

ILSA Chapter Happenings

This section contains stories, activities, and upcoming events of ILSA Chapters around the world. We hope that the shared experiences in this recurring column will provide our Chapters with ideas and tools to improve their programs. Please share your Chapter Happenings by sending them to quarterly@ilsa.org.



UFMG ILS

Universidade Federal de
Minas Gerais
Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Amanda Athayde Linhares Martins
Mariana Chicata Pedrosa

The study of international law is not a theoretical pursuit in Brazil, but is practical, hands-on experience that involves research, courtroom practice, and networking with professionals. The Latin American Conference on Law and International Relations (Conferência Latino-Americana de Direito e Relações Internacionais - COLADRI) held September 6 - 9 in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil, was a wonderful example of that.

COLADRI was organized by International Law discussion groups from Belo Horizonte and supported by local law schools (the Universidad Federal de Minas Gerais - UFMG, Newton Paiva and Fumec). About 600 people attended conference events, which were held at UFMG during the Independence Day holidays. COLADRI was one of the biggest conferences to be held in Belo Horizonte this year, and its size was indicative of the importance Brazilians place on the study of international law.

The COLADRI conference focused on energy and biodiversity. Professors, practitioners, and

students from Brazil and other countries such as Ghana, Serbia, the United States, India, Dominican Republic, Iran, and Argentina attended and participated in conference activities. Participants attended lectures about international trade law, the effects of development on the environment, human rights and humanitarian law, and international relations. Seminars were also held. At the seminars, undergraduate students, masters degree students, and doctoral candidates presented articles, and experts were available to field questions. The seminars were followed by social events that exposed participants to the regional culture and city sites.

The Latin American Rounds of the Stetson International Environmental Moot Court Competition were also held during COLADRI. The Stetson Competition is a mock trial before the International Court of Justice, and this year the hypothetical case concerned investments on the extraction of energy resources and its consequences to local biodiversity. The Catholic University of the Dominican Republic, as Respondent team, and a UFMG team, as Applicant, competed in a thrilling final round. After lengthy oral arguments, the Respondent team was declared the winner.

After the Conference, the discussion groups on International Law continued their hard work. Currently, at Universidad Federal do Minas Gerais, there are seven such groups which focus their study on International Commercial

Law (Arbitration and Contracts), the World Trade Organization, Human Rights, Humanitarian Law, Criminal International Law, International Environmental Law and case-law of the International Court of Justice. Each group prepares students to participate in international moot court competitions held in countries around the world. It is important to note that all of these study groups are centered in the same ILSA Chapter of UFMG, and that COLADRI was a result of the ability of these groups to work together, relating different practice areas of international law.

COLADRI was certainly a historical event in Belo Horizonte and in Brazil, and will become an annual event. We invite and encourage you to join us for COLADRI next year.



UMKC ILS

University of Missouri - Kansas City
Kansas City, MO USA

Mary Bobbitt, President

Greetings fellow ILSA members! As a new ILSA chapter, the University of Missouri – Kansas City International Law Society (UMKC ILS) is pleased to be joining such an important organization. Although UMKC ILS is new to ILSA, we have been established as a leading International Law Society for many years, thanks to the leadership of our active students, supportive administration, and advisor and international law professor, Colin B. Picker.

UMKC ILS started off the year with an Informational Meeting for Interested Students. The event was well-attended by mostly first-year students who were given the opportunity to join and to be elected as representatives of their class. Also, a panel of second-year students who had either studied or interned abroad during the summer

were invited to speak about their experience. This portion of the meeting was hugely popular, as students interested in UMKC's Ireland and China Programs were able to ask questions about those and other ABA-approved programs from students that had studied abroad.

UMKC ILS students make it a point to participate in community-sponsored events that highlight the importance of international legal knowledge in the global, interconnected world in which we live. On September 10, UMKC ILS members participated in the International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City's seminar entitled "Doing Business in Canada." The following week, students participated in the International Relations Council of Greater Kansas City lecture on "Legal Responses to Terrorism: Current Status and Future Trends" showcasing our UMKC Clinical Professor of Law and Director of Urban Affairs Outreach William G. Eckhardt and University of Kansas Associate Dean of Clinical Programs and Professor of Law David J. Gottlieb for an insightful and challenging examination of the legal issues surrounding terrorism.

