

#### FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DEAN

#### New Aesthetic Changes to the Law School

If you have not visited the Law School lately, you will be pleasantly surprised by the many new aesthetic improvements. Over the summer months, new carpet was installed throughout the Law School, along with directional signage for an easier access to departments and offices in the Law building. These additions, along with the placement of several new smart TV's, that display upcoming events, TMSL signage, and both national and international news, were ready in time to welcome the incoming 1L class.



The law school has taken on a more professional look:

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- New furniture has been placed in the foyers of both the first and second floors of the building
- TMSL branding of our logo is visible throughout the building
- Banners have been placed with inspirational quotes from a diverse group of distinguished Americans
- The walls have been painted and accent walls added to some areas of the Law School
- An information desk was installed on the first floor where student ambassadors serve as greeters and provide information to current students, faculty & staff, alumni and visitors
- The Law School motto, "Protect It, Improve It, and Pass It On" was placed on the wall of the second floor
- A mural of the Law School's current values was placed on the first floor
- 20 plus cameras were installed throughout the interior and exterior of the law school for security measures.



#### Even More New Changes Are Soon To Come.

The next phase shall include the installation of a common area with meeting rooms, a café style seating area and a lounge with TV and video games all in a sound proof environment.



## **ALUMNI NEWS**

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#### TMSLALUM, Ruben Perez Receives State Wide Accolades



Pictured: Ruben Perez and Sherri Zack

TMSL alumni Ruben Perez received the well deserved 2013 Executive Office for the United States Attorney Director's Award for Superior Performance as an Assistant United States Attorney. This is a significant achievement that recognizes his exceptional efforts to promote the fair and impartial administration of justice for all Americans.

His outstanding contributions in the investigation and prosecution of the *Rojas* human trafficking organization, which operated for more than 20 years and trafficked hundreds of victims, led to the convictions of 10 defendants. Perez and his co-counsel worked diligently to direct a three-year investigation, which included that nation's first FBI, ICE and sheriff's undercover operation targeting human trafficking in cantinas and bars. He overcame tremendous obstacles, obtaining cooperation from reluctant and frightened victims in order to successfully prosecute this organization and his efforts resulted in the forfeiture of \$500,000 that will be used for the victims' psychological, medical and educational needs.

In addition, Ruben Perez representing the Southern District of Texas, along with Sherri Zack, was recognized for "Best News Article". The article, published in Houston Bar Association's monthly <u>Houston Lawyer</u> magazine, was titled "Challenges in Federal Sex Trafficking Prosecution."



#### ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS D.C AREA ALUMNI AND FRIENDS BRUNCH SEPTEMBER 21, 2013

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## **ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS**

#### TMSL Alum Becomes NRA Commentator and Instant Internet Phenomena



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Colion Noir belongs to the NRA and owns several guns, including a sleek Glock 17 handgun and a customized AR-15 rifle. But Noir does not fit the stereotype of NRA members, or what he calls OFWG: "Old, fat white guys." At 29, he's not old. Nor is he fat — he's slender and stylishly dressed with sneakers made by Prada. He's also not white. In the world of gun owners, Noir, an African American, has become an Internet sensation and his popularity is growing. At this year's NRA convention, he was surrounded by fans when he arrived to film a Sportsman Channel segment on the NRA News stage. Noir has attracted followers with funny, edgy pro-gun videos — titles include "Gun Control & Bathrooms" and "You Know You're a Gun Control Hypocrite if ..." He has emerged as a dynamic and unexpected NRA persona.

#### NRA's Reaction to Noir

Gun control advocates dismiss him as an NRA pawn, and some blacks accuse him of being an Uncle Tom. But to many at the convention, Noir demonstrated a historic diversity among gun owners that defies stereotypes.

After Noir left the talk-show stage, fans approached to shake hands and pose for photographs. Most were white. A handful of them, like Quentin Smith, were black. "Congratulations," said Smith, 44, a gun owner from Cypress, Texas. "There's a few of us out there."

The NRA does not release membership demographics, but according to a Pew Research Center survey, many gun owners in America are white — 31% of whites polled this year said they owned guns, compared with 15% of blacks and 11% of Latinos. "This is one tie that binds all of us together," said NRA spokesman Andrew Arulanandam, describing the group as "the oldest civil rights organization in America."

