

BOB RASHID



## Chris Watson '08

Chris grew up in Madison in a family with severe financial constraints. An excellent student, he went on to college in Pennsylvania, foreign-exchange programs, and challenging work in Chile and Washington, D.C. Now he is back in Madison at the Law School, savoring new opportunities to learn and to help others.

**Hometown:** Madison, Wisconsin

**Undergraduate Institution:**  
Haverford College

**Undergraduate Major:** History

When Chris Watson was growing up in federally subsidized housing in Madison, he experienced hard times first-hand. His mother was struggling to make a life for her children, dependent on welfare and child support payments that were delivered irregularly through a social services system that needed some fixing.

Her situation was written up in George Hesselberg's column in the *Wisconsin State Journal* in 1985. The column begins, "Claire Fried is on welfare, but she is having a hard time supporting herself and her three children on \$9 a month."

"My character was shaped by the challenges my family faced," Watson says. Throughout high school he held down jobs cleaning fraternities and working in fast food restaurants. He was an excellent student, and when the time came for college, he chose Haverford College in Pennsylvania (sight unseen: "I had no resources to visit"), which offered a generous scholarship package. He also had a four-year scholarship from the Rotary Club of Madison.

During college Watson continued to work part-time jobs to meet expenses, while maintaining his high level of academic work. He graduated magna cum laude with high honors in history and was inducted into the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

As an undergraduate, Watson studied abroad in both Spain and Chile. "When I was growing up, we never took vacations. The prospect of studying abroad was exciting and I wanted to take full advantage of the opportunity."

After college, Watson returned to Chile to further improve his language skills, working as an intern for a Latin American business publication in Santiago. He remains fluent in Spanish.

When he came back to the United States, Watson accepted a logistics management internship at

the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., and in August 2005, he entered the UW Law School.

Continuing to make the most of every opportunity, Watson spent the summer after his 1L year working full-time at the Law School's Consumer Law Clinic, where he was able to work closely with Spanish-speaking clients.

He is especially proud of his work on an insurance denial case for a young child. The clinic won the case, and the decision has now been published. "It was an opportunity to make some good law," Watson says, adding that the consumer clinic has been an excellent experience. "It is wonderful to help people and to put into practice the theories and procedures that we learned about in class."

Since his 1L year, Watson has been a project assistant for the Resource Center on Impaired Driving, working with the staff attorneys who run the center ("invaluable to my legal education," he says). His other notable Law School activities have included receiving recognition for his writing ability as a finalist in the Law School's 2006 Best Brief Competition, traveling to Thailand with an International Taxation class, and raising money for Special Olympics by jumping into a frozen Lake Mendota as a member of the Law School's Polar Plunge Team.

This summer, Watson is a summer associate in the Chicago office of Latham & Watkins, and during fall semester he will be an intern for Justice Ann Walsh Bradley of the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

Looking back on his childhood, Watson says he never expected to be where he is right now. "I grew up poor in this town," he says, "and to go away to college, to live abroad and in D.C., and to come back and be able to go to a great law school — I feel very fortunate."

Emily Yip grew up in a family of engineers and majored in science as an undergraduate in California. Neither the field of law nor the state of Wisconsin figured into her plans for the future.

Beginning as a history major at Berkeley with biology as a second focus, she became fascinated with biochemistry. “It was fantastic, and after college I got a job at a medical device company and an internship that segued into a full job as a microbiologist.”

Four years later, she was ready for a new challenge. The transition to law was the result of an interest in intellectual property issues she had discovered in her scientific work.

She was also ready for a new part of the country. “I had never thought about Wisconsin, but a friend of mine from San Diego is in the psychology department here, and she said that Madison is a great research school with a great environment. Also, my mother had gone to graduate school in the Midwest.”

Yip adds, “I wanted a different environment — I wanted to live in a part of America I had never been in before. I came to visit and I was really struck by how similar it was to what I was used to: a college town similar to Berkeley. I felt I could fit in here very seamlessly.”

Now heading into her third year at the Law School, Yip has found that she chose well. “Community is very important to me, and one of the biggest highlights for me has been being involved in the LEO [Legal Education Opportunities] community.”

