



PLANC Points

Newsletter of the Pre-Law Advisors National Council
PLANC.org

Fall 2021

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Regional Pre-Law Advising Associations

- Midwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([MAPLA](#))
- Northeast Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([NAPLA](#))
- Pacific Coast Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([PCAPLA](#))
- Southern Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([SAPLA](#))
- Southwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([SWAPLA](#))
- Western Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([WAPLA](#))



Chair's Message

Mike Vitlip, J.D., PLANC Chair

Director of Legal and STEM Professions Advising, Office of Student & Post-Graduate Development, Franklin & Marshall College

Congratulations to everyone reading this article on all that you have accomplished over the past two years. You all deserve a gigantic “pat on the back” and a resounding “thank you” for all that you have done. The period from early 2020 to now, as we prepare to wrap up 2021, has been one of challenge and transition for most everyone. From the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and the transition to remote work through the “great resignation” being felt on many of our campuses today, most of us have experienced many transitions of different shapes and sizes, both personally and professionally. As I reflect back on everything that has transpired over the past two years and consider the message I would like to share with the pre-law community, a single theme continues to fill my thoughts: Hope.

Last month, the PLANC Board held their fall meeting. After having only met virtually for 19 months, PLANC held a hybrid meeting, with approximately half of its members meeting in San Antonio, TX, and half of its members joining the meeting virtually from locations across the country. This first in-person meeting in over a year and a half served to highlight many of the transitions PLANC has experienced, starting with the absence of many former members. But it was also filled

with energy and excitement over once again gathering as a group to discuss ideas and how we can best collaborate moving forward.

We thank all of those who have rolled off the PLANC Board for their tremendous leadership through one of the most tumultuous times in PLANC’s history. These members include Miguel Moran-Lanier (PCAPLA), Benita (Angel) Powell (SAPLA), Gerald Wilson (SAPLA), and Oak Vichaikul (WAPLA). Additionally, after providing two years of tremendous leadership through impossible circumstances, Sandy Self has rolled out of her role as PLANC Chair. We cannot possibly thank her enough for everything she has done to see PLANC through this time, and we are exceedingly grateful that she will be continuing to serve on the executive board as Past-Chair.

Perhaps the most notable absences last month, however, were RJ Holmes-Leopold and Gerald Wilson. This was the first PLANC meeting I have attended where *either* of these great leaders was absent. RJ has been a fixture on the PLANC board for as long as I have been a member of PLANC, serving as Program Chair for the conference in Chicago, then serving as Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past-Chair over the past six years. RJ was the heart and soul of the PLANC Board over that time, providing a welcoming presence, a

friendly smile, and the energy to keep the Board moving forward.

While I have never seen a PLANC meeting without RJ being a member of the Board, no one has seen a PLANC meeting without Gerald being a member of the Board. It is not an exaggeration to say that this newsletter, and PLANC itself, would not exist without Gerald. As a founder of the organization and its first Chair, Gerald has been the bedrock of the organization and the pre-law advising profession for decades. I hope that you enjoy reading the tributes to Gerald included elsewhere in this newsletter.

Despite those the PLANC Board has lost, I was inspired by the energy and enthusiasm brought by our newest members. This fall we welcomed the following new members to the PLANC Board: Gwyn Wallander (MAPLA), Lauren Dropkin (NAPLA), Chris Shortell (WAPLA), Mark Brown (SAPLA), and Maya Russell (SAPLA). We also saw returning faces take on new roles. Martha Kirby (MAPLA) has now stepped into the role of Chair-Elect; Kevin Freeman (MAPLA) has taken on the role of Conference Chair for the 2024 PLANC Conference; Rita Ralston (NAPLA) has taken

over as Program Chair for the conference; and Mary Nadarski will be continuing on as a member of the PLANC Board representing WAPLA.

There is little as inspiring as gathering with this exceptional group of people, and our time in San Antonio left me feeling hopeful for the days that will come. Discussing the return of APLA Conferences and Caravans, the PLANC 2024 Conference in New Orleans, upcoming recruitment events, and other PLANC and APLA initiatives was both fulfilling and energizing.

