

2014 ABA ANNUAL MEETING: PACIFIC MCGEORGE REPORT

Dear McGeorge Colleagues,

It is an honor to represent the students of Pacific McGeorge as the next ABA Representative and connect the wonderful opportunities of the ABA with the talent we have here in Sacramento. During the weekend of August 8-10, I had the privilege of attending the ABA Annual Meeting hosted in Boston, MA.

On Wednesday, August 6th, SBA President Ernesto Falcon and I took the 10:20 P.M. flight from Sacramento and arrived in Boston the following morning in time for the kickoff reception. Below are some of the programs that we attended and their relevance to the goals of Pacific McGeorge's ABA representation for this coming school year.

Thursday, August 7

Circuit Meetings:

The Law Student Division is comprised of fifteen circuits (not to be confused with the federal judicial circuits) to better serve students at a regional level. Northern California and Nevada are included in the 14th Circuit.

On Thursday evening Ernesto and I attended the Circuit Meetings. Although McGeorge belongs to the **14th Circuit**, we also participated in the **9th Circuit** meeting because it includes Southern California and one of our goals this year is to create a unified voice among the California ABA law schools. During this meeting we met the different ABA Reps and SBA Presidents from CA schools. Each of the 15 circuits has a Circuit Governor that's responsible for overseeing regional activities at every ABA-approved law school within the circuit. The Circuit Governors led the meeting and explained their various goals for the circuit, including increasing membership, creating a circuit wide event calendar, and organizing the **Regional Super Circuit Conference** scheduled for the weekend of *October 9th at UC Irvine School of Law*.

Ernesto and I also had the opportunity of presenting on the legislation we are supporting through the McGeorge Public Policy and Legislation Clinic that would pave the way for law students to receive paid externships for academic credit. This bill would allow for the creation of a law school program (privately funded by alumni) to allow students to get stipends to work in the legislature and executive departments. This is something currently restricted by Interpretation 305-3 of the ABA Rules and was the most significant discussion among the rules affecting legal education standards.

We extended an invite to the CA Reps for a date TBA in the fall semester after the legislation is drafted. By meeting here where the bill is authored and the State Legislature is, we can create a unified voice representing CA (9th and 14th Circuits) to the larger association. This will place McGeorge at the forefront of advocacy on repealing

Interpretation 305-3 of Standard 305 of the *Standards and Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools*, which reads in its entirety:

A law school may not grant credit to a student for participation in a field placement program for which the student receives compensation. This Interpretation does not preclude reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses related to the field placement.

For more information on the regional circuits in the Law Student Division, follow the link below:

http://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_students/about_us/circuits.html

You can also find a **Circuit Map** here:

http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law_students/res-cir-reorg-map.authcheckdam.pdf

Super Circuit Conference @ UCI School of Law

One of the big events we learned about through our circuit meeting was the Regional Super Circuit Conference scheduled for early October at UC Irvine Law School. The Super Circuit brings together the 9th Circuit, 14th Circuit, and other local circuits. This year's *Super Circuit theme* is: **Career Paths in the Law**

The Super Circuit is not intended for ABA Reps to meet, but serves as an opportunity for law students from these schools to participate and benefit in the various events and activities. I am especially excited about this year's program because of its focus on career tracks in the legal field, something us students care deeply about.

Friday, August 8

Q & A Sessions with Division Delegate Candidates

The ABA House of Delegates has the ultimate responsibility for establishing Association policy. The Law Student Division has only three law students in the House, making their representation and advocacy that much more important.

On Friday morning we interviewed candidates for the three delegate positions.

For more information on the ABA House of Delegates, click the link below:

<http://www.americanbar.org/groups/leadership/delegates.html>

The winners were later announced at the Law Student Division Assembly:

1. Ryan Meyerhoff (UC Davis)
2. Lara Marie Edmonds (University of Connecticut)
3. Robert Strobel (Rutgers)

ABA Representatives Training

On Friday afternoon I participated in the ABA Reps Training, designed to help Reps gain a better understanding of their role and responsibilities. We also learned about the benefits and services available to law students through the ABA and Law Student Division. These include career development opportunities, networking events, financial benefits (i.e. 17% discount on your Sprint cellphone bill!) and more.

