
**Travis M. Trimble**  

**Alan Watson**  

**Camilla E. Watson**  
*Tax Procedure and Tax Fraud* (Thomson/West, 2006).

**Michael L. Wells**  

**Rebecca Hanner White**  

**Donald E. Wilkes Jr.**  

As always, commencement is a special time for graduates, their friends and families as well as faculty and staff. Photographs of this wonderful day follow.

---

Soon-to-be graduates (back, l. to r.) Taylor Chamberlin, Megan Haley, Dean Taylor, Elizabeth Barganier; (front, l. to r.) Staci Swit and Rakhi Dalal gather for a photo before lining up to join the graduation procession. Photo courtesy of Professor Robert Brussack (J.D.’76).

Camilla E. Watson helps her son Josh with his tam prior to the ceremony. Photo by UGA Public Affairs’ Nancy Evelyn.

Donald E. Wilkes Jr. applauds his fellow classmates. Photo courtesy of Professor Robert Brussack (J.D.’76).

All graduates learn that putting on their hoods is tricky business. Civil Clinics Administrative Assistant Nancy Watkins assists Terri Stewart with hers. Photo by UGA Public Affairs’ Nancy Evelyn.

The Class of 2006 Legacy Gift Co-chairs M.J. Blakely (right) and Shannon Shipley presented Law School Association President Robert Freeman (J.D.’72) (left) and Dean Rebecca White (center) with a check totaling $25,200, the most ever donated by a graduating class. Sixty percent of the class contributed to this gift. Photo by UGA Public Affairs’ Nancy Evelyn.

During the ceremony, Andrew Thomas proudly applauds his fellow classmates. Photo courtesy of Professor Robert Brussack (J.D.’76).
Isakson’s message to graduates included six “silent” secrets to living a happy, successful and fulfilling life. They are:

**LEARNING** - “I challenge you to treat [your diploma] like a passport; to take it through life and have it validated over, and over, and over again by learning and improving yourself.”

**RESPECT** - “… [T]he man that underestimates his fellow [man] is the man that loses. We’re all different sizes, shapes, races, ethnicities and creeds, but everyone has something to offer our fellow man. Greatness in this world is the power of each individual collectively, not the superiority of any one.”

**ETHICS** - “It’s called the Golden Rule. You do unto others as you would have them do unto you. … Doing right is sometimes the most difficult thing a human being can do, but it is always the best thing a human being can do.”

**LOVE** - “It’s that passion that you have for the people and the institutions that have made you what you are and will carry you to the next level. … [M]ost importantly of all, remember this, that love is the common denominator of a successful, happy and fulfilling life.”

**FAITH** - “… I would never make an address like this without telling you that faith is a series of disappointments held together by singular moments of joy and success. You will lose cases in your life, and you will lose loved ones in your life, and you will have tragedies that you can put in the bank. And how you will endure them, to put them together to learn from them and grow is going to depend on what kind of faith you have.”

**DREAM** - “… [L]uck as defined by me and anyone else in here that has ever had a success is when opportunity meets preparation. … There are as many successes in life … as there are graduates here today, if you are willing to dream.”

In closing, Isakson said, “You can be anything you want to be and you can do it. … And if you don’t believe me think about this: today is a special day for not only for you, but for your parents and loved ones, because you are their dream.”
Advocacy program records stellar year

Georgia Law is well known for the success of its advocacy program. The excellent performance of this year’s teams added to that legacy by capturing three national titles, the most since 1996-97 when the school won four such championships. Overall, the record for this year’s season was three national crowns, one regional trophy and one state title in addition to numerous other individual and team honors.

First Amendment Moot Court Competition

Georgia Law won the 16th Annual National First Amendment Moot Court Competition beating 40 other teams from law schools across the nation.

Third-year students Michael A. Caplan and Warren J. Geller composed the winning team, which triumphed over the University of California at Davis to capture the title. Advocacy Director Kellie Casey Monk (J.D.’90) said she was especially pleased with the pair’s performance. “This tournament is always filled with extremely tough advocates. Unlike other moot court competitions, the written brief counts as 50 percent of the total score, which demonstrates what a terrific job Mike and Warren did on both the oral and written components.”

Georgia Law last won the national crown in this competition during 1997.

Marshall Mock Trial Competition

Georgia Law captured its second national advocacy title when it beat a team from the University of Kentucky to win the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition.