#### **About Colion Noir**

Noir was born Collins — "Mr. Colion Noir" is a stage name — son of an executive chef and a registered nurse. He graduated from high school in Houston, went to the University of Houston, where he majored in political science, and earned a law degree from Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law. Noir is a practicing attorney. He reads fashion blogs, loves gadgets and drives a sports car and a truck — neither with a gun rack, although he keeps a metal candy dish full of bullets in his living room. Noir said he grew up hesitant to admit he liked firearms because it wasn't something people talked about in his middle-class neighborhood. He fired his first gun, a little Taurus .40, about seven years ago at the urging of a friend who took him to a shooting range. I remember how exhilarating it was," Noir said, comparing the experience to sky diving.



Continued from page 5

# **ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS**



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Soon afterwards, he was going to the range weekly and researching guns. He later joined the NRA and bought about a half dozen guns. Noir, who once worked at A/X Armani Exchange and favors tailored suits, worries that a concealed handgun might "print," or show through the fabric. "Secret Service have the worst cut suits — big and bulky," so their guns won't show, Noir said. A few years ago he began posting YouTube videos of himself critiquing guns and accessories. Then he started tackling politics and pop culture, addressing mass shootings, assault weapon bans and gun control campaigns by New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and the rapper formerly known as Snoop Dogg. Noir said he recently started preparing a video about "stand your ground" laws after a jury acquitted George Zimmerman in the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin in Florida. "I decided to table it because there's too much complexity," Noir said. Noir sprinkles his videos with gun slang and offbeat humor, sometimes delivered with a smirk, sometimes deadpan. Some videos have been viewed more than 800,000 times. Once a deal was struck, the NRA released an ad in March promoting his first video praising the gun rights group for cham-

pioning the right of blacks to bear arms during Jim Crow and the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Noir has taken a lot of slack from his own community.

Noir stated that, "Some of the most influential black individuals have advocated for the use of firearms, so how come when I do it, I'm vilified? Take a look at the Black Panthers, MLK, Malcolm X." The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. supported gun rights? Noir noted that after King's home in Montgomery, Ala., was firebombed, King applied for a handgun permit. At the NRA convention, as Noir left the talk-show stage, Chris Blow of Magnolia, Texas, stopped him. Blow, 59, is a longtime NRA member and had watched Noir's videos. When asked where does he like to shoot? Noir stated a few locations in the Houston area. Blow, who is white, smiled knowingly and shook Noir's hand.



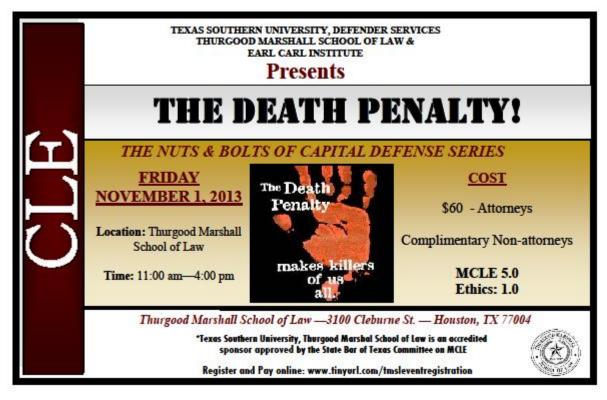


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# **ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS**

# CLE & SYMPOSIUMS –UPCOMING





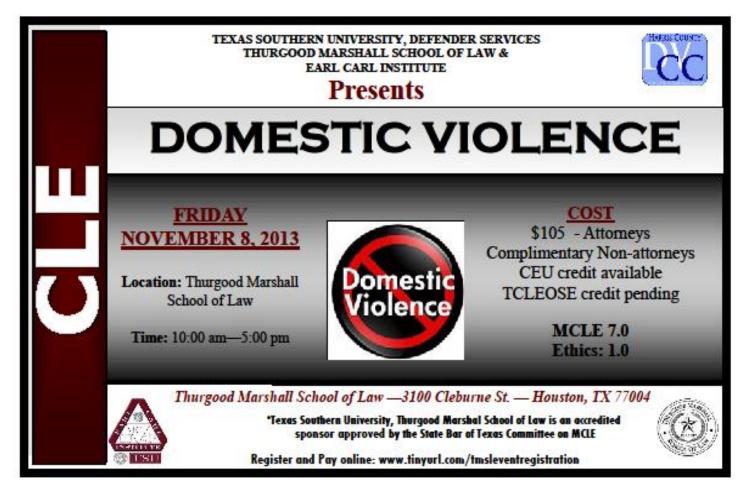


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# **ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS**

