

## UConn Law alumnus looks to fill vacant U.S. Senate seat

By Matt Szafranski

Within days of Senator Joseph Lieberman's retirement announcement, the race to replace him in 2012 began. Among those announcing their candidacy are University of Connecticut School of Law alumnus and Congressman, Christopher Murphy.

In an interview with *Pro Se*, Murphy described his career in public service and his plans to balance his present job as representative and a senate campaign. "My first, second, and third job is to serve the 5th district," Murphy assured. He noted *Pro Se's* interview was sandwiched between welcoming home National Guardsman from his district and escorting the Lebanese ambassador around Danbury and Waterbury,

also both in his district.

Murphy's last House race surprised many observers because it did not fit the narrative of the Republican landslide. Murphy noted that the Republicans' "cookie-cutter" message did not resonate in his district and that he has stood behind the votes taken in the last two years.

Murphy initiated a Senate run because he felt "I can be more effective in a body of 100 as opposed to one of 435." Among the issues for which Murphy wants to advocate in the Senate are manufacturing, health care and environmental protection.

Some of Murphy's popularity has been attributed to his "omnipresence" at home and in-person constituent outreach. "Connecticut is in my blood," he said promising to maintain that re-



Matt Szafranski/UConn

Chris Murphy vies for Lieberman's old seat.

sponsiveness. While Murphy admits that knocking on doors is not practical statewide, he remains committed to meeting constituents directly and getting "orders from people's porches." In his YouTube senate announcement, Murphy channels this commitment through an Internet video starting with

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## *Pro Se* welcomes Jennifer Cerny to UConn Law

By Erica McKenzie

Jennifer Cerny, UConn Law '08, has returned to the law school three years after graduating to become our new Assistant Director of Student Services. Cerny has followed a unique path to higher education and looks forward "to contributing more to the school where she had a really great experience."

Cerny graduated from law school at the beginning of the economic crisis and faced many of the same problems that students are still currently facing. She was initially interested in transactional and contract law, and upon graduating she had a position at a firm that specialized in commercial-real estate. When the economic crisis hit, however, the firm dissolved her department and she was left jobless. She quickly found a position as an insurance defense attorney at Conway and Stoughton, LLP. There she primarily dealt with corporate clients. After two years, Cerny says that she "wanted more human interaction," so she promptly contacted her old career counselor, now director of the Career Planning Center, Aimee Houghton,

See CERNY, p. 4

## WLSA event highlights importance of victims' rights

By Silvia Chung

Not everyone agrees with Attorney Wendy Murphy, or even likes her. Take, for instance, the Nebraska judge she sued when he would not allow her client, a rape victim, to use the word "rape" or refer to the defendant as the "attacker" when testifying. He's probably not a fan—nor was the judge who heard that lawsuit.

UConn Law had the privilege of co-sponsoring with UConn-Stamford a discussion with this impressive woman, a former child abuse and sex crimes prosecutor turned constitutional rights lawyer. The event was held on the law school campus in Blumberg Hall on February 11th. After the event, President of UConn Law's Women Law Students' Association, Allison Panno, described Attorney Murphy as "refreshing." She went on to say that "WLSA tries to bring people from all backgrounds. We respect her for not being afraid to say what needs to be said, and even if it makes people uncomfortable, she takes a hard stance. We

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Basketball team wins WNEC invitational

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## Dean's Corner with Dean Jeremy Paul

By Jeremy Paul

Law school offers much more than advocacy training, although it wisely begins by celebrating those who champion a cause. Each graduate should be supremely skilled at marshalling arguments on either side of a valid dispute. The first year helps you master reasoning from pre-existing law such as statutes and prior cases, while equally emphasizing policy arguments aimed at a better future.

All this proceeds on the assumption that the impartial judge is responsible for determining the just outcome. Fashioning arguments to persuade powerful decision makers is a life long project. But arguments that assume solutions are someone else's problem provide an insufficient toolkit for the modern lawyer. Your clients, and ultimately your fellow citizens will demand more.

A client concerned that her business plan might run afoul of the law does not want to hear the argument you might provide a judge during a lawsuit. She wants a plan of action that will permit her to move forward without ending up in court. The party across the negotiating table might be impressed with your argument for why a judge will one day side with your client... or she might take her marbles and go home. You should plan your studies and your co-curricular and extra-curricular activities so that you develop problem-solving skills that might help your clients make deals, not simply win cases.