As we conclude the fall semester and look forward to the holiday seasons and winter breaks, I hope that you find hope and inspiration in the days to come. From your work with exceptional students and your time spent with family and friends, find that energy and inspiration that is often rampant this time of year. This is an exciting time in law school admissions, and we can be hopeful for the great impact this time will have on advancing the legal profession and helping society to move forward into better, happier, and more just days ahead.



Honoring the Retirement of Dean Gerald L. Wilson, Ph.D.

“Some Old Guy Has Retired.” This email subject came through the PLANC email listserv on June 30, 2021 from Dean Gerald L. Wilson, Ph.D., himself. After 52 years of service as a founder and first Chair of PLANC, pre-law advisor and Senior Associate Dean Duke University Trinity College of Arts & Sciences announced his retirement to his pre-law advising colleagues in the most Gerald-esque way imaginable. To show our appreciation to Gerald for his leadership and dedication to pre-law advising, memories, well wishes and quotes were gathered from colleagues across the

pre-law profession. Join us in wishing Gerald all the best in retirement!

I originally met Gerald at a NAPLA conference at Cornell about a dozen years ago and was immediately captivated by his wisdom and sage advice. We've been quite fortunate to have him as a leader in the profession. Wishing you the best in your well-deserved retirement.
~Suzanne Palmer, J.D., LL.M., Albright College

I worked with Dean Wilson as a Duke pre-law student in 1984, and worked with him again as a fellow pre-law advisor more recently on the SAPLA Board. Over these almost 40 years he did not change. He was the most interesting and sincere guy in the room. Many of us would not have gotten to law school without his guidance.
~ Kathleen Nicolaides, UNC Charlotte

Within the first few weeks that I began working as the Prelaw Advisor at Davidson College, Gerald emailed and called me to offer that I could contact him at any time with questions. I first assumed that his motivation was an allegiance to Davidson, his undergraduate alma mater. But as I got to know Gerald, I soon realized his motivation was much more. It was kindness, passion for prelaw and a sincere desire to help others. I'm forever grateful to his outreach and the assistance he provided. Once a Wildcat, always a Wildcat! Best wishes in retirement, Gerald! ~Kelli Robinson, Davidson College

*Dear Dean Gerald Wilson,
I will greatly miss you in the pre-law world! I always enjoy your words of wisdom, stories, and positive attitude. You have forever left a positive impression on me and I feel better for knowing you and hearing you speak at conferences! Thank you for your guidance, inspiration, and for the impact you have made through your work!*
~Jen Barone,
University of Massachusetts Boston

Gerald often reminds us at PLANC Board meetings that PLANC was founded as a "federation" of APLAs. This is never a trivial point as the work of PLANC benefits all pre-law advisors, law school admission colleagues, and LSAC in a very intentional way. PLANC pulls its authority and its ability to represent pre-law advisors directly from the

APLAs, and never overshadows the good work that each region offers to meet its membership. His gentle nudge of this concept has brought clarity and resolve to many conversations. My hope is someone will carry the "federation" mantra forward just as meaningfully as Gerald has over the years.
~ RJ Holmes-Leopold, Carleton College

I don't remember when I first met Gerald, but I imagine it was when, as a new assistant dean of admissions at Tulane Law School, I visited Duke to talk with potentially interested students. What I do remember is the extraordinary kindness and thoughtfulness and hospitality Gerald always showed me. And most important, what I remember is how well he knew his students. I was fortunate to visit Duke every year for about 30 years, and even more fortunate to have shared stories with Gerald over the years. He is one of the best story-tellers I know. And I was lucky, too, that Gerald loved New Orleans, where I lived and worked, so I could count on him to come to any meeting that happened to be in New Orleans. We are all so fortunate to know Gerald and to have learned so much from him.
~Susan Krinsky, LSAC

One of the first things I did after being hired as a new Pre Law Advisor was to attend the NAPLA/SAPLA Conference at Duke University where I first met Gerald. His warm welcome, sense of humor, and deep knowledge of all things pre-law were a wonderful introduction to what awaited me. He has been a great resource and an inspiring guide to so many of us over the years, and like many, I am grateful for all that Dean Gerald Wilson has done to help those of us who advise the lawyers of tomorrow. ~Dianne McDonald, Bucknell University

Wilson Award 2021



Congratulations to **RJ Holmes-Leopold**, Director, Career Center, Carleton College on being awarded the 2021 Dean Gerald Lee Wilson Award for Excellence in Pre-Law Advising.

