

News in Brief

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Federal Customs House to Be Renovated into Memphis Law School

Ownership of the former U.S. Customs House/Postal Office in downtown Memphis was recently transferred to the Tennessee state government, which will use the site for the new University of Memphis Law School. The transfer, which took place on December thirrd, is the final step before initial construction begins on the site sitting at the intersection of Front St. and Monroe Ave. in Memphis. School officials anticipate that the renovation will be complete in early 2009 and expect to enlist 500 students and faculty by the fall of that year. Funding for the project is provided by the state government and is estimated to cost \$42 million. It has been officially listed as a "capital outlay project." Local foundations, in conjunction with a private \$12 million development plan, have thus far raised almost \$10 million from businesses and legal practitioners in Memphis. These funds will be allocated to cover the cost of the move of Memphis's U.S. Postal Office from the customs house to its new location.

Greensboro Charities Receive Donations from Public Interest Law Society

The Public Interest Law Society (PILS) at Elon University School of Law has fulfilled the charitable sentiment of the season through recent donations to the Angel Tree drive for Freedom House and the Salvation Army. Freedom House is an organization which provides aid to substance-addicted single mothers and their children. The donated items included clothing, toys, toiletries, and other basic necessity items. PILS co-president Rheanna Gaskin noted the gratitude of those receiving the donated items in observing, "The mothers at Freedom House were very emotional and extremely overjoyed. They were ecstatic because they were able to give their kids a gift for Christmas. Seeing the reaction of the mothers and their children when we walked in the door with those gifts made it all worthwhile. They were absolutely thrilled!" Gaskin delivered the items herself with PILS co-president Kristin Cook on December 11th.

University of Utah Law School Faculty to Work with Prosecutors in Afghanistan

The University of Utah's S.J. Quinney College of Law recently announced that 20 of its faculty members will be involved in a project with Afghan prosecutors to help develop the nation's fledgling legal system. It is hoped that the partnership will help establish basic ground rules and a framework for the practice of law and justice in Afghanistan, which is still struggling to find stability in a post-Taliban era. The program has been officially named the Public-Private Partnership for Justice Reform in Afghanistan and was formally announced on December 13th at an event hosted by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Afghanistan Attorney General Abdul Jabar Sabit. The primary aim of the collaboration is to train Afghan legal professionals in the areas of institutional justice reform, criminal procedure, and human rights, as well as investigation, indictment, prosecution, and management.