Problem-solving also has a broader purpose. Current economic challenges have accelerated a trend long haunting our political discourse. As Americans feel resources shrink, we have begun to press positions aimed at securing a share for our favorite cause, sometimes without regard for the bigger picture. The pointed acrimony of dueling political commercials, however, is not the stuff of true self-government.

To acquire the skills our democracy needs, you should start developing experience with self-governing organizations where the trick isn't merely to advance an argument but to bring people together. That's why I am so excited at the thriving SBA culture on campus, including our new film night, and so proud of our own Yam Menon, recent recipient of the Silver Key from the ABA Law Student Division for her fine work in student government. It's why I believe work in all our student organizations provides invaluable professional training.

The beauty of law school is that it enables you to see both sides of an argument. Sometime, this helps you see the true strength of your client's position. Other times you can identify with the wisdom of the other side. Knowing when advocacy is needed and when empathy might lead to a better solution requires professional judgment. That's what you should be seeking here on Elizabeth Street, especially since Watson will soon tackle the law.

### Pro Se

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## A note from the Student Bar Association

Despite record-breaking snowfall in New England this winter, the SBA has been moving full steam ahead with plans for the spring. This semester, the SBA is focusing more than ever on listening to the input of the student body and better serving your needs.

In early February, we realized one of our long-term goals by opening a Student Organizations Office in Knight Hall. This office features filing cabinets, a small meeting space, desktop computer and printer, and is a direct response to student group leaders' requests for such facilities. If you're a student group leader and are interested in using the Student Organizations Office, just e-mail [sba@students.law.uconn.edu](mailto:sba@students.law.uconn.edu) for more details on how you can access the office.

In addition to physical improvements, the SBA is currently revising our Constitution, which defines our role within the student body. Major changes are being proposed, which, if approved, would change the structure of the SBA and clarify how we operate. These changes do impact all students, and the revision process is open to the public. We encourage all interested students to attend upcoming SBA meetings, where the revisions will be discussed, and take an active role in determining how the SBA will operate to work for you.

You can help the SBA continue to improve student life by voicing your questions, concerns, or comments. You can find a student representative in the SBA Office in Starr Hall every day, so please refer to our office hours online or on the office door and stop in. If you can't make office hours, we are always available by e-mail, or just look for us around campus! With your input, we are confident that the spring semester will be a success.

Respectfully,  
Bethany DiMarzio  
Student Bar Association Secretary

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2011-2012 SBA E-BOARD:  
MARCO ALLOCCA, PRESIDENT  
BETHANY DIMARZIO, VICE PRESIDENT  
BRYNN CULLEN, SECRETARY

Current  
events

# Study Abroad

## Hello from Haifa: *Pro Se* editor's chaotic first days abroad

By Karen Rabinovici

It's my fourth day in Israel, my third day at the University of Haifa, and despite being half Israeli I've never felt so American in my life. One example: Classes start on Wednesday (today is Monday), and I haven't yet been able to register for courses. The administration keeps telling me, "Don't worry! It will be okay!" This is quite the change from UConn Law, where I'm used to signing up for classes around three months in advance, logging onto PeopleSoft three seconds after registration opens to ensure getting the classes I chose. Right now, I'm preferring that method! If I'm going to be here for three

months, however, I'm going to have to adjust to the Israeli way.

Orientation could have been law school orientation: One near-twelve hour day filled with lectures, activities (including a rain-soaked tour), ice breakers, and lots of useless/useful information that I have yet to process. The international students consist mainly of undergraduates in their junior year, and a handful of law school, master's degree, and Ph.D students. I have yet to meet the Israeli law students, which is what I am looking most forward to. I also have plans to see Yonatan and Yanon, both Israeli law students who studied at UConn Law for one semester, who many of you probably know. The in-

ternational students are very friendly, everyone asking the obvious orientation questions: Where are you from? Where do you go to school? What are you studying? Do you speak any Hebrew? Again, apart from the last question, it might as well have been law school orientation! Oh, and on a sidenote - I met Professor Jessica Rubin's nephew who is an undergrad studying here! Small world.

