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## **Genius Loci: How Place Can Guide Strategic Planning That Enhances Student Engagement**

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# Experiential Education in the Law School Curriculum

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# Contents

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Foreword	xiii
Introduction	xv
<b>PART 1 • BUILDING SUPPORT FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION</b>	
<b>Chapter One • The Lawyering Lab: 1L Curriculum Reform, Building Consensus for Experiential Education, and Faculty Integration</b>	
<i>Constance A. Browne</i>	3
Introduction	3
The Retreat — Preparation, Learning, and Reflection	4
Post-Retreat Task Forces	7
1L Curricular Reform: The Lawyering Lab and Decisions Underlying Its Design	8
Overall Student Evaluations of Lawyering Lab	10
Reflections on the Decisions Underlying Lawyering Lab and the Students' Evaluations	11
Further Reforms Flowing From the Task Forces	12
Conclusion	12
APPENDIX A The Lawyering Lab: Schedule for the Week	14
<b>Chapter Two • Incorporating Reflection into Law Teaching and Learning</b>	
<i>Barbara Lentz</i>	17
Introduction	17
1. Reflection and the Reflective Learning Cycle	18
2. The Need for Reflection in Law Teaching	24
3. Implementing Reflection and Reflective Assignments in Law Teaching	27
4. Evaluating Reflection (or Not)	36
5. Benefits of Reflection and Reflective Learning in Law School	38
Conclusion	39

<b>Chapter Three • Experiential Learning Deliverables: Making the Most of the Experience</b>	
<i>William E. Foster and Emily Grant</i>	41
Introduction	41
1. Structuring the Experience	42
2. Capturing the Experience	44
3. Explaining the Experience	47
Conclusion	48
<b>PART 2 • THE SPECTRUM OF EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION</b>	
<b>Chapter Four • Eight Tips for Effectively and Easily Incorporating Experiential Learning into the Law School Classroom</b>	
<i>Nancy Soonpaa, Rishi Batra, and Jamie J. Baker</i>	51
1. Start small.	52
2. Integrate class material.	53
3. Involve group effort.	53
4. Allow time for debrief and reflection.	54
5. Assess effort, rather than results.	55
6. Layer, sequence, and build on the experiences.	56
7. Contextualize the experiences, and make no assumptions.	56
8. Probe for misunderstanding (and understanding).	57
Experiential Learning: A Bibliography of Materials	58
<b>Chapter Five • Incorporating Experiential Learning in Every Class: Required Courses, Seminars and Live-Client Representation</b>	
<i>Courtney Anderson, Jessica Gabel Cino, Nicole G. Iannarone, and Leslie E. Wolf</i>	63
Introduction	63
Common Questions and Considerations	66
Experiential Education in Context: Course-Specific Choices and Options	71
Upper-Division Required Courses: Professional Responsibility through the Lawyer's Lens	75
Upper-Division Electives	78
Conclusion	83
<b>Chapter Six • Putting Practice into <i>Palsgraf</i>: Incorporating Experiential Learning into First-Year Doctrinal Classes to Develop Skills and Competencies</b>	
<i>Veronica J. Finkelstein</i>	85
Steps to Create Exercises	86
A. Identify Skills and Competencies	87

B. Build Your Team	88
C. Develop and Schedule Exercises	90
D. Provide Feedback	94
E. Logistics	95
Conclusion	96
<b>Chapter Seven • Drafting Legal Documents in a Doctrinal Class</b>	
<i>SpearIt</i>	99
Introduction — A Recipe for Writing throughout the Curriculum	99
Choosing the Document	100
Developing Materials	101
Creating a Structure and Timeline	101
Grading Effectively	102
Implications for Experiential Learning and Institutional Core Competencies	105
<b>Chapter Eight • Incorporating Experience into First-Year Contracts</b>	
<i>Michael L. Bloom and Bryce Pilz</i>	109
Introduction	109
A. Purpose and Benefits of the Contracts Labs	110
Designing and Implementing the Labs	111
A. Features and Characteristics of the Labs' Implementation	111
B. Designing and Developing the Labs	121
The Student Experience with the Labs	125
A. Across the Contracts Labs	125
B. Bloom's Fall 2014 Lab: The "Abbreviated" Approach	126
C. Bloom's Winter 2015 Lab: The "Integrated-Abbreviated" Approach	128
D. Pilz's Fall 2014 Lab: The "Extracurricular" Approach	129
The Lab Instructor Experience with the Labs	131
Conclusion: Key Lessons Learned for Design and Implementation of Labs	134
<b>Chapter Nine • The Fundamental Skill of Client Interviewing Throughout the Curriculum: How to Build Simulations to Live-Client Clinic</b>	
<i>Christine E. Cerniglia</i>	137
Introduction	137
Specific Language for Learning Outcomes Related to Client Interviewing	139
Competencies Related to Client Interviewing Outcomes	140
Steps to Create a Client Interviewing Simulation	148
How to Create a Client Interview Simulation	148
The Organic Nature of a Simulation	149

Conclusion: A Future Legal Education Curriculum Should Include Client Interviewing as a Learning Outcome and Require Future Lawyers to Interview a Real Client Before Graduation	150
Appendix 1	151
Appendix 2	151
Quick Notes: “How to Prepare for the Client Interview”	152
Quick Notes: “How to Conduct the Client Interview”	153
Effective Note Taking Examples	154
<b>Chapter Ten • Experiencing Civil Procedure: Why (and How) I Teach a Simulation-Driven First-Year Course</b>	
<i>Robert L. Jones</i>	157
Outline of a Simulation-Driven First-Year Course in Civil Procedure	158
Potential Advantages of a Simulation-Driven First-Year Course	163
A. The Pedagogical Benefits of Teaching a Simulation-Driven First-Year Course with Respect to the Learning of Doctrine	163
B. The Broader Benefits of Engaging Students in Simulated Actions during Their First Year of Law School	167
How Should Simulation-Driven Courses Be Utilized in the First-Year Curriculum?	186
Conclusion	190
<b>Chapter Eleven • Teaching Professional Responsibility in an Experiential Way</b>	
<i>Constance A. Browne</i>	191
Introduction	191
Creating the Challenge: Integrating an Employment Discrimination Case File into a Simulated Deposition Seminar	192
Deposition Practice: A Contrast — The Move away from Misconduct toward Professionalism — Setting the Right Tone	194
Case Preparation — The Duties of Competence, Diligence, and Advancing Meritorious Claims and Contentions	196
First Deposition Simulation — Taking the Deposition of Adverse Parties	197
Second Deposition Simulation — Taking the Deposition of Employees of Adverse Entities (Duties Owed to Prospective Clients, Clients, and Non-Clients)	198
Third Deposition Simulation — Taking Reasonable Remedial Measures When a Key Witness Lies under Oath in a Deposition	200
Creating and Using Exercises in Larger Classes	201
Conclusion	202

