

AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW Alumni Association mtg.
December 1, 2007

1:00 – Dean Dobranski law school update
Introduced by Alex Vernon, Alumni Association President

Moment of silence and prayer for Hon. Henry Hyde, R.I.P.

Admissions

127 enrolled freshmen this year – 12 more than expected

Applicant pool of 1600

Application increase of 65% over previous year – AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW one of only 3 law schools to have increase over 50%

Overall apps decrease 33 %, greater in great lakes region.

Yield was lower than previous years, though

Why has yield been lower?

- 1) Relocation decision
- 2) Public controversy

This year is similar to last year, keeping in national slump trend.

Quality of class decreased 2nd year in a row-Class stats were a little low; bottom 25th percentile is lower than desired. Not giving out these profile numbers because saved for ABA only.

Scholarship is not as common.

Students from 30+ states. MI is #1, CA and UT tied for #2

Fair number of students from traditional Feeder schools ND, Christendom, TAC, UD, FUS, etc.- U of M and Utah State were top 2 feeder schools this year.

15-16 incoming students are Mormons (self-identified).

31-33 transfers from last year; higher than previous years; a reflection of turmoil going on. Also due to encouragement to transfer from some 3L's and faculty.

UM Law and Notre Dame admitted a lot more students than before.

Transfers are increasing nationwide as well.

New faculty:

Fr. Joseph Isanga (tenure track)

Prof. Kevin Govern (tenure track)

Prof. Patrick Gillen

Prof. Charles Lugosi

New adjuncts:

Douglas Kahn

James J.J. White

Margo Cleveland

Faculty recruitment for next year: 25-30 interviews; 6 are coming for visits; offers to 2 of them so far

Visiting professor next semester: Prof. Doug Kahn will be here next term teaching tax.

There have been a good number of inquiries from professors for after move to Florida, including a number of tenured faculty elsewhere, and a very well-known academic.

Judge-In-Residence: Judge D. Brooks Smith, 3rd Cir.

Many distinguished speakers this year, including student-invited speakers

Student orgs are active and there are quite a few of them.

Business Law Society – undertook a Christmas service project for the poor children in Immokalee, FL. Over \$700 sold so far.

MI Bar results this year – were not good. We were 6th of 6 in MI. 26 passed out of 36 takers. No discernable pattern yet as to a reason, though it has been suggested that some students didn't take it as seriously as they could/should have. A bar committee has been established to help them. 3 of the 10 failures have a good chance of succeeding on appeal.

NJ & IL – only 1 failure; TX – 100% pass rate; CA not good – 3 of 9 passed

Bar review programs being planned and will possibly be offered for the spring semester; faculty committee established to deal with this. Considering offering a for-credit bar review course. Not supported by many faculty members.

Relocation Transition Team

Moving along reasonably well

Creating leadership council in FL (members of bench and bar) to help with transition into FL legal community. Mr. Garlick (on AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW BoG) is part of this, as is (?).

Some AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW alumni are helping, too.

ABA complaint – a number of charges were filed, AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW must respond to one particular claim made to school by ABA regarding recruiting and retention of faculty.

Also a lawsuit filed by three former...rather one former faculty member and 2 who are on leave. AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW filed response, available as public record in Washtenaw County Court.

Questions:

Preface: Dean will not respond to questions regarding lawsuit.

Q: Cardinal Maida listed as a BoG member. Not term limited off?

A: No. He's still a board member.

Q: What does "yield" mean in terms of applicants?

A: People who come vs. those who were accepted.

Q: Is anyone looking at what Cooley did to ameliorate their low passage rate?

A: No. Looking at other issues/reasons for the low rate that they think would be more productive.

Q: "Bar exam school" – Would the school lose credibility if we instituted a for-credit bar preparation class? How about an extracurricular activity to do it?

A: Disagree that the for-credit class would have us lose credibility or harm our reputation. Many other law schools are considering it and some have already done it.

Q: Status of Howard Bromberg & Diane Eisenberg?

A: Not sure about either. U of M is courting Howard; Diane has personal situation.

