WELCOME FROM THE DEAN OF THE LAW SCHOOL

A warm welcome to the Law School Newsletter. In this edition we celebrate the success of students who have been awarded scholarships from the Inns of Court, our Prince’s Trust prize winner, a student volunteer and one of our alumni, Katie Bell, from Oakwood Solicitors.

Writing this introductory message from the comfort of my own home, was most certainly not where I expected to be!

As we all learn, both staff and students alike, to adjust to this unprecedented lockdown situation and settle into the ‘new’ normal, our thoughts must turn to all those affected by the coronavirus.

Wherever in the world you are when you read this newsletter, please stay well and follow the advice of Public Health England at this critical time.

Deveral Capps, Dean

STUDENTS TO GET FREE ACCESS TO LAW TEXTBOOKS ONLINE

Leeds Law School has just subscribed to an online service offered by Oxford University Press called Law Trove. This means all of our students will be able to access a wide range of law textbooks online and for free.

Law Trove allows access to all Oxford University Press law textbooks, that’s well over 200 books! Our students can read these books online or download chapters in PDF format to print or read offline as they wish. This means Leeds law students will need to buy fewer books, if they ever need to buy any at all!

20% ALUMNI DISCOUNT ON LAW POSTGRADUATE COURSES

Leeds Law School is delighted to offer a 20% discount on tuition fees for eligible alumni on our postgraduate courses, including our LPC.

To find out more please follow the link on the Law School website: www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/law

LAW STUDENT SCOOPS PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FROM HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

First-Year Law with Criminology student, Charleigh Morritt, won the prestigious Delta Air Lines Rising Star Award at the ceremony held at The Palladium in London. The event, hosted by Ant and Dec, was attended by celebrities including Pierce Brosnan OBE, Harry Kane MBE, Ashley Walters, Michael Ward and Richard E. Grant.

The awards recognise young people who have succeeded against the odds, improved their chances in life and had a positive impact on their local community.

She received the award from HRH The Prince of Wales after tackling her anxiety and improving her college grades which led to her joining Leeds Beckett University.

Charleigh suffered with anxiety to the extent that she found herself unable to do day-to-day tasks. Deciding that it was holding her back, she shut herself away from everything and everyone: “I just felt like I couldn’t do anything and I didn’t feel needed. Things got so bad that my mum contacted the Mental Health Services for Adults team for support, and that’s when I found out about The Prince’s Trust.”

“I then started to attend college again and my grades improved so much that I got an unconditional offer to study Law at Leeds Beckett University, where I’m now in my second semester.”

Oscar nominated actor Richard E Grant said: “To transition from struggling day-to-day to studying law at degree-level is an unbelievable achievement. Charleigh is an incredibly impressive young person and is hugely deserving of this award.”

BAFTA Award winning actress, screenwriter, and poet Michaela Cole said: “Charleigh’s story is one that truly makes you believe anything is possible. She has come so far from the person that she was and is going on to achieve great things. Well done Charleigh!”

LAW CLINIC EXPANDS WITH THE HUNSLET CLUB

Due to its popularity with students and the community our Law Clinic has expanded, with one additional session a month being held in the community at the Hunslet Club, in Hunslet, which is an inner-city area of Leeds.

Regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority, the clinic provides a confidential environment for members of the community to seek free legal advice, while delivering a first-class educational experience for our students, who can develop key transferable skills and improve their employability.

Amy Hunter, the module lead of the Law Clinic, also ran a marshalling scheme where all of the students who applied to be involved, were paired with a judge sitting at Leeds Combined Court. To find out more about Leeds Law School Law Clinic, please visit: leedsbeckett.ac.uk/leeds-law-school/law-clinic
STUDENTS ABROAD

A number of our students take the opportunity to study or volunteer abroad. Aimee Hunter blogged about her experience volunteering in Greece:

"If you are thinking of doing international volunteering, I would really recommend it. It is a wonderful experience that really teaches you a lot about the world and yourself."

The objectives of Archelon are to make sure that the community are aware of the beautiful sea turtles that live alongside them, and what to do to help protect sea turtles in order for them to have the greatest chance of survival. As a volunteer, I was responsible for ensuring the safety of turtle nests, adult turtles and hatchlings.

There are a variety of shifts volunteers have during their time in Crete. The first and most important shift is morning survey. During morning survey, we would check all nests were in the correct place, by checking for corner stones around the tripods covering the nests, we would also check for adult tracks and hatching tracks. If we found an adult track, we would record the track in our survey book and decide whether the track was a nest. If we came across hatching tracks we would follow each one individually until we found the end of the tracks, which would hopefully end in the sea, but if they didn’t we would have to help the disorientated hatching by either creating a corridor to the sea (it should never be placed in the sea as it needs to create the swimming motion before the sea in preparation to swim for the first time), or burying it slightly if it is too tired, so that it can have a nap and then carry on its journey.

