

Cousins Public Interest Fellowship supports “new approaches” to indigent legal aid



Torin Togut (left), Georgia Law's first Cousins Public Interest Fellow, hopes to improve access to special education opportunities in Georgia. Alex Scherr, Georgia Law associate professor and director of civil clinics, serves as coordinator of the fellowship program.

This past spring, Georgia Law established the Cousins Public Interest Fellowship, an innovative program that offers experienced lawyers the chance to provide civil legal services to needy Georgians while engaging law students in the process.

Attorney Torin D. Togut is serving as the first fellow of the program.

Working in a two-year appointment, each fellow will initiate a project to provide much-needed legal assistance and will work with a host organization to support the program long term. Law students will help with the development of each project and, once it is operational, they will aid in the delivery of services.

Togut's project is clinical in design and focuses on special education cases, which incorporates the fields of medicine, psychology, education, psychiatry, social work and vocational rehabilitation.

Working with the Georgia Legal Services Program, Togut and eight second- and third-year students will assist children with disabilities and their families in navigating the “educational maze” in securing a free appropriate public education.

Under his direction, students will engage in client interviewing and case investigation, as well as appearing at negotiations with schools in an effort to obtain for children

what the law entitles them to receive. The clinic will introduce law students to fundamental administrative advocacy skills, as they may participate as advocates in mediation and in later due process hearings.

Alexander W. Scherr, associate professor and director of civil clinics, developed the idea for the Cousins Fellowship and now serves as coordinator for the program.

“We hope for this program to become a catalyst for creating new and innovative approaches to help indigent Georgians with civil legal needs. We also hope for law students to gain invaluable exposure to service in the public interest,” he said.

Students' responses to Togut's clinical program have been enthusiastic, Scherr said. The first course, offered this spring semester, was over enrolled and required Togut to narrow down the applications.

Before coming to Georgia Law, Togut worked for the Georgia Legal Services Program as a specialist attorney in mental health, health and education. He also worked in private practice in Georgia and Vermont representing children, adolescents and adults in the areas of disabilities, special education, mental health, disability rights and civil rights.

Togut said he saw the Cousins Fellowship as an opportunity to expand on the service component of his profession while combining it with the ability to teach and mentor law students.

Additionally, it was the lack of special education resources in the area that further encouraged him to apply and submit his proposal.

“There is a significant need for special education attorneys in this area of the state. There are a great deal of low income clients in Athens-Clarke County and the surrounding counties who need services and who would not have any access to these services but for this project,” Torin said.

Applications for the 2007-09 fellowship should be sent to Associate Professor and Fellowship Coordinator Alex Scherr.

Bodansky named associate dean for faculty development



Daniel M. Bodansky, the holder of the Woodruff Chair in International Law, assumed the associate dean for faculty development position

vacated by Rusk Professor Peter J. Spiro this past summer.

In this role, Bodansky will work closely with the law school's faculty, particularly the junior faculty, to expand and promote scholarly activities. He will also work closely with the communications office to heighten awareness of faculty activities and accomplishments.

Internationally recognized as one of the premier authorities on global climate change, Bodansky joined the Georgia Law faculty in the fall of 2002. From 1989 to 2002, he was a faculty member of the University of Washington School of Law and has taught as an adjunct professor at the George Washington School of Law and the Georgetown University Law Center.

He has served as the climate change coordinator and attorney-advisor at the U.S. Department of State in addition to consulting for the United Nations in the areas of climate change and tobacco control.

Bodansky currently serves on the board of editors of the *American Journal of International Law*, is co-editor in chief of Kluwer Law International's book series on international environmental law and policy and is the U.S.-nominated arbitrator under the Antarctic Environment Protocol.

He earned his bachelor's degree *magna cum laude* from Harvard University, his master's in the history and philosophy of science from Cambridge University and his law degree from Yale University, where he was a member of the *Yale Law Journal*.

Conrad becomes sixth Georgia Law alumnus chosen for U.S. Supreme Court clerkship



Out of law school just a little more than a year, Adam M. Conrad (J.D.'05) has already made it to the top of the U.S. judicial system. While he is not a U.S. Supreme Court justice, he is enjoying working for one.

Conrad was selected for a prestigious judicial clerkship with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and he began his term in October.

Applicants for this position come from students at the top of their class and from the top law schools in the nation. Selected from this elite group, Conrad joins five other Georgia Law graduates who have served as Supreme Court judicial clerks.

Hosch Professor Anne Proffitt Dupre (J.D.'88), a former U.S. Supreme Court clerk herself, recalls Conrad as a hardworking, dedicated and amicable law student.

In addition to his work with Justice Thomas, Dupre said Conrad has the opportunity to network with peers from across the country, many of whom will have the potential to influence the legal system in years to come.

"This will be a fantastic experience for Adam. The clerkship will give him invaluable experience and a perspective on the U.S. Supreme Court that is only accessible to a few," Dupre said.

"In addition, he will show all those who come in contact with him at the court just how terrific the students are here at Georgia Law. We are delighted for him and glad to claim that he is a Georgia Law alumnus."

Conrad, a native of Brandon, Miss., came to law school after graduating *magna cum laude* with a B.S. in electrical engineering from the University of Notre Dame in 2002.

