Black History Month Events, Diversity Week, And More!!!

This, the second issue of our new BLSA Alumni Newsletter is chocked full of information about the many events that took place at The Law School during the Winter and Spring quarters.

During this time, BLSA members worked diligently to host numerous events for both Black History Month and Diversity Week. In this issue, we tried to highlight as many of these events as possible—but unfortunately space constraints would not allow for full articles on everything! These non-featured events, such as the Black History Month Film Series, the joint BLSA/ACLU panel on Immigration Law, and a tour of DuSable Museum, were thoroughly enjoyed by BLSA members, the general law school student body and many other members of the general community. We thank all who made these events such a success.

Also, we hope to soon put the Newsletter in hard copy format—so look for that in the near future.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,

Sarah E. Walker
(Alumni Chair, 2004-05)

Congrats to the Incoming 2005-2006 BLSA Executive Board

BLSA welcomes the new executive board and thanks the old for all their hard work and success. The phasing-in process is complete and the new board consists of the following:

President ~ Christina Gibson
Vice-President ~ Darah Smith
Secretary ~ Jennifer Jones-Moore
Treasurer ~ Jason Ewart
Alumni Chair ~ Amani Farid
Community Service Chair ~ Shelliann Marcano
Social Chair and 1L Academic Chair ~ Betsy Laroche
Historian ~ Candice Brown

The new board organized a 3L appreciation luncheon to thank and wish our 3Ls the best of luck on their journey into the real world. The new board met before all of the members dispersed for the summer, and with the leadership of Christina Gibson have many great ideas for the year to come.

The old executive board never completely washes their hands of executive matters but guides and advises the new board throughout the year, which attributes to BLSA’s success and uniqueness among other organizations. We look forward to another fantastic year.

Sincerely,

Amani Farid
(Alumni Chair, 2005-2006)
Carol Moseley Braun Speaks

On February 15, 2005 BLSA’s Black History Month Keynote Speaker, Ms. Carol Moseley Braun, spoke to the student body, with humor, insight and candor. Her initial talk centered around the theme of “putting the past in front of us” - but she soon opened the floor up for nearly an hour of Q&A! Ms. Braun answered many questions, including those on the intersection of race and gender, the potential lifespan of affirmative action, support for public education, the current role of the NAACP and civil rights organizations, and the effect of the United States’ strong global presence,

Michelle Obama—Diversity Week Speaker

Mrs. Michelle Obama, spoke before a packed room of U of C law students, business students, and members of the community as BLSA’s keynote speaker for The Law School’s Diversity Week this past March.

Ms. Obama, the newly appointed Vice President for Community and External Affairs for the University of Chicago Hospitals and wife of newly appointed U.S. Senator Barack Obama, discussed, among other things, the choices that guided her career path (for example, she has worked at Sidney Austin, assistant to the mayor and assistant Commissioner of Planning and Development—all here in Chicago).

Pointedly, she also spoke at length as to what is perhaps her most important role—that of wife to her husband and mother to her two beautiful daughters.

A big thanks to Michelle Obama and her family for serving this community with such dignity, strength and perseverance. We look forward to seeing the great things that are surely to come!

Michelle Obama—graduate of Whitney M. Young HS, Princeton University and Harvard Law School, headlined for BLSA during Diversity Week

John Rogers—Ariel Capital Management, Inc.

Feb. 23, 2005 — Mr. John Rogers, the Founder, CEO, Chairman and Chief Investment Officer of Ariel Capital Management, Inc. gave a great talk at the School. A central theme of Mr. Rogers’ company is “The Patient Investor” and Mr. Rogers began the event by talking to us about the “waiting” that out entire community is still experiencing with respect to economic empowerment and success in corporate America. Mr. Rogers went on to address topics such as minority procurement, leadership, and understanding the importance of relationship building for black professional. He also answered students’ questions, ranging from how we can empower ourselves from within our own communities, to his view of the balance between the supply and demand for black professionals and companies, to personal questions on how he was able to successfully develop his own career.

We would like to thank John and his wife Sharon (who is a student here at The Law School, Class of ’06) for the level of interest and involvement they have shown to BLSA and entire The Law School.

John Rogers founded the first black-owned money management firm in the United States. You can visit http://www.arielcapital.com to learn more.
Alumni Spotlight— Jeanne Gills, Class of 1994

Quick Facts: Hometown: New Orleans, LA; Partner, Foley & Lardner, Chicago; Practice: IP and IP Litigation

You have a degree in Electrical Engineering. Was entering the law a big transition? I went to law school to be a patent lawyer, [and] once I was a summer associate, litigation became a clear choice for me.

What do like most about your job? I really enjoy being a partner— the autonomy, running cases, supervising and training other lawyers; [and also] dealing with cutting edge technology...and utilizing resources that allow me to advocate on behalf of my clients. Tell me a bit about your community involvement? I am a board member of the Evening Associates of Art Institute. I have also been involved with 100 Black Men, Chicago Communities and Schools, and the Ida B. Wells Memorial Foundation.

Who was your favorite professor at The Law School? [Senator] Barack Obama. I was in the very first class he taught-Racism and the Law.

