

Meet Mitchell's Fall 2007 Class

By Lisa Harden

The Mitchell magazine polled **217** incoming students online to learn more about them. Mitchell's current enrollment totals **1,073** students.

Focus on 1Ls

An inventor with 25 patents, a former college philosophy professor, a human rights advocate, and a recent Drake University grad are among the 336 students in William Mitchell's 2007 entering class.

The new class represents 107 undergraduate institutions, 36 states, and 17 countries. They range in age from 21 to 54. Just under half are women (48 percent) and 8 percent are of color. Approximately one-third (31 percent) attend part time.

Most admire their parents or other family member, but Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. and other historical figures were also cited. Sports stars like Kirby Puckett and Brett Favre got a mention, as did celebrities Bono and Bob Dylan.

Of the foreign languages spoken, Spanish, French, and German top the list. A few 1Ls know Arabic, Greek, and Swahili. Among the less common tongues are Icelandic, Wolof (spoken in Senegal), and Berber (the language of native Moroccan people).

The Mitchell mix of students comes from a variety of career backgrounds, working as teachers, pharmacists, engineers, EMTs, nannies, a bank teller, bartenders, paralegals, college professors, and a state representative.

In the classroom, most are interested in intellectual property and criminal law, with environmental, business, real estate, international, family, civil rights, constitutional, and contract law rounding out the top 10 areas of study.

In their free time—what little they have—Mitchell's first-year students play guitar, piano, violin, bassoon, oboe, and lute. They yodel, tap dance, sing, act, and take photos. They enjoy fly fishing, Irish clogging, curling, training horses, brewing beer, and building wooden boats. There's a black belt in Taekwondo, a self-proclaimed Xbox 360 player extraordinaire, and a North Star Roller girl who also knits, embroiders, spins, and sews.

Academically speaking...

GPA median: **3.39**

LSAT median: **154**

Students holding graduate degrees: **33**

More unusual talents...

- I can do **156 back flips in a row**
- Fit a golf ball in my mouth
- Change a tire in **15 minutes flat**
- Run a payload like nobody's business
- Sing soprano, surprising and a little sad, as I'm a **22-year-old man**

A quick view...

I own an iPhone: **2.8%**

I own a pet: **56.3%**

I volunteer: **52.2%**

View of capital punishment: **36.7%** in favor
63.3% against

Determined to succeed

Ellen Won won't let anything stop her from succeeding in law school. The spring before she took the LSAT, she was diagnosed with IgA nephropathy, a condition in which the kidneys do not properly filter protein. Medication keeps the disease in check.

"It made me really think about what I want to do and changed my outlook on life," said Won, who has a bachelor's degree in advertising management from Drake University and plans to study mediation/arbitration at Mitchell. "I feel extremely lucky to have been given the opportunity to evaluate what is truly important to me."

The Iowa native of Korean descent plays the flute and piano and loves trying new restaurants—Café Latte and La Grolla near Mitchell are two favorites.



Big Sky girl takes on the big city



Dani Sollars left the Big Sky country of Montana for the big city life in Minnesota four years ago to attend the University of St. Thomas and pursue a bachelor's degree in justice and peace studies.

"I was never a small-town girl," she says. "I like living in a large city. I do miss the mountains, though. It's not the same snowboarding or skiing here."

Sollars is one of 21 first-year Mitchell Fellows who will provide research assistance to Mitchell faculty doing cutting-edge law reform work. She has helped immigrant women and children who were victims of human trafficking in Florida, witnessed heartbreaking cases of neglect at the Minnesota Children's Law Center, and worked on women's rights issues for Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights.

Inventor with 25 patents

If you've ever looked at a laptop screen, then you're familiar with Hassan Sahouani's field of work.

The first-year Mitchell law student has contributed about 25 patents for 3M in the area of LCD (liquid crystal display).

Sahouani emigrated from Morocco to the United States 20 years ago and has a bachelor's degree in science, a master's in forest protection, and a Ph.D. in physical chemistry and polymer physics. He decided to go to law school to strengthen his position working with inventors. "Protection of the invention is becoming as critical, if not more critical, than the invention itself," he says.

The husband and father of two balances a full-time job at 3M with night classes. To ease the transition back to school, he participated in Mitchell's Summer Enrichment Program, which gives incoming students an intensive orientation to law school classes, resources, and study skills.

To relax, he tends to his small vineyard or plays guitar.



Professor becomes student

Eric Wolf is used to assigning homework rather than doing it. The former Carleton College philosophy professor turned first-year law student enrolled at William Mitchell so he could change the world instead of interpreting it.

Wolf has bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in philosophy. He doesn't think his academic background gives him an advantage in the classroom, however. "One professor said law school is the great equalizer," he says.

The Pennsylvania native taught classes on Global Ethics and Environmental Ethics at Carleton and wants to study environmental law. "Someday I would like to sue a large corporation like Exxon," he says.



If the presidential election were held today, I would vote for:

Barack Obama | 32.4%
 Hillary Clinton | 21.6%
 John Edwards | 12.8%
 Rudy Giuliani | 12.8%
 Fred Thompson | 6.4%
 Mitt Romney | 3.9%
 Other | 10.3%

Person I most admire:

