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LWI Lives is a regular electronic publication of the “Faces of LWI” Committee, which explores the emerging identity of LWI and its members. We have a common commitment to being the best legal writing professors we can be, but we are multi-dimensional people with different strengths, interests, curiosities, and gifts. By profiling individuals in our community, we hope to expand our understanding of who we are and what we aspire to be.

Chantal Morton: Staying Open to Opportunities



By Iselin Gambert

“I don’t have a travel bug.” I wasn’t expecting this response from someone who only five years ago picked up and moved her entire life from Canada to Melbourne, Australia. As someone with a never-ending sense of wanderlust myself, Chantal Morton’s comment surprised me. As a child, she explained, “I didn’t understand people leaving Victoria at all. We have a movie theater, we have

For more about Chantal, see page 2.

Tracy McGaugh Norton: The Life-Saving Powers of Legal Writing



By Janis Kirkland

You may know Tracy McGaugh Norton as one of the original creators of the *Interactive Citation Workstation* (which tremendously reduced the amount of classroom time needed to teach basic citation skills) or from her contributions to the LWI listserv about generational attributes of law students. Indeed,

For more about Tracy, see page 4.

Jason Palmer: International Lawyer Turned Legal Writing Professor



By Byron Wardlaw

Jason Palmer has worn many hats—civil litigator, international lawyer, LGBT advocate, legal writing professor, husband, and father. Each role has brought new adventures and interesting challenges to both his personal and professional life. Here’s Jason’s story.

For more about Jason, see page 7.

Chantal Morton

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live theater—that's enough, what else do you need?"

While she may have been content with her hometown of Victoria, B.C., Chantal visited other worlds and was exposed to a wide range of ideas as a child through books. "I read a lot as a child," she explained. "My mum and dad are huge, huge readers. They read to us. Supposedly I complained about wanting to read as a three-year-old, so I started school early," and she was soon reading. Her parents even gave her and her sister books as rewards for completing their chores. "As a consequence" of all that childhood reading, Chantal reflected, "I valued good writing."

When she was nineteen, Chantal had her first significant stint living abroad; she took a year off from university to be a nanny in Italy. "That was a pivotal year for me," Chantal said. "You grow up a lot when you immerse yourself in another culture and another family. . . . They did everything differently." When I asked her for some examples, she reflected for a moment and remarked, "What they eat for breakfast, what they eat for lunch, how they shop, how they prepare food, how they interact with each other . . . I learned a lot from them."

Chantal "seriously contemplated" staying in Italy long-term, but she didn't want to be a nanny forever. She returned home, finished her B.A. at the University of Victoria, and then completed an M.A. in political science at the University of British Columbia. Did she already know then that she wanted to be a lawyer? "I never wanted to be a lawyer," Chantal said. "There are no lawyers in my immediate family. I just did it because I was interested in the subject matter." She explained that Professor Marlee Kline, who taught her Feminist Legal Theory while she was doing her masters, had inspired her to think critically about the law and that made her want to pursue it further. So she did,

earning her LL.B. from the University of British Columbia.

Despite pursuing her law degree, she had "no career goals. There was no path I saw in front of me, no sense that I'll do X by this time." In fact, "I fell into teaching law students," Chantal said. She clerked at the Supreme Court in British Columbia but knew that she didn't want to practice law, so she started her Ph.D. in law at Osgoode Hall Law School at York University in Toronto. Two years into that degree, she got a job in the career services department. Because she was also a Ph.D. candidate, they gave her one subject to teach as an adjunct: Law and Poverty, a first-year elective. "It was then that I realized how much I loved teaching, and teaching law in particular."



Chantal at the Inner Harbor in Victoria, B.C.

