitudes. Says Aygun: "I went over thinking Serbia was the aggressor. That was the blanket association I had with Serbia. To go there and spend time with people puts a face to that. A lot of the younger individuals we met were 5 at the time. At what point do you take accountability?"

But it is the people of the Balkans who will stay close to their hearts.

"The Mothers of Srebrenica: it's amazing how much loss they had endured," James O'Shea says. "There was a woman in her 40s who said she had lost 56 men in her family, which was all the men in her family. She was able to say that very matter-of-factly. Some people our age said they never talked to their own parents about what role they played in the war, because they were afraid to know the answer."

But the student group also recognized that learning the law through an experience like this was invaluable.

"It reaffirmed my passion for international human rights," Feldman says. "At many law schools, the demand is for the firms and the public interest. That's why programs like this are so important. This gives me hope and guidance on the kind of path I want to pursue."

Adds Sarah Brancatella: "This trip was not in isolation from my Law School experience. It was like a Napoleon – layers upon layers. For example, in the course I'm taking now on the federal courts, it strikes me about the complications of having a national court system in Bosnia. ... The trip was not something that was a fun little aside, an asterisk for me. It was woven into my Law School education. It was an amazing experience, and I'm so glad I went."



For video, go to:

**Bosnia:** [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/bosnia.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/bosnia.asp) • **Serbia:** [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/serbia.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/serbia.asp)

**Kosovo:** [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/kosovo.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/kosovo.asp)



The traditional ceremonial passing of the legacy.

# The color *of* success

A 20-year tradition of solidarity and support was cause for celebration at UB Law School's Students of Color Dinner, held at the Buffalo Niagara Marriott.

The dinner, with the theme "Lifting as We Climb," is a joint effort of the Law School's Black, Latin American and Asian American Law Students Associations. Those organizations honored the achievements of their members set to graduate in May, as well as recognizing distinguished alumni, minority trailblazers in the legal field, professors and administrators.

Those in attendance were urged to the highest standards of ethics and integrity by the evening's keynote speaker, Buffalo State College President Dr. Muriel Howard.

Howard recently announced she

would be leaving Buffalo to become president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. She used that news as a springboard to reflect on her upbringing and the lessons that have served her throughout her life.

Born on a farm in North Carolina, one of six children, Howard moved with her family to New York City as an adolescent. She remembered traveling an hour and a half to attend a brand-new high school in a predominantly white area.



Siana McLean '10 and Shereefat Balogun '09

"Those were very, very challenging times for me personally," she said. "My economics teacher in ninth grade made me sit in the last seat in the last row, behind all the boys, because he didn't think I should be at that school. Although I experienced a lot of challenges, my parents always kept us focused

on the goal, and that is to obtain a good-quality education. My parents firmly believed that education was what would transform their children's lives, and they were absolutely right."

Distinguished Alumni Awards were presented to Margaret Wong '76, accepted by her daughter, Allison Chan '11, and to Tasha E. Moore '98. The Trailblazer Award was given to Brenda W. McDuffie, president and CEO of the Buffalo Urban League.

New at this 20th annual Students of Color Dinner was the Monique E. Emdin Award, given in honor of the 2007 UB Law graduate, who died tragically of cancer at age 28. It is funded with an endowment from the Buffalo law firm Hiscock & Barclay LLP, where Emdin worked as a summer associate and briefly as a full-time associate, and by Bethesda World Harvest International Church, where she was a member. The award was presented to graduating third-year student Keresé Foster by Emdin's brother Christopher.

The event's traditional candle-lighting ceremony closed the evening.



Buffalo State College President Dr. Muriel Howard



# Law School Report



Senior class  
of the  
*Buffalo  
Law Review.*

## Publish and flourish

**M**embers and friends of the *Buffalo Law Review* had plenty to celebrate when they gathered for the journal's year-end dinner. "We didn't simply publish a journal this year," Editor in Chief Gabrielle C. Petersen said to those gathered at the Park Country Club on April 22. "We have been active in the community, helping others benefit themselves through our mentorship program and our outreach program."

In addition to publishing five issues of the *Law Review*, members also undertook a major internal study, strengthening the organization and continuing to improve the level of scholarship being published.

Introduced by Managing Editor Carrie Ann Wilkins, two UB Law School alumni, Hon. Kevin M. Dillon '76 and Dr. George M. Williams Jr. '78 were honored for their service to the school and their accomplishments in the legal profession.

The winners of several student awards were also announced. The Carlos C. Alden Award, given to the senior who has made the greatest contribution to the *Law Review*, went to Gabrielle C. Petersen. The Justice Philip Halpern Award, presented to a senior for excellence in writing on the *Law Review*, went to Keith A. Gorgos. Associate Publication Awards, presented to four associates for excellence in writing, with the promise of publication in the coming year, went to Nathaniel J. Stuhlmiller, Jeffrey T. Fiut, Joshua M. Agins and Joshua Pennel.



**Dr. George M. Williams Jr. '78** was articles editor for the *Buffalo Law Review* and is now a partner at Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP in New York City. Williams has been an active participant in the Law School's

New York City Program in International Finance and Law since its inception, and has served as an adviser to group research projects for the program.

He also spoke of the formative influence of his UB Law School years. "I didn't always know what I wanted to do," Williams said, "and Buffalo is the perfect example of the role American education plays. Buffalo and the Law School made it possible for me to seriously work with good students and great professors to do something that

was greatly important to me and give insight into the way lawyers think. That, for me, is the kind of deeply thinking but extemporaneous intellectual and university work that Buffalo stands for. Buffalo is a place where you can not only study law but how the profession fits together with other things."

**Hon. Kevin M. Dillon '76**, a justice in



the 8th Judicial District of New York State Supreme Court, is one of the best-known adjunct professors at the Law School, having taught Criminal Procedure and Evidence for 17 years.

Dillon talked about his teaching career, which began when then-Dean David Filvaroff recruited him "over dinners and bottles of wine." That first week, Dillon walked into a class of 100 students – and wasn't sure where to start. "So for the first week or two I told them stories," he said, "but then I felt this obligation to try to teach them. In the third year, I found out I kind of liked it. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at the Law School, and I continue to enjoy it."

# Career Services: Coaching on the fine points

**E**ven in the best of economic times, finding the right legal job can be tricky. This year, UB Law's Career Services Office has been busy helping students with a number of innovative approaches to the employment challenge by providing a heavy volume of programming on topics like networking, interviewing, public service and government job markets (especially in Washington, D.C.), judicial clerkships and other topics.

According to Lisa Patterson, associate dean of career services, "This has served two purposes: training the students to present themselves as strongly as possible, and ensuring our students feel supported." Toward this end, the CSO has conducted a heavy volume of one-on-one counseling. Marc Davies, a 2003 UB Law School graduate, has been added to the office staff, where he is doing more employer outreach and counseling students.

"While we send people to a broad spectrum of jobs, one part of that spectrum is the large-firm job market in New York City. Many of our soon-to-be graduates joining those firms have been deferred," says Patterson, but they will eventually go to firms including Ropes & Gray; White & Case; Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft; Willkie Farr & Gallagher; Dewey & LeBoeuf; Skadden Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom; Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson, and others.

"We have seen bright spots," she says. "Recently, a larger volume of smaller firms have hired our recent graduates. They have also been offered jobs at the SEC, as well as Presidential Management Fellowships. We have also been getting cautiously optimistic reports from the local market. Many of our employers are weathering the economic dips and turns pretty steadily. Some are even still growing."

The CSO brought star power to O'Brian Hall in the person of Kimm Walton, the "Job Goddess" and best-

## We're here for you

In addition to the programming for students, the Career Services Office continues to offer free lifetime access to its job bank and alumni job newsletter, resumé and letter review and personalized career counseling. To access any of these services, please e-mail [law-careers@buffalo.edu](mailto:law-careers@buffalo.edu) or call (716) 645-2056.



Lisa Patterson,  
associate dean of  
career services



Marc Davies '03,  
associate director  
for career services

selling author of *Guerrilla Tactics for Getting the Legal Job of Your Dreams*.

"When things are competitive, we want our students to be as competitive as everyone else," Patterson says. "This is all intended to give our students some creative ways to find their edge in the marketplace."

In her well-received Feb. 10 seminar, Walton assured law students, "There is always a way to get a job you love."

How? By, among other things, networking creatively. Walton suggested, for example, writing an article for a bar association newsletter showcasing a particular area of expertise, or volunteering to pass out name tags at a conference.

And she suggested that job seekers remain enthusiastic about the hunt, even when it hurts. "The best thing you can show to an employer is that you really want the job," she said. "Everybody hates rejection, but rejection is not a guillotine. You cannot control it, but you can control your attitude toward it."

"Students always love Kimm Wal-

ton's presentation, and derive great energy and inspiration from it," Patterson says. "Especially this year, we want to give our students as many positive and creative tools as possible."

Patterson also points out that in situations where many people apply for a plum job, employers look for ways to narrow the field. Something as minor as chewing with one's mouth open, she says, can be a disqualifier.

Hence Career Services' three-part etiquette series "Career Networking With Polish," co-sponsored by the Student Bar Association, Kaplan Preliminary Multistate Bar Review and Lexis-Nexis. The series covered correspondence around the interview, including tips on communicating with prospective employers, alumni and other professionals, presented by Mary Ann Rogers, a UB assistant professor of human resources; an at-the-table seminar on strategies and etiquette for lunch interviewing, led by expert Liz Englert; and a wine education and tasting session with Professor and Vice Provost Lucinda Finley, a wine aficionado.



# ON THE ROAD AGAIN

## *S. Todd Brown to teach bankruptcy and business law*

**S** Todd Brown knows business – from some of the biggest companies in America, which he represented in large-scale bankruptcy cases, to one of the smallest, an antiques and collectibles store that he ran for a while between high school and college.

That experience, he says, has informed his scholarship on bankruptcy and business law, “because I can relate to people who are running businesses. I can personalize some of the intellectual concepts and understand what people are thinking when they’re faced with certain situations.”

Brown joins the UB Law faculty this fall, the latest stop in a peripatetic life journey. His father was in the Navy, so the family relocated often. “I saw a lot of different places,” Brown

says. “It was tough, but interesting. I got a better feel for how people in different areas think about things.”

They wound up in Gulfport, Miss., in his high school years, and after his short-term adventure in retailing, he went to Loyola University of New Orleans, where he studied philosophy and graduated *summa cum laude*.

“I decided in my second year in college that I wanted to teach, but not at the undergraduate level,” Brown says. “The things that interested me most in philosophy were issues that translated well into law. A lot of the issues that have been discussed in philosophy with respect to law have also been coming up in cognitive psychology and the behavioral sciences. There is a lot of overlap in the general conceptual thinking in those fields.”

Brown graduated from Columbia University School of Law, where he was articles editor of the *Columbia Business Law Review*, in 1999. From there he went to Cleveland, where his wife was in medical school, and worked with the firm Jones Day representing corporate debtors and creditors in Chapter 11 and cross-border bankruptcies. “The issues there were really interesting, cutting-edge issues,” he says. One of them involved counseling Napster executives after a federal judge ruled the company’s file-sharing technology illegal.

He then moved to the firm’s Washington office before joining the D.C. firm Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Dorr. There he developed training programs for other attorneys on bankruptcy law and corporate investigations, and worked on banking is-

ssues in such high-profile cases as Enron and Worldcom.

In a two-year teaching fellowship that began in mid-2007, Brown has been at the Beasley School of Law at Temple University. In addition to teaching courses, fellows interact with master teachers and hone their classroom skills. “This program was designed for people who have been in practice for a while,” he says, “to help them make the transition, learn about different pedagogical approaches, and think about communicating complex legal concepts for people who have never practiced law.”

