The Writ

SEPTEMBER 2015 – JANUARY 2016

The New Home of the Norman Manley Law School Legal Aid Clinic and Year II Headquarters
The Norman Manley Law School (NMLS) Legal Aid Clinic & Year 11 students moved into new facilities in October 2015. The dilapidated building which housed the Legal Aid Clinic has been replaced by a modern multi-storey structure consisting of four floors which allows for the further integration of the work of the clinic into the Year 11 training programme.

The large and complex move was accompanied by a change in the modality of delivery of the Year 11 programme. The lecture and tutorial system has been largely replaced by 2 hour seminars. These interactive seminars require students to be more active in their learning.

Two moot courts have been included to enhance the advocacy program. Students now have dedicated spaces for their mock trials and case management conferences. The new facilities are expected to provide an inspirational office and training environment conducive to learning and which affords students opportunities for the best practical outcomes when they enter practice. The Senior Tutor, Academic Staff and Associate Tutors are to be congratulated for embracing the new modality.

The Ring Road Building will continue to house the library, administrative offices and the Year 1 programme. Together, the buildings will now comfortably accommodate 270 students in each year, plus approximately 60 students in the transitional 6 month programme. The total student population of 600 students represents a growth of approximately 250% in the number of students undertaking studies at NMLS in a five year period. Given the additional space, steps can now be taken to bring the student staff ratio closer to that generally applicable to law schools and clinical legal training to ensure that NMLS meets the international indicators of a good law school.

An event will be held later in the year to mark the official opening of the building.

The NMLS wishes to thank the Class of 1989 for its generous donation to the Scholarships and Bursaries fund for needy students. Scholarships and Bursaries are invaluable to the students who receive them, helping to ease their financial burden. They also provide an opportunity for alumni who care about the NMLS to demonstrate this. The school also acknowledges with gratitude the following new awards and prizes received in 2015:

- The K.C. Burke Memorial Prize (sponsored by the Society of Notaries Public of Jamaica)
- The Mr. Arthur Glen-Roy Cruickshank QC, JP Memorial Prize (awarded by Miss Dionne Cruickshank, Attorney-at-law)
- The Leonard and Alice Edwards Memorial Prize (awarded by Hon Miss Justice Carol Edwards)
- The William Roper Memorial Prize (awarded by the Council of Legal Education)
The annual Lex Caribbean Client Interviewing and Counselling Competition was hosted by the Hugh Wooding Law School on January 29, 2016. The Norman Manley Law School was represented by Jeniece St. Romain, Jezeel Martin and Jovell Barrett, who were assisted by Ms Kadia Wilson, main coach and chaperone and Mrs. Audrey Welds, co-coach.

Though the team left the Norman Manley International Airport weighted down by the task of defending the shield, the journey had begun long before this. Training for the competition commenced early in October of 2015, spanning the three months before the start of the competition. Three to four days per week were dedicated to intense training sessions which lasted for an average of 3 hours a day, up until the day of the competition. The sessions were rigorous and generally ended with pages of criticisms from the coaches which also included past student Mr. Andre Bascoe and Ms. Celia Barclay who ultimately contributed to the team’s eventual success. By digging deeper, the team was able to steadily improve with each interview. The sessions would not have been possible without students, staff and friends who volunteered to play the role of a client. The team wishes to express heartfelt thanks and gratitude to all those persons who assisted.

The flight to Trinidad was punctuated by further research, as the team laboriously combed through the Trinidad and Tobago statutes, ensuring that all angles of the “unknown issues” our potential client could possibly raise, were covered.

On the day of the competition the Norman Manley Law School was represented by Jeniece St. Romain and Jovell Barrett. Following the opening speeches, the order was selected via numbers being drawn resulting in the NMLS Team being the last team to compete. The interview began on an awkward note; unknown to the team sitting at their desk waiting for the secretary to usher the client in, no secretary was in fact provided. The team was therefore shocked to see the client appear, asking if she was to let herself in. The team quickly recovered however, and adapted as they were taught, smoothing the slight over, and surgically performing the remainder of the interview the way they were drilled to do.

