

February-April 2014

[II Edition]



Alumni Newsletter



Team Vision

Aimed at strengthening the crucial bond between the University and its alumni, the NLIU Alumni Association is striving to bring together the alumni network on a common platform, leveraging their commitment to the alma mater. It is thus, our humble endeavor to contribute to the University for realizing its goal of being the torch bearer of the legal fraternity.

Team Mission

The Alumni Association shall assist in all activities that aim towards the development of a productive and life-long relationship between the University and its Alumni. The Association strives to communicate the interests and concerns of alumni, worldwide, to the University to encourage inclusive growth and commitment to excellence of NLIU.

Contents

Cover Story

The Road Not Taken 2

In conversation with.....

Prof. Surya Prakash 3

Ashish Razdan, *Alumnus* 4

Rachika Sahay, *Alumnus* 6

NLIU Diaries

6th Convocation: Batch of 2013 5

Mumbai Chapter:
Through the Years 5

Alumni Achievements 3

Student Achievements 7

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The Road Not Taken

*"Two roads diverged in a wood, and
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference."*

Robert Frost

Corporate Law Firms and Litigation are usually the only bells ringing in the ears of law students, throughout law school and after. People preferring a different drummer, are least heard of and their music remains unmeasured. But as exceptions make law more interesting, law students with exceptional, off-beat and not-so-legal career choices have left us amazed. After all, discovering that the woman AJAG officer, Winner of Auto Cross Motor Rally 2008, is an NLIU alumnus is, in all senses astounding.

"ultimate satisfaction." On the same lines, **Gunjit Tripathi** (2010) envisioned his passion, or as he says 'obsession' with airplanes, to be his career for life. Being a Commercial Pilot with Jet Airways,



Capt. Gunjit has all that he wanted and says, that "The biggest satisfaction aviation offers me, apart from its dynamism and thrill, is that, I am living my dream."

Anujaya Krishna (2013), chose Sports Law to be the subject of her first book, 'Sports Law', Universal Publications and is now thoroughly engaged in research after working with AMSS, Bangalore.



Quoting Robert Frost, "My object in living is to unite, My avocation and my vocation; As my two eyes make one in sight" Anujaya says that, "the idea of combining my area of study- law and my hobby- watching sports, drove me to explore Sports Law. As lawyers, we must take up

Choice is a colossal concept, and these individuals chose careers distinct from their legal backgrounds. This cover story elucidates the unique choices our alumni made, who travelled 'The Road Not Taken' by most law students.

Lovleen Kaur Mann (Batch of 2004), became the first-woman officer from



Bhatinda (Punjab) to be the AJAG (Asst. Judge Advocate General) at Indian Army. "JAG tenure gave me an

opportunity to handle varied cases and laws of national importance" says Lovleen, when asked of her experience in the Indian Army.

Lovleen chose Army, being true to her family tradition, whereas **Abhinandan Mishra** (2006) took up his interest in Indian politics and blog writing and is now Journalist with The New Indian Express.



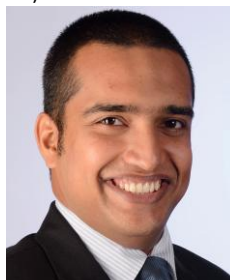
"A 300 words story..." he says, "...can bring a massive change in the society" and this impact on the opinions of the people, is what gives him the

Apart from choosing non-legal careers at the very outset, law school folk are least heard of leaving settled jobs and shifting to an entirely different field of career or even undiscovered branches of law itself. But **Bishen Jeswant** (2012).

has made the move from corporate legal world to the cricket field, joining ESPN CricInfo as Sub-Editor. Bishen, whose mantra is 'Take the initiative'

says, that "the switch in profession was not because I was disillusioned with life in a law firm, but simply because I felt that pursuing a passion would give me greater happiness." Now, happiness being subjective, varies, but for this former associate at Trilegal, Bangalore "The bottom line is simple, if you want something, go out and get it" and believes in taking risks and giving your passion a chance, at the right time.

While Bishen Jeswant is all set to adore the camera on the field, someone shares the same passion off the field.



new challenges and in view of the increasing commercialization of sports, Sports law requires more scholarship to develop as an independent area."

