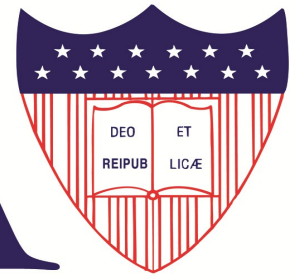


SELSA



HOWARD LAW | SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT LAW STUDENT'S ASSOCIATION

SELSA Newsletter | Spring 2011

SELSA Week & 15th Annual Center Court Conference

The Sports and Entertainment Law Student's Association (SELSA) is excited to announce **SELSA WEEK, which is from February 28 to March 4th**. **SELSA WEEK** culminates with SELSA's *15th Annual Center Court Conference*. This year, SELSA is working with some of the finest student organizations at Howard Law to coordinate both educational and social events. SELSA will co-sponsor events with the following organizations: Barrister; Black Law Students Association; Class of 2011; Howard Energy and Environmental Law Society; Women's Law Students Association. The events are as follows:

Day	Time	Event / Panel
Monday, February 28	12:15PM - 1:20 PM	Bianca Alexander of Soul of Green: Green TV & Production
Thursday, March 3	6:00 PM	City-Wide 3L Thursday - Happy Hour
Friday, March 4	1:00 PM - 6:45 PM	15th Annual Center Court Conference & Networking Reception

This year, the *Center Court Conference* is comprised of a networking event and four panels, which focus on the following topics: Music; Television; Sports; and Intellectual Property. SELSA and its cosponsors will bring the TOP professionals in their respective industries to speak to you! The panel topics and confirmed guests are as follows:

Time	Industry	Panel Title	Confirmed Panelist
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM	Television	Women in Television & Entertainment	Karen Wishart - TV One Lisa Bonner - Bonner Law, P.C. Erika Munro Kennerly - TruTV/Turner Entertainment
2:10 PM - 3:00 PM	Intellectual Property	Intersections Between Entertainment & IP	Brian Edge - Discovery Channel Tanya Bridges - Dada Entertainment, Inc. Ray Thomas - Professor, Howard Law
3:10 PM - 4:10 PM	Sports	A Primer on Sports Law & Collective Bargaining Agreements	Derek Simms - Simms & Shaw Sports Management Group Antoine Shaw - Simms & Shaw Sports Management Group Kiyoo Oden - Oden & Dillard P.L.L.C., Partner
4:20 PM - 5:50 PM	Music	Music 101: Deal Making & the Impact of Social Networking	Matthew Middleton - Simon Eisenberg & Baum, L.L.P. Richard Manson - Manson, Jonson, Stewart & Associates

For more information about SELSA, SELSA WEEK, and the 15th Annual Center Court Conference, please sign-up for our TWEN Page or visit www.law.howard.edu/272.

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SELSA @ BESLA

The Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association (“BESLA”) conference brings attorneys together to discuss issues within the sports and entertainment industries. This year, BESLA celebrated its 30th Anniversary, and the theme of the conference was “Upholding Our Legacy, Redefining Our Future.” BESLA honored Clarence Avant and Henry “Hank” Aaron for their humanitarian efforts in the entertainment and sports industry. Sports and Entertainment Law Association (“SELSA”) members, **Marcus Moore** and **Zalika Headley**, were awarded scholarships for their scholastic achievements and demonstrated interest in entertainment law.

The entertainment industry is comprised of subset industries, such as music, television, film, sports, and media. Like many other industries, the entertainment industry is unique. BESLA offers an opportunity for lawyers and law students to learn about the industry and to network with persons having similar interests. The SELSA executive board found the seminars to be both informative and insightful. Some of the most interesting topics included the following: Representing Producers, Songwriters and Composers; Pulling Back the Curtain on Reality Television Negotiations; The Social Network and the New Independent Music Model; and Social Responsibility and the Global Impact of Sports.

Notably, for the past three years, **Ed Woods**, Howard Law, 1994, served as Chairman of the board of directors for BESLA. Ed first attended the BESLA conference when he was a student at Howard Law, and he received his first employment opportunity from someone he met at the BESLA conference. Last year, Ed was honored for his continued dedication to the organization, and this year he was praised for his leadership during his tenure as Chairman.



Matt Middleton, also Howard Law Class of 1994, was recently elected as President of the organization. Both Ed and Matt credit their successful careers in the entertainment industry to Howard Law and to BESLA.