Ironically, empathy, being something that the team has worked on the most, was what the client ultimately cited as her reason for eagerly retaining the student lawyers, “I felt comfortable,” she later said, “There was a definite connection.”

Representing the Norman Manley Law School and ultimately winning the Lex Caribbean Client Interview Competition, was an altogether fun experience for the entire team. It was both challenging and rewarding. The experience reinforced the importance of quality client care, hard work, dedication, teamwork and ingenuity.
The Norman Manley Law School (NMLS) prides itself in preparing its students to excel on the national and the international platforms when given the chance to do so. The American and Caribbean Law Initiative (ACLI) is a membership organisation with a mission to advance the common interest of its members in the growth and development of the Caribbean Basin by facilitating collaborative relationships and strengthening its legal development and institutions. NMLS ventured to the 2015 Fall ACLI which was hosted by the Charlotte School of Law in Charlotte, North Carolina. This enabled students to derive the benefits of a cooperative relationship based on the mutual goals of providing training in practical skills, partnered learning opportunities, comparative legal experience and multicultural exposure.

First-year student Kristeina Beckford and second-year student Francois McKnight represented the NMLS and were coached and accompanied by Tutor, Ms Yolande Whitely. Throughout the training sessions, students were assisted by Miss Dorcas White, Miss Nancy Anderson, Ms Audré-Lois Reynolds and Mr Kwame Gordon. ACLI saw approximately twenty-one participants from seven law schools which included our host, the Charlotte School of Law (Charlotte, North Carolina), Florida Costal School of Law (Jacksonville, Florida), Truman Bidden Law School (Cayman Islands), Nova Southeastern University (Davis, Florida), Stetson University College of Law (Tampa, Florida), Hugh Wooding Law School (Trinidad and Tobago) and Eugene Dupuch Law School (The Bahamas).

On Wednesday, November 11, 2015, Team NMLS arrived at the Charlotte Douglas International Airport to commence their participation in the four-day clinic. This year, ACLI consisted of three questions on Federal Law issues specific to the State of North Carolina. Each of the three groups was assigned a question and would present on the issues arising which covered a myriad of legal topics including the impact of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth United States Constitutional Amendments on police stops and searches, Immigration Law and seeking asylum.

After meeting participants from the other schools and discussing respective courses of action, the students were able to make the presentations were before a preliminary panel of ACLI staff coaches who gave instructive feedback for the formal presentations the next day, which was to be made before the judges. The judges came prepared to test each advocate and in so doing, they mainly focused on questions about the weaknesses in each submission. The training and preparation over the course of three weeks gave students the confidence to effectively and eloquently tackle these questions head on. The staff coaches beamed with pride as their students effortlessly dealt with challenging questions and just could not help taking multiple pictures as their young advocates traversed this proverbial minefield. After a quick break for lunch, students were presented with certificates of participation.

Overall, the experience was a memorable one. Students who praised the coordinators and expressed gratitude for being given the opportunity to share in such a fulfilling initiative.
The Human Rights Committee conducted several activities in the first term aimed at bringing awareness to various critical human rights issues.

The first activity the Committee conducted was a survey on the Death Penalty on Friday, October 9 in recognition of World Day Against the Death Penalty. The survey consisted of fourteen questions, including six scenarios, designed to determine whether the participant was truly for or against the death penalty, despite their initial answer to that question. The Survey was handed out in the student lounge at both the Gibraltar Hall Road Building and the Ring Road Building. Committee members also handed out flyers and brochures that detailed arguments for the abolition of the death penalty. After the survey was completed, the Committee displayed the results in the student lounges.

The second activity which the Committee carried out was the planting of a Poui Tree at the entrance to the Gibraltar Hall Road Building to commemorate National Tree Planting Day (October 3). This activity took place on Tuesday, October 13 and was done in conjunction with the Environmental Law Society. At the tree planting, members from both the Human Rights Committee and the Environmental Law Society presented on the importance of National Tree Planting Day especially as it regards the conservation of the environment.