These individuals appear to stir distinctly from the law school stream; nevertheless they always value their umbilical bonds with law as well as the *alma mater*. Cherishing his time with the people of NLIU, Gunjit says, that "The study and profession of law develops a composed temperament" and has been of great help in nurturing him as a pilot. Bishen, shares the same thoughts on his skilled, talented and competitive corporate friends & colleagues, in his words, "bright individuals of the country" who made him aspire, each time to get the best out of himself. The off-beat decisions to switch from traditional legal careers and pursuing the under-lying passions as profession, have concretized through "the guidance and support of teachers in the university who encouraged me" says, Anujaya. While Lovleen, generously finds herself "lucky to be an alumna of NLIU, Bhopal" and NLIU shares the same sense of pride for our alumni.

Personifying passion and excellence, our alumni have fostered and garnered 'The Road Not Taken' and enlightened the future generations of the highest felicity: to enjoy delight, with liberty.

Prof. (Dr.) S. Surya Prakash; Professor of Law (Dispute Settlement Process)



Known for his serenity, Prof. Surya Prakash has pioneered the onset of many new ventures in NLIU. Newsletter brings his memoria about the University and Alumni.

Q. What made you to pick up the subjects like Health Law and Alternative Dispute Resolution different from traditional law subjects?

A. Well, *someone had to start somewhere*. The credit of Health Law being taught at NLIU goes to Prof. Rekhi. It was he who had selected and asked me to develop this subject here. He was a man of strong academic foundation and NLIU was lucky to have his guidance. As far as the Alternative Dispute Resolution is concerned, my acquaintance with it started with Labour Law. During my initial years in Andhra Pradesh, I gained its experience while engaging in Legal Literacy/Aid Programme in rural areas. In NLIU, I remember that, **Utsav Johari** (Batch of 2008) approached me with the idea of an ADR Cell. We worked towards it and then formed Alternative Dispute Resolution Cell at NLIU, which stands flourishing today.

Q. Sir, as you know the alumni are an important part of college. What would be your suggestions on strengthening the bridge between the alumni and the University?

A. A continuous contact, from both sides is necessary; after all it is a symbiotic relationship. The guidance of the indispensable alumni is much required and welcomed by the University. Also, the Alumni are our brand ambassadors and the

promotion of NLIU as a brand largely lies in their hands. Whatever image we have today, is definitely the contribution of our alumni.

Q. Any personal moments that you have with the students of previous batches that you would like to mention?

A. I remember Sharma Ji's *Dhaba* near the main entrance gate inside the campus. The infrastructure then was different and I was the Warden of the Boys' Hostel at that time. While I would inspect the campus at night, the students used to close the *Dhaba*, switch off the lights to give me another impression. Sometimes they said, "Sir, better *parantha* Sir, come, join us!" The *paranthas* were actually better than the hostel's mess; and then we would discuss everything from village politics to world politics, invent strategies for Sr. Bush and much more. But later Sharmaji closed the *Dhaba* (maybe because he was in a lot of debt) (laughs!) Such incidents are unforgettable ones.

[Prof. Surya Prakash has authored "The Story of a Law Teacher: Turning Point" dedicating it to Prof. Menon.

Utsav Johri is currently working with J. Sagar Associates, Mumbai as Senior Associate.]

Alumni Achievements



We heartily congratulate our alumni for their success streak in the recent past. **Kanchan Sinha**, (Batch of 2003) was recently alleviated as a Partner at **Luthra & Luthra, New Delhi** in the Corporate and M&A practice. While, **Aditi Mathur**, (2006) was promoted to the partnership of **Singaporean firm Shook Lin & Bok** as the head of Banking & Finance Practice, **Gaurav Gopal**, (2008); our ever-supportive alumnus, became Partner (Real Estate Litigation) at **Wadia Ghandy & Co., Mumbai** within 6 years of his joining. And **Ankit Asthana**, (2010) secured Rank 91 in the **Civil Services Examination 2013**. NLIU, as a proud *alma mater* wishes all the luck to its alumni for their future endeavors.

Ashish Razdan, *Alumnus*, Batch of 2003

1. Sir, survival in a law firm is considered a tough job. What according to you is the secret behind a successful law firm career as yours? Has NLIU played a specific role?

