

MEDIA KIT

THOMAS JEFFERSON
SCHOOL OF LAW
SAN DIEGO • CALIFORNIA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 At a Glance
- 4 Our Mission
- 5 Biography of Dean Thomas Guernsey
- 6 Who We Are
- 7 Areas of Distinction
- 8 Frequently Asked Questions

THOMAS JEFFERSON

AT A GLANCE

MORE THAN **7,000** DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

Thomas Jefferson's more than 7,000 graduates live and work both nationally and internationally. There are alumni in every one of the 50 states and in several foreign countries. They are at leading law firms and corporations. They are judges, elected officials and solo practitioners.

FALL 2015

39%
OUT-OF-STATE
STUDENTS

AGE RANGE
21-66

50%
WOMEN
50%
MEN

52%
STUDENT
DIVERSITY

218
INCOMING CLASS

Five Centers for Academic Excellence

The Center for Global Legal Studies

Students examine the legal implications of globalization on the world economy.

The Center for Law and Intellectual Property

Professors prepare their students to shape technological development of our society.

The Center for Law and Social Justice

A diverse student body explores public policy and law relating to civil rights and equal access to justice.

The Center for Sports Law and Policy

Students are prepared for career opportunities in the growing sports industry.

The Center for Criminal Law and Policy

Provides exposure to the intricacies of criminal law in the classroom and in the field.



OUR MISSION

The mission of the law school is to provide an outstanding legal education for a nationally-based, diverse student body in a collegial and supportive environment with attention to newly emerging areas of law, particularly those related to technological development, globalization and the quest for social justice.

OUR HISTORY

Thomas Jefferson School of Law was founded in 1969 as the San Diego campus of Western State University College of Law, a privately-owned institution based in Fullerton, California. The San Diego branch offered Juris Doctor Degrees to working professionals who could attend law school only part-time in the evenings.

The school was renamed Thomas Jefferson School of Law in late 1995 and was granted provisional American Bar Association (ABA) accreditation in August 1996. Full ABA accreditation was granted in August 2001 and the law school became a private, nonprofit institution that same year.

Thomas Jefferson Law opened a new campus in 2011 in downtown San Diego. Construction of the eight-story building in the East Village community was completed in December 2010. The first classes in the new facility were held in January 2011.

OUR SCHOOL

Thomas Jefferson Law has evolved into an innovative, cutting-edge law school devoted to individual needs and the success of its students and alumni. We also have an amazing array of hands-on opportunities for our students to gain real-world legal experience.

We are committed to giving our students the knowledge, skills, tools and support necessary to be successful from the first day of classes to graduation and beyond.

OUR FACULTY

Thomas Jefferson is renowned for its highly accessible, world-class faculty with excellent experience and credentials, many from top ten law schools. The faculty is prolific in its publication of scholarly works, including more than 550 scholarly articles and books collectively.

OUR CURRICULUM

The legal curriculum offers outstanding preparation for the practice of law. It includes four Centers for Academic Excellence: The Center for Global Legal Studies, The Center for Law and Intellectual Property, The Center for Law and Social Justice, and The Center for Sports Law and Policy. All four Centers have achieved prominence in their fields, expanding student opportunities through certificate programs, conferences and timely speaker programs.

Thomas Jefferson Law also offers three LL.M. (Master of Laws) degrees as well as a joint MBA-JD degree in partnership with San Diego State University.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Thomas Jefferson Law students are part of a highly diverse, technologically-advanced campus with an intellectually stimulating curriculum.

The faculty and staff at Thomas Jefferson Law believe justice is a direct result of an increase in diverse voices among legal professionals. The school's admission practices respect cultural and educational backgrounds so that those who choose Thomas Jefferson will join an inclusive environment and will be part of a school community committed to broadening the legal profession's outreach to underserved populations.