While she doesn't come from a family of lawyers, teaching appears to be in her blood. "All the women in my family are teachers," Chantal remarked. Her mother, aunt, and grandmother all taught piano; another aunt was a Montessori teacher; and yet another was both a teacher and a principal. Her sister is an ESL teacher. Despite being surrounded by teachers in her

family, becoming a teacher herself "wasn't a conscious choice. I had no thought to be a teacher or not to be a teacher. It was more, I'm doing this thing that's interesting."

Perhaps what makes Chantal so well-suited to being a teacher is the attitude she brings to her own learning. "I'm not the kind of person who worries too much about the fact that I'm not perfect at something. I expect to be able to learn some things and be bad at other things—I'm comfortable with that." In fact, she says, "I've never been particularly good at anything, you either have to be comfortable with that or beat yourself up over it. If I'm not judging others, I am not judging myself either." It was this attitude that she brought with her to the salsa dancing lessons she started taking during her third year of law school, when

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Chantal Morton

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she was “looking for something to get me out of my apartment.” She loved it, and dancing remains one of her great passions to this day. “I’m happiest if I can get a dance!”

After a decade in career services and teaching law and social justice at Osgoode, Chantal was ready for something new in 2011. “I was burned out at my previous jobs; I was done in Toronto. It was time to go, find another adventure.” A move to Australia—and Melbourne in particular—had long interested her, as two dear friends lived there and worked on the faculty at Melbourne Law School (MLS). She’d visited them years earlier, fell in love with Melbourne, and decided that she’d like to live there.

“A lot of my life has been, oh, that looks exciting! I’m noodling around happy doing my thing, and then I see an opportunity and take it.” When she saw the job posting for a position at MLS as lecturer in academic skills and legal writing, she knew “that is exactly what I want to do next with my life. I was inspired by the idea of that job.”

As director of the Legal Academic Skills Centre and Director of Teaching at MLS, Chantal designs workshops and resources on legal analysis and communication; trains and manages facilitators for a study group program that reaches more than 200 first-year students each year; runs a writing clinic; and conducts individual consultations with J.D., masters, and Ph.D. candidates. She provides detailed written and oral feedback on over 200 8,000- to 10,000-word papers each academic year through writing conferences that students request to have with her. The individual consultations with the students are her favorite aspect of the job—their commitment to learning the skills, and taking constructive feedback seriously, is inspiring on a daily basis.

With only about 30 law schools spread across Australia, there is currently no one unified approach on how legal writing is taught within the law school curriculum. Some schools, like the one in Adelaide, teach legal writing as a dedicated stand-alone subject, but many others, including MLS, teach it as a skill embedded within one or more doctrinal subjects. “I think in theory embedding the LRW subjects into doctrinal subjects is a really good idea,” Chantal says, “But I think you need someone at the heart of the curriculum planning process that knows how to embed the writing assignments. That doesn't

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Chantal teaching at the 2017 Global Legal Skills conference in Monterrey, Mexico

Chantal Morton

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happen so much when people have individual responsibility for their subjects. A lot of people at MLS do think about their role as writing teachers and try to teach to it. I think it's a competency that teachers can have."

Chantal is gearing up to host the Global Legal Skills Conference at MLS in December 2018, and hopes it will serve as an opportunity both to introduce the global legal writing community to MLS and to bring the Australian legal writing community together. "I'm thankful for the LWI Community," says Chantal. "I could never do my job without the listserv, Idea Bank, all the people who ask questions, etc. When I first got this job, I didn't know what I was doing and didn't have a lot of colleagues here that I could talk to. The community has been extraordinary—both to help me survive and also for my professional development." As for the Australian legal writing community, Chantal says: "We're beginning to identify each other. We're not as organized, there's no listserv yet. But everyone is lovely, and it's exciting to know people who care about legal writing, who are excited to attend GLS."

When I ask Chantal to reflect on what she likes most about her work, she says this: "I am passionate about teaching legal analysis and communication because I see it as a professional responsibility of all lawyers. We have a lot of respect in the community and power when we work with our clients, and part of what we do is communicate." Legal writing, she explains, "is a professional competency" because it clarifies and expresses our legal thinking and makes that thinking available to our clients. That her job allows her to work across the curriculum and interact with J.D.s, masters students, Ph.D. candidates, faculty, and administration is what appeals to her most of all.

