



Law & Business

UWLA - Our Past, Our Vision, & Our Future



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Looking Back: UWLA Faces its Greatest Crisis

Second in a Five-part series. Based upon an interview with Perry M. Polski Dean Emeritus and founder of UWLA by Thomas H. Mitchel and updated by Jay Frykberg. Originally published in the *UWLA Connection* January 1997.

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OUR HISTORY

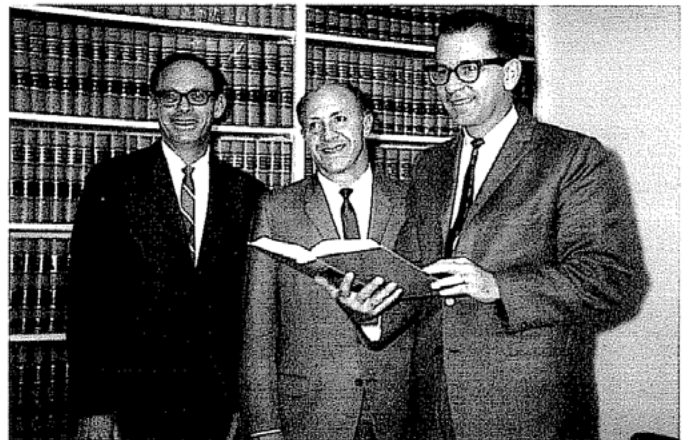
Looking Back: UWLA Faces its Greatest Crisis

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The founders had guessed right at a time when there was growing popular interest in the law as a profession. At that time there existed only one ABA approved accredited law school in the entire Los Angeles basin offering evening courses. There was indeed a significant demand for the kind of no-frills law school that they envisioned.

At a testimonial dinner held in their honor in September 1994, the founders would themselves remark that their impulsive dream to create a law school from the ground up would be nearly impossible to replicate today.

They had the right combination of entrepreneurial spirit and determination at just the right time. For a group of busy high school teachers with little or no experience in such endeavors, the realization of their dream in Culver City occurred at the intersection of Washington Boulevard and Huron Street was an amazing accomplishment. Although tuition for the first couple of years was a mere \$20 per credit unit and at the end of each year there was only a small budget surplus, UWLA had clearly found a niche and had a very promising future. Its physical setting may have been spartan and there were only a handful of instructors such as Joseph Debus, Clifford Dicker, Wallace Frank, and Alan Frieman, at the beginning, but UWLA was able to attract a steady stream of applicants.



Shortly before the opening of UWLA in 1966, Mayor of Culver City, Dan Patacchia (center), welcomes Dr. Wallace Frank, Dean (right) and Mr. Clifford Dicker, a faculty member of the School of Law, to the community

For working people and those not able to meet the stringent admissions criteria and high tuition costs of various ABA-approved law schools in the area, UWLA offered a genuine opportunity. The original site of the University—a former used car showroom—soon proved too small to accommodate the growing institution.

After a year at this location, the five founders decided to purchase a parcel of land across the street and constructed a new building themselves. Norman Kargl designed the one story structure and did much of the sub-contracting work. Henry Blunt and Gary Riedel made the rounds of local auctions and building demolition sites and obtained very low cost—sometimes free—essential building materials and furniture. A rented trailer was placed in the parking lot to provide a site for Wallace Frank to conduct admission interviews and for Perry Polski to oversee the registration process. A year later a second floor was added.



Second location of UWLA, across from the original building, which served as the home of the University from 1968-74.

The first three years of UWLA's existence was a period of steady growth although there were also some false starts. While the main facility in Culver City was beginning operations, the founders had also established a separate entity called the South Bay College of Law, located first in Torrance and later in Harbor City. Some UWLA instructors such as Clifford Dicker and Alan Frieman taught at both the Culver City and South Bay locations. The energy and resources of the founders may have been simply stretched too thin to effectively manage this satellite operation while also overseeing the development of the Washington Boulevard site.

After a brief period, the South Bay College of Law went its own way and became a legally and financially independent entity.

As the end of the 1960s arrived, UWLA was simultaneously beset with both an internal and external challenge to its existence. It seemed for a time that the vision of the founders might not survive this dual threat. Internally, there was growing discord between Wallace Frank, Dean of the Law School, and the other founders, Henry Blunt, Norman Kargl, Perry Polski, and Gary Riedel. Accusations were made back and forth about excessive expenditures and alleged improper use of equipment and facilities.

