

THURGOOD FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
Thurgood Marshall School of Law



May 1, 2019



Professor Shaundra Lewis recently accepted an invitation from the Executive Director of the newly-created Center for Firearms Law at Duke Law School, Professor Jacob D. Charles, to present a work-in-progress at the 2019 Firearms Law Works-In-Progress Workshop.

Professor Lewis has written articles in this area, including *Crossfire on Compulsory Campus Carry Laws: When the First and Second Amendments Collide*, 102 *Iowa L. Rev.* 2109 (2017); *The Cost of Raising a Killer—Parental Liability For the Parents of Adult Mass Murderers*, 61 *Villanova L. Rev.* 1 (2016) (lead article); *Symposium on Texas Gun Law and the Future”: The Fatal Flaws In Texas’s Campus Carry Law*, 42 *T. Marshall L. Rev.* 135 (2016); *Firearms Laws Redux—Legislative Proposals for Disarming the Mentally Ill Post-Heller and Newtown*, 3 *Mental Health L. & Pol’y J.* 420, 423 (2014); and *Bullets and Books by Legislative Fiat: Why Academic Freedom and Public Policy Permit Higher Education Institutions to Say No to Huns*, 48 *Idaho L. Rev.* 1 (2011) (lead article).

Associate Dean for Research & Faculty Development Roberson King Professor of Law L. Darnell Weeden’s article entitled *Equal Voting Rights Require Removing Race and Partisan Discrimination from Elections and Legislative Gerrymandering* was recently published by the LSU Law School in the *Louisiana Law Review*, 79 *La. L. Rev.* 781, 791 (2019).



In the article Weeden makes the following insightful and very controversial assertion regarding the gerrymandering process, “Any use of race in shaping a congressional or legislative district fatally taints the equal protection standard and blocks free and fair elections in America. The Court should have adopted the position that it is never permissible to use race as a factor in redistricting a congressional district because true voting equality requires using race-neutral traditional demographics and prohibiting the use of partisan politics while redistricting.”



Hill



Shu



Vukadin

Associate Dean Cassandra L. Hill, Adjunct Professor D’Andra M. Shu, and Professor Katherine T. Vukadin, signed a contract with Carolina Academic Press to write a new book, *The Legal Memo: 50 Exercises for Mastery*. The exercises in this book will focus on the specific skills needed for each part of the legal memo. The majority of the exercises can be done lightning-round style, taking just fifteen minutes to complete. For those seeking more in-depth practice, the book will also contain exercises taking about thirty minutes. The thirty-minute exercises will allow students to take a deeper dive into the material, bringing together several of the skills addressed in the shorter exercises. Each exercise is independent, not depending on a master set of facts or the answers to a prior problem, meaning students and professors will have very little ramp-up time and can get right into the skills practice. The book will be available for purchase and adoption in the spring of 2021.

Professor Sally Green’s article entitled, *Realistic Opportunity for Release Equals Rehabilitation: How the States Must Provide Meaningful Opportunity for Release*, 16 *Berkeley J. Crim. L.* 1, 2011, was recently cited by Eric Samler and Hollis Whitson in their Colorado Appellant's Amended Opening Brief in, *The People of the State of Colorado v. Davis*, 2017 WL 10964950 (Colo.App.)21. According to Samler and Whitson, Green stated that several scholars have noted the significant problem in relying upon pre-existing parole systems to satisfy the Supreme Court’s requirement for a “meaningful” and “realistic” opportunity for release of juveniles.



In Greens' article she raised the following relevant question that was quoted in the brief, "whether the traditional parole model in which a board administratively releases inmates from prison can adequately determine the release of juvenile life sentence offenders."



Associate Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Experiential Learning Programs Stephanie Ledesma presented at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL) spring 2019 Faculty Lecture Series on the subject entitled, “Experiential Learning” on April 11, 2019. Ledesma stated that there are currently 14 different experiential courses offered at TMSL. Every student will take at least one of the courses before they graduate. The externship learning experience includes federal and state administrative opportunities. In 2018, the externship program placed 92 students.

