Careers in Academic Law Librarianship

by Peter Hook, Electronic Services Librarian

Law librarians play a crucial role in furthering the educational mission of any law school. The largest academic law libraries spend over a million dollars a year buying materials for their collections. It is important to have knowledgeable professionals selecting these materials and insuring that they may be utilized effectively. Additionally, academic libraries have staffs that range from ten to a hundred people or more. Supervising staff members and students is an important administrative component of many librarians' jobs. However, for me, the most enjoyable part of being an academic law librarian is the opportunity to teach.

Here at IU, the librarians guest lecture in the legal research and writing classes. At some law schools, librarians teach a semester long, 1L research course and assign grades. Law librarians also commonly teach advanced legal research courses and sometimes specialized legal instruction courses (i.e. tax research or foreign and international law research). Additionally, many librarians give one time lectures in substantive law courses on specific research tasks.

What most people don't realize is that every hour a librarian spends at the reference desk presents numerous ad hoc teaching opportunities. Good law librarians do not merely show students how to find the answers to their law related questions. Good law librarians also make sure that a student is conceptually clear as to the underpinning legal structure that frames their research task as well as any doctrinal idiosyncrasies that further affect the research. Most law librarians assist a wide variety of patrons - law students, faculty members, undergraduate and non-law graduate students, attorneys, and members of the public. Courses taught on campus such as Sports Law and Law and Public Policy bring numerous non-law students into the library. These students often need background information for them to understand their research task.

It can be very satisfying to help these students learn the basics about the American legal system.

Law librarians have excellent job satisfaction. Many enjoy tenure track positions and academic rank. They are also expected to contribute to the profession through their scholarship, service, and teaching.

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While new academic law librarians may not earn the salaries that some first year associates make, a starting law librarian's salary can be competitive with salaries offered to new graduates. In addition, regular working hours, ample vacation time, and a high degree of job satisfaction provide most law librarians with an excellent quality of life.

IU is fortunate to have one of the top-ranked library science schools. Prior to the completion of one's second year of law school, law students may apply to enter the JD/MLS (Masters of Library Science) joint degree program. The program adds only one year to the length of the JD. (See page 22 of the Law School Bulletin for details.) Most academic libraries require both degrees for their public services librarians. These are librarians that staff the reference desk and do classroom teaching. All of the librarians here at the law school would be happy to talk to anyone interested in a career as a law librarian. Just stop in and visit anyone of us in the library.

NEW & NOTEWORTHY: ACQUERING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

Each month the Law Library acquires a wide variety of materials. A list of each month's new books and periodical subscriptions, Selected Acquisitions of the Library, is distributed to the law school community. Paper copies of the current list, arranged by subject, can be found on the shelves labeled "Library Research Guides," to your right as you enter the Library. Electronic copies of the current issue, along with the past year's issues, can be found on the Library's web page (http://www.law.indiana.edu/lib/pubs/laqlist/index.html). Copies of all past guides can be found in the Rare Book Room (Z733 .I55).

As I compile each month's list, I am always amazed at the variety of titles we receive. Many less research oriented law libraries simply do not attempt to develop their collection in such a diverse manner. While we add our share of Nutshells, Hornbooks, and legal treatises, each month's list is well represented with titles from such subjects as History, Political Science, Philosophy, Fiction, and Popular Culture.

As an example, here is a sample of some of the materials that were added to the collection in February 2003:


Dick Vaughan. Acquisitions & Serials Control Librarian

IS SHE REALLY A JUDGE?

Between the paternity tests on Maury Povich and the "sands through the hourglass" of Days of Our Lives, daytime television is literally awash in "reality court" programs. Hearing scores of dog bite cases and tales of surreptitiously repossessed pick-up trucks, television judges frequently hand down rulings that appear to be little more than common sense coupled with a healthy dose of scolding. It makes you wonder sometimes what qualifies a person to be a telejudge. Is Judge Judy really a judge or does she just play one on TV? You might be surprised at the legal credentials of many of these folks. Try to match the following TV judges to their real-life resumes.
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1. Judge Hatchett
   Judge Glenda Hatchett
2. The People’s Court
   Judge Marilyn Milian
3. Judge Joe Brown
   Judge Joseph Brown
4. Judge Greg Mathis
   Judge Greg Mathis
5. Judge Judy
   Judge Judith Sheindlin
6. Power of Attorney
   Judge Lynn Toler
7. Divorce Court
   Judge Mablean Ephriam
8. Animal Court
   Judge Joseph Wapner

