

LEGAL EDUCATION and the FUTURE OF THE PROFESSION

Presidential Scholars

President	Law School	Tuition During Third Year *	Then-3L Tuition in Today's Dollars**	Current Rate of Tuition***
 Kenneth G. Standard, 2004-2005	Harvard Law School '62	\$1,250	\$9,777	\$52,350
 A. Vincent Buzard, 2005-2006	University of Michigan Law School '67	\$1,200 (out-of-state)	\$8,662	\$52,540 (out-of-state)
 Mark H. Alcott, 2006-2007	Harvard Law School '64	\$1,250	\$9,554	\$52,350
 Kathryn Grant Madigan, 2007-2008	Albany Law School '78	\$2,500	\$9,648	\$43,248
 Bernice K. Leber, 2008-2009	Columbia Law School '78	\$4,490	\$17,329	\$55,916
 Michael E. Getnick, 2009-2010	Cornell Law School '69	\$1,500	\$10,081	\$57,270
 Stephen P. Younger, 2010-2011	Albany Law School '82	\$5,000	\$12,865	\$43,248
 Vincent E. Doyle, III, 2011-2012	University at Buffalo Law School '89	\$3,150 (in-state)	\$5,941	\$21,970 (in-state)
 Seymour W. James, Jr., 2012-2013	Boston University School of Law '74	\$2,750	\$14,486	\$44,720
 David M. Schraver, 2013-2014	University of Michigan Law School '70	\$1,740 (out-of-state)	\$11,088	\$52,540 (out-of-state)
 Glenn Lau-Kee, 2014-2015	Boston University School of Law '74	\$2,750	\$14,486	\$44,720

Chart compiled by Brandon Vogel

* Sources: Harvard Law School Annual Register, 1879-1970; University of Michigan Law School Admissions Office; Albany Law School Office of Communications & Marketing; Columbia Law School Office of Communications and Public Affairs; Cornell Law School Registrar's Office; University at Buffalo Law School Office of Communications and Public Relations; Boston University School of Law Registrar's Office

** CPI Inflation Calculator: http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm *** Information found on each law school's website.

The cost of a legal education today eye-opening to NYSBA leaders

By Brandon Vogel

When President David M. Schraver was a third-year law student at the University of Michigan Law School in 1969, the out-of-state tuition was \$1,740 (\$11,088 in today's dollars).

Today, if Schraver were to enroll at the same law school, he would have to pay \$52,540 in tuition, nearly four times the rate of inflation.

"It is not surprising," said Schraver. "There has been dramatic change."

One of Schraver's presidential goals is to educate today's lawyers about the rising cost of law school tuition.

"First, we need to understand what factors are driving the increased costs. Second, we must look at costs we can either reduce or control," said Schraver. "Some has to do with economics of the law schools; others are political

issues. Investment in physical plants and libraries does not necessarily translate into quality education."

Both Schraver and Past President Kathryn Grant Madigan of Binghamton (Levene Gouldin & Thompson, LLP) said that for years universities treated law schools as "cash cows." He said that "is not viable in today's world."

In the case of his alma mater, Schraver said state support has decreased, forcing the university to raise tuition to recoup costs. The difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition is just \$3,000.

Schraver noted that the rise in tuition leads to concerns about diversity and discourages people from choosing a law career.

"Clearly, people are priced out of the market and may not take the risk," said

Schraver. "There are always going to be optimists who think they will get one of the top jobs. We are pricing people out of taking public interest and government law jobs. That ought to be a concern for our society."

Less is more?

In Broome County, Madigan said, law graduates often have to choose between a career in public interest law or finding a job with a firm, which will allow them to buy a home and get a mortgage. "It is really troubling," said Madigan.

Immediate Past President Seymour W. James, Jr. (The Legal Aid Society in New York City) said Legal Aid attorneys sometimes work second jobs to meet their debt loads.

"It is really astounding what the

cost of a legal education is today," said James. "It is unbelievable. So many students graduate with enormous debt, about \$200,000 between their college and law school loans."

Both James and President-elect Glenn Lau-Kee graduated from Boston University School of Law in 1974, when the tuition for a third-year law student was \$2,750 (\$14,486 in 2013 dollars). James' daughter is a third-year law student at Harvard Law School, where tuition is \$52,350.

Madigan noted the "tremendous growth in for-profit law schools," especially in the South and Southwest. "The profit motive drives the mission of the law school," said Madigan. "That is not healthy."

Post-recession, "the top 50 to 100 law

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Experienced lawyers to law students: 'Be brave; speak up'

By Patricia Sears Doherty

At an early morning forum, a group of students at Albany Law School were given a challenge: to use their youth and special skills as a selling point when applying for jobs upon graduation.

Two partners in the Albany-based Deily & Glastetter law firm told the students that what they could not offer potential employers in on the job or work experience, would be just as valuable—their youthful enthusiasm, their comfort with technology and their flexible availability.

