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FAMU College of Law

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## Dean LeRoy Pernell: Vision and Goals

When I accepted the position of dean of the Florida A&M University (FAMU) College of Law, I anticipated a rewarding and challenging experience. My expectations have materialized as students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends have enthusiastically supported my plans to bring this revered institution back to a position of leadership. This process began with a concerted effort to advance the law school's mission by outlining the following vision and supporting goals:

### Vision as Dean

- To become the law school of choice for law students committed to obtaining a legal education in an environment that is dedicated to increasing the presence and role of the African-American lawyer. To attract and successfully matriculate those students with the credentials and skills necessary to further the mission of the school;
- For the FAMU College of Law to become a national leader in providing the legal insight, direction and expertise necessary to address major issues confronting national and international communities;
- For the FAMU College of Law to develop a leadership position through strong interaction and involvement in local, national and international partnerships; and
- For the FAMU College of Law to grow, both as a distinct professional school and a full University partner able to benefit from and contribute to the rich history and tradition of Florida A&M University.



### Goals as Dean

- Full American Bar Association (ABA) Accreditation by 2009;
- Membership in AALS (Association of American Law Schools) at earliest possible date following accreditation;
- Student enrollment consistent with the legislative mandate and the mission of the College of Law within two years;
- Florida Bar passage for first-time takers at or above the statewide average within four years;
- 100 percent of tenure-tracked faculty engaged in significant annual scholarship activity by 2009;
- Significant and sustainable curriculum growth consistent with the mission of the College of Law and the curriculum to be expected of a major law school within two years; and
- Revised skills training program that integrates live clinic, simulation-based learning experiences and doctrinal-based

*Dean LeRoy Pernell served as law dean of Northern Illinois University College of Law for 10 years prior to accepting the deanship at FAMU's College of Law*

courses to provide both sound skills education and service components for students and faculty.

While it has been gratifying to be embraced by the law school, legal, academic and business communities, I recognize that there is much work to be done to achieve our objectives. I don't pretend that this job will be easy, especially with the tight time constraints. But we are busy addressing the immediate and long-term concerns as the items highlighted in this edition of The FAMU Lawyer point out.

For example, we have hired a Director of Registrar, and our Academic Success and Bar Prep Program is off and running, with students at all levels taking advantage of the writing seminars and bar examination workshops being conducted on a regular basis. We are also noting advances in Operations, where we have hired support staff in the Human Resources area. And, as always, our students, faculty and administration have been very active serving our community.

With backing from the University, the law school community, and supporters like you, the FAMU College of Law will live up to and exceed expectations.

**LeRoy Pernell**  
Dean

# Experienced New Team Leads Bar Prep Program

The FAMU College of Law is proud of its innovative Academic Success and Bar Preparation Program which is designed to demonstratively improve the academic performance of its students and the Bar Exam success of its graduates. In accomplishing these goals, the program comprehensively provides all students of the College of Law access to those resources and services necessary for them to reach the highest level of their academic potential in a non-judgemental environment conducive to all-inclusive participation.



*Edward Parson (left) directs the FAMU College of Law's Academic Success and Bar Preparation Program.*

Among the resources made available to students are supplemental materials which they can borrow to facilitate their academic improvement and/or their preparation for the Bar Exam. The program recommends that students begin meaningful preparation for the Bar Exam at minimum one year in advance of taking it, and endeavors to provide such students with reviews of substantive courses and relevant strategies to maximize their success rate. Having identified writing deficiencies as the most common obstacle to the success of its students, the program strongly emphasizes the need for students to attend writing workshops which it conducts and/or to participate in one-on-one writing tutorial sessions.

**Edward Parson** is the Director of the FAMU College of Law's Academic Success and Bar Preparation program, and is committed to making its services available to students on a reasonably flexible basis. Such scheduling flexibility is enhanced by the utilization of qualified teacher assistants who are available to aid and assist the program's instructors.

Lastly, the program's resources are student-friendly. Students are strongly encouraged and welcomed to visit its offices not only to utilize the available resources, but also to discuss other existing problems which may hinder their academic success. Students will find that they are always treated with respect and that all consultations are

held in strict confidence.

Edward Parson received his J.D. from Howard University and previously served as associate lecturer at the University of Wisconsin School Of Law in Madison, where he taught first-year students in legal writing and legal methods. Working with a support team, his primary responsibility will be to help law students enhance their legal writing, prepare for the Bar exam, and to provide overall academic support.

