



Texas Southern University
THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW

Office of the Dean

ANNUAL REPORT

July 2003

Dear Alumni and Friends:

The year 2002-2003 has been one of change for the law school. Although the most important change involved a new relationship between the law school and its students in the area of student service, these changes have affected almost every area of the law school. I am grateful to many faculty, staff, alumni and friends of the law school for their support this year. The successes enjoyed this year are a direct result of this support.

The most significant accomplishments of the year are listed below.

Strategic Plan

The law school adopted a five-year strategic plan. The plan has the following goals:

- Improve credentials of students who are admitted, while maintaining a diverse student body
- Maintain a faculty of superior teachers and increase the quality and quantity of scholarly works with special emphasis on the mission, heritage, and tradition of the institution
- Improve the Law Library collection to the median level of law schools in the State of Texas
- Improve quantity and quality of Information Technology Resources
- Secure additional law school space
- Improve the educational program
- Improve bar passage rate
- Substantially improve overall job placement rates
- Enhance and develop the clinical education program

Student Services

The new Office of the Law School Registrar has streamlined law student enrollment activities to a single focal point within the law school. Led by a recent graduate of the law school, the office also supplements the academic advisement services of the Office of Student Affairs.

The new Office of Academic Support is an auxiliary to the student-learning component of the law school. This office provides bar examination services that include counseling,

instruction, and scholarships. It also provides academic advisement, individual and group tutorials.

The Office of Career Services has added a new director and a new coordinator. Its services include the following: on-campus interviews, off-campus recruitment programs, career counseling which entails preparation of resumes, cover letters, and interviewing techniques and legal employment searches. The Office of Career Services also hosts seminars by practicing attorneys.

The Office of Law Student Financial Aid also has a new director who reports to the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid. Both professionals assist law students with scholarship and loan funds.

Taken together, the new additions enhance the law school's ability to offer competitive services to students and provide students a better experience at the institution.

Admissions

Applications for the class beginning in the fall of 2003 are up by 35%, an all time high. The large increase in applications has made the law school more selective. Thus, admissions standards have been increased. This increase will allow the law school to lower its attrition rate and increase its bar passage and placement rates.

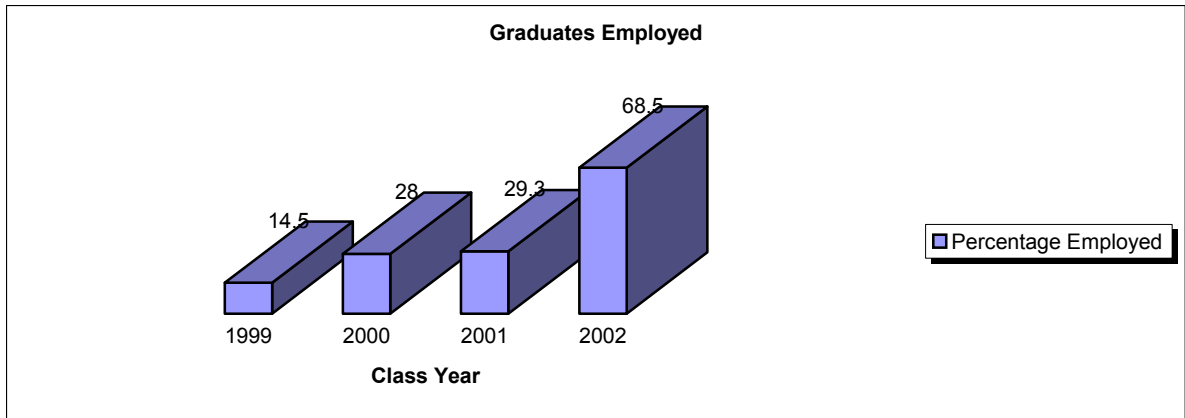
Entering Class	Top 25% LSAT	Bottom 25% LSAT
1999	144	139
2000	144	140
2001	144	138
2002	146	141
2003(projected)	147	143

Entering Class	Top 25% UGPA	Bottom 25% UGPA
1999	2.93	2.48
2000	3.03	3.03
2001	3.15	2.46

2002	3.08	2.47
2003(projected)	3.10	2.56

Career Services

The percentage of graduates employed nine months after graduation has increased from 14.5% for the class of 1999 to 68.5% for the class of 2002. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the class of 2002 was employed by the federal, state or local government; another 59% were employed in law firms/private practice. The remainder were as follows: Business - Legal 5%, Business - Non-Legal 8%, Judicial Clerkships 3%, Academic 7%, Higher Education 4%.



Bar Passage Rates

Recent bar performance has been falling below that of other Texas law schools. The law school has agreed on a comprehensive plan to improve bar rates. The bar examination results since 1999 are outlined below.

July Examinations

Exam Date	First-time pass rate
July 1999	65%
July 2000	52%
July 2001	46%
July 2002	46%

February Examinations

Exam Date	First-time pass rate
Feb. 1999	53%
Feb. 2000	36%

Feb. 2001	36%
Feb. 2002	35%
Feb. 2003	38%

The law school has begun the process of reversing its decline in bar passage through three initiatives: curriculum reform, higher admissions standards, and strong academic support.