<b>Chapter Twelve • Experiential Educating in the Classroom: An Administrative Law Practicum Meeting Student and Bar Needs</b>	
<i>Jeffrey Thaler</i>	203
Introduction	203
The ABA Revised Standards and the Teaching of Administrative Law	206
Creation and Execution of the Administrative Law Practicum Course	208
A. Course Conceptualization	208
B. Syllabus Development	212
C. Practicum Implementation	215
Conclusions, Changes, and Assessments	220
<b>Chapter Thirteen • Semester-in-Residence Programs: Design, Implementation, and Best Practices</b>	
<i>Lance Cole and Camille C. Marion</i>	225
Introduction	225
What Is a Semester-in-Residence Program?	228
What Are the Accreditation Requirements for a Semester-in-Residence Program?	230
What Are the Essential Elements of a Successful Semester-in-Residence Program?	232
What Are the Benefits of a Well-Administered Semester-in-Residence Program?	239
What Are the Costs and Risks Associated with a Semester-in-Residence Program?	244
What Role Should a Semester-in-Residence Program Play in the Law School Curriculum?	249
APPENDIX	252
<b>Chapter Fourteen • Creating the New Law School by Fully Integrating Experiential Education across the Entire Curriculum</b>	
<i>Adam Lamparello and Charles E. MacLean</i>	259
Introduction	259
Experiential Learning Begins with Sound Admissions Standards	260
Learning Outcomes	261
Curricular Integration Tied to Achievement of Learning Outcomes	262
A. The Cross-Curricular Model	262
B. Course-Specific Learning Outcomes	267
Required Legal Writing Courses throughout the Curriculum	271
A. Real-World Litigation and Transactional Documents	271
B. Rewriting	279
C. Professional Skills Instruction	280
Formative and Summative Assessments	281
A. Bar-Style	281



B. Grading Rubrics	282
The Clinical Experience	283
A. Integrating a Five-Semester Clinical Program into the Curriculum	283
B. Building a Local and National Presence	283
Faculty and Community Mentoring	283
Law-Related Pro Bono Service	284
Individualized Academic Support and Bar Preparation	285
A. Academic Support Across the Curriculum	285
Post-Graduation	289
B. Individual and Group Feedback	290
Conclusion	292
<b>Chapter Fifteen • Transforming the Traditional Law School Curriculum into Portals to Practice</b>	
<i>Myra E. Berman</i>	295
Current State of Curricular Reform in U.S. Law Schools	296
The Portals to Practice	300
A. The First Portal: The Courthouse Curriculum — An Introduction to the World of Law and Lawyering	301
B. The Second Portal and The Courthouse Curriculum: Introduction to Court Practice	306
C. The Third Portal: The Courthouse Curriculum — Participating in the Profession	309
D. Putting It All Together	310
Conclusion	311
<b>PART 3 • EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CURRICULUM</b>	
<b>Chapter Sixteen • Combining Legal Research Pedagogy, Pro Bono, and Experiential Learning in the First-Year Curriculum</b>	
<i>Kris Anne Tobin and Brad Morgan</i>	315
Introduction and Program Structure	315
A. Program Structure: Broad Overview	315
B. Legal Process Curriculum Context	316
C. Past Structure	316
D. Current Structure	317
Encountered Challenges	318
A. Growing Pains — Years Two, Three, and Four	318
B. Year Five and Beyond	319
Community Partner Work and Lessons Learned	319
A. Multiple Community Partners Model	319
B. Single Community Partner Model	324
Benefits to Students, Partners, and the College of Law	326

A. Benefits to Law Students	326
B. Benefits to Non-Profit Legal Service Partners	329
C. Benefits to the University of Tennessee College of Law	329
<b>Chapter Seventeen • <i>Genius Loci: How Place Can Guide Strategic Planning That Enhances Student Engagement</i></b> <i>Valerie K. Couch, Anthony W. Crowell and Rachel A. Van Cleave</i>	331
New York Law School: “We are New York’s law school.”	333
Clinical Programs	334
Academic Centers	336
Leadership Training in Strategic Planning and in Urban Law and Policy	337
Oklahoma City University School of Law — “The City’s Law School”	338
Golden Gate University School of Law in the Heart of San Francisco — “San Francisco’s Downtown Law School”	343
Conclusion	347
 <b>PART 4 • RESOURCES FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION</b>	
<b>Chapter Eighteen • <i>A View from Down Under: Designing Online Learning Experiences for Practical Legal Training in Australia</i></b> <i>Katherine Mulcahy</i>	351
Introduction	351
Overview of Legal Education in Australia	352
Overview of the Curriculum Design Project	357
Designing Online Learning Experiences for Practical Legal Training	359
Technology Considerations	363
Mentoring and Supervising Students Online	363
The Need for Lecturer Training	364
Evaluation of the New Curriculum	364
Appendix	366
Sample training activities	366
Designing online learning experiences for practical legal training	366
 <b>Chapter Nineteen • <i>Experiential Learning Resources</i></b> <i>Brian Sites</i>	369
Multi-Subject Exercise Databases and General Websites	369
Articles on Experiential Learning	370
Other Resources Related to Experiential Learning	371
Books Related to Experiential Learning	372
General Exercise Ideas	373
Subject-Specific Resources and Exercise Ideas	373
Administrative Law	374

Alternative Dispute Resolution	374
Antitrust	374
Bankruptcy	374
Business Organizations/Corporate Law/Mergers and Acquisitions	375
Civil Procedure	375
Commercial Law/Secured Transactions/Sales	377
Constitutional Law	377
Contract Law	378
Copyright Law	378
Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure	379
Cyberlaw/Internet Law/Computer Law	381
Disability Law	382
Employment/Labor Law	382
Entertainment Law/Media Law/Sports Law	383
Environmental Law/Natural Resources Law/Energy Law	383
Evidence	383
Family Law	383
Federal Courts	384
First Amendment Law	384
First-Year Courses Generally	384
Health Law	385
Immigration Law	385
Insurance Law	385
Interviewing/Negotiation/Mediation/Counseling Clients Courses	386
Intellectual Property Law	387
International Law	387
Labor Arbitration Workshop	387
Legal Research and Writing/Lawyering Skills	387
Legislative Process Courses	388
Motions and Depositions/Trial Advocacy	388
National Security Law	389
Patent Law	389
Professional Responsibility	389
Property/Land Use/Real Estate Law	389
Tax	390
Torts	391
Trademark Law	391
White Collar Crime	391
Wills, Trusts, and Estates/Elder Law	391
Workers' Compensation	392
Index	393

# Foreword

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We all share the common mission of providing an excellent legal education to our students. We may debate how best to accomplish that, but there is no question that experiential education has finally become not only required in law school but valued. While all of our students gain from practice-based experience in law school, for some of our law students, it is what makes it all worthwhile.

