

BENCHMARK COLUMN // SEPTEMBER 2010

THOMAS M. COOLEY LAW SCHOOL ALUMNI PUBLICATION

WELCOME TO THE BENCHMARK COLUMN

JOIN COOLEY ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS ON LINKEDIN IN THE COOLEY LAW SCHOOL COMMUNITY GROUP – IT'S FREE!

In this issue of *Benchmark Column*, you will find stories that illustrate the many ways that Cooley alumni use their legal education to further their countries and communities. From work to advance the wind industry in Michigan to the development of military strategy in Iraq, Cooley alumni are at the center of it all.

With deep sadness, we report that our great friend and colleague, Darryl Parsell, died on August 24, 2010 following a bout with brain cancer.

Darryl lived and breathed Cooley. A graduate of Cooley's 1979 Wiest Class, Darryl became our Director of Alumni Relations in 1993, where for many years he helped the school build deep and lasting connections with alumni around the nation. He molded the Cooley Alumni Association into an effective organization. His contributions to Cooley and the alumni were recognized by his receipt of the Distinguished Alumni Service Award from the association's Executive Committee, by a special Resolution of Appreciation from Cooley's Board of Directors, and through admission into the Thomas M. Cooley Society, Cooley highest donor recognition. Cooley is hosting a memorial service to celebrate Darryl's life on Sunday, September 19, at 1:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Cooley Center in Lansing. All are invited. RSVP to alumni@cooley.edu or by calling to (517) 371-5140, ext. 2045. Darryl's family has asked that memorial contributions be made to Thomas M. Cooley Law School's Alumni Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Because Darryl died as this issue of *Benchmark Column* was going to press, we will elaborate on his contributions to Cooley in a later issue.

Sincerely,

James D. Robb
Associate Dean of Development and Alumni Relations
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FROM SERVING HIS COUNTRY TO SERVING HIS COMMUNITY

Roberto M. Suarez (Woodward Class, 2010)

Peering out the window of his fourth floor office at Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge with a view of downtown Grand Rapids, Mich., Roberto M. Suarez (Woodward Class, 2010) is grateful for the position he landed as a new law school graduate.

Working on pressing business transaction and immigration cases, Suarez brings robust practice-ready skills to the Michigan law firm. While he credits his Cooley training for helping him to navigate complex issues, Suarez also leans on the worldly teachings of far different experiences, serving most recently as a U.S. military negotiator in Iraq.

Call to Arms

Approximately three years ago, as Suarez was midway through his third-term studies at Cooley's Lansing campus, the veteran military officer was called to active duty and deployed to Northern Iraq's Mosul area leaving behind his wife and young daughter.

Fluent in five languages including Arabic and Russian, the Brooklyn, N.Y., native served as a Lieutenant for the Provincial Police Transition Team in the 4th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 1st Cavalry Division. His primary task during Operation Iraqi Freedom was to venture "outside the wire," leaving the protection and security of the U.S. base and gather intelligence about corrupt members of the Iraqi police force, as well as other insurgent activity. "We knew [U.S.] money for food for the Iraqi people was being spent the wrong way, and it was my job to weed out the bad guys," Suarez explained. "I had to use a lot of tactful negotiation and interpersonal skills."

Putting His Studies to Work

Although he was a world away from the Cooley classroom, Suarez leaned on his coursework on a regular basis. "I would make briefs about these bad cops including an overview of who they were, why I suspected the person and which law(s) in Iraq would apply," he said.

The nearly 18-month assignment inspired Suarez to go to extremes for justice. When other members of his BCT considered the process of arresting rogue Iraqi police officers to be an overwhelming task, Suarez instead laid out an impressive strategy with top U.S. military brass.

"I felt I had a good plan; a good recommendation for how we [the U.S.] should handle certain situations with a high value target (suspect)," he said.

Suarez's superiors were so impressed that they accepted his recommendations and followed his plans to "the letter," with Suarez leading the undercover operation. The key suspect was eventually apprehended and arrested.

"I felt really good about my contribution to the justice process," he said. So did his military superiors; Suarez received a Bronze Star medal for his efforts as well as a letter of recommendation from General David Petraeus.

Danger Lurking

His Iraqi feat was even more impressive given the dangerous, ongoing circumstances in which Suarez lived.

"People were killed around us every day," he said. "You were making split-second decisions at every turn to stay alive. We slept for four hours a day. You were always looking out for the enemy."

Thousands of miles away from Suarez's dangerous combat environment, his Cooley classmates and faculty offered ongoing support and encouragement by sending Suarez care packages filled with special supplies and treats. Cooley's Aletha Honsowitz, head of public services for the Grand Rapids campus, was among the many care package "regulars."

"Cooley was so, so supportive," Suarez said.

Incognito

Suarez's unique career background helped prepare him for the extreme mind games he encountered. After earning an undergraduate degree in biochemistry from Long Island University, Suarez took a position as a health investigator with the New York City Department of Health. Four years later, Suarez became a Special Agent with the North Carolina Department of Justice, weeding out corrupt police officers and conducting undercover operations throughout the state. These experiences made him begin to think about a future law career.

"You're always looking at the facts," he explained. "As an attorney, you need to be prepared for the opposing argument." That's when he decided to take the Law School Admission Test and enroll at Cooley in 2005.

Yet all of his law school training could not aide Suarez one fateful day in late July of 2007. That's when Suarez encountered a mortar attack and incurred multiple injuries to his back and legs from several 82mm mortars. The blasts caused a traumatic brain injury, and injuries to his right shoulder.

He was discharged from active duty in 2008, and returned to Michigan for grueling physical and occupational therapy sessions. As he settled back home, he eventually returned to Cooley, moving his family to west Michigan to finish classes at the Grand Rapids campus. He is currently undergoing a medical discharge from the Army.

From Combat to Coursework

The transition from combat to coursework was extremely difficult, physically and emotionally. While his wounds are long healed and he is fully recovered from his brain injury, Suarez has permanent injuries to his back which have sidelined the long-time runner and fitness buff. He also walks with a slight limp and must refrain from being seated for extended periods of time without stretching.

He has also experienced degrees of post-traumatic stress disorder from his combat days.

“I was so jittery and jumpy when I first returned,” he said. “Any loud noise triggered a reaction.”

Despite these challenges, Suarez persevered and graduated from Cooley in January 2010, and received multiple offers from large, New York City law firms. The NYC District Attorney’s office also weighed in with an offer.

West Michigan’s charm won out. He says that he couldn’t be happier with his current position. A member of the firm’s Diversity Committee, Suarez works with two mentors; Bill Jack is the senior mentor at the firm and Joe Belsito is the junior mentor. Smith Haughey has also made special accommodations for Suarez’s office, with a horizontal, “stand up” desk and ergonomic seating.

The firm’s partners are also receptive to Suarez’s future plans to offer counsel to veterans, leaning on the firm’s expertise in personal injury cases to consider disabled veterans’ cases.

“I can really walk in their shoes....I love it here.”

