

BEST SCHOOLS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

preLaw

A National Jurist publication

WINTER 2020
VOL. 23, NO. 3

BEST LAW SCHOOLS for DIVERSITY

We identify the best schools for Asians, Hispanics, African Americans and Native Americans based on student enrollment, faculty and student services.

PLUS: Atlanta's John Marshall is off ABA probation; Florida International works bar passage magic; Stetson's trial advocacy has few rivals



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CYPRESS MAGAZINES

preLaw is published by:

Cypress Magazines

7670 Opportunity Road,
Suite 105
San Diego, CA 92111
Tel: 858-300-3200
Fax: 877-300-2232

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Cover photo by Andrew Milne

2 more schools lose ABA accreditation: Will more follow?

Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego and University of La Verne College of Law in Ontario, Calif., are the latest schools to no longer have American Bar Association accreditation. That means that seven law schools have either closed or lost ABA accreditation in the past eight years, and some believe more schools could follow.

Thomas Jefferson lost ABA accreditation in December after a lengthy appeal, and University of La Verne announced around the same time that it had chosen to voluntarily drop accreditation. While both will remain open as state-accredited schools, they join a growing list of law schools that have struggled with bar exam performance, finances and other issues.

Martin Pritikin, dean of Concord Law School at Purdue University Global, recently wrote a blog in which he noted the pressures law schools continue to face, from a new bar passage threshold to prospective students being leery of shelling out \$40,000 a year in tuition.

“Given all this, it is reasonable to expect that between one and three law schools will lose their accreditation, be placed on probation or announce closure within the coming year,” he wrote.

Concord Law School is an online school that is not accredited by the ABA.

Many believe poor bar exam performance is the most likely reason additional schools could lose accreditation. In the past, the ABA gave school five years for 75% of graduates from a particular class to pass the bar. But that timeframe has been shortened to two years. Seven law schools have twice failed to reach the 75% mark

Lost Accreditation

Schools that have closed or lost ABA accreditation	Student debt	Debt-to-income ratio
Arizona Summit Law School	\$188,191	4.16
Charlotte School of Law	\$188,985	5.11
Indiana Tech	NA	NA
Thomas Jefferson School of Law	\$195,892	5.24
University of La Verne College of Law	\$140,182	3.81
Valparaiso University Law School	\$139,821	3.78
Whittier Law School	\$196,008	5.31



since the ABA began tracking ultimate bar passage rates with the Class of 2015. (See chart below.)

University of La Verne is voluntarily opting out of the ABA because of this tougher regulation. University leaders did not think the school could meet the new requirement as the effort would have been

cost prohibitive, the university said.

Thomas Jefferson is a stand-alone school that has had a host of problems, including poor bar passage rates. Last May, the ABA stripped its accreditation, and the school unsuccessfully appealed.

Bar passage is not the only concern among law schools. A recent study by the Department of Education reported both debt and income of recent graduates, and six of the seven law schools that have closed or lost ABA accreditation had a debt-to-income ratio or 3.5 or higher, meaning that debt was 3.5 times higher than first year salary. An additional 12 ABA-accredited law schools in the U.S. have a debt-to-income ratio or 3.5 or higher, and five of them have also failed to reach the 75% bar passage threshold in recent years.

Failed to reach exam mark

Schools that have missed the 75% bar exam mark	Student debt	Debt-to-income ratio
Atlanta's John Marshall Law School	\$177,854	4.60
Barry University School of Law	\$168,309	4.65
Florida Coastal School of Law	\$198,655	5.63
Golden Gate University School of Law	\$166,264	4.24
New England Law - Boston	\$109,422	2.19
University of the District of Columbia	NA	NA
Western Michigan University Cooley Law School	\$162,011	4.50

ABA ups & downs

Some schools got Christmas presents in late 2019, and others found coal in their stockings courtesy of the ABA.

Atlanta's John Marshall Law School got a sweet gift: removal from probation. The for-profit school had been on probation since November 2018, but it was cleared by the ABA's Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar.

Atlanta's John Marshall made quite a recovery, considering it had been hit for a number of compliance issues, which the ABA said were "substantial and have been persistent." One strike concerned its admissions policies. According to the ABA, incoming students need to be capable of finishing law school and passing the bar, a standard the school failed to meet.

The school has since become more selective about its admissions and has lowered class size significantly. In 2018, it had an entering class of 108 students. In 2019,

the number was 70, a 35% drop.

The school is also looking to become a nonprofit, a plan which the ABA has approved.

■ **Western New England University School of Law** also got good news. It's back in ABA compliance. The Springfield, Mass., school was sanctioned by the ABA last year for not having the financial resources to run a legal education program.

■ It was happy holidays for **Western State College of Law** too. It got ABA approval to be acquired by Westcliff University. The Irvine, Calif., law school was on the verge of closing after its former owner went into receivership. Westcliff University, also based in Irvine, is a nonprofit institution.

■ Getting coal was **Florida Coastal School of Law** in Jacksonville, which again was hit for being out of compliance and again was shot down in its attempt to seek nonprofit status. That's the second

time the ABA said no.

Florida Coastal was found not to have the financial resources to run a legal education program. Currently, it's owned by the InfiLaw Corp., which once held three nonprofit law schools. The other two are closed or are closing. They had faced ABA actions too.

Florida Coastal is seeking to become a nonprofit because it believes the for-profit model is hampering recruitment of prospective students. The school is facing these issues just months after getting back into compliance for other ABA transgressions. It reduced class sizes in an effort to field better students.

■ **University of Louisville Louis D. Brandeis School of Law** got a lump of coal too. It was found to be out of compliance when it comes to having the financial resources to run an ABA-approved legal education program.

BY THE NUMBERS

96.72%

Ultimate Bar Pass rate
(2016 two-year rate)

#9

Bar Exam Preparation
National Jurist, 2017

90.8%

Employment rate*
(2018 graduates
employed overall)

#14

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A

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2018

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**Family
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A-

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*All employment statistics are 10 months after graduation as reported to ABA. Complete employment data as required under ABA Standard 509 can be found at duq.edu/law/career-services



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Enrollment drops: Where's the Trump bump?

So, it would seem that young people are now cool with President Trump. Or since his impeachment, maybe they see no need to invest a couple of hundred grand in legal education to take him on.

How else do you explain the drop in

first-year enrollment at the nation's law schools?

It fell from 38,390 in the fall of 2018 to 38,283 in the fall of 2019, according to recently released data from the ABA.

While it's a small drop, it doesn't track with the so-called Trump Bump. The nation's law schools saw a 3% uptick in enrollment in 2018, an increase some speculated was because of Trump and his policies. Polls consistently show that young people are particularly unhappy with the president.



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Surveys have shown that politics is a motivating factor when it comes to law school applications. According to a 2019 Kaplan survey, 87% of admissions officers said the political climate played a significant role in the recent increase in law school applicants.

Yet, that increase in applicants did not translate to more law school admissions — at least for the 2019 entering class.

Of course, a host of other factors besides Trump could be at play. Some schools closed, which obviously affects nationwide enrollment numbers. Schools could be toughening admission standards to strengthen their standings, as well. If some schools are being choosier in their selections, other schools may take note and do so as well to keep pace with them.

Mike Spivey, founder of the law school admissions consulting firm Spivey Consulting, said a number of factors are indeed contributing to the latest figures. For one, the economy is good, so recent college graduates have more job options. Secondly, the legal job market is not exactly smoking hot.

"The increase in employment outcomes is a derivative of smaller law school class sizes, not increased hiring demand," he said.

The applicant pool has been rising. There's been a 17% increase since the 2014-15 cycle. Yet the number of enrolled students has barely changed, he noted.

"Economists would look at this and scratch their heads," Spivey said. "But what that tells us is that there are intrinsic drivers to class size at law schools that are taking precedent over profitability."

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Yolanda Greene

RLAW '23, Minority Student Program Participant

Salaries & Debt: How much do law grads earn?

As if you needed any more reason to go to Stanford University Law School: No other school does better when it comes to graduates' debt-to-income ratio. The median debt for Stanford Law School graduates is \$120,400. The median income during their first year of employment is \$156,700.

That's right. You'll be ahead of the game. However, for most of the nation's law schools, that's not the case.

For the first time, the U.S. Department of Education released income and debt figures of college graduates, including

those receiving advanced degrees. It wanted such information known so prospective students could make more educated decisions about where — and whether — to go.

However, there have been some questions about the accuracy of the data. For instance, one admissions officer noted that the number of borrowers didn't match the number of graduates in some cases.



Still, a number of people analyzed the figures to see how the nation's law schools stacked up against each other. Derek Muller, a professor at the Pepperdine Caruso School of Law, did an analysis on his blog, *Excess of Democracy*. He came up with Stanford as No. 1.

While that might not be a big shock, there were a number of other interesting results.

The University of Iowa College of Law came in surprisingly high for debt-to-income ratio, finishing 11th. It betted such schools as New York University School of Law and University of California, Berkeley, School of Law.

There is a catch, though. University of Iowa's debt-to-income ratio was based on a median income of \$62,700 and a median debt of \$62,249, for a debt-to-income ratio of 0.99-to-1.

And if you graduate from NYU? Your first-year median income is a wee bit higher, at \$175,800. (That was the highest of all law schools.) Your debt, at \$183,857, is also a wee bit higher.

Only 11 schools have debt-to-income ratios below 1-to-1. This means that at every other law school, you're likely going to be financially behind after graduation.

In Muller's analysis, graduates of only 16 schools make six figures in their first year out of law school. But income can rise after the first year, so the picture is hardly complete.



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- 93.3%** Ultimate Bar Passage Rate for 2016 graduates (ABA disclosure based on 2016 graduates)



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School	Debt-to-income ratio	Median debt	Median income
Stanford Univ.	0.77	\$120,410	\$156,700
Harvard Univ.	0.84	\$133,617	\$158,200
Duke Univ.	0.85	\$138,000	\$162,200
Univ. of Pennsylvania	0.86	\$149,729	\$175,100
Univ. of Chicago	0.86	\$146,806	\$170,500
Cornell Univ.	0.88	\$153,937	\$175,200
Northwestern Univ.	0.91	\$156,418	\$171,900
Brigham Young Univ.	0.91	\$51,250	\$56,200
Columbia Univ.	0.92	\$165,314	\$180,300
Yale Univ.	0.98	\$126,398	\$128,900
Univ. of Iowa	0.99	\$62,249	\$62,700
Univ. of Connecticut	1.01	\$69,085	\$68,600
Washington Univ.	1.02	\$81,500	\$79,800
Univ. of Virginia	1.05	\$158,376	\$151,500
New York Univ.	1.05	\$183,857	\$175,800
Univ. of Wisconsin	1.1	\$61,500	\$56,000
Georgia State Univ.	1.11	\$69,200	\$62,400
Univ. of California, Berkeley	1.12	\$151,136	\$135,400
Temple Univ.	1.14	\$69,583	\$61,300
Boston College	1.14	\$100,594	\$88,300
Univ. of Michigan	1.14	\$145,182	\$126,800
Wayne State Univ.	1.16	\$67,640	\$58,300
Univ. of Tennessee	1.16	\$61,500	\$53,000
Univ. of Nebraska	1.16	\$59,124	\$50,900
Texas Tech Univ.	1.16	\$70,006	\$60,200
Univ. of Texas	1.18	\$106,598	\$90,100
Vanderbilt Univ.	1.19	\$129,030	\$108,800
Univ. of Arkansas	1.19	\$61,500	\$51,700
Mitchell Hamline School of Law	1.21	\$64,429	\$53,200
Univ. of California-Los Angeles	1.26	\$121,453	\$96,600
Univ. of North Dakota	1.26	\$61,500	\$48,800
Univ. of Kansas	1.27	\$66,415	\$52,100
Univ. of Kentucky	1.28	\$69,860	\$54,400
Univ. of Mississippi	1.32	\$64,300	\$48,700
Univ. of Alabama	1.33	\$68,992	\$51,900
Univ. of Illinois	1.34	\$90,928	\$67,700
Univ. of Houston	1.36	\$92,067	\$67,600
Boston Univ.	1.37	\$110,891	\$81,200
Baylor Univ.	1.37	\$91,401	\$66,800
Univ. of Utah	1.38	\$79,768	\$57,800
Univ. of Hawaii	1.39	\$77,849	\$56,200
Univ. of Oklahoma	1.39	\$74,250	\$53,600
Louisiana State Univ.	1.41	\$71,422	\$50,600
CUNY School of Law	1.43	\$78,224	\$54,800
Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas	1.43	\$94,197	\$65,900
Univ. of Georgia	1.43	\$82,480	\$57,600
Univ. of Missouri-Columbia	1.45	\$71,603	\$49,500
Univ. of Southern California	1.45	\$129,223	\$89,300


To see the complete list, go to excessofdemocracy.com



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Around the nation

■ **GONZAGA UNIVERSITY** and Catholic Charities Eastern Washington recently launched the Catholic Charities

Immigration Clinic at Gonzaga Law School. The clinic aids low-income individuals in need of immigration legal assistance and provides training to the next generation of immigration lawyers.



■ **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, GOULD SCHOOL OF LAW** has created a special topics legal externship to teach students how to advocate for the homeless and those on the brink of homelessness. The class is taught by attorney James Gilliam, who is coordinator of homeless prevention for the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. Homelessness jumped 16% in Los Angeles last year, partly because of a lack of affordable housing.

■ **THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA JAMES E. ROGERS COLLEGE OF LAW**'s Wrongful Conviction Clinic has been accepted as a member of The Innocence Network and has changed its name to the University of Arizona Innocence Project. The Innocence Network is an affiliation of more than 60 organizations in the U.S. and around the world that provide pro bono legal services to individuals who claim innocence and work to redress the causes of wrongful conviction.

