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From Face-To-Face to Facebook: UB Law Reaches out to Alumni in Person and Online

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From face-to-face to Facebook

UB Law reaches out to alumni in person and online

Looking to build even stronger ties with loyal alumni, the Law School and the UB Law Alumni Association are going where the alums are – both in person and online. Ongoing initiatives to strengthen the bonds between the school and its graduates, wherever they may work or live, as well as raise UB Law’s profile nationwide, include an expanding presence on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, video clips of events and recruiting materials on YouTube, and a renewed push to establish and cultivate alumni chapters in several cities with good concentrations of UB-trained lawyers, according to Ilene R. Fleischmann, the administrator who oversees the Law School’s external relations.

“For over a century, Buffalo was a well-regarded regional law school, and a well kept secret,” says Fleischmann, who is vice dean for alumni, PR and communications at the Law School, and executive director of the UB Law Alumni Association. “Now, under Dean Mutua’s leadership, we want to move up to become a top 50 law school. To do so, it is critically important to have a national profile. That will help us recruit the brightest students and faculty, help our graduates get hired by the finest firms, and help us build and strengthen alumni relationships that will move our law school forward.”

Kristina Lively, the school’s Webmaster, says UB Law is in good company as it expands its electronic presence. “Law schools are becoming more competitive,” she says, “and there are other schools that are already using these tools. But we are ahead of the game as far as being open to using these technologies for the school.”

The Law School has long had a Web site (www.law.buffalo.edu), of course – “The Web site is always going to be the mother ship of the information on the Law School,” Lively says. “We’re adding to it by bringing in elements like our

YouTube clips, and we always point from our YouTube channel to our Web site. There is always that exchange going on.

“But information also needs to travel to where people are, and Facebook is one example of where people are spending time. Our students are there, prospective students are there, and our alumni are there.”

The Law School has established a page on Facebook (www.law.buffalo.edu/Facebook.asp) that’s chock-full of class reunion photos, news releases, announcements and links to video clips. Visitors can also add their own comments. Plans are in the works to establish Facebook pages as well for individual classes, reunion classes and alumni chapters. In addition, the school’s admissions office created a Facebook page for accepted students, allowing them to start to build community even before they get to campus.

A further step, Lively says, is to make the Law School’s information portable by placing it on Twitter; alumni and



Alumni say “cheese” in Washington, Cleveland, NYC,

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Alumni Social at Ceiba Restaurant



Left to right: Emily G. Conley '08, Nicole C. Lee '02, Marc Bayard, Stacy A. Tromble '07 and Vice Dean for Administration James R. Newton

CLEVELAND

The Club at Key Center in Cleveland



Left to right: Margaret W. Wong '76, Executive Director Ilene Fleischmann, Gregory P. Stein '08, Assistant Executive Director Lisa Mueller '88 and Susan H. Poole '97

NEW YORK CITY

Dean’s Dinner at the Lotos Club



Ellen Katz Forrest '76 and Kenneth B. Forrest '76

others can “follow” UB Law by going to www.twitter.com/ublawn and clicking the Join Today button. Whenever they access Twitter, whether it is through the Twitter Web site or the way most people use the service, via cell phone, they’ll receive the latest information from the Law School’s news feed. The Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy also has its own Twitter account, at www.twitter.com/baldycenter.

This is in addition to the Law School’s channel on YouTube, the wildly popular video upload site, at www.youtube.com/ublawschool. Lively notes that it’s free to post videos on the site, and that as an educational institution, the Law School isn’t limited by the site’s restrictions on the length and size of videos. “We can put entire lectures

up there, or high-definition clips,” she says. One of the most popular has been a 10-minute clip of consumer activist Ralph Nader’s sometimes contentious give-and-take with students following his appearance in O’Brian Hall last year. A series of video testimonials from current and recently graduated students is also online. Another portal is LinkedIn, at www.law.buffalo.edu/LinkedIn.asp.

All of these avenues of communication, Lively says, are as natural as breathing to young people. “The generations that are coming up expect this,” she says. “They have grown up with it.

But it’s not just young people. Facebook, for example, is becoming more and more popular among the older generations.”

As much as online forums build relationships, though, there is nothing like some face time, and the Law School is establishing and solidifying alumni chapters in a number of cities where UB Law graduates live and work.

“We’ve had chapters in the past, but nothing too formal and nothing ongoing,” says Lisa M. Mueller ’93, assistant dean for alumni and communications and assistant director of the UB Law Alumni Association. “Dean Mutua is very focused on reaching out and expanding our relations with our alumni, not just in Western New York but everywhere else. We all go off in different directions and have such full plates, so it can be difficult to maintain that connection with the school. This is another way we keep in touch.”

So, she says, over the past year alumni steering committees have been established in **Albany, Rochester, New York City and Washington, D.C.** A new chapter in **Ohio** will alternate events between Cleveland and Cincinnati, and in the future, Mueller says, alumni chapters are likely in Boston, Chicago and Florida. Law School staffers have traveled to meet with the steering committees, Mueller says, communicating the dean’s vision of the school’s future and emphasizing the importance of broad

networking with alumni.

The Rochester chapter, she says, has been especially active, and the new chapter in Albany is crucial as the school works to press its legislative interests in the state capital.

“We have had a long history of working with different individuals in these areas, so we already have a good collection of go-to people who have always been dedicated volunteers,” Mueller says. “They then gave us leads to other alums who might be interested in helping. It’s a wonderful combination of established volunteers and new individuals who bring a fresh perspective to those areas.”

And as the school works to expand its digital footprint, she says, online tools like Facebook are a cost-effective way to stay in touch. “Economically, this is a tough time to be spending additional money,” Mueller says, “and social networking offers a great way to reach out to our alums at a minimal cost. That’s what our alums are using – they’re already networking among themselves. If we don’t join them there, we are missing out on an opportunity to connect with them.”

Where to go to contact your regional alumni chapter:

- law.buffalo.edu/AlumniDC.asp
- law.buffalo.edu/AlumniRochester.asp
- law.buffalo.edu/AlumniOhio.asp
- law.buffalo.edu/AlumniAlbany.asp
- law.buffalo.edu/AlumniNYC.asp

YouTube

twitter

flickr

Saratoga Springs and Rochester

SARATOGA SPRINGS
Dean’s Dinner at the Lotos Club



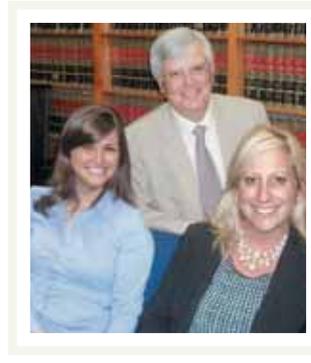
Matthew R. Coseo '05, chair of the Albany alumni steering committee with wife Mary Kate Coseo '05, in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

ROCHESTER
CLE and Reception at the Radisson Hotel



Left to right: Karen Bailey Turner '96, Melissa A. Meyer '02, P. Adam Militello '07 and Norma A. Polizzi '01.

ROCHESTER
Lunch with the judges



Left to right: Monroe County ADA Sara S. Van Strydonck '04, Hon. Thomas M. Van Strydonck '73 and Kristy Karle '97.

For additional photos go to:
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