SPENDING HIS ENERGY ON ENERGY

“When you put your grandchildren at the center of the discussion, you begin to look at things differently,” says Richard (Rich) F. VanderVeen III (McAlvay Class, 1984).

But long before he had grandchildren, VanderVeen, 59, looked at the business world in a different way. His life is dedicated to sustainability and the triple bottom line, a business philosophy that incorporates an expanded spectrum of values, including economic, ecological and social ideals. Many people refer to the philosophy by three simple words: people, planet, profit.

“The three don’t need to be mutually exclusive,” said VanderVeen. “You can do what’s right, make a good living and leave the world better than you found it.”

Today, VanderVeen is known throughout the Midwest and beyond as a leader in the emerging wind energy industry. VanderVeen is currently leading efforts to develop more than 340 megawatts of commercial wind power in Michigan’s Gratiot and Oceana counties. The efforts would create enough energy to power approximately 72,000 homes, dramatically increasing the amount of wind power generated in Michigan.

The launching pad for today’s efforts was established a little more than a decade ago.

Winds of Change

In the late 1990s, VanderVeen took the bold step of leaving a capital equity partner position at Miller Johnson, a leading law firm in Grand Rapids, Mich., to pursue commercial wind power development. While he was new to the role as a developer, he was already an energy insider.

VanderVeen established a focus on energy while working for Lear Siegler Automotive and Aerospace Company in the 1970s and early 1980s. After graduating from Cooley, he founded a law firm with his father, former U.S. Rep. Richard (Dick) VanderVeen, and then worked at Miller Johnson. At both firms, the bulk of VanderVeen’s time was spent on innovative energy projects, utility law and public policy.

Bringing Wind Power to Michigan

VanderVeen quickly went to work in his new role as a developer to bring wind power to Michigan. A site in Mackinaw City was selected based on meteorological studies showing consistent wind and VanderVeen negotiated key agreements.

One such agreement involved Mackinaw City and Emmet County creating a zoning ordinance that permitted utility scale wind turbines stretching 315 feet in the air. The zoning approval was the first such ordinance in Michigan, the first of many firsts in Michigan's wind energy industry attributed to the Mackinaw City project.

In fact, the groundwork laid by VanderVeen a decade ago in the far north of Michigan's Lower Peninsula is still helping the industry grow today. In total, the project is credited as the driving force behind Michigan's first private turbine lease agreements, first tariff to sell wind power, first power purchase agreement from wind-supplied energy and first interconnection agreement. "It was a victory for those of us who want to protect the Great Lakes for future generations," VanderVeen said.

Leading an Industry With Legal Expertise

Many outsiders would say VanderVeen is at the top of the industry in Michigan, but he sees himself as just getting started. He is working to build the industry.

Buoyed by renewable portfolio standards in Michigan and elsewhere that require energy providers to generate a percentage of power from renewable sources, VanderVeen is helping to establish the multipronged network that is needed to make wind power viable on a scale that can supply power to thousands of homes and businesses. Most aspects of growing the industry require legal expertise, including zoning approvals, lease agreements with landowners, wind turbine warranty agreements and power purchase agreements.

"It is a tangled web, but each item is important," said VanderVeen. "It is work driven by a heart-and-head-felt strategy that blends my education at Thomas M. Cooley Law School with my work experiences and passions."

A Destiny, A Cause

As VanderVeen thinks back, perhaps he was destined to work with wind. He jokes that his understanding of the wind dates back to his childhood when his family had several sailboats sprinkled across lakes in west Michigan. Kidding aside, he's dedicated to creating a sustainable society and breathing life into his home state.

He sees wind energy as helping "family farms stay family farms" due to leasing agreements that pay landowners thousands of dollars per turbine per year. He sees the industry as a jobs creator that helps to reduce the United States' dependence on foreign oil and keeps dollars from leaving the nation.

"Seven out of every \$10 spent on petroleum leaves our country," said VanderVeen. "Our vision is to reduce the world's dependence on foreign and fossil fuel. By transforming our vehicles to plug-in hybrids and using new, zero-emissions wind and solar power, this will begin to transform how we make and use power and create a whole new industry of 21st century jobs."

A Concerned Grandparent

VanderVeen is quick to rattle off statistics cited by the American Wind Energy Association and other pro-wind power organizations about the many benefits of wind power, but at his core he seems to be just like many other grandparents, concerned about the future that their grandchildren will inherit. The only difference is that VanderVeen is making a difference by building an industry while crisscrossing Michigan in his hybrid vehicle.

GIVING CLIENTS A VOICE

Nell Kuhnmuensch (Marston Class, 1978)

The worlds of health care, insurance and environmental concerns seem ripe for a lawyer. Burdened with regulations and oversight, businesses and individuals need help navigating the laws to determine what they can legally do. But Nell Kuhnmuensch (Marston Class, 1978) took a different path toward helping others in these areas, a path as a lobbyist that has allowed her to help businesses have a voice on legislation before it becomes law.

A Tireless Advocate

A principal in a firm representing such national names as AT&T, Chrysler, and the University of Michigan, Kuhnmuensch is routinely ranked as one of the top lobbyists in Michigan. She sees her role as an advocate – one who works tirelessly for clients. And she sees her education from Cooley as being one of the key components of her success.

“My legal education was tremendous training for this role,” said Kuhnmuench. “What I’m doing is being an advocate. The training from Cooley allows me to look at a situation, analyze it, and appreciate all of the different arguments coming from all sides. Then, I can find a way to accomplish the best result for our client.”

A director at Governmental Consultant Services Inc. (GCSI) in Michigan’s capital, Lansing, Kuhnmuench attempts to do her best to erase the often negative stereotype associated with being a lobbyist while advocating for clients.

“There is a misconception about the work of a lobbyist,” said Kuhnmuench. “Companies and individuals deserve the right to advocate their positions. Many don’t have the time to do so; that is when we step in.”

Not a Fan

Many outsiders believe that lobbyists benefit from term limits, a hard cap on the amount of time that a legislator can serve. Michigan is one of 15 states with term limits on its state officers, including state senators and representatives. Regardless of the perceived benefits to lobbyists, Kuhnmuench doesn’t favor such restrictions.

“I’m not a fan of term limits,” said Kuhnmuench. “I think term limits have done a great deal of damage. I think they have been damaging to the institution (of government).”

“If you go to a dentist or oral surgeon, you are likely seeking someone with more than six years’ experience. Yet, that is all the time that we allow our representatives to serve.”

As a result, Kuhnmuench believes that it’s a challenge to have effective government. Legislatures are representative of the community that they serve and legislators come from a variety of backgrounds.

“People expect our legislators to be experts in a number of areas. Frankly, they may not have been previously exposed to those areas,” said Kuhnmuench. “It is our job to help educate them. And in helping legislators understand your client’s position, it is critical for them to know they can trust the information you are providing. It takes time, a limited commodity in a term-limited world, to develop that level of trust.”