As for Chantal's life philosophy? "The way I live my life is, I focus on what I like about what I'm doing now and stay open to opportunities." It's an approach that's served her well so far, that's brought her to far corners of the world, and yet has kept her tethered to her love of reading, writing, and learning that she's had since she was a child.

If you'd like to get in touch with Chantal Morton, you can email her at chantal.morton@unimelb.edu.au.

Tracy McGaugh Norton

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our conversation covered both those topics. However, what I learned most from my conversation with her is how teaching legal writing "saved" her life and how she, in turn, has unique insights into the needs of struggling students.

The Life Saver

Tracy commented many times during our conversation that teaching legal writing "saved" her life. I expect this experience is circular as Tracy, in return, likely has saved or significantly helped some struggling law students along the way.

During her mid-twenties, Tracy practiced criminal and family law in Texas. Tracy loved practicing criminal law but lacked the coping skills needed for the high intensity of family law. After a few years, she became severely depressed and struggled with alcoholism. When she finally told her senior partner that she needed to quit, even if she moved on to making sandwiches at Subway, the partner was helpful enough to help her locate another local law job ... teaching legal writing at Texas Tech. She fell in love with teaching and began a slow, steady climb out of the hole of depression and alcoholism. Twenty years later, she says she still finds something new to discover each year she teaches and finds a joy in teaching that was lacking in practice. Furthermore, it's a position with plenty of flexibility, which provides an opportunity to work closely with students and positively influence their professional development.

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Tracy McGaugh Norton

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Despite struggles with cancer and a child's health scare in recent years, Tracy finds that teaching legal writing leaves her energized daily and that time simply "ceases to exist" while she is focused on the job. Outside the law school, Tracy is a wife and a mother of four children (two of whom have seen enough of her passion to be interested in law and all of whom were born during school breaks). Life as a mother and professor keeps her too busy for much else. However, she blends the two by coordinating the Touro Law Justice Patch program for Girl Scouts of Suffolk County, in which her daughter Emma (16) is a Senior Girl Scout and daughter Kate (13) is a Cadette. She also blends home and work by coaching Emma's high school mock trial team. You can follow Tracy's family on Facebook, where she posts pictures of her children, who are as wickedly funny as they are cherubic.

Tracy's experiences when she struggled with alcoholism and depression while in legal practice and in her teaching career have allowed her to be a source of special support to law students with similar struggles. She realizes that law students typically work hard and have a strong desire to succeed. As a result, she believes a floundering student often is suggestive of a personal struggle rather than of laziness. When she discovers that a student is in the midst of a personal struggle, Tracy may talk to that student about how the student deserves to be happy and functional. She believes she can sometimes identify early signs of distress and help students locate assistance from resources available through the law school or university, the bar, or the community.

Intergenerational Teaching Competence

Tracy's passion for helping her legal writing students is re-

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Tracy and her family. Back row: Kate (age 14), Emma (age 16), Curtis (age 11). Front row: Tracy, Lizzie (3), and Tracy's husband Michael.

Tracy McGaugh

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flected in her work related to intergenerational teaching competence. Although Tracy quickly acknowledged that high-quality legal work is essential regardless of a student's generation, she characterized intergenerational teaching competence as a lens that can supply focus about how to communicate with students and to help maximize their learning experience. Tracy explained that the attributes of a generational cohort are distinct from an individual student's learning style. Thus, an understanding of the predominant generation represented in the class can help the professor be prepared for how the students are likely to relate to authority and receive feedback, helping the professor to tailor the teaching approach to maximize students' level of receptiveness.