Curriculum

During the past year, the Curriculum Committee presented eight (8) academic policy changes to the faculty and the faculty voted to implement all of the recommendations. The approved changes are as follows:

- Eliminated "C-" as a possible grade in the first year and increased the percentage of "C" letter grades by a like amount
- Changed the Oil and Gas course to Texas Property Law
- Added a non-credit bar orientation course
- Changed the present method of the scaling of the professor's portion of first year grades and replaced it with a percentage curve
- Required all first-year faculty to use an essay examination or a series of essay examinations as all or as a substantial portion of grades given in first-year courses
- Changed the duration of most first-year courses from one semester to two semesters
- Defined the upper level writing requirement to exclude drafting courses
- Added the following courses as required for all students with below a 3.0 grade point average at the end of the first year:
 - Texas Practice – Third Year
 - Consumer Protection – Third Year
 - Federal Income Tax – Second Year

This curriculum emphasizes the fundamentals of law and fully prepares students for entry into the legal profession.

Building Renovation

The law building is undergoing an \$11 million renovation, which is scheduled for completion in March 2004. The renovation will have two phases: **Phase I** - renovation of the existing building, and **Phase II** - building an addition. The renovation will enhance the interior form of the school while addressing the needs presented by the ABA accreditation committee. Among the changes, we are looking forward to the addition to the new clinical facilities, two new classrooms and the addition of two computer labs with a total of 100 seats. We are also anticipating expansion of the library space and upgrading building technology.

Faculty

- Professor Morris Overstreet has become Director of the Clinical Program.
- Professor Marcia Johnson is the Director of Earl Carl Institute.

- Professor Fernando Colon Navarro has become the Director of the Institute for International and Immigration Law.
- Distinguished Professor James Douglas chaired the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Professor Thomas Kleven was voted Faculty Member of the Year by the student body.
- Professors James Cotton and Edieth Wu served as associate deans this year.
- Professors Martin Levy served as a consultant to the State of Texas House Judiciary Committee and the State of Texas Senate Criminal Justice Committee on Texas' hate crime legislation.
- Professor Constance Fain authored an ALR manuscript for the West Group Publishing Co.

The law school has welcomed the following faculty members: Judge Manual Leal, Ms. Eboni Nelson and Professor Docia Rudley. Professors Diane Klein and Kenneth Williams resigned from the law school.

Unfortunately for the law school, we are mourning the death of Professor Eugene Harrington, who gave thirty-seven years of instruction and mentoring to the students.

Student Organizations

Around TMSL our students have continued to represent the law school by breaking barriers, achieving new heights of recognition and continuing to be active in the community. Here are just a few of the notably achievements by our students:

Thurgood Marshall students are active in four professional organizations: American Bar Association Law Student Division, American Trial Lawyers Association, State Bar of Texas, Houston Young Lawyers Association

- Five current law students will take the patent bar this year
- The Hispanic Law Student Association (HLSA) is now the largest membership organization at the law school
- The Black Law Student Association (BLSA) is the second largest BLSA in the United States
- BLSA won the national and regional award for best community service projects
- The Phi Alpha Delta (PAD) International fraternity Barbara Jordan chapter is the largest PAD organization in Texas. It has established links with law students in China and Moscow.
- The Points of Light organization called Thurgood's Light collected and distributed over 1000 items of clothing to needy people in Houston over the past year.

Judge Calvin Botley Distinguished Lecture Series

The Honorable Calvin Botley Distinguished Lecture Series continues to bring outstanding lawyers to the law school. This year's speakers were Diana E. Marshall, who spoke on "*The Legacy of Practicing Law*;" Ronald G. Woods, who spoke on "*Representing High Profile*

Defendants;” Michael T. Shelby, who spoke on “The United States Attorney’s Office: *It’s Jurisdiction, Goals and Objectives and Recent Accomplishments;*” Michael Connelly, who spoke on “*Ethics in the Law;*” and Robert Alton Jones, who spoke on “*Common Mistakes New Attorneys make in Criminal Practice.*” Judge Botley continues to recruit speakers and moderate each discussion. All lectures were well-attended by faculty and students.

Board of Advocates

This year, the Board of Advocates (BOA) continued to sponsor three moot court/mock trial competitions (Henry Doyle Moot Court, Helen Dawn Williams Mock Trial, Neal Speedon Moot Court). In this year’s Henry Doyle Moot Court competition, Maja Johnson and Takasha Francis won first place and a cash prize of \$5000.00. The two then took TMSL to another victory by placing first in the regional competition and being awarded best brief and best petitioner’s brief. The team then went on to win second place in the national competition sponsored by the National Black Law Students Association in Los Angeles, California.

Law Review

The editorial board of law review eliminated the backlog of books they inherited from prior years, and published the current books. The law review will publish a commemorative edition in honor of the 49th anniversary of the landmark case, *Brown v. Board of Education*. Featured in this edition will be publications by Professors Donald K. Hill, Otis King, Martin Levy, Lupe Salinas, and L. Darnell Weeden.

Members of the 2003-2004 executive board attended the national conference in Seattle, Washington and members of TMSL were elected to the National Conference of Law Reviews.

Alumni Affairs

The Law School welcomed Gayla LeDet as the new Director of Alumni Affairs. The primary duties and responsibilities of the Director of Alumni Affairs are to maintain an effective alumni database, serve as a liaison between the Law School and the Alumni Associations, and sponsor events, lectures and presentations for alumni and friends of the law school.

This past academic year was one of blueprinting and positioning the school to perform at its highest level. In the years to come, we hope to build upon this year’s positive steps towards enhancing the history and tradition of the institution. Thank you again for your continued support!

Very truly yours,

McKen Carrington
Interim Dean