

Class of 2010 Commencement

Members of the law school community gathered on North Campus in May to celebrate a milestone commencement. This group of students, the Class of 2010, enjoyed the special privilege of receiving their diplomas 150 years after Georgia Law graduated its very first class in 1860. Photos from the day follow.



Legacy gift co-chairs Lauren Peel (left) and Kevin Sweat (second from right) presented a check totaling \$56,125 to Dean Rebecca White and 2009-10 Law School Association President Greg Sowell (J.D.'83) on behalf of the Class of 2010. Photo by Terry Allen.



Graduates (l. to r.) Caitlin Crist, Jessica Cox and Daniela Costan take their seats after the opening processional.



From left to right (standing) are classmates Joey Greene, Allan Galis, Jonathan Lowe, Jeff Starr, Johnson Bazzel, Jonathan Parente, Kevin Sweat and (kneeling) Charlie Bailey.

Blake Tillery hangs out with his younger brother Eric while waiting for the festivities to begin.



Arkesia Jenkins waves to the crowd.



There to congratulate Alice Henderson (left) was (l. to r.) her dad James (J.D.'76), her mom Elsie (J.D.'76), her sister Eleanor (J.D.'07) and family friends Martha Smith, Martha D. Reeves and Martha Reeves.



Joining Gail Evins (center) during the ceremony was her 15-month-old daughter Roxanne, with a T-shirt proclaiming "Mom and I Survived Georgia Law."



Showing off his hard earned diploma is Allan Galis.

Faculty members often take part in commencement, celebrating alongside their students' families and friends. Here, Reagan Bush (left) and Assistant Professor Matt Hall pose for a quick photo.



Dellinger stresses to graduates the importance of conversation and never giving up



PHOTO BY TERRY ALLEN.

In his commencement keynote address, former Acting Solicitor General of the United States Walter Dellinger spoke on the importance of the conversation that surrounds the law and on a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision that took place nearly 56 years ago to the day.

“What I think about when I think about [*Brown v. Board of Education*] on the occasion of your graduation is how much a part of our national conversation law is. We are, as one of my colleagues and friends once noted, we are a community built on words. And words are all the Supreme Court has,

and words are what we use to construct our community.”

Dellinger explained that *Brown* put a challenge to the nation and made the whole system of racial segregation into a normative question of whether it was right or wrong.

“The Supreme Court has no purse. It has no army. It has no power in the end except the power of persuasion, and for a decade after *Brown* nothing happened, and yet everything happened. Nothing happened in terms of school desegregation, but the everything that happened was the initiation of a conversation.”

He said he believes it is this ability to talk to each other about our common future that has allowed the United States to be governed as a single nation for so long.

“The skills you have learned from the extraordinary faculty at the University of Georgia law school will equip you to be part of that ongoing conversation [and] to help build the future of a community that rests upon words and a common sense of understanding [of] what we are about as Americans.”

Dellinger also mentioned President Abraham Lincoln, “America’s greatest lawyer,” and challenged students to follow in his footsteps by using their lawyering skills in

“We are a community built on words ... and words are what we use to construct our community.”

their public life in the same way they would in private practice.

“There is a seamless transition from [Lincoln’s] ability to use his lawyerly skills on behalf of the Illinois railroad to using those skills in his debates with Stephen Douglas, and I think it inspires all of us as to what you can do with the skills of a lawyer.

“It may be at night after work helping out with the PTA that you use your skills in trying to bring about resolution of conflict. Or that you use your skills ... to pursue justice, yet you can do it throughout your communities in ways large and small.”

Additionally, Dellinger encouraged the graduates to never give up despite the challenges they will face. “[President Lincoln] was a very defeated person at the age of 50. At 56, he was dead. In between, he changed the world.”

Georgia ties at national transactional law competition

Georgia Law received awards for the Best Buyer Side Draft and Best Overall Team at the inaugural Transactional Lawyering Meet held at Drexel University in Pennsylvania.

Third-year students Patrick S. Baldwin and Rachel K. Jones negotiated against teams from Washington and Lee University, Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania to advance to the finals, where they tied with Indiana University at Bloomington for the competition’s best team honor.

The Transactional Lawyering Meet is designed to be a “moot court” experience for students interested in transactional practice. It requires students to work in teams of two to draft a transactional document (a letter of intent) and to negotiate its provisions. Teams were judged by their success in achieving the goals of the parties to the transaction.

“This competition is an excellent way for law students to develop

essential skills that they will use in a transactional practice,” Business Law and Ethics Program Instructor Carol E. Morgan (J.D.’79) said. “I am excited about the growing opportunities in this area for our students to compete.”

