

ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

MMXIII | Issue II

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

The month of May is often invoked to symbolize a felicitous and transformational time.

As I write this, the class of 2013 is poised to board the stage at the City National Grove in Anaheim, and perform that single ritual that is the culmination of so many other rites and rituals that comprise a legal education. One hundred and twenty-five graduates will receive their diplomas, welcomed into their new professional lives by United States Appellate Judge Jacqueline Nguyen, recently named to the Ninth Circuit by President Obama. As is our custom, we will also be using the occasion to induct four graduates into our Hall of Fame: Patricia Lee-Gulley, Solange Ritchie, Doug Schroeder, and Eric Traut, all highly accomplished attorneys who have contributed to Western State and its students in countless ways, and all of whom set professional benchmarks to which the graduates can happily aspire.

I look forward to the privilege of not only congratulating every graduate personally, but also meeting the individuals who supported those graduates and made this endeavor happen in the first place. Judge Nguyen, our alumni honorees, and the students who will be receiving their juris doctor degrees all have this in common: Their achievements were facilitated by a coterie of family members, committed teachers and professional mentors, all of whom provided crucial assistance in working towards an achievement that by its nature is too big for a single person to accomplish.

This is a felicitous and transformational time, but not one without its struggles.

The class of 2013 faces the residue of a challenging job market, and the graduating classes that follow are confronting mounting educational costs. Western State has always been the beneficiary of the generosity and support of alumni who fund our scholarships and hire our graduates, and the need for that generosity has not abated. I can assure you that there is no more noble endeavor than providing assistance to your future professional peers at this important time, and no more effective way to accomplish that than supporting scholarships and looking to Western State to help with your organization's hiring needs.

I would like to close on a further note of gratitude. Western State has received the final findings of the Accreditation Committee of the American Bar Association's Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar concerning the school's recent compulsory re-accreditation site inspection. That committee has concluded that Western State is in compliance with all of the ABA Standards and will therefore remain on the list of the ABA's approved law schools. This is an auspicious achievement, the credit for which rightly belongs to everyone in this message – students, faculty, staff, and alumni.



FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS



Professor Marianna Dellinger's article "California as an Oil Boom State?" will appear in the forthcoming issue of *Orange County Lawyer*.



Professor Stacey Sobel moderated the Civil Enforcement Panel of *Law Review's* "Medical Marijuana Symposium" on March 23rd.

ALUMNI KUDOS



Scott Hughes (Class of 2007) successfully appealed his client's discharge by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department before the California Second District Court of Appeal. His co-council was former Western State Dean Ronald Talmo.

WESTERN STATE College of Law

LOS ANGELES ALUMNUS HOSTS WESTERN STATE STUDENTS



From left to right: Jim Cheydleur; Students: Madison Burga, Beverly Bashor, Cynthia Farias, and Angelina Lerma; Andrew Struve (Class of 1998)

Four students were guests of Western State Hall of Famer (2012), Andrew Struve, at the Tenth Annual Gala of the Friends of the Los Angeles County Law Library, held on April 3rd at the Library's spectacular location in Downtown Los Angeles, near the Mosk Courthouse. Struve, a partner at the nearby Los Angeles office of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, is a member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Library, who raise funds and provide support for one of the world's foremost legal research institutions.

Founded in 1891, the LA Law Library is the second largest public law library in the nation. It maintains public library partnerships and courthouse collections throughout the County, and is renowned for providing state-of-the-art research services delivered in innovative ways to a far ranging and diverse clientele. Western State Students Beverly Bashor, Madison Burga, Cynthia Farias, and Angelina Lerma joined Struve in honoring Judge Lee Smalley Edmon and Richard Burdge Jr. who received the Beacon of Justice Awards.

STUDENTS AT INN ON ETHICS

On March 14, several students from Western State participated in a CLE presentation on Judicial Ethics at the March meeting of the Peter M. Elliott Inn of Court. Edgar Cruz, Shadee Duarte and Anastasiya Melenteyeva helped draft and perform in hypothetical skits illustrating ethical dilemmas judges can face under the recently amended California Code of Judicial Ethics. Justice Richard Fybel of the Fourth District Court of Appeal moderated and was effusive in his praise of the students' preparation and poise.