Before embarking on any Spring Break (or Summer) travels, be sure to educate yourself about any health or safety issues that might affect your plans for a safe and fun trip. Check out some of the following government resources:

National Center for Infectious Diseases Traveler’s Health
http://www.cdc.gov/travel/
- Health information on a particular destination
- Information on diseases or outbreaks that could affect international travel
- Vaccination recommendations from the CDC
- Other reference and research information, and links to other health and non-medical sites

U.S. Department of State Travel Page
http://travel.state.gov/
- Worldwide Caution Public Announcements
- Travel Safety Information for Students
- Travel Warnings
- Consular Information Sheets
- Visa Services
- Travel Publications
- Tips for American Students Abroad

The World Factbook 2002 (CIA)
http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/
[2001 edition available in print, Law Library Reference PrEx 3.15]

A geographical handbook featuring:
- Full-color maps and flags of all nations and geographical entities
- Country profiles with population, ethnicity and literacy demographics
- Political, geographic, and economic data

U.S. Customs Travel Information
http://www.customs.gov/xp/dgov/travel/

TRAVEL INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

THE SUGGESTION BOX

Every month in this space Associate Director Linda Fariss responds to a suggestion from the Suggestion Box.

Since we haven’t had any suggestions for awhile, I thought I would take this opportunity to encourage graduating students to participate in the annual graduation display that we will be putting up in the lobby early in April. After spring break bring us pictures, memorabilia, etc. from your law school years to include in the display. The success of this project depends on you!
ADDITIONAL NOTABLE ALUMNI

The display case for February highlighted a number of our African American alumni. However, there were several alumni who were not able to place in the display. In this column, I would like to mention three of those individuals.

Jim Hill—
Jim Hill received his M.B.A. from Indiana University in 1971, and his J.D. in 1974. After graduation he moved to Oregon, serving as an Assistant Attorney General in the Oregon Department of Justice. In 1982, he was elected to the Oregon House of Representatives, and then later to the Oregon Senate. In 1992, he was elected State Treasurer of Oregon, becoming the first African American to hold a statewide political office in Oregon. He was reelected in 1996. In 2002, he ran for Governor of Oregon, but he lost in the Democratic primary to the eventual winner in the general election.

Frank Seales—
Frank Seales received his J.D. in 1974. He then practiced law for more than 20 years, including 8 years as the Senior Assistant Attorney General and Chief of the Antitrust and Consumer Litigation Section of the Virginia Attorney General’s office, and 14 years as a senior trial attorney with the Antitrust Division of the United States Department of Justice. In 1998 he was appointed chief counsel of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a position he held through the remainder of President Clinton’s second term as President.

M. Gino Brodgon—
Gino Brodgon currently serves as a state court judge in Fulton County, Georgia. He received his law degree in 1986. He was in the private practice of law for 10 years. In 1996, he became a state court judge.

Michael Maben
Cataloging Librarian

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**Law Library Spring Break Hours**
**March 14 - 23, 2003**

- March 14, Friday: 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- March 15, Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- March 16, Sunday: 1:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- March 17-21, Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- March 22, Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- March 23, Sunday: Resume Regular Hours

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**WORKING THE HALLS**

- Welcome to the Law School:
  - Peggy Wilkes as Senior Faculty Secretary
  - Happy March Birthday to:
    - Professor Joseph Hofermann on the 1st
  - Professor Charles Geih on the 8th
  - Sharon Neffeld on the 10th
  - Asst. Dean Kevin Robling on the 13th
  - Professor John Applegate on the 14th
  - Professor David Dill on the 26th
  - Law Librarian Liz Larson on the 30th

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Here's the answer to the quiz:

Answers: 1-F, 2-C, 3-A, 4-B, 5-H, 6-E, 7-G, 8-D