RANKINGS

RANKED

#1

most undervalued law school by Paul Caron of Pepperdine University School of Law in 2014

RANKED

#13

by GraduatePrograms.com for graduate programs in 2015

RANKED

#15

by *The National Jurist* magazine for diversity in 2014

RANKED

#22

by GraduatePrograms.com for financial aid in 2015

RANKED

#22

by GraduatePrograms.com for networking in 2015

THOMAS GUERNSEY

PRESIDENT, DEAN & PROFESSOR OF LAW, THOMAS JEFFERSON LAW

LL.M., Temple University School of Law;
J.D., Wayne State University, cum laude;
B.A., University of Michigan, with distinction

Prior to coming to Thomas Jefferson Law in July 2013, Dean Guernsey has recently served as a member of the faculty at Albany Law School and served as its Dean from 2002 to 2011. Additionally, he previously served as Dean, Professor of Law and Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Southern Illinois University, as well as Associate Dean and Professor of Law at University of Richmond. His contributions at Albany were significant in placing the school on solid financial footing, dramatically improving its academics and increasing its stature in the community. Dean Guernsey is active in national legal organizations, including the American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools.

In 2011, Dean Guernsey was awarded the Trustee's Gold Medal, the highest honor awarded by Albany Law School to an individual who has demonstrated a record of exemplary support and dedication to the advancement of Albany Law School. Trustees and alumni established

the Dean Thomas F. Guernsey Faculty Research and Scholarship Endowment in his honor to support faculty research and scholarship. He also received the Faculty Scholarship Legacy Award in honor of his efforts advancing faculty scholarship at Albany Law School, and the Legacy Award from the Center for Excellence in Law Teaching for his efforts advancing teaching at Albany Law School. Dean Guernsey was also named a University of Richmond Distinguished Educator in 1983 and 1989.

Dean Guernsey has taught evidence, criminal law, criminal procedure and trial advocacy. He has practice experience in disability law litigation and legal aid, and has served as a consultant/trainer in interviewing, counseling, negotiation, mediation and trial practice for various legal, public service, government, insurance, business, medical and banking organizations.

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WHENEVER YOU DO A THING, ACT AS IF

“ALL THE WORLD WERE WATCHING.”

THE COURAGE OF PRESIDENT JEFFERSON IS WHAT I ASPIRE TO EVERY DAY...

-THOMAS GUERNSEY, PRESIDENT AND DEAN

WHO WE ARE



During the late 1780s, Jefferson supported the ratification of the U.S. Constitution but also strongly emphasized the need for a bill of rights, amendments to the Constitution that would safeguard basic civil liberties, such as the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, religion, the right to bear arms and the right to have a speedy trial by a jury of one's peers.*

This kind of dedication proves what Jefferson, our third president and namesake, once said: "One man with courage is a majority."

LAW SCHOOLS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Thomas Jefferson Law strives to be recognized as a leader in legal education — now and well into the future.

Today more than ever, an outstanding classroom education is just one part of education process. Lawyers of the 21st century need hands-on legal experience. They need to be ready to interview clients, draft contracts, negotiate deals or defend justice in court. Students need to leave law school with more than a cursory understanding of economics, psychology or other disciplines that lawyers often use in their work.

Thomas Jefferson Law gives its students real world practical experience through a variety of experiential learning programs. Each program is designed to strengthen a student's knowledge of the law and its practical application. This type of learning builds professional skills, confidence and networking contacts.

Our Field Placement program provides opportunities for students to earn Pro Bono Honors through Clinical and Mediation programs. After graduation, alums can hone their skills while opening their own practice as part of our Center for Solo Practitioners.

Thomas Jefferson Law will forever be expert in training students to become practicing lawyers. This is the school's core. But many more opportunities exist to provide value to the legal and business communities. *U.S. News and World Report* has highlighted career fields in which a law degree is highly coveted. These fields include journalism, real estate, nonprofit management, entrepreneurship and the arts. The school's leadership believes the program's they've developed further enrich the student body and build a community better equipped for the ever-changing business climate of the 21st century.

OUR NAMESAKE

Thomas Jefferson would be proud of the law school that bears his name. The ideals of this towering figure in American history help to inspire the school's mission and purpose.

Jefferson's life in the law has been generally overshadowed by his towering reputation as one of America's Founding Father. This despite the years he devoted to practicing law and the impact it had on the American Revolution and subsequent generations.