Part of Parson's support team includes **Keith Neyland**, a former Staff Attorney with the National Labor Relations Board. Neyland received his J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, and also worked as a Mediator for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Labor Arbitrator for the United States Steel Corporation/United Steelworkers Board of Arbitration.

Since Parson's arrival, the program has held more than 80 workshops on topics ranging from "Time Management" to "Writing for the Bar Exam" and "How to Prepare for the Bar." Both full-time day and part-time evening students have attended these sessions, amounting to more than 600 student contacts.

## Wave of New Faces at FAMU Law School

As the FAMU College of Law continues to grow, vacant positions are filled with experienced and qualified hires who will help steer the school onto the next phase of development.

**Angela Campbell** - Law Library Technical Assistant

**Janice Costin** - Director of Information Technology

**Geraldine Nappa** - Director of Registrar

**Keith Neyland** - Academic Success and Bar Preparation Coordinator

**Edward Parson** - Academic Success and Bar Preparation Director

**Ericka Polite** - Information Technology Program Assistant

**Phebe Poydras** - Interim Law Library Director (previous Law Library Assistant Director, and Legal Methods Instructor)

**Yhonsha Rue** - Career Planning and Placement Program Assistant.

**Debra Scarlett** - Human Resources Coordinator



# FAMU College of Law Announces New Faculty

**LeRoy Pernell**, Dean of the Florida A&M University (FAMU) College of Law, has announced the hiring of seven law professors who are nationally and internationally recognized for their academic leadership and legal expertise. The appointments are effective for the 2008-09 academic year.

“These individuals are distinguished in legal academia, scholarship, and professional service,” Pernell said. “I am confident that each one of them will make a unique contribution to the academy, complementing the exceptional team of legal scholars currently on the FAMU College of Law faculty.”

The new faculty members are:

- **Markita Cooper**, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Cooper formerly served as professor and associate dean for JD Program Academic Affairs at Golden Gate University School of Law in San Francisco, where she was responsible for the administration of curriculum, instruction and course scheduling. She also hired, evaluated and trained adjunct faculty and helped develop a comprehensive program that improved the bar passage rate. She holds a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law, and an A.B. in communications and psychology from Stanford University.
- **Jeremy Levitt**, Distinguished Professor for International Law and Associate Dean for International Programs. Levitt previously served as associate professor and director of the Program for Human Rights and Global Justice at Florida International University College of Law, in Miami. His areas of expertise include African Politics, the Caribbean, and Human Rights Law. He is a columnist for the Chicago Sun Times and has contributed to radio and television programs across the country and in Ghana, West Africa. He received a B.A. in Political Science from Arizona State University, a J.D. from the University of Wisconsin in Madison, and a Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Cambridge St. John’s College in the UK.
- **Kenneth Nunn**, Professor and Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development. Prior to joining FAMU, Nunn served as a professor at the University of Florida College of Law in Gainesville, where his research focused on criminal law and procedure, civil rights, and critical race theory. He has served as a visiting professor at the University of Warsaw Faculty of Law in Warsaw, Poland and Makerere University Faculty of Law in Kampala, Uganda. Nunn has published extensively and served as consulting editor for law and society for the “Macmillan Encyclopedia Of Race And Racism. He received a J.D. from the University of California School of Law in Berkeley and an A.B. in International Relations from Stanford University.
- **Deleso Washington**, Associate Professor. Washington comes to FAMU after serving as assistant professor of law at Barry University School of Law in Orlando, where she taught legal research and writing. She holds an LL.M. from Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, DC, where she focused on the Intersectionality of Gender, Race and Law; a J.D. from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and a B.S. from Southern University A&M College in Baton Rouge.
- **Crisarla Houston**, Assistant Professor and Director of Legal Writing. Prior to coming to FAMU, Houston served as assistant professor and director of Legal Research and Writing at Texas Southern University School of Law, where she focused on developing and strengthening students’ basic writing, legal writing and case analysis skills. She received a J.D. from Harvard Law School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a B.S. in Finance from Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia, and has studied international and humanitarian law at the University of Ghana.
- **Jonathan Fineman**, Assistant Professor. Fineman previously served as a research fellow for the University of Colorado Law School in Boulder, where he taught employment law and comparative employment law. He also has served as an associate for the law firms of Sedgwick, Detert, Moran & Arnold LLP; Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP; and Morgenstein & Jubelirer LLP in San Francisco, California. He holds a J.D. from Columbia Law School in New York and a B.A. in American Studies from Wesleyan University in Connecticut.
- **Tshaka Randall**, Assistant Professor. Before joining FAMU, Randall was a visiting professor at Widener University School of Law in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where he taught Property and Education Law. He also served on the admissions and diversity committees. Randall received his J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania School of Law, an M.A. in education from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and a B.S. in education from the University of Dayton.

