



Bookstein Institute for Higher Education in Taxation

The hub for education, scholarship, and community service in Taxation in the Greater San Fernando Valley.

INSIDE THE NEWSLETTER

M.S. in Taxation Program

Cal State Northridge Tax Development Journal

The Bookstein Tax Clinic

California State University
Northridge



Director's Note



Welcome to the first edition of the Bookstein Institute for Higher Education in Taxation's newsletter! This annual publication will serve as the central mechanism for the Bookstein Institute to communicate with the many constituents that it serves. As the hub for higher education in taxation in the Greater San Fernando Valley, the Bookstein Institute constituents include the graduate tax students, the undergraduate accounting students who are interested in pursuing a career in taxation, the tax practitioners in our area, the many accounting and tax alumni of Cal State Northridge, community organizations and members of the public who receive tax controversy related assistance from our Tax Clinic.

The Bookstein Institute was established in 2005 through the visionary and generous contribution of Harvey Bookstein, CPA ('71) and his wife Harriet. Mr. Bookstein, a prominent practitioner and a philanthropist in the Los Angeles area for many years, has embarked on this initiative as a platform for transforming the tax curriculum at Cal State Northridge and beyond.

The Bookstein Institute has been instrumental in launching a high quality, graduate education in taxation for mid-career professionals. It is also facilitating the publication of a tax journal that disseminates relevant, cutting edge, practice-based scholarship in the field. Moreover, the Bookstein Institute awards scholarships to support deserving students in the pursuit of tax education. Finally, it provides much needed controversy and education related services to low income taxpayers in our area.

As the Bookstein Institute has only been recently established, there are a number of opportunities for members of the profession to become involved. Here are some of these opportunities:

1. M.S. in Taxation Program: This practice oriented program is always looking to expand its part time faculty pool with prominent practitioners.

2. Cal State Northridge Tax Development Journal: The journal sets a new standard in practitioner based tax scholarship as an innovative forum for intellectual discourse on emerging issues for tax practitioners and policy makers. This refereed journal is currently seeking tax practitioners who might be interested in serving as reviewers.

3. The Bookstein Tax Clinic: The clinic provides free representation on federal controversy matters to low income taxpayers in the Los Angeles area. We are currently looking for tax practitioners with experience in federal tax procedure to join our Pro Bono Panel.

It is my sincere hope that as you become familiar with the Bookstein Institute and its mission, you will take part in the various opportunities that it offers.

Best wishes,

Dr. Rafi Efrat
Director

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About Harvey Bookstein

Harvey Bookstein has more than 30 years of public accounting experience and is a co-managing Partner of RBZ, LLP. Throughout his career, Harvey has provided tax, accounting and business consulting services to clients in the real estate industry, including land developers, residential and commercial builders, property managers, investors and commercial building owners. His clients also include real estate-related businesses, such as architectural firms, general contractors and construction companies. Harvey also works with high net worth individuals and families, and family or other closely-held businesses. He also specializes in dealing with financial issues relating to children, divorce and the development of strategies to pass family businesses from one generation to the next.

Harvey currently serves on the Boards of Directors of The University Corporation of California State University, Northridge, Students for a Better Tomorrow, and MitoS Pharmaceutical, Inc. He is the past President and Board Member of Los Angeles Telecommunications Commission, past Chairman of United Cerebral Palsy/Spastic Children's Foundation of Greater Los Angeles/Ventura and past Board Member of Hathaway Children's Services, Phoenix House and Entrepreneurship Institute.

Harvey is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Harvey graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree from California State University, Northridge. Harvey is also a graduate of Leadership Los Angeles. In 2005, he established the Harvey and Harriet Bookstein Chair in Taxation within CSUN's College of Business and Economics. This endowment also funds the Bookstein Institute for Higher Education in Taxation.

We are excited to introduce to you California State University Northridge's new tax journal: The Cal State Northridge Tax Development Journal. The Development Journal is managed and produced by CSUN's new Master of Science in Taxation Program.

The Tax Development Journal sets a new standard in practitioner based tax scholarship as an innovative forum for intellectual discourse on emerging issues for tax practitioners and policy makers. This student run journal uniquely combines tax expertise with scholarly discourse to provide timely, insightful, and important contributions to scholarly discussion in a broad array of topical tax areas.

