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UB Law Forum

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New Early Start Program for Bar Preparation

Taking the bar exam is a grueling and traumatic ordeal, an initiation rite aspiring attorneys must somehow endure. Typically, exam-takers study and take review courses for eight weeks. When the two test days finally arrive, they spend six hours a day emptying their brains on tricky multiple-choice questions and exhaustive essays.

Then comes the endless wait for a letter from the Bar Examiners. Unfortunately, it does not always bring good news.

To help UB Law students prepare both academically and psychologically for this rigorous test, the school has initiated an innovative program called "Early Start." A seven-session course, it was presented for the first time on weekends in late January, February and March.

At no fee to the students, the BarBri,

Marino and Pieper bar review firms provided substantive lectures and testing on three important bar exam subjects: contracts, torts and property. Tests consisted of essay and multi-state questions. These questions were then analyzed in lectures and written materials.

"By taking the three tests and obtaining feedback, the students' test-taking skills should improve, as should their substantive knowledge," said Professor Philip Halpern, associate dean for student affairs and organizer of the course.

"There are no more three heavily tested subjects than contracts, torts and property, so from the viewpoint of substantive coverage, it seems wise to dedicate attention to them," said Halpern.

He hopes the program will help students begin to learn the necessary techniques for writing the essay answers

and doing the multi-state, "for success in these requires more than substantive knowledge."

The other primary benefit is attitudinal.

"Persons facing the bar exam fall roughly into three groups," he says. "The overconfident, who will not put sufficient time and effort into preparation; the unduly fearful, whose preparation and performance will be hampered by unrealistic fear of the task confronting them; and persons with a healthy respect for the task.

"I hope the Early Start program can increase the numbers in the third group at the expense of the other two. Of course, an incidental benefit is to permit consumer comparison among the three bar review courses." ■

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For details and assistance, call the
Career Development Office at (716) 636-2056

Clinic Helps Elderly Get Home Health Care

By Anthony H. Szczygiel

The current system of health care coverage, while a practical headache, offers a rich educational experience for our law students. Our Legal Services for the Elderly Clinic, part of the Law School's Legal Assistance Program, primarily focuses on the problems of access to and payment for medical care. This year, the clinic worked extensively with one legal issue in particular: Medicare's newly expanded coverage of home health care services.

The clinic is based in the offices of Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled and Disadvantaged, located at 200 Delaware Ave. Students must first familiarize themselves with the variety of medical coverage programs available — Medicare, VA, private insurance, CHAMPUS, CHAMPVA, Medicaid, Hill-Burton, EISEP and EPIC, to name a few — and the various ways these programs interrelate or conflict. The law students then are assigned "live client" cases which are chosen from the caseload of the Legal Services for the Elderly, Disabled and Disadvantaged office. The cases can involve a full range of practice skills, including client counseling, factual development, negotiation and administrative hearings.

Long-term care is a major problem for our elderly and disabled clients, both in terms of finding appropriate modes of care and paying for the care. Recently there has been a dramatic improvement in Medicare coverage for one aspect of long-term care. Home health care benefits were included in the 1965 legislation creating Medicare, the federal medical insurance program for the

