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National Jurist praises SUNY Buffalo Law’s practical skills training

SUNY Buffalo Law School has been named to a select list of law schools recognized by National Jurist magazine as delivering top-quality practical training in legal skills.

The publication and its counterpart, PreLaw magazine, are considered the nation’s leading news sources in legal education. The “honor roll of law schools that deliver practical training,” a first for the magazines, will list 60 law schools in upcoming issues throughout the spring.

“The majority of law schools have vastly improved their practical training opportunities in recent years,” says Jack Crittenden, National Jurist editor in chief. “This is the first effort to try to quantify which schools are delivering on their promises to make legal education more experiential.”

That distinction applies to SUNY Buffalo Law, which in recent years has intensified its commitment to graduate “profession-ready” lawyers conversant in both the theoretical underpinnings of the law and its real-world applications.

“I am extremely proud of my colleagues and our community partners for the amazing efforts that they have put in that allowed us to earn this recognition,” says Professor Kim Diana Connolly, the Law School’s vice dean for legal skills and director of clinical legal education. “We are listed alongside schools that have the ability to dedicate significantly more resources than we do. It’s also a tribute to our students, who take these practical courses very seriously and dedicate their all when enrolled in them.

“SUNY Buffalo has not just made the commitment to graduate profession-ready students on paper – it’s clear that we have made the commitment on the ground.”

The magazine based the ranking on four factors – three objective and one subjective. The three objective factors are the number of clinic positions, field placements or externships, and simulation courses in relation to the school’s enrollment. The magazine then contacted the 90 law schools that ranked highest in that assessment and gathered detailed information on other practical training offerings, and assigned a score based on the data.

Among the other institutions on the list are the law schools of Boston University, Duke, Emory, Michigan State, Northeastern, Northwestern, Seton Hall and Yale. The full list is available at the magazine’s website, www.nationaljurist.com/content/60-law-schools-earn-top-honors-practical-training