

# Environmental Leader: Lewis & Clark

Tyler Roberts

## Small footprint, global impact

Lewis & Clark Law School is training tomorrow's environmental lawyers and sending them around the globe.

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OLIVIER JAMIN, a 2017 graduate of Lewis & Clark, stands in front of the school's library

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Olivier Jamin has represented small island countries at the Paris Climate Change Conference, Campaigned against Japanese whaling practices, presented arguments in the European Court of Justice and worked for NGOs in West Africa.

These are experiences that even seasoned international environmental lawyers would be lucky to add to their resumes. For Jamin, a 2017 graduate of Lewis & Clark Law School, it was part of his legal training and his participation in the law school's International Environmental Law Project (IELP).

"I picked Lewis & Clark for its excellent reputation for environmental law," Jamin, a native of Paris, France, said. "IELP was very attractive. It is really unique to get this experience in a field that is difficult to get into."

Jamin's first foray into international environmental law came during his second year, when he and a group of IELP students traveled to Paris to represent small island clients at the Paris Climate Change Conference. Larger countries had swaths of lawyers combing through the fine details of proposed terms, but smaller countries had a hard time diving deep into the details, Jamin said. That is where IELP stepped in to help.

“The meetings were busy, and we worked around the clock,” Jamin said. “We maybe slept two to three hours each night. It was exciting because all of these countries were coming together to combat climate change.”

The following year, Jamin returned to Europe to assist African countries involved in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, or CITES. In addition, Jamin worked with Sea Shepherd Legal to explore diplomatic and legal avenues to curtail whaling off the coast of Denmark.

While his achievements are impressive, Jamin was not alone. Lewis & Clark Law pulls students from all over the country to its Portland, Ore. campus to take advantage of its curricular and extracurricular offerings. The law school offers certificates in Animal Law, Business and Commercial Law, and Federal Taxation Law, among others. But its Environmental, Natural Resources & Energy Law Program stands out the most.

“Our curriculum is as deep and as broad as you can find anywhere,” said Janice Weis, associate dean and director of the Environmental, Natural Resources & Energy Law Program. “We offer a robust list of courses in pollution, natural resources and energy law. It distinguishes us because other programs offer one of those areas. There is crossover in all of those areas, and it gives our students amazing choices.”

### **No shortage of experiential opportunities**

Programs such as IELP take students all over the world each semester to work on cutting-edge environmental issues, represent international clients and get hands-on environmental law experience. The issues students encounter include climate change, conservation, oceans and fisheries, and trade and the environment.

“There is a growing recognition that we cannot just advocate for environmental issues at home anymore,” Weis said. “These are truly international issues that must be addressed.”

Lewis & Clark Law is also home to the Earthrise Law Center, where students can get hands-on environmental advocacy and litigation experience. Since its founding in 1996, the center has worked to protect the Pacific Northwest from timber sales, coal burning facilities, open pit mining and the overgrazing of public lands.

Participating students work 10 hours or more each week on environmental law cases, participating in all phases of the litigation process and issues that touch on the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act, for example.

The latest addition to Lewis & Clark Law’s Environmental, Natural Resources & Energy Law program is the Green Energy Institute. The institute provides opportunities for students to undertake policy-related projects with the aim of transitioning the power grid to 100 percent renewable energy. Students work to improve existing policies and incentives that encourage investment from energy-market stakeholders.

There is a host of other clinical opportunities for Lewis & Clark Law students. Students in the Small Business Legal Clinic can work with clients to choose and form business entities, review and draft contracts, and secure financing. There is also the Low-Income Taxpayer Clinic, which represents taxpayers in front of the IRS, and the Animal Law Clinic, which encourages the consideration of animals in legal decision-making (and is the only one of its kind in the country).

Lewis & Clark's National Crime Victim Law Institute provides support to the victim's of crimes and ensures that their voices are heard during all phases of criminal proceedings. Students provide assistance to attorneys, helping ensure that victims are treated fairly and with respect.

### **A green campus in a green city**

Lewis & Clark is in the heart of Portland, one of America's greenest cities. More than 25 percent of the city's workforce commutes by bike, carpool or public transportation. The city has the highest number of LEED-certified buildings per capita in the nation. And if that isn't impressive enough, 56 percent of all waste is recycled.

Lewis & Clark's campus is no exception. "It is critical that we as a campus community show that we're not just teaching about sustainability in the classroom but that we're also putting our priorities into practice," Weis said. "It just makes sense that we have much more power when we work together."

All of the campus' sustainability initiatives are guided by the Sustainability Council, which consists of faculty, students and staff from the college's three schools.

Lewis & Clark became the first private college in the nation to achieve certification from the nonprofit Salmon-Safe for managing storm water and reducing the use of fertilizers and pesticides. The school is also in the midst of a three-year project to remove invasive species and replace them with native plants.

"Students come to Lewis & Clark and to Portland to study in an environment that cares deeply about people and planet," said Amy Dvorak, the college's sustainability director. "Our students are often very interested in what we do as an institution to demonstrate these ideals in our programs, policies and buildings."

The law school building itself is certified LEED Silver, and future buildings will be designed with the goal of obtaining Gold certification. The law school is even exploring net zero energy.

What's more, it is situated between two large urban parks, where students can hike, bike and enjoy the outdoors. Thanks to its large windows, students can also enjoy the outdoors from inside the library.

For Jamin, who is now an IELP fellow and LL.M. student, the surrounding parks are a perfect escape from the books.

"I can walk right outside and find myself on a trail that is over 12 miles long," Jamin said. "The connection between life in Portland and what we teach is really beneficial for someone studying environmental law."