Although I have mainly described the chaos, it is fantastic so far. Israel is an amazing country, and I don't have to even mention the delicious food, which I've already indulged in plenty. I'm looking forward to experiencing law school in a different country,

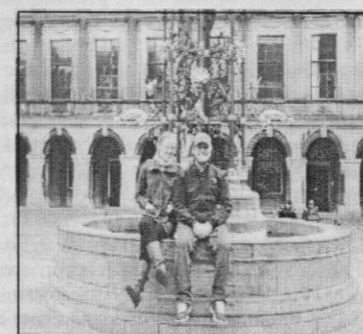


University of Haifa

Aerial view of the  
University of Haifa.

and learning from professors from all over the world. I'm especially looking forward to one of my required classes, "American Law." Sounds like an interesting topic...

## Reports from our spies in the Netherlands



Emily Bolton/UConn

Emily Bolton and Brian Smith in  
front of the Dutch Parliament.

By Pete Golfman

For strategic purposes alone, UConn Law has sent two of its finest spies (Emily Bolton and Brian Smith) to attend the University of Leiden for a semester. Here is the intel thus far: The law school is on the same campus as the rest of the school and is walking distance from Leiden city center. They attend classes with other international students, who come from all over the world, though predominantly from Europe. Emily loves

her Basic European Union Law class because of the exposure to a variety of perspectives. Brian enjoys the diverse atmosphere and breadth of experience within the student body and faculty. The consensus is that classes are genuinely interesting and intellectually challenging while simultaneously leaving students enough time to explore Leiden.

Although housing can be difficult to find within the city center, both Emily and Brian found great living situations. Emily lives in a quaint studio apartment she found through the school and Brian found housing with three Dutch medical students thanks to the assistance of Willem Den Blanken. A seven minute stroll will get you from Brian's house to Emily's apartment and the word on the street is that both have couches prime for surfing.

So what's life really like in Leiden? According to our spies, just peachy! The city center is a cobblestone playground with cozy coffee shops designed for afternoon reading, fresh fruit and vegetable markets for lovers of food, and taverns where folks come to unwind. The architecture is beautiful and the music is fantastic. Best of all, every one of these places is

filled with the Dutch! If there is a single unfriendly person among them, Brian and Emily have yet to meet him. They have enjoyed free tours from Dutch students for just about every excursion they can come up with and for that reason are appreciative of the exchange program. Even before they arrived in Leiden, Brian and Emily had three friends in the Netherlands, all of whom were visiting students last year (Willem, Rob Glansdorp, and Adriaan Zonneville). Rob and Willem also gave them a tour of Amsterdam, which is just a 20 minute train ride away. For the future, they have top-secret plans to visit another student, who visited UConn Law last year, in Germany (Alex Steven).

When asked if the language barrier was making their covert mission more difficult, Brian and Emily explained that almost everyone speaks perfect English. Then I challenged our undercover agents to sum up their experience in one Dutch word. Brian said "lekker," a word that can mean anything from "tasty!" to "nice!" Emily said "gezellig," which she explained as "a cozy, warm, fuzzy feeling." Great intel guys, greeeeeat intel.

## Governor Malloy unveils new budget to mixed reviews

By Matthew Zagaja

On February 16, Governor Malloy unveiled his budget proposal for the 2011 and 2012 years with a theme of "shared sacrifice." At the heart of his plan are two separate proposals: \$1.8 billion in new revenue and \$2 billion in concessions from state employees. The revenue stems from an increase in the sales tax (to 6.25%), and the elimination of exemptions for items like yacht cleanings and yoga. The budget also includes \$758 million in spending reductions in areas such as the regulation of charitable gambling and outside management contracts.

Reaction to the proposal has been mixed. House Minority Leader Lawrence Cafero criticized the budget for not including enough cuts. The Connecti-

cut Mirror explained the issue in an article on February 16, 2011: "The biggest cut in the Malloy budget technically involves a lapse or relatively undefined savings still to be achieved. The governor announced this week that it would come from state employee wage and benefit concessions as well as other savings tied to rank-and-file labor and management." In his budget address Governor Malloy proposed to achieve \$2 billion in savings from state employees over a two year period.

On the other end of the political spectrum organized labor criticized Governor Malloy's budget for not raising taxes enough. John Olson, president of the Connecticut AFL-CIO stated that the tax increase is not enough and the rich will not pay enough of the increase. Olson

claims that the problem is not runaway spending but insufficient revenue. This contention is supported by a study from Connecticut Voices for Children that found that as a proportion of total income Connecticut ranks among the bottom ten states in spending on education, social services, transportation, environment, public safety, and housing.

