LOQUITUR
THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE FOR
Vermont Law School
SUMMER 2013

The Road Ahead in Legal Education
Christopher Ahlers, Clinic LLM Fellow, speaks with an ENRLC clinician.
3 Letter from Dean Marc Mihaly

4 Discovery
VLS welcomes Melissa Scanlan as the new director of the Environmental Law Center and Laurie Ristino as director of the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems. The law school launches its first solar energy project, new Centers for Legal Innovation and Applied Human Rights, and an initiative in Myanmar to provide environmental governance training. Congratulations to the ENRLC for a win in their Passamaquoddy Bay case!

11 Jessica Scott ’10
Distinguished Environmental Advocate

12 Change and Opportunity in Legal Education
Insights from the judiciary, academy, and practice of law are helping to inform VLS as it works to prepare graduates for a changed legal marketplace. The result? A two-year “accelerated” JD at two-thirds the cost, an emphasis on distance learning and hands-on education, and a renewed commitment to legal services for those who can’t afford them.

18 A New Environmental Curriculum
The new environmental curriculum—which includes a new master’s degree in energy as well as important refinements with the MELP, JD/MELP, and JD/LLM degrees—aims to keep VLS as the premier source for the next generation of environmental leaders.

20 The Practice: VLS Alumni in Montpelier

22 Preparing for Practice: The GPP Celebrates 25 Years
In 1988, VLS started a unique simulation program that prepares students for the practice of law. Director Susan Apel, Associate Director Cappy Nunlist ’90, alumni, and students tell how the General Practice Program has evolved.

26 Christine Hill ’09
Connecting Policy with People

27 W. Bruce Pasfield ’84
Balanced Advocacy for the Environment

28 Class Notes
News from the VLSAA, regional groups, your classmates, and friends

360 Degrees of Environmental Commitment

Adam Sowatzka JD/MSEL’97

Inter Alia
Joel Faxon ’94 on Why Give?
President and Dean
Marc Mihaly

Vice President of External Relations
Matt Rizzo

Editors
Peter Glenshaw
Carol Westberg

Production Editor
Jennie Clarke

Contributing Editors
Patty McIlvaine
Ariel Wiegard

Contributing Writers
Lori Campbell
Dana Grossman
Regina Kuehnemund
Kevin Jones
Meg Lundstrom
Patrick Parenteau
Samantha Ruiz MELP’13

Special Thanks To
Lucy Halse MELP’13

Design and Art Direction
Glenn Suokko, Inc.

Printing
Universal-Wilde, Inc.

Published by Vermont Law School
164 Chelsea Street, PO Box 96
South Royalton, VT 05068
www.vermontlaw.edu

Send address changes to alumni@vermontlaw.edu
or call 802-831-1312

Printed with soy-based inks on recycled paper

© 2013 Vermont Law School
Letter from Dean Marc Mihaly

Dear Alumni and Friends,

This is an extraordinary moment to be at Vermont Law School for the campus is alive with change.

As we celebrate the fact that *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked Vermont Law School #1 in environmental law for an unprecedented fifth year in a row, we are pleased to welcome a new director to the Environmental Law Center—Melissa Scanlan.

We have made revisions to our curriculum and added two new degree programs: a one-year Master of Energy Regulation and Law, and an accelerated JD program (or AJD). The AJD will start this summer, and makes it possible for students to earn a JD degree in two years and at two-thirds the cost of a traditional JD. We are also looking closely and deeply at how legal education must change more broadly.

Two new research initiatives are also underway. Professor Oliver Goodenough has created the Center for Legal Innovation and is collaborating with organizations such as Exari, Google, and the U.S. Department of Treasury. And Professor Stephanie Farrior has launched the Center for Applied Human Rights, which has VLS students working at NGOs throughout the world.

These changes, wonderful to see, occur at a time of significant concern for legal education. In the short-term, all law schools face both a significant decline in the number of people interested in attending law school (as reflected in the number of LSAT takers), and a national conversation about the value and efficacy of a law degree.

I know VLS will do well in this new environment, and here are some of the reasons why.

We are a community made of people committed to rigorous and effective legal practice that makes a difference in our communities and the world.

Our home is in the great state of Vermont, a national model for how environmental values can be integrated into daily civic and economic life, and where our graduates are deeply involved in shaping these policies.

We have a track-record for innovation that includes the General Practice Program, now celebrating its 25th year as a program that gives students real-world experience in the practice of law.

Finally, we remain committed to student life and success… did I mention we have a new fitness center?

Please keep in touch.

Marc Mihaly
President, Dean, and Professor of Law
Marc B. Mihaly was inaugurated as the eighth chief executive of Vermont Law School on October 26, 2012 on the South Royalton Village Green. The ceremony included welcomes from trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, the judiciary, and community members, and a musical selection by Abigail Mihaly on violin and Kathy Hartman on keyboard. Following his formal installation and an introduction by David Mears JD/MSEL’91, President and Dean Mihaly delivered an inaugural address on VLS’s initiatives to adapt to the changing legal landscape. For a full transcript, go to http://lawreview.vermontlaw.edu/2013/02/08/volume-37-book-1/.

A video of the ceremony and the afternoon panel discussion on the future of legal education is available at www.vermontlaw.edu/inauguration.

ENVIRONMENTAL CLINIC WINS LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS CASE

by Patrick Parenteau, Senior Counsel, Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic

A seven-year battle over a proposed liquefied natural gas terminal at Split Rock on the shores of beautiful Passamaquoddy Bay in Pleasant Point, Maine, finally came to a successful conclusion on January 25.

In 2005, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic filed suit on behalf of a group of Passamaquoddy tribal members challenging the decision of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to approve a lease to a private company to construct the terminal on the Pleasant Point Reservation at a site with great historic and spiritual significance to the Passamaquoddy people. The case wound a tortuous path through the federal courts with two trips to the First Circuit before the matter was referred to the Interior Board of Indian Appeals (IBIA). As time passed, the Canadian Government registered formal diplomatic opposition to supertankers transecting its waters, the market for East Coast LNG collapsed, and the developers ran out of money. Still the project, like the walking dead, lingered in the shadows until the IBIA issued an order vacating the BIA’s initial approval of the lease and declaring the case—at long last—at an end.

Many hands contributed to this success, first and foremost the dozen or so clinicians who slaved over countless briefs to counter the machinations of the government lawyers, including a companion case that forced disclosure of documents hidden from public view for years. Justin Kolber LLM’07, the clinic’s first fellow, played a significant role and argued before the First Circuit in the early round. Teresa Clemmer, staff attorney and acting director of the clinic, took over the case and argued the second round before the circuit. Last but not least, Associate Director Laura Murphy convinced the IBIA to bury this bad idea once and for all.

According to Professor Michael Dworkin, “It’s a lesson in the importance of sustained institutional commitment…. So congratulations to the people who achieved this and also to the law school that was their base.”
The Passamaquoddy refer to themselves as the People of the Dawn. Whales, porpoise, and other marine life play a prominent role in their culture, nutrition, ceremonies, and heritage. Thanks to the clinic, the critically endangered right whales that ply the waters of Passamaquoddy Bay will not have to compete with oil tankers.

INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LEGAL EDUCATION

When Vermont Law School quietly launched the Center for Legal Innovation last January, lawyers, judges, and practitioners in the know took notice. Center Director and Professor Oliver Goodenough has persuaded many that innovation and entrepreneurship are redefining legal education, the practice of law, and law itself.

Among the organizations collaborating with the Center are a Boston-based, venture-backed company (Exari), Google, and the Office of Financial Research at the U.S. Department of Treasury.

“The law is shaped by the technology that supports it,” said Goodenough. “One hundred years ago, we developed the case method because of a technological innovation of the time—the spread of cheap, mechanized printing—that subsequently influenced the way we argue about law in court, how we approach scholarship, and the very conceptual foundation of the American justice system. I am very excited to ask basic questions about the elements and logic of organizational governance in light of the pervasive presence of digital technology.”

With Exari, Goodenough and Jeanne Eicks ‘96 have been providing product research and development support, focusing initially on building a clause spider as well as a contract tagging taxonomy. VLS students are working directly on these projects, which have been underway for more than a year.

“This is an extraordinary opportunity for VLS students to learn first-hand how the law and lawyering is changing,” said Eicks. “It’s leading to externship opportunities for students today and we’re confident employment opportunities will emerge for them in the next six months.”

In addition to Exari, the Center has received a Google Research Award to explore new ways in which organizations—including businesses, non-profits, and hybrid organizations such as B-corps—can be governed in a digital age. Professor Goodenough will utilize the grant to support his work on automating the formation and governance of organizations fundamentally. The aim is to rethink, in light of digital tools and platform, what an organization is and does.

With the OFR, Goodenough is working to create a financial instrument library as part of work related to the Dodd-Frank Act. The OFR is an Office within Treasury established by Congress to serve the Financial Stability Oversight Council, its member agencies, and the public by improving the quality, transparency, and accessibility of financial data and information; by conducting and sponsoring research related to financial stability; and by promoting best practices in risk management.

CHINA PARTNERSHIP EXPANDS INTO MYANMAR AND THE MEKONG RIVER BASIN

The school’s U.S.-China Partnership for Environmental Law recently launched a new initiative to provide environmental governance training and education in Myanmar as that nation prepares for considerable foreign investment. With financial support from the blue moon fund, this initiative recognizes that the next phases of political and economic reform in Myanmar offer an opportunity to protect large areas of the Indo-Myanmar biodiversity hotspot from the threat of development. The initial emphasis of the project is to provide key stakeholders with legal and policy tools that can be quickly adopted to provide broad protection of the country’s key biodiversity areas.

In addition to assisting with rapid adoption of strong environmental protections for Myanmar’s natural resources, this initiative will improve knowledge of and skills in environmental law among government officials, members of the judiciary, NGOs, business leaders, and educators. It will also help create a broad environmental regulatory framework that will encourage sound environmental management and sustainable investment opportunities.

The China Partnership is also working with Southwest Forestry University in Kunming, Yunnan Province, to launch an Environmental and Biodiversity Law Clinic. The new clinic will provide direct legal and technical services to NGOs, communities, and underserved and vulnerable citizens in southwest China to protect the environment and public health. Yunnan province is part of the Mekong River Basin, which has vast reserves of biological, mineral, and hydro-energy resources and is home to the largest number of ethnic minority groups in China. Supported by a grant from the Department of State, this new initiative will educate citizen leaders on their rights and the legal avenues to address local environmental and public health issues so as to increase citizen participation, strengthen civil society, and improve government decision making on environmental issues.
SOLAR AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES FOR SUSTAINABILITY

By Samantha Ruiz MELP’13, Research Associate, Institute for Energy and the Environment; Lori Campbell, Facilities Manager; and Kevin Jones, Associate Director, Institute for Energy and the Environment

In February, Vermont Law School’s first solar energy project began to power a publicly accessible solar electric vehicle (EV) charging station on campus. In addition, at the direction of Dean Marc Mihaly, the law school’s Institute for Energy and the Environment (IEE) has begun to develop a campus sustainability plan.

Both projects are supported by an anonymous donation of $200,000 to create a Green Revolving Fund, supplemented by a $50,000 contribution authorized by the Board of Trustees and the 2013 Class Gift. The fund will provide ongoing support for campus energy efficiency, green technology, and other sustainability projects. The primary sources of funding for the solar EV charging station are the fund and the Vermont Small Scale Renewable Incentive Program. Over time, net-metered electric revenues from the solar array will pay back the fund’s investment.

The VLS EV charging station includes a 9.2 kW solar photovoltaic system and a General Electric DuraStation dual level-two (240v) EV charging station. In addition, VLS installed two level-one charging outlets (120v) to support up to four plug-in electric vehicles to charge simultaneously. The charging station was constructed in a highly visible parking lot next to the main campus. The level-two charging station can fully charge a Chevy Volt in roughly 3 hours, while the level-one chargers require 8 to 10 hours to fully charge a Volt whose battery is depleted.

The project made South Royalton the first location in the Upper Valley with a publicly available charging station. Studies have shown that vehicles in the U.S. spend more than 90 percent of their time parked at home or work. This idle time provides 21 hours of charging a day and could power cars for 85 miles or more on electricity, utilizing the lower-voltage level-one charger. A study by the Union of Concerned Scientists has shown that driving an electric vehicle in New England is the equivalent of driving a gasoline-powered vehicle that gets 75 miles per gallon. Using solar energy generated on site, the electric vehicle becomes a much cleaner option.

The VLS campus offers a unique geographic location for such a facility. As public transportation is limited in this rural area and VLS offers no residential facilities, a majority of students, faculty, and staff commute by car to campus. An innovative way to reduce the carbon impact of the school’s commuters, the EV charging station will support those who own EVs and encourage others to purchase them.

The project made South Royalton the first location in the Upper Valley with a publicly available charging station. The 9.2 kW solar PV array was constructed at the main entrance to VLS, adjacent to Chelsea Street, a location highly visible to anyone approaching downtown South Royalton from I-89 and Route 14. The project was designed and built by Rutland’s SameSun of Vermont Inc., using U.S.-manufactured products and local labor. The solar panels are manufactured in SolarWorld’s Oregon manufacturing facility, and the solar inverter, which manages the connection to the electric grid, was manufactured in California. Headquartered in Germany, SolarWorld, the largest U.S. solar panel manufacturer, has been recognized by three different independent rankings as the global renewable-energy industry’s leader in sustainable corporate management, environmentally sound management, and transparent financial reporting.

On November 26, 2012, Dean Mihaly signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. As a signatory, VLS is now taking steps to implement a comprehensive plan toward climate neutrality. The IEE is working closely with the Campus Sustainability Committee to develop a campus sustainability plan that will include:

- A greenhouse gas emissions inventory setting a baseline for future improvements
- Short-term and long-term initiatives to reduce campus greenhouse gas emissions
- A target date and anticipated milestones to become climate neutral

The Campus Sustainability Committee is composed of representatives from Buildings and Grounds, the Office for External Relations, the student-led Campus Greening Committee, and a faculty member and research associate from the IEE. The first
The campus sustainability plan will be completed by the end of June 2013.

