March 2007

March 2007 Docket

Georgia State University College of Law

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Letter to the students from Dean Kamoshine

With the spring 2007 semester now fully under way, I wanted to share with you formally what you all have observed informally: some changes in our associate dean ranks, and a thank you to Dean Emanuel for her extraordinary service to the COL.

As many of you already know, Anne Emanuel stepped down as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the end of the fall semester to resume her demanding role quickly as Associate Dean of Students. Dean Emanuel was supposed to make this transition over a year ago, and again this past summer, but being the incredible person she is, agreed to delay the transition until now. I cannot tell you enough how fortunate the COL has been in having Dean Emanuel to oversee the academic side of our operation. We all have benefited immeasurably from her deft touch, her judgment, her advice, her discretion, her candor, her capacity to take on an unfair load, and her unfailing friendliness and dedication to this law school.

At the same time, I am delighted that Roy Sobelson has agreed to become the new Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Many of you have been fortunate to work first-hand with Dean Sobelson in his role as Associate Dean of Students. Dean Sobelson has great rapport with the students, the faculty, and the staff, and knows this institution as well as anyone. With his two years as Associate Dean of Students, and as a member of our admin team, Dean Sobelson has moved into his new role quickly & smoothly.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that Professor Kelly Timmons will become the new Associate Dean of Students, effective at the end of this semester (though Dean Timmons has unofficiatedly already begun taking on some of her new responsibilities). If you have not yet gotten to know Dean Timmons, I encourage you to stop by and introduce yourself to her. You will find her helpful, available and a very valuable resource. Please join me in congratulating Dean Timmons on her new position.
Intellectual Property Law Society Hosts “Hot Topics” Panel Discussion

By Jessica Koreen

You are probably all too familiar with the annoying pop-up ads associated with various websites, but as most of us are downloading “pop-up blockers” advertisers have turned to keyword advertising in search engines as a means of selling their goods. In keyword search advertising specific terms trigger certain advertisements that are most definitely been trademarked? For example, this tax season you’ve decided you want to do your taxes and turn to keyword advertising in search engines as a means of finding the advertised product or service. As most of us know, internet surfing has become a popular source for many consumers that intend to research an upcoming purchase and, as a result, web based advertising models attempt to take advantage of this consumer’s screen time.

But what happens when you search for a brand name, one that’s most definitely been trademarked? For example, this tax season you’ve decided you want to do your taxes and turn to keyword advertising in search engines as a means of finding the advertised product or service. As most of us know, internet surfing has become a popular source for many consumers that intend to research an upcoming purchase and, as a result, web based advertising models attempt to take advantage of this consumer’s screen time.

By Jad Attallah

Once again, the semianual Immigration Law Society (ILS) Citizenship Drive is right around the corner. This is ILS’s main event in which a group of volunteers composed primarily of Georgia State law students and attorneys from Atlanta’s legal community donate their time on a Saturday to help green card holders complete their final immigration form in order to apply for naturalization.

Given that ILS itself is a relatively new organization, perfecting the logistics of the Citizenship Drive itself has been an ongoing learning experience. However, this past fall, the event proved to be our greatest success to date. We found ourselves surprisingly busy assisting an unprecedented eighty clients. Due to the fact that our flyer stated that we would only provide assistance to the first fifty clients, some arrived as early as 4 a.m. and stood out in the cold for hours to secure a spot. Needless to say, fifty clients is no longer our target. Our goals today far exceed that number.

But, don’t let the fact that the drive encompasses “weekend spoiler.” To the contrary, the atmosphere is very relaxed. What could possibly go wrong with a day that starts off with hot coffee and donuts and concludes with a free lunch? Throughout, our volunteers alternate between helping clients with their immigration forms and socializing with attorneys, clients, classmates, and friends.

But perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the Citizenship Drive is the hands-on experience that you will receive dealing with ordinary people with fascinating stories from every corner of the globe. While they may come from different worlds, these green card holders do have one commonality. They all aspire to be citizens of this country and all have a genuine appreciation for what it means to be an American. At this point, most of them have earned the privilege of the title.

The upcoming Citizenship Drive will be held on March 24, 2007. I highly encourage all GSU law students to give a helping hand. You will be surprised at how much you will learn about immigration law and procedure in a pleasant social setting, the long road to citizenship that counts individuals take each year, and last but certainly not least, the always intriguing life stories that you will hear directly from many of the country’s newest citizens.