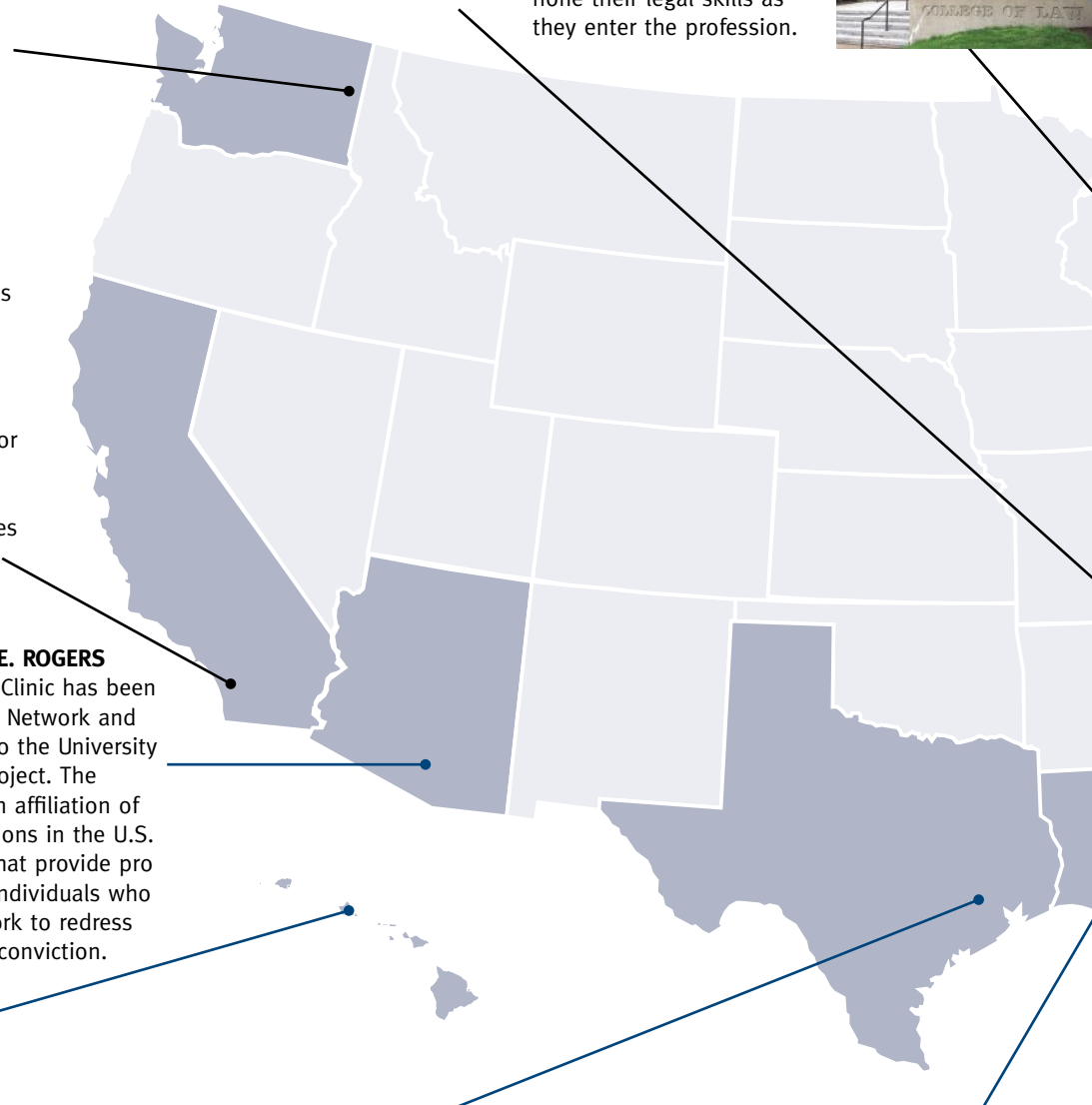


■ **UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MANOA - WILLIAM S. RICHARDSON SCHOOL OF LAW** dedicated a new clinical building, ending a 15-year quest for space to provide practical training for law students and serve members of the community in need of access to justice. The \$9.3 million project, which included more than \$2 million in philanthropic funds, was a combined effort of the law school, the university's administration and the state Legislature.



■ **THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS - CECIL C. HUMPHREYS SCHOOL OF LAW** lowered its out-of-state tuition by 25%, making it one of the most affordable law schools in the country for out-of-state students. The expected cost of \$12,004 per semester for tuition and fees will make Memphis Law the least expensive law school in Tennessee for out-of-state students and will put it in the top five nationwide.

■ **UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI COLLEGE OF LAW** created a fellowship program to provide graduates in-house experience at a local business. Two members of the Class of 2019 joined Fifth Third Bank's legal department as part of the new program. The fellowships are two-year, set-term apprenticeships for new graduates and are designed to help them hone their legal skills as they enter the profession.



■ **UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER** received a gift from The John M. O'Quinn Foundation to help fund construction of a state-of-the-art law building. Construction is slated to begin this summer. In honor of the gift, the building will be named The John M. O'Quinn Law Building. The late John M. O'Quinn was a Law Center alumnus and one of the university's most enthusiastic supporters. The foundation donated more than \$16 million, a significant portion of which will go toward the new building, which is expected to cost \$90 million.

■ **LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY, PAUL M. HEBERT LAW CENTER** has expanded its student mental health services. While law students previously had access to mental health and wellness services at the LSU Student Health Center, they now have direct access, by appointment, to a licensed professional in the law building.



■ **THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON SCHOOL OF LAW** will start a blended online J.D. program in the fall. It will allow part-time students in the first two years of their four-year program to attend classes in person just two nights a week and complete the rest of their coursework online. University of Akron will be the fifth law school to offer such a program. Students can take the online classes when their schedules allow.

■ **UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SCHOOL OF LAW** received a three-year grant from the Betterment Fund to continue the Rural Lawyer Project. This grant enables the Portland school to build upon a successful pilot program that was designed to aid a growing crisis in Maine's rural communities: access to legal services. The program pairs students with rural lawyers, who serve as mentors, and provides students with exposure to rural practice.



■ **SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL** in Boston is the first school in the country to provide students with WordRake, editing software that offers suggestions for reducing wordiness, improving awkward phrasing and increasing clarity. WordRake's suggested edits appear as an add-on in Microsoft Word's track-changes feature.

■ **NEW YORK LAW SCHOOL** and the Interfaith Center of New York (ICNY) are partnering on new classroom- and community-based training programs to benefit the school's students as well as practicing lawyers and local religious communities. The partnership capitalizes on ICNY's two decades of work with grassroots and immigrant religious leaders and the law school's clinical program in Lower Manhattan.

■ **UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA SCHOOL OF LAW** is continuing its commitment to give financial aid to veterans. The school, which is based in Athens, Ga., will provide financial aid to every veteran who accepts its offer of admission for Fall 2020. Known as the Butler Commitment, the initiative is supported by Jim Butler, a trial attorney and 1977 law school alumnus who helped establish the law school's Veterans Legal Clinic in 2018.



■ **UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY COLLEGE OF LAW** received a \$1 million gift from the law firm of Stites & Harbison to help support current and future UK Law students and to help pay for a recently completed major rebuild of the law building. The second-floor main commons, a prime collaboration area in the center of the building, will be named for Stites & Harbison in recognition of the gift.



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The Law Students' Watchdog

As Law School Transparency celebrates its 10th year, the organization continues to help prospective law students understand job and debt data. **BY MIKE STETZ**

Coming out of undergrad, Kyle McEntee was of two minds: go to law school or get a doctorate in philosophy. Hoping to gain financial security, he opted for law school.

But in going that route, he discovered a number of flaws in how law schools reported key information vital to prospective students, such as employment results. Baffled and wary, McEntee decided to forgo financial security — such as a possible Big Law salary — and co-found a nonprofit.

And that nonprofit, Law School Transparency (LST), which recently celebrated its 10th anniversary, has been a key player in changing questionable practices in legal education, forcing schools to be more accountable and forthright.

The organization's website offers a ton of information on law schools, from graduate employment rates to bar passage rates to tuition costs. Much of this information was lacking or difficult to find before LST came into being.

Not anymore.

Want to know which law school has the highest tuition? That would be Columbia Law School, which charges \$72,360 for an academic year.

Want to know the average living expenses for Stanford University Law School. They would be \$39,177.

On and on and on it goes . . .

Ten years? McEntee never envisioned LST reaching that milestone.

"When we started, we never contemplated creating an organization that needed to last that long," he said.

In those 10 years, the nonprofit has helped bring about a host of changes. The American Bar Association (ABA) now requires law schools to clearly document their graduates' employment outcomes and to meet a higher standard when it comes to bar passage rates. If they struggle with compliance, they face an increas-



Kyle McEntee did not end up on the partnership track. Infuriated by how many law schools did not disclose key information — such as employment and salary results — he co-founded a legal education watchdog organization, which remains a force 10 years later.

ingly aggressive ABA, which recently has stripped two schools of accreditation and taken punitive actions against a host of other ones.

McEntee helped champion these reforms.

"I wasn't angry or passionate about this in the beginning," he said. "I saw a problem, and I thought something should be done about it."

Initially, McEntee just wanted to be a law student, not a crusader. He went to Vanderbilt University Law School in Nashville, Tenn., in part because it had shown him where members of its most recent graduating class had landed jobs. He found this to be helpful when it came to evaluating his career options.

McEntee wondered why other schools didn't provide the same information. That question also intrigued Patrick Lynch, who

was a year ahead of McEntee at Vanderbilt. They decided to look into it. And what they found was . . . well, bad.

When it came to graduates' employment results, schools were allowed to lump most all jobs together, whether they were part-time jobs, non-legal jobs or even jobs provided by the law school. So a school's listed employment rate could be — and many times was — very misleading. Salary averages could also be cooked. Schools relied on surveys of grads, but responses were often meager. So if 10% of grads responded and the average salary of those responding was \$140,000, that's what the school posted.

McEntee admits to having been a bit naive at the time.

"I thought this had to be a mistake and that they would fix it," he said.

He later realized that most schools had

no intention of fixing anything.

So in 2009, McEntee and Lynch created Law School Transparency, which sought to bring such practices to light and to offer more accurate information if they could uncover it or the schools would provide it.

Many law schools didn't want to be transparent for one key reason: They couldn't justify their tuition prices — or attract enough students — if they weren't producing results.

LST took off after McEntee and Lynch wrote a white paper in 2010, questioning such law school practices.

Deborah Merritt, a professor at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, read the paper and was impressed by its thoughtfulness. She would later work with McEntee on some of his initiatives. At the time, she was looking at employment outcomes and was growing suspicious of how some schools were portraying them.

"But I was surprised by the extent of these practices, as well as by the vigor with which some schools defended them," she said.

As soon as the white paper was published, McEntee and Lynch started getting calls from the media, asking what in the world was going on. It helped that the two were enrolled in Vanderbilt, a top-ranked school. This gave them a built-in measure of clout.

It also helped that McEntee had worked hard at exposing law school practices and had a smart, nuanced way of explaining it. In short, the media ate it up. (Lynch later pursued other work but still serves as LST treasurer.)

The New York Times and other major news outlets jumped all over the story, particularly when graduates started filing lawsuits (unsuccessfully, it would turn out) against their law schools, alleging that they had been given bogus employment information.

The ABA soon stepped in. It had little choice.

Things were only getting worse. The Great Recession — and the resulting cratering of legal jobs — was causing increased scrutiny of legal education. So what exactly was \$100,000 getting a law student?

The number of applications to law schools soon took a big drop. But not all

schools scaled back class sizes. LST turned its focus to schools that were lowering their admissions standards to keep the doors open. What came to pass is exactly what McEntee predicted. Schools that lowered their standards saw their bar passage rates drop. That in turn led to stricter ABA oversight. Several schools were hit with sanctions or worse. Enrollments collapsed.

And some schools closed.

"It's an awful feeling," McEntee said

of seeing such closures. "The students are trying to use education to make their lives better, or trying to make other people's lives better, but they're being taken advantage of."

Sure, he's been asked why he still keeps doing this. Hasn't LST done enough?

But more work is necessary, McEntee maintains. Law school is still too expensive, and pre-law students still need access to key information.



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Bar Exam Leader

When it comes to bar exam passage, Florida International University is the best law school in Florida and one of the best in the nation. Its secret? cognitive schema theory. **BY MIKE STETZ**

Welcome to another of Florida's magic kingdoms.

That would be Florida International University College of Law, which is the top law school in Florida and one of the top schools in the nation when it comes to bar passage. That's a bit surprising — arguably even magical — given the school's median Law School Admission Test (LSAT) score.

For students entering FIU Law, that number is 157, seven points below the University of Florida Levin College of Law and just a few points higher than the national median.

And yet, FIU reported a 95.7% pass rate on the July 2019 exam, a rate nearly 22% above the state average. The Miami school has led all Florida law schools in bar passage for five consecutive July exams.

"No, I was not surprised," said Raul Ruiz, the school's director of bar preparation, when asked about the most recent results. "Our students work very hard. And it's the continuing evolution of our (bar prep) program. We're constantly identifying what works and what works better."

When it comes to bar passage, FIU Law is something of anomaly because similar success has become elusive for a number of other schools.

The American Bar Association (ABA) used to give schools five years to have 75% of students from a graduating class pass the bar. Now they get two. That recent change has sent some schools scrambling to improve bar prep and bring up their two-year tallies, which are known as their "ultimate" bar passage rates.

FIU Law's ultimate bar passage rate for the Class of 2016 — at more than 95% — is among the top 15 in the nation.

In reality, it's not magic. It's science — the science of learning.

The brains behind this success are Ruiz and Louis Schulze Jr., associate dean and



Raul Ruiz, FIU Law's director of bar preparation, is one of the forces behind the school's remarkable bar passage success. FIU routinely leads all Florida schools in pass rates.

professor of academic support. Schulze wrote an academic paper about their method two years ago, so it's out there for everyone to see and duplicate if they wish.

But it can be complicated to grasp and time-consuming to implement. In short, they use the most progressive learning techniques available — things like metacognition, spaced repetition, cognitive schema theory and retrieval practice. They say it teaches students how to become "self-regulated learners."

"We message to them right away what we're doing," Schulze said. "When they're 1Ls, we start to use these methods. By the time they are 3Ls, it's pretty much ingrained."

And they are ready — with the proper guidance — to rock the bar.

"We're not a glorified, three-year bar prep," Ruiz said. "There's no hand-holding. We're teaching students to teach themselves."

He teaches a third-year class called U.S. Law and Procedure. It's a four-credit course that focuses on bar prep.

Ruiz also created the Bar Exam Success Program, which is geared toward graduates who are studying for the bar. Each graduate gets a faculty or alumnus bar exam mentor, as well as other resources.

"This would work at any law school," he said. "It's not exclusive to FIU."

At FIU Law, they do not employ some kind of kooky science, the professors say. They use tried and true methods for increasing learning outcomes. Schulze designed the Academic Excellence Program (AEP), which includes a number of courses to help students learn to learn more efficiently. The AEP courses are offered during all three years of law school, so the learning can be continually reinforced.