According to IEE Research Associate Jeff Aslan ’13, “The Campus Sustainability Plan will seek to mitigate institutional greenhouse gas emissions in a variety of sectors. The solar array powering the EV charging station will reduce our electrical greenhouse gas emissions. Also, having the charging station in place will facilitate electric vehicle adoption among students, faculty, and staff, reducing VLS’s transportation emissions—one of the most notoriously difficult emission sources to reduce in a rural setting.”

A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

Soon after Professor Laurie Ristino arrived last January to direct the Center for Agriculture and Food Systems (CAFS), students and Center clients alike began to reflect her enthusiasm. All understand that the time for sustainable food and agriculture is now, and Vermont is one of the key places to be.

“I’m struck by the passion of the millennial generation to engage in food and agriculture in what constitutes a postmodern back-to-the-land movement,” said Ristino. “At VLS, we are uniquely positioned to train this new generation of food and agriculture entrepreneurs to lead us to a sustainable future.”

The center offers law and policy students an expanding curriculum in food and agriculture and supports practical, robust scholarship for use in the community. CAFS also offers training and legal tools to help build sustainable local and regional food systems.

Director Ristino, an expert on the conservation title of the Farm Bill, was formerly a senior counsel with the USDA in Washington, D.C., and taught environmental agriculture at George Washington University Law School. She is committed to realizing the dual mission of CAFS: to develop the next generation of sustainable food and agriculture law and policy leaders and to provide legal and policy resources and solutions for citizens to build and support such systems.

This winter the Center announced a new Center for Agriculture and Food Systems LLM Fellowship position that will run from August 2013 through July 2015. In addition to pursuing the LLM degree, the fellow will work part-time on CAFS projects and work closely with the director and students. The fellow will also help farmers, government, and nonprofits develop legal tools and trainings such as legislative proposals, legal and policy analysis, template agreements, and farmer and producer workshops.

CAFS believes that to truly foster sustainable agriculture and food, people need to understand the connections these systems have to the environment, energy, human and animal health, labor, and climate change. Ensuring sufficient, healthy food to feed a growing global population is a critical humanitarian challenge. At the same time, the production of food has tremendous impact on natural resources, including water, soil health, and air, which must be addressed.

Laurie Ristino (center) with students Emily Laine ’15 and Emma Hempstead ’14
HUMAN RIGHTS APPLIED

The new Center for Applied Human Rights (CAHR) offers opportunities for research and advocacy training on cutting-edge issues in human rights law and policy. Student Human Rights Fellows hone their skills and deepen their understanding of international law by engaging in projects for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) under the supervision of Professor Stephanie Farrior, director of International and Comparative Law Programs at VLS. Students gain experience in handling issues of international law theory and practice, contribute to solutions, and build their professional network.

This year, student fellows are working on projects with the following NGOs:

Business and Human Rights Resource Centre
In a project exploring legal issues at the intersection of human rights, environmental justice, and the extraterritorial application of law, a student is examining non-U.S. cases imposing extraterritorial liability on corporations for environmental harm that negatively affects human rights.

Center for Economic and Social Rights
A student is examining human rights-based challenges that advocates have raised in courts and quasijudicial bod-

"The classroom component complements and guides our real-world work experience by providing a foundation in relevant international human rights law and allowing students to share their research experiences and tackle problems together. Being involved in this program has been one of the most rewarding experiences in my law school career."
—Allison Cameron ’13

"The Applied Human Rights Fellowship was very important because it gave me the opportunity to apply my theoretical understanding of International Law and International Human Rights Law obtained at VLS to real life situations involving the recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts by non-state armed groups."
—Joseph Kaifala ’13

"I received this fantastic opportunity through the Center for Applied Human Rights to write a List of Issues document to the UN Human Rights Committee concerning an area of law which I’m very passionate about. I feel honored to have contributed to this."
—Jennifer Reinbold ’13
The Leaders’ Circle was established in 2006 to recognize individuals and organizations whose notable commitment to Vermont Law School guarantees consistent, unrestricted support for the school’s core programs and initiatives. These leaders of our philanthropic community provide crucial funds to the school year after year. In 2011–12, Leaders’ Circle members donated nearly 70 percent of our unrestricted support.

For more information, contact Ariel Wiegard, Director of Development and Alumni Relations, at awiegard@vermontlaw.edu or 802-831-1041, or visit www.vermontlaw.edu/giving.
Melissa Scanlan, a water law scholar who began her career by founding and leading a non-profit environmental law firm, has been appointed as the new director of Vermont Law School’s Environmental Law Center (ELC). She will assume leadership of the ELC in June 2013.

“Melissa Scanlan brings a robust background as a scholar, activist, and social entrepreneur,” said President and Dean Marc Mihaly. “I am incredibly excited about what she will do for the students and faculty of Vermont Law School as the new director of the ELC,” he said.

Scanlan received her JD degree and her MS degree in Environmental Science, Policy, and Management from the University of California at Berkeley. She received her BA in World Politics from the Catholic University of America.

Scanlan received two prestigious fellowships following law school: an Equal Justice Works Fellowship and an Echoing Green Fellowship. Scanlan used these fellowships to launch Midwest Environmental Advocates (MEA), the first non-profit environmental law center in Wisconsin. Under Scanlan’s leadership MEA grew into a thriving firm, with offices in two cities, providing legal and technical assistance to grassroots groups working for clean air, water, and government accountability.

After serving as MEA’s founder, executive director, and senior counsel, she was a lead consultant in the creation of the Center for Water Policy in 2011 at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

“I am thrilled to join Vermont Law School and the Environmental Law Center,” Scanlan said. “I welcome the challenge to further the reach of the ELC and educate the next generation of environmental change makers.”

For the past two years, Professor John Echeverria has served as the Acting Director of the ELC. He will be returning to the VLS faculty following a sabbatical leave during the 2013–14 academic year.

NEW FITNESS CENTER

Vermont Law School opened its new fitness center Thursday, February 14. Designed by the nationally renowned firm Eck MacNeely Architects of Boston and built by E.F. Wall & Associates of Barre, Vermont, the 4,100-square foot, one-story facility has a contemporary, environmentally sustainable design compatible with the historic architecture of South Royalton and Vermont Law School.

Naturally sited in the slope of a hill to take advantage of constant soil temperatures, the building is highly energy efficient and uses low-maintenance materials with a natural feeling. The roof, walls, and high-performance windows are extensively insulated, and the southern roof has the potential for photovoltaics. The interior design features bamboo flooring, high-efficiency lighting, and natural cross-ventilation. Best management practices are planned for storm-water runoff, including permeable pavement and rain gardens.

The equipment in the center is a mix of Cybex and True cardio and weight training machines, including treadmills, ellipticals, bikes, and free weights.

We are thankful to everyone, including the crew and students from the class of 2011, who worked tirelessly to make our new fitness center a reality.
The American Bar Association recently named Jessica Scott a “rising star” and a recipient of their Distinguished Environmental Advocates Award—a fitting recognition of someone whose advocacy is rooted in her childhood: Jessica’s older sister suffered permanent brain damage from lead paint exposure. “It’s easy to think about environmental problems in the abstract,” Scott says, “but every day I saw the impact toxic exposures can have for the rest of your life.”

Since graduation, Scott has worked in the EPA’s Office of General Counsel (OGC), where she handles international, wildlife, federal Indian law, and environmental justice issues. “Through my tribal work I’ve worked clean water, clean air, pesticide, and hazardous waste cases,” she says. “Exposure to all of the environmental media statutes is a great way to start.” Although OGC rarely hires new lawyers, Scott proved herself while interning in its summer honors program and became one of the few exceptions. VLS has a strong presence in the OGC, as Scott is one of five VLS alumni that EPA has hired in recent years.

Scott came to VLS as a well-traveled graduate of George-town University’s School of Foreign Service and found many opportunities to further her grasp of global issues. One involved attending the 2009 UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen with a group of VLS students and professors. Despite that summit’s disappointing results, Scott is glad she could observe an international negotiation. “I remain hopeful it’s possible to come up with a global solution, because we have to,” she says. Researching with former VLS Professor Tsem-ing Yang expanded her knowledge of global environmental law (Scott’s mentor became her boss during Yang’s later turn as EPA deputy general counsel).

Scott recently spent six weeks immersed in China’s legal landscape during a trip with seven other American environmental attorneys organized by the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations. For two weeks they toured the country, meeting with NGOs, judges and lawyers, journalists, and scholars. During the following month, Scott studied a case involving illegal dumping of toxic chromium tailings. “It’s the first public interest environmental lawsuit brought by a grassroots NGO to be accepted by a Chinese court,” she notes. “What struck me,” she says of the trip, “is how many more obstacles environmental advocates face in China than in the U.S. Their funding opportunities are much narrower; there’s uncertainty about getting their day in court. But these people keep fighting. It’s incredible—and inspiring.”
VLS has moved beyond the sensational headlines regarding legal education with changes that can make a difference today and tomorrow. A renewed commitment to provide legal services to the underserved is one such example.

“The constant refrain we hear is that there are no lawyer jobs out there,” says judicial educator Mark Sherman. “From the traditional perspective, that is probably true, but there are many, many people across the country who are without legal representation. So what we have is a mismatch.” Sherman, a former practicing lawyer and clinical law teacher who uses distance education media extensively at the Federal Judicial Center, was one of four presenters at a VLS panel discussion last October titled “Innovation in Legal Education.”

Another panelist was Renee Knake, associate professor of law at Michigan State and cofounder of ReInventLaw.com, a laboratory for innovation and entrepreneurship. She describes the unmet need for legal services as “pretty much anyone who doesn’t qualify for subsidized legal aid, but who can’t afford a lawyer at three figures an hour—which is most of us.”

As a result, there has been a dramatic rise in recent years in the number of self-represented litigants—in Vermont and nationwide—including an especially worrisome self-representation disparity between plaintiffs and defendants in civil cases. At the October panel, the Honorable Amy Davenport, chief administrative judge for Vermont, noted that in Vermont collection and foreclosure suits, over 90 percent of plaintiffs—often banks—are represented by a lawyer; but, she says, “the percentage of defendants who are represented is way down in the teens or less.”

The crux of the problem, says Sherman, is “how to meet
that demand, knowing there’s this new normal and the traditional approach is no longer viable, while recognizing that, when considering traditional classroom law professors, we’re talking about a profession that is very resistant to change.”

The traditional approach Sherman refers to involves studying the law’s theoretical underpinnings for three years, landing a job as an associate at a large or mid-sized firm to learn the practice of law, then making partner, joining a smaller firm, or hanging out a shingle in solo practice.

But eventually, says VLS Professor Oliver Goodenough, director of the school’s Center for Legal Innovation, clients rebelled against “high-end lawyers billing hundreds if not thousands of dollars an hour, throwing associates at a case—‘damn the cost, let’s bill it out.’” In the end, he says, “That model is not sustainable.”

Two additional factors have contributed to the model’s collapse. “The disruptions occurring in the profession are permanent,” explains Sherman, but they’ve been “exacerbated—I guess sped up—by the great recession.” And technological leaps have been a wrench in the works; the offshoring of legal research and the rise of e-discovery, for example, have meant less work for traditional firms.

So now, explains Dean Marc Mihaly, “Law schools have to completely rethink what they do. Of course it’s a difficult time, because any time of restructuring is difficult. But for those of us who have been thinking that law schools should change, but were confronted with a static situation in the past, for us this is a really exciting time. Now that things have loosened up, there are real opportunities for entities like VLS that want to lead the way toward different approaches.

“I have complete faith,” he adds, “that the profession will figure out these issues and come out much better and stronger, and that Vermont Law School in particular, which is nimble and capable of changing direction and rethinking things, will be in the forefront of that effort. VLS itself is uniquely positioned in this regard because its programs focus on service to individuals, nonprofits, and government, and its alumni populate positions in small- and medium-sized firms that are leaders in developing means to serve individuals and small and innovative business at affordable prices.”

That’s not to say VLS hasn’t felt some pain. In January, ten staff members accepted voluntary buy-outs and two more were laid off. In February, eligible faculty were offered an opportunity to voluntarily move to a part-time relationship with the school, keeping their title and offices, and teaching courses as needed. In May 2013, the school will graduate a JD class of about 150, down from recent average highs of about 200, while the current first-year class numbers 170. But some at VLS see in these shifts a return to a historic mean—and to a more personal touch.

Many at the law school appear energized rather than dispirited by the prospect of change. “People get good at the old way of doing things, and because they’re good at it they conceive that it’s wonderful,” says Goodenough. “The trick for us all is to figure out how to get equally good at what the new terms require. There’s no reason we can’t.”

The hard part, he continues, is that “we’re rebuilding the car while driving it.” Students continue to enter and leave while the curriculum, and the ways it’s delivered, are being changed around them. And that rebuilding isn’t just a matter of turning a gas-guzzling SUV into a Prius while going 65 miles an hour down I-89. “Who knows?” continues Goodenough. “Maybe it’s not a car any more—maybe it’s got wings or a rotor on the top. Quite frankly we’re on the front edge of a bunch of this,” says Goodenough. “There are some Joneses to keep up with, but we’re one of the Joneses.”

Indeed, says Michigan State’s Knake, when she was establishing ReInventLaw.com and thought of some things that are nontraditional, cutting-edge, and perhaps even risky, “I knew that Vermont was very much on the leading edge in thinking about how to respond to the pressures.”

