A Variety of Student Backgrounds
Heightens the Learning Experience for All

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR from Turkey, twins with similar career paths, a volleyball player with interests in transnational law, a pastry chef, a journal editor-in-chief, and an Air Force veteran—these and many others add up to one of the most diverse and exceptional student communities in Washington University Law’s history.

“We’re always trying to attract the best and brightest—individuals whom we can help become great lawyers and great citizens,” says Mary Ann Clifford, assistant dean of admissions. “It’s an extremely diverse school in terms of where students come from and underrepresented minority groups. We’re very pleased this year to again have students from a wide variety of backgrounds.”

The 2008–09 first-year class, for example, is drawn from the largest applicant pool (3,700) in recent years, has the highest median LSAT score (167), a high median GPA (3.6), and a strong level of racial and gender diversity: 29 percent are minorities, and 45 percent are women. They come from top-ranked undergraduate schools and join their second- and third-year classmates who also have exceptional credentials.

Compelling principles drive the school’s commitment to diversity, says Kent Syverud, dean and the Ethan A.H. Shepley University Professor. “It is valuable to learn from people with a variety of backgrounds. It enriches education on many levels when everyone brings something different to the law school community.”

The school’s rich mix helped Michael Spivey decide in 2008 to become assistant dean for career services, strategy, and marketing. “There’s something special about Washington University Law,” says Spivey, who previously directed admissions at Vanderbilt University. “Employers want diverse students because they have diverse clients. What’s more, they want students who interact in a diverse environment, which we have here. It’s one of our foundational strengths.”

The breadth of backgrounds, Spivey adds, creates an open and tolerant environment. “I meet with students every day,” he notes. “They have different backgrounds, mindsets, and ideologies. Because of their diversity, they also are willing to listen to others.”
Dilara Heravi, a student in the Intellectual Property Master’s Degree (LLM) Program, marvels at the geographical breadth of her fellow students. “We have colleagues from many countries—China, Taiwan, Portugal, Poland, Kuwait, Romania, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan,” says Heravi, an international student from Turkey and a law graduate of Koc University, Istanbul. “So when we study together, we have an opportunity to compare the systems in different countries.”

The Fulbright grant recipient brings her own varied background to the mix. Born in Smyrna, Turkey, she grew up in Istanbul, and, according to the Turkish educational system, went to a four-year law school immediately after high school. During her summers she worked at three Istanbul law firms that put her and her fluent English to work helping lawyers, translating documents, and writing memoranda.

She earned her law degree in 2008 and won a scholarship to the summer federalism program at Switzerland’s University of Fribourg. Steeped in Turkey’s unitary system of government, Heravi found the federalism approach interesting and potentially useful for her native land. “We have minorities. We have Kurdish people. We have non-Muslims. There has been debate about whether some sort of federalism might work,” she says.

Heravi is fascinated by the intersection of intellectual property law and the Internet. “We live in a knowledge century,” she observes. “I’m interested in infringements of intellectual property on the Internet, easily done with just a click.” Though Heravi hopes to practice intellectual property law, she says that Turkish attorneys typically do not specialize. And eventually she hopes to teach law. “I love teaching,” she says. “I love to share with people. I want to practice law—to see the practical view and also the daily life of a lawyer—and then teach.”
Intellectual property law is the chosen specialty as well for third-year law students Christian and Christopher Hines, twin brothers from St. Louis and 2005 Washington University School of Engineering & Applied Science graduates in computer science. For them, intellectual property is the perfect combination of engineering and law.

“I like engineering and computer science,” says CHRISTOPHER HINES. “I like the way it makes you think and analyze things.” After graduating and working for Citigroup in St. Louis as a programmer and implementation manager, he soon realized that he was looking for more than a computer science career.

Once in law school, Hines gravitated naturally to intellectual property law. The IP and Business Formation Legal Clinic, in particular, interested him. He worked with clients on starting companies, developing a business presence on the Internet, and seeking to patent inventions. He also gained intellectual property law experience during two internships at Polsinelli Shalton Flanigan Suelthaus PC. “It gave me a chance to see what working in a big law firm is like,” he says. Evidently, he—and the firm—liked what they saw: he’ll return there after graduation this spring.

Hines will take with him a wealth of skills. “Law school,” he muses, “has given me the confidence to think about problems and use what I know to solve them, even if I haven’t dealt with that kind of problem before.” He also participated in the Trial Team, which he says “forces us to get out there and stand on our feet.” Team competitions took him to Los Angeles; Kansas City, Missouri; and Austin, Texas.

Another experience was more personal. For two years, he has served as a “Big Brother” to a St. Louis youngster, now a high school sophomore. “He’s interested in technology, so we build computers,” Hines says. “We hang out and play video games, but we also talk a lot about what he wants to do after high school and what college means to him.”

Hines clearly has a heart for service. “I want to make sure,” he says of his unfolding career, “that I take advantage of everything I’ve learned so that when my opportunity comes, I can use these skills to help others.”