Gonzaga University School of Law was excited to host a conference on experiential learning across the curriculum and is also proud to have founded the Institute for Law Teaching and Learning in 1991. We were joined by co-sponsor Washburn University in 2008 and University of Arkansas at Little Rock, William H. Bowen School of Law in 2013. All three schools are passionate about experiential learning across the law school curriculum and joined together to present a conference to work with other schools to understand how to do this. Law professors from around the world attended to share their experiences and expertise with each other in true collaborative fashion.

ILTL recognizes that not all faculty or administrators are sold on the idea of the value of experiential learning, and part of the conference was dedicated to building that support. In the experience of the three co-directors of ILTL, this support is vital to a vibrant and effective program in experiential learning.

One often overlooked component is reflection. In the need to get students through required courses and those recommended for bar passage, it is easy to overlook that students need time to process what they have learned and to reflect on it. Faculty may be concerned about affording time for reflection or to assign reflective writing for a variety of reasons. The conference and this book provide helpful ideas to alleviate this concern.

Many of us might think about experiential learning as confined to our legal clinics or externship programs. ILTL firmly believes that this does not have to be true. The co-directors know that faculty may not understand how to incorporate experiential learning into classes that were planned and taught long before any emphasis on this existed. One session at the conference helped attendees negotiate a settlement for Mrs. Palsgraf, and another taught ten tips for incorporating experiential learning into a variety of courses. Another session focused on the process in which clinical teachers taught experiential components in four traditional first-year courses. Many professors never had a course when they were in law school about drafting any kind of document, but we need to make sure that our students today have that opportunity.

## Chapter 17

# *Genius Loci: How Place Can Guide Strategic Planning That Enhances Student Engagement*

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Valerie K. Couch, Anthony W. Crowell and Rachel A. Van Cleave<sup>1</sup>

Assume that the faculty at your law school has adopted a strategic plan that prioritizes the professional success of students and graduates with a specific goal of engaging students in the development of their professional identity and honing practical legal skills. The law school seeks to ensure that students begin to appreciate the broader professional and societal contexts in which lawyers function and to begin to have an impact in shaping decisions, developing solutions to real-life legal and policy challenges affecting their communities and beyond, including expanding access to justice. The strategic plan calls for engagement throughout the curriculum by expanding clinical and experiential learning programs and courses as well as embedding these approaches into co-curricular programs.

Of course, you should note that like other law schools across the nation, enrollment is down at the school and there are fewer financial resources available to meet these goals, including no funds to hire new full-time clinicians or administrative program staff. The dean has asked you to serve on a small Advisory Committee that is developing an implementation plan to ensure that the goals of the strategic plan are met. Specifically, your task is to develop new co-curricular or curricular programs focused on the engagement of all constituencies and on providing new experiential opportunities for students. The dean has asked you to consider the following as you proceed with this assignment:

- Which constituencies across the law school, and perhaps your university, will be of most help to the Advisory Committee in terms of partnership and collaboration to develop these programs?
- Which external constituencies will be of most help in this project?
- Is there information that you would like to have as you design these programs?
- How will you address the current financial constraints?

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1. Valerie K. Couch is Dean of Oklahoma City University School of Law; Anthony W. Crowell is Dean and President of New York Law School; Rachel A. Van Cleave is Dean of Golden Gate University School of Law.

- What communications strategy do you suggest to best inform the various constituencies in the planning and early implementation phases of the process?

The above summarizes the exercise that we designed to facilitate a discussion at the 2015 Summer Institute for Law Teaching and Learning Conference at Gonzaga University School of Law. In our discussions with conference participants we were able to draw on programs that our law schools have developed to achieve the goals set out in this exercise. A common theme that emerged is how the *genius loci*—the genius or spirit of the places in which our law schools live—has inspired the programs our law schools have designed and implemented. The three of us are deans of law schools in distinctly different cities—Oklahoma City, New York City, and San Francisco. Coast to coast and in the middle of the heartland we have deep appreciation for our cities' special character, spirit, challenges and needs and how these shape our programs. A majority of our students are from or have roots in each of our geographic areas. Their backgrounds and experiences have led them to law school because they understand the power of lawyers to build a better society and they seek to work in and with their communities to address access to justice and to improve the lives and opportunities of others in their communities. Engaging students during law school in programs that address legal and policy challenges greatly enhances their professional identity development in a way that emphasizes the role of lawyers in building and improving a well-functioning democratic society.

More than ever, law schools in larger urban settings have a unique opportunity to create diverse and robust experiential learning programs through a wide variety of strategic partnerships allowing for a more effective use of overall law school and community resources. Law schools in suburban or rural settings, however, may face less obvious and more limited opportunities. This results from lower population density and less diversity and scale of economic, and therefore legal, activity. Nonetheless, all schools have much to be gained by assessing their strategic goals and understanding the potential range of opportunities that their own communities can provide and that most naturally align with community legal needs. This can be effectively achieved as part of a departmental and institutional strategic planning processes and can take advantage of alumni working locally in key sectors.

Indeed, as the profession demands more practice-ready graduates, law schools must ensure that their students' classroom education is complemented by ample opportunities for a wide range of experiential learning opportunities both within and outside the formal law school curriculum. This requires providing students with exposure to practical training opportunities and to professional networks in traditional legal settings, government, business, and new and high-growth fields requiring legal talent.

In response to the shifting needs of the legal market, the American Bar Association ("ABA") now mandates that law schools require their students to complete at least six credit hours of experiential learning before graduation. Although most, if not all, U.S. law schools have long offered some form of clinical education or a formal externship program, the new ABA requirements call for every school to evaluate their

programs and ensure they are sufficiently varied to meet student professional interests while serving important community needs.

In this chapter we describe a few examples of programs and initiatives at our law schools that respond to the exercise described above. Dean Crowell begins with examples of the rich opportunities available to students at New York Law School given the school's locations in Lower Manhattan. Dean Couch follows with a discussion of how the recent relocation of Oklahoma City University School of Law to the City's downtown center has led to partnerships and interdisciplinary initiatives and enabled the school to contribute to the advancement and well-being of the city. Finally, Dean Van Cleave describes a few examples of how Golden Gate Law School's location in the heart of San Francisco's financial district has provided opportunities for community and student engagement.