In brief, here are some of the innovations taking place at Vermont Law School:

**ACCELERATING THE JD**

Vermont Law School’s new Accelerated JD program (AJD) offers the opportunity to earn a law degree in just two years, save a year’s tuition, and enter the workforce a year earlier. Taking advantage of our experience with summer programs, VLS is offering a curriculum that begins in May and allows motivated students to complete the JD curriculum and take the summer bar exam by the end of their second year. Unique among accelerated programs, the AJD at VLS costs two thirds
of the three-year JD’s tuition. This isn’t the “law light” two-year program much in the news, but the full program, including access to experiential opportunities, specializations, and law journals.

**EXPANDING DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

Though the ABA limits the amount and timing of online learning credits that count toward a JD, a relaxation of those limits is under discussion. Furthermore, master’s and LLM programs are not subject to those limits. In 2011, VLS launched the nation’s first online graduate degree in environmental law. Just two years later, three times as many students are enrolled in the online as in the on-campus program; most students come from the U.S., but many come from other countries.

“Like any kind of education,” says Mihaly, distance learning “can be done very well or very poorly. Certainly, sticking a camera in the back of a big class is an example of doing it poorly. But it can be done in small classes very intensely, very well, such that there’s no back of the class and everybody participates in a way that is difficult to emulate even in a traditional classroom, even with a good professor who uses the Socratic method. If you have 60 people in a class, you can’t call on everyone in every class, obviously. But in really good distance learning, you can reach everyone.”

And, Mihaly adds, “Unlike most schools doing distance learning, our core faculty teach this program. It is designed so that it is literally interchangeable with the on-campus program.”

Online courses facilitate movement back and forth between school and the professional world, which is good because one of the best ways to reduce the cost of education is to allow people to work while they learn. They make efficient use of faculty time because all the reading material, narrated PowerPoints, and other information is developed ahead of time. The course is taught with threaded discussion groups, but it’s front-loaded in terms of the planning.

**GIVING STUDENTS HANDS-ON TRAINING**

VLS has been giving students practical experience in the law since its earliest days, through on-campus clinics and off-campus externships. At many law schools, says legal education expert Sherman, “students can go through three years of law school, never get any real, practical experience or training, graduate, take the bar, pass the bar, hang out a shingle, and start representing clients. That’s just not acceptable.”

Most JD students at VLS now take part in some sort of experiential program. “Last semester,” says Mihaly, “we had 72 students ‘here’ who were not here—they were working for the full semester throughout the country, earning credits under the direct supervision of faculty members who very often visited them on site.” And an additional 54 students gained practical experience in VLS’s on-campus legal clinics or by doing a part-time externship with a local lawyer or judge.

“There’s a lot of discussion about the need for clinics,” says Mihaly, but VLS is “light years ahead of what other schools are doing in this regard.” As a result, notes Abby Armstrong ’84, VLS’s director of career services, Vermont graduates have a significant leg up in an increasingly tight job market.

**OFFERING LEGAL SERVICES WHERE THERE IS NEED**

One key to meeting the nation’s unmet need for legal services, says Mihaly, is to “increase the flow of lawyers to rural America.” That’s because many of the lawyers serving rural areas are nearing retirement—or have already retired. To fill that gap, VLS is discussing the creation of “an incubator program that identifies small towns that need lawyers.” Students who are interested in trying out rural practice would be matched with a retiring lawyer-cum-mentor.

The development of the rural-practice incubator program is an example of collaboration among VLS, the Vermont Bar Association, and the Vermont Supreme Court. “That kind of collaboration with the bar and the courts in a big state is much harder,” says Mihaly. “Not only is VLS relatively small and independent, but Vermont as a state is relatively small and of course independent. That makes it easier to get things done.”

**DEFINING NEW ROLES WITHIN THE LAW**

“Many of us,” says Mihaly, “are old enough to remember that when you went to the doctor, there were just two people in the office—the doctor and the nurse.” But nowadays medicine
has a plethora of roles: physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, LPN, and so on. Mihaly and others believe that an important step in satisfying the unmet need for legal services is the development of additional roles in the legal profession beyond lawyers and paralegals.

Of course, adds Mihaly, “those people are going to need training, and I think Vermont Law School can help in that regard.” The school already has a head start, given its long history of offering an environmental law master’s program for nonlawyers (see pages 18–19 for more on VLS’s environmental curriculum).

**RETOOLING CAREER-COUNSELING PROGRAMS**

The decline of the traditional legal job market—associates in a big firm in a big city—hasn’t affected VLS as much as it has some schools. That’s because, says Armstrong, “in many cases, students who choose to attend Vermont Law School are looking for a different life.” Some want to remain in New England, and many are not interested in working the hours that big law demands of associates. Instead, VLS graduates have sought and found jobs with government agencies, nonprofits, and small law firms. Interestingly, students at schools that used to send a large percentage of graduates to big firms are now looking to expand in the small law sector, too.

Changes in the legal marketplace also offer new job opportunities for VLS graduates. A recent trade show focusing on technology and law in New York City provided an opportunity for Armstrong, Goodenough, Rebecca Purdon JD/MSEL’96 (Assistant Dean of Environmental Programs and Director of Distance Learning) and Jeanne Eicks ’96 to bring VLS students to learn first-hand about this sector.

The event “fills three floors of a big convention hotel,” says Goodenough. “It’s just wild—there’s over $20 billion in legal commerce there—and no other law students. I mean it’s a trade show, so it’s not necessarily where you’d have your law students go, but we wanted to have them there.

“A number of them came away going ‘Oh, my!’” he adds, because “almost every company in that set of rooms is hiring.” The students encountered several VLS alumni among the exhibitors, including the cofounder of one of the principal offshore legal services companies and a senior executive in one of the lawyer-for-hire companies.

“There’s gobs of opportunity in this world, as well as gobs of disruption,” Goodenough observes. The key for law schools is to help students “find the opportunity where it is...not where it was 30 years ago.”

Armstrong recently assigned one staff member to work exclusively with students in the online programs. Career Services is also developing short videos and other online resources that students will be able to access anytime, from anywhere. Even “the nine-to-five workday may change,” Armstrong acknowledges. “We haven’t yet had anybody who can call us only in the middle of the night, but we’re going to have to start thinking about that.”

The challenge, as she sees it, is to imbue today’s high-tech way of communicating with the personal touch of a 30-minute in-person session. “I know when I’m sitting and talking to a student that they have a bunch of ‘ah-ha’ moments,” she explains. “We have to figure how to capture the information and disseminate it with the same level of intensity and interest and enthusiasm to someone who’s going to look at it online or watch it as a video. We don’t want to take away from the personal, because what we offer at this school more than anything else is the chance to connect with somebody.”

So “we will continue to focus on individual conversations with students,” she says, “because that’s what I believe works best and has the most meaning for students—whether they’re face-to-face with us in the office or we’re talking to them on the phone or we’re Skyping or using video conferencing equipment.”

All these initiatives give Mihaly considerable optimism that VLS is in a good spot as the profession sorts itself out. “If you look at each area where people are talking about change,” he says, “we’re already doing it or are about to do it. Our long investment in clinics, simulation, and imaginative teaching techniques and our recent investment in e-learning is going to allow the school to maintain a leadership role as these changes evolve.”
Adam Sowatzka JD/MSEL’97

360° of Environmental Commitment

Fresh out of Vermont Law School as a brand new lawyer at the Environmental Protection Agency, Adam Sowatzka found himself facing a team of five corporate lawyers across the table. “Several of the attorneys were my age, but none of them was allowed to say anything. In contrast, I was leading the case for the EPA,” he says. “The experience allowed me to learn very quickly.”

Today Adam finds himself leading cases today as an Atlanta-based partner of King & Spalding on behalf of organizational clients.

“My clients are typically large public companies that want to comply with environmental regulations—they want to do the right thing, but in a way that is cost effective, strategic, and efficient,” Sowatzka says. “My role is to help them through a complicated regulatory process by resolving issues, but in a way that results in measures that improve the environment.”

For example, in a significant enforcement case with a Fortune 100 company, he says, he was able to “act as a translator. I was able to explain to my client what EPA’s objectives were, and help explain to EPA what my clients really meant by certain things, and we were able to effectively move forward a case that had been ‘in the ditch’ for many years before I got involved.”

In another case involving a large Superfund site, remediation improved concentrations of contaminants in fish, which improved the local fish advisories—something especially heartening to Adam, who first encountered environmental issues as a child when he couldn’t eat the contaminated fish he caught near his family’s cabin at Lake Tomahawk in Wisconsin. In another case, he negotiated a nationwide consent decree with EPA that resulted in his client not only addressing storm water violations at 21 sites, but also establishing a program to implement a comprehensive $8 million environmental compliance program for all of the company’s operations throughout the United States.

Raised in the working class community of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Adam was the first in his family to graduate college, and majored in environmental policy at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Choosing law was easy—“growing up, I was sort of inquisitive and argumentative.” According to Adam, VLS “prepared me to practice law” and the master’s program particularly enabled him to “hit the ground running my first year at EPA.”

After three years at the EPA, Adam left to become general counsel at an environmental division of Axel Johnson Inc. Four years later, he returned to EPA to work on issues such as liquefied natural gas in the Gulf of Mexico and permitting of animal feeding operations. A year later, following the birth of his fourth child, he entered private practice. Most recently, he returned to King & Spalding in March 2012, where he has a national environmental practice focusing on federal and state enforcement matters.

Adam and his wife, Mary, spend weekends at their mountain cabin, where he teaches their three sons and daughter, ages 7 to 15, to fish and hunt. “When I need reflection or retrospection, I’ll go hiking or get out on the lake and do some fishing—it’s still the place I do some of my best thinking,” he says.
At first glance, curricular reform might not seem very exciting, but consider the downstream impact: a generation of students equipped to analyze environmental policy issues, devise solutions to environmental challenges, and communicate with the public and professionals about environmental problems and solutions.

“The environmental programs at Vermont Law School can be and should be the premier academic vehicle for producing the environmental leaders of the next generation,” said John Echeverria, professor of law and acting director of the Environmental Law Center.

The faculty at Vermont Law School have spent more than two years redesigning the school’s entire environmental curriculum by considering how course requirements and degrees relate to career aspirations. The result has been “the most significant set of changes in the environmental curriculum at VLS in several decades,” according to Professor Echeverria.

The reform is substantial, and includes the following:

- A new one-year master’s degree, the Master of Energy Regulation and Law (MERL);
- Redesign of the existing Master of Environmental Law and Policy (MELP);
- A new one-year LLM in Energy Law;
- A reconfiguration of the LLM in Environmental Law;
- A new set of joint degrees, which now include the JD/MERL in addition to the JD/MELP, as well as a JD/LLM in either Environmental Law or Energy Law; and
- A comprehensive suite of certificate options for all degrees—Master’s, JD, LLM, and joint—that allow specialization in specific environmental issues.

These new degrees have received accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and acquiescence from the American Bar Association (ABA). Details on each change are described below (for more detail, see www.vermontlaw.edu/ELC).

**MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS**

There are now two master’s degree programs at VLS. Each can be completed in one year or can be completed on a part-time basis over as long as five years.

**Master of Environmental Law and Policy (MELP)**

This degree, which has been offered in some form since the 1980s, remains focused on the political, scientific, and communications aspects of environmental law, with an added emphasis on economics and advocacy. With a MELP, says Echeverria, “you could go into land use, you could become an expert in climate, you could become a water resource specialist, you could become a generalist in environmental law and policy.” The MELP may be pursued either on campus or online.

**Master of Energy Regulation and Law (MERL)**

This new degree, developed in response to the emergence of a strong alternative energy sector, was structured to focus on the legal and political aspects of energy use, production, and transmission. The MERL includes courses in Public Law and the new LLM in Energy Law will include required courses in Public Law; Energy Law and Policy in a Carbon-Constrained World; Energy Regulation, Markets, and the Environment; and Environmental Economics and Markets. The MERL is currently offered on campus and is expected to be offered online in 2014.
There are now four certificates to augment any of the degrees listed above, all of which require additional courses but no additional tuition.

- **Certificate in Climate Law**
- **Certificate in Energy Law**
- **Certificate in Land Use Law**
- **Certificate in Water Resources Law**

A certificate is a formal recognition that a student has pursued a concentrated course of study in a particular area. For example, a certificate allows a JD student to achieve a certain level of specialization within environmental law without having to meet all of the requirements of a second degree.

Previously, VLS offered a certificate related to environmental law only in energy law. Under the new curriculum, students pursuing environmental law at VLS can obtain certificates not only in energy law but also in climate law, land use law, and water resources law.

“We wanted not only to give students more options in terms of their studies, but also provide credentials that could carry forward to their career,” said Echeverria.
Vermont has a well-deserved national reputation for taking the lead in innovative public policy. Whether it was Act 250 (1970), civil unions (2000), single-payer health insurance system (2012), or an energy plan that aims for 90 percent renewables by 2050, Vermont and its public policy makers have been drafting innovative laws and regulations that have often influenced other states and the entire nation. A powerful cohort of Vermont Law School alumni has been an integral part of that effort.

VLS alumni today in Montpelier include at least a half dozen senators and representatives, two dozen lawyers in the Legislative Council, many staff in Vermont state agencies, and approximately 20 lobbyists. VLS is present in other ways. Some policy players have VLS spouses (for example, Professor Oliver Goodenough’s wife, Alison Clarkson, is a state representative from Woodstock) or teach or take classes at VLS. In addition, VLS professors and institutes often provide research and testimony, especially on energy and environmental issues. “We run into each other all the time,” laughs Chris Recchia MSEL’83, Vermont’s newly appointed public service commissioner.

Sarah Buxton ’10, who was elected state representative the year in which she graduated, recalls “the first day I was here, I said, ‘Oh my goodness, there are so many of us!’” A day after Tropical Storm Irene, she was able to reach Recchia, then deputy secretary of the Agency of Natural Resources, to get a waiver on a gravel-extraction ban on streams so that roads could be fixed in her district of Tunbridge/Royalton. She drew on the VLS Land Use Clinic in drafting post-Irene land-use laws updating flood-plain permitting. On the Education Committee, she leans on Legislative Counsel Donna Russo-Savage JD’89 for a thorough analysis of pending bills. She is working with Falko Schilling ’11, Consumer Protection Advocate with the Vermont Public Interest Research Group, to require labeling of GMO food products, and with Vermont Legal Aid’s Chris Curtis ’06 to protect low-income Vermonters from the effects of budget cuts.

