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**Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section**  
a section of the American Bar Association

# Student TIPster

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## Hurricane Katrina's Impact on a Louisiana Law Student

*Natalie Toliver, 2L, California Western School of Law*

Peter Brady was about to enter his third year at Loyola Law School in New Orleans, Louisiana, when Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast and devastated the area. Peter, a Southern California native, had chosen to study at Loyola for their Maritime Law Program. Before Katrina, Peter lived in an apartment within walking distance to Loyola, and across the street from the Cooter Brown Bar where he worked a part-time job.

The Sunday before the storm struck, Peter heeded the warnings about the impending hurricane and evacuated as he had done for other storms many times before. That night, after closing down the Cooter Brown Bar at 2 a.m., Peter grabbed some clothes, textbooks, his laptop computer, and his bicycle and threw them into his truck and headed for Lafayette to stay with a friend.

Continued on page 7

## Hurricane Katrina Brings Law Students Together

*Rusty M. Messer, 3L, Southern University Law Center*

Everyone has probably heard at least something about the problems that Hurricane Katrina caused for law students from New Orleans. Being a resident of Baton Rouge, I would like to personally thank everyone in the nation, and the world, that has done so much to help the city located an hour south of me. I would also like to share some of my personal insights about what Katrina has meant to law students in my hometown.

It's been said that every cloud has a silver lining. The silver lining for Baton Rouge students came in the form of a week and a half off of school. This may have been a good thing, but it also led to make up classes and both law schools in Baton Rouge extending their semesters.

Not having electricity for a week also took a lot of the fun out of it. Not having electricity in the middle of August in Baton Rouge really prompts one to get out of the house. Being out of school I spent most of the week volunteering with the relief effort. And the relief effort was enormous.

The local church I volunteered at had made arrangements to receive shipments of food and redistribute it throughout the area. As fast as one eighteen wheeler truck could be unloaded another arrived to take its place. The shipments included food, water, clothing, medical supplies, baby supplies, and almost anything else you can think of.

I hope that it doesn't sound as though my sacrifice was special, because it wasn't. This town was full of people from all walks of life giving their time to make a difference. There were "chainsaw gangs" that went into the devastated areas to cut tree limbs and help clear roads. There were groups that met at 7:00 AM and worked into the night cooking box meals to bring to the shelters. A large number of medical workers and medical students volunteered their time at different facilities. At one time the Baton Rouge River Center became the largest medical center in the country in terms of beds. One obvious constant at every volunteer location is that students, from law school and other wise, turned out to help.

While life has returned somewhat to normal, there continue to be efforts by the two law schools in Baton Rouge to reach out to the law students from New Orleans. Both Christopher Broughton and Eric Claville, the ABA Representatives from Louisiana State University Law School and Southern University Law Center respectively, had several stories to share of how their schools reached out.

Continued on page 7

## TIPS UPDATE

### *TIPS Announces 2005-2006 Student Vice-Chairs*

The Tort, Trial & Insurance Practice Section announce a current list of 2005-2006 Law Student Vice-Chairs, which can be found on the law student website at <http://www.abanet.org/tips/lawstudent/leader.html>. These individuals will be given a unique opportunity to learn and network with some of the top attorneys in the nation. TIPS still has a few Law Student Vice-Chair positions available. More information can be found at <http://www.abanet.org/tips>. ❖

## Inside This Issue

Hurricane Katrina's Impact on a Louisiana Law Student	1
Hurricane Katrina Brings Law Students Together	1
Interviewing Tips	2
Ask a Professor	3
Career Tips: First Year Associate Life	5
Lawyers as Leaders	6
Wherever you are, TIPS is there	8

## Interviewing TIPS:

### Getting Your Dream Job

*Ann Lyter Thomas – Kolesar & Leatham, CHTD*

You've done it. You wrote an intriguing cover letter, you impressed with your resume and grades, or you may have submitted a knockout writing sample. However you did it, you have someone's attention because you have a job interview with a firm you think you want to work for. Now the trick is to hit the homerun and get a job you will love.

