

# THE ADVISOR

THOMAS JEFFERSON SCHOOL OF LAW | MAY 11, 2015

## NEWLY FORMED STUDENT LEGACY FOUNDATION SUPPORTS STUDENTS DURING FINALS



“Free coffee? Ya, I love it,” said Rebecca Orloff, 3L while grabbing her coffee and snacks, provided by the newly formed Student Legacy Foundation, before heading back to study for finals. “It’s just the little things like this that make students feel appreciated.”

This effort to show appreciation began when several TJSL students formed the *Good Feelings Committee* in an effort to boost student morale and foster positive feelings.

The *Good Feelings Committee* later partnered with the Alumni Relations Department to create what is now known as the *Student Legacy Foundation* (SLF).

“Out of a need to shift the culture in a new direction and collaborate with alumni, the *Student Legacy Foundation* (SLF) was created,” said Stephanie Marquez, Director of Alumni Relations. “Working with the student leaders of the SLF has been an incredible experience. It is such a wonderful feeling to hear students at the free coffee events during finals week express their sincere gratitude and appreciation for these simple gestures we have put together.”

Alumni Board Secretary, and long-time supporter of the Thomas Jefferson School of Law, Phil Shapiro ’85 said, “I am always happy to help students navigate through law school, even if it is as simple

as passing out coffee and encouragement during finals.”

Nacia Castaneda, 1L said the efforts did not go unnoticed. “Thank you for the cookies and taking the time to treat the students. It makes us feel appreciated and important.”

Priscilla Askar, 3L seconded that sentiment. “It was nice to take a coffee break while studying at the student lounge. It was convenient, time saving and very much appreciated.”

As Director of the Alumni Relations Department, Marquez says she is honored to work with such a talented,





driven and exceptional group of students who are committed to their studies and who represent TJSL's future alumni. "Another great benefit of the Student Legacy Foundation is having an avenue to directly connect students with alumni

in order to continue to build those relationships and connections," said Marquez.

Marquez invites everyone to the next Alumni Mixer being held on Thursday,

June 4 at 6:30 p.m. at Bottega Americano located in the lobby of the Thomas Jefferson School of Law building. "Mixers are held the first Thursday of every month and all students and alumni are welcome."



The [TJSL Alumni Video Series](#), filmed and edited by Art Director Sherwin Laranga and produced by Communications Coordinator Denice Menard, showcases a wide variety of Thomas Jefferson School of Law Alumni and focuses on their areas of expertise and experiences.

In [Episode 5](#), you will meet husband and wife team Renee Galente '08 and Eric Ganci '08 who give you a glimpse into their lives and discusses their journey from law school to career.

After several years at a premiere plaintiffs' Civil Litigation firm in San Diego, alumna Renee Galente '08 joined her husband, DUI Attorney Eric Ganci '08, to form [Galente Ganci, APC](#) in 2011. Managing a thriving practice has proved immensely rewarding for this husband and wife team, both professionally and personally. One of the many rewards for Galente is, "Getting to help people who've been

hurt. Everything I do makes a difference to someone, better their lives and makes them feel heard. That is an incredible gift for both the client and me as their lawyer," said Galente. "Another huge rewarding part is the freedom to be your own boss," Ganci pointed out. "Knowing I can do things how I want to do them, and that I am not bound by someone telling me I have to do something a certain way, or telling me I have to do something that I don't feel comfortable doing."

"In law school, all I knew is that I wanted to be a trial lawyer," Ganci said. With this in mind, at TJSL Ganci pursued internships and formed important ties within the legal community while learning important client skills. In particular, Ganci credits the Veterans Legal Clinic with providing an "eye-opening experience" that brought him to the realization that soon after graduating people would be relying on his advice as counsel.

Similarly, Galente pursued various internships and eventually found what area of the law she was passionate about at Thorsnes Bartolotta & McGuire. "Clerking at Thorsnes Bartolotta & McGuire sealed the deal and I knew that it was plaintiff-side civil work that would make me happiest as a career," Galente said. Galente's enthusiasm earned her a job offer at Thorsnes Bartolotta & McGuire after passing the bar.

After becoming an attorney, Ganci faced the challenges of entering a difficult job market. "To be honest, starting my own practice was a business decision to start. I needed to start work, and there were few jobs available," Ganci said. "Also, I was playing in a lot of bars with my band, and I was already answering a lot of questions about what your rights are if you get pulled over for a DUI. I made a name for myself within that community



for giving straight answers, and the clientele just started to build from there.”

For Ganci, a venture that began as a practical decision became a burgeoning practice driven by his growing expertise and interest in DUI defense. “Once I started getting into DUIs, I got really, really interested on the science and procedure,” Ganci said. “The more I learned, the more I wanted to continue to learn about alcohol, drugs, field tests, and police procedure.”

Practicing law also gave Ganci the satisfaction of helping his clients by educating them on the law. “As a former teacher, I really enjoy seeing how people take in and process information, and discovering what makes them act on that information,” Ganci said. “Each trial, each negotiation, each client meeting is about teaching. I absolutely love it.”