**I**n practice and at Temple, his focus has increasingly turned to bankruptcy law. “I was drawn to it because of the way the bankruptcy system is set up,” Brown says. “You really have to understand people and the motivations guiding the different participants. It’s never just a one plaintiff, one defendant kind of situation. You have a debtor and a lot of different constituencies. As soon as you think you’ve got everything figured out, something different comes along and makes you rethink everything. These are fun areas to think and write about.”

He has been taking the train each week from Philadelphia to see his family in Columbia, Md., and now looks forward to having them togeth-



er in Buffalo. Brown is married to Dr. Natasha Cervantes, a forensic psychiatrist, and they have two daughters, ages 3 and 1. (“I probably spend more of my spare time watching *Dora the Explorer* than anything else,” he jokes.)

At UB Law, he feels a kinship already. “A lot of people are working on things that I can relate to and I can feel comfortable exchanging ideas with,” he says. “And the fact that I would be able to teach the subjects that I am most interested in was a big plus. It is really important to be able to teach something that you’re passionate about.

“I think you can teach black-letter

law and practical considerations at the same time. It’s also important to inject ethical considerations into what you teach.

“I want my students to come out with a firm understanding of the law, of their clients’ interest, and of the obligations and responsibilities that go along with being in such an important position.”

“

*“You really have to understand people and the motivations guiding the different participants. . . . As soon as you think you’ve got everything figured out, something different comes along and makes you rethink everything.”*

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# PHILOSOPHER IN RESIDENCE

*Michael Halberstam  
investigates theory and  
practice of governance*

World War II may seem the stuff of textbook history, but Michael Halberstam notes that he was born in Germany less than 20 years after the war's end – “closer,” he notes, “than our own proximity to the civil rights era in the United States.” His family is Jewish – his father was American, his mother German. Apart from growing up bilingual, what he calls his “complicated relationship to Germany” gave rise to a deep interest in German thought and culture, and to research into the roots of totalitarianism. Halberstam's book *Totalitarianism and the Modern Conception of Politics*, published in 2000 by Yale University Press, has received attention in the United States and abroad.

Halberstam joins the UB Law faculty this fall, on the heels of a yearlong research fellowship at Columbia Law School. Among his work there is a major article on the Voting Rights Act – which currently faces a constitutional challenge before the Supreme Court – and the extent to which it intrudes on state and local government autonomy.

In the classroom, he brings to UB Law memories of his own experience at Stanford Law School, where he was articles editor of the *Stanford Law Review* and a co-founder of the Legal Theory Group.

“Law school was a lot of fun,” Halberstam says. “I went there with many interests and questions.” Halberstam believes that “if you approach the things you are learning with a theoretical framework or with theoretical interests, then you tend to get a better sense of why they are interesting and important.

“I appreciated that the Stanford faculty were very conscious about pedagogy and worked very hard at their teaching. Some teachers would come into a class of 60 and know students by name on the first day. The students, in turn, recognized that they were being taken very seriously and that the law school was a very special environment. I hope that I can give that to my students at UB as well.”

Halberstam received his Ph.D. in philosophy from Yale University, then taught philosophy as an assistant professor for four years at the University of South Carolina. It was after he was assigned to teach a course in the phi-

losophy of law in a criminal justice program at the University of South Carolina, he says, that he became interested in the law. “I realized that getting a more detailed understanding of governance and the language of governance would be immensely helpful and interesting,” he says. “I recognized that as a political philosopher I did not have a good understanding of how governance actually works.”

After completing his work at Stanford Law School in 2003, Halberstam clerked for a year in federal court for the former chief judge of New York's Southern District. “It's the best job in the world if you're clerking for a judge you like,” he says, “because you have an enormous amount of responsibility and an enormous amount of delegated power, while ultimately it is the judge who makes the decisions. I was involved in some of the most interesting cases in the nation.”

Then he worked as a litigation associate for the New York City firm Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison – “a very progressive firm,” he says, “well-known for its litigation department.” For three years he focused on civil litigation in the fields of securities, banking, directors and officers' liability, bankruptcy and other complex business disputes. Among other cases, he worked on litigation arising out of the collapse of





Enron Corp. As part of his pro bono practice, he also shepherded a major voting rights case from complaint to trial.

Halberstam says his research style fits with UB Law's focus on interdisciplinary work. "It's becoming something that law schools are increasingly cultivating, but UB Law has had that tradition for a longer time," he says. "Academic work is often work that you do by yourself, but not always. I hope that I will be able to collaborate on projects at the Law School."

Halberstam is married to Kate Brown, a scholar of Victorian literature who until recently taught at Emory University and will be taking up a position at UB's English Department in the fall. They have 3-year-old twins, a boy and a girl. "I try to speak German to them," he says.

“*Halberstam says his research style fits with UB Law's focus on interdisciplinary work. "It's becoming something that law schools are increasingly cultivating, but UB Law has had that tradition for a longer time."*”

# MAKING RIGHTS REAL

*Tara Melish  
will direct the Buffalo  
Human Rights Center*

“**F**rom very early on, my core commitment was to social justice work, a commitment that led me directly to human rights and, particularly, to a focus on economic, social and cultural rights. Ensuring that appropriate steps are being taken to guarantee that everyone has sustainable access to adequate food and water, health care and education, adequate housing and land for subsistence, those sorts of issues were always going to be my focus,” says Tara Melish.

Melish began to travel to war-torn Central America as a teenager with Witness for Peace, collecting stories from affected communities, accompanying refugees in repatriation efforts, and advocating for changes in U.S. policy toward the region. These experiences cemented a commitment to a community-based understanding of human rights that would guide Melish’s academic and professional work for the next two decades.

At Brown, where she graduated

*magna cum laude*, Melish majored in comparative development, spending a semester studying sustainable development in Bolivia and another in Kenya, while traveling back to Guatemala during her summers to work as an international accompanier with a women’s group, CONAVIGUA. Through these experiences, Melish developed a strong interest in rights-based approaches to development and to inclusive, participatory planning processes. Back at Brown, these lessons became a central focus of her work at the World Hunger Program on the right to food.

Law school was not definitively in the cards, however, until Melish returned to Central America with a Fulbright after college. The yearlong fellowship was to work in a border integration initiative between Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, using a rights-based approach to target food insecurity in several border communities.

“I was doing participation-based workshops and rights trainings, working with communities to put together right-to-food projects that corresponded to local priorities, going with leaders to embassies and development offices to seek funding,” Melish says. “It quickly became clear, however, that invoking the right to food – invoking any right – doesn’t get you very far if there is no accountability, if that right cannot be enforced. We would go to mayors’ offices, and they would promise us everything we asked for, and deliver on nothing. From that experience of hitting our heads against the wall, of confronting practical barriers at every step of the

way, I realized that if I wanted to make a difference, I had to go to law school to learn how to make these rights genuinely enforceable.”

At Yale Law School, from which she graduated in 2000, Melish thus committed herself to studying economic, social and cultural rights, even writing a book on it. She was heavily involved in the human rights program – as editor in chief of the *Yale Human Rights and Development Law Journal*, book reviews editor of the *Yale Journal of International Law*, student director of the law school’s Human Rights Center and a three-year member of the Human Rights Clinic.

Even so, she says, “my greatest understanding of human rights law, and the challenges it poses, came from my experiences working on the ground in different parts of the world. That is where you see how concepts learned in the classroom conform to people’s realities.” During her summers she worked with the Land Claims Court of South Africa, with human rights groups in Argentina, and with the Center for Justice and International Law, in Costa Rica.

After completing her work at Yale Law School, Melish clerked for a year on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco. “I wasn’t planning to go into teaching immediately,” she says. But a call came from a small law school in Miami, which was starting an LL.M. program in intercultural human rights. She agreed to teach an intensive course on Economic, Social and Cultural

*“My greatest understanding of human rights law, and the challenges it poses, came from my experiences working on the ground in different parts of the world. That is where you see how concepts learned in the classroom conform to people’s realities.”*



Rights, a job that turned into a two-year visiting appointment to teach constitutional and criminal law.

“It was an important experience in my life,” Melish says, “because it became clear to me just how much I loved to teach and to challenge students to think in new directions. I knew I would continue in academia, but I felt I needed more practical experience as a lawyer.” Melish thus moved to Washington, D.C., in 2003 to work as a staff attorney for CEJIL, a non-profit law firm that specializes in litigation before the Inter-American Commission and Court of Human Rights. While continuing as legal adviser to the organization, she subsequently took a position at the United Nations to work as associate social affairs officer in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and, then, as U.N. representative of Mental Disability Rights International in the drafting negotiations of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.

She has interspersed this practical work with classroom teaching, serving as a visiting professor or lecturer at the law schools of Notre Dame, George Washington, Oxford, Åbo Akademi, Georgia, and Virginia, where she has taught human rights, international litigation, constitutional law and torts.

Melish thus brings a world of theory and practical experience to her new position as a UB Law faculty member and director of the Law School’s Human Rights Center.

As she succeeds Dean Makau W. Mutua as director of the Buffalo Human Rights Center, Melish knows she has big shoes to fill. She hopes nevertheless that she can provide the center with a strong foundation for growth and an open environment for students wishing to find meaningful ways to give expression to their human rights commitments. “I hope the center will be a real resource for students, to

give them the support that they need to follow their own paths in the human rights field,” she says. “I want to be a person they feel comfortable coming to with their ideas, saying, ‘How can I do this?’ ”

Melish wants the center to also be a place of active institutional engagement with human rights initiatives around the world – through research, scholarly fora, monitoring initiatives and litigation. She underscores in this respect that “one of the great attractions of coming to Buffalo is having a dean who so fully and genuinely supports human rights, is so respected in the field, and who will be actively working to bring the full community together to strengthen the center’s profile and impact.”

Melish and her fiancé, Jeff Rinne, who works for the World Bank, are enthusiastic travelers, adventurers and runners. They recently completed their first marathon.



# THE LANGUAGE OF ECONOMICS

*Wentong Zheng  
brings an economist's eye  
to legal study*

Growing up in a small city 200 miles south of Beijing, Wentong Zheng was a witness to history: China's rapid transformation from an isolated nation into an economic powerhouse. The intense debate about economic and political reforms, closely entwined in China, captivated him – and led him to economics as a way to better understand it all.

Zheng, who joins the UB Law faculty this fall, went to big-city Beijing and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in economics from Renmin University of China. From there he traveled to Stanford University, where he earned his doctorate in economics in 2005.

But along the way, he says, he realized that “the dismal science” did not

satisfy his desire to understand the workings of human economic and political life. “I found economics to be more abstract than I would like it to be,” he says. “We were using very complicated mathematical models without explaining the relevance of those models to reality. I wanted to apply my economics expertise to something more concrete. And I just got very interested in legal issues, especially issues relating to economics.”

So he applied and was accepted at Stanford Law School, earning the J.D. (and serving as executive editor of the *Stanford Law Review*) while at the same time completing his dissertation for a Ph.D. in economics. He spent the first year on his law courses, and then shuttled back and forth between the law school and the economics department – a fortuitously short five-minute walk.

How does someone whose native tongue is Chinese survive such a rigorous challenge? “I started learning English in middle school,” Zheng says. “But when I left China for the U.S., I really knew mostly written English. When I came to the U.S., I realized that I didn't really know how to talk to an American and make him or her understand me.” Fortunately, he said, much of his economics coursework was in the universal language of math. “I devoted those years to studying economics, but also to watching TV and talking to my advisers and classmates,” he says. His English – spoken and written – now is impeccable.