First things first, what should you wear? Generally, a dark, conservative suit. It does not have to be custom-made Italian silk, but it should fit well, look professional and announce to the world, "This is a lawyer to be taken seriously." Make sure you are comfortable in it—wear the suit before the interview. I once spent an entire day in interviews distracted because I was concerned the skirt to a new suit, which seemed fine in the store, was too short, especially when I sat down. And when I was the interviewer, I once rejected an applicant, in part, because he spent the entire interview picking at his suit (the story about roadkill didn't help him either, but more about that later). Be aware that, silly as they may seem, many interviewers were given hard and fast rules about what to wear for an interview and they may expect you to abide by them, i.e. no green, red or purple suits, no large jewelry, etc.

Additionally, you should shine your shoes and make sure your hair and nails are neat. I recommend women wear makeup and keep it neutral. I know it is unfair, but women without makeup are often perceived as not being "pulled together." Bottom line is you do not want anyone to remember what you looked like, beyond noting that you looked professional.

It may seem obvious, but arrive a few minutes early. If you are late, you will not get the job. Greet the receptionist courteously. If you are rude to the receptionist, you will not get the job. Note: never underestimate the power of the support staff—they are the backbone of any firm. If they meet you, they will be asked what they thought of you.

The point of the interview, from the firm's perspective, is finding out if you will fit in. You already have the paper credentials or you would not have the interview. Now you need to show them who you are. Be animated and interested in the person you are meeting with. Show a bit of yourself. At the same time, be judicious.

I once interviewed a law student who never looked me in the eye, was generally not animated and, as mentioned before, picked at his suit distractedly while we talked. The only time he became animated was when talking about his hobby, taxidermy, and how on the way to the interview he saw a dead fox on the side of the road and stopped to pick it up so he could stuff it later. Hint, roadkill is not a good interview topic.

Being a lawyer is about attitude, not just knowledge. Give yourself a pep talk before the interview. You can show a bit of positive aggression even. For example, a student was once asked, "Why should we hire you?" She answered, "Because if you don't, you will face me across a table some day and wish I was on your side." They made her an offer.

But, know where the line is between acceptable and unacceptable. A candidate once announced at lunch, "I'm going to be an asshole litigator. Is there room in the firm for an asshole litigator?" The reviews for this candidate ranged from, "no," to, "if you hire him I quit." His comment was particularly inappropriate given that the senior partner of the firm is on the ALI/ABA panel, "Dealing with the SOB Litigator."

And that brings up another point, know your audience. Research the firm. Review their website and their Martindale listings, if they have them. Run a Westlaw or Lexis search for reported cases or Google them. If you know with whom you will be meeting, be sure to research those individuals. If you know a bit about the firm and its attorneys you can avoid faux pas. And just an importantly, you can get a sense of whether you want to work there.

Remember, and this is as important as anything I have written so far, **you are also interviewing the firm.** You want to find out if you would be happy working there. Some firms are hierarchial, some more informal. Some are "lifestyle" firms; others are more intense with an emphasis on billable hours and a correspondingly high compensation structure (hopefully). Some are boutique firms focusing on a narrow area of practice; some have departments in all areas of practice. Some are defense-oriented and others plaintiff-oriented. You should have a sense of what you are looking for in a firm and then ask the right questions. Ask about partnership and how frequently do associates make partner. Ask about turnover of associates and staff. High turnover is a red flag. If associates are turning over, they are not making partner and if staff is turning over, it is likely an unpleasant place to work with substandard staff. Don't just focus on required billable hours but how many are typically worked. If only 150/month is required but the associates average 200, 210 may be required for advancement. Are the associates happy there? Do the associates go to lunch together or socialize outside of work? Are the partners happy? Ask the same questions of different people to see if you get different answers. Try to get to know the people you are interviewing just as they are trying to get to know you. If the conversations are stiff and you cannot find any areas of common interest to discuss, you may not want to work there, even if you do get an offer. ❖

*Ann Lyter Thomas is an attorney with the firm of Kolesar & Leatham, CHTD in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is a graduate of Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, MO and Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She has written extensively and taught legal writing at UNLV School of Law. She can be reached via e-mail at Athomas@KLNevada.com.*

## Ask A Professor

An interview with Professor Jeffrey Thomas  
University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law

By

Loni Stewart Gardner

Many law students are too intimidated by their law professors to ask them questions that everybody wants to know. By asking your professors questions, you will discover that they really are “normal” people and are pleased to get student interaction and feedback. Making the first step can be a painful process, so Professor Thomas has answered common student questions.