Immigration Law Society Hosts Citizenship Drive

By Anthony Yannoni

Barristers Ball...it’s right around the corner! This year we are excited to again have the Matt Museum at Colony Square on Saturday, April 7th. Tickets are $50 a person until March 2nd (after that they go up to $70). Do your homework: there are some promises to be a great event! For those who have additional dietary restrictions due to Passover, we’ve got you covered. Just let the SBA know if this applies to you when you buy your tickets. Oh, last thing, make sure you ask about the special room deals available at Sheraton (includes parking!).

SBA Announces Barrister Ball Details

Eatners

Entrée

10oz NY Sirloin over Mushroom Ragout
Herb Crusted Chicken with a Caramelized Onion Sauce
Black & White Sesame Crusted Filet of Salmon
Fresh Vegetable lasagna with marinara sauce (Vegetarian option)
All served with aasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable Medley, Fresh Warm Rolls & Butter, Freshly Brewed Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Hot Tea, Iced Tea & Water

Dessert

Double Chocolate Babt Bundt Cake with Bourbon Sauce
(Tell the SBA if you would rather have cheese cake!)

Music and Dancing (9:00pm – Midnight)
A full coffee station will be set up (10:30pm).

We expect to have a door prize or two, and at some point during dinner we’ll announce the Professor of the Year, 3L Superlatives, and the 2007-2008 SBA Board. This promises to be a great event! For those who have additional dietary restrictions due to Passover, we’ve got you covered. Just let the SBA know if this applies to you when you buy your tickets. Oh, last thing, make sure you ask about the special room deals available at Sheraton (includes parking!).
Tax Law: So Easy, Even A Cave Man Can Do It!

By Chiquita Woolfolk Banks

Because taxation is an inevitable part of American private and business life, the need for tax attorneys is imperative. As tax attorneys work with clients' confidential, financial, and personal information, several characteristics begin to ring true. Paramount among these are trustworthiness and strong interpersonal communication. Other necessities include a fundamental understanding of tax regulations and procedures, a vital attention to detail, and keen time-management skills.

Tax law generally involves issues in three distinct areas: controversy, planning, and employee benefits. Tax controversy arises when a taxpayer (business or individual) and the Internal Revenue Service disagree on how much tax the taxpayer owes. This area includes audits, appeals, liens, seizures, and litigation. By contrast, tax planning involves the reduction of a taxpayer's fiscal burden in such diverse arenas as individual income tax, mergers & acquisitions, and real estate transactions. Employee benefits practice is a highly-specialized category of tax law encompassing deferred compensation plans (e.g. pension plans and 401(k) plans) and benefits packages.

There comes a time when everyone must branch out on their own. For law students with the looming deadline of graduation, the time to find a job is now. The pressure is on as graduation looms less than three months away.

If you are not a CSO regular, OCI has not been working in your favor, you have missed all the career fairs thus far, or you are like me and cannot figure out what to do next, here are some suggestions to help you in your job search.

- Get in touch with the contacts you have made (you have been networking right?)
- Let them know you are hoping to do and ask for their suggestions of refining your search. Maybe they will know of a prospect.
- Go specific: research firms in your chosen location/practice area and make contact
- Broaden your search: Expand your search options by location and practice area.
- Keep your mind open to working in smaller towns and throughout Georgia.
- Try to consider all areas of law you have an interest in practicing and include them in your search.
- Don't limit your search to only small, medium, or large firms.

Tips for a successful job search

Job Statistics for GSU Law Graduates

Here is more information on 2005 GSU Graduates:

- 141 had full time legal jobs
- 15 were working in full time non-legal jobs
- 70 worked in small firms
- 36 worked in large firms
- 33 were working in government/state or military
- 94 were still in Atlanta

Though it's difficult to give an accurate picture of what constitutes a "day in the life" of a tax attorney, my mentor, tax attorney and partner at Ernst & Young L.L.P. in Chicago's State and Local Tax Services, gave me a snapshot of his typical morning:

7:30 a.m. - It's better to get into the office earlier than others to get the chance to check e-mail and voice mail, handle any administrative tasks and sketch out a general plan for the day. I also spend time glancing through The Wall Street Journal and any local periodicals for news regarding my clients.

8:30 a.m. - My 9:30 a.m. conference call with Client A to discuss the possibility of creating a REIT (real estate investment trust) and the potential state tax implications has just been moved to 10 a.m. I'll take this time to further review the client's current structure with the rest of the team.