The Innocence Project allows externships students to conduct supervised interviews while helping a supervising attorney prepare for trial. The Veterans Initiative provides students with an opportunity to help veterans to upgrade their discharges and to qualify for benefits that have been dishonorably discharged receive benefits and housing. The Immigration Coalition gives students hands on and real time experience helping immigrants to understand their rights and duties under federal immigration law.

Professor Thelma Harmon graduated from Loyola University School of Law, and began working as a contract negotiator for a Fortune 500 company. Five years later and contemplating a career change, she thought about all the lawyers she worked or interacted with and discovered that the happiest lawyers were the law professors. Harmon states that law professors have fantastic schedules, the opportunity to introduce law students to the excitement of studying law, and the chance to explore one’s area of scholarly interest in depth and, perhaps, influence public discourse are important factors that make her profession as a law professor terrific.



Harmon loves when law school students understand what makes the legal system function. She loves those a-ha moments with her students when she sees the light bulb go off. Harmon loves answering questions and sparking in-depth discussions, and when students tell her that her class made them more interested in law.

Harmon states that she owes her amazing experience to Thurgood Marshall School of Law, a historically black law school. Harmon is now doing what Charles Hamilton Houston, Justice Thurgood Marshall, and other Black law professors did. Harmon is helping minority students to practice law in America and succeed in the legal professional. Who could ask for anything more?



Professor Marguerite Butler has been a member of Thurgood Marshall School of Law faculty for 37 years. Butler is currently an Appellate Litigation professor. Butler prides her appellate litigation class on being intricate to the legal field because she has been a coach for the Frederick Douglas Moot Court Competition for 32 years. Butler coached four teams to national competitions where they traveled all over the regions to places such as Nebraska and Arizona.

As an undergrad student, Butler was a math major and had no intentions of ever attending law school. Butler did not like to read or write, however, one of her professors saw something in her and recommended she go to law school. Once in law school Butler participated in moot court and realized that legal writing was just a formula similar to those needed to solve a math problem. Butler stated that she gets excited when she sees her appellate litigation students become proficient in their writing abilities.

Professor Fernando Colon-Navarro performed the following activities during the period of April 8 to April 12, 2019 in the Master Course of Law at the Federal University of Ouro Preto, Brazil. On April 8th, Colon had a meeting with Brazilian Professors. On April 9th, Colon made a presentation in the First Seminar of Integration the Master Course of Law on the topic, “Trumping Immigration Law: President Trumps Approach to Immigration.” On April 10th, Colon taught a class in the Political Science discipline with a Brazilian Professor. On April 11th, Colon gave a special lecture about the possibilities of having an international cooperation between Thurgood Marshall School of Law and other Brazilian Universities. The lecture was entitled, “A Shoot in Legal Education to Practical Learning.”





Professor Constance Fain made a presentation at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL) Spring 2019 Faculty Lecture Series entitled, “Green Book: Commerce Clause, Civil Rights and Race Discrimination,” on March 28, 2019. Fain stated that in 1936, a visionary by the name of Victor H. Green, authored a guide book entitled “The Negro Motorist Green-Book” to make African American travel easier and safer. The first edition of the Green-Book was fifteen pages long containing names of various hotels, parks, taverns, barbershops, beauty parlors, night clubs, service stations, golf courses, tourist homes, vacation resorts, etc. that welcomed African Americans in their establishments. Also, there were sunset towns throughout the country where curfews existed making it more perilous for African Americans to travel during certain hours. The Green Book listed places African Americans could stay after sundown where they would be safe until the next day. By the end of the 1960s, the final edition of the Green Book contained 99 pages which included international cities where African Americans could travel. Fain stated that Green looked forward to a time he would not have to publish the Green Book because people of all races would be able to move freely throughout the United States and enjoy equal opportunities and privileges. However, Green died in 1960 just before Congress passed the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Fain stated that several Civil Rights Laws were passed starting around the 1860s when, according to one writer, a majority of states enforced segregation through “Jim Crow” laws. Due to the increasing unwillingness of African Americans to accept segregation, the increasing national and international awareness of the problems of segregated public accommodations, etc., there was a need for new federal intervention. One scholar stated that in an effort to “revive the ideal of freedom and equality for all, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964”. Not only did Congress employ the Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection guarantee, but it used the Commerce Clause to protect civil rights. Thus, the 1964 Civil Rights Act, prohibiting discrimination in places of public accommodations based on race, color, religion or national origin, along with the Commerce Clause of the United States Constitution, giving Congress the power “to regulate commerce...among the several States”, were successfully relied on in *Heart of Atlanta Motel v. United States* (1964) and its companion case *Katzenbach v. McClung* (1964). The Court found that the public accommodations provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were valid under the Commerce Clause. Fain stated that since the movement of people and goods across state lines, among other things, may be regulated under the Commerce Clause, prohibiting race discrimination in places of public accommodations lifted the economic burden of such discrimination on interstate commerce.

