

## SUCCESSFUL MILITARY SPOUSE CONFERENCE HELD AT TJSL



On Friday, October 17th, TJSL hosted Military Spouse JD Network's annual "Making the Right Moves" Conference. MSJDN's first national event on the west coast, the conference included various panels discussing how military spouse attorneys can overcome the unique barriers they face when growing their career. The conference took place over the course of the entire day and focused on creating and following a successful career path tailored to the unique needs of military spouse attorneys.

Dean Thomas Guernsey delivered the opening remarks, outlining the principles he believes encompass extraordinary leadership; leading by doing, leading by being transparent and honest, leading by allowing extraordinary people to lead and approaching challenges as opportunities. As examples of extraordinary leaders Dean Guernsey recognized TJSL graduate and MSJDN Commutations Director Libby Jamison '06 and conference worker 3L Michelle Mance who is also a military spouse.

The first panel included attorney, legal recruiter, and author Barrett Avigdor and

employment specialist and career coach with Marine Corps Community Services at Camp Pendleton, Lana Massimini. Both panelists provided invaluable advice regarding the two to three sentences every person should prepare as their opening pitch. Panelists also answered questions and provided guidance about when to disclose to a potential employer their status as a military spouse.

Director of TJSL's Center for the Study of Women and the Military, Professor Amy Day headed the second panel, which focused on strategies for building a successful career plan. "Military spouse attorneys face so many huge obstacles, like frequent and unexpected moves, and seemingly insurmountable bar licensing requirements," Professor Day explained. "But we also have one huge thing going for us: the fact that no matter where in the world we may go, we are likely to find another supportive military spouse attorney ready to lend a hand and offer support and advice." Professor Day, also a military spouse, encouraged attendees to approach each move to another state or country as an opportunity to re-imagine yourself and your career.

After the morning panels, a luncheon provided attendees with an opportunity to network and connect with one another. "The best part about the event is meeting all of the different spouses and hearing their stories about how they make life work despite the challenges we face as attorneys and spouses connected through the military," said attendee Stephanie Halford. "What I learned in working with this organization is there are so many different models of how you can use a law degree that I don't have to feel limited by the traditional law firm partnership track."

The keynote speakers for the event, Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez and Mayor of Coronado Casey Tanaka both delivered inspirational speeches about their involvement in politics. Gonzalez, who currently represents the 80th district, encouraged anyone with a desire to run for office to embrace the sentiment and become involved. Mayor Tanaka candidly explained the limitations of the governmental process to provide solutions for all problems and emphasized that solutions often emerge when citizens become proactive.

Director of the Veterans Legal Assistance Clinic Professor Steve Berenson, spoke on the Supporting Your Community and Strengthening Your Resume panel along with other community leaders. The panel highlighted how community service can provide military spouse attorneys the opportunity to gain career experience and fill employment gaps.

The final panels discussed practical ways in which military spouses can join the political ranks by volunteering or working with campaigns. Janice Mulligan, who forms part of the California Judicial Nominations Evaluations Committee, explained the application process for

judicial candidates. The Hon. William Gallo, U.S. Magistrate Judge, shared how he inadvertently became a judge and the importance of networking for military spouses despite the challenges presented by relocating.

The Conference was well attended throughout the day and provided all attendees with valuable information and an opportunity to join similarly situated military spouses. "Because so many of my students at TJSJ have been military spouses, I was especially pleased to see MSJDN choose TJSJ as the host site for its 2014 conference," said Professor Amy Day, "It was really special to be part of an

event for people who understand those dynamics."

"That was by far the best conference I've ever been to," Michelle Mance (3L) said. "I was so inspired by all of the panelists. They really understood the struggles that military spouses face, especially military spouse attorneys. The panels were entertaining and engaging and I took so much away from each of the panelists. Listening to such successful people has really inspired me as I am about to start my path as a lawyer after yet another PCS (permanent change of station) move post-graduation."

## DECEMBER GRADS ATTEND THE 2014 GRAD FAIR

"I am ready to graduate," said Ryan Larson 3L. "It is almost here, we are in the home stretch now."

Students gearing up to graduate on Saturday, December 13, 2014 took time out of their day on Thursday, October 16 to attend the TJSJ grad fair hosted by the Student Services Department held on the 5th floor in the Student Lounge.

As part of the grad fair, students had graduation photos taken, received Career Services exit interview information, Financial Aid exit interview information, got electronic fingerprinting for background checks and had the opportunity to order graduation regalia, invitations and announcements.

