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Who Are You, Class of 2007

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Who Are You - 2004

I thought it would be appropriate, this morning, to tell you, and the faculty, who you are. Can you guess who is who? Well - you've got the next three years to find out!

From California to New Hampshire, big cities and small, you've come to us from twenty-six states. Of the nearly half of you from out of state, the largest number of you from any one state (except Virginia) are from..... Pennsylvania followed closely by New York. Nine of you hail from the great state of Pennsylvania and eight from New York. Maryland has sent us 6 of you. There is a two way tie with four of you representing Tennessee and North Carolina. Three of you are from Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts and Texas. Two each are from the states of Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, and West Virginia. The states of Arizona, Kansas, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Vermont each have a representative sitting amongst you. Korea has sent us one of her finest.

Fifty-seven % of this entering class is male - the same as last year. This class's average age is nearly 24 2 - up slightly from last year. One of you is 49 years old and one of you is just 20. Thirteen (8%) of you are age 30 or over - 8 fewer than last year. Twelve of you are married (at least at the time of your application) and quite a few of you have children.

Applications were received this year from applicants in 13 countries. While 2400 graduates of 501 US colleges (a few more than last year) and 13 foreign countries applied to this Law School, the greatest number of you - 28 attended the University of Virginia. 67 other Universities are represented in this particular class, so that you represent a total of 68 American Universities. Two of you graduated from Canadian Universities and one of you from a University in Korea. Thirteen of you have advanced degrees - one with an M.D.

Eighty-six or 54% of you have been out of college for at least one year - one of you graduated in 1977. Your median LSAT score of 161 places you in the top 15% of the 424,326 test takers during the past three years (38,194 more test takers when compared to last year's entering class).

The top quarter of your class achieved an LSAT of 163 which places them in the top 10% of all test takers over the same period. Eleven of you scored in the top 5% of all test takers (4 more than last year) and twenty-nine (10 more than last year) scored in the top 10% of all test takers. Can you believe the bottom quarter of this class (in terms of LSAT score) actually scored 159 which in the top 20% of these same test takers? This class brings to the Law School the second highest GPA in our school's 134 year history (sorry, last year's class slightly eclipsed you.) The top quartile of your class has a GPA of 3.54 compared to last year's 3.55; your median GPA is 3.31 compared to last year's 3.31. The bottom of the class in terms of GPA is slightly stronger than last year's class with a GPA of 3.11 compared to 3.07.

One of you achieved a GPA of 3.99; 20 of you have a GPA over 3.70. Forty-eight different

majors are represented with the greatest number - 26 graduating in - no surprise - Political Science. Thirteen of you were History majors and 12 of you majored in Economics. Psychology has been a popular major followed by International Relations and Communication. Four of you are engineers having majored in Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical and Systems Engineering. Ten of you graduated with Latin Honors and 4 of you were inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. Twenty-five percent of you had undergrad scholarships - some several. Many, many of you have been on the Dean=s and President=s Lists.

You represent membership in a variety of prestigious honor societies. Two of you have attained the rank of Eagle Scout. Fourteen of you are John Marshall Scholars, recipients of our most prestigious scholarship. Many of you have lived, worked and studied abroad in such countries as England, Brussels, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Scotland, Australia, China, Korea, Romania, Haiti, India, Ethiopia, Italy, Russia, Cameroon, and Lithuania. You are fluent in French, Spanish, Polish, Chinese, Japanese and Korean. One of you was nominated for a Rhodes Scholarship. Several of you are dedicated EMTs and give many, many hours in emergency service. Several of you have served our country in the armed forces, one of you volunteered to serve in Iraq. I have great admiration for three of you who have lived and worked on farms for many years.

