



Campus Profile: Stephanie Willbanks, Vice Dean for Academic Affairs



This is my 27th year at Vermont Law School and my 13th nonconsecutive year as academic dean.

FAMILY STATISTICS: Married to Stephen, who is also a selectman for the Town of Strafford. Daughter, Allison, is 26 years old and

currently works for Jan Sensenich (VLS '83), who is the Chapter 13 bankruptcy trustee for Vermont. Son, Simon, is 20 years old and is a junior at Bates College, majoring in geology and minoring in history.

PETS: My husband has two border collies, Mac and Tess, and one ancient cat, Hamlet.

FAVORITE KIND OF MUSIC: Celtic (or Christmas music, in season)

FAVORIE FOOD: Homemade pizza (my own of course)

FAVORITE VACATION SPOT: London (but I have only been there twice)

PLACE MOST WANT TO VISIT: New Zealand

RELAXATION: Walking and Sudoku

BOOKS: I read mystery stories and am partial to women authors, both American and British.

My favorite author is Dorothy Sayers, although I read all of her books long ago. I am currently reading *Dust* by Martha Grimes. I am also a fan of Jane Austen and re-read her books periodically. My favorite local author is my neighbor Catherine Tudish, who has written *Tenney's Landing* and *American Cream*.

MOVIES: It is not actually a movie, but a BBC production of *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* by John LeCarre is a favorite.

New Staff Members

Courtney Collins

Courtney joined the VLS staff in September 2007 as an administrative assistant for the Climate Legacy Initiative and Faculty Hiring. Before joining us, Courtney worked as an office manager at Diablo Behavioral Healthcare in Danville, California. In her work, she also served as project manager for neuroscience seminars. During college and graduate school, Courtney was also a member of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology, and the National Association of Social Workers. Working at VLS is a kind of homecoming for Courtney, who grew up in New England.

Claudia Comstock

Claudia rejoins VLS after an absence of almost seven years. Now the administrative assistant for the IT department, Claudia previously held positions as staff assistant-GPP, A/P clerk, and A/R clerk while at VLS. She also worked as a faculty secretary and assistant to the dean at Florida Coastal School of Law in Jacksonville, as a legal secretary, and as a docket clerk for the State of Vermont. Claudia is a member of the National Federation of Paralegal Associates and National Notary Association and is a hospice and food shelf volunteer.

Diane Derby

Diane joined VLS in October 2007 as director of media relations. Diane comes to us with over 20 years of media experience, including positions as communications director/press secretary for U.S. Senator Jim Jeffords, State House reporter at the Vermont Press Bureau, and reporter for the *Burlington Free Press*, and other New England newspapers. She has also been a commentator on Vermont Public Television's *Vermont This Week*, a guest news analyst for Vermont Public Radio, and has provided on-air interviews for C-SPAN and *CBS Sunday Morning*. A resident of Montpelier, Diane was recently appointed to the Vermont Judicial Conduct Board. She is a board member for Phulmaya Foundation, a private, nonprofit, Vermont-based organization that raises funds for literacy/school projects in rural Nepal.



Upcoming Events

January 2–6	AALS Meeting
January 17	<i>Roe v. Wade</i> Anniversary Dinner
January 21	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (VLS is closed)
January 23	Martin Luther King Day Celebration: Julius Chambers, speaker
January 24	Student Leadership Collective Dinner
January 31	Solutions to the Climate Crisis: the IPCC Report
February	Black History Month Film Festival
February 1	Campus Climate Change Panel
February 11	Jeff Amestoy, Lecture and Dinner
February 12	Speaker: Leonard Weinglass on the Cuban Five case
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 21	Norman Williams Lecture, Jerold Kayden
February 22	Board of Trustees Meeting
February 22–23	<i>VJEL</i> and <i>Law Review</i> symposium (Bruce Babbitt, featured speaker)

Peg Elmer

Peg joined our community as associate director of the VLS Land Use Institute in August 2007. Previously, Peg was employed as planning director for VT Department of Housing and Community Affairs and as director of the Land Use Policy Program for Vermont Natural Resources Council. This past October, Peg was elected vice president/president elect of the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planners Association. Peg also gives time to the Vermont Earth Institute and the Central Vermont League of Women Voters.