9:00 a.m. - I begin a quality control review of Client B's federal consolidated tax return and corresponding state returns. This client has multiple entities and I have to pay close attention to the deductions and add-backs which differ per state. With the state research memorandums and matrix prepared by the Senior on the project, a recent law grad, I have the resources I need to review the return.

10:00 a.m. - Client A's conference call begins with the client's Tax Director, Chief Financial Officer and other tax department personnel. Since this client is well versed in the Tax Regs., we get the opportunity to discuss the nuts and bolts of the transaction and its potential tax savings which are estimated at $1,000,000 over a 3 year period.

12:00 p.m. - Lunch with the team to celebrate winning Client A's advisory work!

As you can see, a tax attorney, like other attorneys, has to be in-tune with the needs of his/her clients. Life is never boring as an attorney, and the life of a tax attorney is as unique as it can get!

Here are some legally related web sites the CSO has compiled that may help you in your job search:

- www.usajobs.opm.gov
- Legal Internships, www.aalui.edu/-legalint
- America's Job Bank, www.ajb.dni.us
- www.applicantjobs.com
- www.lawmatch.com
- www.flipdog.com
- www.employnernet.com
- www.legalemployment.com
- www.lawjobs.com
- www.lawlinks.com
- www.lawbulletin.com
- www.peoplebank.com (International)
- www.oneworld.net (International)

(For a complete listing, visit the Career Services Office for the Legal and Related Web sites handbook)

Statistically Speaking...

Fall 2007 Externship Information

An Externship Information Session is scheduled for Wednesday, February 28th at Noon (room number to be announced). The benefits of participating in an externship will be explained and a list of all of the programs available for Fall 2007 will be provided. To be eligible to participate in an externship, a student must have completed all first year required courses and have a grade point average of 73.0 at the time of application. The application period will be held from March 12 through March 23. All application correspondence can be obtained by stopping into the Externship Office (on the 3rd floor), or by e-mail to Sarita James (saratjames@gsu.edu). During this time, the externship office will send out e-mails regarding application status.

Career Services Events

Sixth Annual Atlanta Legal Hiring Conference
March 23, 2007

Legal employers from the Atlanta and surrounding areas will be interviewing law students and recent graduates for summer, entry-level and lateral positions.

3rd Annual Southeastern Intellectual Property Job Fair
July 31, 2007

The 3rd Annual Southeastern Intellectual Property Jobfair (SIPJF) for rising 2Ls and 3Ls will be held on Tuesday July 31, 2007 in the Student Center Ballroom. Contact the Career Services Office for registration details.

Information courtesy of the CSO website.

Georgia Bar Pass Rates (July 2006)

First Timers (in order by percent)

- Emory University 95.2
- Georgia State University 93.4
- University of Georgia 90.7
- Mercer Law School 90.6
- John Marshall Law School 70.0

All Applicants (in order by percent)

- Emory University 95.2
- Georgia State University 93.4
- University of Georgia 90.7
- Mercer Law School 90.0
- John Marshall Law School 65.0

Information courtesy of www.gabaradmissions.org.
Professor Timmons Promoted to Dean!

By John Gunn

After eight years of outstanding performance at Georgia State University College of Law, Professor Kelly Timmons has been promoted to Associate Dean of Student Affairs!

You may recognize the name. Rumor has it she was voted Teacher of the Year so often that the administration finally had to ask her to refrain from the competition (this rumor has not been verified!). Dean Timmons graduated first in her class (yep, Numero Uno the Grand Pooh-bah, Mac Daddy) from the Vanderbilt University School of Law, but you could never think "bookworm" from her bright and animated personality.

When asked directly she'd admit that she did receive three "B's" while in law school (actually one "B" and two "B" phases). The reason grades were so important to her is because she knew even in law school that she wanted to be a law professor. And what a job she's done! Three time teacher of the year award winner! When asked what most excited her about the new promotion she smiled and offered "telling my Mom and Dad!"

And just in case you missed it at the PILA Auction...she can sing! In performing a rendition of John Lennon's Dreamer, we learned that she has one "dream" for all law students..."a course load of one." I wonder which "one" subject she was referring to? (Hint: In the song, she mentioned loving "proximate cause." Hmmm...)

