

THE BACK PAGE

New York Law Journal

Pace Law School is set to launch a certificate program of study and externship for attorneys who want to return to practice.

Here Come the 'Come-Back' Lawyers

BY THOMAS ADCOCK

WHILE PERUSING The Wall Street Journal one morning about a year ago, Amy Gewirtz had a lightbulb moment that resulted in a unique curriculum experiment soon to begin at Pace Law School.

"New Directions," set for a May 21 launch, is a two-semester certificate program of study and externship for attorneys who have temporarily left practice and now want to return.

What inspired Ms. Gewirtz was a Journal account of a program at Dartmouth College's Amos Tuck School of Business Administration especially

tailored for women executives wishing to re-enter corporate life after having left to raise children.

As associate director for alumni counseling and relations at Pace Law's Center for Career Development, Ms. Gewirtz asked herself a seemingly natural question: Where is such a program for women lawyers?

Nowhere in the state of New York was the answer. And apart from the Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California, Berkeley, nowhere else in the country.

After consulting with others—including colleagues at the West-

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NYLJ PHOTO/RICK KOPSTEIN

New Directions

THE FIRST semester's doctrinal course in Pace Law School's new program for lawyers returning to practice will be held twice weekly at the White Plains campus from June 4 through Aug. 20.

Classes in matrimonial and family law will be taught twice weekly by area practitioners, one morning session and one evening session.

Second semester externships of approximately 10 weeks' duration begin on or about Sept. 10, depending on employer exigencies.

Tuition is \$9,000.

Attorneys interested in New Directions may apply by contacting Amy Gewirtz at the school's Center for Career Development at 914-422-4606.

Further details will be available during upcoming open-house events on March 28 and April 17.

— Thomas Adcock

Pace Law Team

from left: Amy Gewirtz, Stephen J. Friedman and Deb Volberg Pagnotta

ONE-THIRD collected through "Street Fleet" program administered by City agency that provides food to the poor, notwithstanding the daily efforts of lawyers and 200 members of DLA Piper.

For this achievement, the firm was honored with the firm's annual award for rate volunteers.

According to the firm, it headed the DLA Piper leagues collected from four StarB... ered it each at on West 51st St.

Laura Brown... teen opportunity food provided every morning.

THE CO-FO... The Innocent the Benjamin School of Law... Peter J. Neufel

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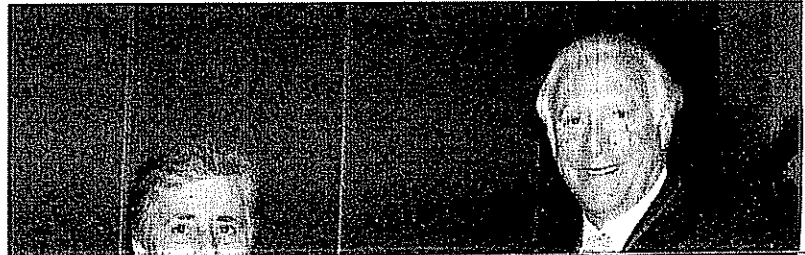
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Federal Bar Honors Plevan

At the weekend conclusion of the 39th annual "Winter Bench and Bar Conference" of the Federal Bar Council, Bettina M. Plevan, a partner at Proskauer Rose and immediate past president of the New York City Bar Association,



parents with children still at home, said Mr. Shulman, "We wanted to identify legal employment markets in the kinds of areas where flexible work relationships are possible."

In the geographic realm of Pace Law—Westchester, Dutchess and Rockland counties and neighboring Fairfield County, Conn.—that means matrimonial and family law.

"We like the idea that we're helping [lawyers] whose professional lives have given way to family responsibilities who can then build on that family experience as they resume professional careers," said Mr. Shulman.

In the future, the school plans to add real estate law, employment law and trust and estates concentrations to New Directions.

But before classroom work begins—two sessions a week from June 4 through Aug. 20—students will undergo a week-long "boot camp" designed to refresh lawyers' abilities with the basic tools of the job market.

"We'll focus on areas such as how to craft a resume, how to approach an interview, how to use the Internet for legal research, communications skills, networking and marketing skills," said Ms. Pagnotta, who ended the litigation phase of her career when she and her husband adopted a baby six years ago.

Classes will be conducted by local practitioners with expertise in issues such as prenuptial agreements, families in crisis, fertility, adoption, immigration, divorce, domestic violence and same-sex relationships, said Ms. Pagnotta, who was named director and master teacher of New Directions.

"We'll actually go through a trial or alternative dispute resolution," said Ms. Pagnotta. "When people finish this program, they'll have a comfort level hitting the ground."

But, Ms. Antin added, "if New Directions had been around, I definitely would have taken advantage."

Ms. Fay, a lawyer with Attorney's Title Insurance Agency in Mount Kisco, said the new Pace Law program would provide an important intangible for come-back lawyers—confidence.

