
Dean Stephanie Ledesma was invited to serve as the Keynote Speaker at the 15th annual "Together We Can!" Conference: Making a Difference for Children Who Have Been Abused or Neglected, in Lafayette, Louisiana. The conference was hosted by the Louisiana Supreme Court, the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, the National Association of Social Workers, and other statewide organizations. This year the conference had close to 1000 attendees, and showcased a theme of "Collaboration Works! improving Outcomes for Children & Families." Dean Ledesma's keynote address was titled, "Cultural Compassion: Addressing Implicit Bias". Dean Ledesma also lead to workshops on Professionalism for Attorneys.

Professor L. Darnell Weeden’s article entitled, The Supreme Court's Rejection of the Rational Basis Standard in Shelby County v. Holder Invites Voter Suppression, 33 MISS. C. L. REV. 219, 222 (2014) was recently cited by Jesús N. Joslin in a student comment entitled Navigating The Post-Shelby Landscape: Using Universalism To Augment The Remaining Power Of The Voting Rights Act, 19 Scholar: St. Mary's L. Rev. & Soc. Just. 217, 239 (2017). According to Joslin, Weeden is among those commentators who have characterized the Supreme Court's ruling in Shelby a historic disaster because of Shelby the VRA is no longer a very effective tool in preventing the implementation of many restrictive voting laws.
TMSL Faculty Members Join together for Experiential Learning Exercise

On November 3, 2017, Professors Colon-Navarro’s and Tekle’s first-year property classes of almost 140 students joined forces to conduct a joint experiential learning exercise. The exercise consisted of a negotiation between siblings of land willed to them by their father and who owned it as tenants in common. At eight o’clock in the morning, 33 simultaneous rounds of negotiations took place, judged by 33 different judges, many of whom were alumni, staff, and upper-class students. Each negotiating team was composed of one student from Professor Colon-Navarro’s class and one from Professor Tekle’s class. Prior to the negotiation, Professor Peter Marchetti conducted a special joint session on the lawyering skill of negotiation, drawing from his background negotiating business deals on Wall Street. In addition, upper-class students Jeffreshia Bell, Nneka Akubeze, and Valerie Salcido conducted a special class for each class discussing the value that employers place on the acquisition of lawyering skills via co-curricular activities and experiential learning as early as possible in law school. Courtney Bowie also assisted students with career guidance and orientation.

Overall, judges were impressed by the rigor, knowledge, and professionalism of the first-year students. Thank you to all of the judges for your feedback and support of the 1Ls. A very special thank you to Alvin Adejei, attorney at Abraham Watkins, Sarah Guidry, Executive Director of the Earl Carl Institute, Sherea A. McKenzie, General Counsel for Harris County Precinct One, and Rodney Ellis, Harris County Commissioner.