

GROWING FORWARD

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The 2010-2011 *St. Thomas Law Review* Executive Board convened with a simple purpose in mind: What can we, as a group, do to further establish the *St. Thomas Law Review* as a serious academic publication, while also enhancing the *Law Review*'s brand and venturing out beyond the traditional publication format by embracing new media. With these lofty goals in mind, the Executive Board, the membership, and our wonderful office manager, faculty advisor, and the entire faculty, embarked upon a truly exciting year in the *St. Thomas Law Review*'s history.

From the beginning of our tenure, expanding the *Law Review*'s reach by utilizing new media was a primary goal, especially when considering that print media, whether traditional newspapers or legal publications, was in steep decline. Though the *Law Review* did have a website, it was the equivalent of a beat up 1980s era Volkswagen Beetle: sure, you could drive it, but did you really want to? Realizing we needed a complete overhaul, I spoke with then Dean of the School of Law, Alfredo Garcia, about the idea. Dean Garcia has always been a champion of his students' pursuits, and this time was no different. Dean Garcia granted the *Law Review* the budgetary flexibility as the fiscal year was nearing its end, and, just like that, a professional first class website was being designed. This web design effort was spearheaded by Michael Skiscim, the Articles Selection Editor, who every day over the summer spent countless hours working with the web designer and debating with me over the most meticulous of details. Before summer's end, the effort paid off and the *Law Review* had its new and vastly improved web presence. The new website is not only aesthetically pleasing, it is also a repository for legal articles published by the *Review*. In addition, there is a feature blog which permits the membership to review, comment, or opine on breaking legal news and the implications that local legal decisions may have on the South Florida community. The website, though seemingly a simple concept, changed the fundamental way in which the *Law Review* could communicate with the legal community. Most importantly, the *Law Review* met one of its first goals for the year and began the school year with great momentum.

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As the school year began, the *Law Review* found itself brimming with new, bright, and eager member-candidates—thanks in large part to the tireless efforts of our notes and comments editors, Lauren Shoemake and Emily Tompkins. Before I knew it, the *Law Review* had its first organizational meeting, and it was time to bring the rest of the membership in on an idea that had been developing the entire summer. Shortly after being appointed Editor-in-Chief, I began wondering what kind of event we could host that builds off the *Law Review*'s recent success in hosting the National Conference of Law Reviews in 2008, but one that is also unique to South Florida. Early in the summer, I was having coffee with Professor Murray Greenberg, a true friend and mentor. One topic of discussion that we always enjoyed speaking about was the 2000 Presidential Election, pitting then Vice President Al Gore against future President George W. Bush. Professor Greenberg mentioned he was very close with a distinguished professor at Columbia University, Nate Persily, and that Professor Persily would love to revisit that election, which occurred exactly one decade earlier. Realizing this fantastic opportunity, we immediately undertook the enormous logistical challenge of making this event a reality, in less than five months.

The first issue became who will participate in this event? After failing to get responses back from either former Vice President Gore or President Bush, we reached out to the premier legal talent involved in the case. Individuals like Benedict P. Kuehne, Kendall Coffey, Joseph P. Klock, former Attorney General of Florida Bob Butterworth, as well as attorneys who worked with General Butterworth, all enthusiastically agreed to participate. In addition to these practitioners with firsthand knowledge, we were also able to secure the participation of the country's foremost election law scholars. All that we were missing now was the view of the judiciary. Judge Nikki Ann Clark, who currently sits on the First District Court of Appeal, but at the time of the election served at one of the epicenters of the legal battle at the circuit level, agreed to participate. Then, one more stroke of good luck. Many of us were gathered in the *Law Review*'s office when our faculty advisor, Professor Gary Kravitz, walked in with Judge Michael Genden of Florida's Eleventh Judicial Circuit. Judge Genden was very interested in the event and asked who would be participating. After rattling off the impressive list of names, Judge Genden looked directly at me and asked, "Do you want Justice Fred Lewis?" Clearly, I thought he was joking. I continued thinking he was joking when he pulled his cell phone out, dialed a number, said hello, and then handed the phone to me. When I said hello, the voice on the other end of the line introduced himself as Justice Lewis and asked how he could be of help.

Once I was assured this was not a joke, and that Justice Lewis would love to participate, I knew this event would be a success. And, it was. Over the course of two days, through the efforts of the *Law Review*, the School of Law administration, and the amazing and talented speakers, the *Law Review* hosted this truly unique symposium, which highlighted our university, the South Florida community, and a momentous event in our nation's history.

In truth, I could write countless more pages championing the *Law Review* and all that we achieved that year. For example, that was the year we were able to reengage a long-term partnership with the Criminal Law Section of The Florida Bar to become their exclusive publication. I could speak at length about the individual successes our members achieved that year, through the stewardship of Executive Board members Jacob Hurst, Jenkins Chan, Robert DeMarco, Ryan Price, and Vanessa Torres, who selflessly gave of themselves to provide guidance and counseling to our membership. Though I could talk about each of these individuals at length, there simply is not enough space. So, what I will say is this: it was one of the greatest honors to serve as Editor-in-Chief of the *St. Thomas Law Review*, and it was my absolute privilege to work alongside and with the fantastic individuals that comprised the 2010-2011 *St. Thomas Law Review*.