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.


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.”
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 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 Trump's 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.”

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**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?

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**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.
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 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.

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.

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.

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.
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.

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.

Please send any announcements you would like to include in the next Thurgood Faculty Spotlight to Ms. Toyann Timmons (Toyann.Timmons@tmsslaw.tsu.edu) and Dean Weeden (Larry.Weeden@tmsslaw.tsu.edu) by 5p.m. Friday, May 10, 2019.