## New York Law School: "We are New York's law school."

In a place like New York City, the concept of *genius loci* is readily understandable. Recognizing NYLS's deep roots in the city dating back to 1891, and the profound role played by the School in shaping modern New York, NYLS undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2013 that fully embraced the concept of *genius loci*. As an initial step, the Law School sought to better contextualize its history and contributions through an institutional rebranding effort which yielded the School's new motto: "*We are New York's law school.*" The effort aimed to galvanize the Law School community and signified the leadership roles played by faculty, alumni, and students in helping to build modern New York, and shaping the profession there, through the School's long commitment to providing access to legal education and being among the first to admit racial minorities, immigrants, and women as students. As much as the motto recognized the School's past, it also framed an aspirational backdrop for strategic planning. And it served as a clarion call for NYLS community members and allies in the profession about the institution's goals for the future, how it would educate students and serve the community through unique and cost-effective partnerships, all accomplished by using New York City as the ultimate classroom.

Being *New York's law school* not only means embracing the diversity, leadership, entrepreneurial spirit, and excellence that are the hallmarks of the world's capital, but it also means shaping programs that reflect the values, needs, and demands of society in the local and therefore global economies. Accordingly, as part of our planning process, NYLS sought to align its curriculum, academic centers, and practical training programs with the legal needs of, and key economic drivers in, the City—focusing on providing access to justice for the underserved while also offering students opportunities to help build and protect the economy. The key drivers of the economy identified in the Strategic Plan include business and financial services; intellectual property, media, technology, and applied sciences; and, government and public interest. And, in the three years that have followed since issuing the plan, NYLS has adopted a new curriculum, reorganized its centers, doubled the number of clinics

offered by the School from 13 to 26, and significantly expanded other experiential learning opportunities.

To accomplish our goals for the expansion of clinical and experiential learning, NYLS leveraged its longstanding relationships with many legal services organizations to identify substantive gaps in community legal services where the development of in-house clinics in various practice areas could provide law students with the opportunity to develop skills while serving those in need. We also evaluated how our location could be optimized to yield successful integrated training partnerships with nearby legal organizations, where talented lawyers would serve as supervising adjunct professors in the workplace. While skills building was the principal goal of these efforts, the design and format of our partner clinics also aimed at yielding another significant benefit—long-term employment opportunities—for those students who demonstrate a commitment and ability to be effective in the workplace during their placements. In addition, in many cases, these partnerships have provided a solid foundation for collaborative discussions about new program development beyond clinics and externships, that have allowed us to offer students unique insights, access, and networking opportunities with thought leaders, executives, and high ranking public officials throughout New York City.

## Clinical Programs

The success of this dramatic programmatic expansion was made possible not only because of NYLS's location in New York City, but particularly because of its location as the only law school in Lower Manhattan. Because of this location, NYLS has been able to bring about a systematic integration of classroom teaching with the abundance of practical opportunities just steps away at key administrative agencies, legal services offices, prosecutors' offices, law firms, the courts, investment banks, tech start-ups, and a wide range of nonprofits—effectively creating a legal training campus like none other. Students, employers, and the community are greatly benefiting from the expansion. And, with our full-time faculty helping to train and mentor adjunct professors in our partner clinics, including through a formal summer clinical workshop series, we have shown how to leverage the power of partnership between our full- and part-time faculties to create meaningful programs and ensure that the pedagogical goals for clinical and experiential learning are met. Consequently, in the past academic year alone, NYLS students contributed 14,000 clinic hours, and approximately 20,000 externship hours, to partner organizations and clients citywide.

There are countless examples of how students are benefiting from, and having a positive community impact in every sector through their various placements. One 2L student, an Army veteran himself, assists other veterans at Legal Services NYC. Another 2L is an advocate for children with autism and other disabilities at the law firm Mayerson & Associates. A third has researched food deserts and educated middle school students about their rights under the Constitution. The students who are part of our Law School Pipeline Project are spearheading the creation of a Charter High



School for Law and Social Justice in the South Bronx. In one of the more powerful examples of giving back to the City, students in the Immigration Law and Litigation Clinic, in partnership with the Safe Passage Project, work on complex cases involving a combination of family law and immigration law to secure immigration relief for undocumented young people, many of whom entered the country unaccompanied by an adult, by qualifying them for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status.

Students in our Civil Rights Clinic serve clients who would not otherwise be able to afford or obtain legal representation. They provide representation to victims of employment discrimination who are unable to secure counsel. They also work with Brooklyn community organizations to address food inequity and insecurity. Students in the Criminal Defense Clinic represent indigent defendants in Criminal Court, and this past year, in a widely publicized case, students in our Post-Conviction Innocence Clinic helped convince a judge to vacate the murder conviction of a woman and grant her a new trial based upon a change in the science of shaken baby syndrome.

NYLS has a number of partner clinics with government agencies. Students in our Child Welfare Clinic have worked with the Administration for Children's Services on original child abuse and neglect cases and permanency hearing cases. Other students have handled administrative enforcement matters at the Department of Health and the Taxi and Limousine Commission. Some may draft legislation and write legal opinions for agency heads and elected officials in the Law Department's Division of Legal Counsel as part of the Clinical Year, while others are defending tort claims as part of the Municipal Litigation Defense Clinic in the Law Department's Tort Division. Students work in the Prosecution Clinics at both the Manhattan and Brooklyn District Attorney's Offices, including staffing the Quality of Life Part in New York County Criminal Court.

In the business law arena, as we recently marked the fifth anniversary of the Dodd-Frank Act, NYLS is the only law school partnering with global financial services giant, Credit Suisse, to provide students with hands-on field training in compliance, an area where the shortage of trained lawyers has made it difficult for the financial industry to keep up with a changing regulatory regime. Students in the program work part-time, rotating through various divisions of the company's General Counsel and Compliance offices during three semesters.

Students in our Securities Arbitration Clinic provide free legal representation to small investors who have suffered damages due to the misconduct of their stockbrokers and brokerage firms. The students advise clients at all stages of the arbitration process and represent them before the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority. For most clients, who would not otherwise be able to afford legal representation, our students' work is the only chance they have to recover losses which are often crippling. Other students are learning dispute resolution skills in our Alternative Dispute Resolution Skills Program, which also sponsors a series of public events in this important field. Meanwhile, still other students are assisting nonprofit organizations with corporate governance issues and advising clients on tax planning questions. They also are working with Business Improvement Districts with the Neighborhood Legal Fellows program that NYLS created with the Department of Small Business Services.

In the innovation sector, we are one of a handful of law schools in the country with a Patent and Trademark Office Clinic helping inventors patent their inventions by representing them before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. And, we are pioneering a new clinic to help protect the rights of those adversely affected by the proliferation of new digital technologies, especially victims of cyberbullying.