Although Galente worked for Thorsnes from 2008 to 2011, gaining valuable experience in plaintiff’s personal injury, the couple soon realized that with their

successful legal skills they could develop a practice together. At Galente Ganci, APC, Galente takes the lead on civil litigation matters while Ganci handles criminal defense matters, specializing in DUI defense.

Since opening their practice, Galente and Ganci have been recipients of multiple accolades. Both Galente and Ganci were included in the San Diego Business Journal’s Best of the Bar. In addition to this honor, the American Chemical Society Chemistry & the Law Division granted Ganci the Lawyer Scientist Designation for his study and application of science in the courtroom.

Galente and Ganci, who are both former TJSL Alumni Board Presidents, recognize that TJSL helped them develop a love for learning the law which has helped them shape the careers and the life they enjoy today. “The school changed my life and was my first experience with an educational organization that encouraged me to succeed and that actively worked and supported me to help me reach

my goals,” Galente said. “I always think about my time doing a summer project with former TJSL General Counsel Jeff Joseph,” Ganci said. “Sitting with him, discussing how to write legal arguments and motions, I just loved how he would flow around case law holdings and facts with such command and enjoyment. That really taught me to love the law, and to get excited about how all this comes into play with real-life situations.”

Knowing firsthand the obstacles many recent graduates face today, Ganci’s advice is, “Get involved in the local, statewide, and nationwide legal communities. Take classes, volunteer your time, do pro bono work. Do everything you can to push yourself forward as a person and as a student of life.” Galente seconds Ganci’s advice. “Hit the ground running. Get out there, and if you have not joined San Diego legal organizations, do that immediately. Get involved in the community,” Galente said. “Show up and sign up for committees. Get your face recognized for being someone who can be counted on to follow through.”



## ADMITTED STUDENTS AND ALUMNI RECEPTION AT AALS CONFERENCE



The Thomas Jefferson School of Law Alumni and Admissions Departments co-hosted a dinner and reception for alumni and admittees at the 38th Annual Clinical Education Conference in Rancho Mirage, California on May 6.

Admitted student Melody Busey said, “I have already been invited to two events to get to know the school better. That is very important and what makes Thomas Jefferson School of Law different from the rest.”

Mena Awan, who is also an Admitted student said, “I felt such a professional atmosphere and vibe, which really helped me with my admissions decision.”

Another admitted TJSL student was heard saying, “This is the best application process that I have experienced. This was the most helpful law school, compared to all the others.”

David Hernandez said, “Since the new generation of students is mostly technology based, TJSL students can learn in a comfortable environment. Congratulations to Thomas Jefferson Law for being innovators.”

Gregory Gruszecki said, “I find it fascinating that after 15 years, Professor Slomanson still remembers his students, for example Michael Melikian who graduated in 2001. That is the type of learning environment that I look forward to being in.”

Professor Slomanson did two presentations for the AALS conference Creating Videos Workshop. The first was his [pre-conference video](#), submitted in advance to the 700 clinical professors who attended the AALS conference. His co-presenters during the video workshop were Angela Upchurch (SIU) and Michele Pistone (Villanova).

Slomanson was invited to present, based on his blended learning article in the [Journal of Legal Education](#)—and his TEDx presentation at American University’s initial [Igniting Legal Education Conference](#).

“It was a magical evening in a five star setting,” said Professor Slomanson. “I had the opportunity to meet and discuss the life of a 1L with prospective students and their parents. Mike Melikian ‘01 provided a robust description of the law school environment, from the student perspective. The above reactions of the admittees and prospective students replicated the familiar adage that law school is as much about attitude as it is about aptitude.”

Pictured: Professor Slomanson, Michael Melikian ‘01, 8 admittees, 1 applicant, and 7 guests.



## FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

MARJORIE COHN

### Radio

Agent Orange: terrible legacy of the Vietnam War, Sounds of Dissent, WZBC, Boston, May 2, 2015.

Criminal charges against Baltimore officers for death of Freddy Gray, KOGO radio news, San Diego, May 1, 2015.

Drones and American exceptionalism, CounterSpin, FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), national, May 1, 2015.

SAMUEL W. BETTWY

### Article

Evolving Transnational Cinematic Perspectives of Terrorism, 9 Persp. on Terrorism 42 (2015).

[View All Faculty Citations](#)

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## THOMAS JEFFERSON SCHOOL OF LAW GRADUATION INFO

**SATURDAY, MAY 16, 2015**

DOORS OPEN AT 9 AM

GRADUATION PROCESSION STARTS PROMPTLY AT 10 AM

**COPLEY SYMPHONY HALL**

750 B STREET

SAN DIEGO, CA 92101



# THOMAS JEFFERSON SCHOOL OF LAW

## ALUMNI & FRIENDS TAILGATE



# PADRES VS CARDINALS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22, 2015 3:30 P.M.

**RSVP** <http://alumni.tjssl.edu/events/rsvp.asp?eventid=411>

**\$28** TJSL STUDENTS **\$35** ALUMNI, FACULTY,  
STAFF AND GUESTS



Includes all-you-can-eat tailgate party  
access and a ticket to the game!

