RAISING THE BAR

A publication dedicated to the exchange of evidence-based thinking about the bar exam

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From the Director

Happy New Year and welcome to the January 2019 issue of *Raising the Bar*, a newsletter dedicated to the exchange of evidence-based ideas about the bar exam. As we conceived and sought content for the [inaugural issue](#), I reached out to great leaders and thinkers in legal education, law practice, and the licensing community. I was overwhelmed, in a wonderful way, by the response and obvious desire of many to participate in a spirited, robust, and respectful discussion about an often difficult topic.

Dean Erwin Chemerinsky's Distinguished Commentary in the October 2018 newsletter underscored a growing chasm between "elite" law schools and many other law schools with respect to the bar exam. Dean Chemerinsky noted that at the former, "little effort" is required "to prepare students for the exam," yet the bar exam is such a concern at some schools that it fundamentally "drives much of how education is done." In schools with low pass rates, the bar exam not only often drives curricular choices but may also become a central focus of resource allocation. In no uncertain terms, for at least a few law schools, the bar exam poses an existential threat.

While the impact of the bar exam on law schools generally, and the disparate impact on elite versus non-elite schools in particular, pose many important and wide-ranging questions, one point must never be lost: bar passage statistics are much more than numbers; they represent the hopes, dreams, finances, and futures of real people, *our graduates*. No matter how great the institutional concerns, the personal stakes are in many respects far greater.

Readers who have taught and advised students before and after they have taken the bar exam know the challenge of counseling and consoling those who fail. Repeat takers typically experience the full range of grief cycle emotions, sometimes compounded with humiliation, while at the same time trying to both diagnose *and remedy* the causes of failure. In addition, they must absorb the compound financial hits of lost or delayed employment opportunities, looming student loan repayment obligations, and the costs of additional bar review and test-related fees.

Raising the Bar will not shy away from tough questions – questions about the responsibilities of legal education and bar admission stakeholders to seize opportunities to make the process of becoming a lawyer as equitable and relevant as possible, and questions about the responsibility of students to engage as fully as possible and to the best of their abilities in the hard work that is necessary to assume their roles as future professionals. As a space for respectful communal conversation and idea-sharing, this newsletter will rely heavily on well-reasoned, evidence-based insights, highlighting recent research and programmatic interventions that show promise for helping the real people behind the statistics.

In this issue, we are deeply grateful to Judith A. Gundersen, President and CEO of the National Conference of Bar Examiners, for contributing the Distinguished Commentary column, and for sharing critical information along with her thoughtful and important perspectives. This issue also features an update from the ABA Commission on the Future of Legal Education, a profile of the academic excellence program at the John Marshall School of Law, reflections on cultural bias and the bar exam by UC Irvine Associate Director of Academic Skills Christina Chong, and much more.

Thank you for joining the conversation! Listening carefully to one another, and working collaboratively, we can and will raise the bar.

Sara Berman, Esq.

Director, Programs for Academic and Bar Success
AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence®

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Distinguished Thinker Commentary

Judith A. Gundersen, President and CEO of the National Conference of Bar Examiners

I'm glad to be able to reach out to readers of this newsletter who hail from law schools to give you NCBE's perspective on lawyer licensing and our respective roles in that process. We are always striving to improve understanding and collaboration with fellow stakeholders in the legal education and bar admissions community; writing for this newsletter aimed at "breaking down silos and bridging information gaps" seems like a great opportunity to dispel some misconceptions about the bar exam, discuss the July 2018 bar exam results in the context of larger exam-related trends, and tell you about some of NCBE's important new initiatives.

One misconception that we have encountered recently is the idea that pretesting items (questions) on the MBE makes the exam harder. Pretesting has been an important part of NCBE's development process for many years. It's a test development best practice because it vets items before they count toward an examinee's score. For example, an item that doesn't perform well doesn't make the cut and won't appear as a scored item on future exams. (In this context, an item that does perform well means one that is not too hard, is not too easy, and differentiates well between examinees who are more proficient and those who are less so.)