After he completed his work at Stanford, Zheng joined the Washing-

ton, D.C., firm Steptoe & Johnson, where he works on international trade litigation and trade policy advocacy. For nearly two years, he worked primarily on a case involving the import of softwood lumber from Canada. U.S. lumber producers had complained to the Department of Commerce that the Canadian government was unfairly subsidizing the costs of lumber production by charging below-market stumpage fees, undercutting fair competition.

“It was a very interesting experience,” he says of the case, in which Steptoe represented the Canadian producers. “We had to hire many prominent economists to prove why the Canadian government's stumpage policy was not a subsidy. I had to be both a lawyer and an economist, because I was interpreting between the lawyers and the economists.”

That dual orientation – Zheng considers himself a lawyer with an economics background, rather than the other way around – fuels the research interests that he will continue at UB Law.

His major interest is in studying international trade law from an economic perspective. Specifically, he has been looking at the use of the market as a benchmark for the law, as in takings law that requires government to pay fair market value for property ac-



quired through eminent domain. “My research points out that there is a lot of inconsistency with the economic principles behind that approach,” he says.

Drawing upon his advanced training in econometrics and statistics, he also wants to pursue his interest in empirical studies of legal and public policy issues.

He also is doing work in comparative law, such as comparing the Chinese and U.S. anti-trust laws through the lens of political and social factors affecting their development, rather than the traditional economics-only approach.

At UB, Zheng says, he is looking forward to a wide range of collabora-

tions. “Buffalo people have interesting ideas and want to talk about their research,” he says. “And the Law School has given a very high priority to interdisciplinary research, especially through the Baldy Center. I think that will provide an excellent platform for my research interests.” As well, he says, he expects to build contacts in the School of Management and the departments of economics and Asian studies.

Zheng is married to Zhuqin “Allison” Zhou; a fellow economist, she works as an economic consultant. They have two young sons, ages 2½ years and 7 months.

“

*The Law School has given a very high priority to interdisciplinary research, especially through the Baldy Center. I think that will provide an excellent platform for my research interests.*”

# CRIMINAL LAW SCHOLAR MOVES EAST

*Angela P. Harris  
comes from Berkeley  
to UB Law as Baldy's  
first Distinguished  
Visiting Scholar*

**T**hey say a change is better than a rest. So when Professor Angela P. Harris was looking forward to a sabbatical from Berkeley Law School at the University of California, she thought a change of scene might be in order.

"I love what I do," Harris says, "and it's recharging to think about doing it in a different place. It's a fun, nice way of getting to know a different faculty and getting to live in another part of the country."

Harris, a widely published legal scholar and award-winning teacher, will come to UB Law School this fall for a yearlong appointment as a Baldy Center Distinguished Scholar. That link with UB Law School's center for interdisciplinary legal studies fits well, she says, with her multifaceted approach to legal scholarship. Already, for example, she is talking with UB so-

ciology professor Mark Gottdiener about the launch of a new journal in urban sociology, in keeping with her interest in the workings of America's cities.

In addition to teaching an introductory course in criminal law, Harris will continue her research and writing, work on conferences and, she says, "get to know the faculty and the students."

Harris, whose undergraduate work was in creative writing and English literature at the University of Michigan, has a master's degree in social science from the University of Chicago. Her J.D. is from the University of Chicago Law School. She has taught at Berkeley Law since 1988, interrupted only by visiting professorships at Yale, Stanford and Georgetown.

She identifies herself broadly with the Critical Race Theory movement in legal scholarship, which looks at racial subordination and discrimination, and the intersection of race with other social phenomena. But she also identifies as a feminist and sees race as "inextricably intertwined" with gender discrimination – and says that these issues make for a lively classroom.

"Criminal law is so much about race, class, gender and sexuality," she says. "Who gets punished, what do we make criminal, where is the line between things that the community might consider just immoral and what the community might want to make illegal? It's a great course to teach, because everyone comes into it with some sort of opinion. All the

students have seen TV shows or maybe even had some personal experience with criminal law."

**T**he confluence of race and gender has deep roots in our country, Harris says. "These two kinds of subordination have really been closely intertwined throughout American history," she says. "For example, during slavery, there was a rule first expressed in a Virginia statute that the status of a child followed the status of the mother. So slavery status would follow reproduction. Women's bodies were essential to the maintenance of slavery – they were engines that could produce more capital for the master."

Today, she says, even though both racial discrimination and sex discrimination in the workplace have been outlawed, race and gender bias continue to be uneasy dance partners. For example, an employer hiring for a certain position may be swayed by stereotypes and expectations that live below the conscious level: "Black women are too loud and sassy, I don't want them in my workplace; Asian women are too quiet and passive, I don't want them in a sales position."

Laws against discrimination are already on the books, Harris says. "The question is, how do you enforce that, how do you make it real?" One way, she says, is by "working through corporate culture and corporate training programs to help people get past those stereotypes. If people are reflective and aware that they may be subject to these stereotypes, they can get past them."





“

*Criminal law is so much about race, class, gender and sexuality. Who gets punished, what do we make criminal, where is the line between things that the community might consider just immoral and what the community might want to make illegal?*

”

**A**t Berkeley Law, Harris serves on the board of the Berkeley Center for Race and Gender, a research institute for students and faculty looking at how issues of race and gender intertwine; as board chair of the Institute for the Study of Social Change, a university-wide umbrella for research; and on the executive committee of the Thelton E. Henderson Center for Law and Social Justice within the law school, which sponsors talks and workshops by practicing attorneys

from across the country for students interested in issues and careers in social justice.

Harris comes to Buffalo with her daughter, Rachel, 11; her partner, Christopher Young; and his daughter, Jasmine, who is also 11. The professor is also a musician – she plays the viola, and has “performed for years with a bunch of choirs” as a singer of both sacred and secular music.

*"We have lost a giant in human rights..." — Dean Makau Mutua*

# HUMAN RIGHTS PIONEER

*Virginia Leary, lawyer, professor, human rights activist  
passes away in Geneva, Switzerland*

Professor Emerita Virginia Leary, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor at the University at Buffalo Law School, passed away April 8 in Geneva, Switzerland, where she had lived since retiring from UB Law in 1995. Apparently, Professor Leary suffered a heart attack. Professor Leary was a beloved member of the Law School and the University at Buffalo, where she taught for 19 years.

Professor Leary was a pioneer in teaching and scholarship in human rights law, a field in which she put UB Law on the global map. She was long a leader in international law and served with distinction on the Executive Council of the American Society of International Law. She was a visiting professor and frequent lecturer at several universities and conferences around the world. Professor Leary, who consulted extensively for NGOs and intergovernmental organizations, including the United Nations, was one of the first women to attain universal recognition in international law. Her work as a scholar and practitioner in labor rights and economic, social and cultural rights was exemplary.

Even in retirement from UB Law, Professor Leary never lost touch with this law school. She repeatedly came back to visit. She helped mentor UB Law students in human rights. Professor Leary was the UB Law Commencement speaker in 2004.

Says Makau Mutua, UB Law dean: "For me, the loss is very personal, as I am sure it is for her colleagues here."

"When I came to UB Law in 1996 to teach international law and human rights, she offered me invaluable advice and assistance. We kept in touch over the years, and her wise counsel to me was priceless."

"We have lost a giant in human rights and international law, but her legacy and contributions to the field and to the most vulnerable peoples on earth will live on."



Dr. Robert J. Genco with SUNY Distinguished Service Professor Emerita Virginia A. Leary at Commencement 2004.



*Professor Emerita Virginia Leary*

*Aug. 15, 1926 – April 8, 2009*

## New works by our professors

# The UB Law bookshelf



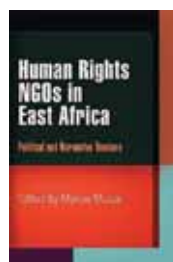
### **Prison Religion: Faith-Based Reform, and the Constitution**

By Winnifred Fallers Sullivan  
(Princeton University Press)



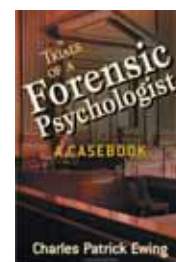
### **Navigators of the Contemporary: Why Ethnography Matters**

By David A. Westbrook  
(University of Chicago Press)



### **Human Rights NGOs in East Africa: Political and Normative Tensions**

Edited by Makau W. Mutua  
(University of Pennsylvania Press)



### **Trials of a Forensic Psychologist: A Casebook**

By Charles Patrick Ewing  
(John Wiley and Sons)

Professor Sullivan, director of the Baldy Center for Law & Social Policy, looks at “faith-based” prison programs in light of the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state. Sullivan takes as her springboard a recent trial challenging the constitutionality of a faith-based residential rehabilitation program in an Iowa state prison. In that trial she served as an expert witness for the plaintiffs, a group of prisoners who were assigned to the “God Pod,” a section of the prison administered by a faith-based organization that equated crime with sin.

Sullivan argues that church-state separation is no longer possible because religious authority has shifted from institutions to individuals, making it difficult even to define religion, let alone disentangle it from the government.

Professor Westbrook, a Floyd H. and Hilda L. Hurst Faculty Scholar, here argues for the importance of ethnography – the descriptive study of human societies based on fieldwork – as a way to understand our interconnected, yet mysterious, worlds. Though ethnography traditionally has been used by



Western anthropologists to study far-flung cultures, Westbrook says they are now using the tools of this discipline to study such close-to-home cultures as corporations, the scientific establishment, the military and organized religion.

In an informal and relatively brief book, written in a conversational style and without footnotes, Westbrook reaches out to a wide audience with what he calls “a publicly available meditation on intellectual life.”

Dean Mutua’s new book chronicles the human rights movement in East Africa as set against the series of political transitions in the region. In particular it examines the role of nongovern-



mental organizations and broader “civil society,” the social organizations that Mutua sees as key to the success of political democracy in African nations. Recognizing that the state remains one of the major challenges to the human rights effort, these essays also acknowledge serious internal problems in the movement to ensure human rights throughout Africa.

The book brings together some of the most celebrated human rights thinkers in East Africa, as well as writers from South Africa and the United States. Mutua, a SUNY Distinguished Professor, also directs UB Law’s Human Rights Center.

Ewing, a SUNY Distinguished Service Professor and widely known expert on criminal psychology, details 10 high-profile cases from U.S. courtrooms in which forensic psychologists – psychologists applying their knowledge in a legal setting – played a crucial role. Drawing from his experiences testifying as an expert witness over three decades, Ewing brings to life the personal as well as the legal stories in these cases, and shows how the forensic psychologist’s craft applies to such issues as the ability to waive Miranda rights, the insanity defense, battered woman syndrome and evaluating allegations of child sexual abuse.

“I have tried to paint a detailed and compelling portrait of the evidence and the testimony,” Ewing says, “and leave it to readers to decide who was right and whether justice was done.”





# A meeting of minds

*Baldy Center working groups put innovative ideas to the test*

Professor  
Rebecca R.  
French,  
Baldy Center  
director.



“I love to lose myself in other men’s minds,” wrote the 19th century British essayist Charles Lamb. It is that philosophy that undergirds a movement in the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy to bring together scholars from many disciplines, including the Law School, and organizing them into working groups centered around particular investigative interests. The result is groups that have become forums for rich interdisciplinary exchanges, scholarly collaborations and intellectual ferment.

The working groups are open to any interested member of the University at Buffalo faculty. Their activities include informal meetings, presenting research work-in-progress, hosting visiting speakers and organizing research workshops.

