



Aba-Uno receives MABL Award



Kellie Bigham

The Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers Foundation recognized St. Thomas School of Law student Uzodima Frank Aba-Uno at its annual Scholarship Gala on November 8, 2008.

Aba-Uno, a 2L, received one of five prestigious scholarships that MABL annually awards to area law school students with outstanding academic and extracurricular credentials.

The award was particularly meaningful, Aba-Uno said, because his scholarship application essay focused on the relationships he had formed during his classical studies as opposed to his legal studies, which made him feel confident that a career in a non-traditional legal setting is an option after law school. Aba-Uno said he is interested in pursuing a media-related career, possibly as an agent in sports and entertainment law.

The Scholarship Gala featured keynote speaker Randall Robinson, who spoke positively on this year's historic election. Robinson is a foreign policy advocate, author, and founder and past president of TransAfrica, a non-profit, global justice organization that focuses on conditions in Africa, the Caribbean,

and Latin America.

"There were a lot of people there, and not necessarily all African American, so it was fun to see so many people supporting and enjoying the event," Aba-Uno said.

MABL is a well-known minority bar association, which was organized to promote and support the professional development of African American lawyers, judges, and law students in Minnesota. For more information on MABL, visit: <http://www.mabl.org>.

Four alumni named Minnesota "Rising Stars"

Each year outstanding up-and-coming lawyers are recognized by *Minnesota Law & Politics* magazine as "Rising Stars." The selection process is rigorous and based on peer recognition and professional achievement. We are pleased to announce that five St. Thomas School of Law graduates were recognized as "Minnesota Rising Stars 2009."

Congratulations to Ryan R. Palmer ('04) of Krass Monroe, P.A., Alyson Martin Palmer ('04) of Fafinski, Mark & Johnson, P.A., Michael D. Sharkey ('04) of Pustorino, Tilton, Parrington & Lindquist, PLLC, Christopher P. Parrington ('04) of Skjold Barthel, P.A., and, Molly R. Hamilton ('05) of Krass Monroe, P.A.

Professor Susan J. Stabile

Many interests, many lives

You play the accordion?!

Yes. I took lessons from about age 9 to 11. Although I have had my accordion for about 40 years, I played it almost not at all during my adult life. But about six months before I came to St. Thomas I was encouraged to start playing again. I started taking lessons shortly after I arrived in the Twin Cities. I'm at the point where I will occasionally play in front of other people, but still have too much leftover insecurity about my abilities to really perform in public.

How did you end up practicing law in Hong Kong?

The firm I started with [Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen and Hamilton] had a small Hong Kong office at the time. I spent a number of years as a Buddhist and asked my firm to send me to Hong Kong so that I could be in proximity to native Buddhist communities. My work in Hong Kong was largely for American clients with business in Asia or for non-American companies that were, for one reason or another, subject to American regulation.

Before moving there, I had been to Asia twice before on vacation. I spent a total of three and a half years living in Asia - a year and a half at the law firm in Hong Kong then the next two years living in Buddhist communities in Nepal and India.

This would definitely be something else people might be surprised to know about you...

Yes, people would probably be surprised that I was an ordained Tibetan Buddhist nun for a year while I was living in Nepal and India. By the way, I looked really good bald. (Buddhist nuns and monks keep their heads shaved as a sign of renunciation.)

I became a Buddhist in law school. I meditated at a Tibetan Buddhist place in New York, resulting in my

desire to move to Hong Kong. While I was working in Hong Kong I took a number of trips to places in Thailand.

Ultimately, however, I decided that if I was going to be serious about Buddhism that I had to really give it

Why did you leave Asia?

What made me come back was that the Tibetans live in exile. It is hard for them to support western people. I knew at some point I would have to go back and earn some money. I



my all. So, I gave away everything I owned, packed a backpack and left. I have almost no possessions that predate 1989...with the exception of my accordion; it is one of the few things I have from prior to my return to the U.S. in 1989.

was concerned when I hit the two year point that if I stayed away from legal practice much longer, it would be more difficult to get back into practicing law. I had barely read a newspaper while I was living in the monasteries.

So I went back to New York. The day I returned Cleary [Gottlieb, Steen

and Hamilton] offered me my job back.

What made you interested in Employee Benefits Law?

Actually, a partner at the firm needed help in that area and so that is how I got started in it. Then I began teaching employee benefits law [at St. John’s University School of Law in New York] and writing about corporate law and employee benefits matters. So it is quite by accident that I am now the co-author of an employee benefits casebook and an ERISA litigation book.

When did you start becoming more interested in faith and law?

When I first started legal academia I was still a Buddhist. Most of my writing was in the area of corporate law and employee benefits and employment law. At some point I converted back to Catholicism and it was after that conversion that my scholarship started moving in the area of the intersection of faith and law.

How did you get started teaching the law?