Kuhnmuench sees the role of a lobbyist as a resource to legislators, stating that lobbyists may even have more information on topics up for debate than the legislators themselves.

“It is a huge challenge for a person to work with legislators to make sure they understand why we’re asking them to do what we’re asking them to do,” said Kuhnmuench. “We must be prepared to explain to them what the counter arguments are and what our response is to those arguments.”

It is a demanding position, one that often requires the married mother of two sons to work long hours. Breakfast meetings, dinner events and lots of meetings mixed in between are common. Despite that fact, Kuhnmuench classifies her position as rewarding.

“It is never boring,” Kuhnmuench adds.

A Different Path at The Start

There was a time when Kuhnmuench was more concerned with interest rates than laws.

After briefly flirting with attending law school following the completion of her undergraduate degree, Kuhnmuench entered the banking world. There, she became one of the first women hired into Michigan National Bank’s management program.

Despite the promise of being one of the first in her gender to be trained for a management role, Kuhnmuench became disinterested in the profession and sought alternatives. It was then that she saw an opening for a legal assistant at an area firm. She applied.

“I was told that I needed to have a degree for the position,” said Kuhnmuench. “I thought ‘why should I attend school for two years to assist an attorney when I can go for three years and be the attorney?’”

She quickly changed paths, attending Cooley in the evenings. She has been influencing and interpreting legislation ever since.

Following her graduation from Cooley, she was a law clerk for a Michigan Supreme Court Justice and then served as chief of staff for two speakers of the Michigan House of Representatives before joining GCSI.

Banking and practicing law are decades behind her now, but she manages to stay connected in her own way. Today, her firm represents the Michigan Association of Community Bankers and the State Bar of Michigan.

NOT ONE TO WAIT

Nicholas P. Scutari (Carpenter Class, 1993)

Nicholas P. Scutari (Carpenter Class, 1993) has never been one to wait. When he decided to attend law school in the winter months of 1990, he didn't want to wait the nine months until the traditional September start date of classes. So he searched for law schools that accepted incoming freshmen at other times of the year. Soon after, he left his home in Linden, New Jersey to move to Michigan.

That January, he started classes at Cooley and completed his Cooley education in seven terms.

Fast forward a dozen years and Scutari had become a promising attorney who had built a successful law practice shaped by his Cooley education. He had served as a civil trial attorney at a mid-sized personal injury firm before becoming a city prosecutor and opening a civil litigation firm of his own. But, at the age of 33, Scutari saw an opportunity to seek the office that he had long hoped to hold, the one of a state senator. The incumbent had announced that he wouldn't run for re-election, opening the door for Scutari. The Cooley graduate decided once again to seize an opportunity. He decided to run.

Scutari went on to gain the Democratic Party's nomination and in November defeated the Republican candidate Martin Marks, garnering 55 percent of the vote in the process. In 2007, the senator earned re-election by an even wider margin.

Today, at age 41, the New Jersey state senator continues his get-right-to-it approach, now in his efforts to advocate for his constituents.

"I advocate for people's rights and do my best to make sure that the government does not interfere with people's lives," said Scutari. "I try to make sure that the government is not intrusive, but works effectively for the people and not against the people."

Scutari is known in the senate for attacking difficult issues head-on, often taking positions that don't necessarily tow the party line. Regardless, Scutari says that all of his positions are governed by what is right and what is best for his district and the state of New Jersey.

Balancing Ideals

Scutari's tackling of the controversial topic of medical marijuana has put him in the national headlines and garnered notoriety in his party. Balancing his state's tough stance against recreational drug abuse with his dedication to obtaining pain relief for sick and dying patients, Scutari became a leading advocate and the primary sponsor of legislation that resulted in New Jersey becoming the 14th state to legalize medical marijuana. The act was approved in January 2010 and is set to take effect in January 2011.

"This is not only the smart thing to do; it's the humane thing to do," said Scutari in a news release on the matter.

The legislation is known as the strictest medical marijuana law in the country, using nonprofit alternative treatment centers to grow and distribute the marijuana in limited quantities to registered patients who have specific conditions such as glaucoma and multiple sclerosis. The law aims to eliminate problems found in other states that have legalized marijuana, such as California and Colorado, where recreational users have found loopholes to obtain marijuana through legal channels.

Thinking Outside His Party

In 2009, Scutari sought to balance the ideals of his same-party governor with what he felt was best for his state. Despite the fact that then-New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine wanted to raise taxes on the rich, Scutari said he was against the idea, eventually taking his stance to the national stage with an appearance on FOX Business.

Scutari believed that the tax hike would drive many people and small business owners out of New Jersey, which would ultimately lead to worse conditions and a need for more drastic measures.

“We cannot tax our way out of this problem,” Scutari told FOX Business’ Neil Cavuto when discussing New Jersey’s budget during the interview. “This is an issue for the citizens of New Jersey and what’s best for New Jersey is what I’m always interested in.”

Staying Connected To The Courts

He doesn’t get to stand up in a courtroom as frequently as he once did, but since New Jersey has a part-time legislature, Scutari still practices law. He is proud of both his work as a trial attorney and as chair of the New Jersey State Senate Judiciary Committee.

In the courtroom, Scutari says he hasn’t lost a case in the seven years since he has established his law firm. “There is nothing more exhilarating than trying a case in court,” Scutari said.

When Scutari shifts from being a lawyer to writing laws in the senate, much of his work is still focused on the justice system. He recently introduced legislation that he believes will help protect the judiciary system by requiring judges presiding over several of the state’s top courts to have at least 15 years of service as an attorney prior to appointment to the bench. The current threshold is 10 years.

“It’s our duty to make sure the judiciary in New Jersey maintains its excellent reputation and independence from political influence,” he said.

A Straightforward Reflection

When looking back at all he has accomplished, Scutari explains it in a straightforward manner.

“I dreamt about becoming a senator years and years ago, but I never imagined I’d be elected as senator at age 33 and be in the position I am in now,” he said. “It’s a dream come true.”

FOR THIS COOLEY GRADUATE, THE FUTURE COULDN’T BE BRIGHTER

Michael Stanley (Woodward Class, 2010)

As 56-year-old Fenton, Mich., native and recent Cooley graduate Michael Stanley sees it, his life has been filled with a lot of lucky breaks.

Take the sale of the piano store he and his wife, Debra, owned for 20 years. Just before the state’s economy began its nose-dive, a local hospital eyed the couple’s property and made them a generous offer that they couldn’t turn down.

Then, there was the good fortune Stanley experienced in 1977 while working at a Fenton-area men’s clothing store. When the business went into foreclosure, the bank asked Stanley, then store manager, if he’d consider ownership “for a really good deal,” the Woodward Class alumnus explained. He changed the store’s name to Michael’s Menswear and, while simultaneously working at the couple’s nearby piano business, built a 10-year, thriving operation.

But that’s not all. In the same spontaneous manner that Stanley took over the clothing retailer, two women walked into his store “out of the blue” one day and asked him if he’d ever consider selling.

