More Than Just Brains – Current Students Show Off Their Other Talents

Accompanied by two friends, third-year student Joseph Evans (right) performs a bluegrass number.

Law Revue, the law school's talent show, made its debut at the 40-Watt Club in late February with 17 acts performed to an audience of nearly 400. The talents displayed ranged from music and dance to comedy.

Assistant Professor Lonnie Brown, Visiting Assistant Professor Kristen Carpenter and Hosch Professor Tom Eaton served as judges for the event, handing out three awards. Singer Ramsey Henderson and guitarist Brandon Ansley, both first-year students, won the Most Likely to Have a Career Outside of Law School Award for their performance of "Fire and Rain" and "Rain King." The Most Enthusiastic Award went to second-year student Tom Ludlam who got audience members on their feet and dancing to his "Bustin' It" dance/rap routine. Third-year student Mike Jacobs charmed the crowd with his rendition of "New York, NY," and won The Wayne Newton - Most Likely to End Up in Vegas Award.

A spontaneous chorus line was formed during third-year student Mike Jacobs' award-winning rendition of "New York, NY."

Caroline Castle, Student Bar Association vice president and chief organizer of the event said the SBA wanted to plan an event where members of the law school community could show off their talents. "We're very pleased with the results," she said. "The Law Revue was a huge hit! We'd definitely like to keep it going." Next year, the association hopes to get some faculty members to perform. "I hear Professor Brussack is a great trombone player," Castle said.

Equal Justice Foundation 2003 Fellows

To encourage students to explore careers in public interest law, the Equal Justice Foundation provides summer fellowships for students who want to work for a public interest organization but who would not otherwise be paid. Below please find the 2003 recipients and where they will work.

Geniece Davis, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington, D.C.

Tamika Davlin, Law in Action, Greenville, SC

Emily Franzen, Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.

Jeff Lell, Georgia Innocence Project, Atlanta, GA

Aimee Stowe, Georgia Center for Law in the Public Interest, Atlanta, GA

Tolsun Waddle, Rural Legal Services of the Legal Aid Society, Oak Ridge, TN

Going Once, Going Twice, Sold!

The Equal Justice Foundation and the Student Bar Association held their 18th annual fund-raising auction this year, collecting over $17,000 and beating last year's total. For the first time, the event included an online silent auction, allowing alumni around the world to bid on items as well.

The biggest money earners were: a first-year section blowout (a party for the entire section hosted by their professors), a R.E.M. autographed guitar, a football signed by the entire 2002 Sugar Bowl Georgia Bulldogs football team, Cirque de Soleil tickets, a BarBri course, flight lessons and an autographed copy of President Jimmy Carter's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech. Most of the money raised will go towards the EJF fellowship program, which provides stipends for students who perform unpaid public interest work over the summer.

- Kristine Fortunato

Community Service Pays Off

Second-year student and organizer of the tax preparation program Cathy Nowlen assists a gentleman with his income tax return.

For eight weeks this spring, the UGA chapter of the American Bar Association Law Student Division offered free tax preparation and e-filing services. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program was initiated to assist low- to moderate-income earners, the elderly, handicapped individuals and non-English speaking people with filing their 2002 state and federal income tax returns. Three times a week, UGA law students operated out of classroom C at the School of Law or an office at the Bishop Park Community Center located in Athens.

Second-year student Cathy Nowlen who spearheaded the operation said the program was a success. Her goal was to file 100 returns. In total, 14 law students assisted with the filing of nearly 150 U.S. and Georgia income tax returns. Nowlen said she hopes the program will grow and assist even more people next year.

Another Strong Advocacy Year for the School of Law

Georgia Law had another superb year in the advocacy arena under the direction of alumna Kellie Casey (J.D.'90). In total, UGA won one national title, finished number two in two other national competitions and in the final four of another. The school also won five regional/state titles in addition to numerous individual and team honors. Director Kellie Casey said it seems that each year there are big shoes to fill by the incoming teams. "This group did an excellent job in continuing the winning tradition that has been in existence at the School of Law for so many years. I could not be more proud of all of the participants in the 2002-03 advocacy program," she said.

