

THURGOOD FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
Thurgood Marshall School of Law



FEBRUARY 15, 2019



Professor Ana Otero has been voted teacher of the year at least twelve times by the law school student body at Thurgood Marshall School of Law. Otero is probably a favorite among the students because she has earned the reputation of being a hard working professor who really cares about her students. Teaching a large number of students in their 1L, 2L, and 3L years allows her to offer guidance through direct contact in the classroom and in her office to a significant number of students during all three years of their legal education. Otero welcomes the opportunity to help TMSL students achieve academic success in the classroom and success on state bar exams. When Otero is teaching her bar study classes one of her goals is to reduce the stress level of her students. She states that students are often stressed during bar review. However, Otero attempts to use her knowledge of the relevant bar review subjects to deliver content to students in an efficient and less stressful manner.

Otero said that what she enjoys most about TMSL is its mission of giving under serviced students an opportunity to acquire a good legal education. Otero also works with Academic Support to assist students to pass the bar. The very popular Otero has taught bar study classes for 21 years. Otero also served as the South West Regional Director of the Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO).

Professor Walter Champion recently signed a contract with the prestigious Publisher Edward Elgar, to write a new book entitled "Teaching Sports Law." Champion's book will be a part of the Elgar Teaching Guides series, based in the United Kingdom.



Professor Fernando Colon-Navarro, Director of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law LLM in Immigration Law Program delivered a lecture on January 30, 2019, at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Spring Lecture Series. Colon graciously agreed to serve as a lecturer on short notice after it was discovered that our scheduled speaker Professor Thelma Harmon had a scheduling conflict. Colon emphasized that there is currently a move to place less emphasis on using the Socratic teaching method in legal education. He states that the Socratic teaching is now being rolled back with an expanding role for experiential learning.

Colon believes that TMSL is a leader in experiential learning in legal education because TMSL implemented practical methods of learning legal when the law school opened more than sixty years ago. Colon said professors at other law schools respect TMSL proactive role in experiential learning and assessment. Colon has made presentations at national and international conferences addressing how to effectively utilize assessment in legal education.



Professor Peter Marchetti gave a presentation for the TMSL Spring Lecture Series entitled, “Regulation of For Profit Law Schools” on February 6, 2019. Marchetti states that numerous law schools around the country may have been shut down due to their involvement with private equity firms. The presentation was based on Marchetti’s work in progress law review article. In the article, Marchetti suggests that for profit schools should no longer exist. Marchetti says that if for profit schools exist, there should be very few of them, and that the schools should be heavily regulated by the American Bar Association in order to protect students.

Acting Dean Gary Bledsoe participated in a discussion entitled “Black & Brown Cooperation in Civil Rights” at the February 8, 2019 Thurgood Marshall Law Review Spring 2019 Symposium the Renewed Civil Rights Movement. Bledsoe said it is becoming more difficult to identify groups of people that traditionally vote together. Bledsoe states that in certain communities it may be hard to group people together because of the different voting decisions that exist. He says that as the population becomes more diverse there will be a similar increase in the percentage of people of color to be elected into office. Bledsoe contends that studying the election of black and brown people should generate a dynamic discussion. Bledsoe supports targeted research to advance justice and uplift all disadvantaged people. The panelists in Bledsoe’s discussion included Luis Vera, National General Counsel for the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and George Korb, a Civil Rights Attorney.



Professor Martin Levy spoke at the February 8, 2019 Thurgood Marshall Law Review Spring 2019 Symposium the Renewed Civil Rights Movement. He spoke about “Thurgood Marshall School of Law’s Involvement in the Civil Rights Movement.” According to Levy TMSL was originally set up to be a segregated law school but is now one of the most diverse law schools in the nation. TMSL has a historical role in promoting integration in legal education. Levy was also happy to introduce his good friend and the Civil Rights Symposium keynote speaker, Dr. Paul Finkleman, President of Gratz College.

Professor Rebecca Stewart’s article, Weeds, Seeds & Deeds Redux: Natural and Legal Evolution in the U.S. Seed Wars, 18 STAN. TECH. L. REV. 79 (2014) has been recommended as additional reading in Gersen, Pollans & Roberts’ textbook FOOD LAW: CASES AND MATERIALS (2018), the first casebook providing a comprehensive treatment of food law as a unique discipline. The article was also recently cited in Indirect and Invisible Organizational Costs: Making Informed Decisions about Litigation and Settlement, 20 CARDOZO J. CONFLICT RESOL. 49 (2018). In addition, Professor Stewart is currently serving as the law school’s Director for the Center for Legal Pedagogy.



L. Darnell Weeden, Associate Dean Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development and Roberson King Professor of Law on February 8, 2019, in his role as the Chair of TMLR Civil Rights Symposium Committee delivered the following welcome and opening remarks.



Paul Finkelman, John Browning, Cortlan J. Wickliff, Rachel Aminu and Reginal Harris and all of our guests, welcome to TSU. My name is L. Darnell Weeden, and it's my privilege and pleasure on behalf of the Thurgood Marshall Law Review and Texas Southern University to welcome you here today. We are delighted to have you with us to participate and share in our scholarly and activist analysis of issues confronting the Renewed Civil Rights Movement. Thank you for coming to TSU and Houston Texas. The fact that many of you have traveled long distances to be here serves as a reminder to us all just how important your commitment to civil rights and the call for social justice is. TSU is one of the nations' largest HBCUs and an anchor institution in Houston's historic Third Ward. For over 70 years, the Thurgood Marshall School of Law has been a catalyst for initiating courageous conversations and action about how to advance equality and civil rights.

Thurgood Marshall School of Law is committed to actively raising the awareness of the civil rights issues during its celebration of Black History Month for every law student. We want all law students, regardless of race, creed or circumstance to achieve their full potential as lawyers committed to social justice and equal rights under the law for all of our people. Today our theme is a simple call to recognize that now is the time to reenergize the civil rights movement. My welcome remarks during this time of celebrating Black History Month are inspired by some of the observations made by King Solomon of the Bible in Ecclesiastes Chapter 3. If there is a time for everything, then today is the time to renew our commitment to fight for justice and equality for all. I will concede there is a time to be born and a time to die, but now is not the time to let our call for racial justice die.

Today we discuss civil right and human rights because we believe it is time to plant a seed of hope for a better tomorrow and now is the time to uproot racial prejudice. Today we discuss the civil right movement because we believe it is time to tear down walls of hate in order to build a bridge of love. King Solomon wisely advised there is a time to be silent and a time to speak, but today we choose to speak about civil rights, slavery and social justice so that all those who live in America may know that today February 8, 2019, is a time to love and not a time to hate. There is a time for war and a time for peace and some of our presenters today will remind America to stop declaring war on hard earned civil rights such as the right to vote. Voter suppression is a war on civil rights. Separate but equal education is a war on civil rights; the failure to acknowledge the tragic history of American slavery is a war on civil rights. And like King Solomon I saw something else under the sun: In the place of justice—discrimination was there.

I looked again in the place of justice—discrimination was there. I am here at this civil rights symposium at Thurgood Marshall School of Law this morning because I share King Solomon's belief "God will bring into judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time to judge every deed." When God judges my deeds I want him to know that I tried to be a drum major for justice and civil rights like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Please prepare yourself to be challenged, excited and inspired to speak truth to power as we discuss the civil rights movement.

And before I leave I want to say once more on behalf of the TMLR civil rights symposium organizing committee welcome. It's good to see so many of you here.

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, February 22, 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**