For Jefferson, the study of law was more than just a means of earning a living; Jefferson felt that examining legal issues enabled one to consider many aspects of society, including its history, politics, culture, institutions and the moral conscience of its people.*

In 1776, the revolutionary Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia. Jefferson was appointed with four other delegates to write a declaration of independence. He wrote the draft and defended it before the committee as a simple piece designed to present in plain and firm terms the "common sense" of independence. Congress approved "The Unanimous Declaration of the 13 United States of America" on July 4.*

*American President: A Reference Resource

AREAS OF DISTINCTION



- Ranked one of the most diverse law schools in the nation. Fifty-two percent of the Fall 2015 class are students of color.
- Ranked the number one most undervalued law school by Paul Caron of Pepperdine University School of Law in terms of faculty scholarly performance.
- Ranked among the top 20 law schools in 2013 for field placement opportunities, based on the ratio of externships and full-time students by *The National Jurist* magazine.
- Four centers for Academic Excellence addressing changes in society and new fields of law -- the Center for Global Legal Studies, the Center for Law and Intellectual Property, the Center for Law and Social Justice and the Center for Sports Law and Policy.
- Recipient of five Burton Awards for legal writing and achievement of legal reform in the last eight years (2006 - 2014)
- Committed to underserved communities and offers a Pro Bono Honors Program for students who devote at least 50 hours of volunteer legal service, without credit or compensation, to underserved populations.
- Four self-help clinics for those needing limited legal assistance in employee rights, veteran issues, family law and small claims.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the school's mission?

The mission of the law school is to provide an outstanding legal education for a nationally-based, diverse student body in a collegial and supportive environment with attention to newly emerging areas of law, particularly those related to technological development, globalization and the quest for social justice.

What is the school's academic focus?

The school's student-centered academic program is engaging and interactive, and offers a balanced, comprehensive curriculum that will prepare graduates for practice in any field, whether it is law, government, business or social service.

How is the curriculum structured?

The curriculum is one of the school's greatest strengths and ensures that they graduate with a broad legal education while specializing in distinct programs of study. The diverse array of elective courses fits almost all legal career aspirations.

Does Thomas Jefferson Law have a strong financial aid program?

The school offers Federal Direct Loans to eligible students in the JD program and unlike the complex process of applying for aid at the undergraduate level, the application can be done in a few easy steps in an hour or less. The goal is to provide personal financial assistance and counseling to fit the needs of students so they can focus on their law school education.

In addition, Thomas Jefferson Law offers guaranteed merit scholarships for first-time entering students. Based on the student's highest LSAT score and undergraduate grade point average, the scholarships are available for full-time and part-time students.

How does the school help its graduates find jobs?

Planning for a career goes hand-in-hand with taking the courses that will get the student there. The Career Services center is a one-stop shop for advice, guidance, networking events, externships, and community opportunities. The professional team in the office works with students as they explore their options.

The team is adept at career counseling, coaching, networking opportunities and applying for internships and clerkships. The Career Services center hosts career fairs. The counselors have all been working lawyers and have the knowledge and experience to help students build a successful career.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why does Thomas Jefferson have a diverse student body?

Thomas Jefferson Law is committed to helping diversify the profession through its admission practices and in the creation of an environment for faculty, staff and students that is inclusive and supportive of a diverse community.

We live in an increasingly diverse world. So Thomas Jefferson Law believes it is important that its law students be exposed to the diversity they will encounter in practice. The school's diversity provides opportunities to be exposed to different views, life experiences and cultures. A diverse student body promotes an understanding of others and their culture.

Diversity is the lifeblood of our law school. It isn't an option; it's an on-going commitment that comes from our core values. We are ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* in 2011 as the 33rd most diverse law school in the nation, and ranked 15th by the *National Jurist* for diversity in 2014.

What is experiential learning?