The UMKC ILS is committed to assisting its students gain useful knowledge about practicing law in an international setting. To that end, we are holding an event in October called "Introduction to International Law Careers." This event will include a panel of international law practitioners in the fields of immigration, business, and public international law.

UMKC ILS looks forward to participating in events with other Chapters, including attending the ILSA Fall Conference at the University of Denver, Sturm College of Law. If any Chapter would like to partner with UMKC to plan an event or trip, please feel free to contact UMKC ILS President, Mary Bobbitt at mebmn8@umkc.edu or Professor Colin Picker at pickerc@umkc.edu.



Case Western ILS

Case Western Reserve University,
Cleveland, OH USA

Patrick Dowd, Vice President

The Case Western ILS is gearing up for another fun and eventful year. Our new executive board members spent the summer working in cities across the globe - in London, Geneva, Shanghai, and at home in Cleveland - and they are bringing those experiences to one of the biggest student organizations on campus.

Last year, the Case ILS received ILSA awards for the Best Philanthropic Event and Best International Social Event. This academic year, ILS members are working to make those events even better. Planning is underway for AIDS Awareness Week, which consists of a week of speakers, educational events, and outreach activities to promote AIDS awareness and raise money for charity. Many student groups, including the ILS, will work together to plan these events. This year, we will be coordinating our efforts with the Case graduate and undergraduate programs in order to spread AIDS awareness to the entire Case and University Circle communities. In addition to co-hosting other events, we will be helping at a free AIDS testing clinic that will be set up at the University. We're taking advantage of Case's active student body, great location in Cleveland, and association with one of the premier medical institutions in the world to promote AIDS Awareness and raise money for AIDS causes.

The ILS also held its first LL.M. meet-and-greet barbecue at the end of September. At the barbecue, ILS members, LL.M. students, and international law faculty introduced first-year law students to the legal community at Case and enjoyed the wonderful fall weather.

ILS members are also busy planning Festivus, the annual ILS holiday bash. ILS has co-opted Festivus, the unique, non-denominational holiday inspired by the television show "Seinfeld," and turned it into an international culinary extravaganza. ILS members capitalize on the vast cultural diversity at Case and recruit faculty and staff to work their magic and cook their favorite, special, or traditional ethnic dish and bring it to this international food potluck. Last year the incredible banquet featured food from six continents! (Sadly, there was no Antarctic fare). In an effort to give students a break before finals from the library and eating in the student lounge, we hold Festivus at the Mad Greek, one of the many nearby ethnic restaurants, which adds an international flair of its own. In addition to the food, the fun, and the "Festivus Pole," the celebration also has a charitable component. We collect donations at the door (which are well worth their weight in the fabulous food, drinks, and desserts) and contribute all proceeds to an international charity. Last year, over \$1000 was raised from student, faculty, and friend donations. Ultimately, Festivus showcases Case Law students' commitment to charity and to international culture.



Osgoode Hall ILS

Osgoode Hall Law School
Toronto, ON Canada

Heather Clark, President

The Osgoode International Law Society (OILS) is the largest student-run organization at Osgoode Hall Law School, which is located at York University in Toronto, Canada. With a membership of over two hundred students, its objective is to provide members with exposure to the field of international law by organizing events during the year and by providing its members with information about the field. OILS serves students

interested in all aspects of international law, extending from international human rights issues to international corporate law.

Our mission is to promote the practice and study of international law by providing our members with access to current information, interactive experiences and practical opportunities aimed to prepare students for careers as global leaders.

- Information – OILS offers a resource base for members to build their knowledge on international law topics and learn about related careers
- Interaction – OILS provides a venue for law students to connect with like-minded peers and professionals who practice international law
- Opportunity – OILS creates opportunities to gain practical experience in the field, build relationships with experts, and prepare for a career in international law

In October, OILS plans to send a student delegation to Ottawa to attend the Canadian Council of International Law's annual conference. In January, OILS members will participate in the third Raoul Wallenberg International Human Rights Symposium in New York. When not attending the symposium, students will take part in tours of New York firms and visit the United Nations.

