

THURGOOD FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Thurgood Marshall School of Law



April 1, 2019



Professor Katherine Vukadin and Adjunct Professor D'Andra Shu presented at the 2019 Rocky Mountain Legal Writing Conference in Las Vegas at the UNLV Boyd School of Law on March 16, 2019. The individualized assessment of student papers is one of the most important tasks legal writing professors undertake, but the work is wasted if students do not absorb the critique. Vukadin and Shu's presentation, entitled "Catching On: How Post-Critique Assessments Deepen Understanding and Improve Legal Writing," offered six tools that legal writing professors can use to help students better absorb professor comments on their papers and carry forward those lessons to the next assignment.

Acting Dean Gary Bledsoe has been selected to receive the Roberson L. King Excellence in Education Award from the Houston Lawyers Association ("HLA"). Bledsoe is the recipient of this award because the membership of the HLA and its Board of Directors concluded that he has empowered the community through education and service to today's legal scholars and tomorrow's legal icons. The Roberson King Excellence Award is one of six (6) Founders' Awards presented annually by the Houston Lawyers Association. HLA is marching towards 65 years of serving lawyers and the Houston community. The HLA Annual Scholarship and Awards Gala serves as a forum to honor deserving members of the HLA as well as the community at large. If Bledsoe accepts this prestigious award he is scheduled to receive it at the awards gala on May 4, 2019.



Adjunct Professor D'Andra Shu and Professor Katherine Vukadin presented at the 2019 Rocky Mountain Legal Writing Conference in Las Vegas at the UNLV Boyd School of Law on March 16, 2019. The individualized assessment of student papers is one of the most important tasks legal writing professors undertake, but the work is wasted if students do not absorb the critique. Vukadin and Shu's presentation, entitled "Catching On: How Post-Critique Assessments Deepen Understanding and Improve Legal Writing," offered six tools that legal writing professors can use to help students better absorb professor comments on their papers and carry forward those lessons to the next assignment.

L. Darnell Weeden, Associate Dean of Research and Faculty Development gave a speech at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL) spring 2019 Faculty Lecture Series on March 20, 2019 entitled, “Standing and Speaking Constitutional Truth to Local Power Regarding Undocumented Immigrant Residents Dwelling with We the People of the United States”. Weeden’s speech was based on passages from his speaking constitutional truth to power article published in the Southern Illinois University Law Journal, 34 S. Ill. U. L.J. 55 (2009). During the presentation Weeden said, “We the People of the United States, in order to establish a more perfect Union with justice and fairness for all persons, shall promote domestic tranquility by giving voice and constitutional protections to those undocumented immigrants dwelling with us.”



Weeden pointed out immigration remains a long standing divisive topic. Today's headlines similar to one's ten years ago in 2009 clearly demonstrate that the immigration debate is a hot subject. Weeden, like many Americans, believes that Congress has all but abandoned its responsibility to establish responsible, uniform, and pragmatic laws to address the status of millions of undocumented immigrants living in the United States. According to Weeden, a supporter of social justice must stand and speak constitutional truth when addressing the rights of undocumented immigrants. America needs to acknowledge that its domestic tranquility is best preserved by paying all workers equitable wages whether they are called employees, undocumented immigrants or slaves. Weeden supports the position taken by Jeffrey Sinensky, Director of the Domestic Policy Department for the American Jewish Committee, highlighting the danger of remaining silent to the plight of undocumented immigrants. According to Sinensky, while reasonable people may have different viewpoints about this difficult challenge, bigotry should never become acceptable in public debate . . . the American Jewish Committee is concerned with the racism, fear-mongering and scapegoating that increasingly are a regular part of the immigration debate. This rhetoric comes not only from extremist groups, but also from public officials, pundits on television and radio, and other influential Americans. Such language is antithetical to American values. There must be a return to reasoned discourse At stake are nothing less than individual lives, the unity of families, the state of our economy, and the very nature of our society. Weeden argues because the power to regulate immigration is a power expressly granted to Congress, the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment properly understood actually places substantive and procedural prohibitions on the power of state and local governments to unilaterally impose burdens on a person because of his or her immigration status. Because a state does not have the independent constitutional authority to determine the terms and conditions under which either a documented or undocumented immigrant remains in this country, the state lacks the legal capacity to establish an immigrant's substantive rights, or to authorize a hearing or procedure to determine any person's immigration status. Only Congress has the authority to establish uniform rules of naturalization for immigrants.

Weeden said we the people have millions of immigrants now living in our country as undocumented residents. We use heavy handed criminal justice tactics against those offenders who unlawfully enter this country, thus employing poor public policy because those tactics divert both attention and resources from serious federal offenses. Our current federal immigration policy is filling the federal courts and prisons with undocumented employees who are incarcerated for non-violent crimes. The current law enforcement treatment of undocumented immigrants involves redirecting vast law-enforcement resources away from pursuing violent and harmful offenders. America needs to control its borders with an effective immigration system that prevents millions of people from coming to America without documentation. We the people should insist that Congress enact comprehensive legislation to make undocumented immigrants authorized employees, citizens and taxpayers.

Please send any announcements you would like to include in the next Thurgood Faculty Spotlight to Ms. Toyann Timmons (Toyann.Timmons@tmslaw.tsu.edu) and Dean Weeden (Larry.Weeden@tmslaw.tsu.edu) by 5p.m. Friday, April 5, 2019.



Thurgood Faculty Spotlight is a twice Monthly journal (the 1st and 15th during the fall and spring semester) recording the achievements, experience, and awards of The Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law faculty of distinction.

**L. Darnell Weeden, Associate Dean for Faculty Development & Research,
is the editor of Thurgood Faculty Spotlight**