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UB Law Brings Home the Gold!

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Alumni Association:

UB Law brings home the

GOLD!

By Lisa Mueller '93

This year's Olympians aren't the only ones with visions of gold dancing through their heads. The UB Law Alumni Association has its own team of young, ambitious and dedicated stars — the 2000-01 GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade) Group board of directors. Committed to the Law School and the activities of its recent graduates, the GOLD Group board represents UB Law's finest recent graduates.

Following an extraordinary year of achievements led by the 1999-2000 GOLD Group president, Wendy M. Irving '91, the torch has passed to this year's president, David R. Pfalzgraf Jr. '97.

"It was both an honor and pleasure to serve as president of the GOLD Group," says Irving, assistant dean for advancement and development at the University at Buffalo. "The visibility of GOLD has increased tremendously and the board's efforts have ensured rewards for GOLD members and the legal community at large. It was truly invigorating to work with such a dynamic GOLD Group board, as well as having the support of UB Law Alumni President Ken Manning. I know under the leadership of David Pfalzgraf, GOLD will continue to be a major force on behalf of the graduates of the last decade."

Pfalzgraf, of Rupp, Baase and Pfalzgraf, has assumed the role of team leader and head coach with great enthusiasm and a clear agenda for another year marked by success. "As this year's president,"

says Pfalzgraf, "I look forward to continuing the outstanding progress the GOLD Group has made in fostering a strong relationship with the Law School, the Law Alumni Association and Buffalo's legal community. Under my leadership, the GOLD Group will continue to focus on continuing legal education programs, a variety of social events, law school recruitment and alumni relations."

CLE Programs Earn High Scores

One of the GOLD Group's strongest events continues to be the UB Law Downtown breakfast series. Offering quality education programs to all members of the legal community, attendees can earn Continuing Legal Education credit and enjoy breakfast with their colleagues before tackling their day at the office. Partici-

pation in the program has grown dramatically over the past year, requiring the board to move the location of the lectures to a larger forum — the Hyatt Regency in downtown Buffalo.

"The GOLD Group has developed a continuing legal education program that has blossomed over the past year," says Pfalzgraf. "Attendance at our morning breakfast series has been phenomenal."

Much of the credit for the program's success can be attributed to the hard work and organization of Gretchen P. Aylward '95, chair of last year's education committee. "We were very pleased with the overwhelming success of the GOLD Group's CLE Programs this past year," says Aylward. "Attendance at the programs has continued to rise over the past two years. We anticipate another successful year."

Aylward will assist this year's new chair, Gregory A. Mattacola '98, of Chiacchia & Fleming, with the organization of this year's breakfast series. On Oct. 10, Michael S. Taheri presented "DWI: An Overview." A partner at the Buffalo law firm of Condon & Taheri, P.C., and a clinical instructor at UB Law, Taheri discussed how a DWI case is processed in criminal court from arraignment through sentencing.

With two more lectures in the game plan, the board looks forward to another year of rave reviews. "The GOLD Group is extremely encouraged by the number of attendees and by the positive feedback we receive after every lecture," says Pfalzgraf.

GOLD Socials Hit the Mark

The GOLD Group has significantly increased the scope of its social activities, drawing larger and livelier crowds than ever before. Through the efforts of the social committee, the GOLD Group has recently participated in a marathon of activities providing UB Law alums with an opportunity to mingle and network outside the formal office arena.

The committee is led by the GOLD Group's chief social butterfly, Hilary C. Banker '96, current chair for a second consecutive year. The past year's events got under way at the UB Alumni Arena, where students and alumni convened with graduates of the UB Schools of Medicine and Dentistry to cheer on the UB Bulls. Hockey season provided sporting enthusiasts with a second opportunity to organize a GOLD cheering section. In March, GOLD fans assembled at the HSBC Arena, where the Buffalo Sabres took on the Carolina Hurricanes.