During the April 11 Inn meeting, several other Western State students participated in a very well-received CLE program on bias in the legal profession. They are: Ashlee Edwards, David Huffman, Jacqueline Salazar and Jeff Wasserman.

Each year, Western State pays the Inn dues for a number of students in the graduating class, many of whom join the Inn as lawyer members after they have been admitted to the Bar.

—Professor Kevin Mohr



Colleagues in Law

A Celebration of Alumni Achievement



Click here
for complete
interview:



Robert Coviello,
Western State class of 1980



- Member of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA)
- Past Chair of the O.C. Bar Labor & Employment Law Section
- Frequent Speaker on MCLE Employment Related and Class Action Matters
- Fulltime Neutral With PMA Dispute Resolution



What does being a Western State Alum mean to you?

Western State itself really gave me a chance that no other law school would give me. Having been a sub-par performer in college, my post-graduate options were limited. Back in the day, Western State's admission criteria were more relaxed than today. Fortunately, I knew after the first week of classes that I'd found my profession. I've really never stopped enjoying it.

What do you like most about the practice of law?

I enjoy the adversarial nature of the profession. I consider it a gentlemen's fight. Play by the rules, don't cross the line, accept the results. That's what makes our system great. As lawyers we've taken an oath to do our small part in the overall system called justice. It often takes young, aggressive lawyers many years to realize that everything doesn't have to be a fight and that respect and civility matter. I still believe it to be a very much respected profession.

What do you like least about the practice of law?

I'd have to say the number of hours it takes to maintain a successful practice. Those days are somewhat behind me now, but at times it seems like whole decades have passed me by. It never would have worked without the support of my wife. Although I worked long hours, I would never bring work home with me.

How has the practice changed since you first started?

Well, we now have computers, fax machines and cell phones! When I started all we had was a selectric typewriter and some carbon copy paper. If you were late for court you would pull over to a pay phone and call the office so your secretary could call the court.

The use of the A.D.R. process has increased dramatically. I believe people understand the cost-benefit. This trend will likely continue due to the budgetary issues the courts are facing.



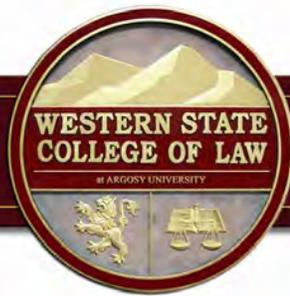
Robert Coviello (Class of 1980) has joined [PMA Dispute Resolution](#) as a neutral at the company's Orange County Office.



Robert Wenzel (Class of 1980) has been appointed Co-chief Operating Officer at Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud and Romo in Cerritos. He was formerly chair of the firm's Employment Services Group.

Claire Green (Class of 1992) recently joined the Social Security Advisory Board as the Deputy Staff Director. Before that Ms. Green spent two and a half years on Capitol Hill as a Congressional Fellow through Georgetown University's Government Affairs Institute.

Commissioner John Slawson (Class of 1976) of the Los Angeles County Superior Court was the subject of a feature profile in the May 6th issue of the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*.



Colleagues in Law

A Celebration of Alumni Achievement



Click here
for complete
interview:



Mari J. Frank, Esq., CIPP

Western State class of 1985



- **Attorney/Mediator, Professor, Dispute Resolution, Professional Speaker/Trainer, Certified Information Privacy, Certified Trainer, State Bar of California, Author, Radio Talk Show Host, and Media Commentator**

Of what success are you most proud?

I'm grateful that I've had clients whose lives I've truly helped to be better. I've literally saved some clients' lives. One client was going to kill himself while on the phone with me at 3 AM. He was a victim of criminal identity theft and couldn't get a job; his wife took the kids and left him, and he was fraudulently deemed a murderer. Aside from clearing his record, I arranged for him to tell his story on Dateline NBC; he did a superb job on the show, and that changed everything. I told him, "Take that Dateline tape with you to every job interview." It worked! He got a great job and was able to see his kids again. He recently wrote me on Facebook, "You're the best, you saved my life!"