To enhance all of these efforts, NYLS dedicated an outstanding new physical space to serve as a center for clinical and experiential learning made possible through a \$5 million gift, the second largest in the School's history. It's known as The Joe Plumeri Center for Social Justice and Economic Opportunity. The new facility, the only one of its kind in the U.S., is located across the street from Legal Aid, and steps away from 26 Federal Plaza, the courts, and agencies where students represent their clients. The 7,000-square-foot center, with ground-level access to the public, effectively serves as the Law School's law firm. It houses the NYLS's in-house clinics, provides space for students to work directly with clients in technologically advanced interview rooms, offers seminar rooms for partner clinics, and incorporates a moot court room giving students a realistic setting to use in learning to argue their clients' cases.

## Academic Centers

Through focused academic centers, NYLS is able to offer both legal and educational programs to help develop and expand those sectors of the economy that assert and underpin New York's stature as a worldwide leader in many aspects of modern life. Academic centers at NYLS work in tandem with nonprofit organizations, City agencies, and businesses on a range of projects that benefit from scholarly research and critical exploration, particularly in areas where new technologies reshape or disrupt existing paradigms. The centers' activities and programs can and do bring leaders in all sectors of the economy—public, private, both for profit and not for profit—into the school. Many of them are alumni and serve as mentors to our students and provide employment opportunities.

Through its publications, NYLS's Center for New York City Law gathers, indexes, and disseminates the City's thousands of administrative, legislative, and judicial decisions; land use determinations; rules and regulations; and hearing notices. For more than 20 years, the Center has hosted elected officials and influential policy makers in an unfiltered forum open to the public. Speaking at a CityLaw Breakfast has become a measure of credibility, a rite of passage for elected and appointed officials, including former mayors, members of Congress, commissioners, corporation counsels, U.S. attorneys, and district attorneys, giving all of them an arena in which they can establish their policy bona fides and break news.

Initiatives at the new Impact Center for Public Interest Law address some of the most pressing and wide-ranging social justice issues that confront American society. By providing resources to communities that are chronically underserved, the Impact Center bolsters innovation, supports enterprise, and fosters social justice endeavors

throughout the City. Among its many programs, the Center has a significant focus on children and families through the Diane Abbey Law Institute for Children and Families, as well as on racial justice through its Racial Justice Project. The Center is also partnering with the Fortune Society to address the multifaceted crisis in our criminal justice system. The Center has hosted panels and discussions on the cost of eviction, housing, and homelessness in New York City and the impact of a model that would provide counsel for tenants in housing court. A recent symposium explored the causes of economic inequality in our area and offered remediation strategies.

NYLS's new Innovation Center for Law and Technology, funded with an initial \$750,000 gift, investigates the current state of legal protection of intangible assets with an emphasis on the intersection of technology and intellectual property in a range of fields, from entertainment law to computer technology and pharmaceuticals. Moving forward, its community action arm will help drive the innovation economy by supporting the work of local entrepreneurs with legal counsel and strategies to find funding and venture capital opportunities.

At the Center for Business and Financial Law, leading industry experts and respected academics consider the policy and practical ramifications of integrating BitCoin and other virtual currencies into the broader global economy and the evolving nature of corporate governance. In fall 2015, the Center brought together legal, financial, compliance, and technology experts to look at the rapid changes that technology has wrought across all aspects of the financial industry, from mobile payments to fundraising to clearing and settlement. In addition, the Rooftops Project, a program within the Center for Real Estate Studies, holds an annual conference to help New York City's nonprofit leaders understand how physical space supports their mission and to educate them on the effective occupancy, use, and management of real estate.

## **Leadership Training in Strategic Planning and in Urban Law and Policy**

In 2013, NYLS established the Dean's Leadership Council (DLC), an extra-curricular program, to engage student academic leaders who place in the top 25% of their division at the end of the first semester or the first year. Each new class participates in an extensive weekend leadership retreat. As part of the program, students partner with the Dean, faculty, alumni, their peers, upper-level students, and outside legal professionals to engage with the legal and policy issues facing the City, the nation, and beyond through discussions, events and activities. The goal is to ensure that, through its students, New York Law School maintains a reputation as an "influencer," and the voices and ideas of our student academic leaders are critical to that goal.

Since the beginning of the program, DLC students have been engaged broadly in our ongoing strategic planning, and they provide early and on-going feedback helping us to assess progress and outcomes. In addition to this work, over the past three years, DLC students have had the opportunity to work with senior City officials and com-

munity leaders. They have been given the opportunity to present their suggestions regarding traffic and bike lanes to the City's Taxi and Limousine Commissioner, to offer the President of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce ideas and recommendations to help guide the Chamber's strategic planning process; to provide critical ideas that became part of Governor Cuomo's plan to have more law schools involved in providing legal services to veterans (NYLS created its Veterans Clinic as a result of this process); and, DLC students have attended private discussions with former New York City Mayor David N. Dinkins, with a prominent group of lawyers who were integral to the city's recovery from 9/11, and with a member of the NYLS Board of Trustees to discuss his book on the United States District Court for the Southern District in New York. They also have participated in a forum on drug policy as part of the 2014 Mayoral transition. This year, they are helping to develop a Presidential election year speakers program; and, on the informal side, they regularly attended outside social and cultural events, related to particular practice areas, accompanying selected faculty and the Dean.

## Oklahoma City University School of Law — "The City's Law School"

Oklahoma City is the capital of the State of Oklahoma, and issues relating to state government and public administration play out prominently in the daily life of the community. The State is home to 38 federally recognized American Indian tribes and has been shaped by their history and by their cultural and economic contributions. Rocked by a horrendous act of domestic terrorism in 1995, the City was galvanized by the tragedy of domestic terrorism and is now in the midst of an entrepreneurial and cultural renaissance. The City has benefited from excellent municipal leadership whose focus has been to create a sustainable and world-class urban center. The City is, however, grappling with pressing problems affecting the health, education, and welfare of its residents, especially its children.

Those attributes of our city guide an evolving strategy of engagement and partnership designed to benefit our law students and the specific place where our school exists. Building the capacity to know a city and capture its essence is a valuable leadership skill, and our strategy for creating that capacity is to immerse students in the community around them. Through this engagement, they develop the ability and sophistication to perceive, analyze, and solve complex problems in their midst.

Here are some of the initiatives inspired by the *genius loci* of our City:

- Our Place in the City's Center: One year ago, we relocated our school from a remote pastoral campus to the heart of the City's urban core. We purposefully placed ourselves in a highly visible historic building that had served as an early expression of the City's ambitions following statehood in 1907. We are densely surrounded by the legal and business community and within a short walking distance to state, city and federal courthouses, government agencies, medical

clinics, hospital complexes, medical research institutes, non-profit organizations, public schools, corporate headquarters and the new downtown arts and entertainment districts. We are within a mile of the Capitol Complex where the legislative and executive branches of state government as well as the Supreme Court are located. We are within a few steps of the Oklahoma City Memorial, which now serves as a source of education and inspiration following the bombing of the federal building. It is a place that reflects both the traditional values of our community and the energetic embrace of innovative change and civic cooperation. Since our move downtown, we have held orientation for our entering class at the Memorial. By doing so, we begin our students' legal education in the context of a real-world drama in which lawyers played powerful roles in resolving one of the most horrific events any city could endure. Through our central presence in this dynamic location, we contribute to the growth of our community as a world-class city, with higher education playing a primary problem-solving role.