For example, Millennial students (generally, those born in the 1980s and 1990s) tend to be highly collaborative and are used to plenty of affirmative feedback and acknowledgement for simply participating. Thus, although these students tend to participate readily in group experiences, critique and the need to make use of feedback to achieve improvement may be an idea that needs to be sold.

As a contrast, students from the earlier Generation X (generally, those born from the mid-1960s through the 1970s) tend to be more solitary and self-critical. Thus, Tracy thinks members of Generation X need feedback that contains a good dose of encouragement mixed with suggestions for improvement. Also, this group is less likely to be receptive to group work unless the professor explains why the group interaction is an important component of the learning experience.

Thus, Tracy's expertise related to generational attributes helps her to tailor her classroom and overall teaching approach in a way that she thinks best maximizes effectiveness for the group as a whole, and she also can use her understanding of generational differences to tailor her interpersonal approach with individual students in conferences and individualized feedback. Tracy noted that the next generational group, with students born around or after 2000, tends to be highly adaptive and rather passive, attributes that will present new teaching challenges.

A Glimpse Inside the Future ICW from the Creative Genius Behind the ICW Program

Finally, I was pleased to get a preview of possible things to come in the ICW arena. Even though the online *Interactive Citation Workstation* underwent a significant upgrade last year, Tracy still has an ongoing list of ideas for continued improvements to students' abilities to learn citation skills. She noted current interest in adding videos to introduce specific exercises and also referenced plans to increase text-online integration.

Overall, I found Tracy to be very inspirational. Her work about intergenerational competency supplies insight that can help us all improve our teaching, and she continues to bubble with ideas to improve the process of learning citation skills through the ICW program. Perhaps most importantly, she models excellence in teaching and a constant push to improve students' law school experience and their ability to learn. The opportunity to be in Tracy's class should be, if not "life saving," at least a highly enlightening experience.

If you'd like to get in touch with Tracy Norton, you can email her at tnorton@tourolaw.edu.



Tracy and her
2016-2017
Legal Process class

Jason Palmer

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The International Law Guru

Jason attributes his international work to his time in private practice. While at Arent Fox, Jason worked with Lucy Reed, a partner handling international arbitration cases. After working on multiple international arbitration matters, Jason decided to leave private practice and head to the State Department's Office of the Legal Adviser, International Claims and Investment Disputes. While at the State Department, Jason served as an attorney-adviser. In that role, he represented the United States in international arbitration cases before the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal in The Hague in The Netherlands. Claims before the Iran-U.S. Claims Tribunal involved the military sales programs that the United States and Iran entered into during the 1970s.

During that same time, he was also the United States representative to the Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC) in Geneva, Switzerland. Claims before the UNCC sought compensation resulting from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait during the first Gulf War.

After working at the State Department, Jason spent four years in Zurich, Switzerland, working as a claims judge for the Claims Resolution Tribunal for Dormant Accounts. At the Claims Resolution Tribunal, Jason supervised a team of international lawyers and paralegals who adjudicated claims for the return of assets of victims of Nazi persecution held in Swiss bank accounts. Jason describes this work "as the most rewarding experience in his legal career," apart from teaching.



Jason in Cuba at Revolution Square



The Claims Resolution Tribunal had attorneys, paralegals, and support staff from all over the world who worked in five official languages—English, French, Spanish, German, and Hebrew. While at the Claims Resolution Tribunal, Jason worked on claims in both English and Spanish, and he learned to speak German while living in Zurich, albeit with a Swiss accent. Further, since Jason has always been a professor at heart, he created and taught a legal writing course to Swiss lawyers at the University of Zurich. He taught predictive legal writing as well as basic aspects of drafting discovery requests.

When Jason left the Claims Resolution Tribunal, he traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, because he had been recruited to join the Secretariat of the United Nations Compensation Commission. At the UNCC, he created a review process to screen approximately 45,000 late-filed claims for losses as a result of the invasion and occupation of Kuwait.