Third-year students Tiffany N. Carter and Carl E. Jones Jr. partnered with second-year students Kimberly R. Bourroughs and Jeffrey A. Reeves to win the national contest, organized by the National Black Law Students Association, which had 68 teams from 54 schools vying for the top trophy.

Georgia Law coach and third-year student Veronica L. Richardson said this year’s tournament was especially challenging due to the number of teams and competitors. Third-year student C. Brock Brockington also helped coach the team.

Georgia Law has competed in the national tier of this tournament three of the last four years.
Prince Moot Court Competition

Georgia Law’s advocacy program claimed its third national crown this year by winning the 21st Annual Dean Jerome Prince Memorial Evidence Moot Court Competition in April.

The team, composed of second-year students Quentasha L. Banks, Merritt E. McAlister and Andrew D. Stancil, overcame 34 teams from across the nation to finish in the top position. Additionally, McAlister received an award for best oralist, while the team was recognized for preparing the tournament’s second best brief. Third-year student J. Alexander Reed coached the team.

Georgia Law last won this tournament four years ago in 2002.

National Trial Competition

In the regional National Trial Competition, two Georgia Law teams captured first place honors in their respective contest brackets. Both Georgia teams competed against 20 other teams from the region.

Advocacy Director Kellie Casey Monk (J.D.’90) said it is rare that two teams from the same school advance to the national round as co-champions. “I could not have been more proud of both. This is a milestone for our mock trial program.”

One winning team was composed of third-year students Michael J. “M.J.” Blakely, Kimberly M. Council and Mary E. “Betsy” Pierce, with second-year students Christopher M. Gant and Erin L. Hantske serving as witnesses. Third-year students Desmond W. Dorsey and Emily A. Poe, together with second-year students Jennifer D. “J.D.” Hart and John R. Thomas Jr. serving as witnesses, comprised the second team.

Notably, Poe was named the tournament’s best advocate. Third-year student Zachary S. Shewmaker served as coach.

Intrastate Moot Court Competition

On the state level, Georgia Law took home all three of the trophies presented at the Intrastate Moot Court Competition. Every year, each law school in the state fields one or two teams in the tournament.

Second-year students Tedra C. Hobson and Glenn T. Singleton teamed up with third-year student J. Dean Taylor to beat teams from Emory, Mercer and Georgia State universities as well as John Marshall Law School, which competed in the tournament for the first time this year.

Also, the trio was presented with the Best Brief Award, and Hobson was named the competition’s best oralist. The last time Georgia Law swept this competition was in 2004.
A special day at Georgia Law occurs each spring when the school recognizes students who have excelled at the institution as well as faculty members for their hard work and dedication to teaching. Below is a list of those who were honored.

Georgia Defense Lawyers Association President John Foster was present to help honor third-year student Mary Rae Phelps, the recipient of the Willis J. “Dick” Richardson Jr. Student Award for Outstanding Trial Advocacy.

Betsy Tanner (left) and Kristin Timm (right) earned the CALI Excellence for the Future Award - Trusts & Estates and the Verner F. Chaffin Award for Excellence in the Study of Fiduciary Law. Callaway Chair Emeritus Verner Chaffin (LL.B.’42) and his wife Ethel join these students for a photo.

Alumnus Dennis Helmreich (J.D. ’86) poses with the recipients of the CALI Excellence for the Future Award - Property and the State Bar of Georgia Real Property Section Award - Merritt McAlister (left) and Andy Paulk. Not pictured are: Jeffrey Gibson and Jessica Lawrence.

The parents and former work colleagues of Kerry Harike Joedecke (J.D. ’97) were present for the awarding of the advocacy prize named in Kerry’s memory - (l. to r.) colleague Ashley Hurst, Mary June Harike, award recipient Jason Burnette, Bob Harike and colleague Tom Mew (J.D. ’97), who teamed up with Kerry and Chandler Mason (J.D. ’97) to win the overall 1996-97 National Moot Court Competition title.

Marjorie O’Byrne (right) stands with the recipients of awards presented in her husband’s memory. Husch Professor Anne Dupree (J.D. ’98) was awarded the John C. O’Byrne Memorial Award for Furthering Faculty-Student Relations, and Shane Lord received the John C. O’Byrne Award for Excellence in the Study of Taxation.