Among pretesting's many benefits is the prevention of a scenario in which a poorly performing item must essentially be "thrown out" by marking each of its possible answers correct. We've heard the assertion that such an "all-correct" item would actually help examinees by raising their scores, and that pretesting must therefore make the exam harder. But that's not how the MBE—or any high-stakes exam—is developed or scored. The MBE is *equated*, meaning that scores on different forms of the exam are statistically adjusted to compensate for differences in difficulty, resulting in comparable scores across time. (Virtually every standardized exam is equated.) Because of equating, an "all-correct" flawed item won't count toward *anyone's* scaled score even if *everyone* gains one raw score point. (Raw scores are simply the number of items answered correctly; scaled scores are the scores that are actually reported and used to make pass/fail decisions.) In other words, "all-correct" items may raise examinees' *raw* scores but won't affect *scaled* scores. This question is addressed in our Fall 2018 *Bar Examiner* ([Bar Exam Q&A: 13 Questions from Inquiring Minds](#)).

Equating is also key to understanding a related misconception addressed in a recent piece in the *Bar Examiner:* whether increasing the number of pretest items on the MBE from 10 to 25 (and thus reducing scored items from 190 to 175) beginning in February 2017 has made it harder for examinees to pass. The concern here may be that with fewer items being scored, each one carries greater weight, and therefore, answering each item correctly becomes that much more important.

The equating process allows us to map an MBE with 175 scored items or an MBE with 190 scored items to the same 200-point MBE scale by statistically accounting for differences in test form length. When the MBE consisted of 190 scored items to sample performance (out of a 200-total item exam form), the scoring process did not entail simply multiplying each item answered correctly by 1.053 to convert an examinee's raw score to the 200-point score scale. Nor do we now, with 175 scored items, multiply each item answered correctly by 1.143 to convert the raw score to the 200-point score scale. In other words, each of the 175 scored items does not have to "count" more to get the same scaled score as when there were 190 scored items.

Instead, equating uses a sophisticated statistical process to account for changes in difficulty (and number of items, as in this case) between test forms to eliminate differences and compare scores from one administration to the next as apples-to-apples. The equating process used with the MBE does not "weight" items; it uses item performance across examinees to map a raw score onto a scaled score so that the scaled score reflects examinee proficiency only, not test form differences in terms of difficulty of items or the number of items on the form.

NCBE's testing and research team modeled the implications of the change from 190 to 175 scored items prior to implementation and found that scaled scores were comparable; specifically, we found that the MBE was not made harder (or easier) by reducing the number of scored items to 175. And we were able to verify that MBE reliability would remain high-stakes-level high. (*See* ["The Testing Column: Q&A: NCBE Testing and Research Department Staff Members Answer Your Questions,"](#) Winter 2017–2018 *Bar Examiner*.)

Some have asked whether the MBE is graded on a curve. It is not. MBE scaled scores have consistent meaning across bar exams so that, for example, a score of 140 earned on one MBE reflects comparable proficiency to a score of 140 on a subsequent MBE. The MBE is not "graded on a curve" such that a certain percentage of examinees obtains a certain score. In addition, if everyone who sits in a given jurisdiction meets that jurisdiction's passing standard, then there can be a 100% pass rate. Passing standards (cut scores, in measurement literature) are also not set so that, say, 70% of examinees will pass—and 30% must fail—during any one administration. Most U.S. jurisdictions have set their cut scores from 130 to 135 on the MBE scale (260 to 270 on the UBE scale). That range is near the mean of the score distribution, where the largest numbers of examinees score, so a small shift in examinee scaled scores (or a change in the passing standard) will tend to have a large effect on the number of examinees who pass or fail.

Another misconception we sometimes encounter involves not the scoring of the bar exam, but the material it tests. The bar exam, in its current state, tests legal doctrine. Some think the bar exam emphasizes legal doctrine more than it should, and dismiss such doctrine testing as "memorization." Asking would-be lawyers questions about the law on a law licensing exam seems reasonable. It also reflects what students have been taught over the course of a three-year law school curriculum. Labeling the testing of legal doctrine as "memorization" ignores the cognitive processes needed to answer well-crafted multiple-choice and constructed-response items. An item testing mere memorization, like "What does Federal Rule of Evidence 702 address?" would never appear on the MBE or the MEE. All MBE and MEE items require some legal knowledge (a contract must have consideration) but also require application and analysis (Is there a contract for the sale of the ring? No, because there was no consideration to keep the offer open.). A 2006 study involving think-aloud protocols revealed that recalling isolated facts was a relatively small part of the cognitive processes examinees engaged in when answering MBE items. (*See* "A Think-Aloud Approach to Understanding Performance on the Multistate Bar Examination," February 2006 *Bar Examiner*.)