I've been so blessed to be able to use my legal training to branch out in many directions. By a quirk of fate (a woman stole my identity as a lawyer), I found myself writing legislation and testifying before the California legislature and Congress on identity theft issues. That led me to write several books on privacy and identity theft, take an exam to become a certified privacy expert, and serve as a qualified expert witness on privacy issues nationwide. As a result, I serve as a media commentator on privacy issues on such shows as Dateline, 48 Hours, Investigative Reports, and dozens of national TV and radio shows, and hosted a 90 minute PBS Television special *"Protecting Yourself in the Information Age"*. And as an outgrowth of my media expertise, in 2005, I became a radio host on KUCI 88.9 FM in Irvine. I currently have two radio shows: *"Privacy Piracy"* in which I interview privacy experts regarding data privacy in the information age; and *"Prescriptions for Healing Conflict"* which is dedicated to discussions with authors and directors of peace institutes. And with my passion for teaching, I presently teach Negotiation, Mediation and Conflict Management at Brandman University in Irvine and give MCLE workshops as a certified trainer for the State Bar. So with a law school education from Western State, you never know where life will take you!

What do you like least about the practice of law?

The acrimony. I stopped litigating 15 years ago because it can be very nasty and very negative. In litigation, some advocates lack civility and engage in dirty tricks instead of intellectual discourse (the fact that courts have developed "civility tool kits" to encourage respect and ethics is quite telling).

Learn more about Mari's many endeavors at www.MariFrank.com; www.conflicthealing.com, www.identitytheft.org; and www.kuci.org/privacypiracy.

ALUMNI KUDOS



Antonette Barilla (Class of 2002) has been appointed Director of Academic Support and Bar Support and Assistant Professor at Elon University School of Law in Greensboro, North Carolina. She was previously Assistant Director of Academic Support and Bar Services at Western State.



Michael Hyams (Class of 1994) has been named Deputy Chief of Airport Police for Los Angeles World Airports, the operator of LAX and several other Southland-based airports. Deputy Chief Hyams, who has a Ph.D in Psychology and is an honors graduate of the Los Angeles Police Academy, has previously served as Captain and Division Commander for Patrol, Detectives, and Support Services at Newport Beach Police Department, and as Executive Director of Judicial Support for the Orange County Superior Court.



Student Profile

Click here
for complete
interview:



Winnie Jow
Graduation Year: 2015

What made you decide to go to law school in the first place?

I worked as a licensing coordinator at a major publishing company. I negotiated synch licenses for songs. I handled contract administration; I was pretty good at it, so I thought I could make more money and have more professional flexibility and independence if I got a law degree.

Why Western State?

Location, Reputation, and Bar-pass rate.

Was it the right decision?

I really like Western State, particularly the writing program. I actually transferred from the University of West LA, who didn't offer a writing class until the summer before the 2nd year. I am working extremely hard in Professor Chavez's class to get everything I can out of that experience.

I'm kind of a "one-and-a-half-L."

What plans do you have following law school?

Either gain some experience working in a firm or go into solo practice doing Intellectual Property/Entertainment Law with a focus on Digital Rights; *I am one of those people who wants to tackle the internet problem.*

My solution is to seek the guidance and mentorship of people at the front of I.P. cases. I probably won't study for the New York bar exam; I like where I live!

What do you do for fun/to keep your sanity while in law school?

I surf for sanity. For me surfing is not just a way to get cardio-vascular exercise, and a total body workout, it's my way to relax and to challenge myself. I like to call it, "Surf Therapy." While school is in session, I paddle out maybe once a week, if I am lucky.

I also play music to balance out my right brain; it helps me stay creative.

What would you like to say to our alums?

I'm looking forward to contributing to the success and reputation of our alumni in the Southern California legal community.



Portasha Moore (Class of 1997) was co-counsel on the recent racial harassment case of Wright v. Los Angeles which resulted in a \$1.2 million verdict for her client.



Virginia L. Landry (Class of 1987) was featured in the May 2013 edition of *Car and Driver* magazine as a top DUI defense attorney in the country. She is also the current Secretary for the California DUI Lawyers Association. She is a Certified Instructor of Standardized Field Sobriety Tests. Landry is also a Regent of the National College for DUI Defense (NCDD) and is Board Certified as a DUI Defense Attorney by the NCDD through this organization.

Judge Daniel Ramirez (Class of 1987) of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County was the subject of a feature profile in the April 18th issue of the Los Angeles Daily Journal.