“I figured it was as good a time as ever,” he recalled. And so he made another lucrative decision that allowed the couple to semi-retire in their early 40s.

Rare Eye Disorder

While things on the outside appeared promising, all was not well within Stanley’s body.

In his early 20s, the amateur boxer and Little League coach spent a year caring for a friend's homing pigeons. Unbeknownst to Stanley, the birds transmitted a bacteria that caused him to develop an exceedingly rare and degenerative eye condition.

The condition, called ocular histoplasmosis syndrome (OHS), causes low-vision. Its severity would rise and fall throughout his adult life, curtailing Stanley's ability to do many things.

When the bills began mounting for his numerous eye surgeries, Stanley pushed on, selling cars in the late '80s. He sold 17 cars his first week on the job and eventually became the large dealership's top salesman.

"I was determined to do whatever was needed to turn things around," he said.

Surrendering the Keys

While Stanley was selling a lot of vehicles, he found it increasingly difficult to drive one. His failing eyesight was beginning to compromise his safety behind the wheel.

"I remember my doctor calling one day saying, 'If you don't tell them (the Secretary of State), I will.'" Additional difficulties came to the Stanley family. Now without work or health insurance, the couple sold their long-time home and moved into an apartment with their young daughter.

"Those were some really hard times," he recalled. "I went from owning the world to starting over."

A Life-Changing, Change of Pace

With time on his hands, Stanley spent his mornings at a local track and struck-up a friendship with a small group of joggers who encouraged him to earn a college degree.

The idea took hold. Stanley enrolled at nearby University of Michigan-Flint, relying on city transit to shuttle him to and from classes. The Michigan Commission For the Blind (MCFB) helped with tuition and supplied him with adaptive reading equipment.

The experience set in motion a new focus and appreciation.

Stanley graduated with a bachelor's degree in history and philosophy and a master's degree in American culture earning academic honors in the process. "I learned I was capable of doing a lot more with my life," he said.

As luck would have it, Cooley's Auburn Hills campus was just opening, which was located about 45 miles from Stanley's Fenton home. The MCFB and Cooley offered him academic scholarships, aiding in Stanley's growing desire to become an attorney.

A Chance Encounter

In his first week at Cooley, Stanley met a neighbor who took a job at Chrysler's World Headquarters; the company is located directly across the street from Cooley's campus.

The new friend offered to drive Stanley to law school and their daily commutes together continued until Stanley earned his law degree in January 2010. The special bond between the two endures to this day.

As one of many non-traditional students, Stanley also built strong friendships with his fellow classmates, some 30 years his junior.

"I think I became this fatherly figure," he recalled with a laugh.

To compensate for his vision issues, Stanley relied on extraordinary preparation and a keen memory. "I memorized the details of every case," said Stanley, who graduated cum laude. Cooley's faculty took notice of his academic strengths, pushing him to excel.

"The faculty's approach is very purposeful in that they bring out of you what you need to be successful," he explained. Stanley passed the Michigan Bar Exam in February and was admitted into the State Bar of Michigan in June.

"Cooley staff and students, without exception, were supportive, but they also gave me the independence to develop the types of skills I knew would be necessary for me to practice as an attorney," he said. "I've been trained very well."

Lasting Impression

The impression Stanley made at Cooley remains.

“What I remember most about Michael is the amazing dedication and commitment he showed and the way that he never complained about the special challenges he faced,” said John Nussbaumer, Associate Dean of Cooley’s Auburn Hills campus. “He was always prepared, always cheerful, and always professional.”

Stanley doesn’t let his vision issues cloud his future as an attorney.

“Life happens to everyone,” he said. “As a general rule, people don’t care (about the disability); I’ve learned the biggest impediment is me. You can’t create a lower standard for yourself.”

As a case in point, Stanley recently turned down a position with a prestigious Detroit law firm as his passion and heart are firmly rooted in the Fenton area.

“I love this town; it’s where I want to practice.”

It appears it’s what his community wants, too.

“The phone has been ringing; people are already wanting him to help with wills and trusts and estates,” said his wife, Debra.

The calls and inquiries to Stanley are reassuring as he explores career opportunities.

“I’ve been fortunate, he said. “I’m starting a new phase of life...I’ll find my way.”

NEWS BRIEFS

DIETZ, SMITH HEADLINE SOIFER LECTURE

Leading scorers from rival Big Ten Conference powers gracefully shared the stage at Cooley’s fifth annual Howard Soifer Memorial Lecture in Sports and Entertainment Law in Lansing, Mich., on July 20. The endowed lecture series is held each year in memory of Howard Soifer and his passion for the law, sports, his family and his legal education at Cooley Law School.

Former University of Michigan basketball player Diane Dietz (Morell Class, 1985) joined former Michigan State University basketball player Steve Smith as keynote speakers at the fifth annual event. Both left their alma maters as their teams’ all-time leading scorers. Dietz serves as the chief communications officer for the Big Ten Conference and Smith is an analyst for the Big Ten Network following a 14-year professional basketball career.

Dietz gave attendees an inside perspective of the Big Ten Conference, the focus of media attention in recent months due to recent expansion and the possibility for further growth. She highlighted the reasons behind adding the University of Nebraska to the conference, explaining that the university’s academic stature played a major role, including membership in the American Association of Universities.

Any additional universities added to the Big Ten would need to have a similar academic focus, according to Dietz. Smith told personal stories about Soifer, who was Smith’s friend and valued advisor.

His stories detailed the long conversations that he used to have with Soifer, discussing everything from life to business, including the NBA’s lockout of players in the 1998-99 season (Smith was a player union representative) and Smith’s \$2.5 million donation to Michigan State University, the largest single gift by a professional athlete to his alma mater. Regardless of the issue, Soifer was there to help, according to Smith.

Dietz and Smith concluded the lecture by agreeing that truly successful sports and entertainment lawyers are knowledgeable in both the law and their clients’ business; work hard and prepare thoroughly; develop trust with clients and opposing parties; tell their clients what they need to know, not what they want to hear; and can do all that in a professional and courteous way.

Alumni Celebrate the Formation of The Cooley Jurist Society

Charter members of the Cooley Law School Jurist Society celebrated at Cooley's Lansing campus during a dedication event on Aug. 5. Membership in the society recognizes alumni who have attained judicial office and have made a lifetime contribution to Cooley Law School of \$10,000 or more. Portraits of the 12 charter members will hang at all four of Cooley's campuses; in Lansing, Auburn Hills, Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor, and a plaque recognizing more than 120 Cooley alumni who have attained judicial office will also be displayed at all four campuses.

