

# Marshall News

## Welcome

The Law Library Staff extends a special welcome to the class of 2008 and all new faculty members. We also want to welcome back our returning students and faculty. We are looking forward to an exciting 2005 - 2006 academic school year.

Are you ready for the enriched vocabulary you are about to encounter? Within the next four months you will be bombarded with new words. Bluebook? Shepardize? Formbooks? Vernon's? Casebook? Nutshell? Torts?

Like all new law students, you will be inundated with information. All these new experiences will descend upon you at one time.

The librarians and the entire Library staff are here to help you define some of these new terms, answer your questions and provide legal research help throughout your law school career.

Please stop by the Reference/Circulation Desk to say hello to the Law Library staff. While you are there, pick up some of the library's helpful publications including the **Fall 2005 Library Guide, 2005-2006 Electronic Databases Guide, Location Guide, Li-**

**brary Map** and an abundance of **pathfinders, bibliographies** and **research guides**. Pick up these guides today. They provide a wealth of information.

## Library TOURS

New law students are encouraged to take a library tour. Library tours were conducted during first-year computer orientation training and the library's open house. If you missed your tour see any librarian.

This newsletter will provide some answers and insights to enrich your law school experience.

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### Regular Law Library Hours

Monday-Thursday	7 a.m. - midnight
Friday	7 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Saturday	9 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Sunday	12 noon - midnight

## Pathfinders/Research Guides/Bibliographies

The Library has revised several of its research guides, pathfinders and bibliographies. These materials are located in the Library and are passed out in classes and library seminars.

Research Guides, Bibliographies and Pathfinders point you in the direction of useful print and electronic materials.

Bibliographies are lists that reference materials on a specific subject. Our bibliographies include references to articles in journals as well as books.

Pathfinders provide in-depth information on an area of law or a particular resource.

Nanette Collins, Reference Librarian, and Monique Gonzalez, Learning Resource Librarian will visit several classrooms and discuss ways of expanding and improving your research.

Tracy Timmons will teach computer clas-

ses throughout the school year. The Electronic Database Guide provides the needed user names and passwords to access those sources.

Several pathfinders will be handed out in Legal Research classes and through the Legal Research Assistants program. Stop by the library to peruse the information kiosk and pathfinder rack to acquire a copy of available research guides.

Why reinvent the wheel? These guides have done most of the work for you. They can save you valuable time and quickly expand your knowledge of how to use a particular research tool.

**THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL OF LAW  
LIBRARY**

*Pathfinder Series*  
Revised September 2003  
By DeCarious Spearman, Assistant Director

**WEST DIGEST SYSTEM**

**1. What is a Digest?**

A digest is a topical arrangement of every best annotation of the points of law found in a case. The digest contains those annotations called **headnotes**, reported so that you can find out in one place just what the case is about. The headnotes include citations to other cases.

The legal approach of the West Digest System helps you understand legal issues in context. A digest allows you to analyze your research goals and theories to find the best cases, statutes and other relevant information for your research problem. You research in one complete digest, instead of using digests.

A digest is a **time-saving tool**. Digests do not interpret cases. That is your job. Digests allow you to find the statute, and make sense of the cases (the **digest**) very quickly and accurately. It is **not** a **crutch**. Therefore, in order to receive a complete understanding of the case you must read the entire case.

**2. How Do I Find The Correct Digest Topics And Key Numbers?**

There are many ways to find topics and key numbers to lead you to cases on point. One way is to use finding aids within the digest itself, such as the **Descriptions About Cases**. These include only cases on the researcher's previous knowledge.

How to use	How to use	How to use
A case that is on the topic	Inductive: Use the topic to identify appropriate cases on the topic.	Topic
A topic about the case	Deductive: Review the digest related topics that will be relevant to the case.	Key: State Digests, Legal Periodicals
Clear specific issue	Investigative: Use the key numbers to find cases directly related to the issue.	Subject-specific digests to identify relevant topics and key numbers
Researching historical information	Historical: Use the Process to find cases defining the word.	

Often, using a combination of methods usually yields the best results. Once you find one or more topics and key numbers that seem to point toward the answers you need in the digest volume or one of those on other key number tables that hope that may also be relevant to your research problem.

## Brown Bag Sessions



The Brown Bag Sessions are back. Each session will focus on an area of legal research or the use of an available electronic database. The first session will cover Developing a Research Strategy and available electronic databases at TMSL. A monthly schedule will be posted in the Library on the information display and is available at the Circulation/Reference Desk.

Please note, by popular demand schedules may be altered to address more pressing needs. If there is a topic you need or would like to see covered, please contact DeCarious Spearman by email dspear-

man@tsulaw.edu.

If you didn't get it in legal research; if you have a research paper due; or if you have to prepare a petition due for class these sessions can help!

Come join us for Brown Bag Sessions.