In their book, *Developing and Validating Test Items* (2013), Thomas M. Haladyna and Michael C. Rodriguez discuss this issue in terms of selected-response ("SR") items (multiple-choice items are a type of SR item, as are true/false items). The authors note that "SR item formats can elicit a variety of cognitive demands. The

stereotype that SR testing is restricted to memory-type cognitive demand is unfair. Fortunately, credentialing testing provides many examples of SR testing with high cognitive demand that reflect the target domain of tasks associated with all professions" (p. 297). They go on to discuss "two highly successful programs, one in licensing and the other in certification," that make use of such high-cognitive-demand items (pp. 297–98). The licensing program cited in the text is the bar exam, with the MBE specifically cited.

All these things are important to consider in light of the July 2018 MBE results, which I know are on a lot of people's minds. The MBE mean was down by 2.2 points compared to the July 2017 mean. Jurisdictions grade the written portion of the bar exam, so NCBE reports on MBE means only, but by the time you are reading this newsletter, all jurisdictions will have released their scores. The decline in MBE scores is given a detailed analysis in the context of law school applicant numbers and LSAT scores in Dr. Mark Albanese's column in the Fall 2018 issue of the *Bar Examiner*, "The Testing Column: July 2018 MBE: The Storm Surge, Again." Dr. Albanese engages in an empirical analysis to understand MBE performance trends in the context of law school applicant counts and MPRE and LSAT scores. His analyses show that the decline in scores on the July 2018 exam was consistent with law school entry indicators and MPRE performance.

How examinees will perform on the 2019 exams remains to be seen. What has become an unmistakable trend is a changing repeater population due to the growth of the UBE. Previously, examinees had to take multiple bar exams when they sought admission to other jurisdictions. Many of these examinees had earned high scores on their first MBE and had to retake only because they had too little experience to qualify for admission on motion in a new jurisdiction. Our researchers label these repeat test takers as "strong" repeaters (scoring five or more points above the passing standard in their original testing jurisdiction), and they are disappearing thanks to the UBE. With over 100,000 UBE scores earned and 12,000 scores transferred thus far (those figures do not fully reflect July 2018 exam statistics), examinees who would have had to take two or more bar exams even just a few years ago are no longer retesting. While it's good that they no longer have to spend the considerable time and money to take multiple bar exams and delay admission, their absence has likely affected overall MBE mean statistics. Performance is down across both first-time takers and repeaters, but the drops in repeater performance are most striking.

Finally, overall examinee counts are down, too. That is a function both of fewer law students and of the UBE's growth. (*See* "The Testing Column: February 2018: The MBE Storm Surge Continues," Summer 2018 *Bar Examiner*.)

I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to learn more about the issues I've discussed here—as well as many other topics related to the bar exam—in our quarterly publication, the *Bar Examiner*. The *Bar Examiner* is available online and will soon have a dedicated website designed to be a central source of information for the bar admissions community. Please stay tuned for the opportunity to subscribe digitally.

This new website is just one of NCBE's new initiatives to reach out to our partners in the legal education and bar admissions community. NCBE is developing strategic relationships that aim to bridge the communication and education gaps among stakeholders along the legal education–admissions continuum and to make bar exam preparation and success more attainable for all students, regardless of their financial means. We are retooling our study aids and preparing to offer them in a new platform that we think will make them a more effective bar exam preparation tool. We plan to launch the new platform in 2019.

And, we are embarking on an ambitious study of the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed for future entry-level practice in a profession that we all know is changing rapidly. NCBE's comprehensive study can be followed at www.testingtaskforce.org. How will this study affect the bar exam? I don't know—I don't think anyone does. But we are excited to see the outcome. Whatever it is, you can be certain that it will be a function of a well-crafted, thorough, empirical study that has had ample opportunity for input from all stakeholders, including those in legal education. Please subscribe for Task Force updates via the website.

The knowledge, skills, and values that you, as legal educators, instill in your students will help shape their legal careers. The path to those legal careers traverses the licensing process, which is aimed at protecting the public, not at posing unreasonable barriers to access. NCBE and bar examiners greatly value your critical role in preparing students to become lawyers. Together, we can strengthen our bonds and help aspiring lawyers to serve the public and defend the rule of law.

Conference Corner

- Seventh Annual Southwest Consortium of Academic Support Professionals Conference, March 8
- Fourth National People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, March 21–24
- Association of Legal Writing Directors 2019 Biennial Conference, May 29–31
- Third Annual National Association of Law Student Affairs Professionals Conference, June 11–14

Please email Success@accesslex.org if you know of additional upcoming bar-related conferences with sessions that may interest fellow readers.