Yip has enjoying serving as treasurer of the Asian Pacific American Law Students/South Asian Law Students Association (APALSA/SALSA). “I feel that I have found my place working with APALSA/SALSA,” she says. “I am used to being one of many Asian Ameri-

cans where I live, and having that community here is very important to me. Just being able to be with others who are like you — who grew up as second-generation Asians in America — I love being involved in the organization.”

She adds, “The Law School experience has been a lot friendlier than I expected. Everyone is really nice here; maybe it’s the Midwest.”

Yip has also developed new subject interests in law school. “I have become very interested in tax law,” she says. “I went with Professor Allison Christians to Thailand for her tax seminar there. She’s an amazing teacher, so I took her class this semester, and it’s just fascinating. When I first came to law school, I was concentrating on intellectual property, but now I want to bring in tax, corporate law, and business law.”

After her first and second years in law school, Yip has worked at a San Diego law firm focusing on intellectual property (IP). “It’s a small boutique IP and corporate firm,” she says. “We cater to biotech start-ups, and because it’s a small firm I can do a lot of different kinds of law. I love my firm!”

Yip’s Law School years have also included work with the Law School’s Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF), and some completely extracurricular relaxation with rock climbing at a local gym (“It’s what I do to keep sane”) and karaoke (“I’m an avid karaoke-er”).

Her future may also bring some international experience, Yip says: possibly practicing with a multinational firm or with international clients. She clearly has a talent for exploring new subjects and new places.



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## Emily Yip '08

When Emily entered the UW Law School, she was simultaneously leaving her home state of California to try a new part of the country, and expanding beyond her science background to take on the new challenge of law. Both ventures into new territory have proven highly successful.

**Hometown:** San Diego, California

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of California-Berkeley

**Undergraduate Major:** Biochemistry

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## Rachel Abhold '08

Rachel's interest in law began in high school with discussions of the constitution. Her high-energy enthusiasm for law school encompasses her courses, her classmates from various backgrounds, and her clinical work with the Family Court Assistance Project.

**Hometown:** North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Wisconsin-Green Bay

**Undergraduate Majors:** History, Political Science, Social Change and Development

Rachel Abhold radiates an energetic enthusiasm for learning. The world is full of compelling subjects, and many of them are calling to her.

Abhold grew up in North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and attended the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay as a high-achieving undergraduate. "I ended up with three majors," she says. "I kept finding things I wanted to do."

In the course of completing those majors in history, political science, and social change and development (with an emphasis in law and social change), she gravitated toward courses involving law. "I took all the legal courses I could get," she says.

Abhold cites a few reasons for her early interest in law. In high school, she was fascinated by class discussions of the constitution, and as a college student she was active in student government and organized a women's leadership conference, "which both started me in the direction of law school."

She also had a more personal experience with the law. "My parents got divorced when I was five, and both were pro se litigants and had some problems with that. That was one of the biggest things that made me want to go to law school."

Abhold applied to law schools in Chicago and Washington, D.C., and was expecting to accept an offer in Chicago. "But I visited here, and everyone was so friendly that it actually sold me on this law school."

Law school, like undergraduate school, has presented Abhold with a broad spectrum of interesting choices.

First, courses have been stimulating. She names a few that come to mind immediately: Equal Employment Law with Carin Clauss, Trusts and Estates with Howard Erlanger, and Property with Thomas Palay.

Her clinical work with the Family Court Assistance Project has been another high point. "That is

probably the biggest thing that has impacted my Law School career so far," she says. "Impoverished people from the community come in and we help them with forms they need to fill out. I was able to learn a lot about family law." She adds, "I spent pretty much all my waking hours on that last summer."

Abhold also appreciates the people she has met at the Law School. "I would definitely say that one of the biggest highlights is meeting different types of people. I have a friend from Texas, from Milwaukee and Madison, from Mexico — friends I hope I will keep forever."

In addition, Abhold finds time to read in other subject areas. "I'm very interested in women's studies and religious studies," she says. "I like to browse in book stores and further my education on my own. I'm also teaching myself guitar; I played the flute for a number of years, but that's not very adaptable to apartment living."

Abhold has completed an article on the topic of women's withholding sex to achieve political goals, which she is submitting to law journals. (She read the classic play on this theme, *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes, as an undergraduate.)