Charter members of the Cooley Law School jurist society include: Hon. Louise Alderson (Sherwood Class, 1986), 54-A District Court, Lansing, Mich.; Hon. Richard D. Ball (Campbell Class, 1976), 54-B District Court, East Lansing, Mich.; Hon. Thomas E. Brennan, Jr. (Marston Class, 1978), formerly of the 55th District Court, Mason, Mich.; Hon. Terrence P. Bronson (Campbell Class, 1976), 1st District Court, Monroe, Mich.; Hon. Brent V. Danielson (Cooley Class, 1976), 85th District Court, Manistee, Mich.; Hon. Joseph J. Farah (Wiest Class, 1979), 7th Circuit Court, Flint, Mich.; Hon. John N. Fields (Campbell Class, 1976), International Judge for the U.N. Mission in Kosovo (2007-2008) and court of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2008-2009); Hon. Ronald W. Lowe (Wing Class, 1982), 35th District Court, Plymouth, Mich.; Hon. Jane E. Markey (Dethmers Class, 1981), Michigan Court of Appeals, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Hon. Jeffrey L. Martlew (Campbell Class, 1976), Cooley professor and former 29th Circuit Court Judge, St. Johns, Mich.; Hon. Pamela J. McCabe (Wing Class, 1982), formerly of the 55th District Court, Mason, Mich.; and Hon. Kathryn J. Root (Felch Class, 1977), Oscoda County Probate Court, Mio, Mich.

Career and Professional Development Department Expands Services

Thomas M. Cooley Law School students and alumni will now benefit from an expanded and restructured Career and Professional Development (CPD) office, all aimed at providing exceptional career services at every stage of an individual's law career.

Under the leadership of Charles Toy, associate dean of the CPD and president of the State Bar of Michigan, the CPD is adding six professional advisors to its staff – all of whom are attorneys – each representing a dynamic blend of legal practice experience and career placement and development expertise. The new advisors will offer the services of the CPD directly to students and alumni at each of Cooley's four campuses through on-campus staffing. The main CPD office will be headquartered at the Lansing campus.

The expansion reflects CPD's efforts to bolster career development services to not only Cooley alumni, but students who are in the initial stages of their academic careers.

"The legal employment landscape is changing and CPD has changed to keep pace with what legal employers require," said Toy. "Now, new associates must be practice ready and have an entrepreneurial spirit to build the firm's practice and the associates' own skill set."

CPD has initiated projects with faculty, alumni, employers and students to meet the challenges and leverage the opportunities of the changing placement paradigm. A hallmark of Cooley has been its practical legal education, which includes its clinical and externship requirements, to ensure that students are practice ready. CPD principles are being infused in the classroom so that students know the importance of relationship building, presentation skills, career tracks, analysis, technology use, and effective communication, in addition to the mastery of subject matter.

In an effort to expand its networking reach, the CPD will soon develop alumni collegiality groups based on geography and practice type. A pilot program is already under way in Washington, D.C.

"We are thrilled to continue providing an exceptional level of service and career expertise," Toy said. affiliate of the Toronto Blue Jays, lost 7-3 to the Lake County Captains. Cooley signed an 11-year, \$1.485 million sponsorship agreement in February to secure naming rights for the downtown Lansing stadium that is home to the Lugnuts.

FACULTY BRIEFS

Tammy Asher, Assistant Professor

Taught, the legal writing classes for the American Bar Association's Council of Legal Education Opportunity, June 1-23, 2010. **Attended**, the Legal Writing Institute's Biennial Conference in Marco Island, Fla., June 27-30, 2010. **Attended**, the 16th annual Youth Law Conference, April 26, 2010, in Troy, Mich.

David C. Berry, Professor

Organized, the first annual International Trademark Association's (INTA) Trademark Scholarship Symposium, held at the organization's annual meeting in Boston on May 24, 2010. He also moderated the symposium session on trademark dilution. **Served**, as a panelist at a program, "Patent Eligibility, Bilski, and the Future of Business Method Patents," held at Cooley's Auburn Hills campus on July 14, 2010. **Presented**, "Avoiding Intellectual Property Pitfalls for Business Lawyers," at the State Bar of Michigan's Young Lawyers Section Summit at Grand Traverse Resort on June 5, 2010.

Ron Bretz, Professor

Spoke, at Know Your Traffic Rights, sponsored by the Cooley ACLU, Nov 1, 2010. **Spoke**, at a symposium on the Arizona Immigration Law, sponsored by the Cooley HLLSA and ACLU. **Lectured**, the Shiawassee County Criminal Defense Bar, on Recent Developments in Michigan Criminal Law and Procedure, August 9, 2010, Owosso, Mich. **Lectured**, the Michigan District Judges Association on Recent Developments in Michigan Criminal Law and Procedure, August 12, 2010, on Mackinac Island, Mich.

James L. Carey, Associate Professor

Participated, on an Immigration Law Panel for students at Cooley's Auburn Hills campus on June 24, 2010. He took an in-depth look at the Arizona immigration law and what it means to citizens across the country. **Debated**, "Guns and Free Association," with Assistant Dean Dan Ray. They focused on the pros and cons of recent Supreme Court decisions, *McDonald v Chicago* and *CLS v Martinez*, and their interpretations of the constitution on July 15, 2010.

Brad Charles, Assistant Professor

Presented, at the Legal Writing Institute's Biennial Conference on teaching comprehensive analysis with the U.S. Supreme Court's argumentation playbook.

Mark Cooney, Associate Professor

Spoke, at the 2010 Michigan Appellate Bench-Bar Conference, on "Collegiality Between Parallel Courts: Erie/Reverse Erie/Certified Questions," on June 11, 2010, in Plymouth, Mich. He was on a panel with Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly and U.S. District Judge Robert Jonker. **Published**, an article called "To Mrs. Finklebean: The Truth about Conjunctions as Sentence-Starters," in the August 2010 issue of the *Michigan Bar Journal*. **Attended**, the Legal Writing Institute's Biennial Conference in Marco Island, Fla., June 28-30, 2010. **Attended**, the State Bar of Michigan's Environmental Law Section program on alternative energy and pending environmental legislation, in Roscommon, Mich., on June 18, 2010.

Dustin S. Foster, Assistant Professor

Presented, "Elder Law/Medicaid," for the Oakland County Bar Association's The People's Law College in Pontiac, Mich., on April 20, 2010. **Attended**, the Institute for Continuing Legal Education's 59th Annual Probate & Estate Planning Institute in Plymouth, Mich., June 18-19, 2010. **Attended**, "Recognizing and Addressing Elder Abuse and Exploitation in St. Clair County" at Port Huron Hospital, in Port Huron, Mich., May 21, 2010. The event was organized by the Lakeshore Legal Aid, St. Clair County Prosecutor's Office, Port Huron Police Department, Safe Horizons and the Council on Aging.

Heather Garretson, Associate Professor

Elected, a Fellow of the Michigan State Bar Foundation. **Co-presented**, "Getting a Grip: Frameworks for Assessing Instructional Mastery" with Associate Dean Nelson Miller and Professor Tonya Krause-Phelan, at the Institute for Law Teaching and Learning Conference in Topeka, Kan., in June 2010.

Christopher G. Hastings, Associate Professor

Reappointed, chair of the State Bar of Michigan's Standing Committee on the Unauthorized Practice of Law.