# CLE & SYMPOSIUMS –UPCOMING



\* Note: Domestic Violence CLE date change from <u>October 25th</u> to <u>November 8th.</u>



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#### **FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**

Eugene Harrington Professor of Law, Lupe Salinas participates in HBNA's Judicial Panel



The Hispanic National Bar Association 38<sup>th</sup> Annual convention was held in Denver, CO, Sept. 4-8, 2013. The Hon. Lupe Salinas, Professor of Law, participated with several jurists on a judicial panel entitled "Maximizing Courtroom Success: A Judicial Perspective." The panelists also included U.S. District Court Judges Marina G. Marmolejo of Laredo, Texas; Esther Salas of New Jersey; and Nanette Brown, of Louisiana, the first African American female federal jurist in the state; Former Texas Supreme Court Justice, David Medina, and the moderator, the Hon. Jimmie Reyna, Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, in Washington, D.C. The panelists presented their perspectives and key insights on mastering written and oral advocacy skills. Most important, the panelists addressed the principal points of what makes for a persuasive motion or brief and the do's and don'ts of arguing before the court. One personal comment which Judge Salinas shared with the audience was that an advocate should NEVER make the mistake of prefacing a comment to the jurist by stating, "If your Honor read the motion, you would see that ......" That could be the end of counsel's ability to convince the judge in a case when the law could go either way. It was an honor for TMSL's professor, the Honorable Lupe Salinas to serve.



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#### **FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**



**Professor Lydia Johnson** has accepted an offer to publish "The Illusion of a Second Chance: Expunctions versus the Law School and State Bar Application Processes" in FLA. A&M U. L. REV. (2013).

**Professor Fernando Colon-Navarro** accepted an invitation to serve as a director on the board of YMCA International Services effective September 20, 2013.





**Professor Katherine Vukadin** accepted an invitation to serve on a panel entitled, "Collegiality in a Diverse Environment," at the TSU fall opening faculty meeting on August 23, 2013. Professor Vukadin's presentation was entitled, "Teamwork: Could Collegiality Unlock Your Research Productivity?" She and her co-panelists are featured in a YouTube video available at <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrtOF5rvCqE">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LrtOF5rvCqE</a>



#### **FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**



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**Professor Sahar Aziz of Texas A&M School of Law,** a national scholar in international law specializing in Middle Eastern affairs, particularly Egypt, served as a scholar-in-residence with TMSL's Institute for International and Immigration Law on October 3-4, 2013. As part of her residency, she gave a talk to the faculty on "The Role of Law in Egypt's (Anti-) Democracy Movement" on October 3, 2013. On October 4, 2013, she led a TMSL community lecture and CLE entitled, "What's Law Got to Do With It:The Rule of Law and Constitutionality in Post Revolutionary Egypt."

**Professor Matthew Festa** of **South Texas College of Law** presented, "The Myth of Houston's Land Use Exceptionalism," as part of the TMSL Faculty Development and Exchange Series on October 2, 2013.





#### **FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS**



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**Professor SpearIt's** work, *Child Pornography Sentencing Data: Reforming Through Research*, 24 FED. SENT'G REP. 102 (2011) (discussing recent cases in which district courts have refused to impose [federal sentencing] Guidelines sentences in child pornography cases and providing empirical data supporting contention that the Guidelines are too harsh) was cited in <u>USA v. C.R.</u>, an opinion issued by the Eastern District of New York . The opinion is available at <u>http://howappealing.law.com/USAvsCR-EDNY-092613.pdf</u>

**Professor SpearIt's** post, "What if They Force-Fed Gandhi?," discussing the hunger strike in California prisons, appeared in the <u>Huffington Post's</u> blog on politics on September 2, 2013. The blog post is available at <u>http://www.huffingtonpost.com/spearit/what-if-they-forcefed-gan\_b\_3854984.html</u>



The Texas Capital Punishment Assessment Team, organized by the ABA and on which **Professor Ana Otero** serves, launched a comprehensive report in September 2013 with recommendations to help ensure fairness and accuracy in Texas' death penalty system. The report is part of a 12-year effort by the ABA to examine the extent to which death penalty states ensure fairness and minimize the risk of executing the innocent. In addition to **Professor Otero**, the committee included former Texas Governor Mark White, former Texas Supreme Court Justice Deborah Hankinson and was chaired by Prof. Jennifer Laurin at Texas Law.