In retrospect, some of the allegations were relatively trivial in nature. In 1968, Frank initiated a law suit against the other founders asserting his desire to govern this new but rapidly expanding institution. Predictably, a counter suit was soon filed. Wallace Frank was represented by a law firm in the San Fernando Valley while Clifford Dicker, and later Alan Frieman, represented the other four founders. Both sides in this dispute made lengthy pre-trial depositions and as 1969 began, it seemed as if the collegial governance of the institution was about to come to a bitter end.

The lawsuit never did go to trial but was settled out of court. Under the terms of the agreement, Frank agreed to step down as a Trustee and as Dean and was granted a permanent contract as a law instructor. Perry Polski, having recently completed his J.D., was appointed Dean of the Law School. Under the arrangement, Frank was free to pursue, among other things, his plan to establish and a market a Bar preparation course. Over time, this would become a very lucrative endeavor.

Despite several months of acrimony, once the suit was settled, it was as if nothing had ever happened. Wallace Frank remained a charismatic and well-respected law instructor and continued to press for the changes

and innovations that would put the institution on the path to eventual approval of its curriculum by the State Bar of California Control of the destiny of the institution, however, was now firmly in the hands of other four founders. Blunt, Kargl, Polski, and Riedel were determined to keep tuition low in order to ensure accessibility to those of modest means and to control expenditures. By the Fall of 1971, their frugality and a steady increase of enrollment to more than 500 students had made possible a sizeable budget surplus.

The threat which UWLA faced in the late 1960s from the external environment, however, was far more complex and dangerous. There had been a proliferation of new law schools throughout the state during this period. Although not accredited by the State Bar, these educational institutions were granted authority by the State of California to issue degrees. Under California law, graduates of these law schools were eligible, along with those of ABA-approved law schools, to take the California Bar examination and, if successful, become full-fledged attorneys.

The opening of a number of then non-accredited law schools such as Glendale College (Now California Bar Accredited), Western State University (Now ABA approved), San Fernando Valley College (Now UWLA's SFV Campus), UWLA Now WSCUC and California Bar Accredited), and others challenged the supremacy of the older and more prestigious ABA-approved schools. In fact, the existence of these private, part-time, primarily evening law schools, provided the only practical opportunity for working people, for the educationally disadvantaged, and for many students to pursue a legal education that otherwise could not.

Beginning in 1967 and intensifying in 1969, a campaign began, sponsored by some ABA-approved law schools, to introduce bills in the state legislature that would have either abolished non-accredited law schools altogether or restricted their operations severely. From 1967 to 1971, some 12 separate bills were introduced in Sacramento that had the potential to put UWLA out of business permanently.

Looking Back:

1966 Happenings

Number One TV Show **Bonanza**

Best Picture **A Man For All Seasons**

Best Actor **Paul Scofield**

("A Man For All Seasons")

Best Actress **Elizabeth Taylor**

("Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?")

Hit Songs

These Boots are Made For Walking

(Nancy Sinatra)

Yellow Submarine, Eleanor Rigby

(The Beatles)

Reach Out and I'll Be There (Four Tops)

Top Albums

Rubber Soul (Beatles)

If You Can Believe Your Eyes and Ears

(Mamas and the Papas)

Dr. Zhivago

Best Sellers

In Cold Blood (Truman Capote)

Valley of the Dolls (Jacqueline Susann)

And, of course . . . **UWLA was founded!**

To counter this threat, the founders of UWLA and the leaders of other non-accredited law schools in California waged their own statewide public relations effort. This was not the sort of playing field that any of them were familiar with but their survival depended on how quickly they could mount an opposition effort. Among the specific bills that posed a threat to the then non-accredited law schools was SB 1125, introduced by Senator Rodda in 1967, which would have eliminated all part-time legal education in California after April 1972. This measure failed and was re-introduced the following year as SB 987 by Senator Lagomarsino, which would have also eliminated non-accredited law schools after a specified period.

In 1969, opponents of non-accredited law schools introduced the following bills: SB 1002, SB 1164, and AB 2025. These bills would have indirectly limited the career options of graduates of non-accredited law schools. Another bill introduced in 1969 would have created a two-tier examination system for students from accredited and non-accredited law schools. Students from ABA-approved schools would have been administered an abbreviated Bar Examination while those from non-ABA schools would have faced a far more rigorous testing process.

To defeat the effort underway by the ABA lobby in Sacramento required a concerted effort. As the new Dean of the Law School, Perry Polski represented UWLA in a newly created organization called the Association of Private Law Schools (APLS), serving as its President for three years. The member institutions of APLS hired a lobbyist and began an extensive letter writing campaign to newspapers and elected officials. Visits were made to the offices of many legislators in their home constituencies and in Sacramento to plead the case for non-accredited law schools. While not as well-financed as their opponents, APLS was able to focus public attention on their goal of democratizing the Bar and their vision of the nobility of the law as a profession. They were ultimately victorious.