Some of Ruiz and Schulze's concepts don't appear to be all that complicated. For instance, students are taught how to

use spaced repetition as a tool. This simply means that students learn to go over the same subject matter at timed intervals. Why? Because there is something called the “forgetting curve.” Retention of information can drop from 100% to 60% in as little as an hour if there is no attempt to retain it. It drops below 40% after nine hours.

This was discovered by Hermann Ebbinghaus, a German psychologist, in 1885, FYI.

“My job is to teach the students that these things are not novel,” Schulze said. “I show them the data.”

Schulze has a long history of working in academic support, and he has continually sought new ways to improve learning. He read the book, “Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning” and became hooked on bringing such methods to law school.

One of the benefits of this kind of learning is that it can continue well after

law school, Schulze said. Graduates are better prepared for the workforce because they have been trained to be self-learners.

And students say these methods work. Tara Hartman, a 2019 graduate, credits Ruiz and Schulze for her performance.

“I’m convinced that they’re the only reason that I not only passed the bar but I passed with a score well beyond what was needed,” she said.

Hartman said she chose to attend FIU Law because of its reputation for bar passage success. She didn’t want to spend three years in law school and chance not being able to pass the bar, she said. Indeed, she’s already a working lawyer.

Hartman excelled in undergrad — earning a 3.98 grade point average — but she said she didn’t really have to work all that hard to achieve it. In her first year of law school, however, she earned all C’s.

“I’d never learned how to study,” she said.

So as a second-year, she took Schulze’s

AEP course called Legal Analysis, in which students are required to write essays, then write critiques of them.

In traditional learning, students read and reread material, giving them an illusion of mastery, Schulze said.

“This is harder,” he said.

Hartman remembers how much effort she had to put in. She said Schulze stressed the importance of not being too tough on yourself. It takes time to succeed. You have to learn from your failures, she said. And there were no immediate repercussions if you did fail. It wasn’t like a final. It was a process. You gained confidence.

“I began getting A’s and B’s,” she said.

Some students initially question this method of learning, Hartman said. That normally doesn’t last long, though.

“Once it works, you stop questioning,” she said. “We put in the work, but we wouldn’t know what kind of work to do without the professors. The level of success is because of the way they teach.”



Jordan Jensen, J.D. '19

Associate Attorney, Alston & Bird LLP

Managing Editor, Journal of Property Law – Volume V

Student Attorney, Community Development Clinic

Global Program – International Trade & Finance, Jersey, UK

Teaching Assistant, Professional Identity – Professionalism & Leadership Program

Leadership Through Law

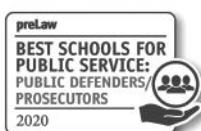
“ One of the most valuable lessons I learned in our first-year course Professional Identity is that employers value competencies beyond foundational legal skills. This knowledge allowed me to spend time developing mentor relationships and volunteering in my community all while strengthening critical skills. I believe my experiences at Texas A&M made me a more skilled, effective, and compassionate lawyer. I am excited to begin my career in the corporate and finance sector. ”



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PHOTOS BY /SHUTTERSTOCK

Upper Midwest ups its game

This region's law schools continue to boast many attractive features, such as affordable tuition and a variety of unique settings. And they certainly don't slouch on innovation. **BY MIKE STETZ**

Hidden gems abound in the Upper Midwest, where affordability and personal attention are hallmarks. The region is also home to many not-so-hidden gems, given Chicago's lineup of impressive offerings.

So options abound in this vast region.

Four schools made the top 25 nationwide in our annual Best Value ranking. They

included University of Wisconsin, which came in at No. 3. The region also has four schools on our list of Best Schools for Legal Technology. They include Chicago-Kent College of Law, which is considered a pioneer in that specialty.

But what's cool — or, um, cold? — about the Upper Midwest is the home-

like atmosphere at many of these schools. They put an emphasis on tracking student progress and making certain the students get the most out of their educational experience.

So get out the snowshoes for this tour. We start in the far northwest and work our way south and east.

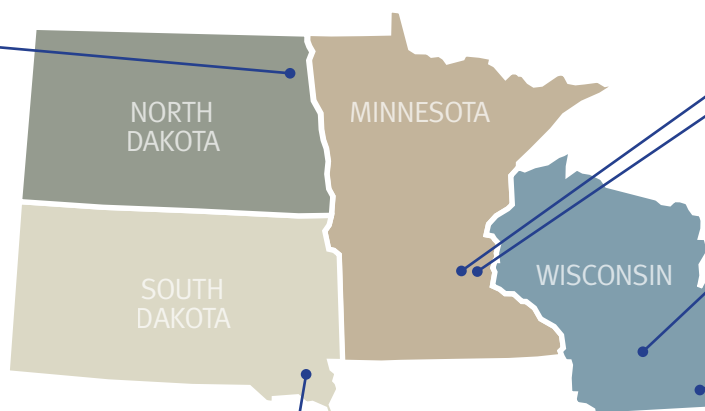
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 148; GPA: 3.13

Guess which state is the hottest economic powerhouse in the nation? That would be North Dakota, according to The Brookings Institution. That's because of its burgeoning shale oil and gas production. The law school, based in Grand Forks, notes that the western region of the state is in need of practice-ready lawyers, as a surge of legal issues is arising from the growth. The good news? The school sports one of the least

expensive tuitions in the nation.

Strengths:
*Affordability,
professional
development*



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 150; GPA: 3.27

Not surprisingly, USD Law is the only law school in the state, and it plays a key role. If not for the school, it would be difficult to maintain the state's legal infrastructure. For instance, the Vermillion-based school has produced eight governors, as well as most members of the state Supreme Court. If you like cozy, here's your place. It has a student body of fewer than 200. **Strengths:** *Class size*

UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS SCHOOL OF LAW - MINNEAPOLIS

LSAT: 154; GPA: 3.53

Go to University of St. Thomas School of Law and be prepared to give back. The school requires that students perform 50 hours of public service during their educations. That's no shock, given that the Catholic school is committed to creating lawyers who do more than just go to court or write contracts. It wants its grads, no matter what practice area they're in, to continue pro bono work throughout their careers.

Strengths: Best facility A, business law A, public interest law A-, No. 2 in the nation for Most Devout Catholic Law School

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 164; GPA: 3.76

Another school that scores high in innovation is University of Minnesota, which was ranked 12th in preLaw's Best Schools for Legal Technology — the highest of any school in the region. The Minneapolis-based school is laser-focused on experiential learning and boasts 25 clinics. Its Class of 2016 had an ultimate bar passage rate of nearly 95%, a clear indicator of how strong its students are academically. **Strengths:**

Tech, health law A, business law A, environmental law A, international law A



MITCHELL HAMLINE SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 152; GPA: 3.14

Mitchell Hamline was the nation's first law school to offer online hybrid J.D. options. The St. Paul, Minn., school continues to evolve online offerings and will launch a blended enrollment program next fall. It will combine elements of the hybrid J.D. program and its executive and weekend J.D. options into a single, partly online, partly on-campus option. **Strengths:** Health law A, family law A, business law A, intellectual property A

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 162; GPA: 3.58

A number of schools routinely rock preLaw's annual ranking of Best Value Law Schools. University of Wisconsin is one. This year it finished third. Last year it came in second. The year before that, fourth. It does all things well when it comes to value, such as keeping debt low and employment rates high. It also rocks another key preLaw ranking: practical training. It finished 15th nationwide in that area. And here's another plus: It's based in Madison, one of the nation's best college towns.

Strengths: Value, practical training, business law A-, No. 4 nationwide for public defender/prosecutor training



MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 154; GPA: 3.42

Concerns about bar passage rates recently moved the ABA to get tougher on those outcomes when it comes to accreditation. But Marquette has an ultimate bar pas-



MARQUETTE
UNIVERSITY

sage rate of 99.7% because its grads don't have to take the bar if they practice in Wisconsin.

A Jesuit institu-

tion, the Milwaukee school looks at law as a "helping profession." It also has one of the nation's top sports law programs.

Strengths: Business law A, criminal law A-, employment law A-



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UPPER MIDWEST SCHOOLS



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 156; GPA: 3.66

It's little wonder that University of Nebraska finished fourth in preLaw's national ranking of Best Value Law Schools. Its tuition is \$16,078, the third lowest of any school in the top 25. Student debt was less than \$60,000. Based in Lincoln, the school is about more than just value. It offers the innovative Space, Cyber and Telecommunications Law Program, the only one of its kind in the nation. So if you want to boldly go . . .

Strengths: Value, family law A, business law A-, criminal law A-

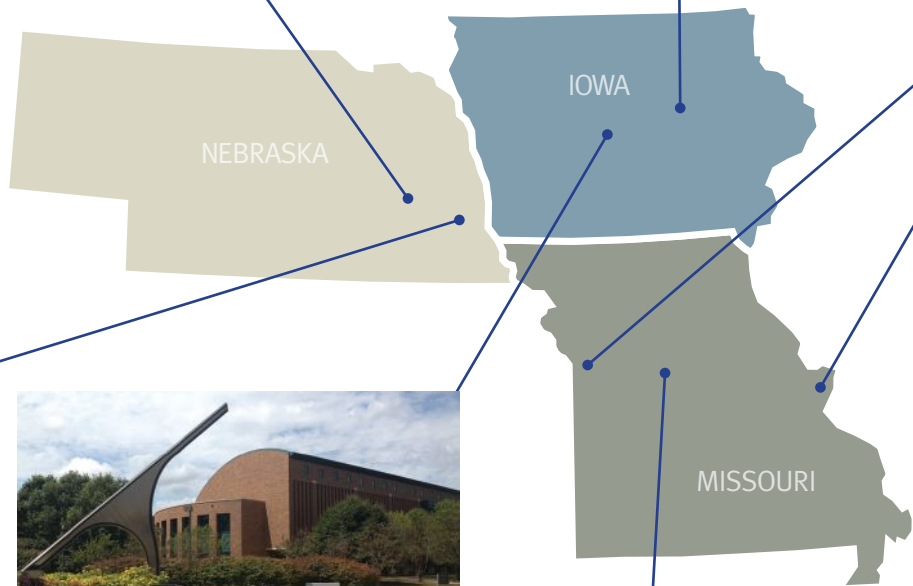


THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 161; GPA: 3.61

We all know the key role that Iowa plays in American presidential politics. Because of that, University of Iowa has conceived a new program called Semester in DC. It gives students the opportunity to watch how the federal government operates. Participating students leave Iowa City and head to the nation's capital to work in a government agency, with a federal judge or for a nonprofit. **Strengths:**

Human rights law A



CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 153; GPA: 3.29

A Jesuit school, Creighton University has been reinforcing its mission of contributing to the greater good by adding programs to help the less fortunate. In the past couple of years, the Omaha school has started the Creighton Immigration and Refugee Clinic and added a poverty law survey course and a civil law poverty externship. **Strengths:** Class size, No. 8 nationally for Most Devout Catholic Law School



DRAKE UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 153; GPA: 3.46

Drake Law School is rich in history, having been established in 1865 in Des Moines, the state capital. That location gives students a key advantage when it comes to getting practical training experience, given all of the governmental and political offerings. But go beyond the city's outskirts and you'll find a rich rural environment. Drake's Agricultural Law Center is internationally known for its study of food and agricultural law. **Strengths:** Criminal law A-



UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 157; GPA: 3.49

Mizzou Law is consistently one of the more affordable and results-oriented law schools in the region. It placed 21st nationwide in preLaw's Best Value rankings for across-the-board success when it comes to debt, employment and bar passage. Located in Columbia, the school continues to innovate. This spring it will unveil a new course, Innovation and Technology in the Practice of Law. It has nine clinics, two centers and nine certificate programs. **Strengths:** Value, criminal law A-

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI -
KANSAS CITY SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 153; GPA 3.41

Also known as UMKC, the school is big on innovation. It was ranked 15th in pre-Law's analysis of top law schools for legal technology, thanks in part to its Entrepreneurship and New Venture Creation course. UMKC is one of only six law schools in the country to have educated both a president of the United States and a U.S. Supreme Court justice. They would be Harry S. Truman — who did not graduate — and Charles Evans Whittaker — who did.

Strengths: Legal tech, tax law A, intellectual property A

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 168; GPA: 3.81

Based in St. Louis, Mo., Washington University is like the Cardinals baseball team — consistently impressive.

It's one of the top private schools in the region. Dating back four decades, its clinical program is still growing. In the past five years, the school has added eight clinical courses. And it's yet another school in the region that's big on technology. It finished 17th in preLaw's national ranking of top schools for legal tech. **Strengths:** Tech, No. 8 in nation for Best Value Private School, No. 5 for best facilities, tax law A-

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 155; GPA: 3.45

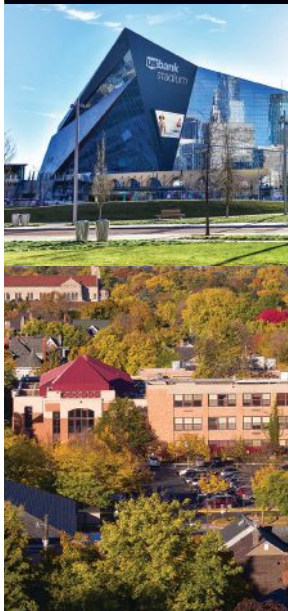
Location, location, location. It's true for beachfront homes — and law schools. When SLU Law moved to a new building in 2013, it picked a prime spot. Scott Hall is next door to civil courts, a block from criminal courts and City Hall and three blocks from the Thomas F. Eagleton U.S. Courthouse. The school has more than just a sweet location, though. It boasts one of the nation's top health law programs, which is anchored by the Center for Health Law Studies. **Strengths:** No. 6 in nation for Best Value Private School, best facility A, employment law A, health law A



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UPPER MIDWEST SCHOOLS

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 149; GPA: 3.09

Thinking of going to Northern Illinois University, even if you live out of state? Good news. The



school got rid of higher non-resident rates in 2018. The school is based in DeKalb, which is just an hour from Chicago. That means students can enjoy

the big city atmosphere if they please — as well as network — but don't have to pay big bucks in living expenses. DeKalb's cost of living is 8% lower than the Illinois average.

Strengths: Diversity, class size, criminal law

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 162; GPA: 3.65

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was highlighted by preLaw magazine for landing grads in both Big Law and small



firms at significant clips, meaning students have a healthy range of job options. It had an overall employment rate of more than 96%.