**Feed your  
body while we  
feed your  
mind!**

## Law Library Services

If you are new to the Law Library or need a refresher, here are some important things to know about available library services:

Law Librarians are ready to help with reference, general information and research questions. Reference assistance is available at the Reference/Circulation Desk seven days a week.

The computer workstations are available for research and access to Law Library materials. Please don't use them for games or recreational web-surfing. Laptop access is also available by con-

necting to one of the Law Library's network jacks and some sections of the library allow wireless access also.

To find materials owned by the Law Library, use **ALEX** the Law Library's *Online Public Access Catalog*. Journal articles are not available in the Catalog.

To find law-related articles, cases, codes or administrative regulations, check out the Electronic Databases available through the Law Library's webpage. Law students have access to most TMSL databases.

## LexisNexis U.S. Serial Set Digital Collection

We are pleased to announce one of the Law Library's latest database acquisitions: LexisNexis U.S. Serial Set Digital Collection. The Serial Set along with our CIS microfiche collection, has fortified the Law Library with the breadth of United States Congressional legislative information. The Serial Set is a serious tool for legal professionals, legal historians & genealogists alike -- but more specifically for researchers seeking to glean Congressional legislative intent.

The Digital Collection begins in 1789, which includes the American State Papers to 1969. The CIS collection picks up where the Serial Set ends, 1970 to present. LexisNexis superior indexing allows researchers to search the collection by: Full text; Document title; Author (personal /corporate /committee / president / agency); Bill number/Public Law Num-

ber/Statute at Large citation; subjects/organizations/personal names; witness/petitioner; SuDoc number and more.

The combined Serial Set and CIS provide unrivaled access to Congressional legislative intent. Here is your One-Stop point for Congressional legislative histories before 1969. You can access the Digital Collection from the Law Library's Electronic Resources webpage (CIS Congressional Universe). Remote access is also available for those with a Law Library account.

Otherwise, you can only access the Digital Collection via TSU/Law Library computing network.

For more information about the U.S. Serial Set Digital Collection, please contact Karim Rand or Tracy Timmons.



Texas Southern University  
Thurgood Marshall School of Law Library

Marshall News is a publication of the Texas Southern University, Thurgood Marshall School of Law Library. Copies are distributed to law school faculty and staff via e-mail and paper. Students can acquire a paper copy of the newsletter in the law library or from the Law Library webpage at [www.tsulaw.edu](http://www.tsulaw.edu). Please send all comments, contributions or concerns to: DeCarlous Spearman, Associate Director Thurgood Marshall School of Law Library 3100 Cleburne, Houston, Texas 77004 [dspearman@tsulaw.edu](mailto:dspearman@tsulaw.edu)

## Library Laws

- **NO FOOD**
- **DRINKS in proper containers ONLY**
- **QUIET PLEASE!**
- **NO TALKING on cell phones**

## Helpful Law Library Numbers

Acquisitions	713-313-1008
Administration	713-313-1010
	713-313-7328
	713-313-1007
Audio/Visual & Instructional Equipment ( <i>allow 2 working days</i> )	713-313-1007
Cataloging	713-313-1005
Circulation	713-313-7125
Computer Assistance	713-313-1120
Course Reserve Materials ( <i>allow 2 working days</i> )	713-313-1157

Faculty Assistance	713-313-1107
	713-313-7125
Fax	713-313-4483
Government Documents	713-313-1978
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	713-313-1005
	713-313-1106
Passwords or Training ( <i>Lexis, Westlaw or LoisLaw</i> )	713-313-7328
Reference	713-313-1107
	713-313-1009

## Using ALEX, the Online Public Access Catalog

**ALEX**, the Law Library OPAC includes books, journals, newspapers, conference proceedings, government documents, microforms, and video or audio recordings in the collection. The OPAC does not include:

- \*Robert J. Terry Library Holdings
- \*Articles in journals, newspapers and other periodicals.
- \*Some individual titles in large microform sets.

### How to search ALEX

#### AUTHOR Searching

**Author** searching retrieves any type of author (individuals, organizations, conference names, composers, artists, performers, editors, etc.).

Example: **AUTHOR:** Calamari John

Example: **AUTHOR:** American Bar Association

#### TITLE Searching

**Title** searching retrieves titles of books, conferences, etc. The OPAC automatically truncates your title

search:

Example: **TITLE:** Contract

Retrieves Contract Act, Contract Cases, Contract Law, etc.

#### SUBJECT Searching

**Subject** searching retrieves only the official Library of Congress Subject Headings. If you are unsure of the correct subject heading for your topic, try a keyword search instead. Use the records you retrieve to identify the correct LC Subject Headings, and then do a new subject search.

#### KEYWORD Searching

**Keyword** searching uses words in the title and content notes when the exact title, author or Subject Heading is unknown. The search looks for the terms that were entered: in the title, author, subject, series, notes, organization name, and corporate name.

Example: **KEYWORD:** Criminal law, Education Law