The last main activity of the term was a seminar on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). On Wednesday, December 9, a representative from the United Nations made a presentation at the Gibraltar Hall Road Building to Committee members about the historical context of the UDHR in recognition of International Human Rights Day (December 10). At the end of the presentation, Committee members discussed various human rights issues and sought to determine whether the UDHR has been successful in addressing modern human rights concerns.

Going forward, the main focus of the committee is the publication of our final Report. The theme of the Report is “Access to Justice in Rural Areas.”
Career Week commenced on Monday, October 29, 2015 and was envisaged under the theme "Start here, Go anywhere." The week was organised by the Students' Association to sensitise students about the diverse opportunities available in law after attaining a Certificate of Legal Education.

At our first event, Postgraduate Practice and Procedure, students got an opportunity to listen to presentations from Dr. Ramona Biholar, Senior Lecturer at the University of the West Indies (Faculty of Law) and Mrs. Janice Henlin, Director of Marketing and Communications at the Mona School of Business. Both presentations captured the importance of pursuing a postgraduate degree after Law School due to the competitive nature of the existing legal landscape as well as finding a niche market on which to capitalise. Ms. Henlin noted the benefits of having another skillset outside of the legal arena and provided brochures with scholarship information and financial bursaries for interested students.

Tuesday, October 27 saw The Hon B. St Michael Hylton, OJ, QC, Chairman of the General Legal Council, presenting on the roles and functions of the General Legal Council. Additionally, students warmly received the presentation given by Mr. John Graham, Managing Partner at John G. Graham & Company, who focused on the ethical roles and responsibilities we would have as newly minted Lawyers.

The focus on Wednesday, October 28 was “Working for Corporate Jamaica”. The day started out with the charismatic Ms. Rochelle Cameron, Vice President of Legal and Regulatory Officer for Jamaica, Trinidad and Cayman Islands at Columbus Communications Limited (Flow) who spoke about the roles and responsibilities of working for a corporate entity. This talk was geared at students who have a demonstrated interest in Commercial Law and she clarified many of the assumptions about the roles of commercial attorneys and company secretaries. Mr. David Fleming, Legal Officer at the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited was the second presenter and he gave students a pep talk on the challenges that were ahead in the legal profession. He made specific mention about launching ourselves as multifaceted professionals who possess the skill, aptitude and drive to enter the market place. He closed on an encouraging note that that there are many opportunities for us to develop our talents and exceed our own expectations.

Thursday, October 29 was planned in conjunction with The Jamaican Bar Association. The Honourable Mr. Justice C. Dennis Morrison, Acting President of the Court of Appeal, as he then was, addressed the Council of Legal Education’s Mission Statement by urging students to transcend ethically into the roles of Attorneys-at-Law.

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On October 21, 2015, the Students’ Association debuted ‘Caribbean Day’ which was executed by the Cultural and Entertainment Committee in collaboration with the Non-National Students’ Association.

On entry to the Ring Road Building, students and staff members were greeted by a beautifully decorated lobby which represented an amalgamation of our rich Caribbean culture. The flags of the different countries within the Law School flew proudly. Additionally, there were information boards with fun facts about the culture, national symbols and rituals of the Caribbean countries within the Law School. At noon, the much anticipated food sale commenced. This saw the display of famous mouth-watering dishes from Anguilla, Belize and Jamaica. Students and staff members could not get enough and kept coming back for more. Everyone received their money’s worth and left feeling satisfied.

The Students’ Association is eternally grateful for the support we received from staff and students. The overwhelming support is indicative of the oneness that birds us as a Law School family.

Sherry-Ann McGregor, Vice President of the Jamaican Bar Association and Partner at Nunes Scholefield, DeLeon & Company spoke about the role of the Jamaican Bar Association, its benefits and the prospect of practising law outside of the jurisdiction. Students later posed questions to both presenters who were able to pull from experiences in their respective careers and give practical advice.