The College of Law is based in Champaign, but 3L students have the option to study for a semester in Chicago (some classes are actually taught in law firms), allowing students to make connections with alumni in one of the nation's leading legal centers. **Strengths:** Employment, government

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 150; GPA: 3.10

Tuition at SIU School of Law is one of the nation's least expensive. Plus 97% of students get grants. And the school is based in Carbondale, which has a low cost of living. So your debt load can be manageable, meaning all sort of legal jobs are in play upon graduation. Public service is encouraged. Students and faculty perform more than 4,000 hours of pro bono service annually.

Strengths: Value, pro bono

Chicago Schools ▼



CHICAGO-KENT COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 157; GPA: 3.45

Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Institute of Technology is the second-oldest law school in Illinois. The original Chicago College of Law was incorporated in 1888, but the school sure doesn't act its age. It's considered one of the more progressive law schools when it comes to law and technology. It boasts the Center for Access to Justice and Technology, which offers students much opportunity in that growing field. Indeed, many believe that technology has already shifted the playing field when it comes to how legal services are delivered. **Strengths:** Intellectual property A+, employment law A+

DEPAUL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

LSAT: 153; GPA: 3.21

DePaul University is based near Chicago's many courthouses, government offices and law firms, and it boasts an alumni network



of more than 10,500 grads in the city alone. The school has six centers and two institutes, giving students a wide range of academic options to explore. Richard J. Daley, Chicago's iconic longtime mayor, was a grad. So was his son, Richard M. Daley, who also served as mayor. **Strengths:** Intellectual property A+, technology law A+, human rights law A, business law A



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 157; GPA: 3.43

Loyola University Chicago is one of the few law schools in the nation to offer a part-time J.D. program that combines weekend classes with online courses. This means students don't have to go to campus on weeknights — a benefit for working professionals. A Jesuit school, Loyola Chicago promotes the importance of public service. Its Civitas ChildLaw Center is nationally recognized for its work in child and family law.

Strengths: Health law A+, family law A+, public interest law A+

UIC JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL



UIC JOHN MARSHALL LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 149; GPA: 3.19

Thanks to a merger with University of Illinois at Chicago, UIC John Marshall — formerly The John Marshall Law School — has become the city's first public law school. UIC John Marshall will offer students the opportunity to get joint and dual degrees with UIC's many other colleges. Illinois residents also received a plum; in-state tuition was cut by about \$10,000 because of the merger. **Strengths:** No. 22 nationally for Top Schools for Legal Tech, intellectual property A+, practical training A-



NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY PRITZKER SCHOOL OF LAW

LSAT: 169; GPA: 3.84

Established in 1859, Northwestern Law was Chicago's first law school and enjoys a stellar reputation for its academics, clinical opportunities and innovation. The school's Bluhm Legal Clinic is one of the most extensive in the nation, having 20 clinics within 13 centers. As many as 90% of students participate in a clinic during law school. **Strengths:** Practical training A, moot court No. 19 nationally



UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LAW SCHOOL

LSAT: 171; GPA: 3.89

See those LSAT and GPA numbers above? They're one of the reasons University of Chicago enjoys status as one of the nation's top law schools. The school strongly supports public service and opens its wallet to prove it. Students taking part in eligible summer public service programs get a \$5,000 award. University of Chicago was one of only a few schools to earn a 100% ultimate bar passage rate for the Class of 2016. **Strengths:** Practical training A+, business law A, No. 4 nationally for federal clerkships



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- 1L Applied Legal Skills
- 2L and 3L Bar Passage Success Program

Here, We Do.



Scholarships 101

Lots of options exist when it comes to paying for law school, but you need to know where to look and how to play the game.

BY SHERRY KARABIN

From the time she was a child, Sandy De Sousa knew she wanted to be a lawyer. But there was one part of the dream she wasn't willing to embrace: massive debt.

As an undergraduate at Montclair State University in New Jersey, she worked hard to get good grades and graduate with as little debt as possible.

She then worked as a bankruptcy paralegal for three years to save up money for law school. Before applying, she researched a number of law schools to see what their scholarship offerings were like. She also searched for outside scholarships, such as those offered by bar associations.

It all paid off. She was offered a full-ride scholarship from one school and a 50% tuition credit from her preferred school, Seton Hall University School of Law in Newark, N.J.

Rather than accept one offer or the other, she tried to negotiate a better deal and asked Seton Hall for a full ride.

"If you know a school is your first choice, I don't think there's anything wrong with having the conversation,

unless they have explicitly made it clear that they do not entertain such discussions," De Sousa said. "My only advice is to be polite, courteous and respectful."

Even though she didn't get a full ride from Seton Hall, she did manage to land two additional scholarships, one for highly qualified students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"Even though I could have had a full ride, I chose Seton Hall Law because I thought it was a better school that would open up opportunities for me in New York City," she said.

As it turned out, she obtained additional scholarship money during the last 18 months of law school, putting her in even better financial shape. She graduated in May 2019 from Seton Hall with \$45,000 of debt, an amount she deemed manageable and far less than the \$145,500 average for law school graduates. She now works at a large law firm in New York City.

Most experts agree that the best way to maximize your scholarship dollars is to start by doing your homework. Research

various schools and find out what they offer.

Isabel DiSciullo, an assistant dean at Seton Hall Law, said some schools base their scholarship decisions strictly on GPAs and LSAT scores, while others, including Seton Hall, use those factors as a starting point and take into account a student's background, goals and work experience.

"Some schools automatically consider admitted students for scholarship money, and others require them to apply (for the funds)," she said.

DiSciullo said that when it comes to negotiating, students need to look at the complete picture before asking a school if it can match another school's scholarship offer.

"It is important for students to consider their offer as a whole, weighing the cost of the tuition and the scholarship they could potentially receive, in addition to scholarship renewal requirements," DiSciullo said. "Based on these factors, they can make the determination on what makes the most sense for them."

Ann Levine, owner of Law School Expert and author of "The Law School Admission Game," advises students to begin by applying to schools where they are most likely to stand out.

"Once you know your undergraduate grades and LSAT or GRE scores, go on school websites and determine where you would be considered the most competitive," she said.

Public law schools typically provide fewer dollars, she said. Also, she warns to be aware of any potential red flags, such as character and fitness issues that could negate or lower offers.

Levine said some law schools make it clear from the beginning that they do not negotiate. If schools are open to discussing the issue, she said, the best time is a month or so before the deposit deadline.

"You want to be able to lay out all your options on the table," Levine said. "Schools do not want to be played, so use your ask wisely. If it is between schools A and B and you prefer A but B is willing to give you more, explain that to school A. The point is to tell them the new offer would make a difference in your decision whether to attend."

Levine advises against using school rank-



"Some schools automatically consider admitted students for scholarship money, and others require them to apply (for the funds)."

—Isabel DiSciullo, assistant dean,
Seton Hall Law

ings when making a case.

"Telling a school you have received a better offer from a higher-ranked institution won't help you," she said.

Alison Monahan, co-founder of Law School Toolbox and Bar Exam Toolbox and creator of The Girl's Guide to Law School, said there's generally no harm in asking a school to at least consider increasing a scholarship package, as long as it's done tactfully.

"I think it's totally fair to reach out politely to the financial aid office via email and say, 'I would love to attend your school, but I have a more robust offer at another school that I am not as interested in,'" she said. "When I was applying to law school, I reached out to several schools with the exact same email, and some increased the offer."

Types of scholarships

Various types of scholarships are available, and some are easier to secure than others.

"Endowed scholarships require an applicant to meet certain criteria to qualify," DiSciullo said. "We identify students who meet the criteria and make them aware of the opportunities."

The bulk of scholarship money, however, comes from institutional funds that are earmarked for scholarships.

"The admissions committee determines our budget and how we allocate it," DiSciullo said. "Some schools have the

ability to reduce tuition based upon what competing schools are charging."

While students should not automatically shy away from trying to increase their scholarship awards, DiSciullo said many schools are not open to such discussion.

"A few years ago, negotiations were trending," she said. "Now more schools are inclined to decline these conversations because they feel that they have put forward their most competitive offer."

DiSciullo said Seton Hall Law is happy to speak to students about the school's scholarship opportunities, eligibility and application requirements.

"For students who are working with schools who do negotiate, we can't guarantee the outcome, but students do stand a better chance of changing that outcome if they . . . share new or updated information," DiSciullo said.

Although getting a robust scholarship may create peace of mind, Levine said funding may be short-lived if you cannot meet institution standards.

"Many schools have stringent requirements for maintaining scholarships," she said.

Schools publish information on scholarship retention, and Levine urges students to check the numbers before making a final decision. If the numbers are bleak, applicants should try to determine whether they would be able to make ends meet without assistance.

Students may want to consider other options as well, including accepting a binding early admission offer that comes with scholarship dollars.

Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, Mo., guarantees its early admission students a 50% or greater scholarship award. Students who apply for early admission receive a decision within two weeks and then have only two days to accept.

"Our early decision applicants are guaranteed scholarship awards because we really believe in scholarships here, and early decision applicants are eager to join our community," said Nancy Staudt, dean of the law school. "However, policies across the country do vary. Some law schools require an immediate answer, and most importantly, some law schools do not offer scholarship dollars."

Financial assistance is provided to regu-



lar admission students as well, Staudt said.

“We try to put our best foot forward right from the start with regard to scholarship awards,” she said. “We appreciate when students share information about other schools’ awards, but this information is not the primary factor for determining our own level of scholarships.”

Staudt said financial assistance is not the only factor students should consider when selecting a law school.

“Students also want to ensure they are picking a school with a supportive and inspiring environment and a high job placement rate,” she said. “Law school is challenging, and students will be spending a lot of time there. They should make sure the school they choose is somewhere they really want to be.”

Christopher Peters, dean at The University of Akron School of Law in Ohio, said applicants should consider upper-division scholarship opportunities as well.

“Many schools offer assistance to rising 2Ls, 3Ls and 4Ls,” Peters said. “Even 1Ls who did not receive money when they entered law school may qualify for these upper-division scholarships.”

He said that schools usually make students aware of such opportunities but that students should continue to do their own research, because new options do become available.

The job factor

Monahan said another thing to consider is the potential for summer jobs.

“Landing a position as a summer associate can make a big difference in a student’s bottom line,” she said. “Some law schools put students in a better position to get those jobs than others.”

“Typically, summer associates make as

much as a first-year attorney at a law firm.”

If one school offers less scholarship money than another school but puts the student in a better position for getting a summer associate job, accepting the smaller award could work out better in the long run, Monahan said.

Some schools offer scholarships to students who commit to working in the public sector.

At University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School, the Toll Public Interest Scholar program covers full tuition and fees for selected students who commit to doing public service work for the first three years after graduation. Students also receive two guaranteed summer stipends for law-related public sector work.

“Anyone who is admitted to the law school can apply for this scholarship,” said Renee Post, associate dean of admissions and financial aid at Penn Law. “The only thing the scholarship does not cover is living expenses.”



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University of Miami's Natalia Jaramillo (left), a native of Colombia, says faculty member Paula Arias is like a second mother to her.



Best Law Schools for **DIVERSITY**

We identify the best schools for Asians, Hispanics, African Americans and Native Americans based on student enrollment, faculty and student services.

BY MIKE STETZ

Lots of law schools are becoming more diverse. That's been a goal for years, and many are making significant progress. Look at Harvard Law School for instance. People of color made up 45% of the 2019 entering class.

At Stanford University Law School, 42% of students in the class are minorities. Boston University School of Law has an entering class that's 34% students of color.

It would be hard to argue that strides are not being made. However, some schools offer opportunity for people of color that few can. Many of those schools are aided by history and tradition, as well as a decades-long commit-

ment to fostering minorities.

Many were diverse before diversity was such a paramount objective . . . or before courts forced it to be so. (And that's something that's far from settled, given the ongoing lawsuits targeting race-based admissions policies.)

One need only go back a handful of decades to 1960, when Georgia's state universities finally became integrated.

And these diversity efforts did not exactly go swimmingly. In 1956, Autherine Lucy became the first African American to go to The University of Alabama. Riots broke out. She was actually expelled so she wouldn't be hurt.

Two people were killed in riots at

The University of Mississippi when the first black student was admitted in 1962.

So, diversity? It may be sought-after and desirable now, what with study after study showing that it helps students become more well-rounded, productive and team-oriented. But it was quite the journey just to reach this point.

The institutions honored here have been determined to be the best for each major minority category in the nation: African Americans, Asians, Hispanics and Native Americans.

Not only do these schools boast a high number of students of a particular race — as well as having a diverse faculty — but they also offer a wide range of support for their minority students. (See page 28 for methodology.)

Many students gravitate toward these schools because they feel a connection that's hard to duplicate regardless of how much effort a school puts into diversity. A number are historically black schools,

which were founded because African Americans were shut out of other law schools.

Still others are based in minority-rich locations and have become landing spots for prospective students of color who want an environment they feel comfortable in. Many of the top schools for Hispanics, for instance, are in Florida and California, where there are large Hispanic communities.

California is also home to many law schools where Asian students gravitate. Twelve of the top 15 schools we identify as best for Asians are in the Golden State.

And the schools that are best for Native Americans are in states where many of the country's tribal nations are located. They offer courses and specialties in indigenous peoples law and Native American law, areas that few other schools teach.

We interviewed four students who go to these schools.

Best schools for African Americans

When Nicole Okeke-Oraeki walks the halls of Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, La., she sometimes feels in awe.

The history of the place can overwhelm her.

It was founded in 1947 after an African American sued the state because he was denied entrance to a segregated state law school. In response, the state Board of Education created one for blacks.

Since then, the historically black law school has educated legendary civil rights and political leaders, educators and countless attorneys in a host of fields.

"I feel pride. I feel empowerment," Okeke-Oraeki said. "I also feel a sense of responsibility to make pathways for other people who look like me."

But that history is just one reason why



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Southern University

she chose this law school. It's family oriented, she said. It has a vast and helpful alumni base. It also has become a model

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How we determined best schools

Methodology: We graded each school on three data points: 1) Percentage of students in each ethnic group (50%); 2) Percentage of minority law professors (25%); 3) Diversity services offered by the school (25%).

Student enrollment was determined by adding the number of students who identify as members of each ethnic group with a ratio or students who are two or more races and dividing by the number of students for whom race is known. Data is from the ABA.

Faculty figures are based on the total number of minority faculty members at each school. Data provided by the ABA.

Services are based on: office or administrator who assists minorities (36%); bar exam preparation support (18%); whether the school has a mentoring program for minorities and/or first generation law students (11%); whether the school has student groups that promote the needs of each ethnicity (11%); whether the school has endowed scholarships for minorities (11%); whether the school offers a summer law school preparation program for admitted students (7%); whether the school offers employment workshops designed to help minority students (7%). Data provided by the schools.