"This will be a fantastic experience for Adam. The clerkship will give him invaluable experience and a perspective on the U.S. Supreme Court that is only accessible to a few."

- Hosch Professor Anne Dupre (J.D.'88)

During law school, he served as editor in chief of the *Georgia Law Review*.

Graduating first in his class, he received numerous honors, including the LSA Award for Highest Academic Average, the Jesse and Dan MacDougald Memorial Award for First Honor Graduate, the Isaac Meinhard Award for Highest Academic Average for the Class of 2005 and induction into the Order of the Coif.

Prior to his Supreme Court clerkship, Conrad clerked for Judge David B. Sentelle of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. He also worked as a summer associate in the Atlanta firms Alston & Bird and Finnegan Henderson during law school.

The Supreme Court clerkship was not the only big news for Conrad this past fall. He and classmate Danielle A. Logan (J.D.'05), an attorney with Robinson, Bradshaw & Hinson in Charlotte, N.C., were married in October.

A typical clerkship appointment is for a period of one year, and each justice usually has four clerks per term.

Alumni who have clerked for a U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Benna R. Solomon, a 1978 graduate who clerked for Justice Byron R. White in 1980

Bruce P. Brown, a 1984 graduate who clerked for Chief Justice Warren E. Burger in 1986

Glen M. Darbyshire, a 1984 graduate who clerked for Justice Thurgood Marshall in 1985

Anne Proffitt Dupre, a 1988 graduate who clerked for Justice Harry A. Blackmun in 1989

John H. Longwell, a 1999 graduate who clerked for Justice Steven G. Breyer in 2005

Faculty who have clerked for a U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Associate Professor J. Randy Beck clerked for Justice Anthony M. Kennedy in 1990

University and Hosch Professor Dan T. Coenen clerked for Justice Harry A. Blackmun in 1979

Hosch Professor Anne Proffitt Dupre (J.D.'88) clerked for Justice Harry A. Blackmun in 1989

Assistant Professor John Neiman clerked for Justice Anthony M. Kennedy in 2001

Assistant Professor Sonja R. West clerked for Justice John Paul Stevens in 1999

THE CLASS OF 2009 AT A GLANCE

Class Size	232
Gender	
Male	55%
Female	45%
Ethnicity	
African American	16%
Other Minority	9%
Non-Minority	75%
Residency	
Georgia Resident	85%
Non-Resident	15%

States Represented 19

Institutions Represented 80

Most Common Undergraduate Institutions

(number of students)

University of Georgia (87), the Georgia Institute of Technology (15), Emory University (8), Georgia State University (5), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (5), Furman University (4) and Vanderbilt University (4).

LSAT/GPA Profile

	75th Percentile	Median
LSAT	164	163
GPA	3.85	3.62

Georgia Law in the news

MILWAUKEE
JOURNAL SENTINEL

Wisconsin-based airlines see tax break

A U.S. Supreme Court appeal is still up in the air concerning the Wisconsin Supreme Court's decision to uphold a state law allowing a property tax exemption for Midwest and Air Wisconsin airlines. The majority opinion held that the tax code did not break federal law, while Chief Justice Shirley S. Abrahamson argues the tax break violates the federal Commerce Clause. In the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, state tax law sage Walter Hellerstein said, "Had Abrahamson's views been in the majority, the case would have been a good one for U.S. Supreme Court review."

Prempro getting set for trial

The first of 4,500 cases filed against Wyeth, the maker of Prempro, a hormone-replacement therapy accused of increasing the chances of breast cancer, stroke and coronary heart disease in women, is set to go to trial. Wyeth is said to have ignored the dangers of Prempro. During the jury selection portion of the trial, health-care regulations authority Thomas A. Eaton told the *Associated Press*, "Juries may not understand the complexities of biochemistry, but they sure understand a coverup."

The Atlanta
Journal-
Constitution

Georgia's gay marriage ban ruled unconstitutional

Georgia's battle for a ruling on gay marriage continues with Fulton Superior Court Judge Constance Russell's decision to strike down Georgia's gay marriage ban. Russell ruled the 2004 constitutional amendment question improperly included two subjects, both gay marriage and civil unions. Associate Dean Paul M. Kurtz called the ruling "a decision about procedure, not about substance" in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. "It is a very carefully drawn opinion, and it's certainly credible."

China and Georgia growing together

Both China and Georgia are exploring ways to enhance their economic relationship. China's ambassador to the United States hopes to place a consulate in Georgia while Atlanta airport officials are working on the establishment of direct flights to the country by the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Commenting on the relationship, C. Donald Johnson (J.D.'73), director of the Rusk Center and former ambassador, said in the *Florida Times-Union*, "There have been companies and politicians that wanted to build a wall around themselves to protect themselves from China. But the smart people have wanted to get involved with China."

THE SUN

The pros and cons of self-representation

The general opinion of those choosing to defend themselves in legal proceedings is that they are mentally ill. However, recent research by criminal law expert Erica J. Hashimoto concluded that was not the case. Commenting on her findings in the *Baltimore Sun* and *The Montreal Gazette*, she said, "Often, people choose to defend themselves because they have an ideological position they want to air – about taxes or euthanasia, for example – or because they are dissatisfied with their appointed lawyers."

- compiled by Nikki Girard