

Confidence, Character & Competence: One Business Student Marches on to Harvard Law School

Storrs, CT (6/12/2007) - As America's oldest continuously operating law school, Harvard's reputation as the impenetrable beacon of unwavering intellect is enough to scare off even the brightest of mensa members. But, for Andrew Ungberg – a UConn School of Business 2007 graduate – he proved to be anything but ordinary and discourageable. Andrew is off to Harvard Law School.

“[I was] beside myself...” notes Andrew, after receiving the phone call from the Assistant Dean of Admissions who personally calls all admits to let them know the news. “It was literally a dream come true. I was speechless, but I managed to stammer a ‘thank you’. It took a little bit of time for the shock to wear off and realize it had really happened.”

Understandably so. Harvard Law School only admits approximately 12% of all applicants, and their rigorous program makes them among the top 3 law schools nationwide by several ranking agencies.

Growing up on Long Island, Andrew's dream began in grade school, when he developed a love of reading and writing. He enjoyed competition – excelling at baseball, basketball and football in middle school – and ultimately joining the local chapter of the Junior Statesmen of America, a national debate club, in high school which took him to Washington DC to participate in the Mock Congress simulation. Coupled with advanced placement courses in History and English, Andrew was well on his way to a career in law.

“I started taking law-oriented political science classes as soon as I could once I got to UConn,” said Andrew. “I enjoyed them all and began seriously considering law school sometime during my sophomore year. It was over Christmas break of my junior year that I signed up for the LSAT and took the first solid steps toward applying.”

Andrew's professors at UConn immediately realized his talent and passion. “Andrew has always stood out as an active participant of class discussions and demonstrated an enthusiasm for the subject matter,” notes Professor Kimberly R. Bergendahl who taught Andrew in three courses. “Andrew often drew upon his knowledge from other fields in order to develop more solid and analytically sound arguments to support his positions. He is someone who is extremely responsible, remarkably articulate and undoubtedly driven to succeed.”

“He has the intellectual ability and personal character to thrive in rigorous academic environment” adds Professor Robert Bird, assistant professor of Business Law. “Andrew's written and oral classroom performance impressed me so much that I invited him to work with me on an independent study. With minimal guidance, Andrew is already analyzing unedited court cases and grasping complex legal concepts suitable for law students.”

In fact, Andrew currently completed his independent study work with Professor Bird – examining intellectual property rights of the corporate academic and conducting thorough research on the legal issues surrounding faculty ownership of intellectual property in light of increased corporate research funding. Previously, Andrew collaborated with another student to study expanding the pharmaceutical market in Brazil and focusing on Pfizer's need for expedited patent approval.

A professor's dream, Andrew was also accepted to Columbia, Duke, Georgetown, Fordham, St. Johns and UConn. Yet, despite his accomplishments, Andrew remains humble, crediting his family and the many inspirational teachers throughout his academic career who have encouraged and challenged him.



“I have been extraordinarily fortunate, and it would be wrong to say that I’m single-handedly responsible for my successes... I’ve been touched by amazing teachers at every stage of my school career, particularly in high school and college... I owe much to both my parents and family, who have always supported me in everything I’ve done – my mom has always inspired me to strive for excellence in anything I do, and to never doubt my ability to tackle new challenges. My father has always been an example for me - his persistence, humility and light-hearted approach to life have taught me the value of enjoying life as a journey.”

And what a journey it is.

“I expect to hear good things about Andrew in the future,” adds Berghandahl.