The Tax Development Journal provides an interactive forum utilizing the latest Internet and electronic publishing technology. The tax journal publishes in an electronic format articles from scholars, distinguished practitioners, and students. Published in a timely fashion, materials are presented in a reader-friendly environment featuring simultaneous text and footnote viewing, and access through the World Wide Web.

The Tax Development Journal's unique format provides a rapid turn-around time from submission to publication, a worldwide multidisciplinary audience, and a welcome absence of both page limits and quotas. Articles are reviewed by a panel of distinguished practitioners and academicians on a double blind basis. Selected articles

What's New

Tax Development Journal

are edited by Cal State Northridge graduate students with significant work experience in the field of taxation.

Membership in the Tax Development Journal allows Cal State Northridge graduate tax students the opportunity to work with noted scholars in their fields of interest, develop strong writing and editing skills, and gain experience with the latest emerging issues in taxation. As a new and growing organization, the journal also affords unparalleled opportunities for leadership and a chance to leave a legacy at Cal State Northridge. Recruitment initiatives take place in the early spring of each academic year.

Currently, the Tax Development Journal is in the development stage and expected to be formally launched in 2009. The journal is currently searching for volunteers to become members of the "blind" technical review panel. Members of our "blind" technical review panel will be responsible for reviewing articles for technical accuracy within their area of expertise (one or two per year). If you are interested in joining our blind review panel or in submitting an article for review, please contact our Managing Editors: Robert Hymers, CPA at Robert.Hymers@ey.com or Leslie Sobol, CPA at LSobol@hkgllp.com



Leslie Sobel '83



Robert Hymers '07

Continuing Education

1. Warner Center's Estate Dinner

Beginning this fall, the Bookstein Institute along with the CSUN Foundation is co-sponsoring the annual Warner Center Estate Dinner and Tax Planning Council dinner seminar at CSUN. The Warner Center Council is a group comprised of life insurance agents, CLUs, CPAs, and attorneys who meet regularly for continuing education, and for networking on a professional basis. Our first seminar is scheduled for Wednesday, November 5th in the evening. There will be a panel discussion titled: "The Post-Mortem Administration of Decedent Estates- A Probate Litigation Ka-

leidoscope." The panel will include Professor Todd Reinstein, Emeritus faculty at Cal State University, Northridge, Randy Leff, a probate litigation attorney at Ervin, Cohen & Jessup, LLP, and the Honorable Judge Alan Haber, the retired head of the Probate Department in Santa Monica and currently a mediator and arbitrator with Alternative Dispute Resolution. For more information, please call Fatema Noor at (818) 677-6883.

2. Luncheon Seminar Series

To further enrich our curriculum, the M.S. in Taxation Program is launching in 2009 the Luncheon Tax Seminar Series. Graduate tax

students attend monthly full day Saturday classes. During lunch time, we offer students the opportunity to attend a continuing education session. During those seminars, we invite guest speakers to talk about various emerging issues in the tax field. We are pleased to announce the inaugural speaker is James DeBree, a tax partner at Deloitte, who will speak to the graduate students on Real Estate Investment Trusts. Other speakers later in the fall include Michael Ozen from Moss Adams and Michael Hearne from Rothstein Kass. If your firm is interested in sponsoring any one of these seminar events, please contact our M.S. in Taxation Office at: (818) 677-3952 or at mstaxation@csun.edu.

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What's New

Tax Fellowship Program

This academic year we launched the Tax Fellowship Program, which is offered by the M.S. in Taxation Program and the Department of Accounting & Information Systems at Cal State Northridge. This is an innovative collaboration with a select number of accounting firms in the Los Angeles area with the goal of identifying and cultivating the next generation of leading tax practitioners. The participating firms are: Ernst & Young, LLP, RBZ, LLP, Rothstein Kass, LLP, Moss Adams, LLP, and Singer Lewak.

The goals of the Tax Fellowship Program are:

- Provide mentorship opportunities in the field of tax to high achieving undergraduate accounting students beginning in their junior year in College;
- Provide short term work experience in the field of tax to high achieving undergraduate accounting students;
- Provide monetary support to high achieving undergraduate accounting students with an interest in tax;
- Provide advanced level tax education to high achieving undergraduate accounting students upon graduation.