At the conference, the SELSA executive board met with over 15 Howard Law Alumni and other influential individuals in the entertainment industry. During this meeting, the Alumni discussed their respective experiences at Howard Law, career paths, experiences at BESLA conferences, and continuing the Howard legacy within BESLA.

Charles King, a prominent film and television agent and Howard Law Class of 1996, emphasized the importance of building relationships. Louise Cummings, Vice President of Operations for Butch Lewis Productions and Howard Law Class of 2005, discussed the importance of giving back to the community. Virgil Roberts, a prominent entertainment lawyer in the music industry, emphasized the “importance of honing legal skills regardless of the industry in which we practice.”

In addition, the SELSA executive board had dinner with members of the BESLA board of directors and students from other law schools. At the dinner, BESLA Board member **C. Anthony Mulrain**, a partner at Epstein Becker & Green, stated that having the BESLA conference in remote locations gives attendees a unique opportunity to network with each other. He also explained that because industry executives are trapped on an island with limited access to the internet and limited cell phone service, they are forced to engage in conversation with strangers and pass along their expertise.



LOUISE CUMMINGS

HOWARD LAW, CLASS OF 2005



Louise Cummings, Esq. is originally from Massachusetts and currently resides in New York City. She graduated from Georgetown University with a dual bachelor's degree in Psychology and Spanish and received her JD from Howard Law, graduating in the top 10% of her class. While at Howard, Louise was an active member of the following student organizations: *Sports and Entertainment Law Students Association (SELSA)*; Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association; also, she served as an Admissions Recruiter, a New Student Orientation Leader, and Executive Director Class of 2005. Louise also received the following honors as a Howard Law Student: Spencer Boyer Scholarship for Sports and Entertainment, Cali Award in Copyrights & Trademark, and the Cali Award in Sales & Secured Transactions. Louise took the non-conventional route while in law school, gaining work experience that combined both legal and entertainment environments. She worked at the NFL Players Association, Strickland Management Group, and she served as a law clerk to The Honorable Mary A. Gooden Terrell, DC Superior Court. Louise believed in getting substantive legal experience mixed with practical experience in the entertainment field.

Upon graduation in 2005, Louise joined the Corporate and Finance Department at Kaye Scholer, where she was appointed to the firm's Diversity Committee. In 2006, Louise left the firm and started her own companies, The Cummings Law Group, P.C. and LEC Consulting, Inc. Louise represented and consulted clients including Tyrese, Chingy, Lunar Entertainment, Danella, Clinton Portis, Santana Moss, Samari Rolle, Converse/Dwayne Wade Sneaker Release, and Howie Bell NFL Sanctioned Super Comedy Week Event.

Today, Louise is the Vice President of Operations for Butch Lewis Productions and manages the day-to-day operations for the newly formed joint venture between Butch Lewis Productions and IMG Worldwide.

The partnership between Butch Lewis Productions and IMG was created to develop and operate a talent management company that primarily represents minority entertainers and celebrities in the areas of endorsements, licensing and programming. Together both Butch Lewis Productions and IMG will create an entertainment powerhouse that gives global opportunities to promote and market minority talent.

Louise is a member of the American Bar Association and its Forum on Entertainment and Sports. She served on the Board of Directors of the Black Entertainment and Sports Lawyers Association (BESLA) and also established the Students Helping Students Scholarship, which is awarded annually at the BESLA conference. Louise serves on the Board of Trustees and diversity committee at her alma mater private high school, The Rivers School, in Massachusetts. Louise is a mentor for the Girls Empowerment Mission (GEM) Foundation and she is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

"There are thousands of people who will give you a million reasons why you can't but you only need one person to say that you can and that is YOU!"

~ Louise Cummings

RICHARD MANSON

DIALOGUE WITH AN ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY



Richard Manson is known for his representation of various gospel music artists and writers. SELSA executive board member, Aisha Granville, chatted with Richard Manson about his career as an entertainment lawyer.

GRANVILLE: Why did you decide to attend law school?

MANSON: I was a history major at Fisk University in Nashville, and I didn't know what I was going to do when I graduated. It was 1967 and there were limited opportunities for African Americans. When I finished at Fisk, I received the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship, given by IBM. The Fellowship provided 35K to deserving students to travel and research around the world. I studied in Europe first. I then went to Africa, where I studied in Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia. After my fellowship, I applied and was accepted to attend Vanderbilt Law. After law school I started a law practice with three other guys.