- **Municipal Law Research Clinic:** We created a clinic whose sole client is the City of Oklahoma City. Partnering with Oklahoma City Municipal Counselor's office, our law students take on current legal issues of vital interest to the City and work under the supervision of a faculty member to research, write and make presentations to City officials. In this way, our students contribute to decisions directly affecting public administration. Networking with city attorneys and building rapport within a city organizational structure leads to student engagement on projects of far-ranging significance to the proper functioning of city government.
- **Partnering with State Government Officials and Agencies:** We host the Oklahoma Secretary of State and state agency officials who serve as tribal liaisons with the American Indian tribes in Oklahoma. Our students and faculty participate in roundtable discussions and become knowledgeable about important relationships between local, state, federal and tribal governments working on issues affecting health, education, economic development and criminal justice within the State. The conversations have led to the identification of several ways our students can be of help to the agencies through the resources of our American Indian Law & Sovereignty Center.
- **Center for the Study of State Constitutional Law and Government:** Our Center for the Study of State Constitutional Law and Government places our faculty and students directly in the middle of important conversations and projects affecting our capital city. Becoming a resource for state and local governments is part of our mission and vision for the future of the school. Annual lectures by leading scholars and influential thought-leaders provide lively forums for analysis and debate about the institutions and traditions of democratic process. We host receptions for state legislators and judges to create informal opportunities for their interaction and communications. This academic center and the extra-curricular activities it hosts are shaped to meet the City's needs for dialogue, debate and expertise on state government.

- Partnership with the OKC Urban Land Institute and Other City and Neighborhood Development Associations: Our law building sits on the cusp of downtown and “midtown” and consequently is surrounded by real estate development, neighborhood improvement, and urban planning and place-making activities by both public and private entities. We invite organizations involved in this work to hold their board meetings and business luncheons in our building, and our students regularly attend meetings and functions, become involved in projects and sometimes serve on committees and workgroups. The professional relationships built through these organizations are proving valuable to students who are planning to develop practices in related areas.
- *Pro Se* Consumer Bankruptcy Project and *Pro Se* Divorce Dockets: Built into academic courses of Family Law and Consumer Bankruptcy Law, our students regularly assist individuals who appear without an attorney in divorce and consumer bankruptcy dockets. Volunteer attorneys from our faculty and from the community provide training and supervision for the students’ work. The students assist individuals filling out forms and provide basic guidance and information about the proceedings. All of this takes place within walking distance of our building. Through these efforts, the students provide valuable assistance to nearby courts managing heavy *pro se* dockets.
- Embedding Law-Related Non-Profits in the Law Building: The State of Oklahoma and Oklahoma City in particular face critical needs relating to the welfare of children. To help us respond to some of these needs, we have embedded an independent non-profit organization Oklahoma Lawyers for Children within the heart of the building. Their executive director and small staff benefit from the central location, and our students help the volunteer lawyers who represent children in a variety of contexts. Oklahoma Lawyers for Children is independently funded through private donations and grants. Our school contributes by covering some of the overhead and providing additional space and support for training, meetings and events. We are in discussions with another non-profit agency about establishing a presence in our building. That community organization is dedicated to promoting respect and understanding for the rights of all people through education, advocacy, and dialogue. Our mission to build a better and more inclusive community is aligned with these non-profit agencies, and their close proximity within our building creates productive alliances for our students and faculty.
- Interdisciplinary Partnerships with Nearby Universities: Through paired for-credit courses and joint degree programs, we have developed interdisciplinary partnerships with nearby universities in areas such as public administration, forensic science, cybersecurity, agriculture and environmental science. Interdisciplinary problem-solving teams of graduate-level students study together, conduct research and train for high level civic responsibilities and data-driven decision-making in areas of pressing importance to our community and state.
- Murrah Center for Homeland Security Law and Policy: On April 19, 2015, on the 20th anniversary of the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, we launched

the Murrah Center for Homeland Security Law and Policy. The mission of the Center is to provide a voice in the middle of the country on issues of homeland security law and policy. In partnerships with the Oklahoma City Memorial Institute, the ABA Standing Committee on National Security and various governmental agencies, we are developing a key site for homeland security law education for law students, lawyers and others in Oklahoma and throughout the country. Through the work of the Center we contribute to research and expert dialogue on homeland security issues. And we seek to support local, state, and federal policy-makers and those in the private sector as they confront terrorism and other threats. Our first national summit focused on Oklahoma City's experience in responding to the Murrah bombing and lessons from the coordination of community and legal resources to achieve justice and resolution. Our second national summit on April 19, 2016, focusses on cybersecurity law as it affects specific industries such as banking, energy, health care providers, law firms, and the aviation industry. Students interested in this area of the law are supported through a comprehensive curriculum, a new certificate program, simulation exercises involving role-playing responsibilities, externship placements, and a student organization associated with the Center. Students become Academic Fellows of the Murrah Center by working with faculty on academic papers pertinent to homeland security law. In June the Murrah Center is co-sponsoring with the Department of Justice and local law enforcement agencies an interfaith conference on Protecting Houses of Worship. Faith communities from throughout the City will gather to learn more about threats to houses of worship and develop key resources and relationships to develop security procedures. One student has been involved in the planning and implementation of the project, acquiring valuable experience and mentorship from lawyers from the department of justice and local law enforcement officials. With the Murrah Center, we align ourselves with the history of Oklahoma City and create resources needed for education, prevention and response in the future.

- American Indian Law & Sovereignty Center, American Indian Wills Clinic, and Service Days for Tribal Citizens and Communities: Ownership of land and mineral interests by tribes and tribal citizens is legally complex in Oklahoma due to the diverse histories of the tribes and their relationships as sovereigns to the state and federal governments. The American Indian Wills Clinic provides doctrinal and practical training in this complex area of the law and regularly provides legal services to individuals and tribes. Additionally, the Center hosts service days in Oklahoma City and throughout the State. On service days, our students enrolled in the clinic (with supervision of the clinic professor) draft estate planning documents for individual tribal members seeking to secure the transfer of property in accordance with various inheritance laws. This year, we hosted an Alternative Spring Break, during which a dozen law students and faculty spent several days in southeast Oklahoma providing estate planning services for citizens of the Choctaw Nation. On this trip, the students also learned about the culture and

history of the Choctaw Nation and the beauty of their country. Our school consistently enrolls a high number of American Indian students, many of whom become leaders on a national level, and our Center, the academic curriculum, certificate programs and extra-curricular programs provide ample resources for lawyers who practice in the multitude of areas of law affected by Indian law.