Nominating comments included “RJ’s most significant contribution to the pre-law profession is his support of colleagues across the nation... necessary to understand issues up for board consideration. In the past nine years I met colleague after colleague who felt RJ was their special mentor as well—he somehow has enough to go around! RJ’s support of his colleagues allows all of us to better serve our students and the law school community.”

LSAC LawHub® Can Support Your Work and Your Students’ Success

Learn how LawHub test prep resources and coaching tools can help you run a more effective pre-law program

As a pre-law advisor, you know that strong preparation for the LSAT is one of the keys to a successful legal education journey. To help your students do their best on test day, LSAC offers a trusted test prep resource called [LSAC LawHub®](#). LawHub can be a valuable resource not just for students but for prelaw advisors too.

About LawHub

[LSAC LawHub](#) includes LSAT Prep, which is free and consists of four exams, one of them an Official LSAT PrepTest in the current LSAT format. For additional practice, LSAT Prep Plus, priced at \$99, includes more than 70 exams (including two Official LSAT PrepTests in the current LSAT format). The Prep Plus subscription is owned by the student for one year. If students have received a fee waiver from LSAC, they can receive a Prep Plus subscription at no charge.

LawHub offers an authentic test interface, options to practice using self-paced and exam modes, and skill-boosting full-length tests. It is an excellent resource to help students feel more prepared, comfortable, and less stressed on test day.

Going beyond test preparedness, LawHub is expanding its programming to help students be ready for and know what to expect when they enter law school. This summer, LawHub delivered a virtual education series, [Law School Unmasked](#), to more than 1,500 attendees. Available as part of LawHub’s Prep Plus® subscription, the program was designed to demystify law school for incoming first-year law students while building a foundation for law school success. Additional courses and programs are in development.

Getting Started **LSAC LawHub**

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- ✓ Free!
- ✓ 2 full Official LSAT PrepTests
- ✓ 1 full Official LSAT PrepTest in the current test format
- ✓ 2 full Official three-section LSATs

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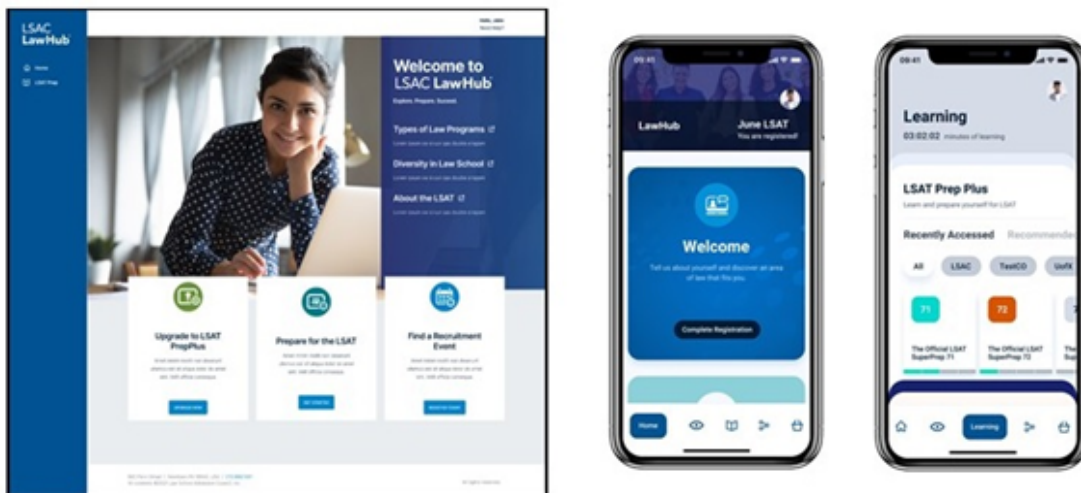
- ✓ 1-year access to 70+ full Official LSAT PrepTests
- ✓ Invitation to exclusive educational events
- ✓ LSAC Fee Waiver applicable

- ✓ Self-paced and simulated exam modes
- ✓ A record of practice test history
- ✓ Instant practice test scoring feedback
- ✓ Take it to Official LSAT content licensees (commercial test preparation companies or one-on-one coaches)

Additional details about test prep resources available from LSAC LawHub.