Finally, OILS and students from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law will organize and host the 15th annual Canadian International Law Students Conference (CILSC) in February, 2008. Recent speakers at the conference have included Denis Halliday, former United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, and Valerie Hughes, former Chief Legal Counsel to the WTO Appellate Body. OILS will keep other ILSA chapters informed about this year's conference panels and would welcome student delegations from other universities to attend the conference in Toronto.



ILSA Slovakia

Bratislava, Slovak Republic

Martin Vojtko, National President
Bruno Stefanki, Bratislava President

ILSA Slovakia is one of the newest ILSA chapters, and is currently in the process of expanding membership throughout Slovakia. Led by President Martin Vojtko, ILSA Slovakia already has active organizations at Comenius University, Trnava University and BVSP. With a firm grounding at three major Slovak universities, ILSA Slovakia plans to expand rapidly and eventually have members throughout the country.

A long-term goal of ILSA Slovakia is to promote international studies at Slovak law schools and increase international opportunities available to law students. By looking at educational programs from other schools around the world, we will be able to take note of the strengths and weaknesses of our programs and make changes that will benefit our students. In addition, ILSA Slovakia will seek input from its student members. To that end, we are currently establishing a forum for students to share their ideas and make suggestions about programs and improvements. If possible, ILSA Slovakia will use this forum to conduct surveys of students, and the information gathered will be sent directly to the government to help improve legal education in Slovakia.

This year, ILSA Slovakia will also organize many events that give students opportunities to gain experience, make important contacts, enhance language skills and open minds. Students have already had the opportunity to take part in the prestigious Cambridge Central European Moot Court Competition in Budapest. The team, lead by Martin Vojtko, represented Comenius University with distinction. In the near future, ILSA Slovakia will organize teams to participate in the WTO

Competition and Jessup Cup. Teams for these competitions will be composed of students from Comenius University and Trnava University. In an effort to field the most competitive teams possible, ILSA Slovakia is making excellent use of its members' experience in previous moot court competitions. Martin Vojtko will coach new team members for the European Law Moot Court, the Cambridge Moot Court, and the Jessup Cup. Perhaps the most ambitious of our long-term goals, ISLA Slovakia intends to conduct national-level competitions to prepare students for these international moot court events.

However, the primary goal of ILSA Slovakia, as alluded to above, is to foster cooperation among law schools across the country. ILSA Slovakia members believe that participating in ILSA activities and competitions will greatly enhance the educational environment at Slovak law schools. Therefore, ILSA Slovakia is actively working to motivate students to take part in events at other schools, is arranging meetings between universities, and is facilitating the exchange of information about international law studies.

Through these efforts, we hope to attract students' attention and commitment. It is exceptionally rewarding to participate in ILSA, and ILSA Slovakia would like to provide this opportunity to as many students as possible.



Tulane ILS

**Tulane University Law School
New Orleans, LA USA**

Lindsay Sakal, President

As the summer came to an end, the Tulane International Law Society welcomed both old and new members to its first meeting. More than 90 new students attended the meeting, and we are confident that there will be a tremendous

amount of participation in the activities we will be having this year.

At Tulane, our organization focuses on bridging the gap between being a student and being a practitioner. We achieve this by holding and sponsoring an array of events throughout the year. This fall we will be kicking-off our repertoire of speakers with Professor Tania Tetlow, the Director of the Domestic Violence Clinic, who will be speaking about human trafficking. Additionally, we are in the process of planning for our October meeting where we hope to have Clint Williamson, the Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes Issues at the United States Department of State, attend and speak.

Other topics we intend to cover during our monthly meetings are the impact of the World Trade Organization on state sovereignty and identity, the role of foreign law in U.S. Courts, and the legal issues relating to prisoners in Guantanamo Bay. Furthermore, we will be organizing a panel of professionals to discuss their specific expertise within international law, as well as alternate careers in the international arena. We additionally hope to promote interactions between our J.D. students and LL.M. candidates by having monthly luncheons where these students can discuss their experiences and legal interests.