Best Law Schools for African Americans

		% Black students	% Minority faculty	Student services grade	Final GPA
1	Howard University School of Law	92.9%	80.2%	4.00	4.25
2	Southern University	64.1%	75.2%	4.00	4.25
3	Texas Southern University	56.2%	79.1%	4.00	4.25
4	North Carolina Central University	54.1%	55.1%	4.00	4.25
5	Florida A&M University	47.1%	68.1%	4.00	4.25
6	University of the District of Columbia	45.7%	47.1%	2.66	3.91
7	Florida Coastal School of Law	17.3%	20.6%	3.66	3.83
8	UIC John Marshall	15.1%	19.5%	4.33	3.75
9	CUNY School of Law	14.0%	36.7%	4.00	3.67
10	Loyola University New Orleans	17.9%	19.8%	2.66	3.50
11	Golden Gate University	16.1%	20.5%	3.00	3.50
12	UNT Dallas College of Law	20.2%	18.2%	2.33	3.42
13	University of Memphis	17.1%	12.1%	3.33	3.42
14	University of Dayton	15.6%	11.6%	4.00	3.41
15	University of La Verne	11.4%	31.3%	3.33	3.33
16	University of Baltimore	21.2%	14.9%	2.66	3.33
17	Thomas Jefferson School of Law	14.4%	17.0%	3.33	3.33
18	American University	9.8%	20.2%	4.00	3.25
19	Atlanta's John Marshall	34.0%	25.4%	0.00	3.17
20	Mississippi College	22.2%	15.7%	1.66	3.17
21	Southwestern Law School	9.6%	26.6%	4.33	3.17

Chart continued on page 30

of diversity. Today, the student body is made up of 64.1% blacks and 34% whites. About 2% are Hispanic.

"Southern University is different," she

said. "The students pretty much all come from the same backgrounds. They're skin color may be different, but everyone has had similar experiences."

Okeke-Oraeki is from Houston and went to undergrad at Howard University in Washington, D.C., another historically black university. She then went to

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Best Law Schools for African Americans *(continued from page 29)*

		% Black students	% Minority faculty	Student services grade	Final GPA
22	Barry Law School	15.1%	24.1%	1.66	3.16
23	NSU's Shepard Broad Law	10.1%	24.2%	3.66	3.16
24	University of Maryland	14.0%	14.0%	3.33	3.16
25	WMU-Cooley	36.5%	14.2%	1.00	3.08
26	Northern Illinois University	12.8%	16.3%	3.33	3.08
27	DePaul University	8.6%	20.4%	3.33	3.08
28	Touro Law Center	13.1%	10.6%	3.33	3.00
29	St. Thomas University	8.9%	27.2%	3.33	3.00
30	South Texas College of Law Houston	10.2%	58.9%	2.33	3.00



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Josh White

Second-Year McGeorge Law Student
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Columbia University in New York for a graduate degree in psychology. She was once pulled over by cops because her windows were tinted. She told the police she was headed to school, to Columbia. The cops didn't believe her.

That's just the way it is for African Americans, she said. It's why she has focused on criminal law. She graduates in May and will be joining the Philadelphia district attorney's office as an assistant district attorney. Blacks are under-represented in such positions, which makes people of color less likely to have faith in the system, she said.

Southern University Law Center has been a unique experience, she said. It offers personal connections. Okeke-Oraeki, who is the school's student bar association president, also wanted to go to a school where she would get constant reality checks regarding her progress and goals, she said.

(One of her goals? She wants to be a U.S. senator.)

And having a diverse faculty is yet another bonus, she noted.

"It's wonderful and heartwarming," she said, particularly when it's women of color leading the classes.

"It's encouraging to see," she said. "Maybe that's me one day. It's wonderful to see people of color in such high places."

Best School for Asians

Like all law school students, Kevin Shone wants to be the best lawyer he can possibly be. So, sure, he studies. He works hard. But he also chose a diverse law school — in this case, University of California, Irvine School of Law. That was critical, he said.

"A huge part of academic success is hearing other perspectives," he said. "It's helpful. It's important. It provides a richer experience."

It's also one of the reasons he went to UC Berkeley for undergrad. Growing up in Irvine, he attended schools that had mostly white and Asian students. He wanted to attend a school that had not only diversity in race but also diversity in socioeconomic backgrounds.

People who learn in non-diverse environments can become close-minded, he said, and it's not by any fault of their own.

How can you understand differences



UC Irvine

in people if you never run across people unlike yourself? “It’s vastly understated,” he said of the importance of diversity.

Shone came back home, to UC - Irvine for law school because he found it to be rich in diversity. Not only is it a top school for Asians, it’s also among the schools honored

Best Law Schools for Asians

		% Asian, Native Hawaiian students	% Minority faculty	Student services grade	Final GPA
1	University of Hawai'i	50.1%	41.7%	3.00	4.00
2	UC - Irvine	26.7%	24.4%	4.00	3.92
3	UC Davis School of Law	22.6%	38.1%	3.00	3.75
4	UC Hastings	20.1%	17.0%	3.66	3.75
5	Santa Clara Law	23.3%	20.8%	2.66	3.58
6	UC Berkeley School of Law	24.6%	18.2%	2.66	3.50
7	Boston College	14.2%	19.5%	4.00	3.50
8	LMU Loyola Law School	13.2%	21.4%	4.33	3.50
9	CUNY School of Law	11.7%	36.7%	4.00	3.50
10	University of San Francisco	15.4%	21.4%	3.33	3.41
11	Southwestern Law School	10.1%	26.6%	4.33	3.41
12	USC Gould School of Law	20.8%	14.1%	2.66	3.33
13	California Western School of Law	14.4%	14.3%	4.00	3.33
14	University of the District of Columbia	11.4%	47.1%	3.00	3.33
15	University of La Verne	11.0%	31.3%	3.00	3.25
16	UCLA Law	18.4%	19.5%	2.33	3.25
17	Golden Gate University	14.7%	20.5%	3.33	3.41
18	Northeastern University	13.6%	15.8%	3.66	3.17
19	Thomas Jefferson School of Law	13.4%	17.0%	3.33	3.17
20	Stanford Law School	14.1%	18.6%	2.66	3.16
21	American University	8.0%	20.2%	4.00	3.08
22	Yale Law School	16.7%	11.7%	3.33	3.08
23	Rutgers Law	9.7%	16.7%	4.00	3.08
24	UIC John Marshall	8.0%	19.5%	4.33	3.08
25	University of Houston	10.8%	17.8%	3.66	3.08

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*Nina Egbuta,
Class of 2021*

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for having a sizeable Hispanic student population, at 16%. In all, 55% of the students are people of color.

The languages spoken: Armenian, Cantonese, English, Farsi, French, German, Gujarati, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese.

“UCI really stood out,” he said. “It puts diversity way in the forefront.”

Shone, a second-year law student, is considering focusing on transactional law. However, he’s far from certain as he continues to explore new options during law school. But, he does know that he wants to work for a firm that puts a focus on diversity.

Indeed, he accepted a summer job with a firm because it had Asians in partnership positions. “Seeing people who look like me in positions of power is critically important to me,” he said.

Best Schools for Hispanics

Natalia Jaramillo, a native of Colombia, has found a new home. That would be University of Miami School of Law and the surrounding South Florida region. She finds the Latin vibe to be a perfect environment for her.

“You can’t underestimate it,” she said of the benefits of diversity. “It creates a sense of security.”

The Cuban culture is engraved throughout the city. “You see it everywhere,” she said.

It’s hard to take a step without seeing a Cuban coffee shop or a restaurant featuring cubano sandwiches.

It’s not just those elements, she noted. There’s a sense of warmth that radiates from the Latino culture. She finds it welcoming.

University of Miami routinely scores well in our rankings of top law schools for Hispanics. The student body is 43.3% Hispanic. In all, 48% of students identify themselves as a member of a minority group. Nearly 65% speak at least two languages.

Jaramillo’s parents decided to leave Colombia when she was 4, in part because of the violence the drug trade was causing. Kidnappings were not unusual.

She got her undergrad degree at Capital University, where Hispanics made up less than 5% of the student body. But Jaramillo



Other schools above

3.0 (alphabetical)

Arizona State University	Texas A&M Law Texas Tech
Barry Law School	UC Berkeley School of Law
DePaul University	UIC John Marshall University of Denver
Florida Coastal School of Law	University of Florida
Florida State University	University of Hawai'i
McGeorge School of Law	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
New York Law School	University of the District of Columbia
Northeastern University	UNT Dallas College of Law
Northern Illinois University	Western State College of Law
Pepperdine University	Yale Law School
Rutgers Law	
Seattle University	
Stanford Law School	

was drawn to the school because of its small size and noted political science program.

After graduating, she took a year off and worked for the U.N. in Geneva, Switzerland. When considering law schools, she decided on Miami because it had the nation's only international moot court program.

In addition to pursuing her J.D., she's enrolled in the school's LL.M. international arbitration program, where she studies alongside people from all corners of the globe. The educational experience she receives from interacting with such a diverse group of students is amazing, she said.

And the faculty plays a significant role as well, she said. Indeed, the director of the moot court program is Paula Arias, who is also Colombian.

"She knows my culture. She knows how I was raised," Jaramillo said. "She's like a second mother to me."

Best Law Schools for Hispanics

		% Hispanic students	% Minority faculty	Student services grade	Final GPA
1	Southwestern Law School	32.4%	26.6%	4.33	4.25
2	UNM School of Law	38.6%	33.3%	4.00	4.17
3	Texas Southern University	26.6%	79.1%	4.00	4.08
4	Florida A&M University	20.6%	68.1%	4.00	4.08
5	University of Miami School of Law	43.3%	19.9%	4.33	4.08
6	CUNY School of Law	28.2%	36.7%	4.00	4.00
7	St. Thomas University	70.1%	27.2%	3.33	4.00
8	University of La Verne	44.2%	31.3%	3.33	4.00
9	LMU Loyola Law School	24.8%	21.4%	4.33	4.00
10	NSU's Shepard Broad Law	40.5%	24.2%	3.66	4.00
11	Golden Gate University	31.0%	20.5%	3.33	3.91
12	Thomas Jefferson School of Law	31.6%	17.0%	3.33	3.83
13	University of San Francisco	33.2%	21.4%	3.00	3.83
14	American University	19.2%	20.2%	4.00	3.75
15	University of Houston	20.0%	17.8%	3.66	3.75
16	University of Arizona	20.6%	16.1%	4.00	3.75
17	UC Davis School of Law	23.7%	38.1%	2.66	3.67
18	South Texas College of Law Houston	29.8%	58.9%	2.33	3.67
19	Florida International University	53.4%	49.4%	1.66	3.66
20	St. Mary's University	49.4%	23.9%	2.33	3.66
21	California Western School of Law	25.7%	14.3%	3.66	3.58
22	Santa Clara Law	25.5%	20.8%	2.66	3.58
23	University of Colorado	18.1%	18.0%	3.66	3.58
24	UC - Irvine	16.6%	24.4%	4.00	3.58
25	UC Hastings	19.7%	17.0%	3.66	3.58



Best Schools for Native Americans

Isaac Morris is in his third year at Oklahoma City University School of Law. It was a natural choice. It was close to home. It's in state. And Oklahoma is where his tribe, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, is headquartered.

The tribal nation is helping to pay for his schooling. Upon graduation, he plans to give back to that community. His specialty is Native American law.

Morris is the first in his family to go to law school. His family members did mostly manual work. But he likes to argue, he joked. If you like to argue, what better field



Oklahoma City University

Best Law Schools for Native Americans

		% Native American students	% Minority faculty	Student services grade	Final GPA
1	UNM School of Law	13.0%	33.3%	3.66	3.75
2	University of Oklahoma	31.2%	14.1%	4.00	3.67
3	University of Arizona	18.4%	16.1%	4.00	3.58
4	University of Tulsa	39.5%	9.1%	2.33	3.16
5	Oklahoma City University	24.0%	12.7%	2.00	3.08
6	Loyola University New Orleans	6.8%	19.8%	2.66	3.00

is there than law?

"And it's challenging," he said of law school. "I like challenges."

Law school can be particularly challenging for Native Americans, though. They make up less than 1% of law students. A 2012 paper on Native American law professors estimated that, at the time, there were fewer than 30 tribal members who were tenured professors.

Oklahoma City University is a bright spot. It has 31 Native American students enrolled. While other schools have higher percentages of Native American students, no school has as many individual students. It also boasts the American Indian Law & Sovereignty Center and offers a number of externships and clinical opportunities in Native American law.

For Morris, all of this is a huge benefit.

"I feel included," he said. "I feel more comfortable to speak, to share my culture."

He has had two Native American professors, and that has been another bonus. Not only can the professors and students identify with each other but the professors are able to help educate non-Native American students about Indian life.

"It's very important," Morris said. "They bring a whole other perspective."

It would be hard for non-Native American students not to feel the effect of Indian Country, he noted. Oklahoma is home to 38 federally recognized tribes. But, he added, students of other ethnicities don't fully understand the challenges that face the Native American population.

One of Morris' challenges is his skin color. It's light. He doesn't look like what many perceive a Native American should look like. Years of inter-marriage have changed how many Native Americans look, he noted, so people sometimes question his heritage.

This comes mostly from non-Native Americans, he said. He's not taken seriously at times. Some question how Native American issues can actually affect him, given his appearance.

"But they do," he said. "They affect my family and my friends." ■

More women tapped as deans

For a number of schools, it's the first time in their histories they've been led by women.

BY MIKE STETZ

Apparently, some law schools didn't get the memo. Women as deans? That glass ceiling was broken in 1951, when Miriam Rooney was named founding dean of Seton Hall University School of Law. (To give you an idea of how long ago that was, it's the same year "I Love Lucy" first aired ...)

University of Southern California Gould School of Law appointed its first female dean way back in 1968. Harvard Law School named its first, Elena Kagan, in 2003. While that may not sound like ancient history, it predated the iPhone by four years, and Kagan is now a Supreme Court justice.

So about that memo . . .

It seems to have been re-circulated. A number of law schools have recently hired women as deans for the first time in their histories. In some cases, they've hired women of color, which arguably is even more of a glass-ceiling beat-down.

In this issue of preLaw magazine, we highlight the Best Law Schools for Diversity and celebrate those schools that have a significant representation of various minorities among their student bodies and faculties. However, leadership starts at the top. (Hey, it's a cliché for a reason . . .)

For some schools, the historic appointments of women to top positions took years and years and years and, well, years.



Kronk Warner



Anita Krug became the first permanent female dean at Chicago-Kent College of Law in August of 2019.

