



Media Advisory

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CLEO Program Returns to Thomas Jefferson School of Law

Six-week "Boot Camp" for Traditionally under-represented, Soon-to-Be Law Students

Forty-three college graduates from across the country arrived in San Diego on June 12, ready to spend their summer at Thomas Jefferson School of Law preparing for the rigors of law school. These future law students are embarking on this journey as part of the CLEO (the Council on Legal Education Opportunity) Summer Institute, which gives traditionally under-represented groups a chance to "jump start" their legal careers.

CLEO isn't just helping to train future lawyers, but also to create future leaders in society.

The participants will go through an academic "boot camp" and will take four courses over the span of six weeks to give them a competitive edge when they enter law school.

TJSL, along with one other law school, has been selected to host a CLEO Institute this summer. TJSL also hosted CLEO Institutes in 2008 and 2006.

Besides preparing for law school, the CLEO scholars also will be afforded with networking opportunities. Throughout the summer experience, they will meet many attorneys and a CLEO alumnus, U.S. District Judge John Houston, and visit his courtroom in the Federal Courthouse.

Many CLEO scholars are the first individuals in their family to ever graduate from college. Upon completion of the Institute, the participants may be eligible for scholarships and grants, and will have special access to seminars and career fairs throughout their law school career.

Here are mini-profiles of some of the CLEO Scholars who would make good interview subjects:

For **Kelvin Adefhinti**, life is about making the most of second chances, as he did. From North East Washington, D.C., "I grew up as a young man with promise but not a lot of guidance. Due to this, I got into trouble in school and with the law," he says.

As Kelvin was turning 18, he realized he had a second chance - a chance to do something positive with his life. He enrolled at the University of Maryland. After he graduated with a degree in government and politics, he taught high school before he decided to go to law school.

"I wanted to show young black men the look of someone that is young, intelligent, and professional to give them an image of me to replace the image of the less inspiring figures in the black community," Kelvin says. "CLEO relates to me, and I relate to CLEO because they want present leaders to inspire future leaders. They can learn from me that you always have a second chance and when you've been given a second chance, you must give back and help someone

else with attaining their second chance. “

After law school, Kelvin wants to be either a prosecutor or an education lawyer.

Kelsi Pilcher, who graduated from Western Kentucky, is working to overcome the African-American stereotypes she so often encountered growing up in the suburbs of Memphis. “I believe in my self-worth and fight to defeat the stereotype forced upon me,” says Pilcher. “It showcases what CLEO stands for and through the support from CLEO, I can be a success in law school and be an example for those who too shared the same dream as me.

“CLEO is such a positive and rare opportunity to be exposed to the legal community at such an early stage in our personal journeys,” Kelsi says. “I want to be a different person finishing the institute than when I first entered, and I am already beginning to see that positive growth.”

Pilcher wants to practice criminal defense law after law school.

Joscelyn “J.B.” Campbell was born in Brooklyn, grew up in Jamaica and now lives in Atlanta.

“I bring a number of “firsts” to my family,” he says. “I was the first member of my family to be born in the United States, thus being the first American citizen in my family. Apart from myself and my younger cousin, my entire family originates from the Caribbean island of Jamaica. Other professional education, upon completing law school I will be the first lawyer in the family. I use this as an inspiration to perform and to perform at my best at all times, because my family is depending on me to succeed. This is why I am taking part in the CLEO Six Week Summer Institute. I want to be thoroughly prepared for law school so that I can continue making my family proud once I get there.

J.B. will attend Thomas Jefferson School of Law and hopes to become a criminal defense attorney.

Melvis Houseman was born in Cuba and raised in Florida. She graduated from the University of Florida with degrees in both Political Science and Spanish. As for CLEO, she says, “I hope to learn and develop a number of skills necessary to succeed in law school and, subsequently, in the professional world.

She won’t rule out putting her political science degree to work in the political arena one day.

“Throughout my life, I have noticed how people, in general, do not take a participatory role in government,” Houseman says. “I have had an opportunity to work for a local municipality and have witnessed firsthand the lack of care by many residents with regard to the decisions made by government officials. This, precisely, is the reason why I want to go to law school and become an attorney. I want to be an active player in our society and help to contribute, even if just a little, towards the betterment of the world.”

Donavon Sawyer is from Little Rock, Arkansas, and graduated from Washington and Lee University, with a degree in Business Administration.

He hopes the CLEO program will give him a head start in law school. “I wanted to be immersed in the law school environment before I actually entered law school,” Donavon says. “You hear of so many 1L's entering school unprepared, and I wanted to avoid that obstacle. “

After law school he **aspires** to become a sports agent. "I hope to use my sports background to help make my aspiration to become a sports agent attainable," Donavon says.

EDITORS: There are many excellent story opportunities here at Thomas Jefferson School with the CLEO scholars!

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