"Putting on the cap and gown for the photos made it much more real that I'm actually graduating," said this December's Valedictorian Lynn Marie Morski. "I've watched friends from previous classes graduate each year and finally it's our turn."



Valedictorian Lynn Marie Morski

Graduation will be held on December 13, 2014 at [Copley Symphony Hall](#) in

Downtown San Diego Hall located at 750 B Street.



Ryan Larson



December Graduates



Jackie Palacios

## LAW STUDENTS FOR REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE CAREER PANEL

By Elizabeth Focht

The Law Students for Reproductive Justice (LSRJ) at Thomas Jefferson School of Law started the year off with a bang when they hosted the first “Careers in Reproductive Justice” panel on September 24. Professor Joy Delman led the dynamic discussion, which was co-sponsored by OUTLaw and TJSL Career Services. Three esteemed panelists – Tracy Skaddan, general counsel of Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest; Debbye Rosenthal '12, associate attorney at the Fertility Law Clinic; and Vince Hall '08, one of San Diego's most experienced political professionals shared their insight and experiences with an eager audience of TJSL students and professors. Ms. Rosenthal and Mr. Hall are both proud TJSL alums.

The panelists recognized the importance of involvement in social justice and provided encouragement to the students in attendance. While acknowledging that the current job market is tough, the group emphasized the significance of building relationships and explained that sometimes career paths don't always go as planned. For example, Ms. Skaddan spent many years as a litigator before finding her position at Planned Parenthood, and said she never imagined she would have the type of career she does today. Ms. Rosenthal, who graduated TJSL in 2012, advised the group not to be afraid to take jobs that they didn't expect to take, because you never know where a position will lead. Ms. Rosenthal started her position



at the Fertility Law Clinic working as a clerk three to four days a week; now, she is a full-time associate handling many exciting matters.

The panelists agreed that networking is one of the most fundamental activities for students and young professionals. They said that even though it's awkward, you just have to go for it, stick your hand out and make those introductions. Mr. Hall elaborated that going to events and becoming a recognizable face within your desired field is an excellent way to get your foot in the door. He also gave the group valuable advice on how to stand out when submitting resumes and cover letters. Mr. Hall, who has read thousands of application packets, says employers look for candidates who explain how the position is a good fit for both the company and the applicant. The panelists echoed this sentiment and stressed the importance of showing how you will be an asset for that particular role and not having a one-size-fits-all application materials.

An engaging question and answer session followed the panel. The experts assured the students not to be afraid to make mistakes or take risks in their careers; such endeavors are all learning experiences. Students had the opportunity to talk with Mr. Hall, Ms. Skaddan, and Ms. Rosenthal after the panel. All three panelists encouraged students to keep in touch and contact them with further questions. The group strongly supports LSRJ and its social justice mission.

The Law Students for Reproductive Justice believe that Reproductive Justice exists when all people have the social, political, and economic power and resources to make healthy decisions about our gender, bodies and sexuality for ourselves, our families, and our communities. If you are interested in joining or learning more about the TJSL Chapter, please e-mail Elizabeth Focht or Mia Saling at [lsrj@tjssl.edu](mailto:lsrj@tjssl.edu).

## REGISTER BY OCTOBER 24 FOR THE 7TH ANNUAL JUDICIAL OFFICERS MIXER ON OCTOBER 30TH



All TJSL students are invited to participate on Thursday, October 30th in this unique opportunity where you will network with State and Federal Judges from around San Diego.

Every year since 2008, the TJSL Alumni Association along with Superior Court Commissioner Gary Bloch (Ret.) '81 has provided students with this chance to mingle with some of San Diego's most respected and prestigious individuals from the bench.

This year's event will pay tribute to the Honorable David M. Gill who began his career in the US Army JAG Corps and has sat on the San Diego Superior Court bench for over four decades.

“Judge Gill is being honored for his many years of outstanding service to the bench,” said Alumni Board President Jeremy Evans. Judge Gill is a very worthy recipient. It is a privilege for the Alumni Association to host the Judicial Mixer.”

This event proves to be very popular each year so you will want to register early. The 7th Annual Judicial Officers Mixer is free to TJSL students and will take place on the 8th floor at 5:30 pm. [Please RSVP no later than October 24th.](#)

## BEN AGUILAR '11 DISCUSSES HIS SOLO PRACTICE



Before attending Thomas Jefferson School of Law, Ben Aguilar '11 already knew what he wanted to do as an attorney. "I wanted to use my law license to do something meaningful that had a very direct impact on people's daily lives." After passing the bar and working briefly at a workers' compensation firm in November 2012, as part of the [TJSL Center for Solo Practitioners](#) Aguilar opened his own practice specializing in family and immigration law. "This environment was a great support network," said Aguilar. "It was extremely helpful to come to work and have other attorneys to discuss cases with and get second opinions."