Take University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law, which was founded 106 years ago. In 2019, the Salt Lake City school hired its first female dean, Elizabeth Kronk Warner, who is also Native American.

"It's a really cool hiring trend," she said. "It's a true positive that our thought leaders are recognizing diversity."

She noted that a host of studies have shown that diverse teams lead to better decision-making. "You have a richer mix of perspectives at the table," she said.

Today's students expect schools to have diverse staff, faculty and student bodies.

"It's something they really value," Kronk Warner said, noting that diversity can play a key role in students' decisions about which law school to attend.

Other new deans also feel a sense of excitement about the direction in which legal education is headed with these hires.

Law schools are becoming more diverse, so it's apt that leadership become more diverse. For the Class of 2021, more than 30% of American law students are minorities, according to the American Bar Association. That's a number that's been rising.

And the number of women law students continues to trend upward. They're now in the majority, at 53.3%.

Anita Krug became the first permanent female dean at Chicago-Kent College of Law in August of 2019. You could say it was due. Dating back to 1888, Chicago-Kent is the second oldest law school in Illinois, yet it had never had a woman hold the position permanently. (Professor Joan Steinman was once interim dean.)

Why the long wait?

"Since I was not part of the Chicago-Kent community until this year, it is difficult for me to say why the school has

not previously had a (permanent) woman dean," Krug said.

One reason — at least when it comes to recent history — is that the job hadn't

been open for close to two decades. Krug's predecessor, Harold Krent, had held the deanship since 2002.

Indeed, few schools have the kind

of track record regarding diversity that Chicago-Kent has. The school had its first female graduate in 1891. Its first African American graduate, Ida Platt, was in the Class of 1894. She was only the third African American woman to become a lawyer in the U.S., and the first in Illinois.

So what's causing this recent wave of female deans?

"More and more women are earning the credentials and gaining the experience often thought necessary to be a law dean," Krug said. "And as women are increasingly appointed as deans, those women are wonderful role models for — and, in my experience, are very supportive of — women who aspire to be deans. It is a virtuous cycle, constantly building on itself and gaining momentum."

Verna Williams was appointed dean at University of Cincinnati College of Law last spring, after serving two years as interim dean. She is the first African American to lead the school, which dates back to 1833.

Such appointments are still something of a rarity. Patricia Roberts Harris was the first African American female dean, according to the National Women's Hall of Fame. She was appointed in 1969 as dean of Howard University School of Law, which is a historically black law school.

Today 35% percent of law schools have female deans.

About 10% have women of color serving as leaders.

Achieving diversity is a significant goal for all institutions, but particularly for law schools, Williams said. "It's incumbent for law schools to reflect our society's principles, one of which is inclusion," she said.

As dean, she's seen in a new light by students, particularly those of color.

"I represent what's possible, that it's not unique for a person of color to hold such a position," she said.

And it's not unusual for students to approach her to talk about law school life and how they are fitting in. Minorities — because they are minorities — can feel



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Verna Williams was appointed dean at University of Cincinnati College of Law last spring.

lonely or intimidated at times.

"I'm happy to do it," she said. "I think I offer a level of comfort that they wouldn't necessarily feel."

But the job comes with pressures, Williams noted. Because she's a woman of color, it's expected that she will be able to magically make the law school a model of diversity. That's easier said than done. For instance, because of the pressures facing legal education, the school has not hired one faculty member in seven years.

It's hard to diversify when there are no open positions available. Just recently, she's gotten the OK to hire more faculty members, but the competition for diversity candidates is tough.

"There will be expectations on me," she said. "It takes outreach. It takes creativity. It takes effort, and it takes patience."

These female law school deans appear to be up to the task — and then some. They went to the nation's top schools and have extensive experience. They speak passionately about the importance of legal education in today's society and how to make it more inclusive, effective, supportive and affordable.

One inspirational story is that of Michèle Alexandre, who was named the first black dean of Stetson University College of Law last year. Born in Haiti, she came to the U.S. at age 15. She could not speak English.

Her mother immigrated to give her children opportunity.

"She gave up everything she knew, so we could have the life that she couldn't," Alexandre said.

For Alexandre, it was not easy. They lived in Brooklyn. There was considerable backlash toward Haitians at the time, particularly because of the AIDS crisis. Health officials had warned that Haitians were at higher risk of having the virus, causing them to suffer harassment.

Alexandre, though, soon saw opportunity through education. She pursued it with zeal, which impressed her teachers, who helped her accelerate her studies. She finished high school before she was 17. She went to Colgate University and became its first black valedictorian.

Law intrigued her. She was upset by gender inequality and by how the poverty line remained stagnated. She saw law as an opportunity to make the most impact. She went to Harvard Law School.



Alexandre

After graduation, her career blossomed, first as a lawyer and then as a law professor. *Ebony* magazine named her one of the Top 100 Influential African Americans of 2013.

When she was tapped as dean of the Gulfport, Fla., law school — the oldest in the state — she saw it as yet more

opportunity.

"I don't go around thinking of myself as the first black dean," she said. "There's no time to pause. When we're here, we are working."

And when it comes to today's students, professors and deans alike need to prove their worth. "They want to get to know the real you," she said. "They're not satisfied until they get that. They're looking for more. They're looking for meaning, for connection."

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Best Schools for Public Service

We identify outstanding law schools for those interested in pursuing careers in public interest and government or working as prosecutors, public defenders or clerks.

BY KATIE THISDELL



When Nicole Ozer graduated from high school in the 1990s, she'd never even heard of the internet.

A few years later, though, after participating in an AmeriCorps program in East Palo Alto, Calif., she saw striking evidence of a growing digital divide. The world's leading tech companies were based nearby, but people in adjoining low-income communities didn't have access to computers.

That led Ozer to a career addressing the intersection of public interest and technology law.

"I saw that potentially on the horizon, seeing how if we could really push how our technology was empowering equality and justice and social change, that would be an amazing world," said Ozer, interim legal and policy director for the ACLU of Northern California and technology and civil liberties director for the ACLU of California.

Ozer earned her J.D. with a certificate in Law and Technology from University of California, Berkeley, School of Law in 2003. Berkeley Law has always been one of the top schools for public interest law, and this year we ranked it No. 2 in the nation.

preLaw magazine looked at employment data, curriculum, tuition, debt and loan repayment options to identify the best law schools for public service. (See the full methodology on page 42.) We broke public service into four categories: public interest, government, public defenders/prosecutors and clerkships.

While most public service jobs don't pay as much as private practice, a growing number of law students are gravitating toward these positions because of the personal rewards. Studies show that lawyers who do such work are among the happiest. Currently, more than one-quarter of law school graduates land their first jobs

in some form of public service.

Many public interest lawyers defend and protect people who can't otherwise afford an attorney. Others work on important social issues. Government lawyers focus on issues such as environmental law and consumer protection, to name just a few.

Prosecutors help keep the world safe, and public defenders ensure that everyone gets legal representation. Federal and state clerks help to ensure fairness in our judicial system.

But not every school is the same when it comes to offering curricula related to public service.

For Ozer, Berkeley Law was the perfect fit, given that it offered training through a technology clinic as well as robust loan repayment options for students who work in public interest.

"I think where you go to law school is incredibly important in terms of how it sets you up to do the work you want to do as a lawyer," Ozer said.



PUBLIC INTEREST

Public interest law tugs at your heartstrings. For some, it means working with survivors of domestic violence or human trafficking. For others, it means tackling issues of immigration, discrimination or environmental justice.

Jobs may be in policy advocacy or with legal service organizations. What they all

share in common is that this is where you can make the world a better place and help people in need.

City University of New York School of Law, which came in No. 1 on our list, stands head and shoulders above the others when it comes to placing students in public interest jobs.

"Public service work is in the law school's DNA," said Mary Lu Bilek, the school's dean.

She said almost every student who attends CUNY Law wants to right some wrong or represent a specific community. That has helped the school place an unprecedented 40.6% of its graduates in public interest jobs.

Yale Law School is next, with 16.7% of its graduates going into public interest positions. Yale, which is No. 18 on our list, is not the only prestigious law school that ranks. Georgetown University Law Center is No. 4, and Columbia University is No. 14.

For these schools, legal education is not just about creating future Big Law partners or hotshot corporate lawyers.

"I was inspired by the civil rights lawyers of the '50s and '60s," said Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of Berkeley Law. "We certainly have many students who come to Berkeley knowing that that's what they want to do."

About 20% of his graduates go into public interest or government jobs, and another 15% take on clerkships.

The school offers a wide range of opportunities to prepare students for such jobs. There are six in-house clinics and eight community-based clinics, while the Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice focuses on building students into effective social advocates. It offers weekly speakers, regular workshops and mentoring opportunities, as well as fellowships and two certificates.

About 92% of first-year Berkeley Law students participate in a pro bono program, where they provide client services. Pro bono hours, plus additional volunteer hours, make students eligible for Edley Grants, stipends for those who gain work

experience in the public interest sector over the summer. The school increased the amount of each grant by \$1,000 last year, so awards are now as much as \$5,500 per student.

"The students who want to pursue public interest work, they should be doing it during the summers of law school," Chemerinsky said. "They shouldn't do anything else. But public interest programs rarely pay for summer work."

The grants help to bridge that gap.

Of course, public interest work is

PUBLIC INTEREST

	School	% employed	Combined grade
1	CUNY School of Law	40.6%	4.23
2	UC Berkeley School of Law	11.7%	4.13
3	Northeastern University	11.8%	4.10
4	Georgetown University	9.7%	3.98
5	West Virginia University	11.2%	3.90
6	American University	8.6%	3.88
7	UCLA Law	9.1%	3.85
8	Brooklyn Law School	9.6%	3.82
9	Case Western Reserve University	7.9%	3.82
10	Wayne State University	6.4%	3.71
11	UC Hastings	6.1%	3.71
12	Albany Law School	9.2%	3.68
13	University of Alabama	8.0%	3.64
14	Columbia Law School	5.8%	3.63
15	UC Davis School of Law	6.8%	3.62
16	University of Colorado	9.3%	3.61
17	University of Oregon	8.4%	3.61
18	Yale Law School	16.7%	3.60
19	Loyola University New Orleans	6.7%	3.58
20	University of the District of Columbia	9.0%	3.57
21	Loyola University Chicago	5.7%	3.53
22	University of Toledo	10.3%	3.50
23	Cardozo School of Law	4.8%	3.45
24	University of New Hampshire	6.8%	3.44
25	George Washington University	4.4%	3.42



Berkeley Law students display the reasons why they perform pro bono work.

never going to match the \$180,000 starting salary paid by many Big Law firms.

"The comparison to large firm sala-

ries will always be dismal," the Yale Law School website states. "If you choose this life of a public interest lawyer, it's best to stop comparing."

Ozer said public interest jobs will always have more work than resources. But that doesn't mean they're harder.

"Public interest work is all about working smarter than the other side. They're always going to have way more resources," Ozer said. "For the work I do on technology issues, a lot of times, who

is on the other side are the most heavily resourced institutions or the richest companies and players in the world."

In short, if you see yourself as a David instead of a Goliath, this is the kind of legal career for you.



JOHN KEITH/ADOBESTOCK

GOVERNMENT

Location, location, location.

Many of the top schools for government jobs are in capital cities, such as Georgia State University College of Law in Atlanta and Pennsylvania State University, Dickinson Law, which is located just outside Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania.

Opportunities abound in state capitals, since that's where many governmental agencies are based.

And then, there's New York City. While it's not a capital city, it's the Big Apple. Population: 8.4 million. Number of people employed in city government: 300,000.

"Whether you're interested in the federal government or the city or local law, or you want to work with an international NGO (nongovernmental organization) like the U.N., New York is the center of the universe for that," said Anthony Crowell, dean and president of New York Law School. "The training and opportunities you get here to work at all levels of government is pretty extraordinary because of the backdrop you get to do that work."

It's not just its location. It's also its offerings that make New York Law School No. 2 in our ranking for government.



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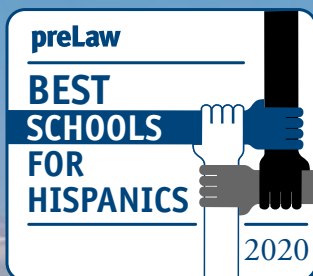
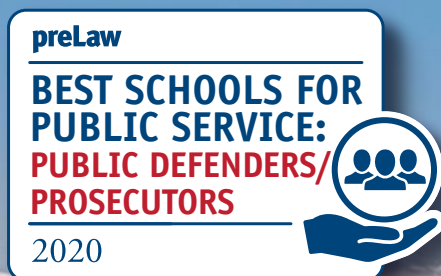
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The school is home to the Center for New York City Law, which aims to increase transparency in the city's government and decisions, said Brian Kaszuba, associate director of the center. It does this through publications, courses and events, such as its recurring breakfasts where students can hear from high profile officials and agency leaders while connecting with hundreds of city government employees.

"It's an opportunity for students to network, and a lot have employment opportunities result from the people they meet at their table at the breakfast series," said Kaszuba, who also teaches a legal journalism course focused on writing about city government topics.

There is also the Office of Public Service and Pro Bono Initiatives, where students get academic and career advising; the Impact Center for Public Interest Law, which offers diverse programming throughout the semester; and the Social Justice Organization Incubator. They are all led by Swati Parikh, the school's executive director of public service and pro bono initiatives.

This year, the school will lead a state-wide effort to ensure an accurate count for the U.S. Census. It will work with communities to mobilize resources to count those who are typically under-counted. The project, part academic, part grassroots organizing, will continue for several years, watching the political redis-

GOVERNMENT

	School	% employed in government	Combined grade
1	Florida State University	29.4%	3.67
2	New York Law School	17.2%	3.58
3	University of the District of Columbia	29.9%	3.54
4	Albany Law School	17.6%	3.42
5	American University	18.9%	3.35
6	Penn State University - Dickinson Law	22.2%	3.33
7	Washburn University	22.0%	3.33
8	George Mason University	16.8%	3.32
9	Georgia State University	16.2%	3.31
10	IU McKinney School of Law	22.3%	3.27
11	McGeorge School of Law	16.5%	3.22
12	University of Illinois	15.4%	3.17
13	University of Washington	17.0%	3.01
14	UC Hastings	13.0%	3.01
15	Texas A&M Law	20.3%	3.00
16	Penn State Law	17.6%	2.92
17	Stetson University	26.4%	2.91
18	University of Baltimore	21.1%	2.90
19	Faulkner Law	20.0%	2.86
20	Ohio Northern University	20.3%	2.86

tricting process, which follows the count.