*Do professors mean it when they say, “my door is always open”? How should students take advantage of open door policies?*

Thomas: Some professors mean it more than others. It depends on the person and the culture of the school. The best way to take advantage of the “open door” policy is to stop by to talk with your professor when you have a specific question about material covered in the course. When you do this, however, make sure that you think through the question and try to answer it on your own first. Also, in this age of email, depending on the professor it may be useful to email your question first (I prefer that). In general, DO NOT just stop by to engage in chit-chat. Save that for receptions, cocktail parties, and hallway talk.

Gardner: One of my favorite professors always has his door slightly open unless he is very busy, signaling to law students to pop in and ask questions.

*Is blind grading really blind?*

Thomas: I know that some students want to think that poor grades are due to the fact that a professor doesn’t like them, but blind grading is really “blind” in 99% of the cases. Every once in a while I can identify a student by handwriting or because of some argument the student makes, but I find that I guess wrong as often as not. One pattern that I have seen, however, is that I can often tell the difference between the handwriting of men and women. As we move to answers written on computers, grading will be even more “blind.”

*Why do fewer professors make old exams available?*

Thomas: I suspect that the primary reason professors are making fewer old exams available because they want to recycle them. I will even admit that I recycled an exam question myself this year, but I had given my students at least five other old exams. If your professor doesn’t do it, you can ask him or her, and if that doesn’t work, look for other exam questions to practice on. You can even write exam questions for one another. This isn’t as good as having the actual prior exams, but the process of writing questions and answering them is still very useful, especially if you compare your answer to others in your class or study group and/or you discuss the answers with others.

Gardner: During my first year, I found flashcards to be a great way to study. After outlining the entire semester, you will know the material fairly well. Once you have a reasonable handle on the material, flashcards are an easy way to “seal” in the information (and relatively fun, with friends).

*How can a law faculty realistically differentiate between many exam papers?*

Thomas: If a professor grades 80 papers and then puts them in rank order, the difference between number 39 and 40 has an element of arbitrariness to it, but the top 10 or so papers are fairly easy to recognize, as are the bottom 10 or so. Different professors use different grading conventions, but all generally are impressed by the volume and sophistication of legal arguments. Developing such arguments is the primary purpose of much of the discussion in class, so if someone makes a really good point in class, that is the sort of analysis that will be rewarded on an exam. Grading a large number of exams is considered by many professors to be the worst part of a great job.

*What do professor’s really think about “gunners”? (The girl or guy that ALWAYS has an answer.)*

Thomas: Professor’s thoughts about “gunners” are probably pretty similar to those of students. Sometimes the professor is glad to have someone willing to answer a question. Sometimes the professor appreciates a good point being made by a well-prepared and thoughtful student. But when a student persistently volunteers just for the sake of speaking (or because of some perceived reward) without having a well-developed and useful point to make, it can be just as annoying for the professor as for the other students.

Gardner: I second that. What is truly annoying is when the “gunner” consistently answers or asks questions that are off the subject. Save it for after class, or better yet, utilize the Professor’s “Open Door Policy” for those questions.

*Do professors “monitor” in-class internet use and how has the internet affected teaching?*

Thomas: I am not aware of an effective way to monitor what students are doing on their laptops during class. I get reports of solitaire, instant messaging, email and browsing the internet. Obviously, students cannot pay as much attention to class when engaged in other activities. Some professors try to discourage or regulate this activity. I try to make classes interesting and engaging enough to attract students’ full attention. The bottom-line from my perspective is that students are paying good money for each class, and therefore should try to get the most out of it. How many students would pay to go to the movies and then browse the internet, or do instant messaging during the movie?