The law school also took part in three other transactional based tournaments this year with outstanding results.

In the Robert R. Merhige Jr. National Environmental Negotiation Competition, second-year students Daniel C. Beer and Rishi P. Chhatwal placed as semifinalists. On the regional level, third-year student Anthony B. “Bin” Minter teamed up with second-year student Jennifer A. Potts to place fifth out of 24 teams at the American Bar Association Negotiation Competition. Additionally, third-year student J. Stephen Albright was first runner-up in the inaugural Hot Seat Tournament sponsored by the Atlanta Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel.

Advocacy program continues its tradition of excellence

The School of Law's advocacy program once again had a strong season, winning one national title and three regional/state trophies in addition to several individual and team honors. Below are some highlights from the 2009-10 academic year.

National Moot Court Competition



Georgia Law took home the top trophy at a regional round of the National Moot Court Competition, held in Atlanta, to earn the right to head to New York and vie for the national championship. Third-year students Marie Greene (left), Kevin Murphy (center) and Ashley Scruggs defeated the University of California Hastings and the University of San Francisco to eventually place as one of the top eight teams in the country.

Intrastate Moot Court Competition



Continuing its dominance in this annual contest against teams from the state's other law schools, Georgia Law captured the top crown and the Best Brief Award. This is the fifth consecutive year UGA has won this tournament and the seventh consecutive year it has earned the best brief title. The championship team was composed of second-year students Gino Brogdon (center), Yvonne Godfrey (left) and Amanda Waide. Serving as coaches were third-year students Sean Kane and Elizabeth Story.

Evans Constitutional Law Competition

Georgia Law won first place in the Evan A. Evans Constitutional Law Moot Court Competition, which is hosted by the University of Wisconsin at Madison. This is the first time UGA has fielded a team in this national tournament. Competing for the law school were second-year students Shemanne T. Davis and Meredith C. Lee. Lee also took home the Best Oralist Award. Coaching the duo was third-year student William T. "Bill" Bozin and alumna Holly A. Pierson (J.D.'96).

Each year our advocacy program receives regional, national and international awards and honors. I am confident that there are two primary elements that make this happen:

Georgia Law faculty spend countless hours preparing our teams either through rigorous practice rounds or through thoughtful conversation and discussion in their offices.

As a result of this outstanding support, our students graduate with the mindset of wanting to help the program. Our alumni, in turn, spend the same type of countless hours volunteering to aid our teams.

With a program supported by our Dean Rebecca White, the entire faculty and numerous dedicated alumni, UGA moot court and mock trial teams are simply the best in the nation! A great thank you to all who have been so good to our teams!

Kelli Casey Mark

Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition

At the southeastern regional rounds of the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, Georgia Law went undefeated to earn first place.

Second-year students Blair J. Cash, Erik B. Chambers, Ashley A. Frazier and Mary C. Moore had a perfect 7-0 record defeating teams from the University of Miami, Stetson University and Vanderbilt University in the process.

Third-year students Benjamin W. Cheesbro and Kevin P. Murphy served as brief editor and coach, respectively.

Alumni advisers were Myra K. Creighton (J.D.'91) and Amelia G. Helmick (J.D.'05).

Douglass Moot Court Competition

Georgia Law had teams finish in the second and third slots during the regional rounds of the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition to advance to the national tier.

Both teams, composed of third-year student Elizabeth R. Givens and second-year student Kimberly C. Walker as well as second-year students Selina A. Tom-Johnson and Jacinda R. Walker, placed as quarterfinalists at the national level.

Additionally, Kimberly Walker received the Helen Dawn Williams Oral Advocacy Award.

The teams were coached by third-year student Norman L. Barnett and alumna Tia L. Daniels (J.D.'09).



Karen Bemis: Global public servant and human rights devotee

Rising second-year law student Karen S. Bemis is not interested in the philosophical study of law – she prefers to concentrate on its practical social significance.

A public servant at heart, Bemis' interest in human and social interactions led her to pursue an anthropology degree from Yale University. "Before college, I always had been interested in art, but I realized it was the people behind the art that really captured my attention," she said.

While at Yale, Bemis worked as a student volunteer coordinator and public school liaison through the university's Office of New Haven and State Affairs to enrich the curriculum and after-school activities at inner-city schools.

"There was a stark contrast between the wealth and privilege of the college and the children whose only association with Yale were its buses that would drive by their schools," Bemis said.