GRANVILLE: How did you learn how to practice law? And, how did you build your practice?

MANSON: That's a good question. I learned a lot from the clerks of the court. It took a while to build my practice. When I first started, I was a full time professor at Tennessee State University (TSU), where I taught criminal justice. Teaching allowed me to grow my practice because it supplemented my income. It also provided a steady stream of interns.

GRANVILLE: When did you stop teaching and start practicing law full-time?

MANSON: As a result of winning three major Title VII cases, I received a lot of publicity. People started reading my name in the paper and seeing my face on TV. Shortly thereafter, my services were in demand. Litigation is a slow grind; it takes a long time to build. I started looking for things that would support what I was doing. When I started doing probate, there was not a strong black presence. Blacks were just dying intestate, and therefore transfer of wealth and assets was not prevalent in the Black community. Therefore,

my practice in probate was not only lucrative, it was necessary. Also, the real estate market in the 80s and 90s was really good. So, I started practicing real estate law.

GRANVILLE: How did you get your start in entertainment law?

MANSON: I got into entertainment in two ways. First, there was a gospel artist in Nashville named **Bobby Jones** and he was just starting his career. I met Bobby when he had a local show called the Nashville Gospel Show. **Bob Johnson** was starting BET and asked Bobby to syndicate his show nationally on the network. I handled the negotiation of that contract. That television show still airs on television today.

Next, **Cece Winans** was moving to Nashville and needed someone to handle her real estate contract. I was known in Nashville for my real estate deals, and someone referred her to me. She was just on the verge of creating her first solo album, and I worked with her on that project. I represented her in her deal with Capital Records, and I got her a deal with Pioneer Records, where she recorded her first solo album, "Ever Lasting Love."

I also represented **Kurupt**, the rapper. His mother is a spiritual woman and I met her at a Bobby Jones concert. She asked me to help her son. I initially told her that I don't really do that type of music. She challenged me – she said that many of the young guys doing this type of music don't have good representation, and that was because of lawyers like me. She told me that it was my fault that these artists don't have good deals. So I took the challenge and represented her son. Kurupt had already had a deal with **Death Row Records**, and he wasn't profiting because he signed away many of his rights in that original deal. As a result, Kurupt was trying to get some of his royalties. I represented Kurupt in a civil suit against Suge Knight. **I took a deposition of Suge Knight**, asking him about the money that Kurupt was owed. There were just millions and millions not accounted for. Mr. Knight cursed me out, but I got my answers.

I took a deposition of Suge Knight ... Mr. Knight cursed me out, but I got my answers.

RICHARD MANSON *continued*

GRANVILLE: How did you get involved with the Black Entertainment and Sports Law Association (BESLA), and how has your involvement affected your career?

MASON: I was out in California to negotiate the deals for Angie Winans and Debbie Winans – I was working with Cece and she asked me to handle her sisters too. I was negotiating with **Ray Tisdale**, who is an African American and actually one of BESLA’s founders. After the negotiation, Ray told me that I did a good job on the deal. Then he said, “here are things you could have asked for, that you didn’t ask for.” This was a tremendous learning experience for me. He told me to join BESLA to learn what to ask for and to better represent my clients. Ray told me some of what I needed to know and sent me to BESLA to learn the rest.

There was another guy, **Gregory Reed** - also one of the founders of BESLA - got me involved with book publishing. Greg wrote about ten books. I didn’t really know about publishing, but he just gave me the guidelines in that area, and I was able to obtain clients. As a result, I worked with **Iyanla Vanzant**, who writes the spiritual books. I also represented Donna Joyner on her publications. I’ve probably negotiated about 20 book deals since I was first introduced to publishers.

As to the other parts of your question, I’ve been involved with BESLA in many ways. I was a panelist at BESLA on different areas of the law, related to music deals and book publishing. In the past I’ve represented **David Talbert**, who is a Black playwright, and we were on a panel together. I am currently on BESLA’s Board of Directors.

GRANVILLE: Can you tell me about your experience representing Rosa Parks in a trademark case against Outkast?

I represented Rosa Parks in a Trademark case against Outkast.

MASON: I got involved in representing **Rosa Parks** through Gregory Reed. He is a very creative lawyer who decided to take over the direction of her career. He brought me in to represent her on anything pertaining to the use of her name and likeness. Greg had three other lawyers representing Ms. Parks on other matters. Ms. Parks had licensing deals with Microsoft and Apple. As a historical figure, many people wanted to use her name. I made sure she was adequately compensated and received appropriate credit.