“Each one of these groups is doing something completely different and interesting,” says **Professor Rebecca R. French**, Baldy Center director. “The research they are doing has great practical value. When I was in practice, I realized that the more you know about the world and about people, and the more you know about the context people are operating in, the better lawyer you are.

“It is imperative today for people to be flexible and able to adapt to new ways of thinking. Having students exposed to that is vital.”

A brief tour of four well-established and productive working groups at the Baldy Center:

**Law and Religion:** “This is an exceedingly broad category, and it is wonderful because it is so open,” French says. Participants in the working group look at the ways that legal systems have been shaped by religious systems, either home-grown or imported. Members of the group, which incorporates French’s Law and Buddhism Project, helped to organize the 2006 visit to UB of the Dalai Lama, including a conference on Law, Buddhism and Social Change. They also sponsored this spring’s three-day conference “Re-Describing the Sacred/Secular Divide.”

Law School members also include among others **Professors Winnifred Fallers Sullivan** and **Stephanie Phillips**. Sullivan’s books include *The Impossibility of Religious Freedom* (Princeton University Press) and *Prison Religion: Faith-Based Reform and the Constitution* (Princeton University Press). Phillips says, “My focus is upon the juncture of law, religion and politics. These intersections are being rethought and re-fought in many places on the globe, including Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria, Afghanistan and the United States. To enrich the interdisciplinary aspect of this work, I am presently pursuing a master’s degree in theology at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School.”

## Cultural Policy and Diplomacy:

This working group “looks at the intersection of law, art, museums and politics,” French says – “what the political dimensions are, how they are understood in different context and what the legal implications are.”

Examples include the 2005 controversy over a Danish newspaper’s publication of an editorial cartoon that depicted the Prophet Muhammad, igniting a furor in the Muslim world; and an incident in Stockholm when the Israeli ambassador disconnected the electricity to an exhibition of Palestinian art that he found objectionable.

The group is convened by **Ruth Bereson**, director of UB’s Arts Management Program in the College of Arts and Sciences. Says French, “She puts together fascinating people and intriguing ideas.”

## Law, Place and Space:

This working group looks at the intersection of law and geography – “thinking in a spatial way about how the law works,” French explains. “It is very, very exciting.” The group is planning a major two-day conference at UB in the fall, and in February sponsored a workshop called “The Hidden Places of Law: Exploring Legal Geographies.”

Among the Law School participants is **Associate Professor Irus Braverman**, whose scholarship has addressed the laws surrounding trees and house demolitions in East Jerusalem. “My doctoral thesis focused on the politics of natural landscapes,” Braverman says. “In particular, this work exam-



Professor  
Winnifred  
Fallers Sullivan



Associate  
Professor Mateo  
Tausig-Rubbo



Associate  
Professor Irus  
Braverman



Professor Errol  
Meidinger

ines the ideological uses of trees in both Israel/Palestine and in four North American cities, employing an ethnographic approach to examine the relations between law, natural landscapes and scientific technologies.”

Also part of the group is **Professor Errol Meidinger**, who also serves as vice dean for research and faculty development. Meidinger is the editor of *Confronting Sustainability: Forest Certification in Developing and Transitioning Countries* (Yale University Press), which looks at the emergence of a system for identifying well-managed forest land and how market choices affect the health of some of the world’s most environmentally sensitive forests.

**Law and Anthropology:** “This was a hidden resource at UB that no one really knew about,” French says. “Suddenly we realized how many people here are doing legal anthropology. There are five people just on our law faculty who have this interest.”

French is one of them, as she has done extensive work on the Tibetan legal system. She is the author of *The Golden Yoke: The Legal Cosmology of Buddhist Tibet* (Cornell University Press).

Also in this working group from the Law School is **Associate Professor Mateo Taussig-Rubbo**, who says: “My work on law and violence draws on anthropological methods and concepts. I am especially interested in forms of meaningful violence that affirm or transform legal categories.” For example, Taussig-Rubbo has written about the concept of “outsourcing sacrifice” through the use of private military contractors.

# On the move

*UB Law School celebrates the accomplishments of these faculty members whose professional lives are taking them elsewhere.*

• Professor **Lee Albert**’s major research areas have been law and medicine, constitutional law and the U.S. Supreme Court. He has retired.

• Professor **Barry B. Boyer**, an environmental law specialist, served as dean of UB Law School from 1992 to 1998. He has retired.

• Professor **Markus D. Dubber**, who studies penal law and comparative law, has accepted a position at the University of Toronto Law School.

• **Kenneth F. Joyce**, SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor, has taught and written on estates, trusts and taxes. He has retired, but will teach his last course in the fall.

• Professor **Janet S. Lindgren**, who taught several advanced writing courses, has retired.

• **Judith Scales-Trent**, a professor and Floyd H. and Hilda R. Hurst faculty scholar, has written extensively about race in America. She is retiring from teaching but will continue her research at UB Law through the fall semester.

• **Amy Deen Westbrook** has been director of UB Law’s New York City Program in International Finance and Law. She is beginning a tenure-track professorship at Washburn University School of Law in Topeka, Kan.

• **David A. Westbrook**, a professor and Floyd H. and Hilda R. Hurst faculty scholar has taught and studied on business and international law topics. He will be a visiting professor at the University of Kansas School of Law and at Washburn University School of Law.



Lee Albert



Barry B. Boyer



Markus D. Dubber



Kenneth F. Joyce



Janet S. Lindgren



Judith Scales-Trent



David A. Westbrook



Amy Deen Westbrook

# Big names at the Baldy Center

## Theorists and Jurists Series

### brings top minds to UB Law

An ambitious initiative of the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy is putting some of the best-known and most well-respected figures in law and humanities before UB Law audiences.

The Theorists and Jurists Series, new this spring semester, includes lectures by several such leading scholars. The participants are chosen by a faculty committee, and invitations have been extended to major theorists in such far-flung fields as urban planning, philosophy and anthropology, as well as to renowned jurists including U.S. Supreme Court justices.

"UB is a world-class institution," says Professor Rebecca R. French, Baldy Center director. "At the Baldy Center, we would like to bring world-class scholars in to present their ideas to the University, Law School and social sciences communities."

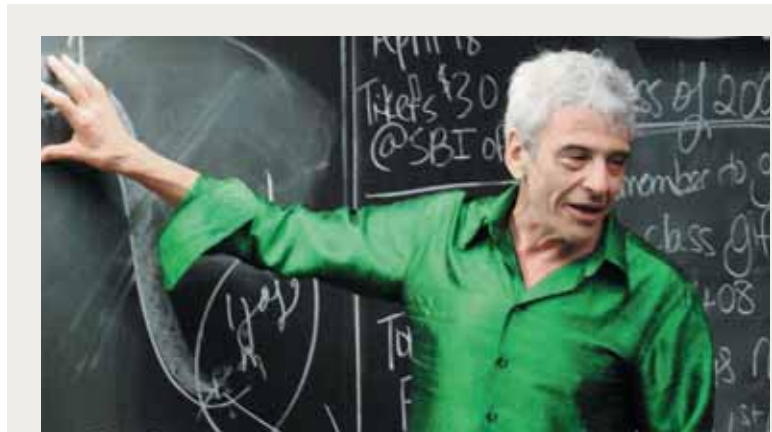
"The goal is to have the great thinkers here – people who are capable of changing the way we think about the world, the way we think about ideas and the way we think about ourselves."

The spring semester lineup of the Theorists and Jurists Series includes appearances by three well-known figures:

**March 17, "Normativity of Law,"**  
**Jules L. Coleman**, professor of jurisprudence and philosophy at Yale Law School. On March 18, Professor Coleman also discussed "The Accountability Theory of Tort Law."



Educated at Brooklyn College and with a Ph.D. in philosophy from Rockefeller University and an MSL from Yale Law



**April 9, "The Yagé Tapes: Shamanism and Intellectual Property in Colombia,"** **Michael Taussig**, professor of anthropology at Columbia University.

Taussig, who has a medical degree from the University of Sydney and a doctorate in anthropology from the London School of Economics, is best-known for his work on Marx's concept of commodity fetishism – the idea in some societies that commodities have inherent value, rather than acquiring value through labor. Taussig's fieldwork in South America, especially Colombia and Bolivia, has been widely read and discussed.

School, Coleman teaches in the areas of philosophy of law; torts law; law, language and truth; political philosophy; and rational choice. His books include *Hart's Postscript: The Practice of Principle* and *Oxford Handbook of Jurisprudence and the Philosophy of Law*.

**April 24, "Housing Rights and Historical Wrongs: Gentrification and Neoliberalism, From the Eternal City to the City of Angels,"** **Michael Herzfeld**, professor of anthropology at Harvard University.

Herzfeld, one of the world's premier social anthropologists, special-

izes in the ethnography of Europe (especially Greece and Italy) and of Thailand. His most recent project is a documentary film, *Monti Moments: Men's Memories in the Heart of Rome*, an intimate portrait of social change in a rapidly gentrifying neighborhood in the Italian capital. He drew



on his research for that film in this discussion of the effects of gentrification in Rome and Los Angeles.



## A view from the top

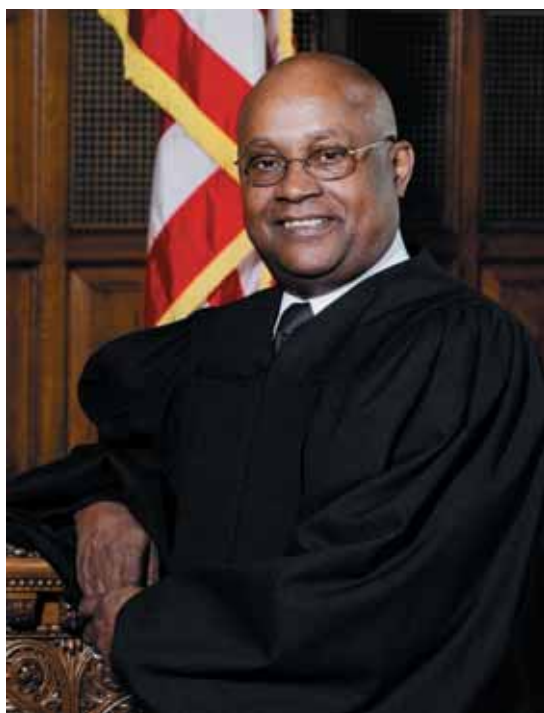
### *Court of Appeals justice addresses New York City alumni luncheon*

Preparing to mark the second anniversary of his appointment to New York State's highest court, the Hon. Theodore J. Jones addressed the New York City chapter of the UB Law Alumni Association on Jan. 30.

Jones, an associate justice on the state's Court of Appeals, brought the lessons of his nearly two years on the high court to an appreciative audience at the historic Union League Club. After a welcome by Alumni Association President E. Jeannette Ogden '83, a Buffalo City Court judge, and an update by Dean Makau W. Mutua, Jones was introduced by Hon. Erin M. Peradotto '84, a State Supreme Court justice.

"I know the significance of this institution and the history of this institution," said Jones, whose J.D. is from St. John's University Law School in Queens. "I was so impressed by the plans, Dean Mutua, that you have to take the Law School to another level altogether. I serve on the board of directors of St. John's Law School, and I also serve on the trustee board. So we sit in these meetings and we discuss the financial and academic ramifications of both the law school and the university, and I guarantee you that I am in touch with the economic realities with which schools are faced today. That makes your work here all the more impressive. You are to be congratulated."