Refer Someone you Know

Dear Alumni,

Each semester we are delighted to welcome relatives, friends and employees of our wonderful alumni into our entering class. After nearly half a century we are now seeing third generation members join the Western State family! Your referral of talented, motivated law students is the strong vote of confidence and support possible for the college of law. Please be aware we now offer full-time as well as part-time start options in the January class, so candidates can take the upcoming October LSAT and apply in fall to start law school in January 2014, and then earn their J.D. degree in as little as 3 to 4 years.

I believe that the current climate is perhaps the most favorable in decades for young people considering the legal profession. We hope you will encourage promising young people you know to consider law school and recommend they apply to Western State. Share with them proudly the high Bar-pass rates and good placements our recent graduates are achieving. At Western State they will receive not only a great ABA accredited legal education but also the hands-on experience to make them desirable, hit-the-ground-running candidates in the job market.

With the help and support of our powerful, engaged alumni network, they will also have invaluable connections in the legal community and benefit from the strong reputation our alumni have earned for Western State over five decades.

Please encourage qualified prospective students to contact our Admission Office about applying for January 2014 or fall 2014. We need more great alumni to follow in your footsteps!

Warm regards,

Gloria Switzer
Assistant Dean for Admissions



Admissions
Call 1-800-978-4529 or 714-459-1101 or email us at adm@wsulaw.edu.



Frank Darras (Class of 1986) of DarrasLaw has been selected by Law Dragon as one of the Law Dragon 500, a compendium of elite attorneys throughout the United States. Darras was selected for his success in building one of nation's foremost disability and long-term care practices as well as the influence he and the attorneys at his firm, [DarrasLaw](http://DarrasLaw.com), have exerted nationwide in helping sick and disabled insureds.

Darras is also one of the few attorneys nationwide to have been named a *Super Lawyer* ten years running. *Super Lawyers* is a rating service of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas who have attained a high-degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. Darras stands with more than 120 alumni of Western State who have achieved a *Super Lawyer* status.

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1L Moot Court Competition



[From left to right] Prof. Park, Lynet' Shigg, Korry Huffman, Kylie Starr, Manolo Madela, Virginia Ksadzhikeyan, Giselle Garcia, Alex Shaaban, Judge Michael Libutti, Dean Adams, Oliver Burchill, Kaitlyn Daley, Suzie Kersh, Gabrielle Ibrahim, Prof. Roberts, Prof. Todd

Western State College of Law congratulates the "Top-12 Students" in the 1L Moot Court Competition. All first year students participated in the preliminary rounds of the Moot Court Competition as part of their Legal Writing & Research II class during mid-April. Over 40 lawyers and judges, many of whom are Western State alums, volunteered as justices for the week-long competition. Judge Michael Libutti (Class of '87, HoF 2012) and Judge Sheila Hanson (Class of '88, HoF 2010), along with Dean William Adams, presided over the Final Rounds on April 29th in the Darras Moot Court Room. Anyone interested in volunteering to judge future moot court competitions can contact Professor Lori Roberts at loroberts@wsulaw.edu.

Additional Alumni Judges:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Neil Pedersen (Class of 1998, HoF 2011) | Andrew Struve (Class of 1998, HoF 2012) |
| Amity Hartman Gleason (Class of 2009) | Mary Lou Wachsmith (Class of 1990) |
| Enrique Arevalo (Class of 1979) | Donna Bader (Class of 1977) |
| Yoshi Kubota (Class of 1994, HoF 2012) | Teresa McNamara (Class of 2008) |
| Dallas Simkins (Class of 2011) | Jason Schwartz (Class of 2000) |
| Demi Meininger (Class of 2011) | Guillermo Tello (Class of 2011) |
| Arman Demirjian (Class of 2010) | David Macher (Class of 1987) |
| Armond Jackson (Class of 2011) | Robin Black (Class of 1991) |
| Brian Trela (Class of 1985) | Tracy Miller (Class of 2001) |
| Judge Jack Holmes (Class of 1994) | |

Solange Ritchie, Esq. April 11, 2013



Would you like to know how to build a stronger relationship with your client or reset the five year trial statute? Just ask any of the students who attended alumna Solange Ritchie's recent presentation on winning litigation strategies. In addressing a group of highly interested students, Ms. Ritchie provided a true insider's perspective on all aspects of trial work including developing discovery tactics and how to create a genuine narrative when preparing a case to go to trial.

