

# Just The Facts

## Welcome to the April 2024 issue of the "Just the Facts" Law Student Newsletter

Wherever you are on your journey, STAY THE COURSE. Through the ups and downs, remember law school is worth the end result. Here are a few things to remember along the way:



- **Embrace the Process of Learning:** Knowledge is power. Continuously seek to deepen your understanding of the law and understand that learning is a lifelong journey.
- **Master the Basics:** A strong foundation in legal fundamentals will serve you well throughout your career. Pay attention to the details and build your expertise from the ground up.
- **Balance Passion with Objectivity:** While passion drives you, always remember to approach legal issues with objectivity. Strive to see multiple perspectives and understand that the law is often nuanced.
- **Network and Build Relationships:** The legal profession is built on relationships. Network with your peers, professors, and legal professionals. Cultivate genuine connections as they can open doors and offer valuable insights.
- **Embrace Challenges:** Challenges are opportunities in disguise. Embrace difficulties as chances to grow and learn. Each obstacle you overcome adds to your resilience and expertise.
- **Ethics Matter:** Uphold the highest ethical standards in all your endeavors. Trust is the currency of the legal profession, and maintaining your integrity is non-negotiable.
- **Practice Self-Care:** Law school can be demanding, both mentally and emotionally. Prioritize self-care to maintain your well-being. A healthy mind and body contribute to a successful legal career.



[Events around Wisconsin](#)

[UW Madison Events](#)

[Marquette Events](#)

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## Lawyers Corner: Tips for Students

Keep an open mind about the area(s) of law you will practice and search for opportunities that allow you to work in different areas of law. This advice goes for your time as a student and as a new attorney.

When I started law school, I was certain I was going to practice criminal law. Although I enjoyed my experiences in criminal law, I kept my mind open about the area I was practicing in, and I ended up practicing personal injury.

I would have never guessed that I would enjoy practicing personal injury as much as I do. Today, almost six years after graduating, I am now exclusively practicing plaintiff's side personal injury law and love my work!

Enjoying your work is crucial to avoiding burnout. When I was practicing in other areas I did not enjoy, I started to think the law was not for me, but when I stumbled into personal injury practice that changed.

To sum it up: keep an open mind and find what you enjoy!



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[Biography](#)

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## Rural Practice

My work is not sensational. As I was researching the ability of an individual to adversely possess a municipality's undeveloped right-of-way, I realized that no one will ever make a movie about my law practice. I am not the lawyer that makes kids want to go to law school. I don't defend criminals in high-stakes cases. I don't prosecute large companies for preying on the weak.

And I don't represent the "Little Guy" against employers who have purposefully done him wrong.

I think there's an allure—or maybe a façade—when you're in law school, that



one day you'll wear a dark suit to work every day and take an elevator up 39 floors to get to your office. You'll drive a German-made car, you'll sit behind a mahogany desk and people will bring you lunch. That's clearly not the case in my practice, or the practice of many. But I also don't see myself as a failure because I wear jeans to work, I pack my lunch every day, and drive a Jeep. I've built a practice representing local municipalities, community lenders, small businesses, and individuals when they end up in litigation. There is a "face" to my clients, and they are easily accessible when I have questions for them. We share beers after work on Thursday nights (OK, sometimes Tuesday nights too) and they know it's ok to text me the occasional dirty joke. They appreciate my candid advice and practical approach to litigation.

Maybe there's some comfort with mediocrity. But I don't see it that way. Recently, there has been an initiative by the State Bar of Wisconsin to help new law school graduates consider getting out of the metropolitan area and relocating to work out-state. (I hate that term.) I would suggest that this is the best thing that many of them could do. My clients have real problems—interesting problems—and they need real legal work. They want someone who is approachable, pragmatic, and reasonable. They may not get that entire combination from a downtown lawyer, and I like that they recognize that. So, I suppose that's a trade-off for both of us: clients get good service and I get to wear jeans to work. I'm ok with that, even if none of my legal work lands me a book deal.

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[Biography](#)

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## Run into Your Career on Purpose

**The Litigation Section's** purpose is to bring together members who have an interest in civil litigation, insurance law, and tort law. To learn more about the Litigation section watch the Introduction to the Section [here!](#)



### **Legal Education Scholarship Available**

The Indian Law Section (ILS) of the State Bar of Wisconsin was created in part to bring together those who have a special interest in Indian law. To foster this special interest, the ILS seeks to award a scholarship to a deserving law student who intends to practice Indian law in the state of Wisconsin. The award for 2024 will be \$1,000.

**Applications must be postmarked or emailed no later than March 1, 2024, midnight central time.** Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

ILS will notify the recipient by the end of March.

**Applications MUST include the following supporting documentation:**

1. Cover letter/personal statement detailing:
  - a. Commitment to practice Indian law in Wisconsin upon graduation.
  - b. Academic background and achievement in Indian law; and
  - c. Involvement in Indian law-related activities (including student and community organizations, and civic, charitable, legal, or social justice endeavors).
2. Letter of good standing from the Applicant's law school
3. One (1) letter of recommendation (Professional and/or Academic)

For more information and the application, please contact Section Coordinator Christine Casey at [ccasey@wisbar.org](mailto:ccasey@wisbar.org).