As for how the internet and computers affect teaching, this is an area of considerable discussion and debate in law schools. My sense is that students have a shorter attention span, expect immediate access to information, put a high value on “entertainment,” have greater facility with technology, and are more comfortable with multitasking.

Continued on page 4

**Ask A Professor** – Continued from page 3

Most professors are fairly slow to adjust to the new reality, tending to use techniques that seem “tried and true.” New pedagogical techniques include use of internet posted information and quizzes, shorter sequencing, use of simulations and exercises in classes, and some use of multimedia materials.

Gardner: I have at least one professor who claims that she monitors internet use, but will permit it IF the student is accessing the tax code or treasury regulations. As a student, it is sometimes a challenge to resist the temptation to “quickly” check email. It is worth the wait- you really can’t learn passively and it could become a bad habit. As for using the internet as an educational aid during class, there have been many times that I have pulled up a treaty or other materials pertinent to the class discussion. However, this particular course, international law, lent itself to internet use, while first year contracts may not.

*Should students use commercially available outlines, supplements and/or case briefs? If so, which ones are best?*

Thomas: I think that most professors discourage the use of commercially available supplements because they believe that most students use them as short cuts rather than as supplements. I think these materials can be useful to verify one’s preparation and understanding after the student does the work to prepare for class or to draft an outline. These materials are like sample answers to questions. If you use them instead of preparing your own answers, you miss the benefit of the process. Much of the preparation for class is about the process of learning to read and analyze the cases. This skill is further developed in class. Relying on commercially available materials as a short cut limits your opportunity to develop your mind in a way that is similar to a student who skips class and gets the notes. One of the main points of preparation and attending class is the analytical process.

*How do you know if the student has read the case or the brief? And what is the best method of briefing?*

Thomas: If the student knows nothing about the case, they probably haven’t read it. If the student can recite well but then cannot answer the follow-up questions very well, the student may have relied on someone else’s brief but either did not sufficiently prepare or does not really understand the case. Basically, a student’s preparation is generally reflected in the quality of his or her answer.

There are as many ways to “brief” a case as there are law professors and students. There is no “right” or “best” way to do it. The case brief is simply a device to assist the student in reading and understanding the case in preparation for class. If a professor has a preferred format, that tells you what the professor wants you to look for in the case. In the last few years, I have been focusing on the “holding” of the case, so my students should spend a little extra time working on that part of their brief.

Gardner: I recommend full briefing for first years. After first year, in courses where assignments spanned a dozen cases, I sometimes reduced my brief to the essential facts, procedural history, outcome, and listed any significant “tests” or rules that came out of the decision. I usually highlighted other details in my casebook and wrote quick notes in the margins if I felt that it was something I may be asked about in class.

*Who was your favorite Supreme Court justice?*

Thomas: I am not very good at picking “favorites,” but one of my favorites is Charles Evans Whittaker. Most law students haven’t really heard of him because he didn’t write any bellwether opinions. But through hard work and diligence he worked his way from a farm in Kansas, put himself through a night law school (without a college degree), and became a successful lawyer, judge and justice. Being on the Supreme Court was probably beyond his abilities, and he struggled with depression during a time when mental illness was misunderstood and shunned. He seemed to be happiest as a U.S. District Court judge in Missouri. I became interested in him because he attended the law school where I teach, graduating in 1924.

Gardner: Thank you for the chat, Professor Thomas!❖

*Visit Professor Thomas’ webpage at <http://www1.law.umkc.edu/faculty/thomas/>. He can be contacted at [thomasje@umkc.edu](mailto:thomasje@umkc.edu).*

*Ms. Gardner received a J.D. from Pace University School of Law and Master’s of Environmental Management degree from Yale University as part of a dual degree program in 2005. She is currently an associate at Murtha Cullina LLP and can be reached at [lgardner@murthalaw.com](mailto:lgardner@murthalaw.com)*

**The TIPS website has**

- ✓ Job postings
- ✓ Law Review Online
- ✓ Tortsources magazine online
- ✓ The Brief online
- ✓ Section news
- ✓ Meeting & CLE information
- ✓ Law Student Message Board
- ✓ Lots more...