Aguilar began his practice in San Diego, and after only one year, opened a satellite office in Imperial County. "I will be celebrating my two-year anniversary as a solo this November," Aguilar said. "It has been a very rewarding two years. Many learning experiences, many sleepless nights, stressful days, but I love being able to control my own schedule and control the type of cases that I work on."

"Family law cases tend to be pretty high conflict, so there is never a dull moment," Aguilar said. Family law also provides Aguilar a unique opportunity to work on legal issues that are continuously evolving with U.S. Supreme Court and Circuit Courts decisions. "Many assisted reproductive technologies cases are incredibly fascinating and tend to be

learning experiences for all parties involved including attorneys and judges," Aguilar points out.

While family law is rewarding, being able to help clients move on with their lives in a dignified manner, for Aguilar, practicing immigration law is fulfilling in a different way. As an immigration attorney, he has been able to reunite families after long and difficult separations. Clients and former clients, grateful for Aguilar's help, often send him emails or cards to update him on their life. "It is nice to get these types of emails and cards in the mail," Aguilar said. "They keep me motivated."

A current TJSL Alumni Board Member, Aguilar is grateful to TJSL for what he considers the foundation of his success. "I am extremely grateful for the opportunities I was presented with throughout my law school career and even after I graduated and passed the bar," Aguilar said. "This is what has inspired me to serve on the TJSL Alumni Association Board of Directors. I want to give back to the law school and ensure that new students continue having law school experiences that are as great as my own."

"I selected Thomas Jefferson in part because of their focus on public interest," Aguilar explained. At TJSL, Aguilar also found a valuable network of "incredible professors and role models in Professors Marybeth Herald, William Slomanson,

Marjorie Cohen, Ben Templin, and Kaimipono Wenger." When it came time to study for the bar, Aguilar relied on what he describes as the "incredible" Bar Secrets team. "I am particularly appreciative of Professor Andrew Poplin, for taking the time to really make me understand character evidence before the bar exam," said Aguilar. "They forever have my admiration and respect."

Reflecting on what made his time at TJSL memorable, Aguilar said, "I really do not believe any other law school would have supported my ideas and goals the way that TJSL, especially the Student Services Office, supported them throughout law school and after graduation. At TJSL, I was not Student X or Student Y, I was Ben. Faculty and staff knew what I stood for, what my motivation for attending law school was, and they encouraged me to be my best. Thomas Jefferson invested in my personal and professional success, and for this, I am very thankful."

Today, Aguilar credits his involvement with multiple boards, on the leadership skills he developed as President of the International Law Society (ILS). "That opportunity was a great platform for me as a future local attorney," Aguilar explains. "During my term leading the organization, TJSL's ILS chapter was recognized as the Best Chapter of the ILS in the nation by the International Law Student Association. At the same time, I was voted Student Organization President of the Year," Aguilar said. "This opportunity really gave me the confidence to go out in the community and volunteer my time serving on different committees and boards." Aguilar currently serves on five board of directors: the TJSL Alumni Association, the New Lawyer Division of the SDCBA, San Diego La Raza Lawyer Association, No Silence No Violence, and is CFO of the Tom Homann LGBT Law Association.

To recent post-bars, Aguilar candidly said, "Unfortunately, your grades, your law diploma, and your shiny new license to practice law will not be enough to get you a job and professional success. In order to be successful you need to have some direction." In Aguilar's experience, direction involves discipline, "Sit down

and do some strategic planning. Think about where you want to be in six months, one year, and two years. Write it down. Come up with an action plan and do not be scared or embarrassed to

seek help from career services, alumni, or attorney mentors.”

“I want to encourage current law students to become involved within the law

school and the San Diego community,” Aguilar added. “Be proud to be a Thomas Jefferson student and know that you are receiving a high quality education from a world-class faculty.”

## PROFESSOR MARJORIE COHN’S LATEST BOOK

Professor Marjorie Cohn’s newest scholarly venture, [\*Drones and Targeted Killing: Legal, Moral, and Geopolitical Issues\*](#) is a compilation of essays, which discuss the legal, moral, and geopolitical aspects of drone warfare and will be available for purchase November 4, 2014. Professor Cohn edited and contributed to the book along with fourteen other professionals, activists, and scholars.