National Champions – National Criminal Justice Mock Trial Advocacy Competition

National champions - (from l. to r.) Andrew Speaker, Joshua Belinfante, Director of Advocacy Kellie Casey (J.D.'90), Nicholas Walter and Megan Jones.

Third-year students Joshua Belinfante, Megan Jones and Nicholas Walter teamed up with second-year student Andrew Speaker to take home the national title in the National Criminal Justice Mock Trial Advocacy Competition. In addition, Jones won the competition's Best Advocate Award. In the last two rounds, UGA outargued teams from Syracuse and Harvard universities. "It has been at least five years since we [UGA] participated in this competition," Casey said. "It is great to come back and win, overcoming such prestigious teams as Harvard and Syracuse."

National Finalist – Dean Jerome Prince Memorial Evidence Moot Court Competition

National Finalists – (from l. to r.) Susannah Rogers, Alan Hamilton and Amanda Eaton.

The School of Law prepared the winning brief and took home the second place overall trophy in the Dean Jerome Prince Memorial Evidence Moot Court Competition. The Georgia trio defeated teams from Albany, Georgia State, Marquette, New York and Emory universities before facing George Mason University College of Law in the championship round. Second-year students Alan Hamilton, Amanda Eaton and Susannah Rogers competed well, just missing the national title according to faculty advisor and Hosch Professor Tom Eaton. This team was coached by third-year student Melissa Davis.

State Champions – Intrastate Moot Court Competition

The top two teams in the state – (back row, l. to r.) Jason Tate, Corey Stern (coach), Christopher Latimer, Jeffrey Shiver, (front row, l. to r.) Ashley Alexander (coach), Stephanie Kirven, Alicia Timm and Trinity Hundredmark.

Georgia Law found itself in a win-win situation during the final round of the Intrastate Moot Court Competition as the school's two teams faced off, clinching the state title for the third year in a row. The winning team was comprised of second-year students Christopher Latimer, Trinity Hundredmark and Alicia Timm. Latimer was also named Best Oralist of the competition.

Placing second, out of a field of eight, was the second-year student trio of Jeffrey Shiver, Jason Tate and Stephanie Kirven. Third-year students Ashley Alexander and Corey Stern served as coaches.

This marks the third year the School of Law has won this competition and had a student named Best Oralist.

Regional Champions - American Bar Association Moot Court Competition

Regional Champions - (from l. to r.) Erica Parsons, Stanley Baker and Meredith Bunn.

The School of Law took top honors at the American Bar Association Regional Moot Court Competition. The winning team, second-year students Stanley Baker, Erica Parsons and Meredith Bunn, was undefeated and beat George Washington University in the final round. In addition, this team placed fifth in the Best Brief category. Individual oralist honors were presented to Baker (fourth) and Bunn (eighth).

A second Georgia team was narrowly defeated by Duke University in the final round. This team was comprised of second-year students Ryan Prescott, Jason Pedigo and Vincent Keesee. Keesee and Prescott placed fifth and 10th, respectively, in the Best Oralist category.

Both teams were coached by School of Law alumna Holly Pierson (J.D.'96). The third-year student coaches were Mack McGuffey and Sharae Sams.

Final Four Finish – National Moot Court Competition

Regional champions and national semi-finalists Stacey Carroll (left) and Nathan Cronic proudly show their trophy. Hawkins &Parnell, LLP, sponsored this team.

After capturing the regional championship for the third year in a row, Georgia Law finished in the final four of the National Moot Court Competition. The law school's team, sponsored by Hawkins & Parnell, LLP, was comprised of third-year students Nathan Cronic and Stacey Carroll. They were defeated by Wayne State University Law School, which went on to win the national championship.

Black Law Student Association Team Takes Second at National Mock Trial Competition

Georgia Law's Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Team – (back row, l. to r.) Jadun McCarthy, Geniece Davis, (front row, l. to r.) Talia Johnson and Dominique Holloman.

The School of Law's Black Law Students Association team finished strong in the national round of the inaugural Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition, placing second. The competition was held during March in Los Angeles, CA.