For more information on the benefits of membership, see the links below:

http://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_students/membership.html

http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law_students/benefitguide.athcheckdam.pdf

Saturday, August 9

ABA Representatives Roundtable and Idea Raiser

On Saturday morning I attended the ABA Reps Roundtable and Idea Raiser, where I had the opportunity to meet with my fellow ABA Reps to discuss different programming and events that are put on at law schools across the country. This forum for ABA Reps was designed to generate a discussion of “best practices” for addressing issues Reps may face during their term. We also shared different events that have been successful in the past, including ABA Young Lawyers Division mixers and career-oriented events like “What I Wish I’d Known about the Job Search,” a panel program put on at this year’s conference.

In addition, we talked about the different approaches schools use to get an ABA Rep. While McGeorge has traditionally appointed their ABA Rep through the SBA President, many schools opt to *elect* their ABA Rep in hopes of creating more interest and value for the position. Also, some schools (i.e. Stetson University School of Law) require a two-year commitment for ABA Reps. This system involves the election of an ABA Vice-Rep that serves for one year and is then elevated to the ABA Rep position the following year. This increases opportunities for the Rep to run for the Law Student Division Board of Governors and apply for school awards which both take place during the school year and before many schools elect an ABA Rep.

Law Student Division Assembly

On Saturday afternoon I attended the annual Law Student Division Assembly. The Assembly is the policymaking body of the Division. Its membership is comprised of two official voting delegates representing each of the 202 ABA accredited law schools. The Assembly convenes only once a year at the Division's Annual meeting where it debates and votes on resolutions and elects the Division's three delegates to the Association's House of Delegates.

To learn more about the *Annual Law Student Division Assembly*, see the link below:
http://www.americanbar.org/groups/law_students/about_us/leadership/assembly.html

Some of the *Resolutions presented* at this year’s Assembly include:

Report 3YL (Passed)

Sponsored by: ABA Young Lawyers Division

Urges Congress and the Department of Education to establish reasonable and effective benchmarks for successful law school debt repayment by a law school's graduates that the law school must meet to maintain its eligibility to enroll students receiving federal student loans.

Report 103A (Rejected)

Sponsored by: ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar

Concurs in the action of the Council of the Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar in making amendments dated August 2014 to the *ABA Standards for Approval of Law Schools*

The Law Student Division filed a Motion to Sever Standard Interpretation 305-3 from Resolution 103A, representing the Law Student Division's position that Interpretation 305-3 is fundamentally unfair to law students as well as law schools and contrary to the legal profession's urgent interest in expanding experiential opportunities for law students while easing the fiscal burden.

During its review at Monday's House of Delegates Assembly, the Legal Education Section's council let stand a comment to Standard 305, which said that a law school may not grant credit to a student for participation in a so-called field placement program for which the student also receives compensation. In a voice vote, the House referred the provision back to the section for reconsideration. So, the fight to repeal Interpretation 305-3 continues and I will keep everyone posted as updates arise.

Report 107 (Passed)

Sponsored by: ABA Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defendants

Opposes changes in current educational debt loan forgiveness programs for public service lawyers and urges Congress and the Administration to support and continue public service student loan repayment and forgiveness programs.

Report 112A (Passed)

Sponsored by: ABA Commission on Domestic & Sexual Violence

Encourages all employers, public and private, including governments, law schools and the legal profession, to enact formal policies on the workplace responses to domestic violence, dating violence, sexual violence, and/or stalking violence that address prevention, provide assistance to employees who experience violence, and which hold employees who perpetrate violence accountable.

I had the opportunity to utilize my role as a delegate to speak in support of Resolution 112A (Insert Clip)

The ABA Annual Meeting was a great experience and allowed me to connect with ABA Representatives and legal professionals from across the country and around the world. I look forward to utilizing these networks to better serve Pacific McGeorge and law students throughout the nation. I invite you to please contact me with any questions, concerns, and/or suggestions via e-mail (m_haider@u.pacific.edu).

Sincerely,
Mirwais Haider
2014 - 2015 American Bar Association Representative