- **Support for Community Service Projects:** As in most U.S. law schools, our students are encouraged to develop a commitment to community service. Through our student organizations and through our pro bono and public interest fellowship program, our students provide thousands of hours of service to the Oklahoma City community. Last year, our students provided over 11,000 hours of service in a variety of settings, including the nearby public schools. Through these efforts, our students learn about the problems and needs of Oklahoma City and beyond. We support our students' community service through the expertise of our pro bono and public interest law coordinator, and we recognize and reward the students' service through annual awards and events involving alumni and other friends of the school. Although not offered for course credit, these efforts have proven to be highly valuable not only in career planning but also in leadership and professionalism development. Robust support of our students' pro bono legal services helps us fulfill our mission to be the City's Law School.
- **The Oklahoma Innocence Project:** Our school currently operates the only innocence project in Oklahoma, serving the entire state. Through our Innocence Project and Clinic, our students and faculty represent Oklahoma inmates with claims of actual innocence. Additionally, the Project provides legal resources relating to legislation affecting post-conviction criminal procedures and research relating to the prevention of wrongful convictions. Oklahoma has one of the highest rates of incarceration of men and women in the United States, and statistics demonstrate that a percentage of those incarcerated are actually innocent of the crimes for which they were convicted. Providing post-conviction legal services to Oklahoma inmates who are actually innocent has been part of the School's program since 2012.
- **Military Career and Veterans Outreach:** Oklahoma City is the home of Tinker Air Force Base and close to several other major military installations. The City's military population is significant, and our economy is heavily influenced by the activities of the military bases. Through concerted outreach, our law school enrolls many veterans and prepares many other students for military service as lawyers. Throughout their law school years, those students receive extra-curricular support through specialized student organizations and through military career planning through the career services department. We recognize our veterans' service to our nation annually and in programs throughout the year designed to address their interests in military law and homeland and national security law.

Other initiatives inspired by the *genius loci* of Oklahoma City are in planning and development stages, such as a pipeline program and outreach to the City's growing



Latino community, an expungement clinic in partnership with a nearby diversion program for women, and intersession programs for federal defense contract management. Strategic planning for these initiatives will be guided by the needs, characteristics and ambitions of our City. We know every world-class city has higher education embedded in its urban core, and it is our school's mission as "the City's Law School" to be a significant player in achieving world-class status. We are inspired by the examples of New York Law School in New York and by Golden Gate University in San Francisco. And in our own way, we seek to sustain a thriving and influential City with its own unique potential.

When we evoke the original meaning of the phrase *genius loci*, we create in students a keen sense of their responsibilities as creative and vigilant guardians of their own community. Reflecting the creative spirit of a particular place and forming meaningful partnerships inspired by that spirit can transform a law school's extra- and co-curricular programs into an integrative force for good, powerfully reinforcing the law school's central mission of preparing lawyers for the work of the world in which they live.

## Golden Gate University School of Law in the Heart of San Francisco — "San Francisco's Downtown Law School"

GGU Law began as a YMCA evening law school in 1901, which like other YMCA schools<sup>2</sup> sought to open the legal profession to future lawyers who could not afford to take themselves out of the workforce for three years to complete a JD. The law school's founders recognized very early on the importance of blending the theoretical with the practical in the classroom. This has been especially crucial for an audience of students who were working during the day in a broad range of sectors from private industry to government and from areas such as finance to public interest. Our students, from the beginning, have expected a practical approach to legal education along with traditional legal pedagogy.

These traditions of both access and teaching practical skills remain up to today very close to GGU Law's heart and soul. Consistent with our location in a city known for its political activism and diversity, GGU Law was one of the first law schools to recruit women, racial and ethnic minorities and LGBT people to become a part of our community as students, faculty and staff. This history of inclusion is remarkable for the way in which people with a variety of backgrounds and experiences are embraced for enriching our community in and outside of the classroom. More recently, we have welcomed military veterans as students, faculty, and staff who bring an especially important perspective on the rule of law and the need to defend and enhance our democratic society. A common theme among this diverse community, since our

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2. See Steven C. Bahls & David S. Jackson, *The Legacy of the YMCA Night Law Schools*, 26 CAP. U. L. REV. 235 (1997).

inception, has been a deep appreciation of the power of lawyers to build a better society and the tremendous need for legal services in the broader San Francisco and Bay Area communities. Hence, we have sought to create new ways to engage our students in and outside of the classroom in practice-based experiences.

The examples highlighted in this chapter share the theme of building relationships and partnerships with lawyers, alumni and the legal profession in the San Francisco Bay Area to best support the success of our students and to assist with addressing the challenges that confront our community. Another important theme is how we developed many of our programs as a result of listening to our students and to others in our community. As dean, I seek to continue this tradition by meeting with each student individually to learn about their goals, how we can best support them, and listening to their ideas for improving our programs and for serving our broader community. One recent example, our Veterans Legal Advocacy Center, in particular demonstrates how we seek to weave together each of these aspects in a comprehensive way.

Nearly 30 years ago, long before the Carnegie Report, *Educating Lawyers*, we created the Honors Lawyering Program, which accelerates law school for high-performing students to allow them to engage in full time hands-on apprenticeships during what would otherwise be the fall semester of their second year. In addition to accelerating the doctrinal courses, students in HLP learn client counseling and other lawyering skills and represent a client who is homeless or has a dispute with a landlord. GGU Law has a long-standing relationship with the Tenderloin Housing Clinic and the Homeless Advocacy Project that allows students to gain live client experiences before they begin their fall apprenticeships. The four credits that students earn both in client counseling as well as actually representing a client count toward GGU Law's three-credit (now 6-credit) requirement of experiential learning. When the faculty increased this requirement to 6 credit hours to comply with ABA Standard 303, the faculty required that students engage in live-client experiences for at least three of these credit hours. Students can enroll in one of our four on-site clinics or in an externship placement, including a judicial externship.

In their apprenticeships, students work full time in local public defender, district attorney or city attorney offices, or in general counsel, public interest or private law firm offices, or in judicial chambers. There, they gain an experience that is far richer than what is possible in an externship placement. This full-time work over fourteen weeks allows students to integrate into the office and engage in meaningful and deeply substantive work as well as further develop their professional identity by working with lawyers. Students do not earn course credit for their apprenticeship.<sup>3</sup> Essentially, instead of working during the summer after their first year of law school, students swap their fall semester for the summer, completing a full semester's worth of course work in the summer and working full time in the fall. Since students do not earn course credit, the apprenticeship does not satisfy the ABA Standard 303 requirement. However, these

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3. Students receive compensation from the placement, through work study or a combination of these.

apprenticeships would satisfy the experiential learning requirements pending in California that are part of the Task Force on Admissions Regulation Reform (TFARR).

