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Mar. 2014 E-newsletter Student Spotlight: Kaitlin Marie Ball (J.D.'14)

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Student Spotlight: Kaitlin Marie Ball (3L)

News @ Georgia Law February 2014 Student Profile

Name: Kaitlin Marie Ball

Age: 25

Hometown: Third Culture Kid (home is where my suitcase is)

Expected graduation year: 2014

Georgia Law achievements and awards: Gabriel M. Wilner Scholarship for International Law, 2013-2014; Spurgeon Public Service Fellowship, 2013; Georgia Association for Women Lawyer's Scholarship, 2013; and Louis B. Sohn Award for Academic Excellence in International Law, 2013.

Georgia Law extracurricular activities: International Law Students Association, Student President, June 2013-present; Georgia Society of International and Comparative Law, member and past president; Georgia Law Project on Armed Conflict and Children; *ILSA Quarterly*: Editorial Board Member, 2013-2014; *University of Georgia Journal of Intellectual Property Law*: Editorial Board Member, 2012-2013/Notes Editor, 2013-2014; American Society of International Law; and Student Coordinator, 2012 ASIL Midyear Meeting in Georgia; ASIL Member, 2012-present.

Undergraduate degree / institution / year : B.A. in Russian and History / College of Wooster / 2011

1. What did you do before attending law school?

I enrolled in law school immediately after obtaining my undergraduate degree; I knew from a relatively young age that I wanted to pursue a law degree, and UGA was my first choice.

2. Why did you choose to attend the University of Georgia School of Law?

Enrolling in Georgia Law is probably the smartest decision I've ever made, although I didn't necessarily know it at the time. I knew I wanted to pursue a career in public interest, and it was very important to me that I didn't leave with the debt that similarly ranked schools require. Second, on the day I toured the law school I walked into Maria Gimenez's, the Associate Director of the Dean Rusk Center for International Law and Policy, office and told her I wanted to work somewhere I could use my language skills. She promised we would find something, and the next summer I was working in Slovakia!

3. What inspired you to become a lawyer?

I lived and travelled a lot as a child and young adult, and gained a love for other cultures. I see myself as a global citizen, and I believe it's my responsibility to use my skills to help give back. The rest of my family is all in science, and I just don't have the head for that—studying law was the best way to marry my skills and desire to help others.

4. Thus far, what is your most memorable experience from your time at Georgia Law?

Probably getting to drive former Legal Adviser of the U.S. Department of State and current Dean of Yale Law School Harold Koh around when he was in Athens for the 2012 Midyear Meeting of the American Society of International Law. We talked about Gangnam Style, and some legal stuff, too.

5. What are some activities/clubs/clinics you are involved in at the law school?

I have been involved with the Georgia Society of International and Comparative Law since my first year, and was president of the Society my second year. The society endeavors to bring international law related activities and speakers to campus; it's been a great way to interact with people with similar interests, and learn about some very unique career opportunities or aspects

of international law. I loved it so much that I ran for a position with our parent organization, the International Law Students Association.

6. What made you decide to run for president the International Law Students' Association (ILSA)? Professor Diane Amann mentioned that ILSA had elections for student officers, and I had really enjoyed my involvement with our local chapter at Georgia Law. I went to their spring meeting in D.C., gave my first stump speech, and won. The position has led to some amazing opportunities, including attending a conference in London, and putting on one of America's biggest international law conferences, International Law Weekend, in New York in October. It also allows me to be part of the biggest moot court competition in the world, Jessup. I don't participate in moot court myself, but getting to interact with so many amazing young advocates is a privilege.

7. What do you enjoy most about a law student?

The people. It is really rewarding to work with people that push each other to improve, and everyone is extremely helpful. If you're open to it, I believe strongly that you can learn just as much from your peers as you can from your professors. My peers and professors push my intellectual boundaries every day, and I love it.

8. What has been your most rewarding experience through this program?

I feel very strongly that I have the skills to be an active advocate thanks to my education at Georgia Law, which means a lot to me. While it's not a single experience, it's extremely rewarding to prepare to leave law school knowing that I am as well-prepared as I could possibly hope to be to enter the legal profession.

9. How has this experience affected your career plans?

International law is known for being a rather difficult field to break in to, and a lot of people choose to pursue other things. Thanks to the education and help from the faculty here, I have been able to continue to pursue a goal I have had since before I started my undergraduate education. I look forward to calling myself an international lawyer, and that is entirely a reflection of the work and investment of the faculty here.

10. What are your hobbies?

I love to read, which can sometimes be hard to do for pleasure when you do so much reading for your law classes. Despite that, I make an effort to read at least one new book a month, although that depends on the book. I have just finished the first book in the Wheel of Time Series, and look forward to re-reading *The Salmon of Doubt*, a collection of essays by Douglas Adams (of *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* fame) published after his death.

11. If you could share an afternoon with anyone, with whom would you choose to spend it?

Although the answer to this probably depends on when you ask me, right now I think it would have to be Thurgood Marshall. We listened to him in oral arguments before the Supreme Court in *Cooper v. Aaron* in Constitutional Law, and it's clear that he was not only a brilliant attorney and advocate, but also an incredibly compelling speaker.

12. Where is your favorite place to study? Why?

The Rusk Center—it has a lovely, and under-utilized, library. You can always find a quiet table next to one of the large windows on the upper floors to get some reading done.

13. What are two things you always have to have with you when you study?

Coffee and a writing instrument.

14. What do you like most about living in Athens?

Athens has a great food and music scene. Even after living in D.C., which has pretty great food, I was really excited to get back to Athens to my favorite restaurants.

15. What do you do to handle the stress of law school?

Exercise and sleep, which helps me "work smart." I know I am most effective on a full night's sleep, and I make sure to get to the gym *at least* four days a week. It keeps me sane, and makes me a more efficient worker.

16. What would you consider your greatest accomplishment in life?

Hopefully it hasn't happened yet! I've spent a good deal of my life surrounded by incredibly talented people, so in many ways it's quite difficult to feel I've accomplished much when I see some of the amazing things these people have done in their careers. To date, I think I am most proud of getting my externship at the U.S. Department of State. It was such an honor, and lots of fun, to be there.

17. What is your favorite place on campus? Why?

Probably the law school's rotunda. First, it's simply a stunning part of the building. Second, as a History major I tend to like places that have a little history, and I feel like the rotunda embodies the potential, and aspirations, of all the people that have ever walked the halls here. You can't help but feel a little inspired.