Ashish Razdan (AR): I would not say that working in a law firm is as tough a job as managing traffic in Mumbai. And if one is only looking to survive (and not thrive), then they are probably in the wrong job! The practice of law requires dedication, aptitude to learn and consistently applying it to the task at hand. There's much joy in helping clients and achieving what they set out to do, and one needs to enjoy the process as well, and not just the outcome. It is great if one enjoys immersing in law and its intricacies. Having an excellent

law school does not offer such subjects, exclusively, students must familiarize with them – most libraries have the basic text and many commentaries/analyses, TV programmes and articles are available online.

It is paramount to develop a keen commercial sense and an understanding of economy and businesses to excel in such fields. Other than following all the corporate subjects closely at law school, becoming a commercially aware lawyer by reading business periodicals and newspapers helps. Internships are a very good opportunity to get a flavor of the corporate law practice and should be used to hone the skills required for this practice



Precision and legal acumen, earned him resplendent success. The Newsletter delves into the views of this Associate Partner at Khaitan & Co. about his profession and NLIU's role in his sojourn to such distinction.

rapport with colleagues and sharing camaraderie comes in handy during the stressful hours carrying the team over the hill.

Being enthusiastic, dependable and proactive and making a mark within an organization is essential. Ultimately, a lot of what you get out of your practice is what you bring to it in the first place (it is difficult to pour over voluminous commentaries if your passion lies in keeping a track of your friends on Facebook!).

2. Though NLIU has no classroom course on M&A, it has largely been your area of practice. What is most interesting about M&A, and what should students do to get a hold of such subjects?

AR: M&A has its fair share of bright and dull days, often being process-driven and tedious but it does present an opportunity to know the brightest minds around, be it entrepreneurs, promoters, investment advisors or, your counterpart legal advisors. Every transaction can pose its own challenges and the skills required to succeed have as much to do with legal acumen as with negotiating skills and people management.

It is imperative for students to be taught basics of M&A law, topics such as the FEMA and SEBI Regulations. But when a

area and so is true for other interests as well.

3. The theme of this issue is 'The Road Not Taken' featuring out of the 'law-box' career options of our alumni. Sir, had you not been a lawyer, what profession would you have chosen? Or any other hobby that you pursue, which is least connected to law?

AR: If I had not chosen to be a lawyer, I would have possibly been an architect or an academician. I have been fascinated with architecture for a long time; and though many do not realize it, architecture/design plays an incredible role in one's experience of life. (It's always a delight to visit a beautiful and well designed building or city.) I have also been a keen follower of literature. I was studying Journalism at Delhi University prior to joining NLIU although I have lost fascination for it now. None of my varied interests are consuming enough to constitute a hobby. My regular interests read like the last line of any ordinary CV – travelling, listening to music and reading!

4. Sir, your valuable suggestions for the Alumni Association and the Newsletter.

AR: Alumni Association has a critical role to play for the University as it is faced with liaising with alumni scattered all over the globe. Often, the intention to contribute to

the alma mater is sidelined by other priorities. I tip my hat to those alumni who made it back to campus and shared their knowledge with the students. The Alumni Association must bring news of the University to its alumni and the Newsletter is an excellent tool to achieve that. I think, one tends to be more generous with time and wisdom while on campus as opposed to being on the other end of a phone line or an e-mail.

5. At the parting note, which incident tops the charts of your cherishable moments at NLIU?

AR: Given that I was a part of the inaugural class at NLIU, there have been many unforgettable moments ranging from being one of the guinea pigs for the course (we studied phonetics in the first trimester and French as a foreign language!) to helping in setting up the first computer lab (them being unpacked by/before us!) to filling overhead water tanks at the hostel (holding massive water pipes down!)

Narrowing down a single incident would be extremely difficult but all such experiences were memorable and cherished for which I am very grateful.

NLIU Diaries

6th Convocation: Batch of 2013

On the 22 of February 2014, a bright Saturday morning, the 6th convocation of NLIU was held wherein 71 students of B.A.,LL.B. (Hons.) Batch of 2008-2013 graduated. The chief guests of the convocation ceremony were Supreme Court Judge Justice A.K Patnaik and Madhya Pradesh High Court CJ AM Khanwilkar. **Swati Singh Baghel** was the center of attention after winning 5 medals. Justice AK Patnaik in his speech to the outgoing students brought to the fore various articles of the Constitution and requested the students to work towards the welfare of the country. In totality, the ceremony was a highly successful one and the gold medalists were a source of inspiration for students of the batches yet to pass out.