Like other legislators in Vermont, Buxton has no staff and sometimes must rely on lobbyists to gain a solid perspective on an issue, including the VLS-heavy firms of MacLean, Meehan & Rice (MMR), which often represents corporate clients, and Sirotkin & Necrason, which often represents nonprofits. Unlike many other partisan-wracked legislatures, civility rules the debate in Vermont. “After I have a talk with Chris Rice JD/MSEL’93 [a founding partner of MMR] about a particularly controversial issue in which he is involved, it’s not at all unusual for him to say something like, ‘I hope you talk to Adam Necrason JD/MSEL’96, too,’” says Buxton.

In a capital as small as Montpelier, trust is the coin of the realm—and VLS alumni have an edge. “Our shared history gives us a baseline respect, and there’s a level of trust and collegiality among us that you don’t always have with others,” says Jessica Oski ’92, a lobbyist with Sirotkin & Necrason. VLS alumni share not only their time in SoRo, but also their commitment to what Buxton calls “a more thoughtful, just, and cleaner world.” VLS enabled them to view issues holistically: “I came to VLS as an advocate for people of lower income, and the critical thinking I learned there is serving me well in my work now,” says Oski.

Opposite: Some of the VLS policy makers who work in Montpelier gathered in the well of the Vermont State House Chamber. Left to right are Shawn Jarecki ’12, Falko Schilling ’11, Jessica Oski ’92, Adam Necrason JD/MSEL’96, Rebecca Ramos JD/MSEL’97, Sarah Buxton ’10, and Chris Recchia MSEL’83.
On day one of the General Practice Program (GPP), Susan B. Apel, professor and program director, walks into her Domestic Relations class and says to the 16 students gathered around the table, “Hi. I’m the senior partner and I don’t know any of you, but we’ve got a problem. There are two people in our waiting room who want us to represent them in a divorce. They insist that it will be amicable, and they want our firm to represent both of them. Is there some ethical issue with this? I’ll be back in half an hour.”

This story plays out each fall. The students are whispering, “I don’t know. Are there really people out there?” At this particular moment, no. Soon, however, pairs of students are assigned “real” clients (or people who play clients) and follow them for the semester. “By the end of the course,” says Apel, “they do a divorce from start to finish for this fictional couple, Joan and Robert Sanford, as a real attorney would do.”

“This is a brilliant program,” says Elizabeth Kruska ’04, an attorney with Marsicovetere Law Group, PC, former GPP student, and currently adjunct professor in criminal law in the GPP. “Law school is very intellectual, but you don’t get trained in procedure. In the GPP, you learn substantive things as in a traditional law class, but you have to go from talking about something to doing something.”

Second-year law student Jenn Hartman came to VLS for the GPP. With Apel’s Domestic Relations class under her belt, she can already see the impact in her current part-time job with a civil litigation and family law practice: “My first week on the job I had several family law issues, and I knew what I was doing.”

The General Practice Program celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. In many ways the program has evolved, but at its core, the GPP remains true to its original vision. When the program started in 1988, donors Julian and Virginia Cornell challenged VLS to come up with a program to provide an expe-
rience like the one students received at the law clinic but open to more students. Paul Ferber, the original director, and Apel, then assistant director, knew they were creating something revolutionary.

“Everything we know about learning is that context enhances the educational process,” explains Ferber, now retired. “My vision was to incorporate professional skills training as part of a substantive class, to make the students think, ‘how will I use this information to solve a client’s problem?’ In the late 1980s, there weren’t programs that incorporated the two.”

Cappy Nunlist ’90, assistant director of the GPP since 2001, was a student in the first class of 12 in 1988. “The practice of law is very different from the study of law,” Nunlist says. “Doing the GPP was one of the best decisions I made. The professors understood that simulation can guide experience, that students learn substantive law best when they use it to solve problems in the way that lawyers do in practice.” Having spent 15 years practicing law, Nunlist says with confidence, “GPP classes feel like a small law firm. And the classes are small and participatory; you can’t hide.”

“The practice of law is very different from the study of law.”
— Cappy Nunlist ’90, Assistant Director, General Practice Program

The GPP, a two-year, four-semester program, has grown since its inception but retains a small class size. Now there are about 16 students in each course and 51 students in the entire program (28 in the second-year class and 23 in the third-year class). Admission is competitive, with only about 65 percent of applicants accepted. Classes take place around a table with a mix of regular faculty and experienced practitioners acting as senior attorneys, guiding the students through a range of activities they might encounter in the practice of law, such as
domestic relations, commercial transactions, employment law, criminal law, international intellectual property, and personal injury. In addition, students are assigned individual mentors—practicing attorneys from the community.

Alumni of the GPP praise the program for the skills and self-insight they gained; the lasting connections they formed with fellow students, faculty, and mentors; and the advantages they felt this program gave them when they entered the job market.

“Like a lot of people, I learn best by doing,” says Stephen Ball ’07, a patent attorney at SSJR in Stamford, Connecticut. “GPP is a skills-based program and students graduate from it with hands-on experience and a portfolio of work. Ninety-nine percent of law students receive the exact same education. This differentiates you.”

“Nineteen ninety percent of law students receive the exact same education. This differentiates you.”

—Steve F.W. Ball Jr. ’07, Patent Attorney, SSJR

Marilyn Bartlett ’91, professor of education administration at the University of Texas Kingsville, was in one of the first GPP classes. Bartlett came to law school with a PhD in educational administration and years of teaching and working as an assistant superintendent behind her. “The GPP appealed to me because I wanted to be a Main Street attorney and work with schools.” Bartlett recalls her internship at Martin Clearwater & Bell LLP, a medical malpractice firm in NYC, between the second and third year of law school. “The attorney I traveled with always let me practice my art. I was told I behaved like a seasoned attorney.” Bartlett praises the GPP for its emphasis on simulation and collaboration. “As an educator, I know that experiential learning is best.”

Andrew W. Clopman ’09, an immigration attorney with the Devore Law Group in Florida, concurs: “When you get out of the GPP, it’s almost like you’ve already been practicing law for two years. My learning curve was not as steep as other associates, and I knew starting my career what my strengths and weaknesses were.” Clopman’s relationship with his mentor was very important to him and informed his job search. “When I was looking for a job,” Clopman says, “I actively sought a good mentor. Thanks to the GPP, I knew what I needed.”

For Michael Stahler ’08, currently an attorney with Berrett and Hanna in Salt Lake City, the collaborative nature of the GPP was vital. “The GPP taught folks that in order to be successful in practice you need to be able to collaborate with
others to accomplish your clients’ goals,” he said. “This is especially true in transactions and when trying to settle litigation cases. People skills are not something one learns from books, but from practice—or as with the GPP, simulated practice. Simply stated, a client will not accomplish her goals with a lawyer who cannot work well with others.”

The heart and soul of the GPP is collaboration and simulation, and simulation is being used increasingly in other classes at the law school, which pleases Apel. Dean Marc Mihaly has a long history of practice. “He’s asking what we’ve learned from the GPP that we can bring to the larger classroom. There are pieces that make sense,” says Apel, “and in fact, I’m doing those in my traditional classes.”

In these days of smaller law school enrollment and changes in the legal profession, what is the place of a program like the GPP, which relies on a small student-to-faculty ratio? Ever more vital, says Paul Ferber. “Law students are very intelligent consumers. They are looking for law schools that are committing resources to programs like this.”

Apel adds, “The perfect storm of the bad economy, rising tuition, and loss of legal jobs has focused people’s attention in a way that it hadn’t been before, and students are voting with their feet. The whole discussion of what kind of education we should be offering to students has been going on forever. The GPP figured it out a long time ago.” Nunlist notes that despite a decline in enrollment at VLS the past two years, applications to the GPP have remained steady.

“The whole discussion of what kind of education we should be offering to students has been going on forever. GPP figured it out a long time ago.”
—Susan Apel, Director, General Practice Program

For third-year law student Ryan Gadapee, the merits of the program are real and immediate. “In my internship with Judge Peter Hall, United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, the first case Judge Hall asked me to work on contained concepts directly related to Professor Oliver Goodenough’s class on Representing Entrepreneurial Business. I knew how to approach the issues, and I wouldn’t have been able to work through the case as effectively without that class.”

Apel and Nunlist are gratified by comments from students and alumni. Apel recalls the numerous alumni who report to her—with surprise—that the work they are doing in practice is exactly what they learned in the GPP. “I know!” She laughs. “That’s the point!”
As the Sierra Club’s Maryland Campaign and Policy Representative, Christine (Chris) Hill has been working to promote clean renewable energy solutions, particularly offshore wind, to members of the Maryland state legislature. And when she’s not in Annapolis working on clean energy policy, she is collaborating with other community organizers, particularly in Prince George’s County, Maryland, on effective grassroots strategies in communities of color.

Last year Governor Martin O’Malley of Maryland proposed a bill to subsidize a 200-megawatt wind farm some 11 miles off the Maryland coast. After being stalled in a Senate committee by African American legislators concerned about its cost to low-income consumers, Chris went to work in populous Prince George’s County (whose population is 64 percent African American) by canvassing door-to-door, organizing large public meetings, finding common ground with business leaders, and encouraging the County Council to pass a resolution in support. In 2013, after three years of pushing, Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley’s Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013 became the law.

According to Chris, community, business, and faith involvement plus personal contact and engagement was critical to the bill’s passage. “There were a few legislators I would talk to at least every other day, and they would say, ‘I just don’t know about this bill, Chris.’ Then after a while something would click in their head—maybe it was all the emails, calls, or visits some received from constituents, or awareness that with all the devastating droughts and super-storms—climate change is real.”

Born and raised in the Washington, D.C. area, Chris earned a bachelor’s of art in broadcast communications and electronic media from Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. Chris was bit by the environmental bug early as a child at summer camp and then again during her undergrad and law school study-abroad opportunities, working with various indigenous communities on environmental issues.

Chris decided to go to law school, not to be able to practice law, but to be able to affect and advance policy. She got her clean-energy focus during a Semester in Practice (SIP) with Appalachian Voices in Asheville, North Carolina. “The out-of-classroom experience is what made Vermont Law School such an incredible place to learn. My SIP and externship were outlets of experience into the ‘real’ world,” Chris says. Chris also appreciates, values, and credits the passionate professors who teach at VLS. She noted how time with VLS faculty, such as Professor Jackie Gardina on trips to Washington DC, solidified her desire to connect policy with people.

After law school, Chris continued the work she began in her Semester in Practice with groups opposing mountaintop-removal coal mining in Appalachia. She returned home to Maryland to take the Sierra Club position almost two years ago. “I’ve built my career around the notion that in order to create good and permanent change, all communities and backgrounds must be represented in shaping public policy,” Chris says.

Chris herself is gaining visibility. She was recently appointed by Governor O’Malley to serve as a commissioner on the Maryland Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities. In addition, she was featured along with 24 up-and-coming actresses, businesswomen, and athletes in Essence magazine. Chris says black environmentalists have been historically overlooked. “I hope this feature will encourage other young women of color to see that they, too, can become advocates for environmental justice.”
W. Bruce Pasfield ’84
Balanced Advocacy for the Environment

During his eight years as a trial attorney in the Environmental Crimes Section of the Department of Justice, Bruce Pasfield gained a reputation as a vigorous prosecutor. During that time, he litigated 35 cases that resulted in fines totaling $5 million and 20 years in prison sentences for defendants. One case was particularly noteworthy both for its particular circumstances and its impact. In 1992, two boys crawled into a dumpster in Tampa Bay, Florida, and died after being exposed to toluene wastes that had been dumped by a local company. In addition to successfully prosecuting the case and securing prison sentences for two employees of the company, Bruce’s efforts helped deflect a congressional effort to decriminalize polluters.

After being promoted to assistant section chief, Bruce managed 30 prosecutors and oversaw cases that resulted in 100 convictions and $40 million in fines over the course of seven years. He also led a multinational task force focused on Freon smuggling, and advised the United Nations Environmental Programme on enforcing multilateral agreements. At that time in his career, Bruce says it “felt you were doing the right thing at just about every turn.”

In 2005, he switched to private practice in part because he felt “the Bush Administration was holding up our successes to say they were being strong on environmental issues when, in fact, they were largely ignoring the most important environmental issue of our time, climate change. It is still a big concern of mine that our federal government has been unable to address this issue.”

A longtime sports enthusiast, Bruce remained more interested in football as a young man until a collarbone injury occurred at Gettysburg College that made the law seem more appealing. Bruce chose VLS because “it was the environmental school,” and discovered a newfound capacity for oral argument through VLS’s moot court team. In his first job after VLS, as an assistant state attorney in Florida, Bruce conducted more than 100 jury trials and helped establish the state’s first environmental prosecution program. At DOJ, his trial work earned him the U.S. Attorney General’s distinguished service award, eight DOJ special achievement awards, and two EPA bronze medals. He has also chaired the ABA Environmental Enforcement and Crimes Committee.

Today Bruce and his wife, Nancy, enjoy hiking, skiing, and listening to live music near their vacation home in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. They also enjoy spending time with their son, Wesley, a financial analyst, and daughter, Chelsea, a college lacrosse captain at Vanderbilt University. And sports have not entirely left his life. “I only coach a junior league now, because that’s all I have time for, but I’d like to do it on a more regular basis at some point in the future. Coaching is my passion.”

