



september newsletter - inform, involve, and inspire

Dear Members,

It's been over one month since Hurricane Katrina, one of the costliest and most devastating natural disasters in our nation's history, wreaked havoc upon our fellow Americans along the Gulf Coast. In the wake of Katrina, we saw how important it is for public servants at all levels of government to exercise strong leadership before, during and after a crisis of this magnitude and the confusion, disorganization, and further devastation that can occur when such leadership is not demonstrated.

While some public officials may have failed to honorably serve the citizens of their communities, still others exercised sound judgment and saved lives, reunited families, and introduced federal and state legislation to start the rebuilding process in the South. Additionally, many non-profit agencies organized various relief efforts and raised millions of dollars to help those affected by the hurricane. It is likely that government and public interest lawyers were behind many of these efforts and they are a true inspiration to those of us who wish to serve the public with our legal education.

Here at the Law School, we raised over \$3,000 for the American Red Cross – nearly tripling our goal and coming in second out of the 18 law schools in our American Bar Association Sixth Circuit (Ohio, Michigan, and Kentucky). Not surprisingly, PI-Gov members helped with many of the fundraising efforts by collecting donations during the Inter-Club Council fundraiser drive, or attending the SBA/PI-Gov co-sponsored “Bar Review” at Plank’s recently. Thank you to all of those who donated their time and effort to this cause. If you haven’t had a chance to give yet, or would like to do more, stay tuned for more information about a Spring Break trip to the Gulf Coast to help build houses with Habitat For Humanity!

The recent Katrina disaster is a fine example of the importance of strong leadership and the difference that it can make whether it's at a law school student organization level or high level of government. Serving on the executive board of a student organization is a great opportunity for those of you who are committed to improving our law school and surrounding community and are interested in developing your leadership skills. PI-Gov will be holding elections for executive board positions starting with our October 12 evening meeting, and if you are interested in running for election, please contact Ashley Moreland.

We need your help to continue to “inform, involve and inspire” students who are interested in public interest and government law!

Erica Gartner
President, PI-Gov

A DAY WITH A JUDGE

JENNIFER RUNTAS



PI-Gov will be sponsoring "A Day with a Judge" throughout the month of October and into the beginning of November. This event is designed for CULS students to be able to "shadow" a judge in the Franklin County Municipal Court while the judge is on the bench for a designated period of time (approximately 2-3 hours). This is a chance to give students a practical legal experience by illustrating courtroom procedures and the different parties involved in the legal process. While the proceedings are taking place, the judge will be able to explain on an individual basis to the student why he/she is making certain decisions or what rules dictate these decisions. The judges at the court have already been contacted and are very interested in this program and pleased that we have asked them to be a part of our law school experience.

An opportunity for you to sign up will occur within the next week or so. It is our goal to have a significant interest and participation in this event by our members so that we may continue this in years to come. We encourage all members to sign up to "shadow" a judge, not only for a "real" experience on the bench, but also for the networking opportunities that are also presented. If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Runtas or Gwynn Kinsel.

Jennifer Runtas works for the Franklin County Municipal Courts and is a 1L-Evening student.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CONFERENCE:

The Tobacco Public Policy Center needs four volunteers to assist with the Center's 1st Annual Tobacco Public Policy Conference on Thursday, October 20, 2005. The conference will provide information on a wide array of emerging topics in tobacco law and policy for attorneys and tobacco control advocates. Volunteers are needed throughout the day and will receive a complimentary lunch buffet. This should be a great networking opportunity! Go to www.tobaccopolicy.org for more information and contact Erica Gartner if you'd like to volunteer.

CAREER SERVICE OFFICE UPCOMING PI/GOV EVENTS:

Let's Talk – Working as an Attorney for the Government

Thursday, October 20, 2005 – 5:15 pm – Room 245 (The date may change on this program – More information to come)

A panel of Capital alumni who work in government service will discuss their legal careers, how they found their government positions, and why being a government employee is a *good thing!* First-years are welcome!

How to Find a Government Job

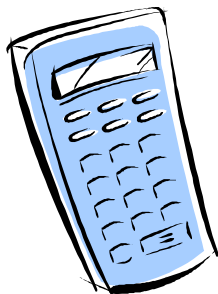
Monday, November 14, 2005 – 5:15 pm – Room A121

Thursday, November 17, 2005 – 2:00 pm – Room A121

This informative program will discuss the ins and outs of government hiring at all levels. Explore websites, books, and other resources that can assist you in finding government work. We will also discuss government employers who offer loan repayment assistance.

UNWRAPPING LRAPS

JASON OWEN



Loan Repayment Assistance Programs, commonly referred to as LRAPs, are an increasingly common tool used by law schools and state governments to ease the financial burdens on students desiring to work in public interest law.

Many law students harbor thoughts about improving the world by entering public interest and public sector job markets. Unfortunately, the reality of high priced law school debt can be cost prohibitive for beginning or continuing in the public interest field. Most public interest legal positions pay traditionally lower salaries regardless of the lawyer's skills or qualifications.