The benefits to the selected Fellows are:

- Develop a mentorship relationship with an experienced tax practitioner beginning in the junior year in College;
- Obtain valuable work experience in the field of taxation while completing the undergraduate degree in accounting;
- Obtain a stipend from the sponsoring firm while completing the undergraduate degree;
- Gain automatic admission into the graduate degree in taxation at Cal State Northridge upon graduation with a B.S. degree in accounting;
- Obtain tuition reimbursement for the graduate degree in taxation from the Sponsoring Firm.

Furthermore, the benefits to our programs are:

- Attract high quality students to its undergraduate accounting and graduate tax programs;
- Provide valuable career services to its undergraduate accounting students;

- Enhance the programs' scholarship offerings.

Finally, the benefits to the sponsoring firms are:

- Matched with high achieving undergraduate accounting students during their junior year in our undergraduate accounting program;
- Cultivate valuable relationship with a high achieving undergraduate accounting student beginning in the junior year in College through internships, mentorships and other opportunities;
- Recruit high achieving accounting students directly to the tax practice;
- Obtain high visibility in the undergraduate accounting program through the active promotion of participating firms who are part of the Tax Fellowship program.
- Obtain high visibility in the graduate tax program.

For more information about this program, please contact the M.S. in Taxation Program at: (818) 677-3952 or via email at: mstaxation@csun.edu.

One student wrote in the end of the semester faculty evaluation: "The instructor is very knowledgeable. He knew the material like the back of his hand. His transactional approach to corporations helped to bring the code to life."

Following his first time teaching at Cal State Northridge last fall, Professor Tolin stated: "I'm delighted to participate in the MS Tax program. The opportunity to work with CSUN's highly engaged students and supportive staff has been one of the highlights of my career." Professor Tolin has extensive experience serving companies engaged in motion picture production, distribution and exhibition, television broadcasting and cable and video operations. He also has extensive international and domestic corporate tax experience including mergers, acquisitions and reorganizations. He received his B.S. from New York University in Accounting, his J.D. from Brooklyn Law School and his LL.M. in Tax from New York University. He is a member of the Motion Picture and Television Tax Institute, and a Member of the New York State Bar Association.

Professor Tolin has published several books and articles and is a frequent lecturer. One of his most recent publications is unique in that it is perhaps the first tax comic book ever published. Together with Michael H. Salama, the Vice President for Tax Administration and Senior Tax Counsel with the Walt Disney Company, Professor Tolin authored GET SMART: ABOUT SPECIAL MANUFACTURING DEDUCTIONS. This graphic novel is a parody of the classic television show GET SMART. It integrates, says Tolin, humor with a substantive tax overview of Internal Revenue Code section 199, also known as the domestic production deduction for the film and television industries. This whimsical book is available online at: <http://www.lls.edu/programs/tax-llm/graphicnovel>

People Watch

Faculty Profile Jeffrey M. Tolin



Teaching corporate tax in our M.S. in Tax program, Professor Tolin is also a Tax Principal and Senior Tax Advisor for the entertainment industry at Ernst & Young LLP. He was formerly the national Entertainment Tax director at Ernst & Young, LLP. His wealth of experience and prominence in the field has clearly made an impact in the classroom. At the conclusion of the corporate tax course last winter, students raved about Tolin's teaching skills.



ZOOM

(continued)

People Watch

Student Profile **Leslie Sobel** **B.S. '83**



I knew when I read about the cohort method that this was the Masters of Science in Taxation program I was looking for. As an undergraduate at Cal. State University Northridge, I served as a student body senator and sorority officer. I strongly believe it is our obligation to give as much to our community as we receive and have been a Boy Scout leader for ten years. I have forged new contacts in the MST program and consider the diversity here to be one of the programs greatest strengths. The program and my circle of contacts now includes CPA's and EA's in, trust and estate, big four, sole practitioners, business management, government, and industry specialists.

The MST program has changed my life in many wonderful ways. I never dreamed it would be this hard or rewarding. We are pushed to find the limits of what we are capable of achieving. Whether we are challenged to understand a new area of tax law or facing a personal challenge such as defending our tax research conclusions in front of the class, I found I was capable of so much more than I knew. It is difficult and overwhelming to work full time, raise a family and complete a masters program too. I would not make it without my husband who gets up to make my breakfast while I study, and my teenage sons, who taught me

how to animate my power point slides.