Note: Other faculty award winners can be found on page 27.
Other award recipients:

Louis Jackson Student Writing Competition in Labor and Employment Law
Wilson G. Barmeyer

Donald P. Gilmore Jr. Memorial Award for Excellence in the Study of Employment Law
Danielle Logan

American Bar Association and Bureau of National Affairs Award for Excellence in the Study of Employment Law
Amy Grynol Gibbs

State Bar of Georgia Award for Excellence in the Study of Labor Law and the American Bar Association and Bureau of National Affairs Award for Excellence in the Study of Labor Law
Darshun N. Kendrick and Rachel N. Saloom

State Bar of Georgia Award for Excellence in the Study of Employment Discrimination
Jason T. Burnette

American Bar Association and Bureau of National Affairs Award for Excellence in the Study of Intellectual Property Law
Kristin M. Timm

Atlanta Bar Association Alternative Dispute Resolution Lawyers Section Award for Excellence in Alternative Dispute Resolution
Meredith A. Stein

Attorneys’ Title Guaranty Fund Award for Excellence in the Study of Real Estate Law
Francis L. Barnes

State Bar of Georgia Tax Section Outstanding Student Award
Maria M. Todorova

Outstanding Prosecutorial Clinic Student
Shiv Sachdeva

Christopher P. Seely American Bankruptcy Institute Medal
Hui-wen Hsiao

Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn and Dial Award for Outstanding Moot Court Advocate
Michael A. Caplan

Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn and Dial Award for Outstanding Mock Trial Advocate
Michael J. Blakely Jr.

Ronald Carlson Award for Excellence in the Study of Evidence
J. Alexander Reed

Shelley B. Knox Award for Outstanding Public Interest Student
Vanessa E. Volz

National Order of the Barristers

Georgia Association for Women Lawyers Award
Vanessa E. Volz

National Association of Women Lawyers Award
Amanda E. Ballard

Gay and Lesbian Legal Network Outstanding Law Student Award
Preston J. Meche

Law School Association Award for Greatest Improvement in Academic Standing
Vanessa E. Volz (1st to 2nd Year) and Molly J. Progers (2nd to 3rd Year)

Law School Association Award for Highest Academic Average
Jason T. Burnette (Class of 2006) and Merritt E. McAlister (Class of 2007)

William King Meadow Award
Andrew J. Tuck

Ellen Jordan Award for Public Interest Law
Vanessa E. Volz

Jessie and Dan MacDougald Memorial Award for First Honor Graduate and the Isaac Meinhard Award for Highest Academic Average Class of 2005
Adam M. Conrad and R. Brent Drake

CALI EXCELLENCE FOR THE FUTURE AWARDS (recognizes outstanding performance in first-year and upper-level core courses)

Criminal Law
Brittany L. Grimes, Naveen Ramachandrapa, Emily E. Shingler and Rebecca M. Thornhill

Civil Procedure
Elizabeth C. Arnett, Patricia J. Brooks, Jessica M. Mallanda, Merritt E. McAlister and Ansly F. Paulk

Contracts & Sales
Chad V. Armstrong, H. Scott Lowry and Adrienne L. Smith

Legal Research & Writing
Janna B. Custer, Meghan C. Dougherty, Teah N. Glenn, Timothy J. Gutenberger, Anita L. Kumar, Merritt E. McAlister and Laurie F. Richardson

Torts and the Class of 1933 Torts Award for Excellence in the Study of Torts Law
E. Claire Carothers, Merritt E. McAlister and Laurie F. Richardson

Constitutional Law I
Elizabeth C. Arnett, Bret R. Hobson and Lucas A. Smith

Constitutional Law II
Jason T. Burnette, Laura J. Callahan and Andrew J. Tuck

Corporations
M. Kathleen Hart and Merritt E. McAlister

Criminal Procedure I
David S. Frist

Criminal Procedure II
Benjamin E. Corson-Knowles and Warren J. Geller

Evidence
Michael A. Caplan, Robert H. Derrick, Philip R. Green, Allison P. Stephens and Betsy B. Tanner

Federal Income Taxation
Adam M. Conrad and Patricia J. Brooks

Legal Profession
M. Kathleen Hart, Danielle Logan and Lauren K. O’Shea
Kevin M. Dious: From engineer to esquire

A self-proclaimed “math and science guy,” first-year student Kevin M. Dious has an unusual academic background for a law student.