"The census is always an important issue. It has a lot of impact, especially on urban areas that need an accurate count to ensure federal and state dollars flow to

the right people on the local level," said Crowell, former counsel to former New York City Mayor Michal Bloomberg and a former New York City Law Department attorney.

Florida State University College of Law ranks No. 1 for government. Hands-on opportunities combine with location to make it the top school. It is located in Tallahassee, the capital of the nation's third most populous state. Nearly 30% of its grads land jobs in government. Only one other school — University of the District of Columbia David A. Clark School of Law — had better placement numbers.

Florida State University Dean Erin O'Connor said about half of the students arrive knowing they want their law careers to make a difference.

"If you really want to protect consumers, doing that through a government agency might be the best possible way," O'Connor said.

Externships are just one of the ways students can see how government offices actually work, and how massive the state government is.

"I think it provides a great exposure for the students to the kinds of careers that are available in the government space, as well as a chance to work in a specific space," O'Connor said.

Clinics introduce Florida State students to advocacy and how government entities are involved in lawmaking

Public Service Methodology

We graded each school in three categories: 1) Employment (50% for public interest and government positions); 2) Curricula related to field (40% for public interest and government); 3) Debt and loan repayment options (10%).

We collected employment data from the ABA, and schools provided data on curricula and loan repayment assistance programs. Debt data came from U.S. News & World Report.

For public defenders/prosecutors, employment counted for 35% of the grade and curricula 55%. This is because employment data is not broken



out for public defenders and prosecutors; it is included in government and public interest numbers.

Curricula is based on the following in each field: concentration/certificate (35%), clinic (24%), externship opportunities (12%), center (12%), student

groups (9%), student journal (8%). Additional information, including number of faculty and courses offered in the particular field, is reviewed with possible bonus points equal to 5%.

The debt and loan repayment options category is based on expected monthly loan payments and long-term debt for the average graduate who works in public interest or government. Expected monthly payments are determined by using an income-based repayment plan based on the average salary for each field and subtracting each school's expected loan repayment support.

and regulations. Recently, the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Law Project (HELP) advocated for a Department of Education rule that would require all K-12 schools in Florida to teach human trafficking prevention.

Courses emphasize implementing a winning case theory and narrative, developing core pretrial and trial skills, demonstrating professionalism and persuasive communication techniques and mastering cutting-edge technology.

"We know what it takes to work as a public defender or prosecutor, and we know what employers are looking for," Jones said. "The fact of the matter is, not everyone is cut out to be a litigator . . .

We are helping students who think they want to litigate see whether they have the skills — when no one's liberty is at stake yet."

Budgets and time restraints at many public prosecutor and defender offices around the country don't allow for much training. There's no time to teach a new hire how to interview a witness or craft an opening statement.

"They're looking to hire people who



PISANU/ADOBESTOCK

PUBLIC DEFENDERS / PROSECUTORS

Prosecution jobs are the most common type of government job, according to the National Association for Law Placement.

American University Washington College of Law in Washington, D.C., offers students many opportunities related to their quest to become criminal law practitioners. That helped the school place No. 2 in this category.

The opportunities start in the first year, with a criminal law course and an externship fair that brings together employers from all over the metro area, including state and federal courts, nonprofits and other agencies. A criminal law-specific externship fair in the fall of the second year connects students with about 25 employers. During their third year, most students participate in a clinic.

When Cynthia Jones was a law student at American University, she tried her first case through one of the clinics. Today, she's a professor and the director of the school's Stephen S. Weinstein Trial Advocacy Program.

That program prepares students for litigation practice through courses, special programs and advocacy competitions.

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American University is among the nation's leaders when it comes to careers in government.

are ready to practice from day one,” Jones said. “Getting that training and confidence in law school and honing those skills is critically important.” Also at American University is the Criminal Justice Practice and Policy

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PUBLIC DEFENDERS

	School	Combined grade
1	Brooklyn Law School	3.97
2	American University	3.90
3	Albany Law School	3.78
4	UC Hastings	3.76
5	University of Missouri	3.75
6	Pace University	3.70
7	Florida State University	3.68
8	University of the District of Columbia	3.63
9	IU McKinney School of Law	3.63
10	UNM School of Law	3.60
11	New York Law School	3.57
12	St. John's School of Law	3.53
13	University of Denver	3.53
14	George Washington University	3.51
15	Touro Law Center	3.51
16	University of Wisconsin	3.48
17	Georgetown University	3.46
18	UC Berkeley School of Law	3.46
19	Cardozo School of Law	3.43
20	Case Western Reserve University	3.43
22	Marquette University	3.43
23	Northern Illinois University	3.43
24	University of Colorado	3.41
25	University of Florida	3.41

Institute. Launched in 2013, it brings together all criminal law faculty to provide career and academic counseling and to help students find jobs in the field.

“Before, individual faculty members were doing this on their own,” Jones said. “My criminal law students would come to me, and we would individually mentor them and steer them to opportunities. Creating the institute allowed us to create a collective knowledge among all the criminal faculty for job opportunities.”

The institute also brings in alumni who are practicing as prosecutors and public defenders.

Because of the faculty’s connections, they’re able to pinpoint specific opportunities for their students. Say someone wants to work with institutional reform. The student can connect with an alum who’s doing that work. Or, say a student heard a podcast about sexual assault in prison or about immigrant women committing crimes. The school has programs in those areas.

“That’s always satisfying when that was easy,” Jones said.

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Federal Clerkships

Yale Law School	34.0%
Stanford Law School	29.0%
University of Chicago	23.8%
University of Virginia	15.1%
Harvard Law School	14.9%
UC Berkeley	14.6%
University of Michigan	13.7%
Duke Law School	13.2%
Vanderbilt Law School	10.6%
University of Texas	9.7%
William & Mary Law School	9.1%
University of Montana	8.7%
University of Georgia	8.2%

U.Arkanas, Fayetteville	8.0%
Notre Dame Law School	7.8%
Northwestern Law	7.4%
University of Kentucky	7.4%
Univ. Pennsylvania	7.4%
Univ. North Carolina	7.3%
UC - Irvine	7.0%
University of Minnesota	6.8%
University of Maine	6.7%
Cornell Law School	6.6%
George Mason University	6.6%
University of Alabama	6.5%

CLERKSHIPS

Clerkships are prestigious, and they help graduates learn the inner workings of the judicial bench. Students get hands-on experience with all the players in the courts, including judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, trial litigators and support staff. Plus, there's the research, the writing and the focus on how the court process is managed.

It's a competitive selection process, particularly for federal clerkships. Graduates at the nation's top-ranked schools have the

best chances for these positions. Yale Law School sends 34% of its graduates into clerkships, followed by Stanford Law School with 29%.

But other schools excel as well. Alexander Blewett III School of Law at University of Montana is among the nation's leaders in this category. It places 12th in our ranking, with nearly 9% of grads getting coveted Federal clerkships. The University of Arkansas School of Law

in Fayetteville finished 14th, with 8% of its law grads landing such jobs.

With courts of all levels across the country, there are many positions available besides federal clerkships. Some states have more spots than others. More than half the graduates at each of the law schools in New Jersey — Seton Hall University

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School of Law and Rutgers Law School — go on to clerkships.

University of St. Thomas School of Law in Minneapolis sends 34.7% of its graduates to clerkship positions, mostly at the state level. That places it fourth among all schools for clerkships.

“We talk a lot about public service with our students,” said St. Thomas Dean Robert Vischer. “And more broadly, we talk about law as a vocation, and the way

we interpret vocation is a reminder that as lawyers we’re becoming part of a story that’s bigger than ourselves.”

Clerking is a great way for graduates to see how their work fits into that bigger story, whether they go on to private practice or public service after their clerkships end.

Law clerks are exposed to the realities of the lives that the law touches, including those who can’t pay for representation, Vischer said.

All Clerkships

Seton Hall University	58.2%
Rutgers Law	54.2%
Yale Law School	39.1%
Univ. of St. Thomas Mn.	34.7%
University of Baltimore	34.3%
University of Maryland	33.3%
University of Montana	30.4%
Stanford Law School	30.1%
U. Nevada, Las Vegas	28.3%
University of Chicago	27.2%
University of Maine	26.7%
University of Minnesota	26.6%
Roger Williams Univ.	25.0%
William & Mary Law School	24.1%
Penn State U. Dickinson	23.8%
Univ. South Carolina	23.6%
University of Hawai’i	23.2%
Widener Law Commonwealth	22.6%
University of Arizona	22.1%
Drexel Univ. Kline	21.7%
Widener Delaware	21.7%
Catholic University	21.6%
Temple University	19.6%
University of Georgia	19.5%
Washington and Lee U.	19.5%

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IUPUI
INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Robert H. McKinney School of Law

Clerking acts as extra time to refine and practice what you learned in law school. While a student may have had a mentor while at law school, as a clerk he or she will work closely with a senior member of the profession.

Vischer, who clerked for three federal judges, said he loves the writing aspect of law. Nowhere can you get such intense practice — and invested feedback — as in a clerkship, he said.

“The writing is coming out under the name of the judge,” he said. “So it’s not just they’re doing you a favor; it’s their work product, so they’re fully invested in what you’re doing.”

University of St. Thomas starts connecting students with the judiciary early. Judges teach as adjuncts, serve as mentors and lead information sessions, such as a recent writing workshop.

“We try to make the judiciary and clerks a natural part of our students’ experience,” Vischer said.

Stetson's court dominance

The Florida law school has one of the top trial advocacy programs in the nation, featuring a number of key components that work in consort with one another.

BY LYLE MORAN

While participating in a Stetson University College of Law clinic with the State Attorney's Office in Pinellas County, Fla., last fall, third-year student Sara Papantonio tried misdemeanor matters under the supervision of a licensed attorney.

During her downtime, the Stetson Trial Team member would go watch felony case proceedings and closely observe the lawyers on both sides. Papantonio said she would leave those sessions feeling confident that she could effectively try a case against a seasoned attorney because she'd had both hands-on and classroom experience at Stetson University in Gulfport, Fla.

"Coming out of law school, I'm not at all scared to be in a courtroom, whether I'm going against a new attorney or an attorney with 50 years' experience," she said.

That's the kind of self-assurance Stetson Law works to instill in students through its consistently top-ranked advocacy program. The law school has attained its lofty reputation by providing a comprehensive array of offerings in the specialty, including moot court and trial teams, clinics and externships, and an Advocacy Resource Center.

Stetson has also distinguished itself by teaching students the skills needed to thrive in the 21st century workplace and by emphasizing that advocacy is much more than litigating a case in the courtroom.

"What really explains our continued success in this area is just a commitment on the part of the institution itself to make sure our students walk out of Stetson Law as close to practice-ready as we possibly can (make them)," said professor Roberta K. Flowers, interim director of Stetson's Center for Excellence in Advocacy.

A key indicator of the effectiveness of Stetson's advocacy training is the impressive results compiled by the school's trial teams and moot court boards, which frequently win national competitions.

Papantonio said the most valuable part



STETSON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW'S trial advocacy program benefits from faculty commitment and a focus on practical training offerings.

of her time at Stetson has been competing on the trial team. Team members constantly get constructive feedback from their coaches and peers while practicing skills such as giving opening statements and examining witnesses.

Papantonio, whose team placed second nationally last year, said the time commitment is significant. Her team often practiced from dawn to dusk on weekends. Papantonio and her teammates, as well as their coaches, were on campus fine-tuning their trial advocacy skills after the fall 2019 semester concluded and returned to school before classes started in mid-January to prepare for their next competition.

"I have no problem doing it because I have learned so much, and I know how beneficial it is going to be to me in my career," said Papantonio, who is from Pensacola, Fla.

Flowers said students such as Papantonio are motivated by a desire to continue the school's legacy of success, known as "the long green line." She said the coaches also

put in long hours to help the teams thrive. While students serve as coaches at some schools, Stetson's teams are coached by faculty members and practicing lawyers.

"We have a commitment that our students will be coached by people who really know how to try cases," Flowers said.

Stetson Law Dean Michèle Alexandre said nearly two-thirds of the faculty is dedicated to advocacy in some form. These faculty members teach students much more than just how to conduct oral advocacy in the courtroom, Alexandre said.

Writing projects are incorporated throughout the curriculum to help students hone their persuasive writing skills, and those interested in a specific topic, such as environmental law, are afforded the chance to write about it.

The law school also has an Institute for the Advancement of Legal Communication, which assists faculty in developing innovative ways to train students to be better communicators.

"If you don't have the confidence orally and in written form in all aspects of law, you just won't be able to find your purpose," Alexandre said.

The dean said a focus on technology is another important element of Stetson's effort to produce graduates with what she calls "21st century advocacy" skills. For example, lawyers and judges come to the school to provide e-discovery training, and students hoping to improve specific skills can watch videos through the law school's Advocacy Resource Center.

Stetson is also working with computer scientists to create a virtual courtroom, and the school is planning to provide opportunities for students to gain experience in cybersecurity law.

"We are creating partnerships in order for students to have real-life 21st century experience in advocacy," Alexandre said.

The school's clinics and externships are another way for students to gain real-world experience. More than 350 such opportunities are offered annually, and Stetson Law guarantees that every student can participate in a clinic or externship during law school.

Additionally, Flowers said, the advocacy program promotes the idea that persuasive skills useful in a courtroom are also extremely helpful in other areas.

Along those lines, Stetson Law offers a concentration in social justice advocacy.

"We want our students to come out believing they can advocate in the community for social justice and they can advocate in legislatures to get laws changed," Flowers said.

The final cog in Stetson's program is a heavy emphasis on mentoring, which is required for students in its advocacy concentration. The school tries to match up students with faculty mentors who have experience in the students' areas of interest.

Papantonio said her trial team coach was a terrific mentor.

"My coach will forever be my mentor, and she will forever be the person (for whom) I thank my lucky stars I went to Stetson, because without everything she has taught me, I would not be even a fraction of the lawyer I anticipate I will be," Papantonio said.



UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON LAW CENTER is home to the Blakely Advocacy Institute, where top moot court teams routinely compete.

The art of the duel: Trial advocacy leaders

Many of America's best-known actors have played the roles of lawyers sparring gallantly in the courtroom: Gregory Peck, Paul Newman, Kelly McGillis, Tom Cruise, Susan Sarandon, John Travolta, Al Pacino, Denzel Washington, Matthew McConaughey . . .

They gravitate toward such roles for the same reason many law school students do. It's exciting. It's challenging. You get to wear nice suits.