Ms. Ritchie, a graduate of Western State (1994) and 2013 Hall of Fame inductee, described the early years of her law career. Having initially enrolled in an out-of-state law school, she moved to California and enrolled in Western State College of Law to complete her degree. After a few years in practice, she met and married attorney Steve Young, eventually joining his practice that specializes in last minute trials, primarily representing plaintiffs. Ms. Ritchie shared several memorable stories of their cases, including creative ways to sway jurors and win cases. She also provided a Top 5 bibliography of must-read books for students interested in pursuing a career in litigation.

Ms. Ritchie emphasized that she is proud of the education she received at Western State and added that the school is renowned for creating graduates who have a passion for the practice of law and an abiding respect for the integrity of the profession. She advised students to take advantage of networking opportunities in the legal community and as she passed out her business cards, encouraged each one to stay in contact with her. Then, in true Solange style, she was off to the next event: an OCBA mixer in Costa Mesa.

Anabella Bonfa, Esq. March 20, 2013



Western State alumna Anabella Bonfa (Class of 1994) provided intriguing glimpses into the life of a trade secrets litigator during her presentation to students on March 20. Starting with the early years of her career, Ms. Bonfa shared stories of her discovery strategies and trial successes, including

how she outmaneuvered a team of eight attorneys to win a stunning verdict for her client in a matter involving stolen trade secrets.

Ms. Bonfa emphasized the importance of hard work and how to develop an in-depth approach to discovery. She emphasized that most cases are won based on the facts, which makes it extremely important to plan case discovery with a solid understanding of the legal issues. Ms. Bonfa also discussed the importance of networking, both in law school and practice, and why client development is an important component of being a successful attorney.

Following Anabella's presentation, many of the students spoke with her individually and were all very impressed with her drive, warmth and dedication to the practice of law.

The Simplicity of Symplicity

“What on earth is Symplicity?!”

Simply put, **Symplicity** is Western State's in-house career services website where all things career related can be found. **Symplicity** allows users to create an individual profile based on their practice interests and apply to posted job openings. It also **allows employers to post their open positions directly to the website at no cost**. Current openings on **Symplicity** include internships, attorney positions, and full-time and part-time jobs. Each job posting reaches over 12,500 registered users within the vast Western State student and alumni network.

If you are an employer and would like to submit a free post for an open position, or a Western State alum who wishes to receive sign-in information, please contact Pam Davidson at pdavidson@wsulaw.edu. You can also find us on LinkedIn.



ALUMNI KUDOS



Lucetta Dunn (Class of 1981) was recently presented the *Excellence in Leadership Award* by California State University, Fullerton's Center for Leadership. In 2012 she received the Southern California Association of Governments' *Private Sector Partner of the Year Award* as well as the California Transportation Foundation's *Person of the Year Award*.

Gregg Gibbs (Class of 1995) has co-authored *Report Writing for Police and Correctional Officers* with Bruce Berg and Michael Miller, published by McGraw Hill. In addition to practicing law, he teaches at California State University, Long Beach and is a 32 year veteran of the Irvine Police Department. He also served on the California Commission on Peace Officer's Standards and Training Ad Hoc Committee on Field Training.

Martin Brhel Jr. (Class of 1977), who currently *pro tems* for the Superior Court, also has three books coming up this year: *America's Two Toughest Sheriffs*; *Deadly Duty*; and *Courtroom Survival for Traffic Officers* – all published by Keith Publishers.

LAW TEACHING FOR ADJUNCT FACULTY CONFERENCE

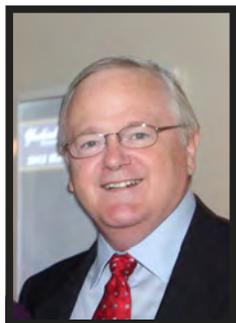
2013



Professor Paula Manning
Class of 1996



Professor Doug Schroeder
Class of 1988



Professor Neil Pedersen
Class of 1988



Professor Monica Todd

On April 12, law school administrators, national experts in legal learning, adjunct faculty and practitioners from throughout Southern California gathered at Western State College of Law for a conference devoted to Law Teaching for Adjunct Faculty. Western State faculty members Paula Manning, Lori Roberts and Susan Keller helped organize the conference with faculty from our co-host, the Institute for Law Teaching and Learning. The conference offered workshops on course design, classroom teaching techniques, the process of applying for adjunct teaching positions, and many other topics of interest to both current and prospective adjunct faculty and the administrators who work with them.