Mumbai Chapter: *Through the Years*

It is said that reunions reveal potential friendships that haven't emerged in the past. The recently organized NLIU Reunion in Mumbai proved this. Set amidst the happy environs of Hard Rock Café, it was attended by graduates from 2011 batch all the way up to 2005 batch. The idea for the reunion was mooted in January and after repeated planning (read, postponing) it was finally executed in April. The response was however, resounding. It was really encouraging to see everyone freely mix with each other. Old jokes revolving around the college and the ever green personalities acted as ice breakers and within no time, it was one big NLIU family. Conversations flowed and various topics were broached, the themes being largely decided by the amount of liquid in the body and the time on the clock. The sheer success of the endeavor has ensured that the reunion is made a biannual affair to be organized in April and November, ever year. We hope to see more graduates in the next edition and want the bonds forged in the first one grow stronger. See you in November! [We thank **Sarabjeet Singh** (2012) for giving the Newsletter this Mumbai Chapter.]



Rachika Agrawal Sahay, *Alumnus*, Batch of 2005

1. How is being the legal head (India) at Weatherford different from your work at Trilegal? How should students decide which path to take?

Rachika Sahay (RS): The essential difference is that when I am an integral part of an organization at a senior position, I have to be much more than a lawyer, having a birds' eye view of all the issues engrossing the organization and the impact of each decision. As an in-house counsel I am a part of the process for taking business decisions. I need to offer solutions that are both legal and commercially oriented, and management of decisions from its genesis to its completion and effect on

requiring fresh technical know-how.

Therefore, in addition to the applicable domestic laws, lawyers need to be aware of international and domestic industry practices and standards.

I would like to clarify for the benefit of all readers, especially students that are about to embark upon their journey as practitioners, that merely because one works in a company that deals with a particular industry does not mean that you will solely be working on that sector related matters. Every organization has to deal with various issues that relate not only to business related contracts but also to its employees, assets, acquisitions and transfers and its



Her journey from one phase of eminence to another has rendered NLIU proud and inspired. Newsletter gathers the thoughts of the Sole Legal Counsel (India) at Weatherford about her journey and alma mater.

the organization. Additionally, being the legal head of Weatherford in India, my responsibility is not only to manage oil and gas related matters, but also employment, intellectual property, disputes, acquisitions, litigation etc. I worked on most of these areas while at Trilegal and handling issues here is an extension to that with added responsibility of being directly answerable for the decisions taken.

For students, who find it challenging to determine whether they should join a law firm or move in-house, I would suggest opting for the opportunity where you can work on legal issues in various practice areas going through the grind during initial years. It may not be a good idea to work in a specialist area right from the beginning.

2. Ma'am your practice area has been and will now solely focus on oil and gas related matters, which is rare and off beat. Which feature of these matters interests you the most and your take on their future?

RS: It is true that relatively few lawyers practice oil and gas extensively. In a typical Indian law firm you get to practice in a wide array of infrastructure and energy sectors. Oil and gas is politically very sensitive and a heavily regulated sector which is in a state of constant evolution,

organizational set up. Therefore, this profile encompasses an array of practice areas. However, what must be carefully checked is that the role is that of an active participation rather than passive liaising.

3. How did London School of Economics (LSE), as an alma mater, help you in shaping your career? What will be your advice to students on higher education after 5 rigorous years of law school?

RS: LSE and NLIU shaped me into the lawyer and the person I am today. While NLIU, strengthened my first principles in law, at LSE I learnt how and why these were applied, modified or rejected by other jurisdictions. LSE brought students from various countries allowing us to learn different ways of managing issues – both legal and personal. It was a wonderful experience.

Pursuing masters is a choice one must make conscientiously weighing factors like financial strength, your career plan and importantly, your expectations from the course. A subject that may appeal to you as a student may not be as much fun in practice. I recollect saying insurance law as my response when asked about the subject disliked during my interview at Trilegal. As

fate would have in store, a few months after joining Trilegal, I had to work for some insurance client and I must confess that I thoroughly enjoyed doing insurance law practice.

4. At the last juncture, Ma'am your thoughts and suggestions for the Alumni Association and the Newsletter.

RS: I would like to applaud the members of both the Alumni Association and the Newsletter committee for their initiatives. There is a growing gap between the alumni and the students for lack of initiative from alumni and reluctance from students, which can be bridged by both sides interacting more. Organizing city based events, especially at the time when students intern, can give the alumni and students a platform to interact. Whenever the alumni have spoken about this aspect there has been a common feeling to contribute towards the University.