After completing her degree in 2007, Bemis pursued an AmeriCorps position with Boston's New Sector Alliance, a not-for-profit consulting firm striving to develop leaders in the nonprofit sector. As part of her position, she worked to make the public more credit savvy in order to prevent foreclosures.

In response to a question from her boss regarding what the organization could do to help individuals who already had been foreclosed upon, Bemis replied, "Nothing. We need lawyers."

This realization led her to a public inter-

est law conference in Boston where she made the decision to apply to law school.

"I've known so many people that have had less than positive interactions with the law – good people. You don't realize how challenging the law is until you run into it without the necessary resources," Bemis added.

In her legal career, Bemis hopes to implement innovative solutions to social problems. For example, when she was a development coordinator for a community health center in the Boston area, she helped raise more than \$300,000 for a fitness and recreation complex. "[This] was revolutionary in the community because low-income people in urban areas don't have the same access to recreational health resources," she said.

Bemis explained that the center was unique because physicians could write prescriptions for workout privileges in the gym, and low-income individuals could volunteer there in exchange for memberships. Plus, fees were sliding based on income level.

As a student at Georgia Law, Bemis has already begun the work of connecting people to legal resources. As part of the 2010 Working in the Public Interest Law Conference, she chaired a committee that organized a panel on barriers to prisoner reentry and recidivism. She also served on the board of the Equal Justice Foundation as a 1L section representative.

While serving locally is important to Bemis, she also recognizes the value of having a global perspective. In the summer of 2006, she worked for a nongovernmental organization in India helping orphaned and abandoned children.

"My experience working abroad is what made me want to do nonprofit work in the United States. Seeing the same problems in a different context makes you notice all of the issues you missed at home," Bemis said.

This summer, Bemis is participating in Georgia Law's Global Internship Program and will be interning with the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, a human rights organization based in Budapest. She was also awarded the law school's Spurgeon Public Service Fellowship, which will help support her during her internship.



Christopher Schaefer: From entrepreneur and engineer to experienced law student

Years of real-world work experience have shaped rising third-year law student Christopher F. Schaefer's perspective on his time in law school. A graduate of the University of Texas with a degree in mechanical engineering, Schaefer said he always will be an engineer at heart.

"The engineering thought process is excellent for law school. The problem solving techniques you learn in the field are no different than those I've learned here," he said.

After earning his undergraduate degree, Schaefer played an integral role in founding Advanced Laser Technologies, a company still in existence today. The company was started as a result of his and two doctoral students' entry in a business competition, which they won. He then used the cash prize to backpack alone through Europe for several months.

"The whole process – from entering the contest to traveling another continent – was just to see if I could do it," he said. "I'm big on experiences – I look for them, unique experiences, that I know will help shape me as a person and as a professional."

On the heels of his entrepreneurial stint, Schaefer spent several years working as an engineer on oil rigs for FMC Technologies and would spend anywhere from two weeks to 40 days at sea. Through this job, he was able to travel the globe while working on world-record projects and fixing others' million-dollar mistakes.

During a period when he was not globe-trotting, Schaefer took the opportunity to give back to an underprivileged community through a junior high after-school mentoring program. He taught students science through projects of their choosing, such as constructing potato guns and designing Web sites, always striving to have them learn through asking “Why?”

“In their minds, their lots in life were already cast,” Schaefer said. “But through little things, like showing them Web design, I could see them realize they had numerous possibilities for their futures.”

Schaefer hopes to return to working with youth later in life by becoming a professor at the undergraduate level. He said he would like to show his students they should pick careers they love, not just ones that will make them the most money.

“I like to see people succeed and do things that make them happy, and in order to do that you have to define success appropriately,” he said.

Though he is currently unsure of which area of law he ultimately plans to pursue, Schaefer enjoys appellate work and has participated in Georgia Law’s advocacy program.

He previously worked for U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas Judge Lynn N. Hughes, who taught him that in law “the solution is not always to win but to come to an agreement you can live with in the long run.”

This summer, Schaefer will spend time working at Sutherland, Asbill & Brennan in Houston, and he will also intern for Morgan Keegan doing investment banking.

When reflecting on law school thus far, Schaefer confessed that he consistently has taken classes that were notoriously difficult in order to get the most from his time at Georgia Law.

“You can figure out course material on your own time, but going through this experience and changing your whole manner of thinking is what is invaluable,” he said.



Reza Williams: Athlete and advocate

Recent graduate Reza A. Williams was voted “most inspirational” by his collegiate sports team, a label describing the manor in which he carries himself and attacks life’s challenges.