“In this interdisciplinary collection, human rights and political activists, policy analysts, lawyers and legal scholars, a philosopher, a journalist and a sociologist examine different aspects of the U.S. policy of targeted killing with drones and other methods,” said Professor Marjorie Cohn. “It explores the legality, morality and geopolitical considerations of targeted killing and resulting civilian

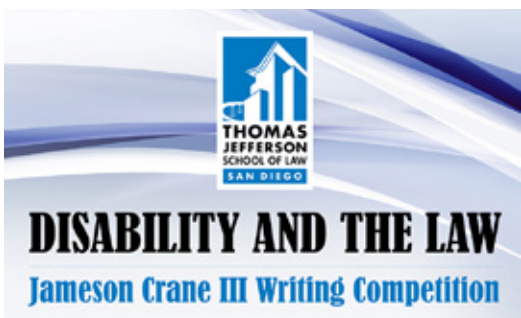
casualties, and evaluates the impact on relations between the United States and affected countries.” Social and political activist, Archbishop Desmond Tutu notes in the forward, “This book provides much-needed analysis of why America’s targeted killing program is illegal, immoral, and unwise.” Like Archbishop Tutu, professors across the country consider this book to be important and timely contribution to the discussion of targeted killings. Among those that have reviewed the book are Noam Chomsky, law Professor David Cole of the Georgetown University Law Center, and law Professor Ellen O’Connell of the University of Notre Dame.

Professor Cohn has lectured throughout the world on international human rights and U.S. Foreign Policy. Previous books by



Professor Cohn include *The United States and Torture: Interrogation, Incarceration, and Abuse*; *Rules of Disengagement: The Politics and Honor of Military Dissent*; *Cowboy Republic: Six Ways the Bush Gang Has Defied the Law*; and *Cameras in The Courtroom: Television and the Pursuit of Justice*.

## JANUARY 15, 2015 IS THE CRANE DISABILITY AND THE LAW WRITING COMPETITION DEADLINE



Thomas Jefferson School of Law Dean Thomas Guernsey announced the September launch of the [First Annual Jameson Crane III Disability and the Law Writing Competition](#). Made possible by the generous gift of TJSL alumnus Jim Crane ‘13, the national competition aims to encourage outstanding student scholarship at the intersection of law and medicine, or law and the social sciences. Open to currently enrolled U.S. law students, medical students, and doctoral candidates in related fields, the competition promotes understanding of legal issues related to disability, furthers the development of legal rights and

protections, and improves the lives of those with disabilities.

“The Crane competition demonstrates our law school’s commitment to excellence in legal and policy analysis for underserved populations,” said Dean Guernsey. “Improving life for the disabled requires changing attitudes and assumptions. Our hope is that the Crane competition will provide a forum for such change,” he noted.

Competition submissions may address any legal topic related to disability law, including issues regarding employment, government services and programs, public accommodations, education, higher education, housing, and health care. An independent panel of experts will judge submissions anonymously based on originality, topic complexity, research quality, organization and analysis, and writing quality to select three winners. The first place winner will receive \$1,500, while two-second place

winners will each receive \$1,000. The Thomas Jefferson Law Review will also consider the first place submission for publication.

TJSL Professor Susan Bisom-Rapp is coordinating the competition. She noted that, “disability law is a rich and complex area of the law, and one we take seriously at the law school.” In fact, TJSL has recently signed the ABA Commission on Disability Rights’ “Pledge for Change.” The Pledge for Change commits legal employers to pursuing diversity in the profession with an emphasis on disability diversity. TJSL is now on the Commission’s Diversity Honor Roll.

All competition submissions must be made electronically to [cranewritingcompetition@tjssl.edu](mailto:cranewritingcompetition@tjssl.edu) by midnight, Pacific Standard Time, January 15, 2015. Winners will be announced by April 15, 2015. Further details about the competition are [available here](#). Any questions may be directed to Professor Bisom-Rapp at [susanb@tjssl.edu](mailto:susanb@tjssl.edu).

## FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

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**JOY L. DELMAN**

**Presentation**

*Ethical Issues in Surrogacy*, UCSD Hospital Center Ethics Committee, UCSD Hospital Center, San Diego (August 25, 2014)

**LINDA M. KELLER**

**Article**

*The Impact of States Parties' Reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, 2014 Mich. St. L. Rev. 309 (2014) [Download a PDF version of the article](#)

**MARJORIE COHN**

**Radio**

Accountability in the International Criminal Court for Operation Protective Edge in Gaza, Earthwise Radio, Christchurch, New Zealand, September 30, 2014.