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#### **STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS**

Criminal Law Clinic News

#### The Criminal Law Clinic Assisted HBA Special Olympics



Rick Ramos, Dayo Ayeni, Erica Domingez, Javier Guzman, Eric Hopkins, Raneca Henson, Professor Lydia D. Johnson,

Chris Gisteanter

The criminal law clinic students participated in the HBA Special Olympics at the University of Houston on October 5th, 2013, as a part of their community service requisite. The criminal law clinic is supervised by Professor Lydia Johnson, who believes that giving back to the community is critical to enriching the students' academic experience. Professor Johnson requires that the students participate in three community service events each semester as a part of the curriculum. These events allow students to network with practicing attorneys and serve individuals in the community they represent. During the summer they took part in an expunctions second chance community service event at Fallbrook Community church where the criminal law students partnered with local attorney Alvin Nunnery and other graduates to provide information about sealing and expunging their criminal history and the same service is provided in the law clinic.



# TMSL Externship Today

Director: Professor Stephanie Ledesma

# Externship Mission:

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The Mission of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Externship Program is to graduate students that are "practice ready" and "client ready". By offering a comprehensive Externship Program, students are afforded the opportunity to enhance their legal writing skills; enhance their practice skills; gain firsthand knowledge of specific areas of substantive and procedural law; observe professional responsibility and ethics in practice in "live" situations; and obtain and refine their professional skills.

## Externship Vision:

The Vision of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Externship Program is to educate, train, encourage and support a diverse group of academically prepared, professionally trained, and ethically committed legal professionals who strive for excellence with every opportunity.

# Externship Open House:

Interested in the Externship Program?

Want more information about Externships at TMSL?

Where are the applications for the Externship program?

What are the qualifications for consideration?

Do you need a certain GPA to participate?

What are some of the placement options?

#### **OPEN HOUSE QUESTION/ANSWER SESSION FOR SPRING 2013 Externship Program**

DATE	<b>LOCATION</b>	TIME
Thursday, October 17th	Room 105	Noon
Friday, October 18th	Room 210	Noon



#### TMSL EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM Student Testimonials



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**Justin Guenley** hales from Overland Park, Kansas. Justin is a third year law student at Thurgood Marshall School of Law and will graduate in May 2014. Justin is currently serving as an Extern this Fall, 2013 with the United States District Court, Southern District of Texas, Houston Division with the Honorable Kenneth Hoyt, (TMSL Alum). Justin has the following to say about his extern experience, "So far, I have had the chance to see upclose how things work on the Judicial side of the law. Next week, I'll get to watch a trial in Judge Hoyt's courtroom." Prior to law school, Justin worked as a newspaper copy editor. Prior to his service as an Extern, Justin served as the Articles Editor for Law Review. Justin's current areas of interest include: Wills, Probate, Estates, Trusts, Tax, and Bankruptcy.

**Sofia Hasan**, is a third year law student at Thurgood Marshall School of Law and will graduate in May 2014. Sofia is currently serving as an Extern with the CPS group of the Harris County Attorney's Office. Sofia has the following to say about her externship, "I work in the Child Protective Services Division and I am able to work under supervising attorneys with a student bar card. As a third year law student, the externship has given me great experience for my interest in family law by allowing me to actively assist in the cases and actively participate in court hearings."





**Brennae Brooks** is a third year law student at Thurgood Marshall School of Law and will graduate in May, 2014. Brennae serves as an Extern with the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office. Brennae has the following to say about her extern experience: "I work on cases that involve Violent Offenders, such as Child Exploitation and Gun Violence." Before attending law school Brennae I spent eight years as an Active Duty member in the United States Air Force. Brennae believes that her strong work ethic, integrity, and determination originated from her honorable military service. Brennae looks forward to continuing her service to our country by serving as a



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#### TMSL EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM Student Testimonials



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New Orleans, Louisiana.

