By Lori Atherton

No less than International Court of Justice Judge Bruno Simma, a William W. Cook Global Law Professor at Michigan Law, calls the International Law Workshop (ILW) series a “lifeline to the world of international law.”

Another recent presenter, Lucy Reed, said that the speaker series “is as advertised—a true workshop, aimed at a broad range of law school and other students and faculty.

“I was able to choose a topic I was passionate about, namely international claims tribunals, which tends to capture the attention of a general audience because it involves so many real-life stories,” said Reed, a partner at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer in New York, co-head of its global international arbitration group, and recent president of the American Society of International Law, who visited Michigan Law in fall 2010.

Michigan Law is known for hosting renowned presenters at the top of their fields, and for nearly two decades, the ILW has been a forum for many of these distinguished visitors to talk about pressing issues of global importance.

The idea for the ILW is to have leading people in the field of international law speak on topics of “compelling interest and generate excitement in the student body, particularly students who don’t know anything about the topics,” said Assistant Dean for International Affairs Virginia Gordan, who coordinates the ILW through the Center for International and Comparative Law. “Its goal has always been to be of interest to a non-specialist audience as well as to a specialist audience.”

The ILW differs from other Michigan Law workshops in that it’s not for credit and doesn’t require students to read and discuss academic papers. Presenters speak for 30 minutes on a topic of their choice, then participate in a 45-minute question-and-answer session with the audience. The ILW attracts not only students and faculty from within the Law School, but also from U-M as a whole. Topics focus on traditional international law as well as comparative law, cross-border issues, and globalization.

While Michigan Law has long had a focus on internationalism in its curriculum, the ILW helps to foster students’ interest in global issues, which Reed appreciates.

“Although Michigan is the leader in requiring 1Ls to take international law, I felt the workshop gave me the opportunity to bring one avenue of international law alive for the students.”

Reed is among dozens of presenters who have participated in the ILW since its inception in 1995. They include prominent academics from American and overseas universities; practitioners from American and foreign government agencies, NGOs, and corporations; and judges from the European Court of Justice, the supreme courts of Israel and Japan, and the International Court of Justice, including Simma, who is joining Michigan Law’s tenured faculty.

Also invited to speak are Michigan Law faculty, whose interest and expertise in global legal issues help to expose the larger student body to the “incredible richness we offer here,” Gordan noted. Michigan Law Professor Michael Barr, for example, recently spoke on “The New International Financial Architecture,” while Professor Laura Benv has presented on Sudan; and Catharine MacKinnon, the Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law, on prostitution and trafficking. Professors Nicholas Howson and Vikramaditya Khanna also have given talks related to their expertise on China and India, respectively.

“The ILW has really been a terrific environment for bringing faculty and students together,” Gordan added. “We have a long-standing tradition where we let the students be the first to ask questions. They feel very free to jump in, and they make us proud with the questions they ask. It’s a wonderful form of shared intellectual engagement.”

ILW: “A Lifeline to the World of International Law”

Judge Bruno Simma (above) and Susan D. Page, the U.S. Ambassador to South Sudan, give ILW speeches.
Legislation and Regulation Course Added to 1L Requirements

Felix Frankfurter famously said there were three keys to interpreting a law: “Read the statute. Read the statute. Read the statute.”

But many new law students have little understanding of agency regulations, rule-making, statutory interpretations, and the impact each can have on how government fundamentally happens. So the Michigan Law faculty recently voted to introduce a new course requirement for first-year law students: Legislation and Regulation.

Professor Nicholas Bagley, an administrative law expert, predicted that the new requirement “will inform the rest of their education here.” Bagley took a similar class as a 1L at NYU, and said “it was formative for me.” Bagley is teaching a similar class this year to second- and third-year students, and may teach the course to 1Ls when the pilot program begins in 2013.

“We are increasingly a civil law state,” he said. “Love it or hate it, you have to learn how to deal with it.”

Added Dean Evan Caminker: “With this change we’ll help our new students see not just how laws are made, but how agencies and the whole apparatus of government goes about ensuring those laws are implemented and obeyed. These are issues that come up more often than ever in the daily practice of law, and this course will ensure that our students know how to deal with them.”

The pilot for the new class will be 2013–2016, and Constitutional Law will move to the second year to accommodate the new requirement.