I took a circuitous path to being a Tax Professional and now I find this program has brought together all my experience so that I apply all I learn to my profession. I graduated Cum Laude with a B.S. in management and a minor in economics into an economy where factories were closing and managers were laid off. With CSUN Professor Richard Tontz' assistance, I found my first position preparing statistical analysis for litigation at Texaco. I returned to school at night to complete the accounting classes I needed to sit for the exam and earned my CPA license eight years after graduation. I went from senior accountant at Laventhol & Horwath, to industry, and back into public accounting with a two person CPA firm. Two years ago I joined Hinton, Kreditor & Gronroos, LLP a growing Pasadena firm which strongly supports the staff in their professional and charitable work and the partners urged me to pursue my masters. My client base is primarily mid-sized closely held business and I bring my knowledge of tax law and accounting to help them grow and flourish. I enjoy working closely with the owners to maintain the business through generations and adapt to the changing world. As accountants we are able to assist the businesses that keep our community working and strong. I consider it a privilege to be able to serve my community as a trusted bridge between our accounting community and the world.

Alumni Profile **John Balian** **B.S. '89, M.S. '96**



Even before obtaining his accounting undergraduate degree from Cal State Northridge in the late 1980s, John Balian began his tax career in 1986 when he was hired by the IRS as a Revenue Agent. In his capacity as a Revenue Agent, John audited a wide variety of closely-held corporations, sole proprietorships, highly compensated individuals and trusts. During his tenure with the IRS, John conducted forensic examinations of businesses in industries such as manufacturing, insurance, oil and gas distribution, law, accounting, medicine, real estate and entertainment. The focus of the audits was typically a search for unreported or diverted income and overstated or fictitious deductions. John's formal training at the IRS included extensive training in substantive tax law, internal IRS procedures and audit techniques.

Capitalizing on his accounting background and professional work experience with the IRS, John obtained his law degree from Southwestern University School of Law and his masters in taxation from Cal State University, Northridge. From 1994 to the present, John has practiced with the firm of Burgh, Balian & Bergstein, LLP in Studio City, California as the law firm's managing partner. During the past 14 years, John's tax and legal work has focused on estate and wealth preservation planning, income tax and capital gains deferral planning; and IRS Audit & Appeals representation. John is a Certified Specialist in Taxation Law, certified by the Board of

Legal Specialization of the California State Bar. He is the past chair of the West Valley CPA group of the California Society of CPAs' Los Angeles Chapter.

In 2008, John came back to his alma mater to join its faculty where he teaches the Culminating Experience in the graduate tax program and a Federal Tax Procedure course in the undergraduate accounting program. As part of these courses, John supervises the student- clinicians as part of the Bookstein Tax Clinic in their representation of low income taxpayers facing a dispute with the IRS.



Inaugural M.S. in Taxation Cohort

Last October, we welcomed 30 highly accomplished tax professionals to our inaugural cohort of the M.S. in Tax program. The Master of Science in Taxation is offered by the College of Business and Economics in collaboration with The Tseng College. The degree, conferred by the College of Business and Economics, was created to meet the needs of those employed in the field of taxation who may require an advanced degree to achieve their career goals and to excel in their profession. The program prepares students to be professional tax advisers and consultants, as well as leading practitioners in both the private and public sectors.

Unlike other programs offered in our region, the M.S. in Tax program is offered in a cohort format whereby each fall a group of approximately 30 mid-career tax professionals participate in this evening and weekend graduate program. Over a period of 18 months, each member of the cohort is guaranteed enrollment in every class. Classes are presented one at a time in an accelerated mode and the schedule is set for the entire program at the outset. Courses are taught primarily by leading practitioners in the field.

Given our small class size, admission to this program is highly selective. For our recent class, the Admission Committee had nearly 90 applications for a targeted class size of about only 30. The typical admitted applicants were primarily CPAs who had on average 3.3 grade point average in their undergraduate studies, and five years of professional tax experience. About sixty percent of our entering students for the first cohort came from tax practice in public accounting, but almost twenty percent came from private industry, and another twenty percent were from government or operated their own practice.

The student body of the first cohort was highly diverse with half of the entering class being immigrants, who on average have been to the United States for almost 15 years. Almost forty percent of the entering students were female. The average age of students in our first cohort was 36. Most students came back to our program after an extended break from school. The typical student had finished his or her undergraduate degree over 9 years earlier. Those who applied and were admitted to our program regarded Cal State Northridge by in large as their first choice as displayed by an acceptance yield rate of 94%.