By the early 1970s, the non-accredited law schools in California had survived the legislative challenge to their existence. They had even achieved sufficient credibility that they were invited to participate in the formulation of a new set of accreditation standards being developed by the Committee of Bar Examiners.

As the new decade dawned, UWLA had been through two potentially disastrous crises. The necessary steps were being taken to facilitate eventual accreditation by the State Bar and plans were underway to create the School of Paralegal Studies and a School of Business. The 1970s would be a period of innovation and dramatic growth.

In the next issue:
*UWLA Builds for
the Future*



OUR VISION

Shay Aboutalebi, Esq.

Vice President of Global Partnerships | PDSO

My life story illustrates how adversity engenders strength of character and a genuine desire to make a difference in our world. My mother and I immigrated to the U.S. from Iran, when I was seven. Within two years, my father abruptly abandoned us, compounding our hardships as immigrants. My mother lapsed into a deep, debilitating depression that led her to neglect household responsibilities. Soon the events of 9/11 would shake our quiet life. Being Iranian and Muslim, we were scrutinized with suspicion and pushed to our limits. I was in middle school at the time and had to cope with ubiquitous prejudice and racism that sprang from sheer ignorance.

Against this backdrop, I matured quickly into a strong-willed, independent young woman. From a young age, I looked after my mother and provided her reassurance and comfort while taking charge of household responsibilities. She worked long hours to support us, and I would follow suit at 16. Challenges made me a more capable and resourceful individual. A related strength that boded well for a legal career was my willingness to stand up for myself.

The same passion and conviction that shaped me into a forceful communicator inspired me to major in political science and take part in numerous civic and community activities. Then I made the decision to start my law school journey at UWLA Fall of 2013 and graduated Spring of 2017. My journey at UWLA was one I will never

forget; my mom always said, “a college degree is key to realizing the American Dream, well worth the financial sacrifice because it is supposed to open the door to a world of opportunity” and she was right!

I was over the moon when I had the opportunity to come back to my alma mater and start in various positions until I was able to find what truly spoke to me, being the Director of Global Partnerships. I contemplated how my passion for defending what was right and my unremitting energy and activism could be combined with higher knowledge of the law and working in higher education combined, empowering me to have a more significant impact in my community and society than ever before. As the Director I will be integrating UWLA’s partnership program into a larger organizational strategy. This position will also help me execute key business development functions to expand UWLA’s partnership portfolio. In addition, I will continue to establish and maintain relationships with current UWLA partners and sponsors. My patience, spirit of cooperation, and strong sense of individual and social responsibility will be an asset in UWLA’s transition to UWLA 3.0.

I am ready and eager to begin this next chapter of my life not only as a UWLA alumna but also as a Director of Global Partnerships, confident that I can make great strides toward a bright future as a member of our community, UWLA and time-honored legal system.

The Global Partnership Directors' responsibilities include:

- Integrating UWLA's partnership program into the larger organizational strategy. This position also executes key business development functions to expand UWLA's partnership portfolio.
- In addition, I will continue to establish and maintain relationships with current UWLA partners and sponsors.
- Effectively evaluate current agreements, suggest improved marketing strategies for members, and maintain relationship and communication with partners.
- Create customized reports to track success of partner and account strategy.
- Build partner/sponsor confidence and credibility by consistently solving problems quickly and accurately.



OUR FUTURE**UWLA's School of Law****Vice Dean
David Chaney**

I began teaching at UWLA over a decade ago. I had other opportunities at other institutions. But what drew me to UWLA was its abiding mission to offer an affordable quality legal education to those who may have beaten a different and often more difficult path than the traditional law student. In my opinion, UWLA not only offers an opportunity to many late bloomers, but it enriches the legal community and pays dividends to the underserved communities by enhancing and increasing access to legal services.

Over my tenure as an adjunct professor and full-time professor, I have witnessed UWLA's, remarkable success in meeting the needs of its students and exceeding the highest levels of accreditation attainable by state bar accredited institutions. Instead of folding or fading in the face of a once in a century pandemic and the accompanying economic fallout, UWLA seized the opportunity to innovate and ultimately become even stronger. Through the experience and expertise of dedicated and committed faculty members, including the extraordinary work of Professors Zand, Barrett, Glassman, and many others, UWLA not only survived but achieved remarkable upticks in quality, reputation, and prestige, becoming in my opinion, one of most exemplary institutions among state bar accredited institution.