Friday, October 30 was titled “Saturation: Who Moved My Cheese?” And this was specifically organised for Year II students at the newly opened Gibraltar Hall building. This session addressed the concerns of final year students who are contemplating setting up a firm or a small business directly after Law School. The presenters were Mr. Ian Wilkinson, QC, Past President of the Jamaican Bar Association and Mr. Ishmael Leon, Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer, Port Authority of Jamaica. Students were encouraged to pool resources, while drawing from the experience of each other, to attain success. This session also encouraged students to become more creative with business models and planning to ensure that they stay competitive in the changing legal landscape.

Overall, students were satisfied with the week’s events and praised the efforts of the NMLSSA for coordinating the different sessions which were beneficial to both Year I and Year II Students.
The graduation ceremony for the class of 2015 was held on September 29, 2015. Mrs Donna Scott-Mottley, attorney-at-law, was the guest speaker. Mrs Scott-Mottley, herself a distinguished graduate of the NMLS, included in her presentation very practical guidance for the graduates as they embark on their career. She drew on her own experiences as a young lawyer to encourage graduates to always seek guidance from their seniors and to strive for excellence in a profession that requires continuous learning. Ms Ashtelle Steele was congratulated for having achieved the Certificate of Merit as well as 17 students who made the Principal’s Roll of Honour. Mr Malike Kellier, the President of the Student’s Association, delivered the Valedictory speech. He chronicled the journey of the 2 years for the class noting that it led to their understanding of the law as a jealous mistress. Mr. Kellier noted the adrenalin rush involved in beating the deadline for submission of assignments while navigating various events, and committees. He ended by noting that the class had captured several moot titles and raised a big thank you to the school and to their families and supporters.

The Registrar and staff are to be congratulated for developing a graduation policy that led to a very efficient and enjoyable ceremony.
If there were any illusions that the bar set by Wine and Cheese 2014 was unreachable, all such doubts were shattered when Wine and Cheese 2015 Masquerade: A Night in Venice was unleashed. The Cecile Black, Cultural and Entertainment Chairperson, led team pulled out all the stops to ensure Wine and Cheese 2015 was a night to remember.

The theme was displayed throughout every aspect of the event. Students, staff members and specially invited guests brought the A-Masquerade game by elegantly pairing their outfits with their masks. The event started with a breathtaking modern day opera rendition of Ave Maria with violin accompaniment. The high energy and elegance continued as the hosts for the night, Kimberley and CJ, masterfully moved the program along with a brief introduction. This was followed by words of blessing from Senior Tutor Emerita Miss Dorcas White and welcome and greeting from Principal Carol Aina.

The Natasha Vassell led Dance Troupe continued with a high-energy performance choreographed by Stephanie Graham, which continued to showcase the theme for the event. The night moved along with a stunning display of the timeless beauties within the Law School. This fashion show showcased daring designs and bold accessories by Franz Christie and Reve' Jewellery.

In keeping with the theme, there was a mask competition for those students who wished to get creative with their masks. A number of students vied for the special prizes sponsored by CPJ, Digicel and JPS. At the end of the night, Travis Benain came out victorious with the best mask. The formal segment of the event ended with a show stopping performance by GIRL and her band, a first live band performance for the event. Guests then danced to the mixes of DJ Spinn.

Heartfelt thanks and appreciation to our sponsors: Jamaica National Building Society, JWWay, Wisynco, Supreme Ventures, CPJ, Nestle, JPS, Live Stush and Main Events. Special thanks from the Students’ Association to the School’s Administration, staff members, tutors and students without whose support, this event could not have been a success.