When I got out of law school I wanted to teach law but I wanted to practice before I started teaching. I would have liked to start teaching law when I returned from Asia but I was just walking in the door after having sat and meditated for two years. So I practiced law for several more years after returning to the U.S. before starting to teach at St. John’s. There, I taught Employee Benefits, Business Associations, Employment Law and a seminar in Catholic Social Thought and the law. I was there for 14 years, from 1993-2007. Then I joined the faculty here.

What is it you most like about teaching law students?

I like teaching law students because I view the three years of law school as a long discernment process as to what the students are going to be in the world.

It is exciting to contribute to students developing a sense of who

they are and who they want to be in the world.

What prompted you to come to St. Thomas?

For the last several years I was living in New York I was basically leading two full-time lives. I was a full-time law professor at St. John’s and I was also a member of the adjunct ministerial staff at a Jesuit retreat house, giving way more retreats than someone with a full-time academic job should have been giving, and also seeing people for individual spiritual direction. (I am trained as both a retreat director and a spiritual director). Dean Mengler offered me the opportunity to come here to do both. Part of my job at St. Thomas is the job of a “regular” law professor and part of my job is to give retreats and other programs of spiritual formation for the law school community. That was too good an offer to pass up.

Had you ever been to Minnesota before?

I was at St. Thomas for a conference in the spring before I began teaching here. I knew a lot of the professors here though, through our common involvement in the project of fostering scholarship and dialogue about Catholic thought and the law. In addition, of course, I already had a friendship with Professor Vischer from his years at St. John’s.

How do you like Minnesota?

Obviously I miss the people from New York – my family, the people I ministered to at the retreat house, my Vincentian brothers at St. John’s. But the mission of the law school was appealing enough to me to come here. I do have to admit that, being a New Yorker, I find the Midwest a strange place. Did I mention that I hate the cold?

If you were not a law professor what would you be doing?

I would be doing full time ministry and more spiritual writing.

What is your greatest accomplishment?

Isn’t that a question you ask someone at the end of their career? I think Thurgood Marshall gave the best answer to that question. When he was asked that question upon retiring from the Supreme Court, he said: “I did the best I could with what I had.”

But I would say that my daughter is my greatest accomplishment. She is 15 years old and is an absolutely incredible young woman. She is a singer and was a cantor in our church back in New York. I remember the first time she got up and led the congregation in song – I looked up in wonder at what I participated with God in the creation of.

Do you have any regrets?

No. I think the older I get the more I realize that all the decisions I made are important parts of the development of the person I have become. As more time passes you realize it is all part of the path.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of the law?

I don’t have much time but I like hiking, reading, listening to my daughter sing and playing some accordion.

What are your retreats like?

I give different kinds of retreats although most come out of the paradigm of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Retreats usually involve some input (a talk on whatever the theme is), some guided retreat or individual prayer and some small group sharing of the prayer experience.

What I learned last year is that it is hard for law students to commit a full day to a retreat so I am trying to do things that fit into the rhythm of the academic schedule. This semester, for example, I have given a couple of single lunchtime reflections and right now we are in the middle of an Advent retreat in daily living where participants agree to pray every day with material I provide them and we come together for weekly gathering.

THE STYLE PAGES

Opinions, Love Letters, and Legal Advice

From the Desk of Statler and Waldorf: Tips for a safer holiday season



When you are out among the masses shopping, carry your wallet in your front pocket where you will be more likely to notice if someone reaches for it – even holiday

and gloves. AAA recommends the following:

- Cell phone
- Ice scraper & brush
- Boots, gloves, hat, blanket
- Tools & flashlight
- Tire traction material such as sand or cat litter
- Shovel
- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Food
- Coffee can furnace
- First aid kit

The holidays are here which means it's time for the semester break. As you all head off for your holiday plans with people you love, we wanted to remind you that there are some Grinches out there and we want you to make their holidays less successful. Here are some simple safety tips to remember during this season:

- Don't ever leave any packages, PCs, backpacks or even empty store bags visible in your vehicle. Around the law school this is always an invitation for someone to break a window and be gone with your things, not to mention getting a car full of snow. During this shopping season people cruise mall parking lots looking for these same opportunities.
- Put things in your trunk, but try not to be too obvious about it. In areas where joggers park their cars, there are people who watch for wallets and purses being stashed in trunks. This time of year they watch for the same opportunities near shopping malls. If you have a trunk lock, use it.

friendliness should have its limits. If you are carrying a purse, pay attention to it and keep it closed and close.