As an Alston & Bird partner, Bruce now advises Fortune 500 clients with an insider’s appreciation for what actions can be taken to solve a problem. “There’s a lot more room to be creative in stopping a problem before it happens. I can tell clients, ‘If you go this direction and the EPA shows up on your doorstep tomorrow, you’re going to be in a lot of trouble,’ and that will usually persuade them to take the right course.”

He tries to “find win-win situations wherever I can.” In one case, his client agreed to self-report a Clean Water violation, cooperated with DOJ investigators in the prosecution of managers, and environmentally upgraded the facility rather than abandoning it.

As he continues to work with corporate clients, Bruce believes private practice can square easily with the values he learned at VLS and prosecuted at DOJ. “Stay true to your role as an ethical advocate for your client, and most everything else will take care of itself,” he says.
Dear Alumni,

I write to you with information that is complicated and concerning, as well as hopeful. There is no question that the last several years have been rife with negative news about the state of American legal education and the legal job market. That concern continues for Vermont Law School and all 202 American law schools as enrollment declines and LSAT test takers decline. But the VLS class of ’15 matriculated last fall with 171 JD candidates, significantly beating the dismal national average, and beating our own enrollment target. However, we are planning for smaller JD enrollment for the coming year by cutting our budget, reducing our size, and focusing on the core programs and the core values that make VLS unique. As Dean Mihaly notes in his letter, our beautiful campus is “alive with change” and I want to share more information about that change with you.

Because we are an independent law school, we have the ability to be more flexible and more responsive to the needs of the legal education market. VLS remains the national recognized leader in environmental law, continues our tradition of innovation by emphasizing our strengths, and fosters a culture of creativity based on marketplace necessities. We are doing many things to help stay ahead of the curve, and to push the boundaries of legal education and innovation:

- VLS is launching a second master’s degree in the fall of 2013 in energy regulation and law.
- Our distance learning (DL) program just awarded its first MELP and LLM degrees, and the DL program is oversubscribed for the coming year.
- VLS has launched a full 87-credit, two-year Accelerated JD program.
- Our new Center for Legal Innovation will transform how law is practiced and how lawyers are trained based on new advances in technology.

The success of VLS as an organization is our success as well. It is grounded in the support and dedication of our alumni; we are the foundation that allows VLS to consider and respond to change. The directors of the Vermont Law School Alumni Association are continuing to work with VLS on a career mentoring program for recent graduates. The school’s new online directory will help alumni connect or reconnect with each other and support each other in job searches and networking; I encourage you to sign on to vlsConnect and explore what it can offer (http://connect.vermontlaw.edu). And the alumni office continues to plan social and networking events around the country for our six regional groups—and new groups are in the works.

From the members of our founding classes to this year’s admitted students, those of us who choose Vermont Law School are unique, iconoclastic, and committed to making a difference. I hope you will reach out to me and the other VLSAA board members, your classmates and each other, and the faculty, staff, and administration at VLS, in order to accomplish that purpose.

Sincerely,
Karis L. North ’95, President
Vermont Law School Alumni Association
knorth@mhtl.com
http://connect.vermontlaw.edu/VLSAA

News from the D.C. Regional Alumni Group

Last November the DCVLSAA held a reception in the U.S. Capitol honoring Senator Patrick Leahy with our annual Achievement Award. We were pleased to have Dean Marc Mihaly join us in presenting the award to Senator Leahy to commend his outstanding efforts and accomplishments in the U.S. Senate, particularly with respect to organic and local agriculture issues. We would like to thank Elizabeth MacDonough ’98, the Parliamentarian for the Senate, for her help in organizing such a stellar event.

The 2013 DC Alumni Group Board has big plans for the coming year, including a golf outing, summer rooftop reception, brown-bag series, our signature happy hours, and, of course, the annual Achievement Award reception in the fall. We look forward to seeing you soon!
For more information about DCVLSAA, please contact us at dcvlssa@gmail.com or look us up on Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter.

News from the Boston Regional Alumni Group

You can now find the Boston Regional Alumni Group on LinkedIn! The “Vermont Law School Alumni Association–Boston Chapter” group is a place where you can post updates, job openings, and learn about upcoming area events. The group is open, so join today. We have also instituted a monthly happy hour taking place the last Thursday of every month at 5:00 PM at Scholars Bistro in downtown Boston. For more information on the happy hour or upcoming Boston alumni events please contact VLSAA Boston Chapter President J. Patrick Kennedy ’93 at pkennedy@bulkley.com.

1976
Mark Portnoy
mhportnoy@gmail.com

1977
alumni@vermontlaw.edu

Jesse Corum IV shared that his wife of 40 years, Lynn, passed away on August 29, 2012, due to complications from breast cancer, which she had battled for almost 9 years. Jesse is back at work at Corum Mabie Cook Prodan Angell & Secrest, PLC, and “enjoying practicing once again after a long 2012.”

1978

35th Reunion September 2013

alumni@vermontlaw.edu

Please email alumni@vermontlaw.edu if you are interested in serving as class secretary.

Kenneth Oliver reports that, as of the end of 2012 and after almost 34 years, he has retired from his three firms—Finkelstein & Partners, Jacoby & Meyers, and Fine, Olin and Anderman. “I will be slowing down and enjoying life more, but I am making myself available to act as an arbitrator or mediator, particularly related to personal injury cases, which has been my specialty for 30 years. I hope all from our class are healthy and doing well as we all age gracefully together,” he says. Find Ken at www.kenoliverlaw.com or email him at keno-liverlaw@gmail.com.

Gerald Siegel has been appointed by the New Jersey Supreme Court to serve on the Unauthorized Practice of Law. The committee handles the investigation of complaints against persons or entities alleged to be practicing law without a license.

1979
Deborah Bucknam
dbucknam@vtlegalhelp.com

Stephen Reynolds joined the law firm of Tarrent, Gillies, Merriman & Richardson in Montpelier, Vermont, on February 1, 2013. He continues to focus on land use and environmental law. In the 1980s, Stephen chaired the Vermont House Natural Resources Committee and, as a Senate Natural Resources Committee member, reported the bill that created the state Environmental Court. He also served as chair of the Environmental Law Section of the Vermont Bar Association, and was succeeded by Attorney Gerry Tarrant of Tarrant, Gillies, Merriman & Richardson. More recently, Stephen has been a guest lecturer in VLS Professor Greg Johnson’s Legal Writing course.

Stephen Reynolds ’79

1980
Scott Cameron
jscameron@zclpc.com

Joel Burcat says, “In addition to my environmental and energy law practice, I have been busy working on my (very part time) writing career. Recently, I have had two short stories published: ‘Inviaturu’ in The Montreal Review (January 2013), and ‘The Job’ in Diverse Voices Quarterly (November 2012). And yes, I am at work on an environmental legal thriller, Drink to Every Beast. I tweet @JoelBurcat. Follow me and I’ll follow you! Cheers!” Joel also reported that his story “Executioners” received an Honorable Mention in the Valhalla Press Legal Professionals Writing Contest. It will appear in the spring 2013 issue of Ragnarok, the e-lit journal of Valhalla Press. “Executioners” is a chapter from Joel’s Drink to Every Beast manuscript.

J. Scott Cameron attended the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration at VLS on January 22. The principal speaker was VLS’s own Alfie J. Bartley ’09, who is the administrative commissioner for District 4, District Court of Maryland. Alfie was a strong student leader during his days at VLS, and it is exciting to see him excelling in his chosen career. Scott was pleased to meet Dr. Donald Jefferson, former superintendent of Selma City Schools in Selma, Alabama, and brother of Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Diversity Shirley Jefferson ’86. Scott also attended the Vermont Bar Association “Mid-Winter Thaw” in Montreal in January, where he and wife, Cathy, enjoyed a night out with President and Dean Marc Mihaly and Tavian Mayer ’78 and his wife, Rebecca Foulk, MD.

Ralph Dawson ’80 and family at daughter Taylor’s college graduation

Stephen Reynolds ’79

Summer 2013
Ralph Dawson proudly reports “We have a new college graduate in the Dawson Family! Taylor Elise Dawson, Arizona State University class of 2012.”

1981
Tim McGrath
timothy.mcgrath@va.gov

Doc Donohue, Dave Dunn JD/MSEL, Eric Parker, and Mark Scribner successfully defended their title in the 25th annual VLS Alumni Golf Tournament at Woodstock Country Club in September 2012. It was the fourth official time they have won the tournament (the most of any foursome, notwithstanding Steve Kantor ’82’s claims to the contrary), though Doc is quick to point out a fifth title at Sugarbush was denied them when a group of current law students with a lower score were handed the “Alumni” trophy over the protestations of all the alumni present. The winning foursome drank beer from the championship cup and proudly noted their ’81 heritage.

Dov Gabriel says, “I hope and trust my quondam friends at VLS are healthy and doing well. Being a grandfather has been a happy experience.”

After 31 years in private practice, primarily as a criminal defense attorney, Richard Mott was elected to a 14-year term as a justice of the New York State Supreme Court in the Third Judicial District in November 2012. The judicial district comprises Albany, Rensselaer, Schoharie, Greene, Columbia, Ulster, and Sullivan counties.

Steve Parady writes, “Things are cold and slow up on the coast of Maine. My job has been great—we opened a third office about two years ago and will open another one in Bangor. We will have four locations for the Trust and Investment division of the bank. We now manage approximately $700 million. I’ve enjoyed my position as the senior trust officer developing the strategic plan for the department and managing the staff. If you plan on visiting Maine, make sure you give me a shout, I would love to see you.”

On March 1, 2013, Mark Scribner joined Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer PC in Burlington, Vermont as of counsel, where he will primarily be doing financial services/banking and business entity/commercial work. Mark will continue to work on economic development projects throughout the United States that are funded by foreign investors under the EB-5 visa program.

1982
Larr Kelly
photolarr@tidalwave.net

30th Reunion September 2013

1983

30th Reunion September 2013

Martha Lyons
malyoneseq@hotmail.com

Joe Benning is happy to report that he was reelected in November to the Vermont State Senate, representing the Caledonia-Orange District. He has been appointed to serve on the standing committees of Judiciary and Institutions, and reappointed to serve on the Joint Judicial Retention Committee. In addition, Joe was elected senate minority leader, the best part of which, he says, “is that I get my own specially assigned parking spot. Woo hoo!”

Jim McLeod recently assisted in the successful prosecution of a company and chief engineer for violating maritime pollution laws (U.S. v. Sanford Ltd. et al.). He writes, “The trial gave me a better appreciation of my regulatory work at the Coast Guard. On weekends, I’ve been creating solar power waterfall-planters at a local pottery studio; it’s not a bad way to relax and learn about solar energy.”

1984
alumni@vermontlaw.edu
Please email alumni@vermontlaw.edu if you are interested in serving as class secretary.

Barry Bram writes “I miss the east coast, but extend warm wishes to all who continue to live in or around the area. Please feel free to call on me in San Francisco when you come west to visit, work, or play. I continue to work in commercial real estate brokerage and have the pleasure of dealing with attorneys for my clients and their counterparts in all sorts of lease and purchase deals. With fond memories of the great Northeast.”

Steven Kunzman JD’81/MSL’84 is continuing to practice environmental law as the chair of the Environmental Practice Group at DiFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flum, P.C., in New Jersey. Classmates will remember the Parkman Brothers, a musical duo Steven had with Eric Parker ’81; Steven has continued to write and perform in the New Jersey/New York region and has also released his second CD of original songs, Back Home, available at CDBaby.com, iTunes, and Amazon. More information can also be found at www.stevekunzman.com.

1985
alumni@vermontlaw.edu
Please email alumni@vermontlaw.edu if you are interested in serving as class secretary.

Stephen Pisini and Frank Twohill vacationed together again for a week in December. This time they journeyed to St. Martin/St. Maarten in the Caribbean and visited Anguilla, Saba, and St. Barthélemy islands. Steve continues his solo estate planning practice in Milford, Massachusetts. Frank’s solo practice in Branford, Connecticut, covers juvenile matters in probate courts, and he was just certified by the National Association of Counsel for Children as a Child Welfare Law Specialist.

1986
alumni@vermontlaw.edu
In January, newly elected Sheriff Scott Israel named Ron Gunzburger general counsel of the Broward County Sheriff’s Office (BSO). Ron serves on the BSO Command Staff and is the #3 ranked official in the organization, which is the largest fully accredited sheriff’s office in the country. Ron says, “It is a tremendously exciting opportunity, plus it is also a lot of fun.” In other news, Ron and his husband Dana Bukaer celebrated their 25th anniversary in June 2012 with a three-week vacation in Italy, and the band Matchbox Twenty gave Ron and Dana a very nice shout-out by thanking them by name in the liner notes of their new album, North. “One of the band members and his wife are friends of ours, but this came as a total surprise to us,” said Ron.

The 2013 Howard H. Dana, Jr. Award was presented to Charlie Soltan at the Maine Bar Association’s winter meeting on January 25, 2013. The Maine Bar Foundation’s highest honor recognizes an individual’s outstanding contributions to the development and implementation of private bar projects that enhance civil legal assistance to the indigent, and for outstanding service in the advancement of the Bar Foundation’s goals.

25th Reunion September 2013
alumni@vermontlaw.edu

Brett Bacon just published his first two children’s books. Both books are now available at Amazon. His first bestselling book is entitled The Fish That Got Away! It is a fun picture book about a little boy who goes fishing with his two older brothers and dreams of catching a big fish. The second book is Messy Room Monsters! This book takes the reader on a fun and entertaining journey into the imaginary world of Messy Room Monsters. Brett plans to write more children’s books in the future.

Peter Van Tuyn JD/MSL writes, “Besseyey & Van Tuyn, LLC, is doing what it can to ensure that VLS grows its influence in the Last Frontier—four of its five attorneys have close connections with VLS through some combination of degrees, teaching, and environmental law clinic work. Ilona Besseyey is a 1989 JD graduate with a specialty in elder law. I am a 1989 JD/MSL graduate with a specialty in environmental law and has been an adjunct professor in the VLS MELP program at various times over the years. Teresa Clemmer has been working with the firm for over a year now and is a former VLS professor and acting director of the environmental law clinic. And the firm recently hired Karen Schmidt JD/ MELP’12, who works with Peter and Teresa on the environmental law side of the practice. The firm and its attorneys have achieved various distinctions, including selection in super and best lawyers and firms listings, and yet we mostly pride ourselves on living the Alaska dream (i.e., we get to ski at lunch).”