Jones recalled the day he was sworn into office on the Court of Appeals – "that very same day," he said, "we heard our first oral arguments. After the oral arguments, everyone went back to what is known in the Court of Appeals as the red room. The chief clerk came in, and he had a stack of white 3-by-5 cards. He put them on the table and said, 'Go



Hon. Theodore J. Jones

ahead and pick.' I thought they were kidding. I thought this was some kind of initiation for me as a new judge. I said to myself, 'This can't be the way they assign cases. But I'm going to play along with this and see where it goes.' I took a card, and everyone else took a card, and I kept waiting for the punch line. But I found out that was actually the way they assigned cases. And the first case I picked was really hard."

Jones told about the clerk system in the court, in which each judge has three clerks, but in addition a group of "central staff" clerks evaluate applications for legal proceedings, writing detailed reports and making arguments for which cases the court should accept.

"We only accept about 5 percent of the cases," Jones said. "A case has to have a certain level of significance before the

Court of Appeals takes it. It has to be the type of case that has ramifications throughout the entire state. If not, it goes in the discard bin."

The judges, he said, are seated in Albany "approximately 64 or 65 days a year. The rest of the time we are in our chambers, working on our decisions. It's an interesting experience. The appellate process is an ongoing thing. I learn from it every single day."

Jones acknowledged that the national and state economic crisis will affect the courts along with the rest of society. "I'm only hopeful that the effect of those changes can be minimized," he said. "We in the courts depend on legal community to help minimize the effects of those changes on the least

among us. We hope that, with pro bono work and free legal work, we can keep the courts open to all."

He also committed to advocating for UB Law students and alumni to serve clerkships in the state court system, saying, "I would like to see Buffalo Law School more completely represented than it has been, and I will do everything in my power to make that happen."

# Alumni Association



Front row:  
Hon. Jeffrey S.  
White '70, Lynn  
A. Clarke '83.  
Second row:  
Brent L. Wilson  
'76, Elizabeth B.  
Mensch '79  
Top row:  
Hon. Sharon S.  
Townsend, Anna  
Marie Cellino '81

## Distinguished alumni honored

An "exceptionally select group of highly distinguished honorees," in the words of Dean Makau W. Mutua, collected Distinguished Alumni Awards on May 5 at the UB Law Alumni Association's 47<sup>th</sup> annual dinner. Awards were presented to five alumni of the Law School and to one non-alumna. Buffalo City Court Judge E. Jeannette Ogden '83, president of the Law Alumni Association, served as master of ceremonies.

The honorees, whose acceptance remarks were printed in booklet form, were:

**Hon. Jeffrey S. White '70**, for his conscientious and diligent performance in the judiciary. White is a U.S. District Court judge in the Northern District of California.

Ronald Hayes Malone, a partner in a San Francisco law firm, presented the award. "This is truly an inspired choice," Malone said. "Jeff White was one of the very best trial lawyers in

America, having tried more than 100 jury trials without one loss. I don't know anybody in the country who knows more about how to effectively, honestly and conscientiously try a lawsuit.

"On the bench, he is a judge who cares passionately about justice. He calls the balls and strikes with accuracy and with fairness, and he treats

everyone with respect, courtesy and compassion. Perhaps most important, Jeff White is simply a wonderful human being. I think he is simply what we all aspire to be."

White said in his remarks: "When UB Law School admitted me, it took a chance on a poor kid from Brooklyn with a thirst to learn how to use the law to serve the community. UB Law and its world-class faculty inspired me and taught me well. I have always followed the directive of my trial advocacy instructor, that a prosecutor should be held to the highest standards of ethical and public responsibility. On the bench, I have always held the prosecutors who appear before me to that same high standard."

For a **Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner** slideshow, go to [www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/alumniDinner.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/forum/spr09/alumniDinner.asp)

## *UB Law Alumni Association recognizes six for their accomplishments*

**Brent L. Wilson '76**, for his leadership by example as a private practitioner. Wilson is a partner in the Atlanta firm Elarbee, Thompson, Sapp & Wilson, LLP.

Presenting the award was Richard F. DiGiacomo '76, a classmate of Wilson's and a vice president of the Law Alumni Association. "He has received awards that are too numerous to mention," DiGiacomo said. "But *this* award is especially noteworthy because Brent is a great example for us, whether in town or out of town, as to how to stay connected to this Law School, which has meant so much to all of us."

In his remarks, Wilson said: "By some beautiful twist of fate, I arrived at UB in my second year of law school after beginning my legal education in Georgia. I was embraced by the UB Law family, including students, faculty and staff, and the people of Western New York."

• • •

**Lynn A. Clarke '83**, for her many contributions to the betterment of our community. Clarke is principal court attorney with the New York State Supreme Court.

In presenting the award, Judge Ogden said: "Lynn is a person who makes community service happen. All of the hours that she has devoted to community service have been an act and a labor of love. We are very proud that Lynn decided to engage in a labor of love by serving our community."

Clarke, in her remarks, said: "It seems curious to be acknowledged for activities which, for me, were labors of love. The community endeavors I have pursued have primarily involved recognition and protection of human and legal rights, preservation of history, participation in our political process and helping those who are less fortunate, causes all dear to my heart. I feel privileged to have been able to work on community issues which are important to me."

**Elizabeth B. Mensch '79**, for her commitment to public service. Mensch is SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Emerita at UB Law School.

In presenting the award, Dean Mutua said: "There are four things that define who Betty Mensch is: humility, excellence, brilliance and dedication. I have never met anyone who was more self-deprecating and more unassuming, and yet so substantial. No matter how much she knows and no matter how little you know, Professor Mensch always made you feel comfortable."

In her remarks, Mensch said: "The single most constant feature of UB life was also its greatest source of change and renewal: the always new, always lively class of first-year students who unfailingly filled our classrooms every fall, determined, three years later, to join our community of UB Law alumni – the real UB Law community. Every year I would marvel at the richness of experience and freshness of perspective they brought to us. It was a privilege to teach them, and a privilege to be part of the alumni community to which they brought constant renewal."

• • •

**Anna Marie Cellino '81**, for her exemplary performance in business. Cellino is president of National Fuel Gas Distribution Corp.

Paula M. Ciprich '85 noted that Cellino began with National Fuel Gas as a law clerk, then an attorney, and detailed her accomplishments in improving customer service, promoting cost and quality control, and serving as corporate secretary. "Anna Marie has incredible energy, focus and business judgment," Ciprich said. "She has been an outstanding mentor and friend, and I can think of no one who deserves this recognition more."

In her remarks, Cellino said: "I have many fond memories of my years at UB Law School and am very appreciative of the time spent with my professors and the legal training that I received. That education certainly assist-

ed me in achieving my success at National Fuel. ... I have been fortunate to have both a successful career and a very fulfilling personal life. I am thankful to my husband, Ross, and my six beautiful children, who have encouraged me in my career and continue to bring much love, joy and laughter into my life."

• • •

**Hon. Sharon S. Townsend**, for outstanding service to the community by a non-alumna. Townsend is administrative judge for the 8th Judicial District of New York State Supreme Court.

Hon. Erin M. Peradotto '84 introduced the honoree: "Her roles as a Family Court judge, supervising judge of the Family Courts of the 8th Judicial District, and now administrative judge have given her a unique opportunity to use her talent and ability to make a positive difference in countless lives. And she has done it one day at a time, one person at a time. She is a person who clearly understands the impact of individual efforts, and has recognized that her words and actions have afterlives."

Townsend said in her remarks: "I have felt that I belonged to UB Law School since I arrived here in Buffalo 30 years ago this month as a recent graduate of the University of Connecticut School of Law. That first summer, my husband, Bradlee, and I would ride our bicycles to UB Law School for our daily bar review course. It was there that we met such wonderful and warm people as Fran 'Cheech' Letro and Tom Black, both successful alums who have given back to the Law School community many times over and have become our dear friends and colleagues."

The Distinguished Alumni Awards dinner committee was co-chaired by DiGiacomo and Mark J. Stuhlmiller '99. Also on the committee were Robert L. Boreanaz '89, James W. Grable Jr. '96, Margaret P. Gryko '77 and Catherine E. Nagel '98.



## Share your reunion photos on Flickr

**T**he Law School has moved toward posting reunion photos on the Web. We are currently migrating our alumni photos onto a photo sharing Web site, Flickr.com, where all of the 2008 reunion photos from the fall and spring *Forum* are available for viewing. We hope that you will find this site helpful by allowing you to view additional photos taken at the reunion and to make prints if you wish.

To access your reunion photos, go to [www.law.buffalo.edu/reunions](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/reunions). Click on "past reunions," which will take you to our area at Flickr. You can then view a slideshow of all your reunion photos, or simply click on a single photo to view details and order prints. Our user group is at [www.law.buffalo.edu/alumniFlickr.asp](http://www.law.buffalo.edu/alumniFlickr.asp).

Do you have photos from other events, or are you planning a reunion with classmates? Please let us know. We would be happy to help, including having a photographer document the event for inclusion in a future *Forum* magazine.

Questions or looking for more reunion photos? Contact Amy Hayes Atkinson, assistant director of reunions and alumni services, at (716) 645-6224 or [aatkins@buffalo.edu](mailto:aatkins@buffalo.edu).

## '70s

**Terrence M. Connors '71** of Buffalo has been named "Lawyer of the Year" 2009 by *Best Lawyers*. He was listed in the categories of personal injury, commercial litigation, legal malpractice, medical malpractice, and white-collar and non-white-collar criminal law. Connors is a partner in Connors & Vilardo in Buffalo and a past member of UB Law School's Dean's Advisory Council.

**Hon. Alexander W. Hunter Jr. '74** of New Rochelle, N.Y., was re-elected New York State Supreme Court justice, 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial District, in Bronx, N.Y. He was also recognized for his 20 years of service as an adjunct professor at Pace University School of Law in White Plains, N.Y. Hunter is currently teaching at Concord Law School in Los Angeles.

**David E. Jacobson '74** has joined Troutman Sanders as a partner in the Washington, D.C., office. He is a member of the firm's tax practice group and lives in McLean, Va.

**Hon. James A.W. McLeod '74** was re-elected Buffalo City Court judge. He has been a city court judge since 1999 and resides in Buffalo.

**Dianne Bennett '75** has co-authored a book with her husband, William Graebner, *Rome the Second Time: 15 Itineraries That Don't Go to the Coliseum*. The book is an alternative travel guide and history lesson. Bennett is past chair of Hodgson Russ in Buffalo and a past recipient of the UB Law Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumna Award. She is a Buffalo resident.

**Maurice L. Sykes '75** has joined Kenney Shelton Liptak Nowak as a senior associate in the Buffalo office. He focuses his practice in self-insured and insurance defense litigation. Sykes lives in East Amherst, N.Y.

## '50s

**Herald Price Fahringer '56** received the Hon. Robert L. Cohen Award from the New York Criminal Bar Association at a ceremony in New York City. The award, in recognition of lifetime achievement, is the highest honor bestowed by the association. Fahringer, a celebrated civil liberties attorney, is associated with the Manhattan firm Fahringer & Dubno. He lives in Manhattan.

**Hon. Joseph S. Mattina '56** was reappointed to a three-year term on the board of directors of Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo. Mattina, former Erie County Surrogate Court judge, is CEO of Counsel Financial Services in Williamsville, N.Y. He is a past recipient of the UB Law Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumnus Award and the Jaeckle Award.

**Richard F. Griffin '57** was named to the steering committee for the 25th anniversary celebration of *The Best Lawyers in America*, held in Atlanta. Griffin was recognized for his listing in the fields of alternative dispute resolution, commercial litigation, personal injury litigation and product liability litigation. He is of counsel with Kavinoky Cook in Buffalo, where he resides. Griffin is a past recipient of the UB Law Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumnus Award.