The team was comprised of second-year law students Geniece Davis, Talia Johnson and Dominique Holloman, and first-year student Jadun McCarthy. Third-year student Shawanda Brown served as coach.

During the competition, team members were required to act as both attorneys and witnesses and argued both sides of a fictional child molestation case. Davis and Johnson received the award for Best Advocate while arguing for the plaintiff, while Holloman and McCarthy were named Best Witnesses for the plaintiff.

The School of Law was narrowly beaten by Georgetown University Law Center in the final round of the competition. The other schools competing in the final round included the Thomas M. Cooley Law School and the Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law.

A dozen teams competed in this first-time event, sponsored by the National Black Law Students Association.

First-Year Students Compete in Closing Argument Competition

First-year students got a taste of the courtroom as they faced off in the 2003 J. Ralph Beaird Closing Argument Mock Trial Competition. In the tournament, student advocates presented closing arguments of a mock trial before a judge and jury.

The students argued the fictitious case *State of Georgia v. Percival W. Snodgrass* in which the defendant claimed he had committed murder in self-defense. The jury decided in favor of the defendant, represented by Kimberly Grant. The state was represented Erik Johnson.

School of Law alumnus and one of the jurors of the competition, Western Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge David Sweat (J.D.'79) commended the students on their handling of the case. "They argued the facts and used them persuasively. They helped the jury to analyze the facts and apply them to the law."

2003 J. Ralph Beaird Closing Argument Mock Trial Competition participants – (front row, l. to r.) Presiding Judge Callaway Chair of Law Ron Carlson, School of Law Dean Emeritus Ralph Beaird, Defense Attorney Kimberly Grant and Plaintiff Attorney Erik Johnson, and the all School of Law alumni jury comprised of (back row, l. to r.) Western Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge David Sweat (J.D.'79), Western Judicial Circuit District Attorney Ken Mauldin (J.D.'80), Solicitor General for Athens-Clarke County Ralph Powell (J.D.'90), Director of the Legal Aid and Defender Clinic Russell Gabriel (J.D.'85) and Athens-Clarke County Probate Judge Susan Tate (J.D.'75)

The all School of Law alumni jury panel also included Director of the Legal Aid and Defender Clinic Russell Gabriel (J.D.'85), Western Judicial Circuit District Attorney Ken Mauldin (J.D.'80), Solicitor General for Athens-Clarke County Ralph Powell Jr. (J.D.'90) and Athens-Clarke County Probate Judge Susan Tate (J.D.'75). Callaway Chair of Law Ron Carlson served as the presiding judge.

A total of 32 first-year law students participate in the annual J. Ralph Beaird Closing Argument Mock Trial Competition each spring, with the top two advocates advancing to the actual mock trial round before a judge and jury. The competition is funded by the J. Ralph Beaird Closing Argument Award Fund, which became fully endowed earlier this year.

First-Year Law Student Wins Second Advocacy Title

Kimberly Grant won her second first-year advocacy tournament, the Richard B. Russell Moot Court Competition during April. She outargued fellow first-year student Eadaoin Waller to take home the Jere B. Morehead Best Oralist Award.

As part of a legal research and writing assignment, each first-year student writes an appellate brief and is required to present two oral arguments based on the brief. At the end of the mandatory rounds, the top 64 students wishing to compete enter the Russell Competition. In this single-elimination tournament, the final eight are automatically invited to join one of the School of Law's prestigious moot court teams the following year.

The last round of the Russell Competition was judged by law school alumnus Georgia Court of Appeals Judge John Ellington (J.D.'85), School of Law Dean David Shipley and UGA Associate Provost Jere Morehead (J.D.'80), former head of the law school's advocacy program and the person for whom the best oralist award is named.

In addition to Grant and Waller, this year's "elite eight" includes: Adam Conrad, Alissa Cummo, Amelia Godfrey, Erik Johnson, Cerita McCollum and Brian Watt.

Grant also won the school's J. Ralph Beaird Closing Argument Competition in February.