You=ve had some pretty amazing careers pre law school. Can you believe 15 of you have been paralegals? Many of you have been teachers - not just in the classroom but as tutors, teaching children with disabilities to ride horses, teaching English as a second language both in foreign countries and at home. One of you taught children about agriculture and one of you taught illegal immigrants English. Several of you have won awards for your dedicated teaching efforts. One of the women in your class worked on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project which attracted the very best designers, engineers, environmentalists and state officials. One of you has been a Barista at Starbucks; another has been a farm laborer and yet another has been president of his own marketing firm. Software developers, or monitoring behavior within chat rooms and forums for America Online, hosting a widely heard radio show; website design, working in theater, construction, bartending, screen writing, recording CDs, dancing with the Atlanta ballet, owner of a business called Cookie Puss, bookseller - you=ve had a variety of careers. One of your classmates has spent several years working with public and private DNA databases working with genetics and health care in support of his belief that there=s a need for professionals devoted to protecting the public=s welfare concerning genetic discoveries and personal liberties affected by the new Agenetic revolution@. I suspect it won=t take you long to discover your fellow student who has written, directed, scored and produced major theatrical productions - you may even have seen him as he walked the red carpet at award show after award show. What do you suppose a ABubbler@ does.....we need to find your classmate who can explain just exactly what this job entailed. You might want to steer clear of the forensic pathologist who is sitting beside you. His specialty is autopsies. Formerly Asst Chief Medical Examiner for the Commonwealth, he routinely provides private consulting services to attorneys related to medical and forensic science issues.

Politics seem to entice a great many of you with you demonstrating your interest by working on political campaigns and being members of the staffs of Congressmen and Senators. White House interns, legislative aides, judicial interns, senate interns - lots of you have made your political mark. I suspect the fur will fly between the political operatives from both parties in your class who have made their living advising politicians on both sides of the aisle. One of them advises the Democratic Party of Virginia and the other does not.

You have a serious commitment to public service. You've given thousands of hours to Women's Shelters, Rape Crisis Centers, Habitat for Humanity, Special Olympics, working with the abused, infirm and elderly, in soup kitchens, shelters and with crisis hotlines. You've worked countless hours in hospices, with sexual assault victims, teaching migrant farm workers and their children. It's heartwarming to know that many of you have taken missionary trips; served the homeless and raised millions of dollars to help eradicate disease and help kids with cancer and muscular dystrophy. You adopt orphans for Christmas, coach children in sports, volunteer in hospitals. Those of you who have given so much of yourselves are surely our hope for the future!

Excitement isn't missing from your lives. Many of you have not only played a variety of sports but have volunteered to coach underprivileged children so that they too might learn and love your sport. Many of you have played at the varsity level in baseball, golf, crew, soccer and we even have several tennis and golf pros. Lots of you have been accomplished debaters and moot court participants. A member of your class competed in the National Dairy Quiz Bowl, another sailed a 53 foot ketch through the Chesapeake Bay for 3 weeks, yet another canoed with inner city children, and one of you has enjoyed snowboarding in the Rocky Mountains.

How exciting to know your true value, as one of your classmates learned, when someone tried to buy her from a friend when she lived in Africa. Several of you ride competitively. Running marathons, track and field, cross country, singing, dancing, you excel.

I want to give you advance notice to the several of you who have played varsity sports and that, for a small fee, I won't tell Professor Gibson who the ringers are that your class might recruit for the faculty - student basketball game. By the way, the undergrads are laying in wait for you....they're just dying to kick your butts in the big soccer free-for-alls with t-shirts (and the law school honor) at stake.

I've been particularly struck this year to more often see words such as Aintegrity, commitment, honesty, public interest, ethics, loyalty permeate your narrative statements. So many of you are survivors and have dealt with life's difficult sides - tragic deaths of loved ones, divorce, terrible car accidents, debilitating illnesses, dissolution of families, murder, and the loss of a dear brother in the World Trade Center on the fateful 9/11.

Yet you endure and strive to be better. One of you wrote, Awe have a choice to use the gift

of our lives to make the world a better place@ and another wrote that he subscribed to Thomas Jefferson=s philosophy that using education to further civic participation is not only appealing, but also an obligation.

One of your classmates wrote, ADream what you want to dream, go where you want to go, be what you want to be, because you have one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do.@

I could go on and on telling you tidbits about your class. There are 158 stories and all of them shed light on the personalities sitting amongst you. But, half the fun is getting to know those who are going to become your life-long friends so I=ll stop now and wish you good luck and good fun on the adventure upon which you are now embarking.