Like Christopher, CHRISTIAN HINES also worked for Citigroup as a programmer and project manager after graduating, and like Christopher he began to look beyond computer science. But Christian Hines also began to “dabble” in politics, illuminating the usefulness of a law degree. When introduced to intellectual property law, however, he made his decision.

“Growing up with computers, I enjoy technology,” he explains. “I don’t want to let that go. Patent law gives me the opportunity to do both.” Taking the same IP clinic as his twin last fall confirmed his enthusiasm. “It was a great experience,” he says, regarding his hands-on work in copyright, trademark, and patent law.

He also values being part of the law school community. “Outside of academics,” he says, “the most important thing for me has been learning how to network effectively with my peers. Getting involved in extracurricular...
activities and finding things I’m passionate about have changed me for the better.”

Those activities include the Black Law Students Association, for which he served as treasurer, and the Christian Legal Society. He also joined the Barely Legal Theater Company, which puts on zany productions filled with political satire, and reveled in its antics and the chance to cut loose with fellow law students. And like his brother, he was on the Trial Team, an experience that has left him intrigued with the possibility of being a trial lawyer.

Focus on Student Leadership

DANIA S. BECKER
Class Year: 2009
Organization: Washington University Global Studies Law Review Editor-in-Chief
Employment: After law school, working as an associate at Winston & Strawn LLP in Chicago

“A THE BEST LEADERS have a keen ability to stay focused on their goals above all else. In my experience, projects go much more smoothly when people stop thinking in terms of taking credit and placing blame, but rather concentrate on doing what’s necessary to get the job done right. Washington University Law is a great place to develop these skills because our students and administration are so supportive. Our Global staff members, for example, constantly impress me with their eagerness to put in the hard—and sometimes tedious—work to make sure our final publication is perfect.”

AARON K. BLOCK
Class Year: 2009
Organization: SBA President and Washington University Law Review Notes Editor
Employment: After law school, clerking for Chief Judge Jon P. McCalla, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Tennessee; then heading to Alston & Bird LLP in Atlanta

“I FEEL VERY FORTUNATE to be attending Washington University Law. Being a part of this community, including serving as SBA president and as Notes Editor for the Law Review, has given me the opportunity to learn both in and out of class from and with some amazing minds. My professors and fellow students also happen to be great people. That’s a real asset to the law school—intelligence is important, but the world runs on human interaction, so personality matters, too.”

SADENA THEVARAJAH
Class Year: 2010
Organization: South Asian Law Student Association Co-President; SBA Diversity Committee Member; Regional Negotiation Team and ABA Regional Representation in Mediation Team Member

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LAW’S holistic legal training provides many ways for students to develop their individual legal strengths. To begin, the school offers a strong curricular base of research and writing. Putting those skills to use through student activities and practice-oriented course work has been a rewarding affirmation of why I came to law school. After my experiences advocating against human rights abuses in Sri Lanka with the South Asian Law Student Association and combating public health issues with the Interdisciplinary Environmental Clinic, I am certain that Washington University can help each student tailor his or her law school education to his or her needs and interests.”

By Ann Nicholson

For now, though, his future lies in patent law. He spent his first summer at Bryan Cave LLP, and then went to Chicago for his second summer, interning at the IP firm of Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione. He has accepted an offer to join that firm after graduation in May.
Global issues are a consuming interest for second-year law student MOLLY KELLEY, who majored in political science at Notre Dame University with minors in European studies and in the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics Program. She spent her sophomore year living and studying in Angers, France: “It was a life-changing experience,” she says. Before law school, she served as an honors paralegal at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), working on cross-border mergers cases and using her French translation skills.

A member of the inaugural class of the Transnational Law Program, Kelley will first complete two and a half years at Washington University, taking core international law classes. She’ll then spend three semesters at the Netherlands’ Utrecht University, ultimately earning both a JD and an LLM. “It’s uniquely tailored for people interested in a global practice,” she says.

“The world is smaller than ever before,” Kelley observes. “I saw at the Department of Justice how important cooperation and coordination are. Transnational law is a way to prepare to meet those kinds of needs.” Kelley will pursue these interests further this summer, when she returns to the DOJ to work in antitrust criminal enforcement. The Government Lawyering Clinic this spring and an internship in the U.S. Attorney’s Office in the Southern District of Illinois are helping her prepare.

Kelley’s other passion in the law is public service. She is a member of the Pro Bono Alliance of the Public Service Advisory Board, which seeks to identify opportunities for pro bono law work in the community. She has worked this year at a city legal aid clinic.

Though spare time might seem in short supply, she also finds time to play on the University’s club volleyball team. “It’s been fun,” she says. “I love volleyball!”

Crossing the Aisle

Two Political Opposites Emerge Best Friends

IN TODAY’S WORLD, “diversity” can take many forms, but two Washington University Law students are making their own case for political diversity.