Last and most important, this year we hope to carry on the traditions of Tulane's International Law Society. We are sending several members to both ILSA conferences. In October, we will send members to the ILSA Fall Conference hosted at the University of Denver. Another tradition that we will be continuing is our annual Mardi Gras fundraiser at Tropical Isle. The event will take place on one of the premiere balconies on Bourbon Street during the height of Mardi Gras festivities. With the funds we raise, we hope to invite other prominent speakers to Tulane Law School.



DePaul University ILS

DePaul University College of Law
Chicago, IL USA

Kelly Razzouk, President

On September 18, 2007, the students at DePaul University College of Law were offered a rare opportunity to engage in a dialogue with law students from Iraq and hear about their struggles and successes. A delegation of Iraqi students and professors, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program visited DePaul and participated in a roundtable discussion facilitated by Daniel Rothenberg, Executive Director of DePaul's International Human Rights Law Institute. Among those present were ILSA staff members, including Executive Director Amity Boye, Programs Coordinator Jill Hereau, and Jessup Competition Coordinator Jeremy Gordon. DePaul International Law Society members also attended the event.

The Iraqi delegation discussed many of their interests, but they were particularly excited about the Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition. Though Iraqi students did not get to participate in the Jessup Competition last year due to problems obtaining the new Iraqi passports, members of the delegation hope to participate this year and are excited about the opportunity to do so. One of the moot court coaches, a criminal law professor at Basra University, Wasfi Al-Shara'a, is also excited about this opportunity for his students. Amity Boye encouraged the Iraqi students to set up their own ILSA chapter and she presented them with t-shirts from last year's Jessup Competition.

The Iraqi delegation thanked DePaul for the work it has done to set up a law library to repair the damage and neglect caused by the extended embargo before the war and looting during the

war. The Iraqi law students had several questions for the law students at DePaul, including what it was like to take a class from renowned international law professor, M. Cherif Bassiouni. DePaul students also took advantage of this rare opportunity to meet with students from Iraq and asked several questions, including whether women were given the same opportunities as men to pursue a law career. To the surprise of many DePaul students, Professor Al-Shara'a commented that 75% of the law students at the University of Basra are women.

DePaul students were also curious to know what inspired the Iraqi students to pursue law as a field of study. One woman said that her reason was to "serve humanity" and "implement law in the correct way." Another student emphasized that Iraqis need the rule of law in order to prosper as a nation. He said, "I want to study law to serve my country."

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ILSA Chapters are encouraged to submit a short note each issue describing chapter activities and plans to be included in the Chapter Happenings section of the *ILSA Quarterly*. If the Chapter at your school would like to make a submission to the Chapter Happenings column, please email the Editorial Staff at quarterly@ilsa.org.

At the end of the event, the Iraqi students invited students from DePaul to visit their country and DePaul students expressed a sincere desire to do so. This event was significant because it fostered friendship between Iraqi and American law students and also afforded DePaul students a glimpse into what life is like in Iraq. DePaul students found it inspiring that these students are overcoming incredible odds to study the law with the hopes of bettering not only their own futures but also the future of their country. After meeting these dedicated and intelligent lawyers-in-training, one cannot help but believe that the future for Iraq looks a whole lot brighter.

the Jessup International Rounds and decided to organize a chapter at our school. Currently, we have eight members in our chapter. We hope that this number increases after the school year begins and more students learn about ILSA.

At ILSA Khabarovsk, we believe that international law should be understood and studied by all students. Promoting the study of international law is one of the goals of our ILSA Chapter. To that end, we hope to attend many ILSA events this year, including the Jessup Competition. In addition, our chapter will strive to build strong relations with other chapters and schools, and will cooperate with them to plan international law events.

Khabarovsk State Academy ILS



**Khabarovsk State Academy of
Economics & Law, Russia**

Anton Pavlovich, President

ILSA thanks all of the universities that contributed to the Chapter Happenings Column this Issue, and wishes them luck in planning events and programs at their schools. If a chapter needs assistance in planning international law events such as the ones described above, please contact the ILSA Executive Office at ilsa@ilsa.org.

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The ILSA Chapter at Khabarovsk State Academy of Economics and Law is a new chapter and the only ILSA affiliate in Khabarovsk. The idea of starting an ILSA chapter arose after the 2007 Jessup Competition. Four student - members of our school Jessup team - learned about ILSA at



Iraqi students and faculty visit DePaul University College of Law