Joseph Kimble, Professor

Published, an article called "Where Should the Citations Go?" in the July 2010 issue of the *Michigan Bar Journal*. **Completed**, his 10th year as the drafting consultant on all federal court rules. **Delivered**, remarks honoring Richard Wydick when he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Scribes, The American Society of Legal Writers. Wydick is the author of *Plain English for Lawyers*. **Agreed**, to give a plenary address to 400 participants at the fall Éducaloi Conference in Montreal. Éducaloi is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to inform Canadians of their rights and obligations by providing quality legal information in everyday language.

Don LeDuc, President and Dean

Published, the 2010 Cumulative Supplement to *Michigan Administrative Law* by West Group. It is the ninth

annual supplement to the 2001 publication, a revision of the 1993 original. **Serving**, as the featured speaker at the Administrative Law Section's annual meeting, to be held during the meeting of the State Bar of Michigan in September 2010. He will provide a 40-year retrospective on the evolution of Michigan administrative law.

Donna McKneelen, Assistant Professor

Testified, before the Michigan House Judiciary Committee on HB 6763, a bill to require audio and visual recording of custodial interrogations by police in criminal investigations.

Nelson P. Miller, Associate Dean and Professor

Presented, "Getting a Grip: Frameworks for Instructional Mastery" at the Institute for Law Teaching and Learning Summer Conference in Topeka, Kansas in June 2010. **Published**, the second edition of the book *The Practice of Tort Law* with Associate Professor Paul Sorensen.

Monica Navarro, Associate Professor

Honored, by *Michigan Lawyers Weekly* as one of the 20 Women in the Law 2010. **Authored**, a white paper, "A baseline on the state of telemedicine in Michigan: Where we are now and where we are headed," for the State Bar of Michigan, Health Law Section, July 2010. **Ranked**, as a 2010 Michigan Super Lawyer, in *Law and Politics Magazine*. **Ranked**, as one of the 2010 Top 50 Women Lawyers, in *Law & Politics Magazine*. Elected, to the board of directors for the Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan. **Chaired**, the Karmanos Race for the Cure Team, Counselors for the Cure, State Bar of Michigan Health Law Section. **Presented**, a webinar entitled "What Attorneys Need to Know about Whistleblowers and Qui Tam Litigation," for the Michigan Association of Justice. **Achieved**, an \$81 million settlement in a pharmaceutical fraud litigation, *United States ex rel. Maher et seq v. Johnson & Johnson et seq.*

John Nussbaumer, Associate Dean and Professor

Re-appointed, by American Bar Association (ABA) President-Elect Steve Zack to the ABA Council on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in the Educational Pipeline. **Appointed**, by Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Marilyn Kelly to her SOS Task Force on Self-Represented Litigants. **Appointed**, to the State Bar of Michigan's Pro Bono Month Planning Committee. **Appointed**, to the Executive Committee of the Oakland County Bar Association's Inns of Court. **Elected**, to the Straker Bar Association Board of Directors. **Elected**, to the Executive Board of the Federal Bar Association for the Eastern District of Michigan. **Invited**, to join the Fellows of the American Bar Association. **Spoke**, at the State Bar of Michigan's Leadership Forum on Mackinac Island, Mich. **Spoke**, at three State Bar of Michigan Diversity Symposiums in Detroit, East Lansing, and Grand Rapids, Mich. **Selected**, by the State Bar of Michigan as one of this year's recipients of the State Bar Champion of Justice Award.

Kimberly E. O'Leary, Professor

Presented, a poster presentation on "Faculty Learning Community: Building Student Responsibility for Learning" at the Association of American Law School's Conference on Clinical Legal Education, May 4-8, 2010 in Baltimore. She also participated in a concurrent session called "Developing and Using Learning Objectives and Assessment to Plan Clinical Courses" with faculty members Patricia Mock and Chris Church on May 5.

James D. Robb, Associate Dean

Reappointed, by the Birmingham City Commission to another three-year term on the city's Board of Ethics. He serves as chair of the board.

John Rooney, Emeritus Professor

Attended, the annual meeting of the Law & Society Association in Chicago, on May 27-30, 2010.

Marjorie Russell, Professor

Served, as a staff member of the Trial Lawyers College in Wyoming, July 16-23, 2010. She taught trial skills using action methods. **Served**, as a host and presenter on voir dire methods, and a teacher for the advanced methods sections for the 7th Annual Cooley/CDAM Criminal Defense Trial College in Lansing, Mich., Aug. 20-25, 2010.

Devin Schindler, Associate Professor

Accepted, for publication, an article entitled "Between Transparency and Security: Prior Restraints, FOIA and the Power of the Executive," by the University of California's Hastings *Constitutional Law Quarterly*. **Moderated**, a televised debate among the Republican candidates for Michigan's Third Congressional District on July 22, 2010. The debate was sponsored by Cooley Law School and the Federalist Society.

Kevin Scott, Associate Professor

Coached, the Black Law Students Association's National Mock Trial Team in the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial competition held during the Midwest Black Law Student Association's Regional Convention in Minneapolis, Minn., in February 2010. **Participated**, in the State Bar of Michigan Diversity Colloquia on June 28, 2010. The focus was to

assist in fashioning a State Bar of Michigan Pledge in support of diversity and inclusion in Michigan's legal profession. The official pledge was passed by the board of commissioners on July 23, 2010. **Honored**, by the YMCA of Metropolitan Lansing (Mich.) with an Appreciation Award for eight years of service, including three terms as treasurer, in May 2010. **Attended**, the Lansing Black Lawyers Association's 13th Annual Otis M. Smith Scholarship Banquet on March 12, 2010 at the Country Club of Lansing (Mich.). **Attended**, the fifth annual Howard Soifer Memorial Lecture in Sports and Entertainment Law, featuring Diane Dietz and Steve Smith, on July 20, 2010, at Cooley's Lansing campus.

Jane Siegel, Associate Professor

Republished, her article, "Thank You, Sarah Palin, for Reminding Us: It's Not About the Clothes," in Thomson West's anthology, *Women and The Law*, in August 2010. The article was originally published in the *University of Virginia's Journal of Social Policy and The Law* (Fall 2009).

Otto Stockmeyer, Emeritus Professor

Co-edited, and contributed to the recently released 2010 *Cumulative Supplement to Michigan Law of Damages and Other Remedies*. The book was first published by the Institute for Continuing Legal Education in 1979 and is now in its third edition. It is available in print and online editions. **Published**, remarks made at the 2010 National Conference of Law Reviews in the Spring 2010 issue of *The Scrivener*, the quarterly newsletter of Scribes, the American Society of Legal Writers.

Victoria Vuletic, Associate Professor

Published, an article, "Is Property More Important than People? The Moral Inadequacy of Model Rule of Professional Conduct 1.6," in the spring edition of the *Charlotte Law Review*.