Several Western State alumni attended and participated in well-received panels. Professor Paula Manning (class of 1996), the Director of Western State's Academic Support program and a national expert on law student learning, organized a panel on providing student feedback with Professor Douglas Schroeder (class of 1988), a member of the Western State adjunct faculty. Professor Neil Pedersen (class of 1988) shared his experiences in developing as an adjunct faculty member on a panel geared toward prospective faculty members, and Professor Paul Smith (class of 1989) gave a presentation on assessing learning in his Negotiations class as part of a panel on Outcomes Assessment.

We would like to thank our sponsors, whose contributions helped make this conference a resounding success!



Western State MEDICAL MARIJUANA

Law Review SYMPOSIUM

Symposium Team

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Faculty Advisor

Sandeep Dhillon
Editor in Chief

Samuel Solodar
Symposium Editor

Jared Willis
Marketing Editor

Katie McHale
Vanessa Moran
Sabrina Narain
Jeff Smetana
Stephanie Smith
Kurtis Urien
Marina Villavicencio

Dear Western State colleagues and staff:

As this year's Law Review Faculty Advisor, I am proud to announce that on Saturday, March 23, the Western State Law Review hosted a tremendously successful symposium on medical marijuana to a sold out crowd of practitioners and some students in Room 102 of the law school.

I have heard nothing but rave reviews and want to thank everyone at the law school who made this event possible - from Jon Evans in Facilities, Jim Cheydeur, Tina Safi and RJ in Development, Gloria Switzer and her Admission team, my colleagues David Snashoff, Elizabeth Jones and Stacey Sabel who moderated our three panels, Dean Sheppard who graciously welcomed attendees on behalf of the law school, Dean Adams for his support of the event, and of course the students who worked so hard to make this event the success it was - for those who haven't heard me carry on in person, Sam Solodar's work was exceptional, he was a one-man hurricane as he swept the event along. I also want to thank Jared Willis, who pushed the concept of holding a symposium on the controversial and current hot topic of medical marijuana.

I can't list all of the students who helped make the event a success, but I do hope you will take the time to personally congratulate any of the law review students you know this was truly a team effort and we couldn't have done it alone!

Edith R. Warkentine
Professor of Law
Western State College of Law



YOUNG ALUM MIXER



WESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF LAW ALUMNI NETWORK

23
MAY
7:00 - 9:00 P.M.



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Leadership Pipeline



ON THURSDAY, APRIL 18TH, 2013, A SELECT GROUP OF COLLEGE OF LAW STUDENT ORG. LEADERSHIP ATTENDED THIS YEAR'S LEADERSHIP PIPELINE MIXER, HOSTED BY WESTERN STATE ALUMNA, SOLANGE RITCHIE, ESQ. (CLASS OF 1994), AT HER HOME IN NEWPORT BEACH. THE EVENING'S DELICIOUS APPETIZERS AND FESTIVE BEVERAGES FUELED THE AFFINITY OF WESTERN STATE STUDENT LEADERS AND MS. RITCHIE'S CLOSE CONTACTS FROM THE VARIOUS ORANGE COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATIONS IN ATTENDANCE.



WESTERN STATE

College of Law

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Western State administers student scholarships through the Education Foundation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation established to receive donations on behalf of the school and disburse those gifts as scholarships to worthy students at the College of Law.

To submit an alumni news item:

alumni@wsulaw.edu



IN FOND MEMORY

- L. Darryl Anderson (Class of 1978)
- M. Constance Cohn (class of 1982)
- Roma V. Hall (Class of 1979)
- H. Michael Morand (Class of 1979)
- David Newman (Class of 1978)
- Ronald Wayne Roper (Class of 1979)
- Glen Umeda (Class of 1989)

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We hope you have enjoyed this issue of *Alumni Highlights*.

Your input is valuable to use, so if you have any comments, ideas, and suggestions, **please let us know.**

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