The University of Baltimore School of Law provides a professional bridge for law graduates educated outside the United States (LL.M. LOTUS). Students - some on F-1 visas, some permanent residents, and a few naturalized U.S. citizens - engage in rigorous study in the nine-month program to learn about the American legal system, principles of law, and the legal profession. The 13 LL.M. LOTUS students who graduated in May 2010 joined 55 earlier graduates in pursuing a variety of career paths.

Some LL.M. LOTUS alumni seek bar admission and enter law practice, most in the District of Columbia. Three have also passed the Maryland bar as their second bar membership. Some attorneys gain experience by performing document review and client work that taps their unique foreign language skills and cultural knowledge. Others open a solo practice, work for a law firm, or bring their legal knowledge into business, real estate work, or public sector employment. And some practice law and provide leadership in their country of birth.

During the past year, LL.M. LOTUS students sought strategic career advice to best feature their unique skills in a tight job market. Pablo Gil de Montes, managing director of the legal placement agency Hire Counsel, addressed the students on document review for cases brought under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. He observed that attorneys with foreign language skills are in demand to perform this work. Sylvia Ontenada-Bernalles, president of the
Maryland Hispanic Bar Association, addressed the students on networking activities of the MHBA.

Current students met LL.M. LOTUS alumni Britta Balum, LL.M. ’09, Elizabeth A. Lawrence, LL.M. ’05, Jumoke Oladapo, LL.M. ’09, Luca Plazzogna, LL.M. ’09, and Ibukun Idowa, LL.M. ’08 to discuss their first-hand experiences of American law study, bar preparation and career development. UB’s Law Career Development Office and LL.M. LOTUS Director Jane Schukoske helped students learn the American way of looking for professional employment.

Several LL.M. LOTUS students found their skills highly valued during internships in the metropolitan area. In addition, some UB Law J.D. alumni sought LL.M. help on international contracts and work with immigrant communities. “American lawyers help transnational families. They handle international trade and deals,” comments Schukoske. “Lawyers educated abroad and grounded in American law bring special insight to this work – be it knowledge of a civil law system, a foreign language, or business culture abroad.”

To read more about what U.B.’s LL.M. Lotus alumni are up to, see Class Notes on page 20. To inquire about LL.M. LOTUS alumni foreign language and country expertise, contact Jane Schukoske, director of the LL.M. LOTUS program, at jschukoske@ubalt.edu.
Gina Schindler-Wren, LL.M. '06, is a staff attorney at WilmerHale in Washington, D.C. working on issues of e-discovery. She works with teams of other legal professionals to manage electronic and other documents in large cases and investigations.

Jana Kaidy, LL.M. '08 and a member of the D.C. bar, works as a corporate counsel for Cogent Communications, Inc., a multinational Tier 1 facilities-based ISP, in Washington, D.C. Ms. Kaidy writes, “My daily work involves all aspects of corporate law, i.e. reviewing contracts, assuring compliance with various regulatory requirements both in US and also in Europe, where we have our subsidiaries. [UB Law's] LL.M. program prepared me well for my current practice of law.”

Inder Singh, LL.M. '08, is an associate broker for commercial and residential real estate with Long and Foster Realtors in Burtonsville, Maryland. He writes, “The LL.M. program offered me a platform and a gateway to American legal system from which I can now analyze any business and real estate transaction scenario from the legal perspective. In the practice of real estate brokerage transactions, it has helped me a lot in communicating precisely and effectively with the attorney on a given specific scenario.”

Jumoke Oladapo, LL.M. '09, has opened a solo practice, Ivylaw Law Office, LLC, in Greenbelt, Maryland. Oladapo is a member of the New York and Maryland bars. Her practice focuses on immigration and family law.

Luca Plazzogna, LL.M. '09, passed the D.C. bar in July, 2009 and has moved back to his native Italy, where he is in private practice with a law firm in Verona. His practice focuses on contracts and property law.


George Wajackoyah, LL.M. ’06, who taught in California after completing the LL.M. LOTUS program, has announced he is running for the presidency of Kenya. Visit his campaign website, www.glw4president.com.

Aidong Zhang, LL.M. '08, is a member of the D.C. bar and has been working for a D.C. firm on a project involving discovery document review.