The management science and engineering major, who graduated from Stanford University in 2004, never planned on following in the footsteps of his father, Georgia Law alumnus I. Kenneth Dious (J.D.’73), who crossed racial boundaries by becoming the first African-American sole practitioner in Athens, Ga.

Although the younger Dious joked that his father “tried to steer [him] toward law school” throughout his childhood, it was an internship, rather than his father’s advice, that finally sold him on a legal career.

Upon earning his undergraduate degree, he was awarded a prestigious fellowship in the Government Relations Department of Philips Electronics in Washington, D.C.

The position, which focused on the company’s international policy and technology, piqued his interest in intellectual property law.

“I realized there was a way to mesh my interests in technology with law,” Dious said.

“The internship really opened my eyes to the legal field and, more specifically, to intellectual property law. As we move more toward a technology-integrated society, it is important that we encourage and protect innovation. I feel that intellectual property law is one of the fastest growing fields in law right now because of this need, and that is what really drew me to law school.”

He took the LSAT and, when it came time to choose a law school, Dious said Georgia Law was, hands down, his first choice.

The school’s camaraderie was a deciding factor, he said, as was Georgia Law’s attention to diversity.

“One of my primary reasons for coming here was because of the diversity of this law school,” he said.

“Percentage-wise, Georgia Law is at the top of the list for African-American students. The statistics here are unheard of. Other schools’ numbers are just not as high in terms of minorities, and it was important to me to come to an environment where I feel comfortable. Georgia Law has done a great job of that.”

Dious said although he is pleased overall with Georgia Law’s open-minded atmosphere, he hopes in the future to see other minority groups - not just African-Americans - more represented.

“It would be nice to see more faces. I think it adds value and helps to improve the overall academic experience,” Dious added.

“The world is not just black and white. There are so many different cultures out there.”

Dious’ aspiration toward greater diversity is just one of the ways in which he hopes to make a difference in the legal field.

A lover of music (he studied piano for 11 years and violin for seven), Dious would like to incorporate both that knowledge and his technical interests into his career in intellectual property law.

“I am extremely interested in the new phenomenon of online music and digital media,” he said.

“In my opinion, this field is in its infancy and has a great deal of potential. I want to make a mark in this industry, whether it is helping to shape and redefine certain aspects of intellectual property law or possibly starting my own company one day.”

Whichever path he chooses, Dious is sure to break new ground.

- Kristin Kiniah

Michelle J. Tarley: A new vision

Since childhood, second-year student Michelle J. Tarley knew she wanted to attend law school and shared her ambitions of becoming a criminal lawyer with anyone who asked.

However, just a few months shy of starting college, circumstances arose that would severely alter the course of Tarley’s plans. At age 19, a sudden illness left her legally blind.

Tarley’s condition, termed “raised intracranial pressure,” resulted from a buildup of fluid in the brain. In her case, this fluid leaked into the optic nerve and cut off all blood flow, leaving her with no vision in her right eye and 50 percent in her left.

To help prevent the buildup of additional cranial fluid, which would cause Tarley to lose her remaining sight, doctors had to insert a shunt, a straw-sized implement that empties the constant flow of fluid from her brain into her stomach, into her spine.

However, Tarley has never allowed her sight impairment to get in the way of her goals.

“It is not so much that I am going to be a ‘blind lawyer.’ It is the fact that I always wanted to be a lawyer and became blind [before completing my education],” she said.

One of the hardest parts, though, was convincing law schools of this fact.

“Georgia Law was always very welcoming, and I felt great about coming here,” she said.

“The faculty and staff were very willing to work with me, and everyone was especially accommodating to me with my special needs. People at other law schools, however,
were more concerned with the fact that I was blind. They said, ‘You can’t handle law school. There will be a lot of reading, and it is just too rigorous.’ That was never said here.”

Using a cane to get around and completing reading assignments with the use of computer programs like Zoom Text, a type of speech output software, and Kurzweil 1000, which allows her to scan text into her computer, Tarley finds law school just as challenging as any non-handicapped student.

“I am not any different from any other student here that is struggling to get through. I just have different hurdles to get over,” she said.

Tarley proved her skeptics further wrong by being awarded several scholarships to attend law school, one being the Scott M. Brown Scholarship, which was named for a 1989 Georgia Law graduate who suffered from muscular dystrophy. Organized by two of Brown’s classmates, the fund was established to assist deserving students with disabilities attending Georgia Law.