Rebecca Flanagan

Rebecca has recently joined us full time as the director of the Academic Success Program and assistant professor of law. She received her JD from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Law after getting her MA in elementary education and BA in political science and English from the University of Connecticut. Rebecca served as the director of academic success at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law in 2006 and as professor and assistant director of academic success at Whittier Law School prior to that. She

is a member of the New York and Massachusetts bar associations and enjoys running.

Sara Fagnoli

Sara joined VLS as assistant director of Career Services in August 2007. Sara previously worked as a research analyst for Science Applications International Corporation, has clerked for the Massachusetts Appeals Court, and interned with the U.S. Department of Justice. Sara received her MA from Boston University, JD from The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, and LLM from George Washington University Law School, focusing on international human rights and environmental law.

Tong Jett

Tong joined the VLS community as an administrative assistant for the China program in August 2007. Before working at VLS, Tong worked in accounting and financial records at Norbord Incorporated in Nacogdoches, Texas. She also spent a summer interning with the marketing department of Citibank Corporation in Bangkok, Thailand.

Cynthia Lewis

Cynthia has worked at VLS as lawyer librarian since July 2007. Previously, Cynthia served as law librarian at the Hugh and Hazel Darling Law Library at UCLA School of Law. Cynthia has also worked at Los Angeles County Law Library and at Franklin Pierce Law Center. She received an award for extraordinary service from Franklin Pierce and has published several articles in library journals.

Melissa Lewis

Melissa joined VLS as a program coordinator and administrative assistant for the SiP program in June 2007. Before working at VLS, Melissa taught at La Petite Crèche Preschool in Hanover, New Hampshire. During undergraduate studies at the University of Maine, Melissa performed in and directed several productions of *The Vagina Monologues*. She is the recipient of the 2006 Grady Award for Poetry and the 2005 Grenfell Poetry prize. Besides writing, Melissa's interests include cooking and studying yoga. Her partner is a 2L student here at VLS.

David McPike

David joined the VLS community as IT helpdesk specialist in September 2007. Before working at VLS, David spent several years as a network engineer for companies including Atos Origin for Seton

Healthcare Network, the University of New South Wales, and Raytheon Polar Services. David also worked as a systems administrator for Link Consulting, Rocky Mountain Internet, and Stonehenge Internet. A Cisco Certified Network Professional, David received a Team Achievement Award and Certificate of Excellence in 2006. David's partner is a 1L student.

Jennifer Miller

Jennifer has served VLS as environmental programs coordinator since September 2007. Before joining the VLS community, Jennifer worked as assistant director/logistics manager for Lewis and Clark College Outdoors. Jennifer gained further outdoors experience working for Shasta Mountain Guides, Outward Bound Wilderness, and Crystal Mountain Resorts. She has also interned at the Chuchawasi School for Girls in Peru.

Phillip Roberts

Phillip began serving as assistant network administrator at VLS in September 2007. Before his work at VLS, Phillip was employed as network administrator for Simon Pearce Inc. Phillip also has experience as a systems engineer and analyst with Green Mountain GeoGraphics Inc. and Dubois & King Inc. Phillip specializes in engineering electrical and instrumental systems in hazardous environments.

Randee Rule

Randee has served VLS as legal writing program coordinator since August 2007 and will be taking over as housing officer as of January 9, 2008. Before moving to Vermont, Randee spent several years in Nevada working as an administrative assistant at the Ormsby House Hotel and Casino in

Carson City and as a legal secretary. Randee also established Aloha Day Care in White River Junction before beginning her employment with VLS. Randee has a vivacious and outgoing character, and she brings energy to all she encounters.

Namita Thomas

Namita has been working for VLS as special assistant to the director of International and Comparative Law Programs since July 2007. Before her work with VLS, Namita worked with Bank of America as banking center manager and lead operations representative. Namita also served as director of marketing services/communications for Climinelli Construction Companies in Buffalo, New York. Namita has traveled extensively in the U.S., Europe, South America, and India.