A large amount of credit for UWLA's recent success must be attributed to Dean Frykberg and his administrative staff. Not surprisingly the dean is often sought out by others in and outside the state to share lessons learned and obstacles traversed. I look forward to lending my support as Vice Dean to the dean, the administration, faculty, and student body in fulfilling UWLA's mission as we confront the post-pandemic educational landscape and myriad twenty-first century issues.

David Chaney Biography:

Professor Chaney attended the University of California at Los Angeles, where he received a bachelor's degree in political science and a JD from the law school. After graduation from law school, Professor Chaney spent most of his legal career with the California Attorney General's office where he worked in the civil and public rights divisions. As a civil trial attorney assigned to various sections within the Attorney General's Office, he litigated numerous federal and state cases at all trial, administrative and appellate levels. Many of the cases resulted in published federal and state court opinions.

Strength of Mind. Strength of Will.



David Chaney Biography, *continued*

In 2006 he was appointed Chief Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Law Division by former Attorney General Jerry Brown and again in 2010 by former Attorney General (now U.S. VP), Kamala Harris. As chief of the Civil Division, he oversaw a budget in excess of \$100 million and the work of over 600 attorneys and paralegals whose primary mission was to represent the more than 200 state agencies and elected officials, including the Governor, Treasurer, and State Controller, in nearly 18,000 active cases at any given time. He also reviewed complex appellate cases and sensitive issues including agency, federal, and state conflicts.

During his thirty-year tenure at the Attorney General's Office, he was also an in-house instructor and lecturer on a wide variety of legal topics, including consumer protection, bankruptcy and state and local taxation. His lectures included presentations to the National Association of Attorneys General on state enforcement of commodities fraud and the Eleventh Amendment. Since leaving the Attorney general's Office, in addition to joining the UWLA faculty, he has lectured in various places in the US and abroad on a broad range of topics, including leadership, ethics and American legal and political systems and processes.

OUR FUTURE

Director of Facilities

Rodrigo Cobarruvias:

UWLA's Longest-Serving
Member of the UWLA Family

Rodrigo was born on April 14, 1961 in Tala, a town and municipality in Jalisco, Mexico. He grew up in a single parent household, has one sister, and attended elementary school in his home town until the fifth grade. His family has a lineage of Mexican singers called Mariachis and he himself was going to become a Mariachi. Rodrigo is currently married and has four children, Estella, Mariselda, Juan Carlos, and Rodrigo Jr. His children currently work in the medical field, sales, and his son Rodrigo Jr. is a United States Marine.

Rodrigo immigrated to the U.S. in October of 1974 when he was 13 years old. Upon arriving to the U.S., he matriculated at the local high school but at the age of 15, he was forced to work to financially help his family. His first job in the U.S. was at an upholstery shop where he worked for about a year and a half until the age of 17. Since then, he has worked as a gas station attendant, clothing assembler, in delivery services, and the automotive industry. At one time in his life, Rodrigo held four (4) jobs at the same time which included his current job at UWLA.

Rodrigo began working at UWLA on July 4, 1998. His first position was in maintenance of the facilities and at some point, during the time he has worked at UWLA, his wife, four children, and grandchildren have also been employed in different positions at UWLA.

Rodrigo enjoys going to work at UWLA. He feels that UWLA has helped him grow professionally and personally by helping him develop self-confidence as an employee and family man. From the moment he began to work at UWLA, he felt the support of the UWLA family from President Brown all the way to the front desk administrator. UWLA has treated him like family and he truly feels blessed to be a part of such a close knit and supportive institution.

Rodrigo feels very appreciate for the opportunity that UWLA has provided because UWLA has truly allowed him to develop into an overall better person. The respect that UWLA has shown him has allowed him to develop values and skills that have contributed immensely to his life. Those values and skills have allowed him to support his family and live the American Dream.

In his almost quarter century as part of the UWLA family, Rodrigo has seen generations of students fulfill their dreams of earning their JD while at the same time fulfilling his own dreams of being able to provide for his family and being part of an institution that promotes growth and prosperity.

OUR FUTURE

Admissions and Enrollment
Administrative Coordinator & D.S.O.

Grace Williams:**UWLA's Newest Member of
the UWLA Staff Family**

Grace Williams, a native to Los Angeles, was born and raised in Burbank, California. As she grew up influenced by the media and entertainment industry that resided in her hometown, she felt a strong connection to the mass communication and marketing. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies. Her education provided her with a well-rounded understanding of strategic marketing, organizational communication, teamwork and collaboration.