Q: Are we sure that Cardinal Maida was not notified that he was term limited off the BoG?

A: Not sure. There was confusion about a group of Board members and this year's term limits. He was part of that group of confusion, but the Dean did not send him a letter notifying him that he was off. "He's still a member of our Board". Explanation of how term limits process was implemented. Term limits were instituted in 2005, then suspended to keep experienced members on through transition announcement. Now that that has been made, next group of term limited members is starting. Dean does not recall signing a letter informing him of removal.

Q: What other schools are instituting bar passage courses? Second tier? Fourth?

A: Don't know. Thinks they are mostly third and fourth tier.

Q: Alumni petition to reinstate three dismissed professors. Can a response be expected?

A: Can't answer, as this is a matter of the pending lawsuit.

Q: Why were the three professors suspended and denied tenure?

A: I can't respond to that.

Q: Who was on executive committee who made that determination?

A: Can't answer that. Lawsuit matter.

Q: ABA acquiescence issue for the move. Do we have a timeline?

A: No. ABA has never done this sort of thing before (major move across the country). Examples given, but none of them are really close enough to provide guidance in our situation.

Q: When will Kate O'Beirne be term limited off the BoG?

A: Next year. Think Cardinal Maida & her go off next year.

Q: Who is on the Executive Committee at this time?

A: Same Committee as was on the summer. No comment.

Q: What law firm is representing the school?

A: Butzel Long. They did not withdraw from representation of the school. Represent law school, Dean Dobranski and the Law School Foundation. Early on, Butzel Long was going to handle everything, but suggestions were raised that maybe other counsel should be brought in because of possible competing interests. Pear Sperling represents Ave Maria Foundation and Mr. Monaghan.

Q: New faculty intending to go to Florida with the school?

A: Every new faculty member is planning on going to FL with the school.

Q: What about current faculty?

A: Don't know. Haven't asked them.

Presentation by Ermin Gornik
Introduced by Alex Vernon, Alumni Association President

Law school becoming more national in scope. We have alumni practicing in almost every state, and students from all over.

It's good in terms of influencing the legal culture & spreading the mission, but it makes alumni affairs & organization difficult

Regional alumni events:

Biggest pockets: Washington DC, SE Michigan, Kansas City MO

Capitalize on where we have people to form grass-roots connections without structures and systems.

Ermin plans on travelling & trying to develop small communities of alumni; supporting our initiatives

Bar hospitality suite – Thanks to the Dean & to Kathy Lochmann

Alumni Board continues to meet & do well. Thanks to Board members who are here, and for the work they're all doing.

Career Services committee: put out regional document of who is where & willing to talk to recent graduates. Olesia Doran, Matt Bowman & Mark Rohlena serve on this committee. Pushing for more cooperation between alumni and Career Services Dept.

Alumni getting more and more active in the school, which is a good thing. Volunteering at Moot Court competitions, etc.

We're producing a different kind of lawyer, and someday this will translate into how we interact with the law school.

Dave Kelley gave tremendous contribution to the school and to/for the alumni. Losing him was a big loss, personally and professionally.

Interim replacement – Dr. Bill Colburn

Long resume of successful development work; great guy.

He's a snowbird – lives in Naples during winter months, helping prepare for law school's arrival in Florida.

IT issues – it's been a hard 40 days. The launch of the new website has been a disaster. We can get on the website through the Ave portal.

Can email within system, access career services- focused on getting most important things for alums. Alumni directory is not accessible. Next email will only come when all systems are fully functional.

Going forward – new development efforts focused on SW Florida. Continue to nationally position our school. Big direct mail effort going out now.

People are starting to connect the dots between classes and coming together to advance our common interests. Please help, don't hinder.

Q: Development efforts are focusing on SW Florida. Other areas?

A: No, we're now starting to focus on that area, to create a "soft landing" for us, but national efforts are still going on.

PA: DC area is ripe for donations toward a school producing ethical lawyers

Dean Answer: Yes, of all areas, DC is the best area for us because of the number of conservatives there. American Spectator dinner was good for us. January 3 - reception in NYC during for friends & potential friends in that region.