The Road to Legal Writing

Upon returning to Washington, D.C., Jason contacted Christy DeSanctis, the Director of Legal Writing at George Washington University Law School, the law school from which Jason had graduated. He was soon hired as an adjunct in GW's legal writing program. In 2007, Jason decided to fully commit to academia, seeking a full-time teaching position as a legal writing professor. Jason attended the "meat market" in Washington, D.C., and as a result, joined Stetson University School of Law in 2008.

Joining Stetson fulfilled Jason's passion for academia and legal writing. While in law school, Jason had served as a teaching assistant to Nancy Schultz, a professor in GW's legal writing program. As a third-year law student, Jason

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Jason Palmer

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worked for Nancy, teaching the research portion of the legal writing classes. Thus, whenever asked how he got started down the path of a legal writing professor, Jason jokingly faults Nancy for his commitment, passion, and dedication to legal writing. His experiences in law school paved the way to his career as a legal writing professor and sealed his interest in legal writing pedagogy.

When students meet with Jason and indicate that they want a career in international law, he often advises them to first determine what it actually means to practice international law. More importantly, in addition to understanding what international law practice means, Jason encourages his students to tie that picture to what they are truly interested in and passionate about. Jason often finds that his experience as an international practitioner and legal writer not only comes into play when advising his J.D. students, but also when teaching international litigation and arbitration to international LL.M. students, educating them on the concepts and norms of international law.

Jason maintains his international law cred by actively participating in Stetson's international programs. This past spring Jason taught a course on Cuban Law and Society to a group of eleven students and then took them on a five day trip to Cuba where the group explored Cuban society, experienced Cuban culture, and met with Cuban lawyers to discuss Cuban law. This summer Jason will teach a



course on Reparation in Domestic and International Mass Claims Processes in The Hague for Stetson's summer abroad program.

Furthering Legal Rights for the LGBTQ Community

Jason's involvement within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer ("LGBTQ") community began while in private practice as a civil litigator. Jason's former law firm, Arent Fox, represented the Whitman-Walker Clinic in Washington, D.C., the largest provider of HIV and AIDS services in the nation. While working on behalf of the Whitman-Walker Clinic, Jason provided pro bono services, which included writing grants to the D.C. government, drafting grants to the federal government, and maintaining funding under the Ryan White Act. Jason also served as a volunteer on the development side, serving as Chair of the Legal Community AIDS Walk Task Force, which solicited law firms to sponsor the AIDS Walk. The following year he chaired the D.C. AIDS Walk.

As a result of his commitment to LGBTQ advocacy, Jason also teaches Stetson's Law and Sexuality seminar. When teaching the course this past fall, the day after the presidential election, the students in his seminar class expressed trepidation and angst over the future of LGBTQ rights. One expressed despair at even completing her

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Jason discussing "hot topics" in international law as a panelist for Stetson's International Law Society

Jason Palmer

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seminar paper on transgender rights due to the drastic change in advocacy at the federal level on this issue. However, Jason cautioned his students to remain steadfast and continue to work on the issues, highlighting the importance of the ongoing fight for the rights of the LGBTQ community. Jason said to his class, “It is easy to be an advocate for change when the tide is in your favor and everything is moving smoothly. It is much more difficult and therefore even more important to be an advocate when you have to fight an uphill battle and you are faced with resistance and challenge.”

One aspect about being a professor that Jason loves is the ability to mentor and guide students as he was mentored and guided. Working one-on-one with students and recognizing that “aha” moment when they finally grasp the concept that is being taught is one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching. Jason looks forward to many more “aha” moments with his students.

Husband and Father

As much as Jason enjoys teaching and engaging his students in critical legal thinking, he is truly a “homebody” and loves spending quiet time with his family. Jason and his husband, Anthony, had a commitment ceremony in Washington, D.C., in June 2007, and then they were legally married in D.C. in March 2011, once D.C. recognized marriage equality. Simultaneous with their marriage, Jason and Anthony began the adoption process in Florida. A little more than one year later, in March 2012, Jason and Anthony welcomed their newborn daughter, Liora, into their lives, making this couple into a family of three. Jason’s greatest pleasure is watching movies with his husband of ten years and his five year old daughter, especially his daughter’s current favorite movies—Trolls and Hair-spray.