## '60s

**Fredric H. Fischer '67** is co-editor in chief of *How to Take a Case Before the National Labor Relations Board*, Eighth Edition (BNA Books). Fischer is a partner in the Chicago office of Seyfarth Shaw and is a member of the firm's labor and employment department. He lives in Highland Park, Ill.

Class Action  
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## 50+ Reunion Luncheon

**O**n Aug. 6, 2008, the Law School hosted its fifth annual 50+ Reunion Luncheon. This annual event welcomes alumni who graduated 50 or more years ago. Alumni and guests joined Vice Dean Alan S. Carrel, who gave updates about the Law School. In attendance were alumni ranging from the classes of 1943 to 1958.

The event took place in the fifth-floor Law School Conference Center in O'Brian Hall. There were lively conversations and plenty of memories between alums. This wonderful tradition gave all an opportunity to celebrate their many accomplishments and relive a few of the fond memories from their days in law school.

**Seated** – Richard M. English '53, Richard Lipsitz '43, Arthur J. Maloney '48, Hon. Joseph J. Sedita '50, Hon. Michael A. Amico '58, Sue Dealy Murszewski '58, Alexander J. Russ '52, Michael T. Sullivan Jr. '53  
**Standing** – Joseph C. Vispi '49, Owen F. Mangan '56, Hon. John J. Gruber '52, John F. Canale '47, Hon. Joseph D. Mintz '56, Ross M. Cellino Sr. '56, Sanford M. Silverberg '57, Thomas J. Kelly '52, Ralph L. Halpern '53, Hon. John P. Lane '53, Frederic C. Washburn '53, Frank R. Papa '52, Anthony J. DeMarie '55, Wells E. Knibloe '50, Hon. Charles R. Newman '50, David P. Evans '56, Herbert Shafer '50, Anthony J. Colucci Jr. '58, Victor C. Silverstein '54



Top: Ross M. Cellino Sr. '56 and Joseph C. Vispi '49

Above: Richard Lipsitz '43 and Sue Dealy Murszewski '58

Left: Hon. Joseph J. Sedita '50 and Herbert Shafer '50



Barbara Newman, Hon. Charles R. Newman '50 and Wells E. Knibloe '50





# Class Action



**Margaret W. Wong '76**



**Dennis R. McCoy '77**



**Terrie Benson Murray '79**

## High honors for Daniels, Freedman

Two distinguished alumni of UB Law School have received prestigious awards in recognition of their achievement in legal practice.

**Joel L. Daniels '63**, who for four decades has been one of Buffalo's leading defense attorneys, received the Charles F. Crimi Memorial Award as the state's outstanding private defense practitioner. The award was presented in New York City at the annual awards luncheon of the New York State Bar Association's criminal justice section.

Also, the New York Bar Foundation conferred its Lifetime Achievement Award on **Maryann Saccomando Freedman '58**. The award, presented at a New York City dinner, recognizes Freedman's service both to her clients and to the legal profession in New York State. A former director and president of the Bar Foundation, she also was the first female president of the New York State Bar Association and the Erie County Bar Association. She is of counsel at Cohen & Lombardo in Buffalo, where she maintain a general civil practice.



## Two alums rise in State Senate staff

At a critical time for New York State government, two UB Law alumni have been named to high-level legal posts in the State Senate.

**Shelley Mayer '79** has been named Counsel to the Majority by Majority Leader Malcolm A. Smith, a Queens Democrat. Mayer previously served as Counsel to the Minority under Smith, as well as Special Counsel to former Minority Leader Martin Connor. Before beginning work with the Senate, she was an assistant attorney general for 12 years. She lives in Yonkers.

Also, **Lourdes Ventura '98** was named Counsel for Latino and Immigrant Affairs. Previously, Ventura served in the Minority Counsel's office, following work as a prosecutor with the Queens County district attorney's office and as an assistant attorney general with the state attorney general's office. She currently serves as a director of the UB Law Alumni Association and as a member of the Dean's Advisory Council. She lives in Queens.

**Margaret W. Wong '76** is representing President Barack Obama's aunt, Zeituni Onyango, who is a Kenyan immigrant living in the U.S. illegally. Wong is managing partner of Margaret W. Wong and Associates in Cleveland. She is a recipient of the UB Law Alumni Association Distinguished Alumna Award, a lifetime member of the UB Law Alumni Association and a member of UB Law School's Dean's Advisory Council. Wong lives in Shaker Heights, Ohio.

**Dennis R. McCoy '77** was named general awards committee chair of the New York State Bar Association's torts, insurance and compensation law section. McCoy is a partner in the Buffalo office of Hiscock & Barclay. He is a member of UB Law School's Dean's Advisory Council and is a past president of the UB Law Alumni Association. McCoy lives in Snyder, N.Y.

**James J. Duggan '78** of Amherst, N.Y., has become a partner in the Buffalo office of Kenney Shelton Liptak Nowak. He handles cases involving self-insured and insurance defense and insurance coverage litigation. Duggan was a founding partner of Lustig & Brown in Buffalo.

**Robert B. Fleming Jr. '78** is listed in *Best Lawyers* as Lawyer of the Year 2009 in the corporate law category. Fleming is a partner in Hodgson Russ in Buffalo, where he resides.

**Mark J. Moretti '78** was appointed chair of the trial lawyers section of the New York State Bar Association. He is a partner in the Rochester, N.Y., office of Phillips Lytle, practicing in business and tort litigation. Moretti lives in Pittsford, N.Y.

**Vikki L. Pryor '78** received the Distinguished Alumna Award from the UB Alumni Association. Pryor is president of SBLI USA Mutual Life Insurance in New York City. She is a past recipient of the UB Law Alumni

Association's Distinguished Alumna Award and is a member of the Law School's Dean's Advisory Council. Pryor is a resident of New Rochelle, N.Y.

**Claudia G. Allen '79** was named to the 2009 "Ohio Super Lawyers" list. She is a partner in Strauss & Troy in Cincinnati, counseling clients in employee benefits and employment law. Allen lives in Cincinnati.

**Terrie Benson Murray '79** was elected recording secretary of the Philanthropic Education Organization for the CM Chapter, based in Orchard Park, N.Y., where she resides. She is a founding member of the chapter and is also the project chairperson for Cottey College, a private two-year liberal arts college for women in Nevada, Mo. Murray is an associate with Cohen & Lombardo in Buffalo.





## Class of 1953

**T**he 55th reunion for the Class of 1953 was held on June 26, 2008, in Buffalo. There was an excellent turnout of classmates and friends, with some coming from as far away as California. The reunion was celebrated in grand fashion at the fabulous Mansion on Delaware Avenue. The class provided Dean Makau Matua with a special class gift in honor of their significant milestone.

**Seated** – Joseph M. Nasca, Richard M. English, Ralph L. Halpern, Joseph A. Marion Jr., Neil R. Farmelo, Michael T. Sullivan Jr., Frederic C. Washburn  
**Standing** – Michael G. Wolfgang, Frank N. Cuomo, John D. Cahill, Hon. John P. Lane, Jack I. Morris, Daniel T. Roach, Hilary P. Bradford, William E. Lawson Jr., Matthew X. Wagner Jr.



**Left:** Matthew X. Wagner Jr. '53, Joseph A. Marion Jr. '53 and Joseph M. Nasca '53

**Below:** Michael T. Sullivan Jr. '53, Daniel T. Roach '53 and John D. Cahill '53



**Left:** Michael G. Wolfgang '53, Jo-An Webb and Jack I. Morris '53



**Richard M. English '53, Joyce Crawford and Hilary P. Bradford '53**



# Class Action



**Hon. Barbara Howe '80**



**Denise E. O'Donnell '82**

## UB recognizes three Law School alumnae

Three UB Law alumni received University-wide recognition this spring when they were named winners of achievement awards from the University at Buffalo Alumni Association. The awards were presented at a gala dinner March 20 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Buffalo.



**Nicole Lee '02** received the George W. Thorn Award, given to UB graduates younger than 40 who have made outstanding national or international contributions to their field. Lee is executive director of TransAfrica Forum, an international organization that promotes human rights and social justice for people of African descent. Lee, based in Washington, D.C., has led TransAfrica Forum for three years.

Lee is executive director of TransAfrica Forum, an international organization that promotes human rights and social justice for people of African descent. Lee, based in Washington, D.C., has led TransAfrica Forum for three years.



**Vikki L. Pryor '78** was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award in recognition of her exceptional career accomplishments.

Pryor, president and CEO of SBLI USA since 1999, has transformed the New York City-based mutual life insurance company into a diversified national financial services firm. The company has a commitment to gender and racial diversity, and since Pryor's arrival has donated more than \$750,000 to local and national charities.



**Jean C. Powers '79** received a Volunteer Recognition Medal from the UB Alumni Association. The honor acknowledges her long and diverse service to the Law School, including serving as president of the UB Law Alumni Association, on the Dean's Advisory Council, and as chair of the Annual Fund campaign in 2003-04. She also mentors law students and serves as a trustee of the UB Foundation.

service to the Law School, including serving as president of the UB Law Alumni Association, on the Dean's Advisory Council, and as chair of the Annual Fund campaign in 2003-04. She also mentors law students and serves as a trustee of the UB Foundation.

**Jean C. Powers '79** received the UB Alumni Association Volunteer Recognition Medal. Powers is a partner in the Amherst, N.Y., office of Jaeckle Fleischmann & Mugel, practicing in the real estate group. She is a member emeritus of UB Law School's Dean's Advisory Council, a former recipient of the UB Law Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumna Award and a past president of the alumni association. She lives in Williamsville, N.Y.

## '80s

**Hon. Barbara Howe '80** was appointed president of the New York State Chapter of the National Association of Women Judges. Howe is Erie County Surrogate Court judge in Buffalo, where she resides. She is a past recipient of the UB Law Alumni Association's Distinguished Alumna Award, a past president of the UB Law Alumni Association and is an adjunct faculty member at the Law School.

**Patrick C. O'Reilly '80** is listed in *Best Lawyers* as Lawyer of the Year 2009. He is a senior partner in the firm Lipsitz Green Scime Cambria in Buffalo, where he resides. O'Reilly is an adjunct faculty member at UB Law School and is a past president of the UB Law Alumni Association and the New York Chapter of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.

**Michael L. Ciminelli '81** of Rochester, N.Y., is the new commander of patrol division west for the Rochester Police Department. Ciminelli recently served as deputy chief counsel for operational law for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in Washington, D.C., and previously served for 11 years in the Rochester Police Department as a patrol officer, an investigator and a sergeant.

**Richard P. Valentine '81** has joined Rosenthal Siegel & Muenkel in the Buffalo office. Valentine practices in plaintiff's medical malpractice. He was previously a partner in Hamsher & Valentine in Buffalo, where he resides.

**Denise E. O'Donnell '82** was named deputy secretary for public safety by New York State Gov. David A. Paterson. She will oversee all homeland security and criminal justice agencies, in addition to maintaining her current position as commissioner of the Division of Criminal Justice Services in Albany, N.Y. O'Donnell also received the New York State Bar Association's Excellence in Public Service Award. She is a Buffalo resident.

**Hon. Tracey A. Bannister '84** was elected New York State Supreme Court justice, Eighth Judicial District in Buffalo. Bannister lives in Kenmore, N.Y.

**Perry Binder '84** has written the book *Unlocking Your Rubber Room*, with "44 off-the-wall lessons to lighten and transform everyday life." The book is available at [www.YourRubberRoom.com](http://www.YourRubberRoom.com) and Amazon.com. Binder is an assistant professor at Georgia State University in Atlanta, where he resides.