In law school, trial advocacy is the specialty in which students learn to suit up, so to speak. They learn rules and techniques for engaging in the legal arena, be it criminal or civil.

Stetson University College of Law has one of the nation's top programs. But another four schools also earned A+ grades from preLaw magazine for their curricular offerings in this area. And 14 more got A grades.

University of Houston Law Center received an A+, but that's not exactly shocking, given its commitment to this specialty. The center is home to the renowned Blakely Advocacy Institute (BAI), which hosts a number of moot court competitions. It also created and maintains the national moot court rankings.

Each year, the top 16 teams compete in

BAI's Hunton Andrews Kurth Moot Court National Championship.

The school's trial advocacy program is consistently ranked among the top in the nation and attracts much student interest. For instance, in 2018-19 more than 300 University of Houston students took advocacy courses. During the past 20 years, more than 11,000 students have done so.

Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University is another A+ recipient. The Intensive Trial Advocacy Program (ITAP) is a key part of the New York school's practical training curriculum. It's one of the few such programs in the nation.

ITAP is a two-week course held each January in which students learn cutting-edge strategies for courtroom litigation under the instruction of leading jurists and lawyers from across the country. The program culminates with students putting their training to the test before a judge and jury in a mock trial.

UCLA School of Law, which got an A grade in this specialty, continues to enhance its program. It recently added courses in Advanced Trial Advocacy and Advanced Evidence and Objections. It also hired a full-time director of trial advocacy, Justin Bernstein, who is a former president of the American Mock Trial Association.

Trial Advocacy

See methodology on page 53

A+

American University
Cardozo School of Law
McGeorge School of Law
Stetson University
University of Houston

A

Baylor University
Case Western Reserve University
Chicago-Kent College of Law
Hofstra University (Deane)
LMU Loyola Law School
NKU Chase College of Law
Pennsylvania State University - Dickinson Law
Suffolk University

A (continued)

Temple University
UCLA Law
University of Arizona
University of Cincinnati
University of Missouri - KC
Washburn University School of Law

A-

Drake University
George Washington University
Georgia State University
New York Law School
Southwestern Law School
University of Miami
University of Memphis

Since the fall of 2018, UCLA's trial team has won 55 out of 68 trials, which is a much better record than that of its football team . . .

Few schools put more emphasis on advocacy than Baylor University School of Law in Waco, Texas. Not only does it have outstanding moot court teams — it led the

nation last year in University of Houston's BAI rankings — but every third-year student must go through Practice Court.

How tough is that six-month program? Well, it's known as "the Marine Corps Boot Camp of law schools." That gives you an idea.



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AKRON LAW

By The Numbers ...



TOP 2

AAJ Student Trial Advocacy
Competition, 2018 and 2019

TOP 4

Top Gun National Mock Trial
Competition, 2019

TOP 5

Fordham Trial Competition
Performance Ranking, 2018-19

TOP 8

ABA Competitions
Champion Ranking, 2018-19

TOP 34

Trial Advocacy
U.S. News & World Report, 2020

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International Law: It's a small world after all

One can see international law in action just about every day. Look at our nation's conflicts with China over trade and intellectual property protections, with France for slapping taxes on our digital services, and with Iran over, well, EVERYTHING!!!

It's an evolving specialty too. International law is not just about enhancing our economic interests. It's also about forging agreements among the world's nations to protect the global environment and to ensure that future generations will be guarded from poverty and disease.

If you want to delve into it, Cleveland is an option. Yes, Cleveland, home to the Cavaliers and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. The Ohio city is also home to Case Western Reserve University School of Law, which has one of the nation's top international law programs.



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY'S Dean Emeritus Claudio Grossman leads Chile's delegation to win a landmark International Court of Justice case between Bolivia and Chile regarding access to the Pacific Ocean.

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#19

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#3

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LAW TRIAL ADVOCACY 2020
#15

Suffolk has four *U.S. News* top 20-ranked specialty programs.

SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY
LAW SCHOOL

International Law

See methodology on page 53

It was one of 10 schools to get an A+ for curricular offerings in this specialty. Meanwhile, another 13 schools received A grades, which shows how much emphasis law schools place on international law.

Case Western Reserve has the nation's largest international law program endowment, at \$3.8 million. It's the only law school with a foreign policy talk radio program, and it's the most recent law school to win the Jessup International Law Moot Court competition.

For students, opportunities abound. Every year, the school's Cox International Law Center awards more than \$60,000 in grants to defray travel and living expenses for 25 to 30 summer internships, semester externships and postgraduate fellowships with international organizations, foreign law firms, government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

UCLA School of Law also received an

A+

American University
Brooklyn Law School
California Western School of Law
Case Western Reserve University
Georgetown University
LMU Loyola Law School
Santa Clara University
UC Berkeley School of Law
UCLA Law
University of Washington

A

Boston College
Cardozo School of Law
DePaul University
Duke University
Emory University
Fordham University
Southwestern Law School

A (continued)

University of Hawai'i
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Oklahoma
Washington and Lee University

A-

Harvard Law School
Penn State Law
Regent University
Temple University
George Washington University
University of Arizona
University of Georgia
University of San Francisco
University of Utah
University of Virginia
Vanderbilt Law School

A+, and it continues to expand its offerings in this specialty. This spring, the school's Promise Institute for Human Rights will

launch UCLA Law in The Hague.

In this program, students will be placed at international courts and tribunals for full-

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- #15** HEALTH CARE LAW

– U.S. News & World Report 2020 Best Law Schools Specialty Rankings

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11 CONSECUTIVE YEARS

**BEST VALUE LAW SCHOOL
IN THE NATION**

— National Jurist —

NAMED AN

**APPLE DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL
2017-2019 | 2019-2022**

— Apple, Inc. —

93%

**OF CLASS OF 2018
EMPLOYED WITHIN
10 MONTHS OF
GRADUATION**

— American Bar Association —

95%

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— Oklahoma Board of Bar Examiners —



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time, semester-long externships. Students will also participate in a course called The Practice of International Courts, taught by a leading international criminal law practitioner.

U.S. businesses working overseas regularly encounter human rights issues. Some nations don't have the best records in that area. This is why University of Oklahoma College of Law, which received an A rating, started the Center for International Business and Human Rights. It's the first of its kind in the nation.

Part of the center's mission is to help businesses meet international principles in this regard. Many rely on their lawyers to draft policies to meet such guidelines, and the center was formed to train legal experts in this critical field.

Given its location in Washington, D.C., American University Washington College of Law is well positioned to excel in international law. And it does. It earned an A+. The school boasts nearly 20 centers and pro-

grams focused on international law, from the War Crimes Research Office to the Syrian Initiative to Combat Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

Another Washington, D.C., school, Georgetown University Law Center, also received a top grade. It notes that its faculty has expertise in areas such as treaty interpretation, human rights, the law of war, international environmental law, international trade and financial regulation, European Union law and the rule of law in China.

Santa Clara University School of Law in California, another A+ school in this specialty, is home to the Center for Global Law and Policy, which offers the largest and one of the oldest summer abroad programs in the nation.

It offers nine summer class programs as well as more than 30 externship options, including working in large international law firms, local firms, nongovernmental organizations, courts, international organizations and the UN.

Public Policy: Retooling society for the better

Our society, regardless of our advances, is far from perfect. We face myriad challenges. We have homelessness, opioid addiction, income inequality, rising student debt, communities with unsafe drinking water . . .

We could go on, but you get the point.

That's where public policy comes into play. You want to make a difference? Becoming a lawyer who works for the betterment of society is one way. And law schools are very much in the mix. Improving society through justice endeavors is a key part of their mission.

Stetson University College of Law is a leader in this particular area, as is Duke University School of Law. Both schools earned A+ grades for their curricular offerings.

New York Law School places an emphasis on public policy too. Its dean and president, Anthony Crowell, served as counsel for former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, who is a current presidential candidate. Elected officials

still reach out to Crowell for advice on policy issues. He also teaches a class called State and Local Government Law, offering students his unique insights.

Other professors play key roles in public policy too. Alvin Bragg, co-director of the school's Racial Justice Project, is running for Manhattan District Attorney.

In 2019, the school launched the New York Census and Redistricting Institute, which is working with and educating public institutions, nonprofits and the public about law and policy related to this year's U.S. Census and the city and state political redistricting that will follow.

New York Law School's location in Lower Manhattan gives it the opportunity to partner with a host of key public policy institutions, and it is often asked to host a wide range of public dialogs.

Temple University - James E. Beasley School of Law has upped its public policy offerings. Last year, it launched the Access to Justice Clinic, and this year it will offer the Systemic Justice Clinic. Temple earned an A grade.

The Access to Justice Clinic's primary

focus is on systemic projects, rather than on individual representation, though it does take individual cases at times. Clinic students lobbied for a recently passed city council bill that will, if signed by the mayor, provide free legal representation for low-income people facing eviction.

"Supporting a right-to-counsel bill is the least I can do," Xavier O'Connor, a 3L student in the Access to Justice Clinic, said at the city council hearing. As part of the clinic, he had researched why so many cases had ended with tenants being booted out. Many didn't realize they had legal protections.

The Systemic Justice Clinic will look at how the current criminal legal system wreaks longtime havoc on a person's life



NEW YORK LAW SCHOOL, located in lower Manhattan, gives students ample opportunity to participate in public policy issues.

Public Policy

A+

Duke University
Stetson University

A

Cardozo School of Law
Florida State University
McGeorge School of Law
New York Law School
Temple University

A-

Case Western Reserve University
Regent University
UCLA Law
University of Miami
University of San Diego
University of St. Thomas - Mn.
Washington and Lee University

B+

Duquesne University
Penn State Law
Penn State University - Dickinson Law
St. John's School of Law
University of Colorado
University of Maryland
University of New Hampshire
University of San Francisco
University of Utah

preLaw magazine grades law schools based on the breadth of their curricular offerings. The scores were weighted as follows: 30% for a concentration, 24% for a clinic, 12% for a center, 12% for an externship, 9% for a journal, 8% for a student group, 5% for a certificate and added value for other offerings.

and why it is mostly the poor and minorities who face such consequences. These consequences can include barriers to jobs, education and housing.

University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law is based in Sacramento, the capital of California, and it takes advantage of that location with a program called Capital Lawyering. Students get practical learning experience in a number of areas,

including the state Assembly and executive branch committees.

The school also boasts the innovative Legislative and Public Policy Clinic, in which students learn to research, craft and lobby legislation. In 2016, five of six bills that students worked on were signed into law. One of them allows counties to create collaborative, comprehensive programs to help sexually exploited children.

Diverse ideas start with diverse backgrounds.

Introducing the New Leadership Team at the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law

Left to Right: Associate Dean of Faculty and Research **Ronell Andersen Jones**; Associate Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid **Reyes Aguilar**; Director of Development **Kevin Carrillo**; Assistant Dean of Student Affairs **Leilani Marshall**; Assistant Dean of Career Development **Arturo Thompson**; Associate Dean of Academic Affairs **Amelia Smith Rinehart**. **Center:** Dean **Elizabeth Kronk Warner**. For more information, please visit our website at law.utah.edu.

Tips for getting organized in the new year: a pre-law school timeline

BY HILLARY MANTIS

The new year brings new goals, and if you are a pre-law student, a timeline for what you need to accomplish this year can be crucial.

Here are some tips, broken down, year by year:

FRESHMAN YEAR:

Get involved in pre-law activities: If you are a freshman, there is not much you need to do yet or to worry about, in terms of applications to law school. This is a very good time, however, to get involved in pre-law activities at your school.

Find out about the pre-law clubs on your campus, as well as the mock trial team, if that interests you. It's a good time to visit your career services office if you haven't done so yet and sign up for law related job and internship listings.

Your GPA and LSAT score will be key factors down the line, so it's not too early to work on your GPA.

SOPHOMORE YEAR:

Choose a major: This is usually the year you finalize your major. You do not have to have a pre-law major to apply to law school. Any major should be fine, so choose what interests you. Political science tends to be a very popular major for pre-law students, but really, you are free to choose whatever you want to study.

I have seen students apply to law school with majors including English, math, psychology, sociology, philosophy, business and even dance. You will need reading, writing and analytical skills in law school, so look for classes that will help you build skills in those areas.

I would suggest taking some law related electives, not because you need them for your application to succeed but so you can see for yourself what a law school class might be like.

JUNIOR YEAR:

Set up your test prep schedule: This is a big year. You should decide this year if you will apply right from college or take time off between college and law school. If it is the former, it is a good time to begin to study for the LSAT or GRE.

If you haven't already done so, sign up for an account at www.lsac.org. To get you started, there are free practice tests on the site and links to the Khan Academy, which offer free online LSAT prep. LSAC, the Law School Admission Council is the main site for law school applicants.

You can register for the LSAT and apply to law school through

this site. If you will be taking the GRE in addition to or instead of the LSAT, also check on www.ets.org for GRE information and a list of schools accepting the GRE.

If you plan to study abroad this year, it is crucial that you are very organized and figure out when you will be able to study for and take the LSAT. I recommend you try to take it in the spring of junior year, summer after junior year, or at the latest, early fall of senior year.

Because law schools have rolling applications, it can be an advantage to get your applications in early. I recommend you allow for at least one retake of the LSAT should you need it — so do not delay setting up a study schedule. Give yourself several months to prep for the test. I also highly recommend registering as early as possible, so you can be assured a seat and a convenient test center location.

This is also a good year for legal internships. It is not mandatory to do a legal internship, but I strongly recommend against applying to law school until you have had the chance to try out a legal internship, to make sure you are headed in the right direction.

SENIOR YEAR:

Get your applications in early. If you are applying to law school this year,

get your applications in ASAP, preferably by Thanksgiving. This could help as law schools have rolling admissions.

Ask professors for recommendations early in your senior year, as they may be swamped with similar requests.

Check out resources such as The LSAC Official Guide to ABA-approved Law Schools, a free online GPA/LSAT score calculator that can help you assess your admissions chances. Keep in touch with your pre-law adviser, admissions offices and your recommenders throughout the process, and keep them updated.

It is common for applicants to take a year or more off. Don't feel pressured to rush in your applications if you are not sure about law school or need more time to position yourself for a successful application cycle.



HILLARY MANTIS advises pre-law students, law students and lawyers. She is director of the pre-law program at Fordham University and author of career books, including "Alternative Careers for Lawyers." You can reach her at altcareer@aol.com.

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* 2017 Standard 509 Information Report

** U.S. News: See the Price, Payoff of Law School Before
Enrolling, by Ilana Kowarski, March 21, 2018

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