After graduating through the beginnings of quarantine due the Covid-19, she began her professional career with much uncertainty.

Ms. Williams curiously found an open position in Admissions and Enrollment as an Administrative Coordinator at the University of West Los Angeles. She had worked in the field of higher education during her last years of her undergraduate career as a student leader in a residential advocacy association. With a great passion of contributing her experience and skills at a higher education institution, Ms. Williams excitedly accepted her position at UWLA.

As the newest staff member at UWLA, Ms. Williams began her journey at UWLA working remotely in the Admissions and Enrollment department. Presently, she assists students with their admissions process, communicates needs during enrollment periods, and

aids her team members in marketing and recruitment initiatives. She manages UWLA's social media accounts and uses the university's platform to engage its community through highlights of UWLA students, faculty, and alumni, running campaigns and creating content for crucial holidays and events such as black history month and notifying the audiences of UWLA on recent news on behalf of the university.

Earlier this year, Ms. Williams became the most recent Designated School Official (D.S.O.) at UWLA. In her role, she assists the Vice President in Global Partnerships with international admissions, enrollment, and student engagement initiatives. As the most recent staff member to join the UWLA family, Ms. Williams is grateful for the opportunities her position has given her and deeply looks forward to the growth and development she can provide to the university.

WINTER Reading List

Recommendations from Your UWLA Family

One of UWLA's values is that of family.

Our value of family is one of interpersonal relationships that requires us to care for and treat all *members of our community in a constructive but honest and respectful manner. **Members of our community are all who share our values.*

To help communicate our institutional value of family, we asked our staff the following: "What is your personal recommendation of two (2) books of a non-religious nature, that you believe would be beneficial to the UWLA community (Students, Staff, Faculty, etc.) to read, or if they have already read your recommendation(s), to reread?"

That list was reviewed by a committee, that committee selected those submittals that at least one member of the committee had read previously and agreed was in alignment with UWLA's values as an educational institution.

The following list includes submittals by the following UWLA staff in alphabetical order:

President Robert W. Brown, Dean Talon Brown, Financial Aid Administrator Diana Carrillo, Vice Dean David Chaney, CFO Ryan Fullmer, Provost Jay Frykberg, Faculty Chair Perry Martin Jr., Admissions and Enrollment Administrative Coordinator & D.S.O. Grace Williams, Faculty Chair Steve Zand, Associate Dean Eric Zegarra.

Book Recommendations

(Organized alphabetically by title and linked to Amazon.com, Gimlitmedia.com or Youtube.com):

1. **The Art of War** by Sun Tzu
2. **Caste - The Origins of Our Discontents** by Isabel Wilkerson
3. **Don't Overthink It** by Anne Bogel
4. **The FIVE Temptations of a CEO** by Patrick Lencioni
5. **Friday Forward: Inspiration & Motivation to End Your Week Stronger Than It Started** by Robert Glazer
6. **How I Built This** (Podcast)
7. **Lifespan—Why We Age And Why We Don't Have To** by David Sinclair
8. **The Mamba Mentality: How I Play** by Kobe Bryant
9. **Man's Search for Meaning** by Viktor E. Frankel
10. **Meditations** by Marcus Aurelius
11. **The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business** by Charles Duhigg
12. **The Prince** by Machiavelli
13. **The Slight Edge: Turning Simple Disciplines into Massive Success and Happiness** by Jeff Olson and David Mann
14. **The Soul of America, The Battle for our Better Angels** by Jon Meacham
15. **Startup (Gimlet)** (Podcast)
16. **Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know** by Malcolm Gladwell
17. **Where Tomorrow's Aren't Promised, A Memoir of Survival and Hope** by Carmelo Anthony
18. **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People** by Stephen R. Covey

UWLA Writing Contest

“Which book do you recommend to the UWLA community and why do you recommend it?”

The winner will be selected by the UWLA committee and will be awarded:

1. A cash prize of \$350.00,
2. The publication of their submittal in the next edition of the UWLA newsletter, and
3. A copy of the book recommended will be purchased and given to all UWLA staff to read.

TERMS: *All submittals must be emailed and received no later than 11:59 p.m. P.S.T. on Friday, January 7, 2022. The submitter gives UWLA permission to publish the submittal and the submittal must be the original work of the author. All submittals must be in a word or PDF format and emailed to ALO@UWLA.edu. The winner will be selected and receive their award on Monday January 31, 2022.”*