If you would like to get in touch with Jason Palmer, you can email him at jspalmer@law.stetson.edu.



Jason with his husband Anthony and his daughter Liora (age 5)

UPCOMING LEGAL WRITING EVENTS

July 7-8, 2017

Institute for Law Teaching
and Learning
University of Arkansas-Little Rock

July 11-13, 2017

6th Biennial Conference on
Applied Legal Storytelling
American University Washington
College of Law

July 19-21, 2017

ALWD Conference 2017
University of Minnesota Law School

August 25-26, 2017

7th Annual Western Regional
Legal Writing Conference
Seattle University School of Law

September 15-16, 2017

Central States Regional
Legal Writing Conference
Indiana University McKinney
School of Law

October 21, 2017

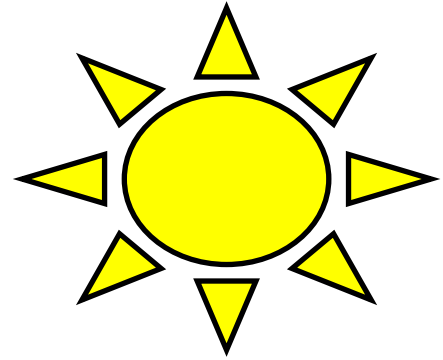
Capital Area Legal
Writing Conference
Regent University School of Law

Check out these websites for more
information on what's happening!

<http://www.aals.org/aals-events/>
<http://www.lwionline.org/>
<http://www.alwd.org/>

The **Faces of LWI** Committee exists to allow us to learn about the interesting lives of our colleagues. If you know of someone who we should interview, please email any committee member. Please include a short note explaining why you think the individual should be profiled.

Selection and Presentation Process: We believe it is important for LWI members to know our process for creating the newsletter. The Committee is organized into three teams, and each team is responsible for proposing and writing the three profiles for a particular issue of the newsletter. To ensure a diverse newsletter, the teams propose the names of the selected individuals to the Co-Chairs to ensure that there is a breadth of coverage for each issue. Additionally, the Co-Chairs keep a master list of all the profiles, so that we can ensure a wide range of coverage over time. If you think WI Lives should feature a particular LWI member, please share your idea with one of the committee members.



Enjoy the summer!

Faces of LWI Committee Members



Maureen Collins
Co-Chair, JMLS
7Collins@jmls.edu



Grace Hum
Co-Chair, USF
ghum@usfca.edu



Joan Rocklin
Co-Chair, Oregon
jrocklin@uoregon.edu



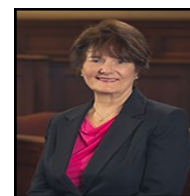
**Elizabeth Berenguer
Campbell**
berenguer@campbell.edu



Alexa Chew
UNC
achew@email.unc.edu



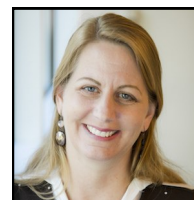
Iselin Gambert
George Washington
igambert@law.gwu.edu



Janis Kirkland
Regent
janikir@regent.edu



Jody Marcucci
DePaul
jmarcucc@depaul.edu



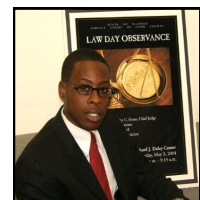
Jennifer W. Mathews
Emory
jmathews@law.emory.edu



Allison Ortlieb
DePaul
aortlieb@depaul.edu



Rebecca Rich
Duke
rich@law.duke.edu



Byron Wardlaw
JMLS
bwwardlaw@sbcglobal.net