Dean Kelly Timmons

Professor Timmons currently teaches Torts, Employment Law and Constitutional Tort Litigation. It appears the Con-Tort-Lit class will be dropped from the curriculum due to her increased administrative duties, but we're all very proud to have such a great student's advocate promoted to Associate Dean of Student Affairs.

Other changes amongst our deanships includes Anne Emanuel finally having the opportunity to pass the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs torch to Roy Sobelson who has agreed to accepts the role. Dean Emanuel has been kind enough to fill the role for over a year past her promised réprieve, deferring other opportunities for the good of the College of Law. Tremendous thanks go to Dean Emanuel for taking what could only be referred to as an "academic overload" for as long as she has and running the ship with such great stride. She'll be taking the immediate opportunity to move forward with her work as the official biographer of legendary 5th Circuit Judge Elbert Tuttle.

As Dean Kaminshine mentioned in his recent email, Dean Sobelson has great rapport with the students, the faculty, and the staff. Dean Sobelson spent two years as Associate Dean of Students before moving into the new role. He'll be judged against Dean Emanuel's high marks and for those of you wondering, he's also one heck of an Evidence professor (it was close there for a while, but I passed!)

The Face Behind the Emails...Patricia Rackliffe

By Suzanne Lee-Jackson

You know the name, you've received the emails, let's get to know the person! Patricia Rackliffe, who we all know as "Tricia," is the Associate Registrar of the College of Law. In addition to listening to us beg to get in (or out) of classes, Tricia maintains our grades, organizes class schedules and formulates the rankings.

As someone who spends a lot of time in Tricia's office—not only to beg, but because she is a genuinely nice person, I had the opportunity to ask Tricia what she finds most interesting about working with law students. She told me that when she first considered the position, she was warned about the temperaments of law students (apparently from someone who works at one of those other law schools)—aggressive, bossy, impatient. However, she said, after she had her experience at GSU, she has found that none of that is true about our students.

She says we're funny, intelligent and great to talk to. I knew spending all of those hours in her office would pay off!

On another note, in the time I've spent in Tricia's office, I noticed she has books about serial killers. Seems we share the same fascination with what makes these people "tick." Interestingly enough, in reading the answers to her questions, I noticed she likes to chop things up...Hummhum...Enjoy!

Name: Patricia Rackliffe
Birthplace: Atlanta, GA
Hometown: Atlanta, GA (obviously too lazy to move)
Position at the law school: Associate Registrar
Major responsibilities: Grades, registration, exams, clearing graduates, rankings, reporting to The Bar
Favorite thing about working with law students: Our law students are so accomplished as people. They have interesting lives and jobs outside of law school. They can hold a conversation. They seem to be very nice people. (don't usually) panic over small stuff because they do things like fly airplanes and catch bad guys and other important things.

What is your favorite thing about working with law students? (a) I like the fact that they are so accomplished as people. (b) I like the fact they are so accomplished as people and they have interesting lives and jobs outside of law school. They can hold a conversation.

Favorite legal TV show: Twilight Zone (the Rod Serling version). A lot of those shows were based on short stories from the Alfred Hitchcock Presents Series. All those books are in boxes in my attic. I need to re-read those.

Favorite legal T.V. show: Bones. Is that legal? If not, then CSI (the original, not the wannabes) and Criminal Minds.

Favorite sport: Dog Agility. Is that a sport?

Favorite vacation spot: Pass-A-Grille Beach, Florida

Three people dead or alive that you would like to have dinner with: Katherine Hepburn, Neal Boortz and Nigella Lawson

Favorite food: Bugs Bunny. If that doesn't count, then Spiderman because he's such a smart-ass (do you see a trend?)

What did you do before coming to GSU-COL?

Graphic artist at various printing companies.

Favorite Neighborhood: Do I have to choose just one? Love the Cheshire Bridge Road area because it's central to pretty much anything else. And my house is over there. A lot of those other law school—aggressive, bossy, impatient.

Favorite watering hole: Highland Tap or Vickery's or Baraonda.

Favorite musical group: Loreena McKennitt, Pink Floyd and anyone who sings what Jim Steinman writes. See? I told you I can't pick just one of anything.

