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Law School Report

Dean's Advisory Council members bring their expertise to class

As the practice of law becomes increasingly specialized, even knowing the range of career options open to new attorneys becomes a challenge. A recent initiative arising from UB Law School's Dean's Advisory Council aims to bridge that knowledge gap by bringing into the classroom lawyers practicing in widely varied specialties.

The idea came out of brainstorming sessions among the Dean's Advisory Council, a national group of UB Law alumni who work to help maintain continuity between the Law School curriculum and the real-world practice of law.

"We started thinking about how the alumni can help in terms of broadening students' perceptions of what the law is all about and what kinds of careers they could have," said Thomas R. Bremer '79, chairman of the group and the retired senior vice president of U.S. Surgical Corp. "We want to broaden their perspective."

Attorneys will come to the Law School and present to a single class session, with the possibility of meeting with faculty and administrators as well. Members of the Dean's Advisory Council are recruiting for the project first among themselves, building on a series of lectures Bremer presented a couple of years ago about corporate acquisitions, his field of expertise.

In addition to Bremer, other DAC members who have already taught in the law school include Jeffrey L. Tanenbaum '76, a partner in Weil, Gotshal & Manges; Brian M. Martin '88, vice president of Sun Microsystems Inc.; and Gerry and Judith Ittig '71, of Ittig & Ittig, P.C.

The first presenter in the new DAC program was Gary A. DeWaal '80, executive vice president and general counsel of the financial services firm Fimat

USA. He met March 3 with Professor John Henry Schlegel's class and spoke about the regulation of derivatives.

DeWaal teaches at Brooklyn Law School a course called Derivatives Trading: Practice and Law, and says wryly that "it was easy for me to come up to UB, because I just collapsed my 14-week course to three hours."

But he said it was important to expose UB Law students to his practice area. "I love this field," he said, "and there is nothing like this taught at UB Law School. I happen to think it is a growth field, in such areas as prosecution of money laundering. I hope that UB Law does expand its program in financial services. There are opportunities here in New York City, and as they expand the program I hope that more UB Law graduates will take advantage of them."

He also took the opportunity to note the value of the joint J.D./MBA program he took at UB, saying that it prepared him well for the complexities of corporate law.

Deborah J. Scott, vice dean for de-

velopment, said the initiative is intended to have a mentoring component as well, by enabling students and practitioners to network and by providing students with a friendly contact as they plan their careers.

"The intention is to give opportunities to students to be mentored in a variety of ways," she said, "either on the day the alumnus comes in or perhaps later on."

"Also behind all this," Scott said, "is the showcasing of our successful alumni, to give students the knowledge that there are many very successful attorneys out there doing a variety of interesting jobs, and unique sorts of jobs that they would not normally have known about. I think that shines a light on our alumni."

"For the alumni, there is a lot of satisfaction in helping students ultimately get into careers that really work for them. And I think there is an aspect to this which is linked to Career Services, in that if we can help our students get good jobs in some of these areas, it continues to enhance the reputation of the Law School."

Adds Bremer, the Dean's Advisory Council chairman: "What we are striving for is people who started a different career path. We were really looking for people with unusual backgrounds who can come in and say, you do not have to do what everybody else is doing."



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