In 2010 we launched another summer program called 1st STEP — 1st Summer Trial and Evidence Program. In the words of the faculty member who designed this program, “I wanted to teach students what I wish I had learned in law school about the integration of rules of evidence and trial advocacy.” Hence, this summer program blends these and includes multiple opportunities to practice oral and written advocacy skills while receiving several rounds of feedback from multiple evaluators. The goal is to prepare students for an externship position that will allow them to begin to put these skills to work.

Another innovation we added to our first-year curriculum after listening to students is called the Lawyering Elective. We began to hear from students that the heavy spring semester course load in their first year was interpreted by them as our attempt to “break them.”<sup>4</sup> After listening to our students we realized we needed to include a course in the curriculum that would energize students about embarking on a legal career, remind them why they came to law school, and introduce and hone skills that are not otherwise included in the traditional first-year curriculum. We have offered a range of Lawyering Electives that have enrollments of fewer than twenty students and focus on a narrow area of substantive law, such as the tax implications of gender reassignment surgery, a fact scenario involving trade secrets or ethical issues in criminal defense. In these classes students work on simulated legal issues and problems, which dramatically increases their overall engagement and satisfaction. The Lawyering Electives also begin to prepare students to take advantage of clinical and externship offerings. While we believe that these simulation courses satisfy ABA Standard 303, they do not count toward the 6 credit hours of experiential learning that GGU Law requires; rather, these credit hours must be completed in upper-division courses.

Externship placements for students also include a broad range of possibilities, both substantively and geographically. Placements allow students to engage in legal work all around the Bay Area — Solano, Alameda, San Mateo and Sonoma. Students have placements with legal start-ups like SelfHealth Network, policy advocacy offices such as the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights and non-profits such as Bay Area Legal Aid. Tied to the significance of our part time evening program, we established a Consumer Advocacy Clinic designed specifically with our part time students in mind and give them registration priority for this clinic. Further evidence of deep collaboration is how the local law schools established the Bay Area Consortium on Externships (BACE), which created a Manual on Externships for supervising attorneys, co-sponsors training programs for supervising attorney, and created one set of forms for evaluating student performance.

Students who participate in one of our on-campus clinics are involved in building relationships and partnerships in the community. Nearly 25 years ago, we established

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4. I discuss this and other changes in *Promoting Experiential Learning at Golden Gate University School of Law Through Curriculum Reform* in REFORMING LEGAL EDUCATION: LAW SCHOOLS AT THE CROSSROADS 115 (David Moss & Debra Curtis, eds.) (2012).

two on-site clinics—Women’s Employment Rights Clinic (WERC) and the Environmental Law and Justice Clinic (ELJC). Each provides free legal services and representation of people and communities that are underserved. Each clinic engages in legislative policy work and has developed deep relationships with other organizations locally and nationally to provide effective and comprehensive legal representation. We established our LLM in Taxation over 35 years ago and a significant strength of this program are two *pro bono* tax clinics. In the Sales and Use Tax Clinic, students represent clients who are appealing Sales and Use Tax assessments issued by the Board of Equalization. In the State Income Tax Clinic, students assist taxpayers with state income tax disputes against the California Franchise Tax Board. Each clinic and program emphasizes the importance of listening to members of our community—students, faculty, alumni and other lawyers and judges, as well as those in need of assistance. More recently, recognizing a greater need for specialized training on probate law and estate planning, in 2015 we launched our LLM in Estate Planning, Trust and Probate Law for practicing lawyers.

Another recent initiative is establishing the Veterans Legal Advocacy Center (VLAC) in 2013. VLAC is illustrative of how we integrate live client work, practical skills training, student support, and collaboration with the legal community to serve an underrepresented community. We launched this center after we listened to our students who had served in the military, or had friends or family who had served, and understood the importance of assisting other veterans. VLAC includes a clinical component in which students assist veterans with claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs, as well as with petitions for discharge upgrades. VLAC is one of several key San Francisco organizations that constitute V-HUB, which is a centralized portal for veterans seeking legal assistance. Along with the Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF), Swords to Plowshares, the Employment Law Center and the Veterans Administration, we work together to ensure that a veteran is quickly, accurately and effectively referred to the appropriate legal service provider. We also collaborate closely with the Veterans Administration to staff legal services clinics at VA locations in San Francisco, as well as with Swords to Plowshares. Other important partners include the Veterans Court as well as the veterans pod in the San Francisco jail. Students in VLAC assist veterans with non-criminal matters that have created obstacles to these veterans being able to transition smoothly to civilian life. VLAC also organizes and hosts a veterans conference each year to place a spot light on the challenges facing veterans as well as to celebrate their successes. We have featured speakers that include renowned trial attorney, John Kecker who is also a combat veteran, Col. Maritza Ryan who led the law department at West Point, and Kyndra Rotunda, Director of the Military and Veteran Law Institute at Chapman University.

Our student group Veterans Law Student Association is another important component of supporting our students who have served. After learning about GI education benefits and the Yellow Ribbon program, we successfully encouraged University leadership to increase our Yellow Ribbon match to cover 100% of law school tuition for an unlimited number of qualifying students.

Our location in the heart of San Francisco, “the City of Love” known for its liberal activism feeds the GGU Law ethos of community, service and the goal of being strategic in achieving practical results for those in our community whose voices would otherwise be muted. This is consistent with the expectation our students have that they will cultivate practical skills, legal knowledge and the values that are at the heart of the legal profession.

## Conclusion

Indeed, as the legal profession evolves and law schools respond to change, what law schools bring to their local areas will change. Many schools offer a wide range of programs, and when we consider all of them together, it becomes clear that law schools play a vital role in providing critical legal services to our communities, as well as information and ideas that influence policy debates, legislation, and judicial decisions, therefore contributing to the strength of every part of our economy. In order to continue and strengthen these important contributions, law schools in large cities, and those in less urban settings, must continue to adapt and innovate, form new strategic alliances, and create incubators and other innovative programs that serve the needs of our communities, and of the dynamic business, tech, government, and nonprofit sectors.

Not each of our initiatives necessarily satisfy ABA Standard 303 since some are not for course credit. We believe that it is important to remember that Standard 303 sets a floor, not a ceiling. Initiatives that result from engagement with the local community and from listening to alumni, students, faculty and others in the community provide broader and richer opportunities for students to enhance their overall learning and growth as professionals and appreciation for the power of collaboration and creativity.