Growing up in Fontana, Calif., his father was homeless, and Williams described childhood memories of visiting him behind a grocery store. Though this situation was difficult, Williams’ mother, an Islamic Iranian, pushed him to excel academically.

Outside of the classroom, Williams also challenged himself athletically in hopes of receiving a college scholarship. Ultimately, he was recruited by Urban Meyer (who later became the head football coach at the University of Florida) to play football on scholarship at the University of Utah.

Williams excelled in college in Salt Lake City, earning numerous athletic recognitions and graduating with academic honors. He attributed his accomplishments largely to the mentoring of Coach Meyer. “He was honest, broke me down, built me back up and made me realize what it would take to be successful in life,” he said.

While at Utah, Williams used his status as a successful football player to benefit the community. He started a tutoring program at a homeless shelter for youth, reminding them that they could overcome their circumstances and succeed. He eventually recruited numerous other football players to volunteer at the program, receiving recognition by a Fox News television station.

Around the same time, Williams discovered Christianity, an event he said was critical in his life. He fondly described a janitor at his college apartment complex who captured his attention with biblical tales and wrote down Psalms for him to remember. “His wisdom, along with a Christian book given to me by my father, inspired me to become a man of faith,” Williams said.

As a law student, Williams has continued to act on his faith and use his legal knowledge for the good of the community. “I want to use my legal expertise to serve underprivileged people and to help meet their needs,” he added.

To help him prepare for this challenge, Williams has participated in many of Georgia Law’s clinical programs.

In the Special Education Practicum, he learned how children with special needs can qualify for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) to help improve their performance. He worked with school administrators and parents to negotiate IEPs for a child.

“I watched this child go from receiving negative comments on his report card to receiving praise from his teacher, and I saw first-hand the positive affects the legal system can have on a struggling child,” Williams said.

In the law school’s Family Violence Clinic, Williams has helped victims of domestic violence obtain temporary protective orders against their abusers. Through this program, he learned how to prepare for trial by drafting opening statements, performing direct and cross examinations and introducing evidence into court. He then had the opportunity to represent three individuals under Georgia’s Third Year Practice Act.

“It was rewarding to be able to help these women take the steps to end their abusive relationships while gaining real-world trial experience,” he said.

Williams plans to use his newly earned degree for the good of others at a firm in the Los Angeles area and eventually hopes to travel the globe pursuing a life of mission work.

- ALL PROFILES WRITTEN BY CHRISTINA GRAFF



LAW SCHOOL LIFE

Family & Friends Visitation Day



First-year student Andrew Bagley (center) celebrated Family & Friends Visitation Day with his parents Michael (J.D. '80) and Bridget (J.D. '80). This annual event is designed to give family and friends of first-year law students a chance to come together and meet their student's professors and classmates while gaining insight into the law school experience.

Talmadge Moot Court Competition



The final rounds of the 2009 Talmadge Moot Court Competition were judged by (back row, l. to r.) U.S. District Court Judge Randal Hall (J.D. '82), Georgia Supreme Court Justice David Nahmias and UGA Senior Vice President and Provost Jere Morehead (J.D. '80). Competing in the tournament were: (front row, l. to r.) second-year students Michael Rafi, Amanda Waide, Ashley Frazier and Meredith Lee. Rafi and Waide captured first place.

To view more photos from this year's events, please visit www.law.uga.edu/photo-gallery.



Admitted Students Reception



Those already accepted into the entering Class of 2010 had a chance to learn more about Georgia Law from its alumni at an admitted students reception hosted by Alston & Bird in Atlanta during March. Here, Alston & Bird Partner Timothy Fallaw (J.D. '00) (right) speaks with admitted student Varen Moore.

Welcome Reception for Chief Justice Sears



Georgia Law second-year student Sherwin Figueroa (left) and first-year student Mai Nguyen (center) welcomed former Chief Justice of the Georgia Supreme Court Leah Ward Sears during a reception hosted by the Davenport-Benham Chapter of the Black Law Students Association and the Women Law Students Association. Sears served as a visiting professor for the 2009-10 academic year and taught family law.

CNCS' Frank Trinity Speaks on Federal Jobs and Homelessness



This spring, Georgia Law hosted two presentations by Frank Trinity (left), general counsel of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Trinity spoke about federal public service job opportunities and conducted a forum on strategies for dealing with homelessness in the current economic climate. Helping plan the second event was Georgia Law's fourth Public Interest Fellow Alison Spiers (right), whose fellowship project focuses on advocating for the homeless in Northeast Georgia.