Partner with LSAC and LawHub to create or enhance a test prep program at your school

LSAC invites you to join a growing number of prelaw programs that use LawHub’s rich library of resources as the foundation for on-campus or virtual LSAT prep courses. With LawHub, you’ll also get unique coaching tools and insights that make test prep as effective as possible for your students.



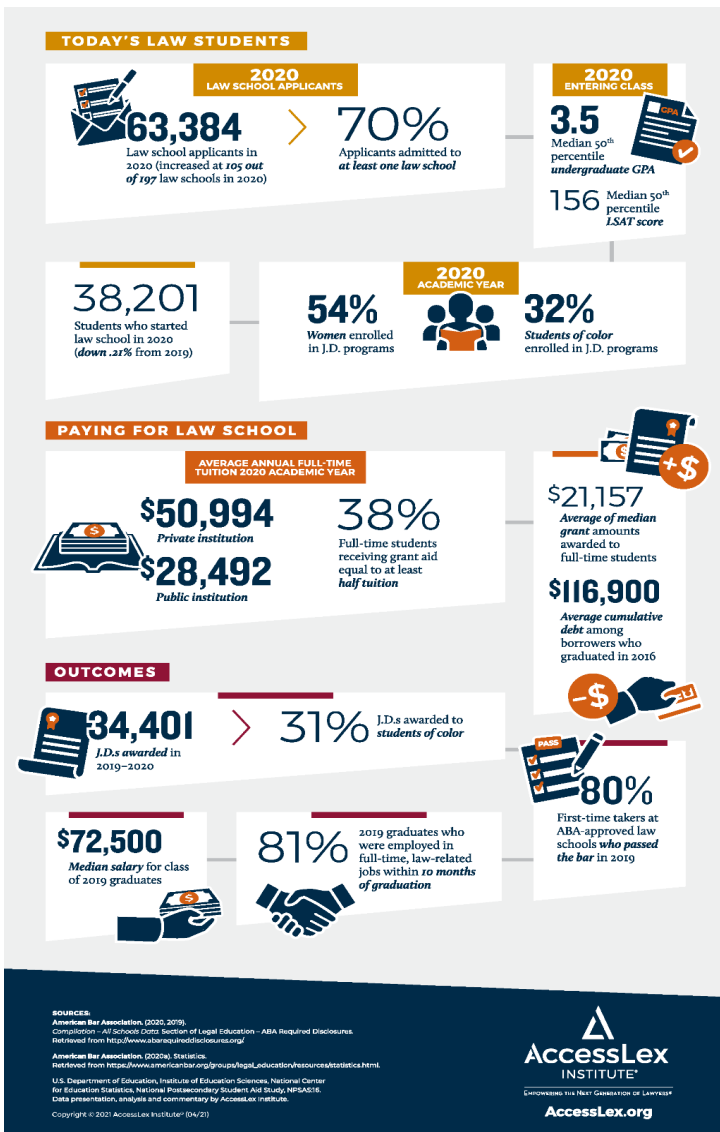
A preview of the new LawHub landing page, including desktop and mobile views.

By using LawHub, test prep coaches gain access to students’ practice history, progress, section time on exams, and total and raw scores on exams. Coaches can see which students have access to Prep Plus and all prep tests a student has taken. Schools wishing to create their own formalized test prep and coaching program can purchase coaching materials for either LSAT Prep or LSAT Prep Plus for \$15 per student, a fee that is paid by the school. The LSAC Ambassadors can help you set up a LawHub-powered test prep program at your school. **Interested in learning more about LSAC LawHub?** Contact the LSAC Ambassadors for a personalized presentation.

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AccessLex Institute Thinking About Law School Infographic

www.accesslex.org/thinking-about-law-school
2020 data, AccessLex Institute



PLANC Board

planc.org/leadership

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