ABA Descends on the College of Law

by Nichole DePriss

What do new library furniture, facility renovations, and the nervous anticpation of the administration and faculty all have in common? Answer: The American Bar Association (ABA) review of accreditation. Every seven years law schools are subject to evaluation by the ABA. The process begins with a self-evaluation by the dean and faculty reviewing the program, evaluating strengths and weaknesses, setting goals, and developing a plan to achieve those goals. According to ABA representatives, the College of Law submitted an estimated 174 page report in preparation for the ABA visit. The purpose of the visit is to allow the accreditation committee to apply each of the ABA standards to the facts of the school. If the school is not in compliance with a standard, the administration and the ABA set goals to comply. Members of the six person accreditation team evaluate criteria including library and information technology, facility, faculty scholarship and accessibility, and professional skills training.

An open forum was held on Monday, February 19 to allow students to voice questions, concerns, and confidences, and for the ABA to ask questions of the students. The ABA primarily asked about the accessibility of professors, clinical programs, the evening program and the availability of externships. Students voiced concerns about the credit to work ratio for courses like litigation and RWA, but rallied behind the value of the education, citing a responsive and supportive faculty who is enthusiastic and accessible. Both day and evening students noted that the diversity and integration of the full time and part time programs enhanced their understanding and perspective of the law.

Gill Howard, a member of the team, assured students that the ABA is not visiting to revoke accreditation, but to open a constructive dialogue on how the COL can be improved.
Five places to use your Student ID to get a discount
By Amanda Clark

Your student ID. Otherwise known as your mug shot. (Seriously, why do we all look like a deer frozen in headlights in those things???) You may not like your picture but that little blue card can bring you a lot more than just access to the library.

Here’s a short list of places you can use your ID for a discount.

1. Apple – Your student ID can get you a 5% discount on Macs at the store or online. Just show your student ID at checkout. Both Lenox Mall and Perimeter Mall have Apple Stores. Or visit the online store at: http://store.apple.com/1-800-780-5009

2. Paperie – Lucky for us public school kids J. Crew expanded their student discount program beyond the ivy league schools. Question: if you go to an Ivy League school don’t you have enough money to buy a pair of paperie? J. Crew will knock off the student discount? The discount is 10%, is only good in stores and you have to ask for it.

3. The Movies – both AMC and Regal Cinemas offer a student discount. Your wallet will thank you for using your student ID for a discount so you don’t spend almost $10 to go see “Epic Movie.”

4. High Museum of Art (www.high.org) – Go see “Louvre Atlanta” for 50% less than the general public. The Musee du Louvre and the High Museum of Art have partnered to bring special exhibitions of art to the High over the next 3 years. The current exhibition features royal collections and can be viewed Tuesday through Sunday.

5. Sam Flax (Paperie & Art Supplies) – This store has everything you need and lots of stuff you don’t want anyway. Where else can you buy wrapping paper that has a map of France on it? Sam Flax offers a discount for students which applies to most of the stuff in the store.

You can also visit the Panther Perks Program Page for more vendors that offer a student discount.
http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwhere/perk/partners.htm

Eatin’ Good in Our Neighborhood
By Amanda Clark

You can only eat a Chick-Fil-A sandwich so many times during a week before you start chucking. Take a break from the GSU Cafeteria and try some of these nearby restaurants that are within walking distance of the school.

1. Reuben’s Deli, 57 Broad Street. Try one of their signature sandwiches or design your own. Reuben’s uses Boar’s Head meats and cheeses so you know it’s going to be good. The sandwiches are generous and will easily satisfy even the biggest appetite.

2. Tringali’s, 94 Pryor Street. It’s your 3rd year. The end is in sight. And so is a J-O-B. That pays. A lot. You just heard that some Atlanta law firms are raising their starting salaries to $130,000 and you’re feeling like Donald Trump or P. Diddy. Head over to Tringali’s to enjoy authentic Italian cuisine with white linen tablecloths and a waiter! You can view their menu online at http://www.tringalislanta.com/index.html.

3. Alibaba’s Turkish & Mediterranean Delights, 60 Broad Street. The name says it all. If you’re looking for something a little different try Alibaba’s. The food is cheap, tasty, and within walking distance. If it’s a nice day you can take your Gyro Wrap and cross the street to Woodruff Park which has a reading room and Wi-Fi. Take a break from your homework and rediscover that reading can be fun! Alibaba’s: http://www.alibabastlanta.com/lunchmen.php

Woodruff Park:
http://www.atlantadowntown.com/WoodruffPark.asp

Coming Soon: The Docket Online!
Students help with the search for justice

By Suzanne Lee-Jackson with excerpts from the Georgia Innocence Project website

"Sometimes the innocent victim of crime is the person convicted of one." The Georgia Innocence Project (GIP) has adopted these words in their efforts to promote the mission to free the wrongfully convicted. Since its inception, GIP has received more than 2600 letters requesting assistance. Each request is carefully reviewed to determine if the case meets their requirements. If the case meets GIP's strict scrutiny and there is DNA evidence available to test, they accept representation of the case and begin litigating the issues.