By working with Archelon I learnt so much about turtles and the dangers they face. I became aware of how dangerous tourism is for these creatures; with hotel lights causing hatchlings to become disorientated, tourists taking flash photos causing them to go blind, sunbeds disrupting nesting turtles, and more. I learnt how to make shades and developed my communication skills through PA shifts. I also learnt a lot about myself, that I can be thrown into a completely new environment with completely new people and still thrive! I found out that I do not need all my home comforts to be comfortable and happy, and I can easily make new friends from all around the world.

If you are thinking of doing international volunteering, I would really recommend it. It is a wonderful experience that really teaches you a lot about the world and yourself.

To read more about students abroad please visit: www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/blogs/students-abroad/categories/leeds-law-school

Q & A WITH ALUMNI: KATIE BELL

We were delighted to catch up with Leeds Law School alumni, Katie Bell, who graduated with us in 2007.

What is your current position?
I am a Solicitor Advocate and Head of the Costs department at Oakwood Solicitors in Leeds. I have recently been promoted to the position of Director.

What course did you study at Leeds Law School?
LLB Law Degree with Honours.

What has been your career progression since graduating?
I did the Bar Vocational Course after my degree (now known as the Bar Professional Training Course). I then cross qualified under what is now referred to as the Qualified Lawyers Transfer Scheme to be admitted to the role as a solicitor. I then completed my higher rights of audience to become a solicitor advocate. I initially started work at Oakwood Solicitors in an administrative role and then worked my way up to a paralegal, solicitor, deputy head, head of department and finally Director.

How did Leeds Law School equip you for life as a solicitor?
It taught me to be organised and prioritise work to ensure you complete every task. Being well prepared for lectures and workshops is the key to succeeding and this is an essential skill to adopt in practice.

What did you enjoy most about your time at Leeds Law School?
I enjoyed my lectures and the workshops were invaluable. I feel that I graduated with a sound understanding of the law which set me on the path to qualifying. I also made some great friends and contacts.

What would be your top tip for students embarking on a law degree?
You should realise the time and effort the degree will take. Organise yourself so you can ensure you have enough time to complete all work and revision. Make sure you attend the lessons and do the preparation work for them - that way you will get the most out of each session and is essential for exams. Try and do work experience as much as possible and really impress the employer while you are at the firm. In my current role I have hired several students from Leeds Law School who have completed work experience placements with us. Be dedicated and driven and believe in yourself. I believe I have achieved my goals because I never gave up.
LAW IN PRACTICE SERIES

As part of the popular Leeds Law School’s Law in Practice series the University’s students joined lawyers, members of the public and judges attending two guest lectures in March.

On 5 March, Caroline Goodwin Q.C, the Chair of the Criminal Bar Association, spoke about her experiences at the Bar and the various issues criminal practitioners face daily. The audience received an insight into Caroline’s experiences in both prosecution and defence work in serious and high-profile cases in criminal courts across the country.

The West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Mark Burns-Williamson OBE, joined us on 10 March and shared his experiences within West Yorkshire and nationally as Chair of the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC) around tackling serious violent crime. Mark spoke in detail about the various challenges in dealing with the causes and not just symptoms of crime.

JODIE HILL – EMPLOYMENT LAW

Leeds Law School is delighted to join with the world-renowned leadership development training provider Common Purpose to deliver a webinar on Employment Rights during the Coronavirus-crisis. The webinar will be delivered by Jodie Hill, a part-time law lecturer at Leeds Beckett, and cover important issues like furlough, reasonable expectations of home working, mental health when working from home and balancing the demands of childcare with schools now closed.

To reserve your place on this public lecture please see the link on the Law School webpage: leedsbeckett.ac.uk/law

FIRST-YEAR INSIGHT EVENING WITH IRWIN MITCHELL

Leeds Law School students were invited to Irwin Mitchell for an insight event in February. The event allowed students to meet legal professionals from a variety of departments in different stages of their legal career. Part of the evening involved a Q & A session with students finding out more about different areas of practice, interesting cases the firm had been involved with and the various routes into a legal career. Leeds Beckett student, Ben McGeeney attended the event and was interested by the clinical negligence and Court of Protection work undertaken by the firm. He said it: “Opened his eyes to areas of law he had not considered before.” And he felt it made him think about the elective modules he will choose in the future.

INSPERA and eExams

In early December, Deveral Capps, Donna Brown, Jenni Taylor and Safina Zarif were invited to give a paper entitled ‘Logistics & Pedagogy v Staff & Student’ at the Examining Excellence: eAssessment in Law, Business and Technology at BPP University in London.

The paper was based on research carried out following the successful use of the Inspera system to facilitate the multiple-choice question assessments in English Legal System and Skills and Property Law in October/November last year. The team would like to thank all the students who took part by completing the questionnaires on their experiences; it will help to inform the development of the software and its use within the Law School and University as a whole.

JONES MYERS SHARES EXPERTISE WITH NEXT GENERATION OF FAMILY LAWYERS

Jones Myers collaborative family law experts have shared insights with students from Leeds Beckett University into how collaborative family law and mediation can assist divorcing couples.