Organization Updates

ABA Commission on the Future of Legal Education

We thank the ABA Commission for sharing this important update.

ABA President Hilarie Bass launched the two-year Commission on the Future of Legal Education at the beginning of her tenure in August 2017. ABA President Bob Carlson augmented the forward-looking think-tank with the addition of two young lawyers this year and will continue sponsorship of the Commission through August 2019. (View the entire Commission membership here.)

The Commission is tasked with helping to build the legal profession of the future by articulating how best to align the education and licensing of legal professionals with accelerating technology advances and the ever-changing practice of law. Through the course of its work, the Commission has engaged with hundreds of stakeholders to apply design thinking to all aspects of that challenge.

Integral to the Commission's broad task—and the subject of this newsletter—is the bar exam. The Commission seeks to both assess the bar exam as we know it (including the many factors driving the precipitous and ongoing pass rate declines) and to seriously consider what types of instruments are appropriate for assessing licensure for the modern practice of law.

In addition to reviewing the extensive existing research and scholarship, the Commission has engaged with bar examiners, law schools, the NCBE, and others on essential questions related to the bar exam. Dean Patricia White, the Chair of the Commission, recently summarized many of those questions in an article for the *New York State Bar Association Journal*.

The Commission has embarked on a significant longitudinal study designed to better understand the implications of the wide variations among state-level bar exams in the past decade and how testing formats and content correlate, if at all, with the latest cognitive science research. The results of this study and other empirical work will be included in the Commission's final report.

The Commission appreciates all who have already contributed to date, welcomes additional input, and believes we are at a juncture when change is possible.

With all of our collective efforts, we know that the bar exam of the future will more effectively measure minimal competency for the future practice of law and correlate better with the entry-level knowledge, skills, and values required to do the work law school graduates will actually be required to do in the decades to come. For information about and to provide input to the Commission, contact Andrea.Sinner@americanbar.org.

Please email Success@accesslex.org with bar-related updates from your organization.

Upcoming Panels

The Bar Exam will take center stage at AALS with the January 3, 2019 joint session of the sections on Academic Support ("ASP") and Empirical Study of Legal Education and the Legal Profession.

This January 3, 2019 program, *Circling the Square: Fresh Partnerships to Understand Student Learning and Bar Performance through Empirical Studies*, features two plenary panels addressing what we know about bar passage and what we can do with what we know. It then offers 11 concurrent sessions, providing participants with opportunities to choose in-depth, hands-on discussion with individual lead presenters and others engaged in linking ASP and empirical research on bar-related topics. The agenda is reproduced below:

Plenary 1:   What We Know About Bar Performance (January 3, 2019 at 1:30 p.m.)
Moderator: Staci Rucker, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Diversity, University of Cincinnati College of Law and Chair, AALS Section on Academic Support

- *Emerging Issues in Academic Support & Bar Support*, (Sara Berman, Director of Programs for Academic Support and Bar Success, AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence)

- *Success, Supports, & Factors in Bar Examination Performance: What We Learned through Data Analysis & Implications for Curriculum Design* (Amy N. Farley, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, University of Cincinnati School of Education; & Christopher M. Swoboda, Associate Professor and Associate Director of Research Methods, University of Cincinnati School of Education)

- *Predictive Modeling and Bar Performance: Data Analysis & Individualized Student Interventions* (Michael Barry, Assistant Dean and Practitioner in Residence, St. Mary's University School of Law)

Plenary 2: What Might We Do with What We Know? (January 3, 2019 at 2:30 p.m.)
Moderator: Neil Hamilton, Holloran Professor of Law and Co-Director of the Holloran Center for Ethical Leadership in the Professions; Chair-Elect, AALS Section on Empirical Study of Legal Education & the Legal Profession

- *Resilience, Belonging, Learning, Mindsets, and Metacognition in Legal Education* (Victor Quintanilla, Professor of Law, Maurer School of Law and Co-Director, Center for Law, Society & Culture; Adjunct Faculty, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Indiana University-Bloomington, & Jennifer Gundlach, Clinical Professor of Law and Senior Associate Dean for Experiential Education, Maurice A. Deane School of Law, Hofstra University)

- *The Relationship between Law School Coursework & Bar Exam Outcomes* (Robert Kuehn, Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Clinical Education, Washington University School of Law)

- *Battling Bias on the Multistate Bar Exam* (Christina S. Chong, Lecturer & Associate Director of Academic Skills, University of California-Irvine School of Law)

Concurrent Breakout Sessions (January 3, 2019 at 3:30 p.m.)