Mario Gallucci recently completed his 14th full year as partner at the Staten Island law firm of Helbock, Nappa & Gallucci LLP, where he has built a successful criminal trial practice and has handled some of New York City’s most infamous recent cases. Life outside of the courtroom has been exciting, as well. In September, Gallucci was the celebrity guest chef for a fund-raising event at Dock’s Clam Bar & Pasta House in Staten Island, New York, where he planned and prepared an extensive menu of his favorite Italian dishes for more than 100 of his closest friends. The evening’s proceeds were donated to the fight against ovarian cancer. In October, the USA Network announced that it will begin production of the new television series Partners in Crime. This weekly documentary/reality show will focus on the life of a criminal attorney by following Mario and one of his associates as they handle high-profile cases and remain good friends outside the courtroom. The show will air in 2013.

Jeffrey Newman and his wife Katie have welcomed their third daughter, Genevieve, who was born in November. Genevieve joins sisters Christabel and Matilda.

In 2012 Pamela Pescosolido’s son started college, and she moved to Massachusetts after 20+ years in California.

Tammara Van Ryn-Lincoln MSL, executive director of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, reports that she is having great fun working with newly hired review specialist Josh Gorman MSEL’06. Tammara and Josh work from the commission’s Saratoga Springs, New York, headquarters. (“Stop in and say ‘hi’ if you are in Saratoga.”) The commission enjoyed the benefit of research conducted by intern Justin Pevnick JD/MELP’11 in the fall of 2012. Tammara also reports that she and her husband, Chris Lincoln, are entering their 15th year at New Minglewood Farm, a certified organic vegetable farm that sells produce at the Saratoga Springs Farmers’ Market.

1991
Peg Stolfa
margaret.stolfa@gmail.com

1992
Margaret Olnek
mlo@olneklaw.com

On January 21, 2013, Carole Wacey and Fred
Joe McCaleb MSEL retired from the practice of law in December 2011. In July 2012 at age 70, Joe hiked 640 miles on the Appalachian Trail from the Michaux State Forest in Pennsylvania to West Hartford, Vermont. Hiking the trail in sections for several years, he has now finished 1,715 miles and lacks 457 miles to the top of Mt. Katahdin, Maine. He plans to finish the trail in August–September of this year. After Joe got off the trail in October of 2012, he visited with classmate Heather (Trillium) Toulmin MSEL and her husband, Steve, and two boys in Sheffield, Vermont. “Heather and Steve put me up for a couple of days and gave me a ride to Lebanon to catch the Dartmouth Coach to Boston-Logan Airport for the flight home. It was good to see her and Steve again and meet their very active young sons. It was a great way to end the trip!”


Renee Bouplon MSEL wed Todd Rollend. They reside in Cambridge, New York.

Diane Henkels JD’97/MSEL’98 wrote to share that she was the recipient of the 2012 Oregon State Bar President’s Sustainability Award.

On January 1, 2013, Anthony Raimondo became an equity partner at McCormick, Barstow, Sheppard, Wayte & Carruth, LLP, the leading law firm in California’s San Joaquin Valley. He has also been recognized by Martindale-Hubbell as an AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated attorney.

Joseph Suich writes: “Due primarily to Michael Berube coaching me through law school years ago, I have taken a new position at General Electric. Please contact me if you are visiting Eastern Europe.”

Russell Booker moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, early this year to begin a three-year tour of active duty with the United States Coast Guard District 8 Legal Office. He adds: “Y’all come visit—can’t beat the food here.”

Krista Kline JD/MSEL reports: “After nearly 10 years of serving the City and Mayor of Los Angeles, I am moving on to an exciting new venture! As of February 11, I will be the managing director of the Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability (LARC for short) at UCLA. Coordinating climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts being made by organizations and government agencies throughout LA County should prove to be rewarding, and I’m very much looking forward to the challenge!”

Zeytoonjian JD/MSL chatted with New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand while attending an Obama Inaugural Ball at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C.

Joe McCaleb MSEL

1993
20th Reunion September 2013
Lainey Schwartz
gewomanj@aol.com

1994
alumni@vermontlaw.edu

1995
Karen Moore
kj.moore@judicial.state.co.us

Joe McCaleb MSEL retired from the practice of law in December 2011. In July 2012 at age 70, Joe hiked 640 miles on the Appalachian Trail from the Michaux State Forest in Pennsylvania to West Hartford, Vermont. Hiking the trail in sections for several years, he has now finished 1,715 miles and lacks 457 miles to the top of Mt. Katahdin, Maine. He plans to finish the trail in August–September of this year. After Joe got off the trail in October of 2012, he visited with classmate Heather (Trillium) Toulmin MSEL and her husband, Steve, and two boys in Sheffield, Vermont. “Heather and Steve put me up for a couple of days and gave me a ride to Lebanon to catch the Dartmouth Coach to Boston-Logan Airport for the flight home. It was good to see her and Steve again and meet their very active young sons. It was a great way to end the trip!”

1996
alumni@vermontlaw.edu


1997
Cheryl Deshaies
cdeshaies@deschaieslaw.com

Renee Bouplon MSEL wed Todd Rollend. They reside in Cambridge, New York.

Diane Henkels JD’97/MSEL’98 wrote to share that she was the recipient of the 2012 Oregon State Bar President’s Sustainability Award.

On January 1, 2013, Anthony Raimondo became an equity partner at McCormick, Barstow, Sheppard, Wayte & Carruth, LLP, the leading law firm in California’s San Joaquin Valley. He has also been recognized by Martindale-Hubbell as an AV Preeminent Peer Review Rated attorney.

Joseph Suich writes: “Due primarily to Michael Berube coaching me through law school years ago, I have taken a new position at General Electric. Please contact me if you are visiting Eastern Europe.”

1998
15th Reunion September 2013
alumni@vermontlaw.edu

Russell Booker moved to New Orleans, Louisiana, early this year to begin a three-year tour of active duty with the United States Coast Guard District 8 Legal Office. He adds: “Y’all come visit—can’t beat the food here.”

Krista Kline JD/MSEL reports: “After nearly 10 years of serving the City and Mayor of Los Angeles, I am moving on to an exciting new venture! As of February 11, I will be the managing director of the Los Angeles Regional Collaborative for Climate Action and Sustainability (LARC for short) at UCLA. Coordinating climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts being made by organizations and government agencies throughout LA County should prove to be rewarding, and I’m very much looking forward to the challenge!”

1999
Joy Kanwar-Nori
joy.kanwar@brooklaw.edu

Warren Coleman became a partner of MacLean, Meehan & Rice, LLC, a Montpelier, Vermont-based government relations firm and its companion law firm MacLean & Rice, LLC, in January 2013. His practice focuses on environmental, telecommunications, and energy issues before the Vermont legislature and executive branch agencies. He is also the president of the board of directors at Quimby Country, Inc. in Averill, Vermont, where he also serves as a fly-fishing guide. He and his wife, Roni, reside in Calais, Vermont, with their two English setters.

Jennifer Riggle is a new member of the board of directors of the Michael Walton Foundation, a nonprofit that provides creative outlets for youth development. The foundation’s purpose is to foster leadership skills and behaviors in young people by helping them to identify and cultivate their talents, set goals, and make informed career choices. In addition to serving on this board, Jennifer is the chief sustainability officer and deputy director of the Office of Management for the Health Resources and Services Administration in Washington, D.C.
On April 20, 2013, Michael P. Hartman MSEL and Dr. Lincy Cherian were married at The Palm House at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden, Brooklyn, New York. They will reside in Brooklyn, New York.

Maria Stewart recently self-published a children’s book to benefit Miriam’s Kitchen, a homeless center in Washington, D.C. Her book, *Harvey and the Little Tomato*, addresses homelessness through the eyes of a small dog and a little tomato, and teaches children about homelessness, the need for access to healthy food, and to inspire them to help work on solutions. The book is available at HarveyandtheLittleTomato.com and at Betsey, a boutique in Middleburg, Virginia. Maria also works as a staff attorney at the Washington, D.C. office of O’Melveny & Myers LLP.

Abigail Sykas Karoutas was married on December 7, 2012, to Periklis Karoutas. Andrea Courtney JD/MSEL was a bridesmaid, and Elisa Pensavalle was in attendance. Abby and Periklis will continue to live in Dover, New Hampshire, where Abby maintains a solo practice specializing in the representation of businesses, tax-exempt, and municipal entities.

Carolyn Ross’s son Garrett Mark Hazlitt Adelman was born September 2, 2012. He weighed 9 lb. and measured 22 in. long.

Lorie Abolafia-Cartwright continues to practice at Fitts, Olson & Giddings, PLC, in Brattleboro, Vermont, and has recently added mediation to her services. She welcomes any referrals or a visit from anyone travelling through the area.

Alex Pastewski and Kimberly Beth Pastewski MSEL’00 (formerly Kimberly Beth Bryant) were married on the Lake Champlain Northern Lights Cruise with friends and family in Burlington, Vermont, on September 9, 2012.

From left to right, Allison Minges, Miles and Mazzy Minges, and Josh Minges JD/MSEL’03

Josh Minges JD/MSEL is working as an attorney with the South Carolina Public Service Commission, and has just had his second child, Miles. He hopes everyone at VLS is doing well, and writes that he misses Vermont.

Daniel P. Richardson was recently nominated to become president-elect of the Vermont Bar Association in 2014. Dan is a partner at Tarrant, Gillies, Merriman & Richardson in Montpelier, where he focuses on municipal law, land use permitting, utility work, and general civil litigation. He lives in town with his wife Britt and their two children. Dan is also an acting small claims court judge in Washington County, began teaching municipal law as an adjunct faculty at VLS in 2012, and is celebrating two years of running the SCOV Law Blog, which can be found at www.scovlegal.blogspot.com or vtdigger.com.

Jessica Ryan JD’04/MSEL’05 writes, “I went to a great alumni function at Olnek & Ware LLC in Denver. It was fantastic to meet and network with alumni of all ages, backgrounds,
and practice areas, and be able to give the job seekers some input. I hope to be able to go to more of them. Thank you for coming, Abby Armstrong ’84. Please send her again, VLS.”

David J. Singer was inducted as a Loyal Son of Rutgers at a ceremony at Rutgers University on April 13, 2013. He was also featured in the April 2013 New Jersey Monthly Magazine as one of the top young environmental lawyers in the state of New Jersey.

Hall & Evans, LLC, welcomed its newest associate, Adam Wiens, in 2012. Adam is a trial lawyer who represents companies and their principals in complex civil lawsuits involving commercial, real estate, construction, business, trade secret, securities, personal guarantees, finance leases, promissory notes, and real estate commission dispute cases. Prior to joining Hall & Evans, Adam was an attorney with regional commercial and real estate litigation firm Lottner, Rubin, Fishman, Saul, P.C., in Denver, which included representation of national and regional companies, real estate developers, general contractors, and design professionals.

2005

Meg Munsey and Kelly Singer vermontlaw2005@gmail.com

Jesse Bell JD’05/MSEL’06 (Jesse Miller) and Forest Bell JD’04/MSEL’05 welcomed their third child, Juliette Grace Bell, on July 23, 2012.

Cindy Hodge and husband, Glenn Jared Hodge, welcomed their first child, Isaac William Hodge, on November 6, 2012, in Atlanta, Georgia. Isaac is a beautiful addition to their family.

After graduation in 2005, Jason Reimers clerked for a federal bankruptcy judge and then joined the New Hampshire Office of the Attorney General for five years. Jason recently returned to environmental law by joining friend and fellow member of the class of 2005, Amy Manzelli JD’05/MSEL’07, at BCM Environmental & Land Law, PLLC, in Concord, New Hampshire. Jason is excited about the move and is having a great time working with Amy and her partner, Jed Z. Callen. Jason still lives in Goffstown with his wife, Susie Hackler, yet another member of the class of 2005. Susie is the executive director of Conservation New Hampshire.

2006

Ashley Cottingham ashleybrey@gmail.com Ebony Riggins erriggins@gmail.com

Stacy Brooks was appointed chair of the Ross County Democratic Party in April 2012 and opened her own private practice in Chillicothe, Ohio, in July 2012, after spending six years with Southeastern Ohio Legal Services. Stacy and her husband, Luke Feeney, met President Bill Clinton during his visit to Chillicothe last fall.

Clancy DeSmet JD’06/MSEL’03 reports that after more than five years as the planning and zoning administrator for the city of Montpelier, Vermont, he was recently hired as the district coordinator for the District 5 Environmental Commission of the Vermont Natural Resources Board. As district coordinator, Clancy serves as the administrative, technical, advisory, and executive officer for the District 5 Environmental Commission involved in granting and administering land use permits under the Land Use and Development Act (Act 250). “Maybe I should have taken Land Use at VLS,” he writes. In addition, Clancy is working with various local, state, and non-government floodplain managers, who are also Certified Floodplain Managers (CFM), to establish a Vermont chapter of state floodplain managers under the umbrella of the Association of Floodplain Managers (ASFPM). For more information see www.floods.org.

Andrew T. Mason was elected in November to the Maine Legislature as the representative for House District 60 (Topsham). He was appointed to serve on the Joint Standing Committee for Labor, Commerce, Research and Economic Development for the 126th Session of the Maine Legislature. Andrew is an attorney with the employee rights firm, Reben, Benjamin & March, and practices in the areas of workers’ compensation, Social Security disability, discrimination, and personal injury.
**Class Notes**

He has served on the Topsham Board of Selectmen since 2010.