- Even these tough economic times haven't caused cutbacks in federal grants to law enforcement agencies for DWI enforcement. That means that most agencies are staffing up and adding overtime officers who only concentrate on finding impaired drivers. They do a lot more probable cause stops for minor infractions - "just fishing" as we used to call it. If you are going to consume more than one alcoholic beverage, please take a cab or have someone else drive.
- If you are new to winter travel, be sure to add a winter survival kit to your car. In the case of a bad storm or car trouble that leaves you stranded, you don't want to leave yourself vulnerable to the cold. At a minimum, throw a blanket or a sleeping bag in the trunk. You should also have some fluids, a couple of candy or energy bars, a small shovel, and extra hat

- For additional information, the University of Oklahoma Police Department has put a great deal of content on their web site. There are some great tips there for those traveling the highways: <http://www.ou.edu/oupd/holtips.htm>

Have a safe and happy semester break. We look forward to seeing you back at school soon.

Editors Note: "From the Desk of Statler and Waldorf" is a new column from our own security experts Brad Hanson and Pete Willner. Extra points if you can figure out where the name of the column comes from.

I also hope these guys forgive me for using these photos. I'm sure I haven't captured their best sides.

Legal Advice in the Future Tense:

What is the best give you have ever given or received?

Kellie Bigham



“This Christmas we are giving my mom a plane ticket to go see my stepsister that she has never met before.”
– Katie Elliott, 2L



“One year my brother filled a box up with rocks and a toilet seat. But there were 5 prized baseball cards in there too.”
–Alex Wasserburger, 2L



“VIP tickets to Justin Timberlake. I touched his leg.”
– Callie Lehman, 1L
“A Tiffany’s ring.”
– Amanda Crain, 1L



“I’m giving someone special an ornament that says, ‘My driver is really sore...that’s what she said.’”
– Pam Steinly, 1L



“The Chipmunks Christmas album.”
– Michael Kemp, 3L

Merry Christmas from the the
School of Law News

We look forward to your contribution in the New Year.
Submissions always welcome to: cbhazelbaker@stthomas.edu or talk to the contributors: Joanna Salmen, Kellie Bigham and Sarah Ellsworth

THE BRIEF: A Monthly Publication of Awards, Publications, and Recognition

Faculty/Administration

Tom Berg published “Religious Choice and Exclusions of Religion,” 157 U. Pa. L. Rev. PENumbra, <http://www.pennumbra.org> (the *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*’s online companion); the article is an invited response to an article by Nelson Tebbe of Brooklyn Law School. Professor Berg also spoke at the October 24 program on “Civil Rights, Social Justice, and the 2008 Elections,” sponsored by UST Law’s Community Justice Project; and on November 13 and 14 co-moderated a Terrence Murphy Institute roundtable on Catholic thought and the law school curriculum, involving 20 faculty members from UST Law and law schools around the country. . . . **Julie Oseid** moderated a panel at the “Visions of Women’s Leadership” conference on October 24. My panel was the “Women’s Leadership in Law” panel with Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Diana Murphy, Mary Cullen Yeager, and Sonia Miller-Van Oort. . . . **Gregory Sisk** has published an article titled, “The Continuing Drift of Federal Sovereign Immunity Jurisprudence,” in the *William & Mary Law Review*. After sketching the history of statutes allowing suits against the federal government and Supreme Court decisions interpreting those statutes, the article maintains that a principled jurisprudence of federal sovereign immunity has been emerging. In particular, he argues that an early jaundiced judicial attitude has resolved into a greater respect for the legislative promise of relief to those harmed by their government.

Sisk also participated on a panel on law firm ethics before the annual meeting of the American Agricultural Law Association in Minneapolis on October 25. . . . **Robert Delahunty** participated in a debate at the University of North Dakota Law School Federalist Society on the possibility of indicting the President of Iran on incitement to genocide charges. (against) **Teresa Collett** and Delahunty also gave presentations

. . . **Elizabeth Schiltz** delivered one of two keynote addresses at Notre Dame University’s Center for Ethics and Culture’s 9th Annual Fall Conference, in Notre Dame, Indiana, on November 7, 2008. Her talk, the Inaugural Jack Schuster Memorial Lecture, was entitled: “Does Sarah + John = 3? The History and Future of Complementarity in Catholic Feminism.” The other keynote



on integrating Catholic doctrine into teaching international law at a conference at the School of Law sponsored by the Murphy Institute. . . . **Robert Kahn** participated on a panel November 14-15 entitled “Criminalizing Denial: Legal Ethical Perspectives” which was part of a larger conference on Holocaust Denial sponsored by the Remarque Institute of NYU and held at the Ecole normale superieure in Paris, France.

address for this conference was delivered by Professor John Finnis. On October 30, 2008, Professor Elizabeth Schiltz was elected to membership on the Board of Trustees of The Saint Paul Seminary. . . . George V. Baboila, School of Social Work, Patricia Stankovitch, Graduate School of Professional Psychology, and **Jennifer L. Wright**, School of Law presented at the 23rd Annual Midwest Clinical Law Conference,

Bloomington, Indiana on November 14th, 2008.