William Weiner, Professor

Attended, the LL.M. Fair Europe, at the University of Münster, Germany. Cooley was invited to present information regarding its new LL.M. in U.S. Legal Studies for Foreign Attorneys. **Visited**, with eight Cooley students attending the University of San Diego's summer program in Paris, for an informal wine-and-snacks event.

Derek S. Witte, Assistant Professor

Partnered, with Symantec and Compsat Technologies, to teach an e-discovery seminar to business leaders in Indianapolis, Ind., on May 18, 2010, and Southfield, Mich. on June 16, 2010. **Profiled**, in the *Grand Rapids Press*, on May 2, 2010 in a Sunday profile entitled "Wheels of Justice," by Greg Johnson.

CLASS NOTES

1977 Felch Class

Byington, Robert, an attorney with the Depot Law Office in Hastings, Mich., received the Red Rose Citation, the highest honor issued by the Hastings Rotary Club. Byington served as the club's president in 2006 and 2007.

1977 Grave Class

Brey, Ingrid, an immigration attorney, has joined the Detroit-based employment law firm of Nemeth Burwell, PC, as Of Counsel.

1980 Bushnell Class

Terpstra-Cagle, Mary, is the statewide director for Children's Legal Services for the Florida Department of Children and Families.

Wynn, James F., an attorney in Petoskey, Mich., has purchased the Arnold Transit Company ferry line. The line transports passengers between Mackinac Island, Mich., and St. Ignace and Mackinaw City, Mich.

1981 Dethmers Class

Hemker, Joseph B., of Howard & Howard Attorneys, PLLC, in Chicago, spoke at the Illinois Bankers Association annual meeting in June 2010 on the topic of strategic planning in a troubled economy. Phone: (312) 456-3444; e-mail: jhemker@howardandhoward.com.

1981 Long Class

Brown, José T., was elected as chairperson of the Negligence Section of the State Bar of Michigan. He also was named, for a fifth consecutive year, as a Michigan Super Lawyer in the area of medical malpractice defense. Selection of Michigan Super Lawyers is a thorough, multiphase process that involves peer nominations and evaluations, a blue ribbon panel review, and independent research of candidates. Each candidate is evaluated on 12 indicators of peer recognition and professional achievement. Only five percent of the attorneys in the state are named to the list. Mr. Brown is a partner with the law firm of Cline, Cline & Griffin in Flint, Mich.

1983 Chandler Class

Aaron, Richard J., an attorney with the Okemos, Mich.-based law firm of Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes, PLC, was selected for inclusion in the 2010 Michigan Super Lawyers publication. Selection of Michigan Super Lawyers is a thorough, multiphase process that involves peer nominations and evaluations, a blue ribbon panel review, and independent research of candidates. Each candidate is evaluated on 12 indicators of peer recognition and professional achievement. Only five percent of the attorneys in the state are named to the list.

1985 T. Smith Class

Hayward, Randy, of Munger, Mich., is a pilot for American Airlines and owner of Clean Air Biofuels. He also farms with his father and brother.

1985 Morell Class

Jonas, the Hon. Susan A., was inducted into the Grand Haven (Mich.) High School Hall of Fame. She has served as Chief Judge for Michigan's 58th District Court for 14 years.

1987 Morse Class

Folks, Karen L., was appointed city attorney for Ecorse, Mich. She previously served as chief executive officer and chief legal officer of the YWCA in Flint, Mich.

1987 Grant Class

Amesbury, the Hon. William H., was elected as a judge on the Court of Common Pleas of the 11th Judicial District, serving Luzerne County in Pennsylvania.

1988 Green Class

Ittner, Lori A., shareholder in the Grand Rapids, Mich., office of Garan Lucow Miller, PC, was elected as president of the Michigan Defense Trial Counsel Association on May 15, 2010. At Garan Lucow Miller, she concentrates her practice in the areas of Medicare/ Medicaid recovery actions and defense, Employee Retirement Income Security Act litigation, Michigan's no-fault insurance personal injury protection benefits, and catastrophic injuries and accommodations in housing and transportation.

1988 Pratt Class

Kayes, Karen, an estate attorney with Warner Norcross and Judd, LLP, in Muskegon, Mich., spoke on wills and trusts at the Heartland Health Care Center in Whitehall, Mich. on Aug. 25, 2010. She specializes in trusts, wills, patient advocate designations, and powers of attorney.

1989 Douglass Class

Millenbach, Paul J., a company shareholder with the firm of Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, PC, has been elected to serve on the firm's executive committee. He practices in the firm's Farmington Hills, Mich. and Detroit offices and serves as co-leader of the firm's general litigation practice group. In addition to his transportation practice, Mr. Millenbach handles Michigan no-fault insurance litigation, mass tort defense of asbestos disease cases, commercial litigation, and family law matters. He also is a visiting lecturer on transportation law at the University of Denver's Sturm College of Law. Mr. Millenbach was recently appointed by Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm to the Michigan Truck Safety Commission. He is assigned to represent private motor carriers for a term expiring Aug. 4, 2011.

1993 Moore Class

Thacker, Connie, an attorney with Rhoades McKee, has been chosen as a member of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. She is one of only two women in west Michigan to be chosen as a member and one of about 45 in Michigan.

1995 Bird Class

Gibson, Lisa, was named one of the 2010 Ten Outstanding Young Americans by the U.S. Junior Chamber (Jaycees) on June 5, 2010, in New Orleans, La. As an attorney, she has worked as a child advocate focused on policy changes to improve the lives of at-risk children. She also is a conflict mitigator, and author of the award-winning book, *Life In Death: A Journey From Terrorism To Triumph*. In July 2006, Ms. Gibson started the Peace and Prosperity Alliance, an organization that attempts to bridge the gap between the developed and developing world through cross-cultural partnerships between government, business, civic and religious leaders. Recently, she raised more than \$25,000 to benefit children in Libya with HIV/AIDS. Gibson resides in Colorado Springs, Colo.

1995 Kuhn Class

Pohl, Lisa M., has joined the law firm of Miller Canfield as a senior attorney in the Litigation and Trial Group, in the firm's Grand Rapids, Mich., office. She specializes in state and local taxation. Previously, she was employed by the public accounting firm Crowe Horwath LLP.

1996 Moody Jr. Class

Hissong, Stacy L., joined the law firm of Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC in Okemos, Mich. Prior to joining Fahey Schultz, Ms. Hissong was a shareholder with the Hubbard Law Firm in Lansing and later with the real estate appraisal firm of Vertalka and Vertalka, where she worked as a commercial real estate appraiser.

White, Amy, has joined Chemical Bank in St. Joseph, Mich., as trust site manager.

1997 Fellows Class

Young, Gary, an attorney at Robert K. Young & Associates, and his wife Stacey Young, announce the birth of a daughter, Nora Natalie Young, born on Tuesday, October 27, 2009. Phone (516) 826-8938; e-mail: yong31@optonline.net.

1999 Flanningan Class

Watkins, Cecil, was appointed Rowan County Attorney in Morehead, Ky., on November 30, 2009, and elected Rowan County Attorney, on May 18, 2010. Phone: (606) 784-4640; e-mail: cwatkins@kyprosecutors.com.