**Check out <http://www.abanet.org/tips>**

**TIPS Advantage #3**

***Networking Opportunities***

Many students go through law school focused on the present. Between classes, papers and final exams it is hard to find time to do anything besides study law. Upon graduation, this leaves many students scrambling to find a job. TIPS provides students with opportunities to learn, meet professionals and develop a strong professional network. Students involved in TIPS have used these connections to get interviews, internships and jobs. The advantage does not come from what you know, but from who you know. Do you want the advantage?❖

## **Career TIPS: First Year Associate Life**

**By  
Scott R. Wolf, Esquire**

These are exciting times for me. I am now about to complete my ninth month as an associate at a very prestigious law firm in my hometown of Shreveport, Louisiana. I work at a law firm that has been in existence since 1917 and which currently has seventeen outstanding attorneys. The last few months have been somewhat of a blur because I have worked a lot of hours during that time, but I have thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it thus far.

Many law students probably wonder, what's the first year like as a young associate? Do you work a lot of hours? Do you work late every night and every weekend? What do the partners expect out of you? Will I get the necessary feedback on my work product? Will I actually get to enter a courtroom during my first year?

As a first year associate you will learn very quickly that law school did not teach you everything you need to know in the real world of practicing law. Even to this point in my short legal career I feel like there is still a great deal I have to learn before I can truly understand the practice of law. I spent my first two years after law school clerking for an appellate court Judge and while this helped me mold my writing skills and gave me a solid foundation of what to expect as an associate, I still know that I have so much more to learn.

I do work a lot of hours and as a first year associate you will likely have to work a lot of hours also. That is just the nature of the profession. When you are a young associate you have to spend time not only billing hours, but also actually learning about the practice of law. You have to learn a great deal about the practical side of the law. For instance, in law school, they do not teach you about how far ahead of time you have to prepare affidavits, get them to your affiants and then get them back from your affiants before your motion for summary judgment is due. You have to learn that your affiants do not often feel the same sense of urgency and time pressure that you do, when trying to meet a court deadline.

I do not know what it is like to work in a large law firm, with 100 or more attorneys, but if I did, I cannot imagine that I would receive the great level of feedback that I receive on a daily basis from each of the partners for which I work. I also cannot imagine that if I did work at a large law firm that I would have had the opportunity to argue my first motion for summary judgment only a month after I started working at the firm.

As you are winding down your law school career and you are preparing to enter the real world, keep in mind what expectations you might have as you become a first year associate at a law firm. Those expectations may be different depending on the type of law firm where you work.

If you are starting work at a smaller firm, you may have more client contact than you would at a large firm and you may be able to actually go to court once in a while, rather than having to spend day after day just doing research.

Starting your legal career can be both exciting and terrifying. Each person will have a different experience in his or her first year, but my experience has been quite pleasant. If you are interviewing with law firms now to start work at a firm after you graduate, make sure you talk to the young associates at the firm and ask them what their life is like, both at work and away from work. Based on what they tell you, you can probably figure out if that firm is right for you. Once you get out in the real world you will realize that you still have a lot to learn, but it will be one of the most exciting times in your life. If you are well organized and know what to expect before you start, hopefully you will be able to maintain a proper balance of work and play. My best advice to those starting work at the end of the upcoming summer is to start with a great attitude and to get excited about going to work each day. If you follow this advice, your experience will be rewarding. ❖

*Scott, the Chair of the ABA Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section's Taskforce on Outreach to Law Students is an associate at the law firm of Blanchard, Walker, O'Quin & Roberts in Shreveport, La. He is a member of the Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section and has been busy taking bar exams since graduating from law school in 2002. He is licensed in Arizona, Louisiana, Texas and Nevada. He served as the 2001-2002 Law Student Liaison to the Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Section Governing Council. He can be reached at [swolf@bwor.com](mailto:swolf@bwor.com).*