Collaborative family law pioneer Norman Taylor and partner Nicki Mitchell - the first collaborative family lawyer in York and a trained mediator - explained how the processes can help to avoid costly, traumatic and public litigation in court and put particular emphasis on the interests of any children involved.

The session, which took place at the Leeds office of Jones Myers, received positive feedback from students.

Emily Hughes said: “It was very insightful to see a genuine, no nonsense view of what it is to be a family law solicitor. We could not have had nicer or more approachable people leading the session.”

Tailer Punton commented: “I am grateful to Jones Myers for allowing us to find out more about collaborative family law and the process of mediation. So, thank you to you all, the insight has encouraged me to go even further in my legal aspirations.”

Fellow student Sian Thurkettle, added: “I would say that the session offered me a wealth of knowledge in regard to life in the family sector. Not only did it provide me with helpful advice but also an opportunity to work with in the group and look at examples of situations we may deal with. Giving a more realistic idea of what day-to-day life would entail. I believe this has been a useful stepping stone in seeing where I want to be in the future.”

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO...

Nazia Yaqub who joined Leeds Law School as an Online Learning Tutor.

Before joining Leeds Beckett, Nazia spent several years in legal practice. As a solicitor, she represented clients in the areas of prison law, crime, mental health and child law. She then crossed to academia and spent five years teaching at Bradford Law School and a further five years with the University of Liverpool in Family Law, Contract Law and English Legal System. During this time Nazia completed a post-graduate teaching diploma, became an HEA Fellow and completed her PhD in the area of International Family Law. She is currently developing her thesis into a monograph with publishers Bloomsbury Hart.

Outside work, Nazia is kept busy by her three children and strives each day to stay balanced with yoga and mindfulness practice.

STAFF UPDATE

Jenni Taylor has been promoted to Course Director of Undergraduate and Vocational Courses and is responsible for our ‘Law with …’ courses and growing portfolio of legal apprenticeships. Jenni has previously worked at Northumbria University and the University of Law and is an expert in legal tech. Well done Jenni!
Students are reminded about the Power Bank charging lockers recently installed in the Law School’s reception area. Here, you can charge phones, iPads, tablets and even Macbooks for free in the secure charging unit. You’ll never have to worry about running out of power again!

STUDENT SUCCESS IN SECURING INNS SCHOLARSHIPS

Four of our students have been successful in gaining Inns of Court Scholarships to train as barristers – this is our best year yet. Huge congratulations to James Rowney, Verity Barnes, Maariyah Ismail and Isaac Rajakaruna.

Isaac tells us about the process and what it means to securing a Lincoln’s Inn Scholarship:

“The process started in September; when all four of the Inns of Court open their application portals for the Bar course scholarships. Once I had decided that I wanted to join Lincoln’s Inn I began to write and rewrite my application; answering all the generic questions such as why I wanted to be a barrister, what area of practice interested me and why, as well as sections covering my interests, hobbies and achievements during my time at school and at university.

Once I was happy with what I had written, some of the Law School staff were happy to check over my application. Their support was invaluable and in January I received an email inviting me to an interview, the next and final stage of assessment. In preparation the Law School held a mock Inns Scholarship interview day with none other than the lady who had overseen scholarship interviews at Lincoln’s Inn for nearly two decades! The feedback I received from this mock interview assisted me greatly in preparing for my actual interview, and I am very pleased to say I was awarded a scholarship from Lincoln’s Inn! After I received the email, I think it took me a day or so to stop smiling, the news confirmed to me that I was absolutely on the right track; I could not be more excited about what the future holds!”

STREETLAW

StreetLaw is a volunteering opportunity which takes law students into schools and colleges to share knowledge with students. The Law School will be working on activities for the September 2020 academic year soon.

If you’re interested please email: probono@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

LAW SCHOOL BAG COMPETITION!

How do you use your law school bag?

Take a photo of your law school bag somewhere interesting and send it to: law@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

A prize will be awarded each quarter for the best photograph.

NB this may just be in your house surrounded by pets or family!

RESEARCH NEWS

- Congratulations to Kat Langley, Graduate Teaching Assistant, who has recently been appointed as Policy and Educational Developments (PED) Editor for The Law Teacher.

- Good luck to Dr Agata Fijalkowska, Reader in Law, who started her Institute of Advanced Legal Studies (IALS) Visiting Fellowship in January on her Polish Lawyers Project: the war crimes trials. Agata is investigating members of the legal team at the Supreme National Tribunal, collecting and examining Polish archival materials to write individual life accounts linked to key legal principles at play at that time at Nuremberg.

- Congratulations to Robin Bennett, Graduate Teaching Assistant, and Dr David Lowe, Senior Research Fellow, who’ve had a proposal for an edited collection accepted for publication by Routledge. This is a great achievement and stems from the symposium that took place earlier in 2019: Prevent Strategy: Helping the Vulnerable being drawn towards Terrorism or Another Layer of State Surveillance?

- In March, Dr David Lowe chaired the International Centre for Parliamentary Studies conference on Terrorism and Violent Extremism. Delegates, mainly from the intelligence services, attended from all around the globe.