“We’re adding the course because practice in the modern era requires an understanding of how laws are made and how administrative agencies make use of these laws,” said Professor Nina Mendelson, chair of the curriculum committee. “I think in 20 years all major law schools are going to require a course like this.”

Currently, a handful of other top-tier law schools have added a similar class to the 1L curriculum, including Harvard, NYU, and Georgetown. Michigan Law professors and administrators think the addition could have a profound impact on the readiness of our graduates when they are beginning their careers.

“A significant number of our students go to work at government agencies at various levels,” said David Baum, ’89, assistant dean for student affairs and special counsel for professional skills development. “Many others will interact with agencies and will have clients who deal with government regulations.”

—JM and KV

Justice Kagan to Visit Law School, Help Dedicate South Hall

When Dean Evan Caminker thought about the dedication ceremony for the new South Hall—the first new academic building at the Law School in 75 years—he knew he wanted to invite a prominent person in the legal field whose presence showed the significance of the event. He also wanted someone who understands and appreciates the importance of legal education. Someone like Elena Kagan.

Indeed, the most recently appointed associate justice of the Supreme Court (and former Harvard Law dean) will join the dedication on Sept. 7 and will speak to the Law School and University communities.

“As we celebrate this beautiful new building and our dedication to world-class education, I am delighted that the newest justice will be present to honor the occasion with us,” said Caminker. The dedication, he said, is a “singularly important event in Michigan Law’s history … and our level of celebration will be commensurate.”

Justice Kagan is scheduled to speak with Caminker during a Q&A session on the morning of Friday, Sept. 7. The ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony at South Hall will take place that afternoon. (Updated schedule information will be available at law.umich.edu when it becomes available.)

Justice Kagan’s visit will serve as a bookend to the groundbreaking of South Hall, which featured Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., in 2009.
Scenes from the Semester

The Law School winter term featured a blend of the scholarly and the entertaining, the serious and the … wait, is that Professor Len Niehoff, ’84 (top, second from right) dancing on a desktop? Indeed it is, when he served as an auctioneer at the annual SFF auction (where students are bidding on items, top right).

Other events included (clockwise from the SFF photos): the grand opening of South Hall; Midway Madness; the MLK Day Forum about “Dr. King’s Vision for Economic Justice: Focus on Detroit”; a Women’s Week faculty-student reception; Mr. Wolverine winner Brian Chang, a 3L; and Valograms, performed by the Headnotes a cappella group for students and faculty, including Professor Doug Kahn.
Attorney General Eric Holder Named Senior Day Speaker

Attorney General Eric Holder will deliver the Law School’s Senior Day address May 6. Holder, the 82nd attorney general and the first African American to hold that office, will address the school’s graduating class at Hill Auditorium.

“A broad base of experience and a long career in public service make Attorney General Holder a compelling choice as Senior Day speaker,” Dean Evan Caminker said. “His years of experience and his position atop the Department of Justice mean he will offer a unique and important perspective for our graduates as they begin their law careers.” Holder was selected for this honor by the dean after consultation with a student advisory committee.

A New York City native, Holder graduated from Stuyvesant High School, majored in American History at Columbia, and attended law school there. He earned his juris doctor in 1976, then joined the Justice Department, where he helped investigate and prosecute official corruption cases. In 1988 President Reagan nominated him as an associate judge on the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. President Clinton named him deputy attorney general in 1998, and President Obama nominated him for the top post in 2008.

Before becoming attorney general, Holder also worked as a litigation partner at Covington & Burling LLP in Washington, D.C.

The May 6 Senior Day ceremony begins at 2 p.m. and will be followed by a reception in the Law Quad. More information about Senior Day is available at www.law.umich.edu/seniorday/Pages/MaySeniorDay.aspx.—JM
Attend European Alumni Reunion, June 29–July 1

“I love Paris in the summer, when it sizzles,” Cole Porter wrote.

Find out what he meant by joining us for the Michigan Law European Alumni Reunion, June 29–July 1, 2012. While the reunion focuses in particular on the interests of alumni who live in Europe, any Michigan Law alumni who can attend are encouraged to do so. Spouses, partners, and guests also are welcome.

“Our time together in the City of Light will be memorable, from the opening night reception at the recently restored Hotel de Talleyrand to the closing brunch at the elegant Hotel Lutetia, reunion headquarters,” Dean Evan Caminker and Assistant Dean for International Affairs Virginia B. Gordan wrote in a letter to alumni. “An array of stimulating panel discussions will showcase some of Michigan Law’s distinguished faculty and alumni experts.”