The Governor's budget proposal included a 10% (\$25 million) reduction in the block grant for the University of Connecticut. At a briefing to the Appropriations Committee, Office of Policy & Management Secretary Ben Barnes stated that the 10% cut was more like 2% or 3% due to the ability of the university to tap outside funding and realize other savings. At a regularly scheduled town meet-

ing on tuition at Storrs University Chief Financial Officer Rich Gray indicated that this reduction in funding was not expected and they were not prepared to provide information on how it would impact tuition.

Unlike previous years there is no disagreement between the legislature and governor as to how big a budget shortfall exists. In spite of widespread disagreement on how to fix the budget all parties seem to be able to agree that there is a problem and it must be fixed. Yet the Governor's proposal is not the final budget. It still must go through the legislative process and Governor Malloy is holding a series of town hall meetings across the state to obtain input from the public.

## Operational mis-steps force *Borders* to close stores

By Elise Baun

I am a Borders Rewards member – if I have a bad day, I go to the bookstore, order a cup of coffee, and shop for the next hour. The second I walk into the store and smell the books, life feels a little better. Unfortunately, my days of going to the bookstore are numbered, especially with Borders now filing for bankruptcy.

My bookstore made more than a few bad marketing decisions, including not making the switch from print books to online shopping. A bookstore can't really be sustainable unless it supplements revenue with Internet sales. But, rather than expand to online markets, Borders outsourced that part of its operations to Amazon.

Borders then made a few location mistakes. First, it made the mistake of leasing stores in locations that were too expensive, like downtown Manhattan. The revenue from the stores wasn't enough to cover the leases. Then, Borders attempted to expand overseas at a time when it should have focused on U.S. locations, particularly these expensive locations.

Part of its problem may be due to numerous changes in management. The CEOs of the company continually rotated, without establishing a working plan

for how to help the company. Borders lost leadership and customers, while Barnes & Noble made an eReader and slowly expanded online.

All of these mistakes culminated in Borders' inability to pay its publishers in December. In return, the publishers stopped shipping the books. The company suffered from inventory losses and amassed an even greater debt. The bookstore finally filed for bankruptcy and will be closing over one hundred stores across the country.

Borders made the decision to close its failing stores and come back fighting with a new focus on eBooks and other non-book products. I understand that print books and newspapers are slowly becoming old-fashioned, but I don't have to like it. I like having something in my hand. I can turn the corner of the page down to mark my spot, I can highlight key sections, and I can write notes in the margin. This may mean that I'm behind the times, but I'm just not an eReader kind of girl. My hope is that either Borders revamps itself in such a way that it can sustain brick and mortar stores, or that Barnes and Noble will be able to fill the gap. Either way, I still want to have a bookstore to go to when I'm having a bad day.

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about changing careers and entering higher education.

Cerny now has a brand new position in Student Services here at UConn Law. The position was created primarily to both support Dean Susan Schmeiser and Dr. Jane Thierfield Brown in their positions, as well as to ensure that there is always someone accessible to the students, should they need "somewhere to go with a tiny problem or with [their] world falling apart."

Students will notice Cerny's presence on campus primarily through her work with room scheduling and helping coordinate events on campus. She also will be instrumental in enacting a new program on campus, the Law Student Survey of Student Engagement. Each year between 75 and 100 law schools participate in this survey, which gathers information from the current students about their law school experience. Under Cerny's tutelage, UConn Law will participate in this program for the first time ever in late March. Cerny emphasizes how important student participation in this survey is as it is a real chance "to find out what we can do to make the law school better." A worthy cause!

More than anything Cerny wants to impart to the students that her "door is always open. When you have an issue that doesn't fall neatly into some category, Student Services is a great place to start." *Pro Se* on behalf of the student body offers Cerny a warm welcome back to UConn Law.

## Current legislation fails to address possession of exotic animals

By Sarah Shah

While many might agree that setting an animal on fire is a form of animal abuse, not all agree that keeping exotic animals as pets is also animal abuse. Not every jurisdiction in the U.S. has laws to prevent the possession of exotic animals, like big cats, primates, and certain snakes. As a result, exotic animals are kept captive across the U.S. in private homes and roadside menageries.

Tony the Tiger has been held captive for all 10 years of his life in a concrete and steel enclosure at a truck stop in Louisiana. Shockingly, there are more tigers held captive in the U.S. than there are left in the wild. With less than 3,500 tigers in the wild, tigers are on the brink of extinction. Strict laws against the possession of tigers would help slow down the tragic demise of tigers, though illegal poaching of tigers for fur would still remain a problem. Some jurisdictions in the U.S. allow for the possession of exotic animals after filing a permit, while other jurisdictions do not regulate the issue.

