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Improved and in Touch: New Alumni Offerings Make It Easier to Stay Close to UB Law

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Alumni Association

Improved and in touch

New alumni offerings make it easier to stay close to UB Law

With friendships forged in the crucible of what may be the toughest three years of their lives, UB Law alumni have always been uncommonly close. Now the Law School is taking significant steps toward solidifying that community for years beyond Commencement.

A new directory of more than 9,000 alumni, new initiatives by the GOLD (Graduates of the Last Decade) Group, and a significant enhancement in the Law School's Web presence are all intended to help graduates stay connected with the school and with each other.

The benefits are both professional and personal, said Lisa M. Mueller, associate director of communications and coordinator of the Law School's CLE program. "Younger attorneys do not have a lot of time to pull themselves away from the paperwork and the office," Mueller said. "Options like the GOLD Group give them another opportunity to get together with other attorneys."

The GOLD Group offers both education and social events to help graduates of the past 10 years to make the sometimes difficult transition from law school to practice. "It is important to know how to ease into the legal community," Mueller said.

The group supports that process with social events that put new lawyers in touch with each other, and with Continuing Legal Education programs that focus on the nuts and bolts of legal practice. The group offers three one-hour programs each year, free to every dues-paying member of the UB Law Alumni Association. Somewhat surprisingly, Mueller said, these CLE programs draw a cross-section of both new and

experienced attorneys, as even experienced lawyers may benefit from a brush-up in areas that are outside their concentrations.

New this past year was a collaboration with the Erie Institute of Law, an Erie County Bar Association presenter, on a "mini medical school for lawyers" dealing with the medical aspects of back injuries.

Now these CLE programs are being made available via teleconference – ideal for participants outside the metro Buffalo area – and on videotape. Thus all New York State residents can take advantage of these learning opportunities.

GOLD Group social events have gone beyond the traditional happy hour to include such family-friendly gatherings as UB Bulls basketball games, and a tour and reception at Buffalo's Albright-Knox Art Gallery.

Hilary C. Banker '96, an associate at the Buffalo law firm Burgio, Kita & Curvin, served as president of the GOLD Group in 2004-05 and now serves on the UB Law Alumni Association board.

"It is a great group of people. Everyone is hard-working and energetic," Banker said of the GOLD Group. "In the last couple of years we have started branching out to get connected with the university as a whole," including such events as special hospitality efforts at the Bulls' Homecoming football game.

Other recent alumni outreach efforts have extended to New York City, including a night of networking at the Divine Bar on East 51st Street and the annual Alumni Luncheon. Last year, the event was held at the Waldorf Astoria, featuring New York State Court of Appeals Judge Victoria A. Graffeo.



Top, left to right: Scott T. Peloza '07 and Jenny W. Le '07

Above, left to right: Shawn C. Graham '06, Trevor M. Torcello '06 and Jennifer M. Brace '07



Also in the works is a new version of the UB Law Alumni Directory, the first since 2001. Published by Bernard C. Harris Publishing Co., the directory is expected to be available in early 2006. Alumni will be offered the opportunity to buy a copy in printed form or on CD-ROM; watch your e-mail or check the Law School's Web site, www.law.buffalo.edu.

Now the Law School will put the directory online as well, with additional opportunities for alumni to post "profile pages" with more information on their professional and personal lives.

The online directory is part of an emerging "online community" that will serve as a one-stop destination for UB Law alumni. In a password-protected section of the Law School Web site, alumni will be able to browse the online directory of their fellow graduates; read about upcoming events for alumni and members of the University community, and register online; read an expanded section of alumni news; and find links to news releases of interest to those who care about the Law School.

The site is modeled after the University's successful UB Connect service for alumni.



Top: A divine evening at the Divine Bar

Middle, left to right: Luke S. Bassis '03, Lesley Wong '02 and Lourdes M. Ventura '98



Bottom, left to right: Jana Kosberg-Kleidman '01 with her husband Paul Kleidman '01, Margaret Murphy '01 and Clare Lubiner '01