1. *Getting Started with Empirical Work on Academic Support & Bar Success* (Sara Berman, Director of Programs for Academic Support and Bar Success, AccessLex Center for Legal Education Excellence)

2. *Data Analysis, Bar Performance, and the Curriculum*, (Amy N. Farley, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership, University of Cincinnati School of Education; Christopher M. Swoboda, Associate Professor and Associate Director of Research Methods, University of Cincinnati School of Education; Joel Chanvisanuruk, Assistant Dean for Academic Success and Bar Programs, University of Cincinnati College of Law)

3. *Data Analysis, Bar Performance, and Individual Student Interventions* (Assistant Dean and Practitioner in Residence Michael Barry, St. Mary's University School of Law)

4. *Resilience, Belonging, Learning, and Mindsets in Legal Education* (Victor Quintanilla, Professor of Law, Maurer School of Law and Co-Director, Center for Law, Society & Culture; Adjunct Faculty, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Indiana University-Bloomington)

5. *Metacognition and Its Role in Learning* (Jennifer Gundlach, Clinical Professor of Law and Senior Associate Dean for Experiential Education, Maurice A. Deane School of Law, Hofstra University)

6. *Fostering Growth Mindset Through UW Resilience Lab* (Melissa Berry, Assistant Dean, Student & Career Services University of Washington School of Law)

7. *Law School Coursework and Bar Exam Outcomes* (Robert Kuehn, Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Clinical Education, Washington University School of Law)

8. *Battling Biases: How Can Diverse Students Overcome Bias on Multistate Bar Exam* (Christina S. Chong, Lecturer & Associate Director of Academic Skills, University of California-Irvine School of Law)

9. *Identifying Risk and Plus Factors from Admission Through Bar Study* (Andrea Curcio, Professor of Law, Georgia State University College of Law; Dr. Kimberly D'Haene, Georgia State University Director of Academic Success, Georgia State University School of Law; & Hong Jiang, Senior Research Associate, Office of Institutional Research)

10. *The Elephant in the Room: Removing Stigma from Mandatory Academic Support Counseling and Courses* (Joni Wiredu, Director of Academic Excellence, Washington College of Law, American University & Kertisha Dixon, Assistant Director of Academic Excellence, Washington College of Law, American University)

11. *Professionalism Education and the Road to Bar Passage* (Deborah Moss Vollweiler, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Shepard Broad College of Law, Nova Southeastern University; and Chance Meyer, Assistant Dean for Academic Success & Professionalism, Nova Southeastern University, Shepard Broad College of Law, Nova Southeastern University)

Please email Success@accesslex.org if you know of upcoming events with bar-related sessions.

Publications and Posts

Recent publications

- Louis D. Bilionis, *Bringing Purposefulness to the American Law School's Support of Professional Identity Formation*, 14 U. St. Thomas L.J. 480 (2018)
- Louis D. Bilionis, *Law School Leadership and Leadership Development for Developing Lawyers*, forthcoming in 58 Santa Clara L. Rev. (2018)
- Susan L. Brooks, *Fostering Wholehearted Lawyers: Practical Guidance for Supporting Law Students' Professional Identity Formation*, 14 U. St. Thomas L.J. 412 (2018)
- L.O. Natt Gantt, II; Benjamin V. Madison, III, *Self-Directedness and Professional Formation: Connecting Two Critical Concepts in Legal Education*, 14 U. St. Thomas L.J. 498 (2018)
- Joan M. Rocklin, *Exam-Writing Instruction in a Classroom near You: Why It Should Be Done and How To Do It*, 22 Legal Writing: J. Legal Writing Inst. 189, 253 (2018)

Selected blogs

- Best Practices for Legal Education
- Law School Academic Support Blog
- What Great Law Schools Do

Please email bar-related publications, blogs and posts for inclusion in future issues of *Raising the Bar* to Success@accesslex.org.

Perspectives, Advice, and Tips

We welcome the thoughts below from Christina S. Chong, Associate Director of Academic Skills at the University of California Irvine School of Law.

Statistical studies have shown that minorities underperform on the bar examination compared to the majority. For example, in 1998 the LSAC released a report that revealed first-time passage rates were disproportionate among subgroups: 92% for Whites; 81% for Asians; 75% for Hispanics; 66% for Native Americans; and 61% for African Americans. Similar studies conducted as many as 18 years later mirrored the disparate results in the LSAC report (New York (1992), Florida (2001), and California (2008, 2012, and 2016)).