Hands-on legal experience is invaluable for law students. Experiential learning strengthens a student's knowledge of the law and its practical application. This type of learning builds professional skills, confidence, networking contacts and experiences that look great on a resume. Thomas Jefferson Law encourages its students to take advantage of the many opportunities available for gaining real world practical experience through its large number of Field Placements. Thomas Jefferson Law also offers many Pro Bono opportunities where students can earn Pro Bono Honors through Clinical and Mediation programs.

After graduation, alums can hone their skills while opening their own practice as part of our Center for Solo Practitioners.

Why did the school choose to be called Thomas Jefferson School of Law?

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and was the third president of the United States. Prior to being one of the founding fathers of the United States of America, Jefferson practiced law. As a young country lawyer, he traveled throughout the state of Virginia specializing in estate, land and title law. In Jefferson's autobiography, he was most proud of his work on three specific law reforms: the drafting of a bill to establish religious freedom; creation of a system where land ownership was available to anyone; and the establishment of widespread public education.

Thomas Jefferson was America's voice for half a century. He believed that the study of the law qualified a person to be useful to themselves, their neighbors and the public. He died on the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.





What are other career options for a JD degree other than practicing law?

While Thomas Jefferson Law will forever be expert in training students to become practicing lawyers, law students have unlimited opportunity in the 21st century to employ their JD degree. Top executives espouse the benefits of a law degree, even if they decided to skip the bar exam and, instead, start their own business. The skills developed at Thomas Jefferson Law reach far beyond the courtroom.

Many large corporations have increased their demand for lawyers in a variety of settings, such as real-estate, financial and insurance firms, consulting firms, and healthcare providers.

What Thomas Jefferson programs provide career paths outside of practicing law?

The school offers elective courses, four Centers for Academic Excellence and experiential learning opportunities that prepare our students for the 21st century. The Center for Sports Law and Policy prepares its students for employment in the growing sports industry. With its emphasis on professional, amateur and international sports law and policy, and its location in San Diego, the Center is ideally suited to become a major force in dealing with sports law and policy issues. Students graduate with the knowledge base to succeed in the sports industry.

What steps have been implemented to improve the bar pass ratios?

The first professional hurdle in becoming a practicing attorney is successfully passing the bar exam. For many the bar exam is a key measurement of a graduate's aptitude to practice law. Thomas Jefferson Law does everything it can to support students in passing the California Bar Exam on the *first* attempt.

The school has several bar preparation faculty whose sole responsibility is to prepare our students for the bar exam. These bar faculty spend hours each week reviewing, grading and commenting on practice exams to help students succeed on the bar exam. Thomas Jefferson Law offers pre-graduation, for-credit bar preparation courses, Legal Synthesis I and II, to be taken in the last semester of law school. These courses provide students with an intensive review of the critical subject areas tested on the California bar exam.

How did you address the financing restructure?

The school had approximately \$127 million in bonds outstanding from a \$130 million debt incurred in 2008 to build its new building. As part of the transaction, the bonds were cancelled. In exchange for cancelling, the bondholders became owners of the building and have leased it back to the school for 10 years with an annual rent of \$5 million.

The lender has also issued \$40 million in new notes at an interest rate of 2 percent. Interest rates on the previous outstanding taxable bonds were over 11 percent.

The agreement reduced the school's debt by almost \$87 million, from \$127 million to \$40 million, and resulted in a significant improvement in cash flow. Previously, the school was paying about \$12 million a year in principal and interest on its debt. Under the restructuring, the school pays \$5 million in annual rent and about \$1 million a year in interest, improving annual cash flow by a total of \$6 million.

School operations continue unchanged under the new agreement. The bondholders continue to express support for the school and its future plans.

Do you have a new focus for helping graduates secure jobs?

At Thomas Jefferson Law the focus has always been to help its graduates find fulfilling careers. The school understands that the measure of their accomplishments comes not only from receiving the degree, but also by what they do with that quality legal education.

The Career Services team works with students and alumni to explore professional development, training and opportunities. These professionals offer advice, guidance, networking, career fairs, externships and community engagement. The team is adept at career counseling, coaching, networking opportunities and assisting students in pursuing internships and clerkships. The counselors have first hand experience as attorneys and can help our students build a successful career.