## College of Law Alumni Section

If you are looking for the regular feature *Alumni Spotlight*, please note that it will be placed in the upcoming **Alumni Newsletter** which will begin publication in Summer 2008. Please contact the College of Law’s Office of Development at (407) 254-3266 with Alumni news and information to contribute to the publication.



# FAMU Law to Award Full Tuition Scholarships in 2008

*“Our goal is to attract the best and brightest students to the FAMU College of Law, and one of the most effective ways to do that is with full-tuition scholarships”*

*- Dean LeRoy Pernell*

For the first time ever, thanks to a commitment from Florida A&M University (FAMU) **President James H. Ammons**, the FAMU College of Law will grant full-tuition scholarships to high-achieving entering students. For the Fall 2008 semester, a total of 15 full-tuition scholarships will be available, with three of the 15 reserved for Bethune-Cookman University graduates.

“Our goal is to attract the best and brightest students to the FAMU College of Law, and one of the most effective ways to do that is with full-tuition scholarships,” said **Dean LeRoy Pernell**.

The FAMU College of Law applicant pool – which reached a record 1,503 applications this season -- has always included prospective students who were highly-recruited by law schools

across the county, Pernell said. While many of those top prospects now walk the halls of the FAMU College of Law, others are lured to larger institutions with more lucrative scholarship offers, he said.

“The full-tuition scholarships will allow us to be more competitive with other first-class law schools because we can now offer additional incentive to come to FAMU,” Pernell said. He added that the three Bethune-Cookman scholarships provide a unique opportunity to bring in graduates from a neighboring feeder school that is a natural educational partner.

All of the scholarships will be awarded through the Office of Admissions and are renewable until graduation, if the students maintain certain academic requirements. For more information, call 407-254-3286.

## Minority Law Day at FAMU Law School

The FAMU College of Law participated in the Law School Admissions Council’s National Minority Law School Recruitment Month holding its first Minority Law Day on Friday, February 15, 2008. More than 100 guests from throughout Florida attended the event at the law school campus in Orlando.

The attendees included a tour bus-full of FAMU undergraduate students who are members of the Hatchett Pre-Law Society on the main campus in Tallahassee.

The event was hosted by the Office of Admissions and included a day-long agenda of information sessions that addressed issues facing potential law students. This included an overview of the admissions process, financial aid, and academic success while in law school. Guests also participated in a Mock Class with College of Law **Professor Robert Abrams**, and several panel discussions which featured current law students and alumni who are now practicing attorneys.

“FAMU’s first-ever Minority Law Day was a huge success,” boasts **Mwenni Ekpo**, Assistant Dean for Admissions and Financial Aid. “Based on the evaluations we received, our guests had a wonderful time and learned alot.” The Office of Admissions plans to continue to host the event during the spring semester each year.



Dean LeRoy Pernell address attendees at Minority Law Day. The event was part of National Minority Law School Recruitment Month.



Law students Patrice Featherstone (left, 3L), Alycia Prioleau (3L), and Tanya White (1L) are pictured with a Minority Law Day participant.

# Spring '08 Scenes from the FAMU College of Law

## A New Direction



*Dean LeRoy Pernell arrived at the FAMU College of Law in January and immediately met with current law students to address concerns and outline a path toward success.*

## Alumni Meet New Dean



*While visiting in Tallahassee in January, Dean LeRoy Pernell (second from left) met with FAMU College of Law Alumni Anthony Thomas ('06) (far left), Tiffany Mount ('05), Trinetta Lyons ('05), and Jarian Lyons ('06).*

## Taking it to the Streets



*FAMU College of Law student organizations participated in the Day of Service in January with the Orlando Mayor's MLK Commission. Students painted waste receptacles, cleared debris, planted foliage and placed banners along Church Street and Paramore Avenue.*