Recently, creative law schools, generous benefactors and forward-thinking state governments have begun addressing the financial issues facing public interest lawyers. Cash payments, low interest loans and even loan forgiveness programs ease the financial situation for those students who want to work in the public interest.

These programs provide students with alternative funding sources to defray the cost of student loan payments which can rise above 4 figures a month! Some LRAPs even pay the entire year's payment if you work the whole year for a public interest firm.

This summer, CULS charged a committee with researching and analyzing LRAPs around the country in an attempt to establish a program at Capital. The Committee's report will be finalized soon and presented to the administration shortly. Keep a look out for more information about LRAPs when considering future employment!

Jason Owen is a 2L-Day student, the President of BiGLaw and a member of the CULS LRAP Research Committee. You can find more information about Loan Repayment Assistance Programs and other initiatives to reduce law school loan debt on the American Bar Association's website at <http://www.abanet.org/lsd/legislation/>.

JOIN THE AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION:

The American Bar Association (ABA) is the largest voluntary professional association in the world and is a great way for you to add to your résumé and build your career for a low annual membership fee of just \$20. Benefits include annual subscriptions to *Student Lawyer* magazine and *ABA Journal*, a health insurance plan, leadership opportunities as national, regional or local representatives, a free *Legalines* study guide, \$70-\$100 discounts on the PMBR course and more! Additionally, there are sections, divisions, and committees related to public interest and government law, so you can start learning more about these fields and networking now. To join, simply call the ABA Service Center at 800.285.2221 or sign up at <https://abanet.org/join>. If you have questions regarding the ABA, feel free to contact the school's ABA representative, Erica Gartner, at egartner@law.capital.edu.

MEMBERS CORNER*



MEMBERS CORNER

1. Name: **Katie Deter**
2. Age: **23**
3. Neighborhood: **Originally from Weirton, WV and since then I've lived in Huntington, WV, Florence, Italy and Myrtle Beach, SC. Now I live in Dublin.**
4. CULS Status (1L-Day, 2L-Eve..)? **2L-Day**
5. Undergrad/Grad School and major: **Marshall University, psychology major with criminal justice/sociology minors**
6. What I did before law school: **Worked at Planet Hollywood in Myrtle Beach for the summer after graduation**
7. Hobbies: **traveling, watching my two little brothers play football, and working with my non-profit**
8. Favorite movie/book:
Movie: **Boondocks Saints and anything with Will Ferrell**
Book: **the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling and Tuesdays with Morrie**
9. What's playing on my Ipod today: **Poor law students can't afford Ipod's!! My cd player, however, currently has O.A.R., the Clarks, Billy Joel, and some various country songs**
10. Favorite word: **eclectic**
11. Non-CULS Associations/Affiliations: **Lend-a-Hand for Appalachia**
12. Public Interest or Gov't Law areas that interest me include: **Adoption Law/ Child advocacy**
13. A great quote is:
"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have." – Margaret Mead
14. Favorite Philosopher: **Jimmy Buffett and Kahlil Gibran**
15. Favorite website: **www.facebook.com- it's addicting!**
16. How can we encourage public service at CULS?

I agree with Ryan Sarni [last month's featured member] – free pizza! If we show people where the need is and what they can do to help, the socially conscious students will naturally step up. There are two things law students have little of, time and money/ I think we should try to gear our projects/efforts with that in mind. I think the organization has done a great job of that so far with the service/money option for dues.

Each month a PI-Gov member will be randomly selected to participate in our survey. If you have ideas for questions that will help members get to know each other, please forward them to pigov@law.capital.edu.

SPECIAL THANKS THIS MONTH GO OUT TO –

Gary Smith (for his efforts in recruiting fantastic speakers for the next few months – good luck in you new job, Gary – we'll miss you!); Prof. Chris McNeil (for keeping us abreast of opportunities to learn more about the administrative law field and inviting us to a hearing he presided over recently); Ashley Moreland, Jennifer Runtas, Jason Owen, Claire Cahoon, Shawn Beem and Katie Deter (for their help with the Newsletter this month); Melissa Messina, Gary Tober, and Justine Grubb (for planning our first SBA/PI-Gov Bar Review).

MANY THANKS TO EACH OF YOU!

Equal Justice Works Conference 2005

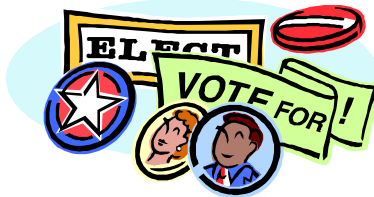
- Thursday, October 27, 8a.m.-5p.m. and Friday, October 28, 8a.m.-5p.m.
 - Hilton Washington Hotel, Washington DC
 - It's the *largest national career fair* for public interest law.

1Ls*, 2Ls, 3Ls and 4Ls are invited to join members of your executive board in representing CULS at the 2005 Equal Justice Works Conference in Washington DC, October 27-28.

Go to http://www.equaljusticeworks.org/careerfair/dsp_start.php for a current list of registered employers, the conference schedule and more.