Wine & Cheese 2015 – Masquerade: A Night in Venice
Silk 2015 took the form of a review whereby small skits made up the entire play. It was entitled "A Play...On a lot of tings" and was directed by Rayon McLean. The play was a commentary on aspects of Jamaican culture and issues that are faced in society. It made bold statements about where we are now, politically, and where we should strive to be. The production ran for two nights at the Phillip Sherlock Centre on December 12 and 13, 2015 and was well received by those in attendance. The quality and execution of the production was undeniably good. DVDs have been made available for purchase.
Justice C Dennis Morrison O.J. appointed President of the Court of Appeal

We congratulate Justice C. Dennis Morrison O.J., the first graduate of the school appointed as President of the Court of Appeal in Jamaica. The school takes particular pride in this as a significant index of the accomplishment of one of the first graduates of the NMLS.

Congratulations are also extended to Ms. Sanchia Burrell who was appointed to the Bench in the Resident Magistrate's Court on February 1, 2016. Ms. Burrell graduated from the law school in 2004 and joined the tutorial staff of the law school as an Associate Tutor in 2014.

The Norman Manley Law School Congratulates

The Honourable Mrs. Justice Zaila McCalla OJ, Chief Justice of Jamaica

On being conferred with the prestigious title of Honorary Bencher of the Middle Temple Inn in London, England. The Chief Justice is a graduate of the NMLS Class of 1976.

The Norman Manley Law School congratulates Mrs. M. Georgia Gibson-Henlin, QC on her elevation to Queens Council. Mrs. Gibson-Henlin is a graduate of the Class of 1993 and has been an Associate Tutor at the law school since September 2010.
NMLS Student Association Executive Members

President: Joel Nelson
Vice President: Marsha-Dawn Walters
Secretary: Loriann Tagwell
Treasurer: Richard Lynch
Cultural & Entertainment Committee Chairperson: Cecile Black
Academic Committee Representative: Francois McKnight
Returning Officer: Yanique Taylor
Moot & Library Committee Chairperson: Katherine Watson
Constitutional Committee Chairperson: Monique Thomas
Public Relations Officer: Amanda Montague
Sports Chairperson: Nasha-kay Virgo
Publication Committee Chairperson: Wendy Beswick
Second Year Representative Morning Stream: Lenroy Stewart
Second Year Representative Evening Stream: Russell Stewart
First Year Representative Morning Stream: Jovell Barrett
Six Month Representative: Stephanie Graham
First Year Representative: Andrew Rogers
Six Month Representative: Lenroy Stewart
Second Year Representative Morning Stream: Russell Stewart
Second Year Representative Evening Stream: Katherine Watson
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Moot & Library Committee Chairperson: Katherine Watson
First Year Representative Morning Stream: Jovell Barrett
Six Month Representative: Stephanie Graham
First Year Representative: Andrew Rogers
On the last day of term, December 18th 2015, the NMLS staff took time to have a Christmas lunch at Hope Gardens. The occasion was also used to acknowledge Ms. Nancy Anderson and Ambassador Stewart Stephenson for their contributions to the NMLS and Legal Aid Clinic as they retired from full-time duties at the school. Mr. Norman Davis read the citation to Miss Nancy Anderson and Miss Barbara Waul read the citation to Ambassador Stewart Stephenson.
New Staff

- Meridian Kohler – Tutor
- Casie Jean Graham Davis – Tutor (Legal Aid Clinic)
- Kayann Bailli – Tutor (Legal Aid Clinic)
- Hugh Wilson – Tutor (Legal Aid Clinic)
- Betty Ann Brim – Senior Secretary
- Pauline Bent-Hall – Receptionist
- Lorice Smith – Office Attendant
- Craig Morgan – Reprographic Technician

Tribute to Jason Alliman

NMLS and the legal profession mourned the passing of Mr. Jason Alliman who died tragically on Dec 27, 2015. Mr. Alliman had been recently appointed as Legal Officer to the Director of Public Prosecutions and was attending a special sitting of the Court of Appeal in Hanover when he suffered injuries in a car crash.

He was the past president of the NMLS Students Association 2013 and had delivered the response on behalf of his colleagues at the calling ceremony in September 2013. He was remembered for his sterling leadership, his dedication to excellent professionalism and his scholarship.

May his soul rest in peace.