The consistently lower results for minorities suggest that the multistate bar examination ("MBE") may suffer from test biases. Although test administrators work diligently to reduce test bias, eliminating bias is a difficult task, in part because most people are unaware that implicit bias even exists. The reality of a diverse society is that no one will ever think exactly the same. *Battling Biases: How Can Diverse Students Overcome Test Biases on the Multistate Bar Examination* discusses a four-step method that students can implement to help overcome test biases. The method incorporates techniques related to increasing self-awareness, reading comprehension, IRAC, and using objective logic and common sense.

While this four-step method cannot be said to be the sole reason for student improvement, the successful application of this skills-based training approach, as discussed in the aforementioned article, suggests that educators should focus on teaching students techniques to overcome test biases on the MBEs in addition to advocating for less biased drafting of exam questions.

Grant Opportunities for Legal Educators

- Russell Sage Foundation
- AccessLex Institute Bar Success Grant Program

Please email Success@accesslex.org with links to information about grant opportunities and calls for papers regarding bar-related research.

Bar Success Program Profile

Thank you to Rodney Fong, Associate Dean for Academic Achievement, Institutional Assessment, and Bar Preparation and Clinical Professor of Law at the John Marshall Law School for the profile below of John Marshall's Academic Achievement Program.

The John Marshall Law School recently revamped our Academic Achievement Program, embracing the philosophy suggested by Stanford Professors MarYam Hamedani and Linda Darling-Hammond: "From developing grit and a growth mindset, to learning collaboration and perspective-taking skills, to fostering student belonging and inclusion, psychological resources are critical to student success and to a 21st century education." We are preparing students, starting from day one, with the skills they will need to successfully pass the bar exam.

Diversity, innovation, access, and opportunity are key aspects of our law school's mission. As a result, our student body includes many students from diverse backgrounds, most of whom are first-generation law students. To meet our students' needs, the law school is integrating the research conducted in cognitive psychology, education, and neuroscience throughout the program of legal education.

During new-student orientation, students participate in a new, intensive academic program to develop their learning and analytical skills under the themes of "transitioning to law school" and "life-long learning." Then, during the first semester, students practice their skills in a one-unit, graded course called Expert Learning, which is paired with a doctrinal subject. In that course, we discuss students' transition to law school, along with the law school's expectations, to help demystify the learning process.

In addition to cognitive training, we also incorporate non-cognitive topics, such as growth mindset, resilience, lack of belonging, imposter syndrome, and stereotype threat, into Expert Learning. We introduce these concepts to correspond with times when students are assigned a challenging task in the doctrinal course and could perceive their struggle in a negative way. We've also informed law school faculty and staff about these non-cognitive challenges, and several have developed ways to support and encourage our students.

Students in their final year are reminded of these non-cognitive challenges as they participate in the school's bar-preparation courses. In fact, stereotype threat, growth mindset, and lack of belonging are topics discussed frequently when students meet with

our academic support advisors. The school is also collaborating with experts in high-performance brain training to prepare a group of bar takers in higher-order cognitive functions of strategic attention, integrated reasoning, and innovation.

Please email Success@accesslex.org to submit a bar success program profile for possible publication in future newsletter issues. Note that the purpose of this feature is not to endorse particular programs but to cultivate a community dialogue and share ideas about bar success programming.

Academic and Bar Success Resources for Students

Spotlight: Mental Health and Wellness Resources

As highlighted in the 2016 study by Jerome M. Organ, David B. Jaffe, and Katherine M. Bender, _Suffering in Silence: The Survey of Law Student Well-Being and the Reluctance of Law Students to Seek Help for Substance Use and Mental Health Concerns_, law students struggle in disproportionately greater numbers with substance abuse and mental health challenges. Help is available, however according to the aforementioned study, a majority of those most in need are reluctant to ask for it. No one should suffer alone, and there are many resources available to law students struggling with addiction or mental health disorders. The American Bar Association's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs website includes a list of lawyer assistance programs and resources available in every state. The challenges and available assistance took center stage in the powerful webinar hosted at American University Washington College of Law on Law School Mental Health Day, October 10, 2018: "To Hell and Back: One Lawyer's Path to Recovery."

Please email Success@accesslex.org with links to bar exam-related and other resources that would be helpful for law students, including information about bar preparation scholarships, for inclusion in future issues of _Raising the Bar._

Bar Exam LibGuide Resources for Law Students

Georgia State University College of Law Library

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