## Class of 1963

**T**he 45th reunion for the Class of 1963 was held on June 28, 2008, in Buffalo. An excellent turnout of classmates and friends helped to create an ideal weekend for these alums to reconnect. Classmate Peter J. Fiorella graciously hosted a lunch on Saturday afternoon at his office on Summer Street, while regaling his classmates with its historic significance. Saturday evening brought yet another opportunity for the class to gather. The reunion weekend was highlighted on Saturday evening with dinner at Marinaccio's Seafood and Steak House in Williamsville. The night was full of reconnecting and reminiscing.

**Seated –** David C. Laub, Roger V. Barth, Saul Lerner, William J. Mullins Jr., Bernard B. Freedman, Robert J. Tronolone

**Standing –** James V. Hall, Joel L. Daniels, John P. Robshaw Jr., Timothy C. Leixner, William C. Farner, Peter J. Fiorella Jr., Jerome D. Carrel

**Left:** Timothy C. Leixner '63, Joyce, and Roger V. Barth '63



**Teresa Lerner  
and Jerome D.  
Carrel '63**



**Above:** John P. Robshaw Jr. '63 and Saul Lerner '63

**Left:** Mary Loy Robshaw, Suzanne Sinnott, James V. Hall '64 and Saul Lerner '63



# Class Action



**Michael G. Zapson '85**



**Katherine A. Fijal '88**



**Frank T. Housh '93**

## Births

**Simon A. Fleischmann '01** and **Jamie H. Fleischmann**, a daughter, Remi Adel, on Feb. 18, 2009, in Chicago.

## Marriages

Congratulations to the following newlyweds:

**Stephanie G. Carter '01** and Jason C. Pennington, Dec. 19, 2008

**Kenneth R. Kraus '05** and **Alyssa M. Truelove '05**, Aug. 8, 2008

**Patrick J. Higgins '84** is editor in chief and contributing author of the New York State Bar Association treatise "The Plaintiff's Personal Injury Action in New York State." Higgins was also named in the 2008 Upstate *Super Lawyers*. He is a partner in Powers & Santola in Albany, N.Y., where he resides.

**John T. Kolaga '85** was named special counsel in the Buffalo office of Damon & Morey. Kolaga is chair of the environmental law practice group and is listed in *Business First* "Who's Who in Law" for environmental law. He is a Buffalo resident.

**Michael G. Zapson '85** was appointed to serve on the Democratic Judiciary Committee by Nassau County Democratic Leader Jay Jacobs. Zapson is managing attorney in Davidoff Malito & Hutcher in the Garden City, N.Y., office, specializing in commercial litigation, real estate, zoning, estate planning and estate administration. Zapson lives in Long Beach, N.Y.

**Hon. Rolf M. Thorsen '86** was elected town justice of Clarkstown Town Court, County of Rockland, in New City, N.Y., where he resides.

**Katherine A. Fijal '88** has become a member of the Buffalo-based firm Hurwitz & Fine. Fijal is a litigation attorney in the insurance coverage practice group. She is a Buffalo resident.

**Diane R. Tiveron '89** has been promoted to partner in the firm HoganWillig in Buffalo. Tiveron handles cases involving business and commercial law, civil litigation and bankruptcy. She is a resident of Lockport, N.Y.

## '90s

**Carl J. Tierney '91** was awarded the Group Superior Honor Award from the secretary of state in recognition of outstanding work during the negotiation of missile defense agreements with the Czech Republic and Poland. Tierney is associate deputy general counsel, international affairs, for the Department of Defense, Office of General Counsel, in Washington, D.C. He is currently on a leave of absence and is deployed as an Air Force Reserve Judge Advocate to Southwest Asia, supporting air operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Tierney resides in Falls Church, Va.

**Scott B. Schwartz '91** spoke on "Ten Tips on Trademark Trial and Appeal Board Practice" at a panel discussion sponsored by the Pennsylvania Bar Institute's Intellectual Property Law Institute. Schwartz is a member of the intellectual property department in Cozen O'Connor in Philadelphia. He is a resident of Bala Cynwyd, Pa.

**Catherine Cerulli '92** received the Kate Stoneman Award at Albany Law School. The award is named for the first woman attorney licensed in New York. Cerulli is assistant professor of psychiatry at the University of Rochester Medical Center and director of its Laboratory of Interpersonal Violence and Victimization in Rochester, N.Y., where she resides. She is also director of research for the Women, Children and Social Justice Clinic at UB Law School.

**Michael J. Keane '92** has been named special counsel in the Buffalo-based firm Colucci & Gallaher. He represents clients in personal injury and business litigation and lives in Orchard Park, N.Y.

**Frank T. Housh '93**, a West Seneca, N.Y., resident, was elected Western New York regional vice president of the New York Democratic Lawyers Council. He practices in Cohen & Lombardo in Buffalo, in civil litigation, special education and criminal defense.

**Cathy Lovejoy Maloney '94** of Snyder, N.Y., is the new executive director of Cornell Cooperative Extension in Lockport, N.Y. She has previously served as executive director of the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens.

**Amy Habib Rittling '95** has become a partner in Lippes Mathias Wexler Friedman in Buffalo. She concentrates her practice in state and federal employment and general business counseling and litigation. Rittling lives in Amherst, N.Y.

**Pauline C. Will '96** was named partner in Watson Bennett Colligan Johnson & Schechter in Buffalo. She specializes in toxic tort litigation, product liability, trucking industry defense litigation, insurance defense and criminal law. Will is a resident of Lancaster, N.Y.

**Philip D. Leone '97** has opened his own law firm in Buffalo. He focuses his practice on plaintiff representation in personal injury claims, estate administration, residential real estate transactions and misdemeanor/traffic violations. Leone lives in Depew, N.Y.



**T**he 40th reunion for the Class of 1968 was held on June 6 and 7, 2008, in Buffalo. An excellent turnout of classmates and friends helped to create an ideal weekend for these alumni to reconnect.

On Friday, things got under way with an informal reception at classmate Norman Effman's house in the heart of Buffalo. Classmates enjoyed cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in a beautifully landscaped garden. The night provided plenty of laughs and opportunities to catch up with old friends.

Saturday morning brunch brought the class together at the Law School. Following the brunch, classmates toured the Law School's facilities, which provided an opportunity for the alumni to see firsthand the advancements that the school is making. Saturday evening brought yet another opportunity for the class to gather. The reunion weekend was highlighted on Saturday evening with a gourmet dinner at the Buffalo Club. The night was full of reconnecting and dancing to Mark Mazur's Jazz Quartet and was a great way to cap off the reunion weekend.



Kenneth S. Kirsner '68, Susan Conklin and Robert B. Conklin '68



Michael R. Wolford '68 and Andrew Feldman '68



Sanford D. Rockowitz '68 and Barbara Rockowitz



Hon. Jeremiah J. Moriarty III '68 and John J. LaDuca '68

Seated – Michael F. Chelus, Sanford D. Rockowitz, Jeffrey A. Sellers, Michael R. Wolford, Andrew Feldman, Patrick J. Baker, William H. Bond, Hon. Thomas H. Meldrim

Standing – John J. LaDuca, Ronald W. Zackem, Joseph A. Plantania, Bruce D. Drucker, Thomas M. Montante, Hon. Jeremiah J. Moriarty III, Kenneth S. Kirsner, Howard R. Relin, Norman P. Effman, Robert B. Conklin, Max E. Schlopy



# Class Action



**Theresa M. Cusimano '98**



**Damon M. Gruber '99**



**Kirstin Lowry Sommers '99**

**Maj. Scott Lovelock '97** received the Meritorious Service Medal for his performance during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Lovelock is assigned to the 152nd Air Operations Group out of the Air National Guard Base at Hancock Field, Hancock International Airport, in Syracuse, N.Y. This is the second time he has been awarded this medal. In addition, he received the Air Force Commendation Medal for outstanding achievement as chief of the Master Air Attack Plan Cell, Combat Plans Division, Combined Air and Space Operations Center at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. Lovelock lives in Clifton Park, N.Y.

**Jeremy J. Best '98** has accepted a position as senior attorney at the Mental Hygiene Legal Service, Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, Third Judicial Department, in the Ogdensburg, N.Y., office. He lives in Brasher Falls, N.Y.

**Theresa M. Cusimano '98**, a human rights advocate, was sentenced to 60 days in federal prison for nonviolent civil disobedience. She was charged with trespassing after walking onto the Fort Benning, Ga., military base to protest the controversial Army training school called School of the Americas. Cusimano is executive director of the Colorado Campus Compact at Regis University in Denver, where she resides.

**Eric C. Naegely '98** is a partner in Damon & Morey in Buffalo. He specializes in medical malpractice and insurance defense. He lives in Amherst, N.Y.

**Frank J. Sparacino '98** is assistant managing attorney of the Law Office of Teresa M. Spina, Geico staff counsel, in Woodbury, N.Y. He has been with the firm since December 2002 and is a resident of Melville, N.Y.

**Shelly Baldwin '99** of Yonkers, N.Y., has become a partner in Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker in the New York City office. Baldwin concentrates her practice in the defense of health care professionals and institutions in medical malpractice and negligence claims.

## In Memoriam

The Law School extends its deepest condolences to the families and friends of the following friends and alumni/ae:

Montgomery G. Pooley '41, Buffalo, New York  
Hon. Ralph J. Radwan '44, San Antonio, Texas  
Richard M. English '53, Rancho Mirage, California  
Aaron Goldfarb '54, Orchard Park, New York  
Toni Delmonte '91, Warsaw, New York  
Michael Doran '82, Amherst, New York  
Matthew J. Schnirel '08, Amherst, New York

SUNY Distinguished Service Professor  
Emerita Virginia Leary, Geneva, Switzerland

**Katherine E. Cauley '99** was named partner in Hodgson Russ in Buffalo. She is a member of the estates and trusts practice group, concentrating in estate and trust law, cross-border tax and estate planning. Cauley is a Buffalo resident.

**Damon M. Gruber '99** has become a partner in Goldberg Segalla in Buffalo. He practices in workers' compensation, accidental work injury, occupational disease claims, psychological stress claims, automobile negligence and accidental death. Gruber resides in Williamsville, N.Y.

**Kirstin Lowry Sommers '99** is of counsel in Hurwitz & Fine in Buffalo. She joined the commercial real estate development and finance practice group, concentrating on sustainable development projects, environmental regulatory matters and environmental business practices. Sommers is the only LEED-accredited professional attorney in Western New York and is a resident of Orchard Park, N.Y.

## '00s

**John C. Godsoe '00** is a member of Bond Schoeneck & King, focusing his practice in employee benefits law in Buffalo. Godsoe handles matters involving the design, implementation and termination of qualified pension plans, tax-sheltered annuity plans, self-funded medical plans, cafeteria plans and COBRA compliance. He is a Buffalo resident.

**Catherine Grantier Cooley '01**, a Hamburg, N.Y., resident, is a partner in the Buffalo office of Hodgson Russ. She is a member of the business litigation group, practicing in securities, ERISA, and employment and construction litigation.

**Ellen B. Sturm '01** is practicing with Cellino & Barnes in the Buffalo office. Sturm specializes in personal injury litigation and appellate matters. She was previously an associate in Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom in Wilmington, Del.

**Tara Johnson '02** was promoted to legal counsel for Excellus Health Plan in Rochester, N.Y. She previously served as associate counsel. Johnson lives in Webster, N.Y.





**T**he 35th reunion for the Class of 1973 was held on June 6 and 7, 2008, in Buffalo. An excellent turnout of classmates and friends helped to create an ideal weekend for these alumni to reconnect.