Newsletter is doing a good job by updating the alumni and it fills us with immense joy and pride to read about the achievements of the University, its teachers and the students.

Student Achievements

Moot Court Association

The session 2013-14 surely stands apart from all other mooting sessions as NLIU was **Rank 1 in MPL** for over three months. From being the Winners at the prestigious **Surana & Surana National Corporate Law Moot Court Competition**; to being Semi-Finalists at **10th KK Luthra Memorial National Moot Court Competition** and **15th DM Harish International Moot Court Competition** NLIU has set new records. We also won the **3rd Dr. AT Markose National Moot Court Competition** and **1st NLUO Maritime Law National Moot Court Competition**. Not merely participating and winning, this session also brought us glory by being the host at **4th NLIU- Justice RK Tankha Memorial National Moot Court Competition, 2014**. The mooting community is hopeful and determined towards maintaining this success streak.



The industrious and enthusiastic team of Moot Court Association 2013-14.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Cell

The students of NLIU Bhopal have been very active in the mediation and negotiation competition scene globally, having garnered a large number of accolades and prizes in major competitions during 2013-14. The students who formed the University Pool showed stellar performances in various mediation and negotiation competitions. In the **International Intercollegiate Mediation Tournament, Drake University, Des Moines (2013)**, NLIU won many accolades including the Best/Client Counsel Team, Outstanding New Team, as well as awards in the Top Mediator and Top Client/Counsel categories. NLIU was also represented in **The Negotiation Challenge, Reykjavik, Iceland (2014)** and was the only team from India to be selected for representation in the Competition for that edition.



Winners at the International Intercollegiate Mediation Tournament, Drake University, Des Moines.

NLIU मंथन

The NLIU Manthan has successfully achieved its aim of bringing together students as well as the faculty members regularly, to discuss, debate and deliberate on pertinent issues of both national and international importance. Some of the more recently discussed matters have been:- *Elections 2014 : Secularism vs Development, Opinion Polls and One Candidate Two Seats*, *'Law of the Land to prevail over Personal Law: Discuss in light of 'Shabnam Hashmi vs UOI'*, *'Trial by Media: Impacts and Need for Media Regulations'*, *'Section 377: Need and Legality of Decriminalization in light of Suresh Kumar Koushal and another vs. NAZ Foundation and others'*, *'Death Penalty: Delay in deciding mercy plea ground for commutation in light of 'Shatrughan Chauhan v. Union of India'* and *'Free Speech Loses in India: Tracing the root and finding a way out in light of the recent controversy over the Wendy Doniger's book The Hindus: An Alternative History'*.

PULER(People United for Law, Education and Rehabilitation)

PULER is a student-run organization founded in 2009 with the objective of social welfare. It started its first project with primary and secondary education by regularly teaching the kids of nearby rural area Mindori with the help of a bunch of volunteers. And with the enthusiasm of volunteering students Computer, Dance and Painting classes were also held and this dedication was materialized with the children giving their wonderful performance at the University Cultural Fest, Rangmanch, 2014. Apart from imparting education, PULER has also successfully organized Cleanliness drives, AIDS awareness campaigns and Blood Donation Camps, both within campus and outside.



The manifold activities of PULER.

Jus Cultura

With the onset of the academic year NLIU hosted the **2nd NLIU Parliamentary Debate 2013** and this year has been one of great pride as our team won the **Indian National Debating Championship at IIT- Delhi**, along with **Sri Ram Debating Festival** and **Punjab Engineering College Debate**. Our teams were finalists at the **Nirma Law College Debate**, **Polemic Debate**, **Ramjas College**, **BITS, Pilani Debate** and alike, and semi-finalists at debates like the **Kremlin Debate**, **Jesus and Mary College**. Further, this year has seen adjudicators from NLIU do very well as we have won Best Adjudicator awards at **Xaviers College Debate**, **Thadani Invitational Debate**, **Mukherjee Memorial Debate** and the **Bits, Pilani Debate**. Internationally at the **United Asians Debating Championship**, **Krithika Chandrasekaren(2014)** was placed as the 8th best adjudicator. This has been an unprecedented success of the NLIU debating team.



Final rounds of the 2nd NLIU Parliamentary Debate 2013.