### **TIPS Meetings & Events**

**2006 ABA Midyear Meeting – February 9-12, 2006**  
**Chicago, IL**  
Hotel: Hyatt Regency

**2006 TIPS Spring Meeting – May 18-21, 2006**  
**Miami, FL**  
Hotel: Eden Roc

**2006 ABA Annual Meeting – August 3-7, 2006**  
**Honolulu, HI**  
Hotel: Sheraton Waikiki

**2006 TIPS Fall Meeting – October 18-22, 2006**  
**Pinehurst, NC**  
Hotel: Pinehurst Resort

For information, call Felisha Stewart at (312) 988-5672. Or visit <http://www.abanet.org/tips/calender.html>

## Lawyers As Leaders

Advice from Early Leaders

By Lauren D. Godfrey

Past Chair, Law Student Division

Litigation Associate, Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

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### What led you to take on the role of ABA Law Student Division Chair?

When I first started as a law student at New York Law School I wanted to get involved in the Student Bar Association so I became an Evening Division Representative and thought that the ABA Committee of the SBA would be an interesting committee to join. This led to my being elected as School Representative, and then Circuit Governor. The more I became involved in the ABA, the more I enjoyed it. Specifically, I liked the public service projects that I became involved with, I liked reaching out to law students at other law schools to motivate them to become involved in public service and the ABA, and I felt like I was contributing to the profession. As Circuit Governor, on a national level, the next step naturally was to run for an officer position. I felt that my experiences in the ABA so far had prepared me to lead the Division as Chair, that I could continue serving the profession in a more involved capacity, and that it would be an exciting and rewarding experience. This proved to be true.

### What were your concerns at that time, and were they founded or unfounded?

I had concerns that as a part-time evening student with a full-time job, I would not have the time to be involved with the ABA and also do well in school. This proved to be an unfounded concern. I felt this way before I ran for School Representative, however, the current representative who was also a part-time student working full-time said that if she could do it, then so could I. She was right. I realized that if you like doing something enough then you find the time to do it. ❖

Dear TIPS Law Students,

The WINNER of the TIPS Law Student Writing Competition will win a trip to Hawaii in August 2006. START writing that winning essay today! The first place winner gets hotel and airfare to Hawaii. Submissions are due on MARCH 6, 2006.

Visit the link below for information on the competition.

[www.abanet.org/tips/lawstudent/lawstudentcomp.pdf](http://www.abanet.org/tips/lawstudent/lawstudentcomp.pdf)

### What leadership roles have you held since (within the ABA and beyond) and what motivated those involvements?

Aside from the Law Student Division, in law school I was also a vice-chair of the Trial Tort & Insurance Practice Section's (TIPS) Employee Benefits Committee, a law student liaison to TIPS Diversity in the Profession Committee, and member of the Task Force on Outreach to Law Students. Since law school, I am a member of the TIPS Diversity in the Profession Committee, Technology Committee, Employee Benefits Committee and Task Force on Outreach to Law Students Committee. I am also the Chair of the ABA Young Lawyer's Division Law Student Outreach Committee, a Co-Chair of the New Jersey State Bar Association's Paralegal Committee, and a member of the NJSBA's Membership Committee. I became involved in TIPS as a law student because it was a likely area of the law in which I felt I would be practicing and TIPS was very law student friendly in terms of getting law students involved substantively in its committees. Since I had been active nationally in the ABA, as a practicing lawyer in New Jersey I felt that it would help me professionally to get involved in the State Bar. As a paralegal, I worked with the current NJSBA President, which is how I was able to get appointed to the two committees I am currently involved with.

### What impact has your leadership had on your career path and day-to-day practice of law?

When emails go out in my firm requesting names of lawyers in other parts of the country, I have been able to respond at times because of the contacts that I have made in the ABA. Hopefully, by referring cases to other attorneys they will return the favor some day.

### What advice and suggestions do you have for lawyers and law students contemplating (or, on the other hand, shying away from) taking on formal leadership roles?