This is an issue that needs to be addressed by legislation for environmental, health and safety reasons. Owners of exotic animals often find that they are not equipped to properly care for the animal, and the animal either suffers at the hands of its owner living a

deplorable life, or is taken to an animal sanctuary. However, sanctuaries in the U.S. are crowded and unable to rescue all animals in need of care. Many animals that would have lived a fulfilling life in their natural habitat are then euthanized. In some cases, the animal is abandoned entirely when the owner finds himself incapable. This is an increasing problem in the Florida Everglades with anacondas and pythons. These snakes are a threat to the ecosystem. Removing wild animals from their natural habitat also threatens the ecosystems they leave behind, as it disrupts the natural order.

Aside from the animal not receiving proper nutrition and exercise while held captive, safety and health issues impact both the people and environment these wild animals are brought into. Exotic animals are hosts to a variety of diseases that can spread through close contact. One need only recall the story of Charla Nash, the Connecticut woman attacked by a Chimpanzee a year ago, to know the dangers of keeping exotic animals who haven't lost their natural instincts.

For information on how to help, visit <http://www.bornfreeusa.org>.

## UConn servers hacked, leads to identity theft

By Patricia Martins

January usually starts with New Year's resolutions. I stopped making resolutions years ago since I have a bad habit of forgetting all about them by January 3. I hadn't considered the possibility of having an alter ego with a New Year's Resolution.

At the end of January, my credit card company informed me of just that. I was okay with this. This opened up a myriad of possibilities. If I was going to be leading a double life, I hoped I'd be someone like Batman.

The Southwest representative was quick to inform me that I wasn't buying utility belts. My secret self was a lonely college gamer looking for love. Clearly, this wasn't the work of a hidden identity. This was a stolen identity.

There hasn't been any confirmation as to how my credit card information got stolen, but a couple of emails from UConn informed me that Husky-Direct, the UConn Co-Op customer database, was breached. They sent the first email January 10, but I dutifully ignored it after I read the first line, and deduced that I don't have or want anything to do with Husky-Direct. When Amazon rejected my credit card, I shrugged it off, figuring that I had reached my credit limit with my car warranty, insurance, and law books--which is what I figured the credit card company wanted to clarify when they called me the next day.

They wanted to question me about

no such thing. After confirming that I did not try to buy books from a shady college book site, purchase a large quantity of items from Best Buy, or try to sign up for an online dating service, I canceled my credit card and decided to open up that old email. Now, I had two. A second e-mail had followed on January 21, prodding the people who hadn't taken action yet (me) to start protecting their identity.

By the time I learned that the vendor hosting and managing Husky-Direct's online database had been hacked and customer billing information may have been accessed, I remembered that, way back in the fall semester, I did use Husky-Direct to get some law school gear. The e-mail suggested canceling your credit card and warned individuals may pose as a business and ask for your social security number; Husky-Direct will never ask for the social security number and, if we got contacted by somebody pretending to be them that asks for that information, to forward that e-mail to UConn. Their follow up letter confirmed that UConn is offering free credit monitoring service with Debix Identity Protection Network for a year.

Hopefully this tale of stolen identity prompts those in the community who also ignored the official emails to take a second look at their own finances, just to be sure there aren't any other alter egos taking advantage of fellow busy law school students.

## Voices from the Quad

By Patricia Martins

The truly awful pick up lines:

Let's make music together.

- Arielle Hansen, 1L



Oh, wow, I see your ring's turned the right way. That's very lucky for a guy like me.

- Kristin MacDougall, 2L

Does anyone want to set sail with the Captain?

- Anonymous



# Student Spotlight

## Matt Carlone, *Tearing Down Tomorrow*, wins Radio 104.1's battle of the bands

By Drew Schaffer

In only their 6th and 7th performances as a band, *Tearing Down Tomorrow*, led by 3L Matt Carlone on guitar, defeated 15 other bands to claim victory in Radio 104.1's Cover Wars Competition at *Up or on the Rocks* in Hartford. The competition consisted of 16 bands from Connecticut and Massachusetts competing in two rounds over 6 nights all looking to claim the prize of \$1,004, an interview on Radio 104.1, and the chance to have an original song played on the air.