Q: Bill Colburn's tenure to end at end of November, what is happening?

A: Not satisfied with applicant pool, so Bill Colburn going to stay on indefinitely but operate from FL.

Q: Agree on networking between classes. One way to do this is to make alumni minutes available as soon as they are approved?

A: They will be put up quickly.

Q: Could the minutes be e-mailed out to alumni? They are priority.

A: Ermin will bring it up to the Alumni Board as a suggestion at the next meeting.

Open Session

Alex Vernon, Alumni Association President

Mary Anne Zivnuska: We've wanted to know the reasons for the move to FL and why it's a good idea. Good to see why Dean Keesler explains the move is a good thing. Would like to see communication from BOG as to why the move was approved and why they were convinced to make the move.

Alex Vernon: A link to explain the move is on the school website. MAZ had suggested more concrete reasons and hadn't seen them before. Seeing how the factors balance is helpful.

Suzy Siegle: why do we have only one major donor? Why don't we have enough money to run a school without the Ave Maria Foundation? Why haven't we gotten donors like St. Thomas has? ELG- no simple answer. We had no base and have long process of building. Currently most law schools have alumni supporting them. Chart is gradual increase. While direct mail program hasn't given large donations it has given good brand recognition. St Thomas not well known but raised a lot of money. Move to FL, Monaghan's involvement, poor handling on all sides happened.

SS: Why didn't we have independence before move decision was made.

ELG: doesn't think our development efforts were not solid. We do have pipeline of potential donors, but need more time. Not sure people won't make significant gifts later.

SS- If 2001 or 2002 donor gives gift contingent on not moving to FL, is money kept separate from Monaghan's gift or does it 'discount' Monaghan's gifts.

ELG- 3 streams of money from donors:

- 1- General gifts go into general fund.
- 2- Directed funds for law review, Lex vitae, etc.
- 3- Planned giving through trusts and estates.
- 4-

Olesia Doran - Is general fund an AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW account or a Foundation account? Is the fund administered by AVE MARIA SCHOOL OF LAW employees or a general fund administered by the Foundation?

ELG: Accounting function handled by Foundation. We take our money into bank, administration happens from Foundation. Sue Kerry administers the budget at the school.

OD: Authority to spend money is from school administrators, not Foundation members.

ELG: Budget set by Dean and Sue Kerry. Foundation gives us money to cover shortfalls. Confirm donations to school don't go to Foundation.

Bev Griffor: if need 10M to run school, during course of year budget is ok, if we collect 3M is that on top of next year's anticipated 10M or does it mean the Foundation gives less?

ELG: Here are money sources, here's budget, here's shortfall (from school to Foundation). Shortfall covered by Foundation.

BG: So if we anticipate 3M in donations, and we get 5M in donations, do we 'bank' the excess or does the Foundation give less?

ELG: good question, I'll raise the question and get an answer.

Andrew Shirvell: Meeting minutes, when developments occurred in July and reports of Orsi and possible cover up of child pornography, serious issue for law school. Why was the scandal not made public by the Alumni Board? Outrageous that an administration would ask questions or examine a computer involved in a crime, why was no definitive statement made?

AV: headline was misleading, not his policy to spread conjecture stories. Grateful for answer from Dean Dobranski, thought that was sufficient for past events previously investigated.

AS: free pass to Orsi as a priest? Someone else would have gotten a free pass.

AV: no free pass from me. I don't share the belief the events actually occurred. Dean's statement clarified facts to his satisfaction.

AS: Reason for question is because we've discussed Safranek and other personal issues, and immoral that Orsi's situation wasn't addressed similarly.

Luke Reilander: I want to give more information to the Alumni, but have encountered opposition. Feels Dean has hidden behind the excuses of lawsuit, pending personnel matters, etc. LR feels transparency is important.