I recommend taking on a leadership role in the profession because it can enrich your experience as a law student and as a lawyer, it provides an opportunity to socialize with other lawyers whom you might never meet otherwise, it can be a source for case referrals, and can make you stand out from other associates who may have had great grades in law school but did not go the extra step by actually getting involved in the profession. ❖

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<http://www.abanet.org/careercounsel/leader/godfrey1.html>

**GET INVOLVED IN TIPS!  
NETWORK, TRAVEL, & LEARN!**

<http://www.abanet.org/tips/lawstudent/leader.html>



**Louisiana** continued from page 1..

After the storm had passed and New Orleans was devastated, Peter knew that he would not be able to return to his apartment or his school. His main reason for not attempting to go back was the ensuing violence and looting, which he found out was going on at the bar across the street from his apartment. With nowhere else to go, Peter decided to head out west to stay with his parents in the San Diego area.

Shortly after arriving in California, Peter, a 3L, began to worry about not being able to graduate on time to take the Bar Exam. Fortunately, all the law schools in San Diego were offering to take in displaced law students. California Western School of Law had an opening and Peter accepted. California Western offered to waive tuition for the semester and gave him free textbooks.

Now that he is settled in school, Peter's biggest concern is not being able to contact many of his New Orleans friends who were also affected by the hurricane. He is concerned about his fellow Loyola 3L's who received job offers from New Orleans firms. Peter does not know what the future holds for his classmates because many of those New Orleans firms have been devastated and displaced as well. Peter also worries about the apartment he left behind. He fears that his landlord has now evicted him, perhaps removing all of his belongings. Peter has tried to mail keys to friends in the area so they can check on the apartment, but so far he has not had any luck.

On a daily basis, Peter is reminded of having been displaced from his law school. Peter must now commute one hour to get to school from his parents house, instead of enjoying a morning walk to class like he did in New Orleans. For Peter, who enjoys a variety of outdoor sports, trading in his daily walks for Southern California traffic has taken some adjustment. As any law student can relate, two hours a day of lost study time can be frustrating, especially as final exams loom ahead. Additionally, Peter misses his Loyola classmates and his lack of a social circle here has been difficult.

On the bright side, Peter was able to smoothly transition into upper division courses at California Western. He says that the students here have been extremely helpful and generous with providing him notes to catch up for the three weeks he missed. He plans to resume classes at Loyola in January and is currently on track to graduate on time. Peter is also pleased that his Maritime Law concentration at Loyola will not be affected by his displacement. Additionally, Peter says his health has improved since leaving the Big Easy and the Bourbon Street lifestyle outside his apartment door.

In light of his experience, Peter is now considering going into Maritime Insurance Law. He is interested to learn about effects the storm damage will have on the industry and he feels that this is an area bound to provide him with job security for many years to come. Even though Peter had originally planned to move back to California after law school, this experience has sparked his interest in returning to Louisiana to practice Maritime Law. ❖

**Together** continued from page 1...

LSU Law took in more displaced students than any other law school in the country. Southern Law, while it took in fewer students, opened its doors to first year students when many other schools would not. LSU Law's Career Services and Southern Law's Moot Court Board helped displaced students with clothing. When you pack to evacuate for a hurricane you usually bring two or three days worth of clothing because you expect to go back. Many displaced students were left without suits and appropriate clothing for work or job interviews. LSU Law had stories of clothes being mailed from as far away as Chicago.

Southern Law helped with financial assistance not only to displaced students, but also to students originally from the New Orleans area attending Southern. Some of these students had as many as 14 family members, and pets, living with them in their Baton Rouge apartments. LSU Law raised money through an auction of football tickets to see the LSU Tigers play in the routinely sold out Tiger Stadium. LSU Law also had a welcome reception to help displaced students meet people and feel more at home. Southern Law's Moot Court Board is looking to provide meals to displaced families for Thanksgiving.

Thanks to generous help from Lexis and Westlaw, both schools were able to get new books for students who had to evacuate the affected areas. The LSU Law library reported distributing over two tons of casebooks. Westlaw also provided additional computers and other resources to Southern Law. Lexis not only provided casebooks to students, but also gave publications to displaced law firms and set up blogs to help the firms locate their employees.