*Tearing Down Tomorrow* has only been in existence since Spring of 2010 when the band's drummer, Seth Wetherbee of Wethersfield and Carlone's high school classmate, badgered Carlone over a period of three months to help him form a band. "It's funny because Seth originally asked me to jam last winter when he saw me at the Pourhouse downtown. Knowing him from high school I just assumed it was a waste of my time so I spent three months dodging him. He called so often that I eventually ran out of excuses. By the end I was telling him just ridiculous things like 'I can't play with you today because I promised my grandma I'd go spelunking with her.'" After recruiting three other musicians, all from the greater Hartford area (Dominic Colon, Tony Certo, and Steve Frick), the band was formed.

Prior to emerging victorious at Radio 104.1's Cover Wars competition, the band had only played at a few house parties and at UConn Law's Halloween party. "Our thing is to take recognized songs and put a new rock twist on them" Carlone explained "for example, we took 'Staying Alive' and 'Billie Jean' and put a metal twist on

them and converted 'Gin and Juice' and 'California Love' into rock covers.

This reporter had the opportunity to sit down with Carlone to get his thoughts on the victory. "I was pretty confident going in to the competition but I had no idea how talented the other bands would be," said Carlone. "At the outset, I would have given us about a 50/50 shot...I knew we would play well but I had no expectation of winning." Carlone explained that after winning their group in the first round, the band was confident but knew it would have to step it up to come out on top. To meet the challenge and shake things up a bit, the band spent the two weeks between the first and final rounds perfecting four new songs for their final set, including a rock cover of "Forget You" by Cee Lo Green which proved to be their most popular piece. "After they announced that we had won, I couldn't believe what I had heard," Carlone recalled. "My initial reaction was to go streaking through the quad and into the gymnasium but I opted to get another drink instead"

Carlone has been playing the guitar for about 12 years and writes all of the arrangements for the covers that the band performs, in addition to many of the band's original songs. The band plans to use the \$1004 in prize money to record a ten song demo. Carlone encourages everyone to check out and "like" *Tearing Down Tomorrow* on Facebook and said to be on the lookout for an upcoming performance in late April in conjunction with the SBA and PILG. "Thank you to everyone from the school who showed up to support us" said Carlone. "You all know who you are and without you we wouldn't have gotten as far as we did."

## Kennex Chan sets new record for interscholastic competitions

By Brendan Horgan

The greatest oral advocate in the history of the University of Connecticut School of Law speaks English as his third language.

In his duties as Captain of the Jessup Moot Court team this February, Kennex Chan officially became the most prolific oral advocate in our school's history. The previous mark was set at seven competitions by Jay Hyne, and Chan's recent trip to New York City marks his eighth interscholastic tournament. Chan is also scheduled to compete in the Capital City Mock Trial tournament with the Mock Trial Society this fall, to set the mark at an impressive nine tournaments.

Chan's mock trial career began at Georgia Tech, where he ironically often competed against the current Mock Trial Society President, Colt Holmes (of the University of Georgia). Chan battled all over the southeast and honed his oratory skills that would eventually become lethal.

Upon arriving at UConn, he quickly left his mark by winning the William R. Davis Mock Trial Competition with his partner Matt Nettleton. He followed up his victory in the spring by competing in the Lo-

iselle Moot Court competition and earning a spot on the Moot Court Board. If Chan's record included these intra-scholastic competitions, his final tally would be a staggering eleven competitions.

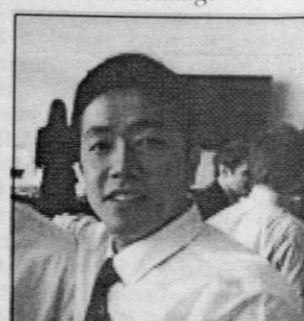
Last fall, a mock trial competitor was forced to drop out of a tournament three days before the competition due to a family emergency. Chan rose to the occasion, threw himself into the case-file, and argued in dominant fashion against opponents who had months to prepare.

For anyone who has ever competed in Davis, Loiselle, Hastie, or any interscholastic competition, you know the rigor of preparation on top of course work is almost unbearable. Kennex Chan spent three years in constant preparation. His work ethic, ability to multitask, and attention to detail are unmatched. He represents the UConn Law all over the country, sacrificing hundreds of hours of sleep in the pursuit of perfection. Everyone who knows Kennex is certain that we have only seen the tip of the iceberg.

Please join *Pro Se* in congratulating Kennex Chan on this historic achievement. If, down the road, you ever find yourself as his opposing counsel, we recommend settling.



Katie Yates/UConn  
Carlone on guitar.