Meet second-year law student Erick “E.D.” Harris and third-year law student Scott Talkov. Harris is a dyed-in-the-wool Republican from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, while Talkov is a lifelong Democrat from Los Angeles.

Both have worked on political campaigns for their respective parties—among others, Harris worked for former Senator Jim Talent, while Talkov participated in city campaigns in Los Angeles.

One might not expect them to have much in common, but they share a love of politics and at least one other thing—an address. The two decided to become housemates long before they began receiving media attention during the 2008 presidential race; Harris and
There’s as much diversity to be found in law students’ passions as in their backgrounds, and for first-year student **David Eng**, it’s cooking. The son of immigrants from Canton, China, Eng grew up in New York City and majored in political science at Amherst College. But what really interested him was cooking, so he talked his way into a job at Blue Hill at Stone Barns, Tarrytown, New York, a respected restaurant, farm, and food education center.

From there, he went to New York City’s top-ranked Gramercy Tavern as a pastry cook. “I wanted to work for the best,” he says simply. “That’s how you become a good cook.” Regrettably, the long hours standing caused a painful foot condition, and he realized he had to pursue a different career. After considering various options, he decided on law school.

In addition to his restaurant experience, he had also worked for the National Audubon Society in Washington, D.C., and environmental law intrigued him. The law school’s Interdisciplinary Environmental Clinic was one of the reasons he chose Washington University.

Though part of his heart is still in cooking—he laughs about being in demand at school social functions—Eng is thriving as a law student. He’s grateful for the mentors he’s found both among faculty and students. “There’s just an amazing amount of experience and knowledge here,” he says. “The professors go out of their way to make themselves available.”

He appreciates also the Career Services Office and has taken advantage of the panels and programs it presents.

Eng is a member of the Environmental Law Society and has begun a law school wine society. A runner, he competed in the 2004 Chicago Marathon. “I really enjoy running,” he says. “It’s a great way to meet other students.”

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Talkov had met months earlier at law school.

“He thought I was a Republican!” laughs Talkov, remembering their first meeting. “E.D., much more than I do, likes to hang out on the Republican side of the aisle—or rather, E.D. likes to hang out on his own side of the aisle; he enjoys his bubble.”

At that, Harris laughs.

“You would disagree?” probes Talkov. Harris responds: “I would not be your roommate if I only associated with members of my own party.”

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That kind of quick, back-and-forth exchange caught the attention of a political campaign manager and lawyer friend of Talkov’s who “pitched” the unlikely pair to Los Angeles Times columnist Steve Lopez.

Collins hails from Jackson, Mississippi, where famed author Eudora Welty was a neighbor. She majored in literature at Vanderbilt University, with a focus on southern authors and Welty, in particular.

Graduating in 2005 from Vanderbilt, she interned with the Jackson Public Defender’s Office. “It was an exciting and eye-opening experience,” she notes, and it confirmed her interest in law school. It also shaped a commitment to social justice. She has especially valued law classes “that tackle difficult social issues and force students to articulate complex views.”

These interests found focus in her work on the Washington University Journal of Law & Policy, where this year she is editor-in-chief. “Each volume concentrates on a pertinent area of law,” she explains. “We bring together legal and policy scholars in our symposia.”

Published three times a year, the journal is demanding and time-consuming, but Collins is enthusiastic. “I love getting to work with authors and with my peers in this setting,” she says. She has developed a keen interest in policy development and particularly in gender issues; she has written a note for the journal proposing changes to address discrimination women still face in the workplace. She also joined the Women’s Law Caucus and, last year, served as president. This spring she taught an undergraduate course, Women & the Law.

Fittingly, Collins has accepted an offer to join the Nashville firm of Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz PC—it awards billable hours for pro bono work. She sees the same concern for helping others throughout the law student community. “They’re bright and selfless people,” she observes, “very active in social issues and community service.”

One point of view the two definitely have in common: public involvement is key to a successful democracy.

“The real enemy is not the Republicans or the Democrats,” Talkov says. “It’s the people who just don’t care—who don’t vote or pay attention to what’s going on. That’s the enemy—not any one political party.”

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Lopez wrote about the two, and his column—plus the perceived “novelty” of an African-American supporting McCain over Obama—caused CNN’s attention. The pair, who also reflected the mood of a swing-vote state, offered their perspectives on national television both before and after the election.
Following graduation in May, Talkov is planning to work for the law firm of Reid & Hellyer in Riverside, California. Harris, who has another year left of law school, will be working in the Kansas City office of Spencer Fane Britt & Browne LLP during summer 2009. Neither Talkov nor Harris sees anything strange about their friendship, which they are sure will endure. *“I think if more people were willing to reach out to others, or maybe even live with others, they would find out that they really aren’t that different. Understanding the differences can help them work toward compromise,”* Talkov says. “I’m sure E.D. and I will continue to act as a sounding board for each other for many years to come.”

“Our relationship is like a fan of the Jayhawks having a best friend who is a fan of the Tigers,” says Harris. “That doesn’t change the fact that you both love football.”

By Tim Fox