Hong Kong’s Team Wins Susan J. Ferrell Intercultural Human Rights Moot Court Competition

From January 28 - 30, 2011, St. Thomas Law in Miami Gardens welcomed eight teams from five different countries for the 2011 Susan J. Ferrell Intercultural Human Rights Moot Court Competition. First-time participants from the City University of Hong Kong School of Law, the American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates and The University of Virginia School of Law joined returning teams from the National Law School of Gujarat, India, Cayman Islands Law School, Howard University School of Law, Valparaiso Law School and Florida International University College of Law. Together the law students drew on their intellect, talent and enthusiasm to grapple with culturally sensitive issues of challenging complexity and immediate global relevance.

Created five years ago by the Intercultural Human Rights program at St. Thomas Law, the competition is designed to generate a cross-cultural discussion of the international legal duties a state owes its citizens and other human beings. To do so, St. Thomas’ International Moot Court students, guided by executive director of the Human Rights program Professor Roza Pati, framed this year’s fictional problem. The discussion that ensued focused on real-world issues related to the use of force against violent non-state actors and the states that support them, as well as on the rights of terrorist suspects and the security of the state.

Distinguished legal professionals and St. Thomas Law faculty members served as judges, and after four preliminary rounds on Saturday, January 29, only the University of Virginia School of Law and Hong Kong School of Law remained standing.

To judge the final round on Sunday, Professors Lauren Gilbert and John Kang were joined by His Excellency Professor Fausto Pocar of the University of Milan, Italy, former President of the U.N. Human Rights Committee, past President of the International Criminal Tribunal on the former Yugoslavia and present Member of the Appeals Chamber of the Yugoslav and Rwanda International Criminal Tribunals.

Professor Siegfried Wiessner, director of the Intercultural Human Rights program, commented that they constituted “a fascinatingly hot bench, which subjected the competitors to a firestorm of questions. The students’ responses showed that they were at the top of their game.”

Ultimately, the team from the City University of Hong Kong School of Law defeated the team from the University of Virginia School of Law. The best memorial was written by the team from FIU, while Valparaiso Law School fielded the best oralist. Overall, both “veteran” participants and judges noted the excellent quality of argument and academic preparation, another step up in the development of this unique competition of growing international appeal. Much of the event’s success was owed to a great student crew under the leadership of International Moot Court President Colleen Kerins and Ferrell Competition Coordinator Michael Sneeringer.

At a banquet to honor the teams, Dean Douglas Ray thanked St. Thomas Law Professor Siegfried Wiessner for creating and directing this competition since its January 2006 inception. To the participants, he said, “This competition and your participation make clear that concepts of human rights and justice transcend borders and cut across whatever religious, ethnic, and cultural differences we may have.”
IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

Tuesday, February 15, 2011, is the last day to apply for admission to the LL.M. program in Environmental Sustainability for the 2011-2012 academic year, without paying the $45 application fee (including the one-semester accelerated program for St. Thomas J.D. students). For more details, please visit http://www.stu.edu/law/environmentLLM

The deadline for third-year J.D. students interested in applying for the Certificate in Environmental Justice is Tuesday, March 15, 2011.

For J.D. students interested in participating in the Netherlands program, which is scheduled for May 23-27, 2011, please note that your composite fee of $1000.00 (includes room and board) is due by Friday, April 1, 2011. For more information, please visit http://www.stu.edu/shortcourse/tabid/2979/Default.aspx. This program may be of special interest to students participating in the Summer-in-Spain program; there is still space available for students interested in this program.

If you would like to pick up the required forms, you may do so by contacting Professor Light, Professor Munson, or Carol Rauseo-Danclair, Program Coordinator (office across from Room 2-1 on the second floor).

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER – PROFESSOR DOROTHY BROWN
FROM EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

On Monday, February 14, 2011, at 12:00 p.m., in the Moot Courtroom, Professor Dorothy A. Brown will be speaking on the topic “From Justice Thurgood Marshall to Chris Rock: Black History Now.”

Professor Brown specializes in federal tax law and critical race theory. She is well known for her work examining the racial implications of federal tax policy. Professor Brown is a professor at Emory University School of Law in Atlanta, Georgia. She previously taught at Washington and Lee University School of Law, where she taught courses in administrative law, critical race theory, federal income tax, and partnership tax and was the director of the Frances Lewis Law Center. She also has taught at George Mason University and the University of Cincinnati.

Before becoming a professor of law, Brown worked as an adviser to J. Stephen Swift of the U.S. Tax Court, as an associate with Haynes & Miller in Washington, D.C., and as an investment banker at New York’s Drexel, Burnham & Lambert. She also was a special assistant to the Federal Housing Commissioner at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

THE FEDERALIST SOCIETY PRESENTS MR. ROBERT LEVY

Please join the Federalist Society in welcoming Mr. Robert Levy to campus on Thursday, February 17, 2011, at 12:00 p.m. in room 2-1. Mr. Robert Levy is the Chairman of the Cato Institute. Mr. Levy will be giving a lecture on his recent book entitled "The Dirty Dozen: How Twelve Supreme Court Cases Radically Expanded Government and Eroded Freedom."

An excerpt from the Cato Institute’s Website says of the book, "...12 U.S. Supreme Court cases that moved the course of American history away from constitutional government. Whether it involves the regulation of commerce, political speech, economic liberties, property rights, welfare, racial preferences, gun owners’ rights, or imprisonment without charge, the U.S. Supreme Court has behaved in a manner that would have stunned, mystified, and outraged our Founding Fathers. We were supposed to have a government of limited power and maximum freedom for the individual. Instead, we have been afflicted by a vast enlargement of both federal and state power, condoned by a Supreme Court that has selectively protected some — but not all — of our constitutionally guaranteed rights."

Some of the cases covered in the book that will be covered in the lecture include Helvering v. Davis, Wickard v. Filburn, Korematsu v. United States, and Kelo v. City of New London. Bush v. Gore, while not one of the "Dozen," does receive attention in the book and will be discussed in the lecture.