## First CLE Alumni Event



*FAMU College of Law Alumni attended the first Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Alumni event in February, which featured J.R. Phelps (center), Director of the Florida Bar's Law Office Management Assistance Service. Professor Joan Bullock (fourth from left) helped organize the event.*

## Journey to La Perle Des Antilles



*FAMU College of Law students Fedline Ferjuste (left, 2L), Soeurette Michel (2L), and Mahala Dar-Janvier (3L) were 2008 Scholarship Winners at the Haitian Lawyers Association Gala in February.*

## Vigil for the Dream



*FAMU College of Law students gathered on the front steps to hold a candlelight vigil in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in January.*



# Student Groups Recognize MLK with Service

More than 50 College of Law students, representing 10 student organizations, sacrificed a Saturday morning of studying to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The student groups joined forces with the Orlando Mayor's MLK Commission to provide community service to the Parramore neighborhood. The MLK Day of Service took place January 12, 2008 as a day to help make "the City Beautiful" by cleaning up the streets of Parramore.

FAMU Law students and volunteers marched from the law school steps at 10:00 AM to a staging area at Heritage Park at the corner of Church Street and Parramore Avenue. Once at the staging area, **Assistant Dean Mweni Ekpo** registered the student volunteers who were then issued a pair of gloves and a safety vest, and put to work. Students were assigned various tasks which included painting street utility covers

and waste receptacles, weeding flower beds, and hanging street banners.

**Associate Professor Patricia Broussard**, who also serves as FAMU's representative on the Commission, joined other College of Law faculty and staff to assist the students in their effort. The Day of Service was not the only event the law students partook in to celebrate Dr. King's contributions.

On January 15, a small group of students congregated in the College of Law Atrium to reflect on the lasting legacy of the civil rights pioneer. What began as a presentation of the construction of the MLK Monument at the National Mall in Washington D.C., expanded to include a call-to-action for College of Law students.

**Mr. Charlie Jackson** of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, encouraged attendees

to make contributions to assist in the efforts of the fraternity in completing the monument, which will be the only memorial of an African-American figure at the prestigious location. His presentation was followed by a moving speech by **Camara Williams** (3L), who implored law students to remember the sentiments of Dr. King while building a personal legacy as a FAMU Law student. He insisted that students should strive to promote the good from their law school experience.

**Dean LeRoy Pernell** followed Williams and expressed his appreciation for what the law students were doing to remember King's Legacy. The event concluded with a candlelight vigil on the law school steps. Attendees sang the FAMU Alma Mater, the "National Negro Anthem", and the famed "We Shall Overcome."



*College of Law students march through the streets of the Parramore Neighborhood during the MLK Day of Service.*



*Dean LeRoy Pernell (right) with Charlie Jackson of Orlando's Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Graduate Chapter.*

## Law Student Elected to University Post



*Jean Oguntade (3L, right), takes a tour of the law school with members of the FAMU Court.*

**Jean Oguntade** (3L) is well known at the College of Law as a vocal supporter of various causes for the law school and Orlando community. Her active involvement with school issues led to her winning the FAMU Graduate Attendant position.

As Miss Graduate Attendant, a year-long appointment, Oguntade has added responsibilities of university ambassador, the voice of the graduate and professional class, and assisting with recruitment for the school. She

will also work closely with the Vice President of Student Affairs.

As the first College of Law student to run for and win a main campus-based position, Oguntade hopes the selection will ensure that, in future elections, the university will continue to accommodate the law school and other off-campus locations by having precincts available to students who want to participate in the democratic process.

# Orlando Welcomes LeRoy Pernell



*FAMU President James H. Ammons (center) is pictured with Orlando City Commissioner Daisy Lynum (left to right), FAMU Law Dean LeRoy Pernell, State Representative Geraldine Thompson and Judge Emerson Thompson (Ret.).*



*FAMU College of Law Alumni are pictured with FAMU President James H. Ammons (center), FAMU Law Dean LeRoy Pernell (left) and former FAMU President Frederick S. Humphries (right).*

Nearly 200 elected officials, judges, attorneys, business leaders and other supporters joined Florida A&M University (FAMU) **President James H. Ammons** during a reception to welcome **LeRoy Pernell** as the new dean of the FAMU College of Law.