The title of their presentation was *Three Silos and a Skyway*. Baboila, Stankovitch and Wright presented a unique model of interprofessional collaboration – the “collaborative and independent” model adopted at the University of St. Thomas Interprofessional Center for Counseling and Legal Services (including law, psychology and social work). The goal of the presentation was to assist others interested in interprofessional collaboration by sharing our learning about what works and what to watch out for, including the costs, challenges, demands, and benefits of this relatively unusual structure.

Staff

Cari Haaland attended the Prelaw Advisors National Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, October 15-18. At the conference, UST Law Admissions co-sponsored a lunch where Cari visited with and promoted the law school to over 150 prelaw advisors from undergraduate institutions around the country. On October 18th, Cari represented the law school at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas law fair. Also, in the past few weeks, Cari has met with prelaw students and advisors at the University of Minnesota in Morris, Minneapolis, and Duluth, along with students at Concordia College in Moorhead and our own undergraduate students at the University of St. Thomas. . . . **Dave Bateson** is working with a Group of Bar leaders from Maryland, Georgia, Illinois led by John Montgomery, Director of the Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough Center on Professionalism at the University of South Carolina School of Law. They are evaluating research on mentoring networks and drafting a best practices guide for formal legal mentor

programs. . . . **Monique McCarthy** is happy to be back in the office after this fall’s recruitment season! In November, she attended events at the College of St. Scholastica and the University of Minnesota – Duluth and the University of Iowa in Iowa City. She also had a successful week recruiting in the Pacific Northwest at Portland State University in Oregon, the University of Washington in Seattle and Western Washington University in Bellingham. She would like to extend her sincerest thanks to all the members of the faculty, staff, student ambassadors and alumni who assisted the Admissions Office during the Fall Recruitment Season.

About the *Brief*: The *Brief* is a monthly publication of awards, publications, and recognition at the University of St. Thomas School of Law. Items will be published once, either at the time of acceptance or at the time of publication based on the author or awardees preference. Submissions should be sent to cbhazelbaker@stthomas.edu on or before the last Monday of each month. More information and headlines about the School of Law are updated weekly on Wednesday at www.stthomas.edu/law.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

For the most complete list of events at the School of Law check www.stthomas.edu/law/news and make sure to read "The Docket" online

January 2009

Winter 2009 Vocation and the Study and Practice of Law Retreat

Students, alumni, faculty and staff are invited to Vocation and the Study & Practice of Law: A Retreat Experience in Janesville, Minnesota January 9-11. Prior to each semester, Associate Dean Jerry Organ, Professor Susan Stabile and students have hosted these retreat experiences designed to help participants reflect on how God might be calling them to use their gifts and talents to serve others in the study and practice of law.

Participants will depart from the School of Law on January 9 at 4:00 p.m. The retreat will start with a light dinner on Friday and end with lunch on Sunday. This retreat is open to any law student and to alumni but will be limited to approximately 20 people. The location for the retreat is the Holy Spirit Retreat Center located about an hour and fifteen minutes from the Twin Cities on Lake Elysian in rural Janesville, MN.

"Lunch, Literature, and Public Life: George Orwell and Evelyn Waugh,"

sponsored by the Murphy Institute for Catholic Thought, Law and Public Policy. January 27, 2009, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. Twin Cities lawyer-author David Lebedoff discusses *The Same Man*, his dual biography and meditation on Evelyn Waugh and George Orwell, including their approaches to faith and politics. Admission and lunch free. RSVP required by January 16 to murphyinstit@stthomas.edu or 651-962-4842. Admission limited.

Mark your calendars for Spring 2009

February 13: "Memo to the President: Priorities for the Common Good" sponsored by the Murphy Institute for Catholic Thought, Law and Public Policy.

March 5: Spring Law Journal Symposium: "Are We Ready Yet? The Legal and Ethical Issues of Preparing and Responding to a Bioterrorist Attack."

March 6: "Ethical Leadership in Professional Firms" sponsored by the Holloran Center for Ethical Leadership in the Professions and the Center for Ethical Business Cultures.

March 18: "A Muslim Catholic Dialogue on Faith and Reason" sponsored by Terrence J. Murphy Institute

March 19: "What Can the Private Business Sector Do to Restore Public Trust?" sponsored by the Holloran Center for Ethical Leadership

March 21-29: Spring Break

April 17: "Exploring the Connection Between Faith and Corporate Law" sponsored by Holloran Center for Ethical Leadership in the Professions

April 22: Mentor Externship Reception

May 9: Commencement

Promote Your Event

When planning and promoting an event at the University of St. Thomas School of Law there are several resources to help.

- Always start with Angela Dzik to set the space and date of all events.
- Contact Chato Hazelbaker to make sure the event appears on the website and to discuss other ways to promote the event.
- Contact LuAnn Hudson to make sure your event appears in "The Docket."