Why hasn't anything happened with Fr. Orsi situation? Dean admitted priest talked to Orsi re. computer, Orsi offered help to talk to IT person at law school. Dean's press release indicated Orsi not aware of content on computer, careful investigation of process internally and on lawsuit. LR had not firsthand knowledge, so unlike Falvey documents and Faculty situations LR didn't know what to think, and after press release didn't have more to say. Dean accused us of airing rumors and

misrepresentations, and since we didn't have any additional information we didn't know what to say.

Justin Berger- some Alumni Board members have refused to reference Ave Watch because it discussed the Orsi situation. We do try to keep alumni informed, sometimes disagree on what we should send, but also only have conjecture as to what interests alumni, so if you have a question or comment, something to address, email us and we'll address it somehow.

Ryan King: What was nature and purpose of Orsi's help? If simply helping a friend defend himself within legal bounds, that's not a bad thing.

AS: Negative publicity attributed by administration to Alumni Association, but association with the Orsi scandal is far worse and the Association should have taken a stronger stand.

OD: this was an agenda item, we tried to discuss, but no concrete evidence or position to take. Believes Orsi's conduct was terrible and unsupportable, but didn't know how to respond. Would like to see full investigation. Agrees that if you have a question, please email.

AS: We should be supportive of three faculty, Prof Pucillo only one came to the last alum meeting. Safranek would go to bat for you. We should do the same for them now. Losing them is a tremendous loss to the School.

LR: we've talked about ways to honor them, discussed various expressions of support in including financial support, do you have suggestions? Anything you want to see the alumni board do specifically?

AS: Moral support would be good. With this lawsuit a lot is going to come out, the law school is going to feel like they have to defend their position, but we as alumni owe them a debt of gratitude and give them support, they are a part of us, this is just the way things have unfolded. As the alum board changes I would like to see them recognized on both sides.

Voting closes tonight and the votes will be counted tonight

AS: If you are running for the Alum Board you should be at this meeting, the one annual meeting. You should be here to support us and say why you are running.

EG- not reasonable to expect a national school Alumni Association Board members to travel in. Everybody on the Board is extremely committed.

AV- we'd lose qualified candidates if we required them to come to the meeting.

Comment: Perhaps we should do teleconferencing in the future. Ermin says that this is going to be in the budget for next year. A few alums volunteered to take care of the extra cost if it is vetoed for budget reasons.

Comment: Perhaps some candidates can fly in, but not all can. Not everyone can afford that kind of thing.

Comment: We wouldn't want to disqualify someone because they can't make it in, but they would want to do the teleconferencing or the march for life or other event.

Ermin offers reflections on Advent and closing prayer.

Results of the 2008 alumni board elections of three Chair positions are attached to the next sheet below.

2007 - Chairs																									
Ballot	Cornell	Drake	Esseltine	Flickinger	Goulding	Grifor	Hoffman	Holder	Manos	McGuire	Mitchell	Muggeridge	Northon	Randall	Rothkopf	Samuel	Siegle	Skinner	Smith	Sullivan	Weeden	White	Yoho	Total	Invalid
1	8	22	1	5	3	3	7	3	3	5	13	6	8	4	5	2	22	1	2	1	6	0	2	132	1
2	8	22	0	5	3	3	7	3	3	6	13	6	8	4	6	2	23	0	2	0	6	0	2	132	1
3	8	23	0	5	3	3	7	3	4	7	14	6	8	4	7	0	24	0	0	0	6	0	0	132	1
4	10	25	0	5	0	0	9	0	4	7	14	8	8	4	7	0	24	0	0	0	7	0	0	132	1
5	11	25	0	5	0	0	10	0	0	7	14	11	8	0	8	0	26	0	0	0	7	0	0	132	1
6	11	25	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	7	14	11	8	0	10	0	26	0	0	0	7	0	0	131	2
7	12	29	0	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	16	13	10	0	10	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	130	3
8	14	29	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	17	23	0	0	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	126	7
9	0	33	0	0	0	0	15	0	0	0	17	31	0	0	0	0	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	125	8
10	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	31	0	0	0	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	124	9
11	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
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Total	82	270	1	25	9	9	96	9	14	39	152	146	58	16	53	4	264	1	4	1	39	0	4	1296	