Brett Grayson - Making the Right Choice

Who would ever turn down an offer from Harvard Law School to come to Georgia Law? Third-year law student Brett Grayson did, and he has plenty of good reasons for doing so.

"It came down to deciding between Georgia and Harvard. For a couple of different reasons, I chose Georgia. One of them was that I went to undergrad here. I was born and raised in the state of Georgia, so I felt a lot of loyalty to this state and to the institution," Grayson said.

Grayson wanted to stay in Georgia to practice law and knew that "as far as establishing a networking connection, it helps to go to law school near where you want to practice. I knew if you came here and did well, you had a good chance at getting any job you wanted to. That was definitely one of the biggest reasons [I chose the School of Law]," Grayson said.

Grayson's father Robert graduated from the School of Law in 1972, which also had an influence on his decision to stay at Georgia. "I've seen first hand how the Georgia Law degree served him well. My dad knows so many people around the state, just from going to law school here. So, that kind of rubbed off on me. My dad has practiced in Cobb County ever since he graduated. So many people there, attorneys, judges and state officeholders, are graduates of the School of Law, and that's true all over the state."

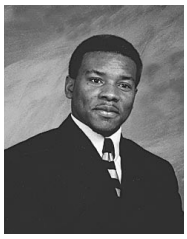
When asked if he always wanted to go to law school, the answer is a resounding no. "Thanks to my dad, people have been asking me if I wanted to be a lawyer since I was about eight years old and I resisted for as long as I could," Grayson said with a laugh. After obtaining a degree in political science from UGA, his options were either graduate school followed by teaching or law school. Now about to earn his Juris Doctor, Grayson said he is happy with his choice. "I think the decision to come to the School of Law was the best choice I could have made."

As for the decision to go to the School of Law versus Harvard, Grayson said he has no regrets about that either. "Meeting the people I've been able to meet, specifically the students here, will continue to pay dividends for the rest of my legal career," Grayson said. "I'm fully confident that I'm going to run into my peers all over the state and the courtroom. Some of them are going to be judges, somebody might even be governor, for all I know. But they're going to continue to pop up. I think that's the strongest aspect of this school right now, the quality of the student body."

Following graduation in May, Grayson will join the Atlanta office of Butler, Wooten, Fryhofer, Daughtery & Sullivan, LLP. This firm also has an office located in Columbus.

- Kristine Fortunato

Francys Johnson - Putting It All Together



Second-year law student Francys Johnson remembers watching courtroom dramas like "L.A. Law" and "Law and Order" growing up as a child. "I was fascinated with the law, fascinated with how to make it better, to expand it and to make real all the promises that are contained in our democracy," Johnson said. Now that he is fulfilling his childhood dream of attending law school, how does it compare to all those television shows? "It's a little different than I thought, but it is a rewarding experience," he said.

"My favorite part of law school is the things that are not in the brochures, like the conversations we have in the coffee room or the political banter that goes back and forth on the listservs," Johnson said. "It has been amazing getting to know all the students who have such different backgrounds, but have all come to this same place for the same goal. In the future, my classmates will shape the course of this world in business, government and society."

Before Johnson came to law school, he was in active ministry as an ordained Baptist minister. His first pastorate was in Statesboro near Georgia Southern University where he did his undergraduate work. "On Sundays, I would preach and, on Mondays, I had to go and be taught by those I had just been preaching to. That puts you in a different type of relationship with your professors!" Johnson said.

"I did not know how [being a minister] was going to fit with the desire I had to practice law. From all I had heard, lawyers were the very antithesis of what a good preacher should be," Johnson said. However, he quickly learned that this was not the case. "I have come to realize that integrity, honor, truth and the course of seeking justice are just as much a part of the legal profession as they are a part of the ministry. I think with me, these very different fields will complement each other well."

Being a pastor is not the only job on Johnson's resume. He also serves on the National Black Law Students Association National Board of Directors as the southern regional director, representing African-American law students at 42 schools located in nine different states. "It is incredible," Johnson said. "I toured about 30 law schools this year and got a chance to meet and speak with so many future colleagues. It is amazing to see the amount of energy that exists in these law schools and the dreams people have. If they stay true to them, our country is in great shape."