One of the biggest challenges in these cases is finding the physical evidence. Acknowledging this problem, the 2003 Georgia General Assembly created a solution. Under the leadership of Lt. Governor Mark Taylor and State Sen. David Adelman, a bill was passed allowing for post-conviction DNA testing and for the preservation of evidence. This bill passed both the House and the Senate unanimously and was signed into law by the Governor.

Exonerations

In 1999, Calvin Johnson, Jr. was freed from prison after serving 16 years of his life in a Georgia State Penitentiary for crimes he did not commit. In August 2004, The Georgia Innocence Project's work exonerated Clarence Harrison, a man who had been sentenced to life in prison for rape, robbery and kidnapping and who had been behind bars for nearly 18 years. In 2005, the Georgia General Assembly awarded Mr. Harrison $1 million in compensation for his wrongful imprisonment.

In December 2005, Atlantans Robert Clark was freed from prison after serving nearly 25 years for a crime he did not commit. Mr. Clark's exoneration was a joint effort between the Georgia Innocence Project and the original Innocence Project, based in New York.

The Georgia Innocence Project, through its Life After Exoneration program, continues to work with Mr. Harrison and Mr. Clark to help them rebuild their lives. In January 2007, Atlantian Willie O. "Petie" Williams walked free after nearly 22 years of wrongful incarceration.

Most of the high school students seem to value our presence not merely for the break in the monotonous school day, but also for the educational currency provided. The observation is made all the more startling by the fact that many of the high school students come from some of the toughest neighborhoods in Atlanta. The currency we bring comes in the form of, among other things, teaching the high school students note taking skills, substantive legal principles, and improving their analytical skills.

But the benefits flow both ways. When law students are forced to explain legal principles to high school students, they further cement the concepts in their own minds. When law students attempt to hold the attention of ninth grade students who may not have eaten a solid meal in the last 12 hours, they hone their oratory skills. When law students are asked to return by kids from broken homes, they learn the value of keeping their word.

COL Students partner with South Atlanta Academy of Law and Justice

By Adam S. Levine

A conspiracy is afoot at the law school. The conspiracy involves law students, high school teachers, and even a couple of law professors. Their goal has been to infiltrate a local Atlanta high school to teach ninth graders about criminal law, facts, and any other legal topics they can push on the kids. They call their efforts Street Law.

GSU's Street Law program is part of a national effort to bring "high falutin" legal principles to the street level. Some law schools focus their efforts on prison inmates and others focus on senior citizens. GSU has chosen to focus on a small school within a school.

The GSU program began over the summer through the collaboration of GSU law students Doug Rosenbloom, Meredith Riggs, and myself, Adam Levine, in collaboration with Peter McKnight, the current director of the school at the focus of GSU's program. With the assistance of Professors Hennel and Soboloff, the program gained school support and launched its first class this past fall.

Once a topic is chosen, law student volunteers write a lesson plan and train their fellow law students on the lesson plan. From there, groups of law students are assigned to teach the different periods of classes (we usually teach about four different periods of classes in a given week). Each class at the high school lasts approximately 90 minutes.

Sue the government? For a Living???

By John Goss

Ever thought about suing the government for constitutional rights violations for a living? Seemed like a great public interest area of law to practice to me, so I thought I would do a little investigation.

First, the big areas of constitutional violations: Illegal police actions, pretrial detains and job discrimination. Practically any field where government employees are the actors are areas of interest because they act under color of State law.

Well, I went to Washington D.C. last summer to spend a week with the Institute for Justice. Their first comment: "Well, you can't make a living doing that..." However, this did not deter me for my new found interest. I did some research to find out why not. It turns out these cases are particularly difficult to win. In fact, one study indicated that civil rights cases take longer, cost the plaintiff more and you will lose two to four times more often than a typical tort plaintiff!! In fact the study's author put it this way "the findings suggest that constitutional tort plaintiffs do significantly worse than (other) litigants in every measurable way"! This is coupled with fewer cases, approx one successful case per 100,000 persons per year equates to about 900 successful cases in all of Georgia each year! Throw in a wallowing dose of government immunity and a doctrine of court discretion moving away from awarding damages and you have an uphill road to hoe.

