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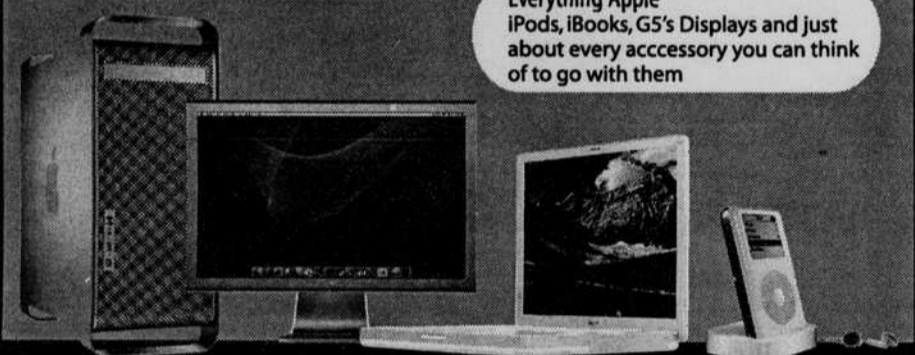
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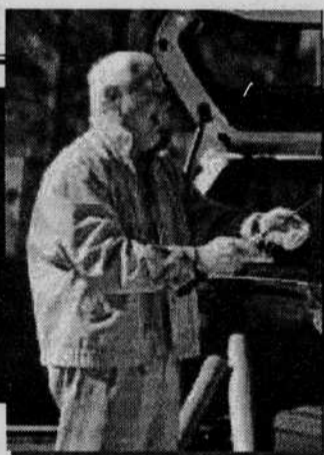
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Street Law program enables students to share their skills

Law students bring their knowledge to community members in need

OMIE DRAWHORN
NEWS REPORTER

For some, law school means spending long hours in the library, pouring over constitutional law books and researching court cases, rarely seeing the light of day.

But the Street Law program takes law students out of libraries and classrooms and into communities, teaching classes in search and seizure, landlord/tenant law, renter's rights and dispute resolution.

Jane Steckbeck, faculty chair of the law school's Pro Bono Executive Board, said the program is a great way for students to take what they learn in their classes and apply it to the real world.

"We inform people of their legal rights and let them know what they can expect," said Daniel Apoloni, director of Spanish Street Law, a division of Street Law geared to helping Spanish speakers and other members of the community learn their rights.

Steckbeck said the Street Law program has been around since she was in law school in 1989, but eventually dissolved and was re-created two years ago. The group had about 25 members this past year and expect their ranks to grow this year.

"It's a great way to connect with the community. It gets you out of the bubble," said law student Rob Sokol, who taught landlord/tenant law classes this past year.

Some of the people in the class have been evicted and aren't yet familiar with the law but have practical knowledge, Sokol said.

"It helps them avoid problems down the road because they know their rights," he said.

Sokol said some people in the classes are living in shelters or their cars. If they complete the program, the program will give them \$500 each to apply to future housing costs.

Apoloni said there are real attorneys present during the class to answer specific questions and give legal advice. Law students can only educate the public and inform them of their rights, not give advice.

Apoloni said his involvement with Street Law has made him want to continue to perform pro bono work, "at least on the side."

"I plan on doing this for the next two years and even after I graduate," he said.

Law students created the Spanish Street Law division last year.

Apoloni said the first year of Spanish Street Law was challenging because the group was just forming. He had to find places to teach classes and get teaching material.

"We had to start from scratch," he said.

There were five law students in the group that spoke Spanish, and this year he's hoping to increase the numbers. He expects this year to be easier, because the group has established itself.

Sokol admits teaching classes has its challenges.

"One problem is initially relating to people," he said. "They want to be there, but they have to be there."

After he connects with people, "It's a lot of fun," he said.

Sokol said he enjoys the real-world experience.

"You really feel like you're helping," he said. "It's good practical work."

He said he feels this is more rewarding than class work.

"(I like) getting out of the library, doing something that actually helps," Sokol said.

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NEWS BRIEF

Office of Multicultural Affairs restructures staff

Vice Provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity Gregory Vincent announced July 23 that the Office of Multicultural Affairs will undergo employee restructuring.

As a result of restructuring, Vincent will take on the role of interim director of the OMA.

Former OMA director Carla Gary has been named assistant vice provost of institutional equity and diversity and former academic advisor and interim assistant director Linda Liu has been promoted to associate director of the office.

Vincent said these changes are to align the office's strengths with proposed diversity initiatives. One is the Portland Initiative, which will

provide targeted outreach to communities of color in the Portland area. Gary has extensive ties in the Portland community, Vincent said.

Other goals for the year include the Minority Faculty Recruitment Initiative, the Cultural Competency Initiative and the Student of Color Recruitment and Retention Initiative.

Vincent said that the OMA was placed under the control of Institutional Equity and Diversity to assure that the OMA's efforts would have the full support of the provost's office.

"These changes prepare us to move forward more effectively with OMA's very important work," Vincent said.

Vincent said that all changes to the OMA were effective immediately as of July 23.

"I look forward to working with Carla and Linda in their new roles," he said.

— Ben Brown

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