I am sure that these two schools are not alone in their efforts to assist law students displaced from New Orleans. It's possible, and likely, that your school has helped in some way or has taken in some students. I encourage everyone to find out who those students are at your school. Make sure you introduce your self. Tell them you are glad they are at your school.

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

When the storm first hit I remember thinking that if my home were destroyed I could go stay with my brother, or at my parents, or with other relatives or friends. But, what do you do when all of their homes have been washed away too?  
We may go to different schools but this catastrophe reminds us that we all have one thing in common. We will always be connected by the law. ❖

### **Wherever you are, TIPS is there!**

*Natalie Toliver, 2L, California Western School of Law*

The beauty of TIPS is that your involvement now as a law student doesn't end when you graduate and pass the bar- it only gets better. Like a fine wine, your continued membership and involvement only get better with age. Even if you don't know yet what area of law you would like to practice, it's a great place to find out. Your TIPS membership allows you to explore a variety of practice areas through membership in the General Committees and excellent publications. When you graduate and pass the bar, you then enter into the TIPS young lawyers group, where there are even more opportunities to stay involved. Your TIPS involvement can last your whole career because there are so many different committees to fill your needs, from Alternative Dispute Resolution and Employer- Employee Relations to Toxic Torts and Trial Techniques. Best of all, no matter where you move, your TIPS colleagues go with you.

I personally became involved in TIPS through the Vice-Chair program the summer after my first year in law school. During my first year of law school I signed up for every ABA section that was free. TIPS was one of those sections. Soon I began to receive tons of ABA section magazines and journals in the mail. As most first year students do, I was questioning my reasons for being in law school and what I wanted to do once I graduated. While I did, and still do, enjoy my student-focused publications; I was really interested in what was happening out in practice now- what practicing lawyers were dealing with day-to-day. The TIPS section magazine, *The Brief* was the most interesting and diverse of all the ABA section magazines I received. When I found out that TIPS had a Vice-Chair program, I applied. I applied to the program because it seemed like a good opportunity to exercise my leadership skills. It was also a great opportunity to start something that I could continue beyond the three years that I was in law school. Lucky for me, I was appointed as the Law Student Liaison for the Diversity in the Profession Committee.

My first TIPS meeting was the 2004 ABA Annual Meeting in Atlanta. At the age of 22 and having

just finished my first year of law school, the idea of attending the Annual Meeting was a bit daunting. Despite my apprehensions, I went. I went alone, but I was not alone for long- everyone reached out and I quickly made new friends. Everyone in TIPS made me feel welcome and all were very pleased to see law students involved. During the meeting I was invited by numerous TIPS leaders to attend their committee meetings and encouraged to participate. It was a great experience meeting law students, lawyers, and even judges, from all over the country.

When I first joined TIPS I was not sure what actual law practice entailed. I found that in law school you are taught merely to apply the facts to the rule, but not much else. What I wanted to learn about were practical skills and knowledge for my future career. The people you meet in law student focused groups are in the same boat as you- new, and inexperienced. The people that are going to be most beneficial in helping you shape your future are those that have gone before you- actual practicing lawyers. My involvement in TIPS has helped me learn about real life law practice. The knowledge I have gained through my TIPS contacts and the TIPS publications has been invaluable. In taking advantage of the excellent TIPS networking opportunities I have met a variety of practitioners. It has been a valuable opportunity to learn about different practice areas such as Insurance Risk Management, Business Litigation, Mediation Practice, Construction Defect Litigation, and even Animal Law.

My involvement with TIPS has helped me to focus on my goals of career development and enrichment, rather than harping on the stresses of law school, which thank goodness, are only temporary. Law school is only three years of blood, sweat, and tears. Your life as an attorney, counselor or judge lasts a lifetime. Which one would you rather devote your precious time to? ❖

*Natalie Toliver, a Second Year Law Student at California Western School of Law in San Diego, California. She can be reached at [nctoliver@law.cwsl.edu](mailto:nctoliver@law.cwsl.edu).*

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