



News Release

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TJSL awards J.S.D. to Dr. Richard Gendler for Chapter 13 Bankruptcy Research

SAN DIEGO - - After a successful dissertation defense on October 22, 2013, Thomas Jefferson School of Law awarded the degree of Doctor of Science of Law, called a "J.S.D." degree, to Dr. Richard S. Gendler. Dr. Gendler is the senior shareholder of Richard S. Gendler & Associates, P.A. in South Florida where his practice focuses on consumer bankruptcy. In 2009, Dr. Gendler earned his LL.M. at TJSL. The J.S.D. is a research-based doctoral degree, the most advanced law degree in the United States. It requires three to five years of legal research and writing on a unique issue of law that makes a substantial and novel contribution to a field of study. The J.S.D. degree is equivalent to a Ph.D. in law, which first requires the completion of the Bachelor, J.D., and LL.M. degrees.

"It is an honor to have received my J.S.D. from the Thomas Jefferson School of Law. I am grateful to Dean William Byrnes and Dr. Robert Munro for encouraging me to pursue my J.S.D. after completing my LL.M. at Thomas Jefferson," Dr. Gendler said about his award. He continued, "I am also most appreciative of the countless hours Dean Arnold Rosenberg and Professor Katherine Porter spent reviewing and critiquing my study in their supervisory capacities. Had it not been for the remarkable support and encouragement I received throughout the process, this enormous and life-changing achievement would not have been possible."

Associate Dean William Byrnes added, "Dr. Richard Gendler has undertaken ground-breaking empirical research for his Ph.D. of all Chapter 13 cases that were filed in the Southern District of Florida from 2009. Dr. Gendler scrutinized the effectiveness of cure of mortgages on homeowners' principal residences relative to the use of lien stripping in Chapter 13 plans, both for underwater and non-underwater mortgages. We will see mention of his policy recommendations in Congressional testimony, think tank policy papers, and his research cited in decisions."

Dr. Gendler replied, "I am pleased that my dissertation has been held in such high regard amongst those so highly revered in the field of insolvency law. It is an overwhelming sense of fulfillment to know that my findings will make its way to the consciousness of those in the Judiciary and Congress whom are in a position to effectuate an equitable balance between creditor and debtor rights."

Professor Byrnes said of the awarding of the degree, "I think Dr. Gendler has captured the essence of the doctoral program's mission to combine a robust professional experience with in-depth academic analysis of a challenging policy that requires a fresh look by its stakeholders."

Richard Gendler added "Struggling homeowners are in desperate need of bankruptcy reform so that they may more readily use the process as an effective means of saving their homes. It is with distinct pleasure that I can deliver to them my study's findings in their support."

Assistant Dean Arnold Rosenberg of California Western School of Law said, “Dr. Gendler’s contribution to the current debate about cramdown of home mortgages, particularly in rebutting arguments raised by others regarding its possible effect on the availability of mortgage credit, is extremely important and should receive the attention of policy makers and scholars in this field.”

Dr. Gendler’s dissertation supervisor was Dean Arnold Rosenberg as well as Katherine Porter, Professor of Law at the University of California Irvine School of Law, a well-regarded scholar in the field of consumer bankruptcy law. Dr. Gendler/s evaluators were Professor Mary Jo Wiggins of the University of San Diego School of Law and Professor Jean Braucher of the University of Arizona School of Law, both of whom are also well known and highly regarded experts in the field of consumer bankruptcy. The dissertation defense was organized and moderated by Professor and Assistant Dean Rosenberg.

[Thomas Jefferson’s first J.S.D. degree was conferred February, 22, 2013 on Dr. Olufeyisan Feyi-Sobanjo of Nigeria](#) for his research and recommendations for development of the electronic commerce legal regimes in West Africa States. Dr. Feyi-Sobanjo’s dissertation was recently published by Lambert Academic.

Professor Byrnes interjected, “The conferral of the J.S.D. on Dr. Gendler and on Dr. Feyi-Sobanjo evidences the graduate program’s commitment to make its graduate degree program accessible to both U.S. and international lawyers.” He added, "We are excited that Dr. Gendler has decided to stay involved with the graduate program, considering his extensive practice. In fact, he is now counseling other potential doctoral candidates for their insolvency oriented proposals and may even serve as their doctoral supervisor."

Information about Dr. Richard Gendler

Richard S. Gendler became the second Doctoral candidate at TJSL to successfully defend his J.S.D. dissertation. The dissertation topic was “Home Mortgage Cramdown in Bankruptcy.” The dissertation provided an extensive study into the interplay between the recent home mortgage crisis and U.S. Bankruptcy Law. The study advocates for bankruptcy reform in order to effectuate an effective response to the foreclosure crisis.

Dr. Gendler is the senior shareholder of Richard S. Gendler & Associates, P.A. in South Florida where his practice focuses on consumer bankruptcy. In 2009, Dr. Gendler earned his LL.M. at TJSL and his J.D. from the University of Miami in 1992. He presently serves as an adjunct professor in TJSL’s online J.S.M. /LL.M. program and as an adjunct professor at Florida Atlantic University. He also teaches continuing legal education courses regarding bankruptcy and serves on the Florida Bar Federal Rules Practice Committee. In addition, he has published several scholarly articles about bankruptcy related issues for the American Bankruptcy Institute. He may be contacted at Rgendler@miami-law.com.

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