Finally, although the “Green Book” movie failed to focus specifically on the Green Book by name, it clearly emphasized the adverse impact of Jim Crow laws on one of the main characters, Donald Shirley. Shirley was a well-known African American classical piano prodigy, who was on tour in the South during the Jim Crow era; consequently, he had to rely on the Green Book for lodging and meals, as well as other services. At the 2019 Academy Awards, the “Green Book” movie won “Best Picture” in addition to Oscars in other categories.

In the spirit of giving honor to whom honor is due, congratulations to **Professor Ana Otero** for being selected as the 2019 Professor of the Year by the student body at Thurgood Marshall School of Law.



Otero



Bledsoe

In the spirit of giving honor to whom honor is due, congratulations to **Acting Dean Gary Bledsoe** for being selected as the 2019 Administrator of the Year by the student body at Thurgood Marshall School of Law

In the spirit of giving honor to whom honor is due, congratulations to **Professor Edieth Wu** on being elected the 2019-2021 Faculty Senate/Assembly Chair, on April 24, 2019.



Wu



Jackson

In the spirit of giving honor to whom honor is due, congratulations to **Professor Faith Jackson** on being elected the 2019-2021 Faculty Senate/Assembly Vice Chair, on April 24, 2019.

Professor SpearIt was featured in an essay entitled “Empowered by SpearIt,” published in *Voices*, a diversity journal at Gonzaga University (Spring 2019). The essay was written by Hisrael Carranza, who took SpearIt’s Criminal Law course in fall 2018. In the essay, he lauds SpearIt’s teaching style and his efforts to connect with minority students at Gonzaga.



SpearIt recently published “Alabama Executes a Muslim and Extinguishes Religious Rights on February 29, 2019, at The Islamic Monthly, <https://www.theislamicmonthly.com/alabama-executes-a-muslim-and-extinguishes-religious-rights/> and “Give Prisoners a Voice to Increase Prison Accountability” on April 8, 2019, at JOTWELL Criminal Law, https://crim.jotwell.com/give-prisoners-a-voice-to-increase-prison-accountability/?fbclid=IwAR2c7y3jilwBWsg-1stTrjXvoyk_Kz4ITw86yRzlTyd6w5YsyAN3zvg4XPs. His scholarship was cited in a number of publications including: *Expungement Expansion: Missouri Makes More Misdemeanors Moot*, 84 *Missouri L. Rev.* 1 (2019); *Beyond Recidivism: Identifying the Liberatory Possibilities of Prison Higher Education*, 10 *Critical Ed.* (2019); *Black Men, Religiosity and Desistance: Exploring Islam, Desistance and Identity*, 17 *Safer Communities* (2018); *Latino and Muslim in America: Race, Religion, and the Making of a New Minority*(Oxford University Press 2018); “Supreme Court Says Discrimination is OK—If You’re a Muslim,” *Truthout* (April 7, 2019), <https://truthout.org/articles/supreme-court-says-discrimination-is-ok-if-youre-a-muslim/>.



Adjunct Professor D’Andra Shu presented at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL) spring 2019 Faculty Lecture Series on the subject entitled, “Catching On: How Post-Critique Assessments Deepen Understanding and Improve Legal Writing,” on April 17, 2019. Shu stated that the individualized assessment of student’s legal writing is a critical part of legal writing pedagogy. Shu analyzed six techniques for ensuring that students understand, absorb, and then deploy the lessons learned from professors’ critique.

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, May 10 , 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**