If you have questions related to the Conference or travel arrangements, please email Vice President, Jarrod Shirk, at jshirk@law.capital.edu.

*Per the National Association of Legal Professionals (NALP), 1Ls are not permitted to interview for 2006 summer clerkships, but you may participate in table times (which are basically informal interviews). Employers are permitted to accept 1L applications/resumes after December 1, 2005.



Elections are Coming Up!

Ashley Moreland

Elections will be held during the October evening and day meetings. We will be electing a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. Who is eligible? All day and evening students are eligible to run for office (candidates for President must have previously served as executive board members). You must be a PI-Gov member in good standing having either paid dues or pledged volunteer time by the nomination deadline. How does the nomination process work? Simply email your name and the office you would like to run for to Ashley Moreland at amoreland@law.capital.edu before October 5, 2005. What are the benefits of holding office? Taking a leadership role in PI-Gov is a great way to build your resume and network without an extensive time commitment. You'll also gain valuable experience in planning events networking with other student leaders and guest speakers. Need more information? Contact Ashley or any current PI-Gov executive board officer.

Ashley Moreland is a 2L-Day student and serves as the Chair of Fundraising, as well as Chair of Elections.

"In the Public Interest"

By: Claire Cahoon

Rebecca Pokorski, Staff Attorney –

Franklin County Public Defender Officer, Felony Division

Education: Muskingum College (psychology); Capital University Law School
Before she was a PD: worked as a typesetter, waitress, and for Nationwide Insurance, and generally "had no idea what to do as a career".

PI-Gov: What first drew you to the law?

RP: I always loved to do writing and research but never thought I would want to be in the courtroom. In the night school, you're in with a wide range of people and I think I clicked right away. I think after I got over the terror of not knowing if you're going to bomb, I really enjoyed it. What I remember liking the best was the clinic class. I did a few cases out in Whitehall and I really enjoyed representing people. I think I was attracted to people who are used to getting walked on.

PI-Gov: What was the transition from law school to work like?

RP: It was actually much easier than I thought. When I first started, I immediately felt comfortable. I was with such a great group of people who helped guide me through. I think I envisioned that I would walk in to a stack of cases and I would have to find my way through and that wasn't the case. People were very enthusiastic about going to court and doing their jobs and that made it very easy.

PI-Gov: Describe what you do as a Public Defender.

RP: Cases are assigned and I have no say of what comes to me. The largest percentage are low-level felonies—possession of drugs, stolen cars, domestic violence. Then there are a number that are more serious—a murder, a few rapes, burglaries, robberies. Then we initiate the case by getting information from the Prosecutor's office, going to see the client in jail or if they are out of jail setting up an interview with them here, and seeing what options there are. We can have our investigators look into things. We have social workers look in to matters like drug abuse. We talk to probation about getting them back on track, work with the prosecutors about negotiations. Usually trial is more of a last resort. Actual trials average about four a year.

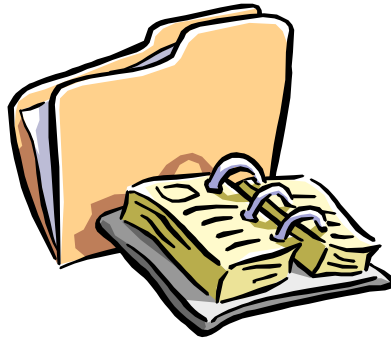
PI-Gov: What is the hardest thing about your job?

RP: The hardest thing is counseling clients on what to do with choices. It's hard to help someone decide if they should go to trial or take a plea bargain because no one can guarantee a result. Clients look to you to know what will happen and you have to rely on your experience.

PI-Gov: What is the most rewarding part of what you do?

RP: I think the most rewarding thing goes back to what I felt in clinic. Whenever you have a client who comes to you and feels that they just don't have a chance and maybe they are mistrusting, maybe not of me but of the system, and you get a good result for them—anything from winning a trial to getting a dismissal or probation—and they are satisfied and you can tell some of their fears (are gone). They feel good about their experience. That is very rewarding.

Claire Cahoon, PI-Gov's roving reporter, is a 2L-Day student and the President of the CULS Democrats. She was a journalist with a Chillicothe, Ohio, newspaper prior to law school.



SAVE THE DATE

October Meetings – The Role of an Independent Judiciary and PI-Gov Elections

Wednesday, October 12, 5:15-5:55pm (Room 245) – Evening Meeting
Wednesday, October 19, 2:00-3:00pm (Room 242) – Day Meeting

*The October day meeting will feature special guest speaker, **Ohio Supreme Court Justice Judith Lanzinger**. Other speakers to be announced.*

November Meeting – Special Guest Speaker, Attorney General Jim Petro

Friday, November 18, 12:00-1:00pm (Room 245) – Day Meeting

We are proud to co-host Attorney General Petro's visit to the Law School with the CULS Republicans.

Due to the special nature of this event, a November evening meeting is not scheduled at this time.

“There is no cause half so sacred as the cause of a people.”
Woodrow Wilson