Although Brown passed away from his illness in 1994, his impact is still felt at the law school, especially through the awarding of his scholarship. Tarley has even formed a friendship with Brown’s parents, further keeping his memory alive.

“They are wonderful people and, from what they have said, their son was a fighter - not the type to let things get him down. I aspire to have Scott’s attributes,” she said.

Tarley appears to be living up to the inspiration Brown provided her and hopes to use her experiences to help others as a disability lawyer.

“Before my illness, I never thought about disability law,” she said. “When I started losing my sight, though, it became apparent just how difficult life is for people with disabilities. I never imagined being in this position, but I believe everything happens for a reason. With me having to fight my individual battles, I thought, ‘What can I do to help others fight theirs?’

“Having a disability does not mean you cannot go on to be something great,” she added. “It has not stopped me - I just had to take another path.”

- Kristin Kissiah

Michael A. Caplan: Active academic and advocate

Georgia Law’s Michael A. Caplan was recently awarded his third degree in just four years. Although the educational load would seem daunting to most, the third-year student from New Orleans, La., received his B.A. from the University of Georgia in 2002 and, this spring, earned his J.D. and M.B.A. from UGA as well.

Although Caplan always knew he wanted to work in the legal field, he felt a J.D. was not quite enough for the hybrid law and business career he hopes to have.

“I am very interested in entrepreneurship, which I think is an important aspect of a business law practice,” he said. “I wanted to learn more about accounting and finance in particular.”

Caplan said his biggest challenge came from the contrasting mentalities of law school and business school. “Going back and forth between the two was hard because the philosophies were so different,” he explained.

The rigorous coursework involved when simultaneously completing two degrees did not seem to have been too overwhelming for Caplan, who remained very active in extracurriculars as well.

He has been a participant in Georgia Law’s Moot Court program since his second year of law school, an activity he said “fosters the development of one of the most practical skills you can have in the legal field. Advocacy goes to the heart of what we are going to do as lawyers.”

Caplan also helped establish the Georgia Law branch of the Election Protection Program, a national organization set up during the 2004 presidential election to ensure voters’ rights were protected at the polls.

Caplan’s current champion cause, however, is assisting in the restoration of his hometown post-Hurricane Katrina. Together with his mother, nurse Mindy S. Caplan, he spearheads the New Orleans chapter of a nationwide aid organization called the Pajama Program.

The initiative, geared toward those affected in the New Orleans and Mississippi Gulf Coast area, has a goal of collecting as many children’s pajamas and books as possible for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Over 1,000 pairs of pajamas, along with substantial monetary donations, have been collected thus far, and the program continues to acquire more every day.

“Hopefully it can change a lot of lives,” Caplan said. “My initial goal was to collect $500 from friends, and I got there in only two weeks. I have also collected a lot of pajamas from those who were just looking for a good excuse to go out and buy a few pairs.”

Even as someone personally affected by the hurricane tragedy, Caplan has managed to find a bright side.

“The disaster has shown me how much I took for granted,” he said. “Our house had five feet of water in it - the first floor has been gutted. But I learned that material things are not nearly as important as the community in which you live. That is what home really means. It is the community and the routine you have become accustomed to, and that has very sadly been disrupted for so many.”

Despite a two-year clerkship following his May graduation and an ambitious career path ahead of him, Caplan plans to remain in law school, especially through the awarding of his scholarship. Tarley has even formed a friendship with Brown’s parents, further keeping his memory alive.

“They are wonderful people and, from what they have said, their son was a fighter - not the type to let things get him down. I aspire to have Scott’s attributes,” she said.

Tarley appears to be living up to the inspiration Brown provided her and hopes to use her experiences to help others as a disability lawyer.

“Before my illness, I never thought about disability law,” she said. “When I started losing my sight, though, it became apparent just how difficult life is for people with disabilities. I never imagined being in this position, but I believe everything happens for a reason. With me having to fight my individual battles, I thought, ‘What can I do to help others fight theirs?’

“Having a disability does not mean you cannot go on to be something great,” she added. “It has not stopped me - I just had to take another path.”

- Kristin Kissiah

For more information about the Pajama Program or if you would like to help, please visit www.pajamaprogram.org or e-mail pajamaprogram@neworleans.gmail.