Suppose you defy the odds: you take on such a case, ultimately the government agrees you were right, changes their policy and agrees never to do it again! How about THAT! You won, Right? Wrong. According to the Supreme Court the government merely changed their position. You lose all rights to an award of attorney fees and walk away in the hole. The client wins, but you lose. Explain that one to the mortgage company!

This is not looking good so far, but not to worry, I am meeting with a law school student that successfully battled in the area and won. I will let you know what I find out...

(Thanks to Professor K. Timmons for contributing her time and information to this article.)
Milton County: Really? Really!?! 

A LL professor once told me that to be an effective attorney one must be able to argue both sides of an issue. Halfway through law school we shall see how well I have developed this skill. Today’s topic is a look into the implications, both good and bad, of the secession of Milton County from Fulton County. There is currently a resolution that the cities of Roswell, Alpharetta, Johns Creek, and Sandy Springs break from Fulton to form their own county.

The purpose of local government is to provide efficient and effective responses to its people’s needs, and also provide a direct mode for people to voice their grievances to people that can make a difference. The people of North Fulton feel that their county does not fulfill these needs. Fulton is a 70 mile long snake-like piece of land that meanders from the well-endowed cities of Roswell and Alpharetta to the north to the meager cities of Fairburn and Palmetto to the south. It is impossible for such an economically diverse group of people in such a large area to be properly represented by one government. The formation of Milton County would give both groups of people much more control over their daily lives, and in turn would create a more effective government.

The people of “Milton” County do not receive a fair return on their tax dollars. For every dollar paid in taxes by North Fulton residents, only 68 cents is actually reinvested in the area. Their dollars are being used to subsidize other parts of the county for things that they never use. The best thing Georgia could do is create Milton County and give the people of that area a local government that can actually represent their needs and reinvest all of their tax dollars back into their community; not some place 50 miles away that they will never benefit from. Some opponents of this plan say that it is based on race, as North Fulton is predominantly white and South Fulton predominantly black. However, the only color that the people of North Fulton are seeing right now is green.

On the other hand... 

The creation of Milton County would be one of the worst things the Georgia Legislature could do since... well I have developed this skill. Today’s topic is a look into the implications, both good and bad, of the secession of Milton County from Fulton County. There is currently a resolution that the cities of Roswell, Alpharetta, Johns Creek, and Sandy Springs break from Fulton to form their own county.

Uneven Grades May Create Unsavory Carrot

By Alpharetta, Johns Creek, and Sandy Springs break from Fulton to form their own county.

By Eric Rogers

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The people of “Milton” County do not receive a fair return on their tax dollars. For every dollar paid in taxes by North Fulton residents, only 68 cents is actually reinvested in the area. Their dollars are being used to subsidize other parts of the county for things that they never use. The best thing Georgia could do is create Milton County and give the people of that area a local government that can actually represent their needs and reinvest all of their tax dollars back into their community; not some place 50 miles away that they will never benefit from. Some opponents of this plan say that it is based on race, as North Fulton is predominantly white and South Fulton predominantly black. However, the only color that the people of North Fulton are seeing right now is green.

On the other hand...

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Top 10 Ways You Know You're a GSU Law Student...

by Michelle Cooper

10. You think your "Trust me, I'm a lawyer" shirts are cute. And you think everyone else thinks so, too.

9. You also think your "Don't make me F.R.C.P. (12)(6) You" T-Shirt is cute too. Trust me, it's not. No one gets it.

8. Your inbox is filled with emails from Valencia Lewis and Patricia Rackliffe...and only Valencia Lewis and Patricia Rackliffe.

7. You start your sentences with "my argument is..." and end them with "arguably".

6. The highlight of your day is being serenaded with "under the boardwalk" during lunch at Broad Street.

5. Even though the elevators take 46 minutes to come, you still wait to go up (or down) one floor.

4. When you say "that's a lawsuit waiting to happen"...you actually know what you're talking about.

3. You don't know who Natalie Green is, but you know she got you through law school.

2. You make the proverbial legal jokes by inserting "law school language" in everyday conversation, e.g. "if it's called a brief, why is it long?" bleh bleh, "that's a slippery slope...", "look at that wet floor, that is negligent." blink blink, nudge nudge.

1. The homeless person will be allowed in the library without a GSU ID, but you won't be!