Do you feel The Law School prepared you well? Yes and no. U of C is a fine institution....some professors are truly at the top of their game. [And though] Bigelow was quite beneficial, because I worked throughout law school, most of my practical legal training (learning to research, write briefs, interact with attorneys) came with work experience. But overall, a U of C degree opens so many doors...

Do you have any advice to give to the current student body? Find and identify good mentors. Its key even if you are a majority student—no one succeeds without the counsel of someone who has done it before and done it well.

White Sox Event—Black Alumni Association Kickoff

May 31, 2005.

Black Law Student Association (BLSA) alumni and current BLSA students gathered in a skybox to watch the White Sox play. Three alumni came together and organized the event: Linda Chatman of Chatman Law Offices and class of '89, Perri Irmer CEO of Illinois Sports Facilities Authority and class of '91, and Kevin Freeman Partner at Gardner, Carton & Douglas and class of '95.

Their vision was to plan an event for alumni to reconnect and build a community while hopefully raising some money to begin a University of Chicago BLSA alumni chapter. The goal is to continue with similar events, thus providing support for fellow alumni and current students. Current students had the opportunity to meet alumni and share experiences. Watching the White Sox game took a back seat to the talking, catching up and all around bonding. Thanks to Gardner, Carton & Douglas the sponsor, the event was a huge success.

Speakers Wanted

If you or a colleague would be interested in speaking at the Law School, either to BLSA or to the General student body, please contact Alumni Chair, Amani Farid at afraid@uchicago.edu. The presentation of topics and ideas, especially as they relate to African-Americans is one of our top priorities, and we can’t wait to hear from you!
Black Law Students Association
Earl B. Dickerson Chapter

University of Chicago
Law School
1111 E. 60th Street
Chicago, IL 60637

2004-2005 Executive Board

President, Annette Moore
Vice President, Keely Stewart
Secretary, Valdir Barbosa
Treasurer, Clarence Franklin
Historian, Jessica Benford
Alumni Chair, Sarah Walker
Community Service Chair, Linda Boachie
1L Academic Chair, Maronya Scharff
Social Chair, Kameron Matthews
Publicity Chair, Anthony Webb
1L Representatives, Dana Brown
Carshae Davis

Contact us on the Web! Http://blsa.uchicago.edu

Class of 2005—Destinations

Julia Bennett—Shearman & Sterling, NYC
Kristy Johnson—Sidley, Austin, Brown & Wood, Chicago
Averil Edwards—Winston & Strawn LLP, Chicago
Shannon Jones—Equal Justice Fellowship, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Chicago
Goldburn Maynard—Columbia University, School of Journalism
Robin Nunn—Simpson Thacher, & Bartlett, NYC; Public Defender Service of DC; Judge Barrington Parker, 2nd Cir. Court of Appeals
Franita Smith—Judge Ruben Castillo, Northern District of Illinois; Sidley Austin, Brown & Wood, Chicago

BLSA—Summer Destinations

Brooke Bairnes-Irving—King & Spalding, Atlanta; KMZR, NYC
Valdir Barbosa—Latham & Watkins, Chicago
Jessica Benford—Ryley Carlock & Applewhite, Phoenix, AZ
Linda Boachie-Ansah—Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw, Chicago
Dana Brown—Judge Amy J. St. Eve, Northern District of Illinois
Carshae Davis—Schiff Hardin, Chicago
Jason Ewart—U.S. Attorney’s Office, Criminal Division, NYC
Amani Farid—Locke Liddell & Sapp, Dallas; Baker Botts, Houston
Sharon Fairley—Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP; U.S. Attorney’s Office, NYC
Clarence Franklin—Fulbright & Jaworski LLP, Houston, TX
Jason Frazier—Proskauer Rose LLP, NYC; Dechert LLP, Philadelphia
Christina Gibson—Legal Assistance Foundation, Chicago
Betsy Laroche—Goodwin Proctor, NYC
Shellian Marcano—Goldberg Kohn Bell Black Rosenbloom & Moritz, Chicago
Kameron Matthews—Crowell & Moring, Washington Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights & Urban Affairs, Washington, D.C.
Annette Moore—Sidley Austin Brown & Wood, NYC & Chicago
Jennifer Moore—Hon. Ann Williams, 7th Circuit Appellate Court
Norbert Ngethe—Goldberg, Kohn, Bell, Black Rosenbloom & Moritz, Chicago
Maronya Scharff—Morgan Lewis & Bockius, NYC
Darah Smith—Pattishal, McAuliffe, Newbury, Hilliard & Geraldson LLP, Chicago
Keely Stewart—Winston & Strawn; McDermott, Will & Emery, Chicago
Sarah Walker—Greenberg Traurig; Goldberg Kohn Bell Black Rosenbloom & Moritz, Chicago

Don’t’ Forget!

We still need everyone to send in accomplishments and events relating to you or other U of C Alumni—we would like to feature this information in an Alumni Highlights section (this would be in addition to our current Alumni Spotlight section). We also welcome any other suggestions and comments you may have for the newsletter. Please send all comments, suggestions, and/or information to the 2005-2005 BLSA Alumni Chair, Ms. Amani Farid at afraid@uchicago.edu. Thanks!