**A'Kiesha White**, is a third year law student at Thurgood Marshall School of Law and will graduate in May, 2014. A'Kiesha is serving as an Extern this Fall, 2013 with Housing and Urban Development, HUD. A'Kiesha is also the Business Editor for the Thurgood Marshall Law Review; and a Fall Research Assistant. While in law school, A'Kiesha has served as a Judicial Intern to the Hon. Vanessa D. Gilmore, U.S. District Court Southern District of Texas; the Hon. R.K. Sandill, 127th District Ct.; and the Hon. Jan Krocker, 184th District Court. A'Kiesha has also served as an Intern with the Texas Attorney General's Office and the Harris County District Attorney's Office. During A'Kiesha's second year of law school she served as a Property Law Teaching Assistant and held large group tutorials for first year students. A'Kiesha received her Bachelor's degree in Political Science at Loyola University and is a native of

Ashley Vance, is a third year law student at Thurgood Marshall School of Law and will graduate in May 2014. Ashley is serving as an Extern this Fall, 2013 with the Harris County Attorney's Office. Ashley says the following about her externship placement, "My externship placement with the Harris County Attorney's Office has been quite challenging thus far. Working in one of the most esteemed Departments at the office; Litigation, the attorneys always have projects available for me. Analyzing, evaluating and resolving issues in the area of eminent domain are a lot more complicated than I initially thought! I look forward to the multitude of opportunities that await me throughout my externship at the Harris County Attorney's Office."





#### UPCOMING EVENTS HOMECOMING / REUNION 2013

Rennion Class Events

### CLASS OF 1998 - 15th

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#### **Committee Members:**

Nicoolette Westbrooks Letitia D. Quinones Deborah Bryant Hilary Green Major Adams Chris Nave

Major Donor: Law Office of Chip Lewis

Friends: Psych on Site, Inc.—Troy Marsaw Libra Lounge

#### FRIDAY OCTOBER 18th

Official Homecoming Happy Hour Libra Lounge

#### **SATURDAY OCTOBER 19th**

Official Tailgating Party @ Texas Southern University

Homecoming Party/ After Glow @ Our Legends Cigar Bar

#### **CLASS OF 2003 -10th**

#### **Committee Members:**

Kelly Wilson Austin Clemetric Thomas-Frazier Lucia Flores Anne Bradley Kim Burkley Milstead Melissa Q. Reed Joe Smith

#### FRIDAY OCTOBER 18th

Happy Hour Sponsored by TMSL Classmates Juan Guerra and George Farrah @ Washington Avenue Drinkery

> *Class Dinner* @ Brio Tuscan Grill

#### SATURDAY OCTOBER 19th

Law School Homecoming Reunion/After Glow @ Our Legends Cigar Bar

#### **SUNDAY OCTOBER 20TH**

See Ya' Later Brunch (a) Birraporetti's

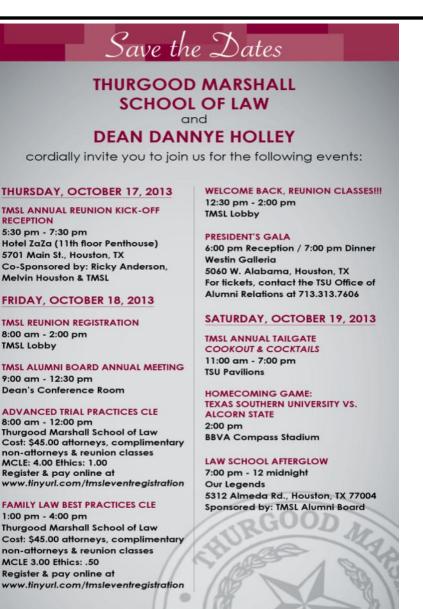


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#### UPCOMING EVENTS HOMECOMING REUNION 2013



For a full schedule of homecoming and reunion events, go to www.tsulaw.edu/alumni

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#### UPCOMING EVENTS HOMECOMING REUNION 2013

# TMSL Annual Reunion & Homecoming Kick-Off

*spensered by* ATTORNEY RICKY ANDERSON, ATTORNEY MELVIN HOUSTON AND TMSL

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# THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2013

5:30 p.m. -7:30 p.m.