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## Law Student Benefits

[Law Student Associate Member TODAY is the time to take advantage of all the benefits available to help you in your present and future law career.](#)



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Many law students and lawyers do not think that their chosen jobs might be dangerous. Unfortunately, members of the legal community face heightened risks of workplace-related violence because of the nature of the profession and the judicial system. According to lawyer Stephen Kelson, who has conducted surveys in many states, “violence and threats of violence against members of the legal profession are far more prevalent than reported by the media or commonly perceived by lawyers.”

In recognition of the widespread nature of violence and threats of violence, the State Bar of Wisconsin recently created a guide for lawyers, judges, paralegals, and others who work within and alongside the legal community to help them

protect themselves and their families. *Reduce Your Risk: A Guide to Personal Safety and Security for the Legal Community* is specifically crafted to address safety and security challenges faced by legal professionals and their staff as they go about their work and daily lives.

The book summarizes the nature and extent of the risks to members of the legal profession; provides practical tips for staying safe in offices, courthouses, and outside the legal workplace and for keeping data safe; explains how to build resilience and well-being; and discusses ethical considerations for lawyers as they deal with safety and security issues.

Reading this book will help law students and legal professionals at all levels take control and proactively act to safeguard their personal safety and protect their clients and families while upholding the principles of justice. For more information about [Reduce Your Risk](#).

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## Health & Wellness in the Legal Profession

By Amber Ault Ph.D., MSW

If the December 2022 Bloomberg Law survey of 1000 law students in the U.S. gives any indication, anxiety affects the majority of law students. Fully 77 percent of law students report elevated anxiety since entering law school, and students from underrepresented groups, including women, report experiencing it at rates disproportionate to those among their white male peers.



Facing the daily demands of law school and the anticipation of launching a career, it's not surprising that anxiety among law students can become so elevated that it interferes with sleep, self-care, relationships, and performance. Students often turn to maladaptive self-soothing strategies, such as drinking or the use of other substances, addictions to online experiences that cost time and money, or checking out of class to avoid the situation that provokes anxiety.

Fortunately, there are both self-help antidotes and easy access to resources that can help students elevate their anxiety-management skills. In the realm of self-help:

- Reduce the use of caffeine, which elevates anxiety, especially in people with anxiety disorders.
- Design a schedule that includes both classes and study time, to create a sense of control over time. Designate times for rest, relaxation, and socialization.
- Allow yourself a stretch or movement break every hour, however briefly. Make this a habit.
- Commit to working with study partners or groups; connection is an

important source of support, encouragement, resources, and cultural knowledge.

- Develop relationships with your professors. They were law students once, too, and they have helped many students over the course of their careers. Especially if you're struggling in any class, make sure you begin to show up for office hours.
- Identify one activity that supports your sense of well-being. This might be getting outside for a walk, attending yoga class, swimming at the university gym, playing an instrument, or cooking with friends. Build this activity into your weekly schedule.

When anxiety becomes something, you would like extra coaching, help, or support to address, consider reaching out to a professional. Inside your law school, staffers include student support teams; on the broader campus, university counseling centers offer both individual therapy and graduate support groups. Most health insurance now includes virtual visit options with mental health providers, and mental health providers across the state also offer non-insurance/direct pay options, if you are reluctant to use insurance to pay for therapy.

Finally, the Wisconsin Lawyers Assistance Program (WisLAP) offers confidential support not only to attorneys but also to law students. Whether you'd like to talk about the general stress of law school or about a personal issue that makes law school more challenging, WisLAP can offer both support and resources, free of charge, and confidentially. We are also happy to provide programming for law school organizations and groups around law student success, wellness, and mental health. To contact WisLAP, call (800)444-9404 ext. 6159 or write [callwislap@wislap.wisbar.org](mailto:callwislap@wislap.wisbar.org).

*Reference:* <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/bloomberg-law-analysis/analysis-well-being-in-law-school-law-students-arent-ok>

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## Check out the podcast “Bottom Up”

Produced by the State Bar and hosted by Attorney Emil Ovbiagele and Kristen Hardy, discussions include relatable stories that highlight interests, challenges, and opportunities for attorneys in the first decade of practice. The podcast is available on multiple platforms. [Take a listen](#) and gain some insight!



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## Networking Opportunities

**The 14th Annual Young Lawyers Conference!**

**March 8, 2024**

9:00 am-4:00 pm – Conference

4:00 pm-6:00 pm – Networking reception

Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center in Madison

Registration [here](#). (Free to students)

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## **Establish Your Reputation: Write for Your State Bar**

Raise your profile, advance your career, and share your perspective with other legal professionals by writing for the State Bar. Through our nationally recognized publications like *Wisconsin Lawyer* magazine, there are so many ways to show your stuff and shape the profession. Learn more at [www.wisbar.org/contribute](http://www.wisbar.org/contribute).

Also, by emailing Jacque Evans [jevans@wisbar.org](mailto:jevans@wisbar.org), share ideas or topics you'd like to see us capture in the law student newsletter!



## **State Bar Will Vigorously Defend Constitutional Challenge to Diversity Clerkship Program From the Executive Director Larry Martin.**

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## **Share ideas or topics you'd like to see us capture in the newsletter by emailing me!**

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