Emily (Plett-Myaki) Merolli JD/MSEL and Aric Merolli are delighted to announce the birth of their daughter, Kiyoko Amina, on November 6. Along with big brother, Asaka, the Merolli family lives in Takoma Park, Maryland. Emily has been an associate at Perkins Coie LLP in DC since graduation, but recently joined the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of the General Counsel, Division of Legislative Counsel.

Agnieszka and Jay Nunenkamp joyfully announce the birth of their son, Jack Lech-Nunenkamp. Jack was born on August 26, 2012, in Silver Spring, Maryland, weighing 6 lb., 10 oz., and measuring 19.25 inches. He enjoys milk, smiling, building new neural connections, chewing random things, playing with crinkly objects, and the song “You Are My Sunshine.” At over five months, Jack remains the most amazing, wonderful, and sweetest baby his parents have ever seen.

Kim (Perdue) Shelton was named South Carolina Legal Services Attorney of the Year in November 2012. Kim began working with SCLS as an Equal Justice Fellow during the summer of her 3L year and was hired after graduating from VLS. For the first five years, she worked predominantly with victims and survivors of domestic violence, and was awarded the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Attorney Advocate of the Year in 2010. She married Will Shelton in 2009. They had their first child, Sam, in June 2011.

2007

Greg Dorrington
gregdorrington@gmail.com
Liz Lucente
liz.lucente@gmail.com

In December, Steve Ball and his wife, Courtney, welcomed their first child, Eleanor. Everyone is doing well and Eleanor is keeping mom and dad very busy. Steve is a patent attorney at SSJR, an intellectual property firm in Connecticut. The firm works with companies small and large both in the U.S. and overseas, including, according to Steve, “a number of green-tech clients developing incredible technology.”

Megan Campbell and Dickson Corbett JD/MSEL are pleased to announce the birth of their son Ira Reed Corbett. Ira was born on December 20, 2012. He is receiving lots of attention from his older sister Plover.

Jessica Fox JD/MSEL wrote to tell us that: “The most interesting thing happened. I was at a meeting for the American Inns of Court, Thomas M. Cooley Chapter, in Lansing, Michigan (near where I work and live), and was introduced to a new member, Sarah McGuire JD/MELP’11. It was interesting and nice to find another VLS grad in Michigan. Doesn’t happen often! Additionally, I was reelected as secretary/treasurer and reelected to another term on the board of directors of Court Appointed Special Advocates for Kids, Barry/Eaton Counties.”

Susan (Keane) McManus married fellow VLS alum Dan McManus ’01 in November 2012. Susan writes, “We recently purchased a home in Manchester Center, Vermont, and are enjoying married life!”

Kristi Ponozzo and Thad Adkins ’09 are both working for the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. Kristi is a Montana Environmental Policy Act coordinator and Thad is an attorney for the Abandoned Mine Lands program. Their children, Owen and Alice, are growing and enjoy exploring Montana.

Sara Terranova JD/MSEL’08 writes that she married Josh Trei in 2010. Their son, Wilder Terranova Trei, is 8 months old. “We recently moved from Chicago to Springfield, Illinois. After a long bout of contract work doing document review, I am working for the Illinois EPA as assistant counsel, Division of Legal Counsel. I work with the Bureau of Water on regulatory matters. Josh and I are working hard to keep up with my school loans but we are both happy to be working!”

Kate Trinward Udo JD/MSEL married Akanimo Udo on September 29, 2012, in a festive ceremony in Washington, D.C., surrounded by friends and family. Karrin Hoesing served as the maid of honor and Natalie Karas ’09 performed a reading. Jill Pfenning, Lauren Hopkins ’08, and Melissa (Derwart) Papasavvas JD/MSEL’08 also attended the celebration. The couple continues to reside in Washington, D.C., where Kate is an associate with Hunsucker Goodstein P.C. and Akanimo is a consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton.

In September 2012, Marie Vernhes LLM married Jérémy Oger, her long-time boyfriend, who made frequent trips to Vermont to support her during her year at VLS. Gretchen Oldham ’09 happily served as matron of honor in their Paris ceremony. Gretchen and Marie met during Marie’s year at VLS and remained close when Gretchen moved to Paris in 2008. Both are graduates of the VLS/Cergy-Pontoise exchange program and remain active respectively through coaching and teaching in the DJCE master’s program at Cergy-Pontoise.

In September 2012, Marie Vernhes LLM married Jérémy Oger, her long-time boyfriend, who made frequent trips to Vermont to support her during her year at VLS. Gretchen Oldham ’09 happily served as matron of honor in their Paris ceremony. Gretchen and Marie met during Marie’s year at VLS and remained close when Gretchen moved to Paris in 2008. Both are graduates of the VLS/Cergy-Pontoise exchange program and remain active respectively through coaching and teaching in the DJCE master’s program at Cergy-Pontoise.

Newlyweds Marie Vernhes LLM’07 and Jérémy Oger with bridesmaid Gretchen Oldham ’09

2008

5th Reunion September 2013

Samantha Santiago
santiago.samantha@gmail.com

Jamie Williams
willjamie@gmail.com


In December 2012 Bill Eubanks LLM was made a partner at Meyer Glitzenstein & Crystal, one of the nation’s leading public interest environmental law firms. Previously, Bill was an associate with the firm for four years, handling cases in federal appellate and trial courts on behalf of environmental nonprofits concerning public lands preservation, natural resource conservation, and endangered wildlife protection.

Joshua Galperin ’08 shared that from 2009 through August 2012, he worked as a policy analyst and research attorney with the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy in Knoxville, Tennessee, where he was responsible for running the organization’s coal plant retire-
Joshua moved to New Haven, Connecticut, to become the associate director of the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy where, among other things, he oversees the joint degree program between VLS and the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

Robert Gardner JD’08/MELP’10 writes, “I’m just about to celebrate my third anniversary at Greenpeace as a climate and energy campaigner. In these last three years, I’ve had a pretty good time working on protecting our climate. I’ve gotten to work with communities to shut down coal-fired power plants, helped to change the way Apple powers their data centers, sued companies, engaged with the feds on rulemaking efforts, and had a hell of a good time doing it. I’ve also been lucky enough to work with dear friends from VLS, spend a bit of time on Greenpeace ships, do lots of media work, and, in fine VLS tradition, get arrested scaling a 400-foot smoke stack. I am still in the D.C. area playing banjo and rugby. Come to town, give me a holler, the first round’s on me. You can contact me at Robert.Gardner@greenpeace.org.”

Samantha Medlock is policy counsel for the Association of State Floodplain Managers. Sam received the Army Commander’s Award for Public Service in recognition of her service as member of the National Committee on Levee Safety, created by Congress in response to Hurricane Katrina to address U.S. levee challenges in an integrated risk management approach. She has provided invited testimony in Congress on the National Flood Insurance Program, flood risks associated with levees, and the federal response to flood disasters. Sam relocated to Washington, D.C., in September 2012.

Megan Roberts and Kim Chehady ’09 are excited to announce they were married in an outdoor ceremony in Warren, Vermont, on September 22, 2012, after a surprise proposal on SoRo’s town green in November 2011! On the career front, after three years as a securities associate at WilmerHale, Kim recently accepted a position at the U.S. Securities Exchange Commission, Division of Trading and Markets. Meg continues to practice appellate law, and successfully argued a constitutional speedy trial issue before the New York Court of Appeals and won her first habeas argument in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. The couple just purchased their first home, which they happily share with a spoiled shih tzu and a cranky Siamese cat.

2009

John Miller
johndmillerjr@gmail.com

Shelby (Kammeyer) Busó JD/MELP and Roberto Busó-Griggs JD/MSEL’07 welcomed their second child, Coralina Jewell, on August 7, 2012. She was a healthy 7 lb., 9 oz., and happy to meet her big brother, Sebastian River, who is now four years old! Rob continues to practice RCRA enforcement at EPA’s Region Four office and Shelby has moved into a new position as the assistant director of Transportation and Sustainability at Midtown Alliance in Atlanta, Georgia.

James DeVerne married Ashley Hintz ’11 on October 5, 2012, at the Prospect Park Picnic House in Brooklyn, New York, at a ceremony presided over by Brian Selogie JD/MELP’11. Musical stylings were provided by South Royalton’s own Barb Cragan Band. The newlyweds are especially grateful that they were able...
In Memoriam

Jay A. Scherline ’76, 61, of Allentown, Pennsylvania, died on December 31, 2012, in the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. He was the husband of Lorrie L. (Lipschitz) Scherline. The couple had celebrated 33 years of marriage on July 1, 2012. Born in New York, New York, he was the son of Shirley (Dauber) Scherline and the late Irving Scherline. He was a member of Congregation Sons of Israel, Allentown. He was the founding member of Scherline and Associates Law Office in Allentown. Jay was involved in many organizations including the Minsi Trails Council Learning for Life Career Awareness Program, B’nai Brith Senior Citizens Housing, Jewish Family Service, Citizens for a Better Allentown, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, American Cancer Society, March of Dimes, Bar Association of Lehigh County, and the Anti-Defamation League. Jay received the American Hero for Arthritis Award in 1998, Philanthropist of the Year Award in 2001, the National Volunteer Service Citation in 2009 from the Arthritis Foundation, the Movers and Shapers Award, Who’s Who in American Law, united States President’s Volunteer Service Award in 2005 and 2010, Silver Beaver Award from Minsi Trails Council Boy Scouts of America in 2011, Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal’s Spotlight Award for Prominent Business Executives, and many other honors.

Matthew H. Harnett ’83, 54, a prominent Rutland, Vermont attorney died Monday, November 19, 2012, at Dartmouth Hitchcock Memorial Hospital. He was born in Brooklyn, New York, August 2, 1958, the son of Dr. Joseph and Sandra (Eisler) Harnett. Matt graduated from Bayside High School and SUNY Brockport College before attending Vermont Law School. Matt interned for the late congressman Ted Weiss of New York, as well as in the South Royalton Legal Clinic. He served as a law clerk for the Vermont Attorney General’s Office in 1982–83 and for the Rutland County Public Defender’s Office in 1983–84. He was admitted to the Vermont Bar Association April 1984, and was a Rutland County Public Defender 1984–87. He started private practice in 1987. Matt was an adjunct law professor at Castleton State College since 1991. He also was a serious felony attorney for the State of Vermont and a frequent presenter of criminal defense and trial practice. He was tennis pro for the Killington School of Tennis, and was an active member and well-loved ski coach for the Killington Ski Club and Killington Mountain School. He was an active golfer and member of the Rutland Country Club.

Rita Marie Brayer Howe ’83, 58, of Shelburne, Vermont, passed on October 8, 2012, at her Shelburne home, surrounded by her loving family. Born in Marshfield, Wisconsin, on February 17, 1954, Rita was the daughter of Irma Brayer and the late John Brayer. She went to Columbus High School in Marshfield and went on to graduate from University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. While Rita excelled in various professions (nurse, lawyer, and clinical psychologist), she is most remembered for her brilliant inner light and outward compassion. A devoted wife and mother, Rita made it her mission to cultivate authenticity, kindness, humor, and wisdom within her family. She led by example; she was light-hearted enough to laugh at herself, selfless enough to put others before her, and intelligent enough to hold three degrees. Anyone who had the honor of knowing Rita will agree that when you were with her, it was as if you were the only person on the planet that mattered. She was the ultimate listener and always offered insightful, honest, and loving guidance to those around her. She truly was a people person and in every action she took, she elevated her surrounding community in countless ways. The essence of Rita cannot be put into words; instead, we all feel her in our hearts.

Julie Fothergill Kelliher LLM ’05, 43, died on February 10, 2013, at her home, in the loving arms of her husband, Rick, after a very sudden battle with a brain tumor. She was born April 2, 1970, the daughter of Bill and Loretta Fothergill of Hampton, New Hampshire, and was raised in the Hampton area. Julie was a 1988 graduate of Winnacunnet High School, and went on to earn several degrees, cum laude. She obtained her bachelor of arts in political science from the University of New Hampshire, her JD from Suffolk University Law School, and her LLM from Vermont Law School. Julie was the general counsel for the state of Vermont Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development for nine years. Recently, the State of Vermont flew the flag at the State House in her honor.
to share their special day with so many VLS alumni.

**Dr. William G. Holt III** has been named coordinator of the Urban Environmental Studies Program at Birmingham-Southern College. He edited *Urban Areas and Global Climate Change* (Emerald Press 2012) for their research in urban studies series. Holt recently received U.S. EPA and Mellon Foundation grants for a community study of the North Birmingham Superfund Site.

On August 10, 2012, **Kyle Lewis** and Ameenah Lloyd exchanged wedding vows in New Albany, Indiana. The ceremony was held in the historic Second Baptist Church, once part of the Underground Railroad, and the reception was held at The Grand, a renovated movie house built in 1909. **Torend Collins JD/MELP** was in attendance. Kyle and Ameenah recently moved to windy Chicago, Illinois. Kyle is an attorney with the Federal Emergency Management Agency–Region V.

**Taylor Neff** married Daniel Eberle in Phippsburg, Maine, on August 4, 2012. Several VLS alumni were in attendance.

**Carolyn Rooney JD’09/MSEL’06** celebrated her one-year anniversary as counsel in the Environmental Legal Department of National Grid. She is based out of the Hicksville, New York office and currently living in Long Island. After dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, Carolyn is looking forward to a relaxing 2013 and the warmer summer weather. She is willing to connect with VLS alumni in her area. “Go Swans!”

**Tamara Toles** and Patrick E. O’Laughlin, Esq., are happy to announce that they were married on Sunday, February 17, 2013, at the Atrium, Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Brooklyn, New York. The happy couple met and fell in love on the island of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, whilst working at the Superior Court of the Virgin Islands. Interestingly enough, they were introduced to one another by **Nesha Christian-Hendrickson ’08**.