On Friday, things got under way with a reception at 77 W. Eagle St. – the former home of our Law School. Classmates enjoyed seeing the changes made to this historic building, which is now the Supreme Court Library at Buffalo.

Saturday morning brunch brought the class together at the current Law School. Following the brunch, classmates toured the Law School's facilities and learned where our Law School is headed. Immediately after brunch, several classmates gathered at a local course and teed off for a beautiful summer day of golfing. That evening everyone reconvened on Buffalo's picturesque waterfront for dinner at the Buffalo Yacht Club.

**1st Row –** Walter R. Pacer Jr., Hon. Yvonne Lewis, Amy C. Haber, Robert A. Friedman, Arthur H. Ackershalt, Nelson F. Zakia, Hon. Eugene F. Pigott Jr., Robert B. Nichols

**2nd Row –** Douglas G. Roberts, Walter P. Seegert, Peter A. Reese, Sally A. Mendola, Leslie Mark Greenbaum, Dennis M. O'Leary, Stephen E. Jaffey, William G. Hamilton Jr., Philip M. Marshall



**Above:** Margaret Bender and Douglas G. Roberts '73

**Right:** Nelson F. Zakia '73, Leslie Mark Greenbaum '73, Hon. Eugene F. Pigott Jr. '73 and Robert B. Nichols '73



**Left:** William G. Hamilton Jr. '73, and Philip M. Marshall '73



**Above:** Gezina Hamilton and Hon. Yvonne Lewis '73

# Class Action



**Kara M.  
Addelman '08**



**Roland R.  
Georger '08**



**Taylor M.  
Miranda '08**

**Nicole C. Lee '02** received the George W. Thorn Award from the UB Alumni Association. Lee is executive director of TransAfrica Forum in Washington, D.C., where she resides.

**Joseph M. Hanna '05** was named partner in Goldberg Segalla in Buffalo. He focuses his practice in intellectual property law, construction litigation, fidelity and surety law, and sports and entertainment law. He is the national vice chair of the ABA's arts, entertainment and sports law section. He also is founder and president of the Bunkers in Baghdad Troop Program. Hanna is a resident of Amherst, N.Y.

**Fatimat O. Reid '05** has become associated with Davidson Fink in Rochester, N.Y., practicing commercial litigation. She resides in West Irondequoit, N.Y.

**Minryu Kim '06** was elected a director of the Minority Bar Association of Western New York in Buffalo. She practices civil litigation as an associate with Phillips Lytle in Buffalo, where she resides.

**Carla J. Miller Montroy '06** was chosen to represent Liz Claiborne Inc. and *Redbook* magazine in a national coalition of concerned citizens who are advocating for legislation to ensure teen dating violence education. Montroy is a Buffalo solo practitioner practicing in criminal defense and family law. A member of UB Law School's GOLD Group, she lives in West Seneca, N.Y.

**Mathew J. Morton '07** practices as an associate in Lipsitz & Ponterio in Buffalo, where he resides. Morton handles cases involving asbestos and mesothelioma litigation as well as automobile accidents.

**Patrick M. McNelis '07** has joined Goldstein Ackerhalt & Pletcher in Buffalo. McNelis will focus in special education and education, wills, trusts, guardianship, not-for-profit corporation law, disability discrimination, health law and vaccine injury cases. He is a resident of Amherst, N.Y.

## Student kudos

As if **Kimberly Sweet '09** didn't have enough to do over her Christmas break, she wrote a heavily researched, 13-page scholarly paper for a national entertainment law competition.

How'd that work out for you, Kim?

Very well indeed. Sweet was named one of four runners-up in the competition, run by the Grammy Foundation and the American Bar Association's Forum on Entertainment & Sports Law. For her efforts she received a \$1,500 scholarship – and even more interesting, a trip to Los Angeles, where she and the other winners hobnobbed with entertainment industry types at a series of events, culminating in a star-studded night at the Grammy Awards ceremony.



**Theodora Belniak '10** and **Jason Tubinis '09**, students in the JD/MLS program, are co-winners in the Student Category of the AALL/LexisNexis 2009 Call for Papers competition for their papers, "The Law Librarian of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries: A Figuration in Flux" (Theo) and "A Law Librarian's Guide to the Economic Crisis" (Jason). The winners in each division receive \$750 donated by LexisNexis, plus the opportunity to present their paper at a program at the 2009 AALL Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. Winning papers are also considered for publication in the Association's prestigious *Law Library Journal*.

**Siana McLean '10** has been named the recipient of the 2009 President's Pro Bono Award from the New York State Bar Association for a Law Student for her work with the Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County during the summer of 2008 on a research project regarding the assignment of counsel in Supreme Court divorce actions pursuant to Judiciary Law Section 35(8). This report and recommendations were disseminated to legal service providers to assist volunteer attorneys in possibly attaining payment as assigned counsel, creating an incentive to become assigned counsel or to volunteer in these cases. She also helped 208 clients through the VLSP's Family Law, Pro Se Divorce and Debt Clinic during the summer of 2008.

**Kara M. Addelman '08** has become associated with Damon & Morey in the Buffalo office. She practices in the firm's general litigation department and resides in Williamsville, N.Y.

**Roland R. Georger '08** has joined Damon & Morey as an associate in the Buffalo office. Georger practices in the real estate department and is a member of the zoning and land use practice group and the environmental law practice group. He is a resident of Williamsville, N.Y.

**Amanda J. Kelly '08** is an associate in HoganWillig in Amherst, N.Y. She practices in family law and personal injury. Kelly lives in North Tonawanda, N.Y.

**Amanda L. Lowe '08** of Depew, N.Y., has joined HoganWillig as an associate in the Amherst, N.Y., office. She concentrates in civil litigation, personal injury and medical malpractice.

**Taylor M. Miranda '08** practices in the business litigation and insolvency department of Damon & Morey. She joined the firm as an associate in the Buffalo office and resides in West Seneca, N.Y.





# Class of 1978

**T**he 30th reunion for the Class of 1978 was held on June 6 and 7, 2008, in Buffalo. An excellent turnout of classmates and friends helped to create an ideal weekend for these alums to reconnect.

The reunion celebration began on Friday evening with an informal reception at Shanghai Red's. The beautiful weather and picture-perfect views of Buffalo's waterfront provided an ideal setting for the first night of the reunion.

Saturday morning brunch brought the class together at the Law School. Following the brunch, classmates toured the Law School which provided an opportunity for the alumni to see all the changes in the facility. The reunion weekend was highlighted on Saturday evening with dinner at the Muse – the restaurant inside the world-renowned Albright-Knox Art Gallery. The classmates had an opportunity for a private docent tour of the museum. Everyone enjoyed seeing pictures of each other from the year-book from their senior year. It allowed for a great opportunity to reconnect and reminisce.

**Seated** – Janice R. Trybus, Elise Hagouel Langsam, Maryann E. T. Foley, Ruth E. Fleming, Sarah E. Sholes, Linda J. Marsh, Diane J. Morgenroth, Jane E. Mago, Donnalynn Darling, Roberta E. Tarshis

**Standing** – Neil S. Cartusciello, James W. Meeker, Philip J. Szabla, Robert B. Fleming Jr., Garry M. Graber, Steven H. Polowitz, Charles C. Murphy Jr., Thomas J. Murphy, John N. Lipsitz, David M. Ascher, Jeffrey T. Lacey, James M. Mucklewee, Hon. Kenneth L. Gartner, Mark J. Moretti, Peter Hersh, David J. Saleh, Michael S. Schwartz, Neal A. Haberman, Steven J. Errante



**Top:** Charles C. Murphy Jr. '78 and Donnalynn Darling '78

**Above:** Hon. Kenneth L. Gartner '78 and Philip J. Szabla '78



**Above:** Roberta E. Tarshis '78, Jeffrey T. Lacey '78, Laurie G. Ogden '80 and Sarah E. Sholes '78



**Left:** Candace Caprow-Polowitz and Steven H. Polowitz '78 look at class photos from their senior year.



# New face on National Labor Relations Board

*Buffalo attorney appointed by President Obama to serve*

*Reprinted from The Buffalo News*

By Jerry Zremski

**W**ASHINGTON — A prominent Buffalo labor lawyer will likely take a seat on what a colleague called “the Supreme Court for labor law” later this year.

President Obama has named Mark Gaston Pearce, a 55-year-old partner with the Buffalo firm Creighton, Pearce, Johnsen & Giroux, to the National Labor Relations Board. The board administers the main law that governs relations between unions, companies and workers.

Pearce said he could not comment until after the Senate holds a confirmation hearing on his nomination. The full Senate will have to vote on his appointment. Current and former colleagues described Pearce as a labor-friendly lawyer who also has good relations with attorneys who represent management.

“The good thing about Mark is that he has represented working people for decades, so he comes to this not with an ideological bent but with real working knowledge,” said Catherine Creighton, Pearce’s law partner.



Mark G. Pearce '78

As administrator of the National Labor Relations Act, the NLRB oversees elections where workers determine whether they want to join a union. The board also is charged with preventing and remedying unfair labor practices.

“They create the policies and trends,” said Creighton, who dubbed the NLRB the labor-law version of the U. S. Supreme Court.

The board’s five members serve five-year terms. Obama appointed Pearce along with Craig Becker, associate general counsel to both the Service Employees International Union and the American Federation of Labor & Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), to fill two of the board’s five vacancies.

Richard Lipsitz, of the Buffalo firm Lipsitz Green Scime Cambria, said Pearce is well-respected among lawyers who represent unions and management alike.

“I’m confident that Mark will be confirmed without any real problem because of his solid reputation,” said Lipsitz, who noted that Pearce used to work at his firm. “We loved his work,” Lipsitz added.

A Brooklyn native, Pearce graduated from Cornell University and moved to Buffalo to attend the University at Buffalo Law School.

Pearce served as a district trial specialist with the NLRB’s Buffalo office before entering private practice. He has served on the Commission on Increasing Diversity in the State Government Workforce and the State Industrial Board of Appeals.

In addition, Pearce serves as an adjunct professor at the Cornell University School of Industrial Labor Relations. He is also an accomplished painter whose work has been displayed at the Buffalo Arts Council and the AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington.

Pearce is not, however, especially active in politics. While many lawyers give thousands of dollars in political contributions, a check of federal records showed that in the last two years, Pearce made just one donation, sending the Obama presidential campaign \$250 last October.

Pearce is the first attorney with a Buffalo connection to serve on the board since Sarah M. Fox, a former Buffalo journalist who later became a lawyer on Capitol Hill, who was appointed to the board by President Bill Clinton in 1996.



Presiding Justice Henry J. Scudder and Associate Justices Samuel L. Green '67, Salvatore R. Martoche, Erin M. Peradotto '84 and Eugene M. Fahey '84.

## UB Law hosts appellate court

The New York State Supreme Court Appellate Division, Fourth Department, spent the last day of its term April 9 in the Francis M. Letro Courtroom on the first floor of O'Brian Hall. The five-judge panel heard arguments in 17 cases, ranging from a child custody matter to actions involving fraud, divorce, counsel fees and criminal charges. One case involved issues Professor Theresa Miller's Criminal Procedure class had been discussing. "We just talked about consent to searches yesterday," said Miller, who gave her students credit for attending the oral arguments and writing about them. "Studying law in the classroom is not the same as seeing it applied in action. This is an opportunity to see the consequences of some of the doctrines that they're studying in class." Three of the five appellate justices are UB Law graduates.



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# UB Law Alumni Association – now's the time to join



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