1999 Fead Class

Malinowski, Christopher, was recently elected as a Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. He practices in Virginia and is a principal in the firm of Hottell Malinowski Group, PC. Phone: 703-352-5666.

1999 Weadock Class

Sommers, Jay, announced that he and his wife, Katie, had twins, Jack and Lauren, on Dec. 30, 2009. They join their big sister, Maggie, age 3. Jay continues to prosecute felony cases in Scott County, Iowa and also develops real-estate. Phone: (563) 326-8232; e-mail: jsommers@scottcountyiowa.com.

2000 Rutledge Class

Brigman, Constance L., was elected to serve a three-year term on the State Bar of Michigan's (SBM) Probate and Estate Planning Council, part of the Probate and Estate Planning Section. She also is the chairperson of the SBM's Guardianships and Conservatorships Committee for the Probate and Estate Planning Section and serves on the Law-Related Education and Public Outreach Committee. The Institute for Continuing Legal Education recently selected Ms. Brigman as a chapter author for the next edition of the *Michigan Guardianship and Conservatorship Handbook*. Ms. Brigman's law practice is in the Grand Rapids, Mich. area. She frequently serves as a judge for moot court and mock trial competitions at Cooley's Grand Rapids campus.

2001 Blair Class

Grech-Clapper, Caroline, a partner in the Farmington Hills, Mich., office of Secrest, Wardle, Lynch, Hampton, Truex & Morley, PC, was selected for inclusion in the 2010-2011 edition of *Who's Who in North America*. She is co-chair of her firm's premises liability practice group, and practices in the areas of employment law, premises liability, and divorce.

2002 T. Johnson Class

Chartier, Mary, and law partner Natalie Alane (Chase Class, 2002) of Alane & Chartier, PLC, recently won two cases at the Michigan Supreme Court. Alane & Chartier, PLC, specializes in appellate work in state and federal court, as well as criminal defense and family law. Phone: (517) 482-2000; e-mail: mary@alanechartier.com.

2002 Chase Class

Alane, Natalie, and Mary Chartier (T. Johnson Class, 2002) of Alane & Chartier, PLC, recently won two cases at the Michigan Supreme Court. Alane & Chartier, PLC, specializes in appellate work in state and federal court, as well as family law and criminal defense. Phone: (517) 482-2000 and natalie@alanechartier.com.

2003 O. Smith Class

Frimpong, Ben, was appointed by the Michigan Attorney Discipline Board as a hearing panelist. Hearing panelists conduct trial-level proceedings in which the Attorney Grievance Commission has filed a formal complaint alleging that a member of the Bar has committed misconduct. He also has been appointed chair of the board of directors of the Michigan's chapter of the Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc.

2005 Starr Class

Feltman, Michael, an immigration attorney, has established a law office in Dodge City, Kan. He also has offices in Okeene and Elk City, Okla. Previously, he practiced immigration law in Alamo and Harlingen, Texas.

2006 Reid Class

Chisholm, Erica, opened a law practice at 205 Seventh St. N., Wahpeton, N.D. She is a former assistant city prosecutor and practices primarily in the areas of criminal defense, bankruptcy, and family law.

2007 Fisher Class

Bower II, Ross K., an associate attorney with the Okemos, Mich.-based law firm of Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes, PLC, was selected for inclusion in the 2010 Michigan Rising Stars list by Super Lawyers magazine. Selection of Michigan Rising Stars is a thorough, multiphase process that involves peer nominations and evaluations, a blue ribbon panel review, and independent research of candidates. To be eligible, a lawyer must be either 40 years old or younger, or in practice for ten years or less. No more than 2.5 percent of Michigan's lawyers who meet the criteria are named to the Rising Stars list.

2007 Boston Class

Bettis, Capt. Ross R., was appointed bilateral affairs officer for the Office of Security Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia. He recently completed his third combat tour of duty as a member of the Michigan National Guard and his second trip to Afghanistan. He also served as the regional command south region chief at the Counterinsurgency Training Center in Kabul.

Tomak, Tracie L., opened a law firm at 330 E. Columbia Ave., Battle Creek, Mich. She has a general practice focusing on family law, criminal defense, and estate planning/probate.

2007 Brickley Class

Zevalking, John G., has been hired as an associate in the appellate department of Collins Einhorn Farrell Ulanoff, PC, in Southfield, Mich. He previously served as a law clerk for the Hon. Michael F. Cavanaugh of the Michigan Supreme Court. He has served as an adjunct professor at Cooley Law School in Lansing and Auburn Hills, Mich., teaching Advanced Legal Writing and Moot Court.

2009 Coleman Class

Sharp, Tara L., has joined the McCarthy Smith Law Group, a management-side labor and employment firm in Portage, Mich.

Winters, Nicole L., has joined the law firm of Brown & Crouppen in St. Louis, Mo. E-mail: nicolew@getbc.com.

2009 Riley Class

Scott, Patricia, has joined the law firm of Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, PC, as an associate in the Lansing, Mich. office practicing in the areas of banking, finance, and real estate.

2009 Suouris Class

Cross, Steven, has joined his father, Dennis, in practice at the Cross Law Firm, 407 Michigan St., Petoskey, Mich.
2010 Woodward Class

Brown, Larry J., has opened a law practice in Hillsdale, Mich. He is focusing primarily in the areas of elder law, estate planning, wills, trusts, and probate matters. Phone: (517) 797-4599; e-mail: contact@LJBLawOffice.com.

Pendry, Laura E., has joined David L. Pendry and J. Andrew Root in an association of independent practitioners at 133 E. Market St., Xenia, Ohio. Phone: (937) 372-4919.

Plont, Ross D., has joined Gruel Mills Nims & Pylman, LLP, in Grand Rapids, Mich., as an associate specializing in personal injury law and medical malpractice. Plont has been working at Gruel Mills Nims & Pylman, LLP for a year, first as a student extern and then as a law clerk.

Podolksy, Kellie E., opened a law firm at 330 E. Columbia Ave., Battle Creek, Mich. She has a general practice focusing on estate planning/probate, family law, landlord/tenant issues, and criminal defense.

In Memorium

2001 Blair Class

Wise, Victor A., 57, of Fort Wayne, Ind., passed away on July 14, 2010. After 22 years of service, he retired from the Fort Wayne Police Department and was employed with Earth First Services.

2004 Toy Class

Benavidez, Angela C., 46, died of complications from cancer on July 17, 2010, in Killeen, Texas. She was a U.S. Army veteran of 15 years. She is survived by her father, Phil Benavidez Sr.; mother, Alicia Vela; brother, Phil Benavidez Jr.; son, Raymond Beecham, and many other relatives. Donations can be made to the American Cancer Society.

Cooley encourages all graduates to contribute information to the Class Notes. We encourage information about your law practice and other accomplishments in the legal profession.

E-mail: communications@cooley.edu

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