Kennex Chan/UConn  
Chan at Emory.

# Commentary

## Robson's Ramblings

By Scott Robson

It's a tradition steeped in historical precedent. It pre-dates American jurisprudence by a significant margin. In fact, many believe the practice stretches back beyond organized religion, beyond written language, beyond mankind's control of stone and fire. It precedes and even transcends law as we understand it. And yet, to this very day, the custom is alive and well in many institutions of higher and legal education. Some would call it

indispensable to our chosen field.

It is cannibalism, ladies and gentlemen, that we concern ourselves with today. Cannibalism, the consumption of one being by beings of its own kind, is more widespread than most realize. It's not just in the stale jokes about the Donner Party or the love-hate relationship criminal law classes have with Dudley and Stevens. It's not contained to isolated pockets of jungle tribesmen. No, readers; it happens in the courtroom, the classroom,

the co-op. It happens in elections and e-boards and entertainment venues.

I do not refer strictly to one person eating the flesh of another. I'm sure that happens from time to time, given the stresses of a legal career. We all have our own ways of coping.

No, I refer instead to the symbolic acts of consumption and digestion that sometimes occur here and elsewhere in the world of law. Whether you call them cannibals or cutthroats, there are some who will not hesitate to

throw you (or me) under the bus. Some are obvious, some are subtle. For every Atticus Finch, there is a Hannibal Lecter. It's not necessary, it's not desirable, it's not appetizing. And yet, it is part of the way things are for the time being. UCONN Law has few cannibals, but I say it can do better. Join me, readers, in my Campaign to Crush Cannibalism.\* Only then will we be truly safe.

\*Meeting schedule TBA. Chianti and fava beans to be served.

## Breathe... It's Only Law School

By Roopa Modha

When I chose to go to law school, I honestly didn't know what I was getting myself into. My background was in science and computer science, but in a "Eureka!" moment (no a law dictionary did not fall on my head) I realized law school is where I belonged.

I began with an idyllic notion of law school, where we, the law students, would develop into guardians of justice. However, friends described law school as being a dark and scary vortex that sucks students in and turns them into highly competitive, ruthless robots. Luckily, this is far from the truth at UConn Law.

As a 1L, my experience has only been positive. Faculty, even those I don't have personally, and upper-class students are incredibly caring, supportive, and genuinely interested in helping us 1Ls adjust to the rigors of law school. My professors have created an environment that encourages participation and that embraces individuality. Though there are a lot of readings, the key to surviving the first year, in my opinion, is to take a step back and breathe. Expand your experience beyond just books. Get involved on campus and try to get to know your peers - they won't bite! In fact, they may become your closest allies in keeping you afloat.

I would compare the environment at UConn Law not to a vortex, but to that of a candy store. It may be overwhelming at first, but when you finally find what you're looking for, life is sweet! The key is to try different samples - i.e. join various classes and clubs to expose you to different facets of the law - until you find the ones you love. I am glad that I made the right choice in choosing UConn Law and look forward to the rest of my years here. I'm ready to sample away!

## Are all "B's" equal?

By Brendan Kelly

The famous B median policy allows for manipulation and abuse by students and faculty. The policy is strictly enforced in first year courses, but thereafter only in courses of 18+ students. Thus an A in a B median course and an A in a course in which every student earned an A are indistinguishable. Some argue that higher grades are warranted because the quality of papers in seminars is higher than that of written exams. This is unfair. Because exams are time-constrained, quality is expected to suffer. Given ample time to research, plan, and write a paper, paper quality should be higher. Therefore papers should be weighed against each other in the same manner as exams.

The reality of law school is that after one year students know which courses will yield higher grades. So if student X enrolls in these courses, student X is rewarded with a higher GPA. Meanwhile, if student Y takes B median courses, he will only earn a similar GPA by outperforming most classmates. Thus, students pass on courses that interest them because they do not want to risk a low grade, especially in a tough economy.

To remedy this, I propose a strict B (or B+, to offset lower overall grades) median for all three years and in all courses. Clinics should be pass/fail like externships. This way, the popularity of courses will reflect the subject matter and quality of professors, and not the likelihood of higher grades. Moreover, first year grades must not be diluted by inflated second and third year grades. At the least, transcripts should have notations for B median courses. Better yet, transcripts should list the average course grade next to the student's grade. This way grades have a context that reflects reality, rather than this myth that all grades are equal.