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5701 Main Street , Houston 77004 (11th Floor)

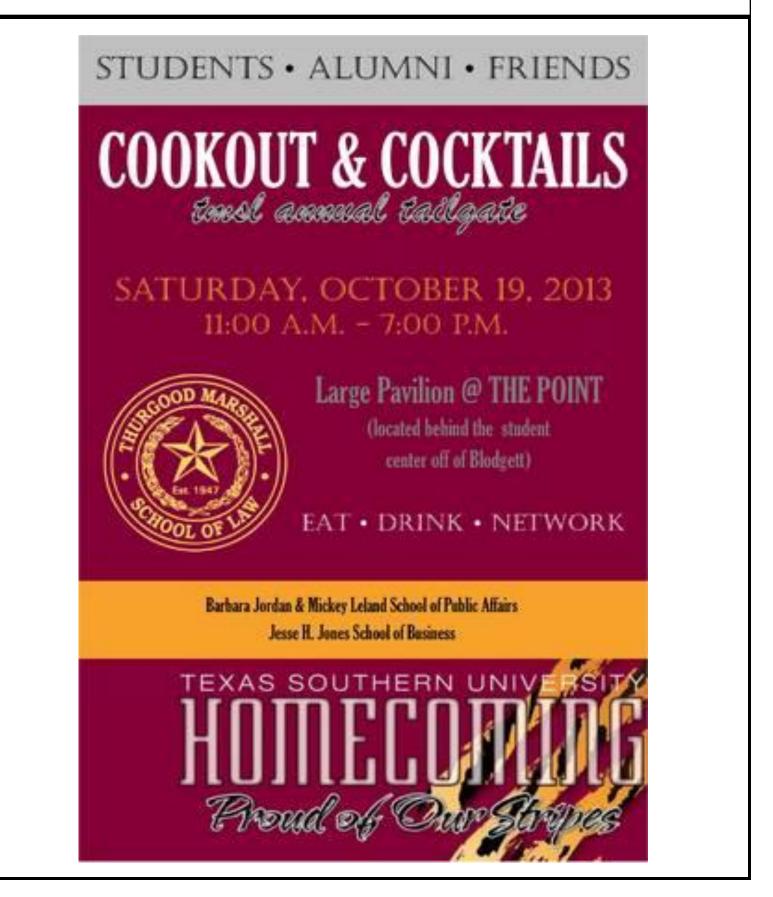


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UPCOMING EVENTS HOMECOMING REUNION 2013





UPCOMING EVENTS HOMECOMING REUNION 2013

# HOMECOMING 2013

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# Law School

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# Saturday, Oct. 19th

Our Legends Cigar Lounge 5312 Almeda Road • Houston 77004 7:00 p.m. - Midnight

# Hosted by Marchris Robinson



Sponsored by: Robinson Law Group, PLLC TMSL Alumni Board, TMSL Troy Pradia, Toni Jackson TSU School of Public Affairs

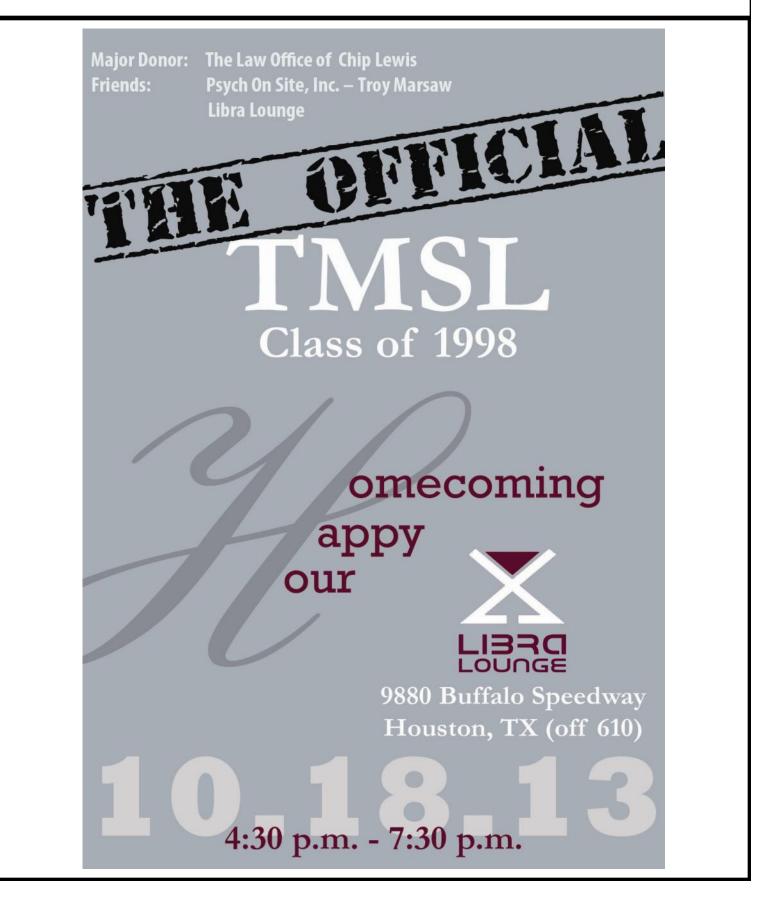


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#### UPCOMING EVENTS HOMECOMING REUNION 2013