Currently Abhold is working as a summer associate at Melli, Walker, Pease & Ruhly in Madison. She knows that she really enjoys family law, but she is keeping options open; those courses in employment law, trusts and estates, and property have all opened new possibilities.

"I've always thought about having my own practice," she says, "so it doesn't hurt to have a variety of areas that interest me."

Students profiled in the *Gargoyle's* Student Life section often are looking ahead to government work in the nation's capital. Third-year student Bill Bettenberg, in contrast, can look back on such a career.

Bettenberg's 40-year career at the U.S. Department of the Interior included numerous positions such as Director of the Minerals Management Service, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Budget, and from 2002 to 2005, Director of the Office of Policy Analysis.

He designed computer systems for the U.S. Bureau of Mines; directed and "cleaned up" the Minerals Management Service in the wake of the mineral leasing scandals of the early 1980s; negotiated the first six self-government compacts between the federal government and Indian tribes; became a negotiator on western water, hydropower licensing, and other natural resource issues; and worked extensively on energy policy, receiving numerous awards for distinguished service.

In August 2005 he retired, and matriculated at the UW Law School.

"Law school was always something I was interested in," Bettenberg says. He had taken the Law School Admissions Test in 1968, but at that point his career was already taking off. As an applicant in 1964 for a federal government management intern program, now known as the White House Management Fellows Program, he had received seven federal job offers.

Almost 40 years later, he picked up the law school thread again. By this time, his interest in law had become more specific. "In the negotiations I conducted, I usually had attorneys with me," he says. "I really enjoyed resolving conflicts between tribes, environmentalists, and resource users, and the conflicts always involved thorny legal issues. That is basically why I went to law school, and what I'm focused on here."

Because he and his wife had always pictured retiring to a college town, and because their grown son lives in Madison, he chose the UW Law School.

"Retirement" is probably not an accurate description of Bettenberg's experience at the Law School, however: he is taking 18 credits each semester. "I am trying to get the maximum advantage from my time here," he says.

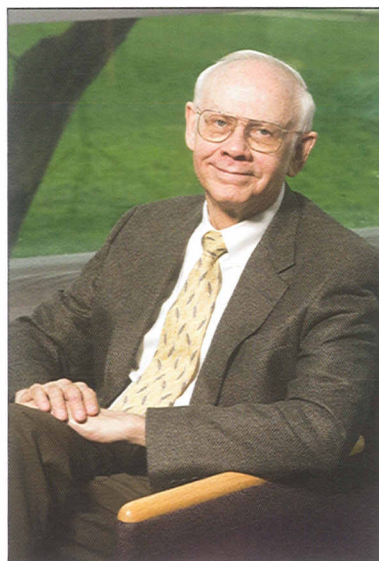
He also participates "pretty extensively" in ILSA, the Indigenous Law Student Association.

Bettenberg has a clear vision of where he wants his law degree to take him: he hopes to continue his work in the area of natural resource conflicts that involve tribes, environmental protection, and resource users. This summer, he is working in Washington, D.C., at Homerlaw, a firm that specializes in representing Indian tribes.

Bettenberg's well-established interests have guided his choice of courses. "From an Indian law standpoint, it was a good fit," he says. "There is a year-long program in Indian law here — better than most schools." His class on natural resource law with Professor Stephanie Tai was "perfectly tailored for my background," and he took administrative law "because that goes with hydro-power licensing and tribal and natural resource issues." He also plans to take trusts and estates, and tax law, both subjects being "useful for tribes."

Of course, returning to student life requires some adjustment. "It's hard coming back and doing things like taking tests after being away from it for four decades," Bettenberg says. "But I've enjoyed my classes and my professors — I've had lots of good professors."

As a dedicated law student, Bettenberg is focusing neither on his past career nor on his future one, but on the interesting present. "I think of the Law School," he says, "as a cornucopia of opportunities."



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## Bill Bettenberg '08

Bill came to law school after a 40-year career in Washington, D.C., in high-level positions at the U.S. Department of the Interior. His achievements include negotiating the first six self-government pacts between the federal government and Indian tribes. He is relishing the learning opportunities offered by the Law School.

**Hometown:** Richland, Washington

**Undergraduate Institution:** University of Washington

**Undergraduate Major:** Political Science

**Graduate Degree:** M.A., Political Science, University of Washington