The September 24 breakfast was the first in a series on professionalism established by the State Bar's Young Lawyers Section. Program Chair Sarah Gold of Albany (Gold Law Firm), an alumna of Albany Law School, planned the series as a conversation between established professionals and aspiring lawyers on different practical aspects. The September event focused on cultural competence in the private law firm. Events on November 19 and February 19 will explore working in finance and government.

Joann Sternheimer and Jonathan D. Deily, partners in Deily & Glastetter, LLP, agreed that the legal profession is much different today than when they began practicing law. Other lawyers in attendance agreed that today's clients are looking for quality and value for their dollars. "We have to get over the fact that we are not a 'vaulted profession' anymore," said Sternheimer. "Law is a 'business'."

The advantage that new lawyers bring to any law firm includes their

knowledge and comfort with "cutting edge technology and your cultural perspective," she said. "Don't be afraid to speak up."

Sternheimer, who recently became managing partner, said there is more diversity in the legal profession today. "But in my area of practice often it is still me and five white guys," she said. When women or people of color walk into a law firm that does not appear to be diverse, "that can be intimidating and that can be scary," she said. But young lawyers must overcome their nerves. "Screw up your courage," she said. "Be brave and put your best foot forward."

Changes in the makeup of the legal workforce are being dictated by clients' desire to hire firms with more women and minorities.

Deily said clients seem primarily interested in "the number of hours the lawyers in your firm worked for 'us' and 'Why are you working on the file?'" He said today's clients see the hiring of a lawyer more as a business transaction.

Law as business

Today, law firms need to promote their business by advertising their skills, said Sternheimer. "That is how we get the business," she said.

"If you don't meet the clients' diversity requirement, then you don't get the work," said Deily. "That has really become part of the public company culture." He said in order to win clients, he spends much of his time preparing Request for Proposals (RFPs) filled with diversity information, technology speci-



Legal advice—Joann Sternheimer, managing partner at Deily & Glastetter, center, gives practical advice to law students on navigating the law firm environment during the first in a series of breakfast discussions at Albany Law School in September. She and partner Jonathan Deily, right, answered students' questions and offered suggestions about entering the profession. Sarah Gold, chair of the State Bar's Young Lawyers Section, left, is program chair of the series. Events on November 19 and February 19 will explore working in finance and government. [Photo by Melissa Batalin/Albany Law School]

fications and other information that has nothing to do with the law.

Young lawyers

Members of the Young Lawyers Section at the breakfast confirmed the importance of the cultural shift from a law profession to a law business.

Stephen T. Buckley of Albany (Herzog Law Firm) said that new lawyers who "gain an understanding and appreciation for the business side of things" will be more marketable to today's law firms.

Penelope Andrews, president and dean of Albany Law School, noted that

Albany Law offers courses during semester intersessions and summer courses that teach basic business tasks, such as how to complete time sheets, how to dictate a memo or how to write a status report for a client.

Students at the breakfast asked whether their summer internships and participation in the school's law clinics could translate to better marketability.

"Anything that gives you the experience will help," said Sternheimer. ♦

Sears Doherty is State Bar News editor.

Presidents: Cost of an education today a shocking burden for profession's new attorneys

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schools are going to be fine. A lot of us are concerned about what may happen to the good, more regional schools, like Albany Law School and Seton Hall, that do not have the top rankings, as the market constricts," said Madigan.

She said her alma mater, Albany Law, had a historically high level of bar exam passage. But, as class size grew in the 1980s and 1990s, standards were sacrificed and bar passage rates plummeted. She noted that the new dean, Penny Andrews, is building on prior efforts to reduce class size and raise admission standards. Her plans for improving bar passage rates, as she did while associate dean at CUNY Law School, include identifying struggling students earlier and improving curricular support.

Schraver said some law schools are admitting fewer students and offering fewer courses, which affect faculty size.

Then and now

Madigan has been financially independent since she was 18 years old. In law school, she qualified for funding through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). The program provided low-income individuals with training and jobs in public service. She typically worked 30+ hours a week in the Albany County Public Defender's Office during her second and third year of law school, in addition to receiving a partial fellowship.

"The hours I worked were the exception, not the rule," said Madigan.

She noted that some parents paid the \$2,500 law school tuition, while others took out loans. She took out small loans in both college and law school, which were "manageable. Back then it was possible to work your way through school with minimal loans. That is no longer the case," said Madigan.

"More scholarships were available then," said James. "Today, most students are not going to be able to finance their legal education on their own without sizable loans." He funded his education through a partial scholarship, loans and by working during the summer and school year.

Madigan, whose son graduated from Cornell Law School in 2009, and James agreed that there are more clinics and practical skills programs available to law students today than in the 1970s.

Throughout her career, she said, law grads often have told her that they wished there had been better financial planning advice available for first-year law students. Some students get more loans than they need; others do not take enough.

Friends of Madigan frequently ask her if their children should become lawyers.

"Somewhat tongue-in-cheek, I often ask: do you want me to talk them into it or talk them out of it," said Madigan. "I have long believed that we could always use more good lawyers who are committed to service. There are those students who look at law as a calling. There should always be a place for them." ♦

Vogel is NYSBA's staff writer.