Ammons kicked off the event at the Marriott Orlando Downtown by recognizing Pernell as one of only two African-American law school deans with more than a decade of tenure at one institution.

“We are pleased to have Dean Pernell as a part of our leadership team,” said Ammons. “I believe he is a great asset to the College of Law and the university.”

Orlando **Mayor Buddy Dyer** extended greetings on behalf of the city, declaring how proud he was to have the FAMU College of Law located in Orlando, and recalling that while he was in the Florida Senate, he co-sponsored legislation authorizing the reestablishment of the law school.

“We recognize the value this law school brings to our city,” Dyer said. “Dean Pernell, we are excited to have you at the helm of our law school. We welcome you and thank you for accepting this opportunity.”

Several attorneys from the law firm of Greenberg Traurig, LLP -- which sponsored the reception -- also attended, including **Michael Sullivan**,

co-managing partner; and **Jéan Wilson**, partner.

Pernell assumed permanent leadership of the FAMU College of Law in January 2008. During his first two months on the job, he has met with faculty, students and staff to address critical concerns and to lay out his vision for moving the law school to the next level of greatness.

“The proud history of FAMU and the national significance of this College of Law make me excited to work with others to bring about the realization of the full potential of this law school,” Pernell said. “The Florida A&M University College of Law is here to stay.”



*FAMU Law Dean LeRoy Pernell (right) is pictured with Florida Board of Governor's member Tico Perez (left) and Orlando City Commissioner Daisy Lynum.*



*FAMU Law Dean LeRoy Pernell (second from left) is pictured with Michael Sullivan, Greenberg Traurig Managing Partner (left to right), Jéan Wilson, Partner, Greenberg Traurig, LLP, and Orlando City Commissioner Phil Diamond.*



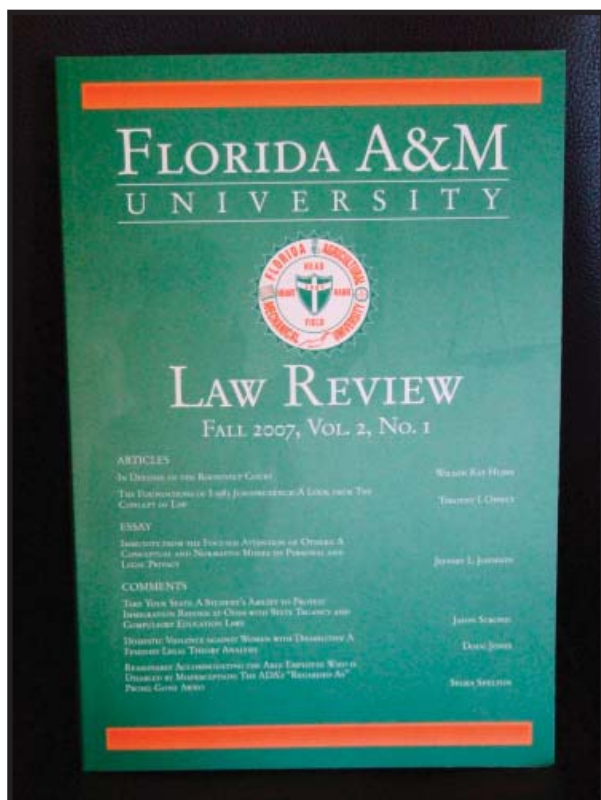
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## Second Volume of Law Review Journal Now Available



*The FAMU Law Review has released its second journal, Volume II, No. 1, a culmination of the hard work and dedication by the Law Review Executive Board and members from 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, and their advisors, Associate Dean and Professor Lundy Langston, and Assistant Professor John Harper. The journals are \$15 per copy, and can be purchased by contacting the FAMU Law Review at (407) 254-3298.*

*The 2007-2008 Executive Board members of Law Review include: Ruth Singer, Editor-In-Chief; Audrey Chisholm, Executive Editor; Ericka Garcia, Business Managing Editor; Amy Carter, Articles Editor; and, Mahala Dar-Janvier, Notes & Comments Editor. Staff members include: Chad Barr, Doris Dashevich, Luis Gonzalez, Elizabeth Kirk, Laura Klossner, LaToya Newell, Osiris Sesenaya, Ashley Shapiro, Donna Sirois, Javier Soto, Misty Taylor, and Nicolette Tsambis.*