**2010**

Cara Cookson
caracookson@yahoo.com
Laurie Wheelock
lauriewheelock@gmail.com

Cara Cookson writes, “I had an unexpected 2010 mini reunion at Sugarbush!” Cara and her fiancé were skiing with **Kira Bryers** only to run into **Diana Vogel Arnell**, **Bobby Arnell**, and **Jon Ciappa**...and then bumped into **Markell Ripps JD/MELP**. We caught up over lunch and hit the slopes.
Christal Cuadra and Peter Keegan ’09 married on New Year’s Eve 2012 on the North Shore of Hawaii.

Andrew Delaney reports that he took a position teaching business law at Community College of Vermont for spring 2013.

Brian Lusignan and Christina Luke were married on October 14, 2012, at Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke, Massachusetts. A reception followed in Northampton. The couple honeymooned on Nantucket before returning to their home in Cohoes, New York, where they reside with their westie, Buddy.

Shaina Rasmussen started as a litigation associate at Cooley Manion Jones LLP in Boston, MA. She is focusing her practice on toxic tort and product liability matters.

Jillian Riley JD/MELP reports that she reunited with Andrew Schwartz, Matt Johnson JD/MELP, Markell Ripps JD/MELP, and Joey Solomon JD/MELP at Sugarbush to ring in 2013, “It was a terrific weekend!”

Markell Ripps JD/MELP and Dan Grossman ’80 announced that they plan to continue to practice law together, as of January 1, 2013, as Grossman & Ripps, PLLC. Their firm is located in Norwich, Vermont, and Dan and Markell are admitted to the bar in both Vermont and New Hampshire. Their practice focuses on real estate transactions, estate planning, estate administration, and small-business law. Markell began working with Dan during her third year at VLS through the legal externship program, and she joined his practice upon her graduation in 2010. Dan established the practice in 1982, two years after his own graduation, and has been serving clients throughout the Upper Valley in the 30-plus years since then. Both of them continue to enjoy hosting VLS students in clerkships and externships; currently, Katherine Barnes JD/MELP ’13 is a third-year extern. Further information on the firm is available at www.grossmanandripps.com.

Robert W. Scharf reports that he and Jane Osborne McKnight, Esq., have established the Shelburne-based Vermont Employers Law Center, Inc. (www.vtemployerslaw.com), an innovative subscription-based venture focused on addressing the legal needs of Vermont employers. Robert concentrates on counseling small and medium-size businesses on employment policies, compliance with federal and state employment laws, addressing employee issues, and managing the employer’s business operations. He has provided legal counsel to manufacturing, retail, services, real estate, medical practice groups, and farm ventures, as well as not-for-profit organizations.

Diana Vogel Arnell writes, “On August 4, 2012, I married my law school sweetheart/love of my life, Robert “Bobby” Arnell, in Craftsbury, Vermont. We loved celebrating with our former classmates, including Evan Belser, Katelyn (Bush) Atwood, Patrick Joy, Munonyedi Ugbode, Abel Russ, Jessica Scott, and Robert Scharf, Robin Arnell ’89, Professor Arthur Edersheim, our friends’ awesome partners, and Jon Ciappa, who officiated the ceremony.

Sean Williams now lives in Arlington, Virginia, where he is an LLM student at George Washington University Law School. Sean’s focus is litigation and dispute resolution. In addition, he is an intern at the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia. Sean reports that he passed the New York bar exam in July 2012, but has not yet been sworn in.
2011
Amanda George
amandadgeorge@yahoo.com
Sarah McGuire
smcguire@vermontlaw.edu

Christy Asbee writes, “The Bird and Flower got hitched!” Kenneth Miller ’09 and Christy wed on September 2, 2012. Sam Dixon JD/MELP’09 photographed the entire wedding weekend. Many fun and amazing VLS alumni joined in the festivities.

Jared Cain MELP has been promoted to digital communications lead at the Electric Power Research Institute. In his role, Jared has helped to support EPRI’s public benefit mission by managing the development of the institute’s new website at www.epri.com. The site articulates to a broader audience EPRI’s role in conducting research that helps support an energy future that is clean, reliable, and environmentally responsible.

Betsy Crumb will be featured in a short film to be presented at the King County Bar Association’s Breakfast with Champions. Breakfast with Champions recognizes individuals dedicated to justice and diversity. The film highlights a favorable outcome Betsy was able to obtain in a complex pro bono case, which also happened to be Betsy’s first case. Betsy works in a small two-person firm in Seattle where she specializes in family law, focusing on domestic violence cases.

In July 2012, Sarah McGuire JD/MELP hung out a shingle in Lansing, Michigan, with her fiancé, Anthony Browne.

Kevin Schrems JD’11/MELP’08 accepted a position with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEq) as an environmental quality analyst in June 2012. Kevin works in the Compliance and Enforcement Section of the DEq’s Remediation and Redevelopment Division, which administers programs that involve the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties to achieve a healthier, cleaner, and more productive environment for Michigan’s citizens. Kevin currently resides in the Lansing area.

Rebecca Wagner JD/MELP is approaching the end of her first year as a solo practitioner in the upper Valley. Based in West Lebanon, New Hampshire, the Law Office of Rebecca A. Wagner (www.nhconservation-law.com) opened its doors in April of 2012. Helped by her husband and law clerk Kevin Wagner ’12, Rebecca primarily handles family, probate, and land use cases (with a little environmental law thrown in). Her passion remains with land conservation. One of the highlights of her time in practice has been co-representing a group of residents opposing a proposed gun range in Newport, New Hampshire. Initial counsel on the case brought her on as co-counsel primarily because there is an environmental law component to the case due to the residents’ concerns about potential lead and other contamination from the proposed range and because the applicant is proposing to fill several thousand square feet of wetlands. Rebecca and Kevin live in South Royalton with their two cats, Sinbad and Trevor.

2012
Susan Lettis
susanlettis@gmail.com
Lauren Miller
lauren.miller.c@gmail.com

Nine members of the class of 2012 were sworn in to the New York State Bar in January, 2013: Nassy Avramidis, Michelle Bleecker, Eric Gentino, Molly Hann, Christina Hung, Susan Lettis, Matthew Marks, James McElney, and Cassandra Partyka JD/MELP.

On Being a Black Lawyer (OBABL) nominated Kendra Brown as one of the “Top Ten to Watch.” OBABL has just released the names of those chosen for Second Annual Power 100 list, a comprehensive catalog of the nation’s most influential black attorneys working in government, academics, and both the public and private sectors. OBABL’s editorial team, together with a group of advisers, spent months researching prospective candidates. Kendra currently attends the George Washington University Law School where she is obtaining an LLM in civil rights.

Mollie Dapolito was sworn in to the New York State Bar on February 21, along with Nathan Thomas and Adam Falcheck.

On September 8, 2012, Nic Gladd and Kristin Hines ’10 returned to Barnard, Vermont, to be married in a small ceremony at the site of their first date. They currently live and work in Washington, D.C. Kristin is an associate attorney at Ayres Law Group, practicing environmental law. In July 2012, Nic joined the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s Office of General Counsel, Energy Markets section.

Blake Johnson writes that “VLS West
(Seattle)” struck up a “Mini-Re-(Lake)Union” in December to celebrate new jobs and (many) moves. He is currently working with the Society of American Law Teachers in Las Vegas, Nevada. Blake offered the following updates from the reunion: “Daniel Lawson Revan moved to Seattle, Washington. Ben Muth is working (litigation) with his family firm, Andrew S. Muth, P.C., in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Eliza Pollard Donoghue, is working with the Natural Resources Council of Maine, and living in Farmington, Maine. Meredith planning. As Anthony made the transition from VLS to the working world, his wife Kristen transitioned as a teacher from South Royalton School to Southeast School, an elementary school in Leominster. Anthony and Kristen live in Leominster with their recently adopted kitten, Edgar Stiles. They also recently made the first of many law school loan payments.

Tyler St. Cyr ’13 reports that this has been a big year for him. He started a solo practice in Burlington, Vermont, focusing on education law, mainly representing individuals who are having problems with schools. Through his practice, he has also been offering community education workshops, helping people understand their special education rights.

Michelle Tarnelli joined Murdoch, Hughes & Twargog, Attorneys at Law, PC, as an associate attorney in October 2012. She will be concentrating in the areas of divorce and family law, adoption law, and personal injury. Michelle started at the firm as a legal intern through VLS’s Semester in Practice Program in September 2011. She was drawn to the internship because of the firm’s experience in family and adoption law, and remained a law clerk at the firm until her association. The
Vermont Law Review recently published her article, “Joint Custody Presumption in Vermont: A Proposal for Co-Parenting,” 36 Vt. L. R. 1015 (2012). The firm’s president, Kurt M. Hughes ’84, also a VLS alum was one of the first Vermont attorneys to become a Fellow of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys (AAAA), an invitation-only national association of attorneys who practice or otherwise distinguished themselves in the field of adoption law, and the American Academy of Assisted Reproductive Technology Attorneys (AAARTA).

Lindsay M. Walton JD/MELP has joined the law firm of Macaulay & Burtch, PC, as an associate. She will focus her practice on government affairs and health care law. Lindsay will represent health care professionals in disciplinary actions, perform audit appeals and lobby the Virginia General Assembly.

After graduation in May, Jess Wilkerson JD/MELP studied in Vermont until July when she left to take the Montana bar. After passing the bar, Jess interned with the New Mexico Environmental Law Center in Santa Fe to complete her MELP degree and then headed back to Montana. Currently, Jess is working as an assistant public defender in Anaconda, Montana, and loving it. Despite having made it through her time at VLS without adopting a dog, Jess left New Mexico with a little charmer named Caliente, who found her at a rest area.

Scott Wold JD/MELP began work in November as the environmental director for the Upper Sioux Community in Granite Falls, Minnesota.

Scott Woodward JD/MELP lives in Pomfret, Vermont, where he has lived since starting at VLS in 2009. Since graduation, Scott splits his time between IT consulting and becoming more skilled at takings law. He and two former coworkers started Four Nines Technologies, Inc., based in San Francisco, California. The company focuses on providing professional services to state and local government clients, particularly public transit agencies. Scott also continues to work with and learn from Professor John Echeverria on takings issues.

Correction: In the fall 2012 issue of Loquitur, the class year for Althea Kroger’s and Bob Varner’s In Memoriam notes was mistakenly given as 1987. Both were members of the Class of 1988. Loquitur editors regret the error.
Inter Alia

A conversation with VLS Alumnus Joel Faxon ’94 on the value of giving back.

How did you first get involved with giving to VLS?

I began giving to VLS soon after I graduated as an act of appreciation to the school for the excellent professional foundation it provided. As I grew as a trial lawyer, both with early successes and eventually developing my own firm, I knew a lot of what I accomplished was due to my experience at VLS and the individualism, ethics, and public citizenship instilled in me as a student at the law school.

Since 1994 you’ve supported VLS with student scholarships, operational support, and (most notably) the new Center for Legal Services. What influenced your decision to give in these areas as opposed to other initiatives?

Education and assistance to people who lack proper access in the legal arena are central themes of my and my firm’s policy of giving. The VLS Center for Legal Services makes a significant difference to families in desperate need of legal aid, and our primary goal has been to establish a pattern of continual funding for legal services, especially since funding from private and governmental sources dried up as a consequence of the Great Recession.

Your firm, Stratton Faxon Trial Lawyers LLC in New Haven, CT, gives back 10 percent of its fee to charitable causes. What drives your firm’s “10% Philosophy”?

Our “10% Philosophy” is similar to the traditional concept of tithing and is driven by a strong, principled sense of social responsibility. As trial lawyers, we are as committed to our community as we are to our clients, and choose to contribute 10% of our case fees to charitable causes or entities that support the right to trial by jury. This giving philosophy reflects our understanding that although money may offset a grievous loss or injury, it can never fully right a wrong—and often comes around full circle to directly impact our clients and many others in the community who have lost some quality of life. If we can somehow help restore someone’s quality of life, our legacy will continue on.

What would you tell someone who is thinking about donating to Vermont Law School, but hasn’t donated yet?

I would absolutely tell anyone who is considering it to donate to VLS. The school is continually growing and improving—turning out not only fantastic talent in significant areas of law, but more importantly, individuals who embody the VLS motto: Law for the Community and the World. VLS, particularly in this economic climate, is in need of the resources necessary to retain that small school feeling and hands-on training enjoyed by so many of its students. The scholarship program is an especially important area to fund so that bright and qualified applicants are not denied an opportunity to thrive just because of limited resources.

To make your gift to Vermont Law School, visit https://connect.vermontlaw.edu/makeagift or return your donation in the enclosed envelope. For more information, call 802.831.1312 or email giving@vermontlaw.edu. Thank you for your consideration.
Homecoming Weekend
September 27–29, 2013

Each September, Vermont Law School welcomes alumni “home” for a fantastic, fun-filled weekend. This year, we invite you to join us for a special celebration of 40 years of VLS students, past and present.

Questions? Contact the Office of External Relations at 802-831-1312 or alumni@vermontlaw.edu. You can also visit us online at connect.vermontlaw.edu/homecoming for weekend details, including registration forms, lists of registered guests, and scheduling and lodging information.

If you’re a member of the class of 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, 1998, 2003, or 2008, you’re celebrating a milestone reunion this year. To help organize your class as part of a Reunion Committee, contact Ariel Wiegard, Director of Development and Alumni Relations, at awiegard@vermontlaw.edu.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Vermont Journal of Environmental Law invites all Vermont Law School alumni to submit their scholarly articles for consideration in the journal’s 15th volume.

The journal seeks to provide discourse on a broad range of issues affecting the environment. We welcome submission of well-supported articles, regardless of position, subject matter, or length.

While the journal accepts articles on a rolling basis, preference will be given to those submitted by August 15, 2013. Please direct submissions to vjel@vermontlaw.edu. For additional information, please visit our website, www.vjel.org.