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#### **UPCOMING EVENTS cont.**

#### **OCTOBER**

October 14th <u>1L CSO Orientation Session I</u>

October 15th <u>1L CSO Orientation Session II & 1L Counseling Be-</u> gins

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October 16th Satellite Counseling Office of Career Services

October 16th–20th BESLA Annual Meeting Location: Dominican Republican

October 17th SBA Board Meeting Location: TMSL

Time: 6pm

October 17th—19th <u>TMSL/TSU Reunion & Homecoming</u> <u>TMSL ALL ALUMNI Homecoming</u> For more information go to: www.tsulaw.edu and www.tsu.edu For class specific events, go to: www.tsulaw.edu

October 17th <u>TMSL Annual Reunion Kick-Off Reception</u> Co-Sponsored by: Ricky Anderson and Melvin Houston

Location: Hotel ZaZa 11th Floor Penthouse 5701 Main Street Houston, TX 77005

Time:

5:30pm—8pm

October 18th <u>TMSL Alumni Board Annual</u> <u>Meeting</u> Location: Dean's Conference Room Time: 9am-12:30pm



October 18th <u>President's Scholarship Gala</u> Location: Westin Galleria Time: 6 pm—Reception

7 pm—Dinner

For tickets: Contact the TSU Office of Alumni Relations @ 713-313-7606

#### October 19th <u>TMSL Annual Tailgate BBQ</u> Location: TSU Pavillions Time: 11am– 7 pm

October 19th <u>Homecoming Game</u> Texas Southern University vs. Alcorn State Location: The BBVA Compass Stadium Time: 2pm



October 19th Law School After Glow Location: Our Legends 5212 Almeda Time: 7pm-12am

Cigar Lounge

October 24th <u>SBA Board meeting</u> Location: TMSL Time: 6pm

October 25th OCI Ends Office of Career Services

October 25th <u>NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet</u> Location: Hilton Americas Hotel 1600 Lamar Houston, TX Time: 7pm



#### **UPCOMING EVENTS cont.**

#### **OCTOBER cont..**

October 29th <u>Networking 101</u> Office of Career Service

#### NOVEMBER

November 2nd Law School Recruitment Fair Location: Loew's Atlanta 1065 Peachtree Street, NE Atlanta, GA 30309 Time: Recruitment 10am– 4pm

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November 6th <u>Student Leaders' Meeting—SBA</u> Location: TMSL Time: 12non-1pm

November 7th Ask the Experts—Small Mid-size Firm Office of Career Services

November 7th <u>2013 Texas Diversity Roundtable</u> Dean Dannye Holley Host Location: Four Season's Resort & Club Dallas @ Las Colinas Time: Afternoon



November 6<sup>th</sup>

Securities & Exchange Commission Houston InitiativeThurgood Marshall School of Law and the Jesse H. JonesSchool of BusinessLocation:Thurgood Marshall School of Law-Time:12:00 pm – 3:00 pm

# November 8th Reception Honoring: Newly Admitted Texas Lawyers & Newly Elected Judges Sponsored by: Thurgood Marshall School of Law, TMSL Alumni Association & Houston Lawyer's Association Location: Sullivan's Steakhouse 4608 Westheimer Rd. Houston, Texas 77027 Time: 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm

November 11<sup>th</sup> Honor & Remember Day - SBA Location: TMSL Time: 6pm

November 13<sup>th</sup> <u>General Body Meeting – SBA</u> Location: TMSL Time: 12 noon – 1pm

November 14thBattle of the Sections – SBALocation:TBDTime:6pm

November 20<sup>th</sup> Satellite Counseling Office of Career Services

November 21<sup>st</sup> <u>SBA Board Meeting</u> Location: TMSL Time: 6pm

November 25th Last Day of Classes

November 25th Last Day to Drop a Class

November 26<sup>th</sup> – December 1st Reading Period (NO CLASSES)



#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

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THURGOOD MARSHALL SCHOOL of LAW AN EXAMPLE OF DIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION "Protect It, Improve It, Pass It on ??