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## UConn Law basketball team victorious at WNEC invitational

By Drew Schaffer

Congratulations are in order for UConn Law's intramural basketball team who emerged victorious at the 36th annual WNEC Law basketball invitational in Springfield, Massachusetts. The team, who has been holding weekly open gym sessions in Hartford showed up ready to play and outmatched all seven of their opponents including a hard fought final game against 2010 champion Syracuse Law.

The tournament was held from February 11th to 13th at the WNEC School of Law and included 80 games played on four courts over three days. The tournament, which is the

only national law school basketball invitational in the country boasted 25 teams from 13 different law schools including: UConn, Vermont, Albany, Roger Williams, WNEC, Touro, Suffolk, Pace, Quinnipiac, Buffalo, Syracuse, New England and Northeastern.

Members of the 2011 team include: Aaron Roy, Alex Hornat, Franklin Perry, Joe Brady, Keegan McClure, Mike Salerno, Mike Williams, Paul Costa, Pete Golfman, William Goodbody, and William Herchel. *Pro Se* congratulates the members of the team on their tournament dominance.



Joe Brady/UConn

Basketball team poses with tournament trophy.

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a knock on a door. The camera's point of view is as though we are looking out the door at him as he promises to personally respond to Facebook, Twitter and Youtube questions.

Murphy highlighted his "Buy American" program intended to boost domestic manufacturing. He admits that low value items will inevitably be made overseas, but military, high-tech and green energy manufacturing can and must be part of the American economy.

Murphy also wove "Buy American" into reduced defense spending. Congress spends money on things the defense department does not need while spending millions on overseas contractors. If wasteful projects are eliminated and the defense department is required to use American contractors wherever possible, Murphy explained, "we can shrink spending and protect American jobs."

Murphy also discussed the long-planned Springfield-New Haven commuter rail line, specifically, the need for an Environmental Impact Statement on replacing the line's second track. Until the 1990's, it had existed for decades. "NEPA is very impor-

tant," Murphy said referring to the National Environmental Policy Act. However, Murphy agreed the commuter line is a perfect example of where the act needs improvement. Careful revision, he suggested, could remove some of the high barriers to building necessary infrastructure yet without environmental degradation.

Murphy had served in the Connecticut House and Senate prior to his Congressional term. When asked why he chose public service Murphy said he sensed "a growing disconnect between government and its citizens." He explained that while growing up, his family instilled in him an obligation to give back. Asked if Americans still value public service, Murphy raised some concerns. "I worry about the demonization of public officials in the media" which implies that most officials are "buffoons." However, Murphy said, "Ninety-five percent are good" and are "in [politics] for the right reasons." "There are more people like me" than not, said Murphy, "Good people."

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respect that." Indeed, Attorney Murphy's evocative words and hard stance that our system of government is inherently prejudiced against women causes a feeling that is simultaneously uncomfortable and strangely refreshing; it's a stance that can make even women uneasy. "No one wants to hear that their system of government is inherently prejudiced against them," said Panno. But it really is a refreshing and encouraging reminder that there are those who dare to practice law by challenging it with what they believe is right.

Attorney Murphy spoke candidly when she said that there is no firm for her type of law. Rather, she has a purpose and a goal that she envisions, and then pieces together laws to achieve that end. When filling out renewal forms for her ABA membership, under type of lawyer, she checks "other." She's been criticized for being a radical and a liberal. Ironically, such criticism from moderates and conservatives is an affirmation that Attorney Murphy is successfully doing the very thing she set out to do when she left her prosecutorial role: fighting out loud for crime victim's rights.

Words are powerful, and that is one area in which Attorney Murphy is advocating change. She runs a program at New England School of Law in Boston which looks for politically incorrect language in judges' opinions and then strongly urges official revision. While some words may be casually interchangeable to a detached reader, word choice has the power to engender very different reactions from the affected victim. When a child is forced to execute oral sex, and a judge's opinion states "the child performed oral sex," the difference in word connotation is of consequence a matter of principle—that should and does count for something.

WLSA continues to seek out people from all backgrounds and organizes diverse events. Please join WLSA on March 15, for a screening in the Library 4th Floor Lounge at 6 p.m. of the film "What I Want My Words To Do To You." The film is about the stigma attached to female inmates, and a look into what drove them to commit the crimes that resulted in their incarceration. On April 21st WLSA will be hosting its biggest event, the annual Spring Luncheon, where members of the student body and community can hear speakers and participate in discussions on various women's rights issues.