A welcome reception will kick off the weekend on the evening of Friday, June 29, at the Hotel de Talleyrand. A conference on Saturday, June 30, features discussions about China and India, combatting gender discrimination in Europe, and perspectives about the financial crisis from the United States, Italy, and Greece—all featuring prominent Michigan Law professors and alumni. The keynote address will be given by Susanne Baer, LLM ’93, justice of the German Federal Constitutional Court (First Senate) and a William W. Cook Global Law Professor at Michigan.

In the evening, a cocktail reception will be followed by a gala dinner, where Dean Caminker will provide an update on the Law School, and Professor Mathias Reimann, LLM ’83, the Hessel E. Yntema Professor of Law, will pay tribute to the late Hessel E. Yntema Professor Emeritus Eric Stein, ’42. A farewell brunch on Sunday, July 1, will conclude the weekend.

For hotel information and further details, visit www.law.umich.edu/alumniandfriends/europeanreunion. Please register by June 15 at web.law.umich.edu/Reunion3 or by calling the Office of Development and Alumni Relations at 734.615.4535.
Members of a delegation from the China University of Political Science and Law (CUPL), led by CUPL President and Professor of Law Huang Jin, learned about the reach of Michigan Law’s international programming during a fall visit.

The visit by a seven-member delegation from one of modern China’s top three institutions of legal instruction began with a stop at the office of Dean Evan Caminker. The itinerary, which included talk about possible future links between faculty and students from both institutions, also featured meetings with internationally oriented faculty such as professors Daniel Halberstam, Steven Ratner, and Donald Regan.

In addition to President Huang, the CUPL visitors included Gao Jianjun, a professor in the School of International Law; Liu Shouren, an associate professor and vice dean of the School of Continuous Study; Shi Xiaoli, a professor in the School of International Law; Xu Lan, director of the Office of International Cooperation and Exchange; Xu Shenjian, a professor in the School of Law; and Zhang Qing, an associate professor of law in the Center for Law and Economics. The visit was organized by Assistant Dean for International Affairs Virginia Gordan.

“Michigan Law has had strong interest in China for more than 100 years,” Caminker said, “and these types of personal interactions are important opportunities for us to continue developing relationships with academic leaders in a country that’s growing increasingly important on the world stage.”—JM

Delegates from China Explore Michigan Law’s Global Reach During Visit

Two New Journals Publish This Spring

The last time a new journal was published by the U-M Law School was the winter of 1996, when the Michigan Journal of Race & Law made its debut. This year, two new journals are joining the ranks of the Law School’s esteemed collection of student-run publications: The Michigan Journal of Environmental and Administrative Law (MJEAL) and Michigan Journal of Private Equity and Venture Capital Law (MJPVL) have received provisional approval and are publishing for the first time this spring.

Many students at Michigan Law are interested in careers in environmental law, and there was strong interest in forming a journal focused on the topic, says Liz Och, managing editor of the second issue of MJEAL, as well as a member of its founding committee.

But environmental law faculty advised them not just to focus on environmental law because so many other journals already do that. The dual focus arose from the fact that the two areas “strongly complement one another” because of the number of environmental issues that arise in an administrative context, Och says.

In the same vein, MJPVL editors wanted a journal that focused not on general business law, but rather more closely examined legal issues involved in private equity and venture capital, says Editor-in-Chief Theresa D’Andrea. To that end, Robert Hirshon, the Frank G. Millard Professor from Practice and special counsel on development in the legal profession at Michigan Law, connected the editors with the ABA. Members of the ABA Business Law Section are acting as an advisory board for the journal.

Even before the publication of the first issue, the response has been strong. When the MJPVL editors announced the new journal through the Alumni Relations office, “we heard from a lot of alumni who wanted to help and who wished there was something like that when they were students,” notes Managing Editor Joe Mead.

The editors of both journals encourage alumni to write articles and buy subscriptions. MJEAL and MJPVL must prove they can be successful during the provisional period before they can become fully instated journals. The MJEAL is supported in part by the Graham Sustainability Institute at U-M, and MJPVL is supported Honigman Miller Schwartz & Cohn LLP and Paul Hastings LLP.