So how will he put it all together? Johnson said he sees his law degree as a means, but not an end, to his profession. "I have political aspirations. I love politics. I love the ministry. And I love the law. I think the law is really just a door one walks through to be granted access to other areas of life that can be just as rewarding."

- Kristine Fortunato

Daniel and Katie White - Partners in Life, Partners in Law

What started out as a date at Weaver D's resulted in a marriage for first-year students Daniel and Katie White. "We met here as undergrads," Daniel said. "I proposed to her right before the start of our senior year at the fountain on Herty Field. You can see the spot through the law library windows." The site of the proposal was fitting, as a year after getting married the couple enrolled in law school.

"Daniel always knew he wanted to go to law school," Katie said. "I was very geared towards doing something with kids." Following graduation, she accepted a position teaching high school French. "A few months into it I realized that teaching was not my career, so I started looking at other things to do. I always thought to be a lawyer you had to be this really aggressive person and work in a high-rise building in downtown Atlanta. Then I started to find out that you don't have to do that, and how I could still help kids as a lawyer, just in a different way."

Daniel encouraged her to take the LSAT and they ended up with the exact same score. Next, the couple set their sights on Georgia Law. "We decided that if we both got in, this was the place we were supposed to be," Katie said.

"It is kind of ironic," Daniel said. "I knew I was going to law school, but I wasn't sure what kind of law I wanted to go into. Whereas once Katie decided she wanted to go to law school, she knew she wanted to help kids and practice family law specializing in child advocacy. I worked for a real estate litigation firm after I finished my undergrad degree and I really enjoyed it, but I can see myself practicing almost any type of law."

Going through law school together has its advantages. The Whites are in different sections, so "we have met twice the students and know twice as many professors," Daniel said. "There are days when we both really push each other to work, and other days where we help each other not feel so bad about taking a break. I think the hardest part of being married and going through law school is finding time to do the things we used to do before," Daniel said.

"We always have our best friend at home," Katie added. "I can come home and tell Daniel everything about class and he understands it completely. He knows exactly what I mean when I say, the professor called on me today and I didn't know the answer."

So just what does the future hold for these first-year students? "A lot of people ask us if we're going to be White and White, but I just don't think you can look that far down the road," Daniel said.

The Whites will celebrate their second wedding anniversary in July. Daniel is also the son of alumnus Watson L. White (LL.B. '50). ■

- Kristine Fortunato

Mathis Joins Alumni Staff

Lisa Mathis joined the Office of Alumni Programs in September 2002 as alumni events coordinator. In this position, she assists Director Jill Birch in planning and executing law school alumni events. These events include Homecoming, Reunion Weekend and other alumni outreach programs. Mathis has 14 years of office experience and is a Commerce native. She replaced Bridget Hardin who left the law school early in 2002 to stay home after the birth of her son Thomas.

LRAP Recipients for 2003

It is a proven fact that loan repayment assistance programs aid in the recruitment and retention of legal personnel in the area of public interest law. According to a 2002 survey of 326 public interest and government employers nationwide, 82 percent reported LRAPs are an effective recruiting tool and nearly 70 percent said the programs aided in the retention of employees. The School of Law is proud it offers a loan repayment program, supported by the Ann B. Downs Loan Repayment Assistance Program Fund created by alumnus Bertis Downs (J.D.'81) in honor of his mother. There were five recipients of this year's funds:

Kealin Culbreath (J.D.'99), U.S. Sentencing Commission, Washington, D.C.

Adrienne DerVartanian (J.D.'00), Legal Aid of Washington, D.C.

Melissa Gross (J.D.'02), Georgia Legal Services, Gainesville, GA

Sydney Taylor (J.D.'02), Office of State Attorney, Pensacola, FL

Temika Williams (J.D.'01), Aid to Children of Imprisoned Mothers, Atlanta, GA

The School of Law is currently the only Georgia law school to permanently fund a loan repayment program. The first awards were presented in 1997.