Geoff Tuller

Geoff joined VLS Buildings and Grounds as a general maintenance technician in September 2007. Before joining the VLS community, Geoff worked as general carpenter with Tuller's Custom Homes. Geoff also worked with Rutland Parks and Fields Department and as a summer camp coordinator at Dartmouth College.

Carol Westberg

Carol joined the VLS community as director of marketing and communications in June 2007. Formerly director of creative services at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, Carol has also worked as vice president and general manager for the Compag Company in San Francisco and as an editor at Little, Brown and Company. Carol has a BA from Duke, an MAT from Stanford, and an MA in poetry from Vermont College, and has studied martial arts for 18 years.

Dilbert



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Benefits Updates

- The maximum allowable amount to be contributed to a 403b supplemental retirement plan for calendar year 2008 will remain at \$15,500 for employees under 50 years old and at \$20,500 for those 50 or older.
- The maximum taxable wages subject to Social Security withholding will increase from \$97,500 in 2007 to \$102,000 in calendar year 2008. This will mean a social security tax increase from \$6,045 in 2007 to \$6,324 in 2008.
- Please be reminded that the exempt payroll will be changing so that voluntary deductions will come out of each check instead of out of only the first check of each month.
- Effective January 1, 2008, the Hartford Insurance Company will be handling VLS Life, AD&D, Short and Long Term Disability insurances. Consolidation of these insurances will allow for easier and more efficient administration. There is no change in benefits. Now is a good time to make sure your beneficiary information is up to date, not only for the VLS provided life insurance, but also for TIAA-CREF.

Style Q & A

from the Communications Office



No, we're not offering fashion advice. This column offers writing style advice and tips. VLS will soon have its very own online style guide, which, along with this column, will help guide your writing, answering questions such as

- "Do I mean 'which' or 'that'?"
- "What is the full, formal name of Oakes Hall?"
- and "Is that comma really necessary?"

This month, the topic is capitalization of titles. It's now common practice (and a more egalitarian approach) not to capitalize job titles unless used as the introduction to someone's name.

Example:

The dean will give a speech at noon.

but

The lunchtime speaker is Dean Jeff Shields.

Yes, as with most rules, there are exceptions, including headlines and formal lists, such as in an event program or list of donors. In such cases it is

just fine to use initial capitals in a job title that follows the person's name.

Capitalize organizational or departmental titles if you are using the full, formal name of the department or program.

Example:

The Office for Institutional Advancement has announced successful completion of the campaign.

but

The advancement office helped the school exceed its recent campaign goal.

Likewise, we'd write "Vermont Law School," but subsequent references to "the school" or "the law school" remain in lowercase letters.

If you have any writing style, grammar, punctuation, or spelling questions, please send them to Jennie Clarke (jclarke@vermontlaw.edu or x1310). We'll be happy to address any questions as they arise, and you may also see the answer in next month's column!

IT Corner



SPAM is still a growing problem. We understand that SPAM is a nuisance and you may get some now and then, but there's a lot that you're not getting! During the last half of 2007, VLS received more than 1 million email messages per month. Of those, less than 200,000 (per month) were delivered to user mailboxes. Seventy percent of all the mail sent to our domain is SPAM. According to our SPAM filter service, Postini, this is a 60 percent increase from this time last year. We will continue to work with Postini to keep the SPAM at bay.

Public Internet access. VLS now has two public hot spots available for Internet access. If you have guests or visitors on campus that need to access the Internet, please direct them to the Chase Center or the circulation desk area of the library. Ask your guest to look for wireless networks, and they should see "VLS-Public." Charter Communications is providing this service so that we may accommodate visitors who do not have access to our campus network.

J Drive quota. Just a reminder that all faculty and staff now have a quota set on their J drive. This will help us manage the network storage space more efficiently. If you receive a notice that your J Drive is full, please open a helpdesk ticket for assistance.