"It will be a stamp of approval, if you will, for returning to the workforce," she said.

Dean Friedman said the new program would be "largely self-funding," at least in the first two-semester phase.

Mr. Shulman said tuition is \$9,000, and that he expected 12 to 20 students at the outset—a range that would provide at least a break-even financial point. Student tuition aid through Pace Law is available, he added.

Mr. Friedman said the externship semester, commencing Sept. 10, represents the school's commitment to an "aggressive job placement process" for New Directions students.

"Like any sale, the hardest thing is to get in the door," he said. "This externship process guarantees that you get over that threshold with at least one firm."

Mr. Friedman said he expects that many of the students will "be highly attractive" to firms.

"They're coming at good functional levels—a fifth or sixth-year associate, for example—and they're coming as very competent, mature people," he said.

Ms. Antin defined "maturity" as an attorney with judgment, perspective and calm in dealing with clients, traits that develop quickly and necessarily when dealing with a child running a 106-degree fever at 3 a.m.

"The experience might be at a different level," she said, "but it certainly is beneficial."

— Thomas Adcock can be reached at tadcock@alm.com.

mittee of the New York State Association to attorneys who best advance the understanding of professional ethics.



Roger C. Cramton

A former dean of Cornell Law, Mr. Cramton was presented with the award at a luncheon in his honor during the state bar's annual meeting in Manhattan in January.

Mr. Cramton is the creator of the American Legal Ethics Library, a collection of state ethics codes, accompanied by narratives. From 2003-2005, he was a reporter for the revision of New York's Rules of Professional Conduct.

THE LOYOLA Law School of Los Angeles sponsored a two-day symposium on free speech issues last weekend in honor of Cornell Law School Professor Steven Shiffrin, who was also given an alumni



Steven Shiffrin

award for scholarly achievement.

Mr. Shiffrin is the author of "Dissent, Injustice and the Meanings of America," published in 1999 by Princeton University Press, and "The First Amendment, Democracy and Romance," Harvard Press, 1990. He writes for numerous law school journals, as well as The New York Times Book Review.

Other New Yorkers attending the Loyola "Commercial Speech: Past, Present, and Future" symposium included Professor Nadine Strossen of New York Law School and president of the American Civil Liberties Union, and New York Times reporter Adam Liptak.

DURING ITS fourth annual "Champions of Diversity Awards Breakfast," the New York Urban League honored Weil, Gotshal & Manges for its "dedication to sustaining an environment of inclusion."



Stephen Dannhauser

Weil Gotshal was one of three corporations—along with Pfizer, Inc., and Prudential Financial—recognized for diversity practice in hiring, promotion, supplier relations and philanthropic activities.

Stephen Dannhauser, chairman of Weil Gotshal, accepted the award on behalf of his firm. Former New York City Mayor David N. Dinkins and his wife, Joyce Dinkins, presided over the breakfast event held Feb. 8 at the Rainbow Room.

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

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By uncovering the deeper need, Jones may be able to accomplish his real goal at a much lower cost.

Preparing and asking a few key questions is a great start, but it doesn't get us far enough.

Rather than plowing ahead with prepared questions, listen carefully to the other side's responses. Jotting down occasional notes will help you stay focused on what opposing counsel is saying. As you pay close attention to her answers, you may hear opportunities to delve deeper into motives, needs or issues. Pursue those opportunities.

A helpful tool for keeping the other side talking and conveying a sense of commitment to meeting those needs is using encouraging phrases such as "Tell me more about that issue" or "You've mentioned X is a concern. What else?" Notes will help you mark subtleties in the other side's position that you can use to respond effectively.

Lack of Stature

A second challenge new lawyers face in negotiations is a lack of stature. Early in our careers, we have no credibility. We have to earn it. When we walk into a negotiation, we not only represent our client, we represent ourselves as professionals and the profession as a whole.

One reason laymen hire lawyers is that we can participate in the discussion in a professional manner, rather than with all of the emotional baggage that otherwise creeps into some negotiation discussions. Asking open-ended questions changes the tenor of the conversation and helps change the discussion from combative to cooperative, where more progress can take place.

Remember, the other negotiator is just that, another negotiator. His client has legitimate needs that must be met as a result of this discussion. Communicating a sense of trying to achieve those objectives for both sides shows a maturity and understanding of the issues that will help build rapport with today's opposing counsel, and a reputation for tomorrow's.

By asking probing questions during a negotiation, you gain additional information that will help you craft a better deal for your client. In addition, you appear to be more interested in meeting long-term solutions rather than accomplishing a quick fix.

By approaching a negotiation from the perspective of wanting to achieve fairness and equity, you establish a reputation for yourself as an attorney who accomplishes the needs of your client without bruising the other side. Such a reputation can only help with future business and with future stature as a professional.

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