We look forward to learning more about our MS in Tax alumni. We hope that you will share with us information about recent career changes, and other important events in your life. You can email us at: mstaxation@csun.edu.

Student Scholars

Through the incredible generosity of our supporters, we have been able to provide financial support for many students in our graduate tax programs over the past year.

Select students admitted to the M.S. in Taxation program receive up to \$4,000 in scholarship funds. The selection process is highly competitive and is based on merit and financial need.

Our contributors include firms, the Bookstein Institute, as well as advisory board members and faculty members. In particular, we would like to recognize one of our finest faculty member, Professor Jeff Tolin, Tax Principal, Ernst & Young, LLP, who has donated his faculty salary to fund a number of scholarships to deserving students.

We are thankful to all of our contributors. With their generosity, we were able to award more than \$30,000 over the past twelve months.

To fund a future scholarship for our graduate tax student, please contact the M.S. in Taxation Office at (818) 677-3952 or at mstaxation@csun.edu.

HARVEY & HARRIET BOOKSTEIN ENDOWMENT:

Rabia Dahal	\$2,000
Gregory S. Horwitz	\$2,000
Farid Faryab	\$3,000
Miesha Shelly	\$3,000
Lillie D Johnson	\$2,000

JAMES DEBREE, TAX PARTNER, DELOITTE:

Babken Basmadzyan	\$3,000
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RBZ, LLP:

Arkady Vaserfirer	\$2,000
Tym Williams	\$1,000
Edward R. Martinez	\$2,000

JEFF TOLIN, TAX PRINCIPAL, ERNST & YOUNG, LLP:

Bak Kwan	\$3,500
Biaina T. Shams	\$4,000

STONEFIELD JOSEPHSON, INC:

Yin Wai Lo	\$4,000
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Tax Clinic Update

The Bookstein Tax Clinic, launched in 2008, provides free federal tax controversy resolution services to low-income taxpayers residing throughout the Los Angeles area. Under the supervision of an experienced tax professional over 50 undergraduate and graduate students have participated as clinicians serving over 85 low income taxpayers facing a controversy with the IRS.

The Bookstein Tax Clinic also provides tax education to taxpayers not proficient in the English language by participating in numerous community outreach programs. Over the past six months, students facilitated over a dozen seminars and workshops to self-employed taxpayers throughout the Los Angeles area primarily on federal payroll tax issues. As part of the community service, students have authored several short articles on variety of tax issues affecting low income taxpayers. Some articles have been published in local newspapers, including Spanish language newspapers.

Undergraduate and graduate accounting students are provided the opportunity to handle various aspects of controversies with the Internal Revenue Service, including interviewing clients, preparing cases for appeals conferences and appearing at the conferences themselves, preparing offers-in-compromise, and negotiating settlements with the Internal Revenue Service. The Bookstein Tax Clinic provides students high quality training that is transferable to both large firm and solo practices. Students are required to attend classes and work independently and in teams on their cases with diligence, excellence and efficiency. Earlier this year, the Bookstein Tax Clinic received a \$47,000 grant from the U.S. Treasury Department to support the clinic's activities and service in the community. Most recently, Citi offered its support of our educational outreach services by providing a generous grant.

Our annual clinician recognition reception is scheduled to take place on Saturday, December 13, 2008.

The Bookstein Institute gratefully thanks all of our sponsors



MOSS ADAMS LLP



Internal Revenue Service



Rothstein Kass

Bookstein Institute

for Higher Education in Taxation

Bookstein Institute Contact Information

The Bookstein Institute for Higher Education in Taxation is the focal point for tax-education within the College of Business and Economics at California State University, Northridge, serving as the hub in the greater San Fernando Valley for education, scholarship and community service in taxation.

Established by Los Angeles philanthropist, co-founding partner of RBZ, LLP, and Cal State Northridge accounting alumnus Harvey Bookstein and his wife Harriet, the Institute has been instrumental in launching of the Master of Science in Taxation program. The efforts of those involved in the Institute enable us to lay the groundwork for future programs focused on advancing tax education for professionals in the surrounding area.

The Bookstein Institute for Higher Education in Taxation provides professional growth and development opportunities through advanced studies in taxation, scholarly research, networking events and service learning projects in taxation. The Institute promotes and supports activities that encourage a greater understanding of the dynamic field of taxation.

Martha Nelson
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