Most noteworthy of all, the Gold Group hosted an end-of-the-year celebration this past May that shattered attendance



GOLD Group Officers and Directors

Seated, left to right: Social Chair Hilary C. Banker, Immediate Past President Wendy M. Irving, Christopher M. Marks, President David R. Pfalzgraf, Jr., Membership Chair Kenneth M. Gossel, Brigid M. Maloney, Stephanie Williams-Torres, Education Chair Gregory Mattacola, Executive Director Ilene Fleischmann and Susan E. Van Gelder

Standing, left to right: Glenn J. Bobeck, Secretary Joseph N. DelVecchio, Irene Chiu, Vice Dean Peter R. Pitegoff and Admissions Recruitment Chair Michael Radjavitch

Not pictured: President-Elect Gretchen P. Aylward, Amy J. Fitch, Alisa A. Lukasiewicz, Mari A. Moorman, Venita A. Parker, Carmen L. Snell and Stephen Yonaty

records. "We held a spectacularly successful social at the SoHo Grille on Chippewa, in downtown Buffalo. The turnout was incredible, and the party extended well into the evening," says Banker. "It was a great year for GOLD Group social events. We plan to replicate our success by continuing our traditional events, while also exploring new ideas for social interaction with alumni, law students and future law students."

Recruitment Efforts Are Ahead of the Game

One of the GOLD Group's most recent endeavors was the development of the Group's recruitment program. Begun last year by Brian D. Gwitt '98, former chair of the recruitment committee, the GOLD Group actively assists the law school in attracting and admitting top-notch students from across the nation. Single-handedly, Gwitt established a method of matching recent UB Law graduates with students considering UB Law School. GOLD graduates then contact the prospective stu-

dent to answer their questions, and offer them insight as they weigh their law school alternatives.

"The efforts of the GOLD Group membership, coordinated and led by Brian Gwitt, were instrumental in the 40 percent increase in application volume witnessed this fall at the Law School," says Jack D. Cox Jr., associate dean for admissions and financial aid at UB Law. "Brian developed a GOLD Group Volunteer Form, which obtained valuable information regarding individual GOLD Group members. This data was then matched with information about prospective members for our first-year class. With the match made — based on geography, undergraduate school or similar interest in areas of legal study — GOLD Group members were then provided with names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of prospects. A contact from a grad is a very important component of our recruiting strategy, and it would not have been possible without the

dedicated assistance of the GOLD Group."

The board is excited to continue this program by collaborating with the Law School's admissions team. "The GOLD Group has taken on a very active role in the Law School's recruitment process," says Pfalzgraf. "Board members have acted, and will continue to act, as ambassadors for the Law School by personally contacting high-caliber students from across the country. We look forward to working with Jack Cox to further develop this program and to maintain the board's connection to UB Law students." Michael Radjavitch '93, of Cary and Radjavitch, will chair this year's recruitment committee.

The Official 2000-01 GOLD Group Team Officers and Directors

Officer's of this year's GOLD Group include: David R. Pfalzgraf Jr., '97, of Rupp, Baase & Pfalzgraf, as president; Wendy M. Irving '91, of the University at Buffalo, as immediate past president;

Gretchen P. Aylward '95, of Phillips, Lytle, Hitchcock, Blaine & Huber, as president-elect; Joseph N. Del Vecchio '96, of National Fuel Gas, as secretary; Gregory A. Mattacola '98, of Chiacchia & Fleming, as education chair; Hilary C. Banker '96, of Burgio, Kita & Curvin, as social chair; Kenneth M. Gossel '91, of National Fuel Distribution Corp., as membership chair; Michael Radjavitch '93, of Cary & Radjavitch, as recruitment chair; and James M. Gerlach '97, of the U.S. Naval and Marine Corp. Reserve Center, as communications chair.

Additional board members include:

Glenn J. Bobeck '92, of Phillips, Lytle, Hitchcock, Blaine & Huber; Irene Chiu '00, of Hodgson, Russ, Andrews, Woods & Goodyear; Amy J. Fitch '96, of Hodgson, Russ, Andrews, Woods & Goodyear; Natalie Lesh Schaffer '93, of UB Law School; Alisa A. Lukasiewicz '95, of Hurwitz & Fine, P.C.; Brigid Maloney '98, of the Erie County Attorney's Office; Christopher M. Marks '93, of Buffalo Financial Associates; Mari A. Moorman '99, of Altreuter Habermehl & Callanan; Venita A. Parker '95, of the Law Offices of Venita A. Parker; Carmen L. Snell '92, of Blue Cross & Blue Shield; Susan E. Van Gelder '97, of Saperston & Day, P.C.; Stephanie Williams-Torres '00, of Hodgson, Russ, Andrews, Woods & Goodyear; and Stephen L. Yonaty '94, of Hodgson, Russ, Andrews, Woods & Goodyear.

Alumni graduating within the past 10 years are automatically GOLD Group members. If you are interested in becoming a member of the GOLD Group board of directors, or for more information on upcoming GOLD events, call David Pfalzgraf at (716) 854-3400.