One day, Greg called me and asked if I heard this Rosa Parks song by **Outkast**. This was not the first time Ms. Parks was featured in a song – at that time there were really nice songs created by gospel artists using her name. But this song, was talking about getting to the back of the bus and mischaracterized Ms. Parks and what she stands for. We sent the song to Ms. Parks and she was distraught, she felt like it was not a good representation of herself and she asked us to make it right. At Ms. Park’s request, Gregory Reed filed the lawsuit in Michigan. I deposed both members of Outkast in Atlanta. In response to one of my questions, one of the rappers told me that the song was not even about Rosa Parks. We surmised that someone in the marketing department at the record label named the song after Rosa Parks because the chorus mentions people going to the back of the bus.

The Defendant’s essentially argued that because she was a public figure, they should be able to use her name. But their claim was severely undermined by the fact that the Outkast member said that the song wasn’t really about her. Our case was heard, and the lower court granted a motion for summary judgment in favor of the defendants. We appealed the case to the court of appeals. Gregory brought in **Johnny Cochran** to argue the case in the appellate court. When Johnny argued the case, the courtroom was packed. Johnny insisted on doing his own research and writing his own arguments. He starts to argue the case, and argues for 45 minutes, and typically the court only gives you 15 minutes. We won in the appellate court.

The defendants appealed to the Supreme Court. And we wanted the case to be heard because we were trying to establish law that would preclude people from arbitrarily using an individual’s name in a song. We wanted law that would limit the protection that artists had under the First Amendment. In preparation for that case, we had to get everyone on the legal team admitted to the Supreme Court Bar. I was the only person on the team who had already argued before the Supreme Court, and because attorneys must be admitted by someone already admitted, I had the pleasure of admitting everyone on the team, including Johnny Cochran. The Supreme Court denied the petition for certiorari.

Brian Walker

Student Spotlight

Brian Walker is a native of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and current 1L representative for the Sports and Entertainment Law Student Association (SELSA) at Howard University School of Law. As an active member of SELSA, Brian plans to strengthen his network in the entertainment industry, and gain additional insight into the relationship between both the entertainment and the legal professions.

In 2007, Brian graduated from Howard University, earning his Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Management. As an undergraduate, Brian was an active student leader who worked three years for the Bison Yearbook staff, where he rose from Photography Secretary to Managing Editor. Brian also maintained an actively demanding schedule off campus by interning his freshman year for a local record label, Nationwide Takeover. After working for several months at Nationwide Takeover, Brian left the company with his mentor and label's co-founder, Mr. Rob Ford. Together, Brian and Mr. Ford created Creative Minds, Inc., a film and television production and development entity. Brian served as the Chief Operating Officer of Creative Minds, and Unit Production Manager for the company's original film entitled, "Dorm Window." Moreover, Brian worked for four years as the Program Director for the Creative Minds In Cannes Student Filmmaker Program, which is held annually at the Cannes Film Festival in the South of France.

After graduating from Howard, Brian immediately moved to Los Angeles to further pursue his interests in the entertainment industry. While in Los Angeles, Brian would continue as Chief Operating Officer at Creative Minds. Through consistent hard work, an unyielding attitude, and networking, he obtained employment with New Line Cinema, a Time Warner Company. While at New Line Cinema, Brian held a dual position as the Executive Assistant to the Vice President of Production Administration and the In-House Production Assistant. In addition, Brian also worked many weekends as an on-set Production Assistant and Coordinator for MTV's Video Music Awards, the Janice Dickinson Show, The Billy Blanks Jr. Cardioke Fitness Video, and other independent features and short films. After leaving New Line Cinema, Brian worked as a Production Assistant within the Mobile Group at Fox Digital Media in Beverly Hills, and later in Studio City at the illustrious Fox Studio Lot.

After obtaining his J.D./M.B.A. from Howard, Brian aspires to continue working in the entertainment industry. Ultimately Brian plans to develop his own television, film and digital media development and distribution firm that will specialize in both minority and educational based content. Furthermore, Brian also plans to build a portfolio of various real estate investments across America. Currently dedicated to his studies, Brian utilizes his limited free time learning about the intricacies of legal, educational and entertainment matters, developing ideas for his future firm, watching the occasional Netflix movie, and playing soccer competitively.



Meet the Team

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