

## THOMAS MITCHELL, JULIET BRODIE JOIN LAW FACULTY

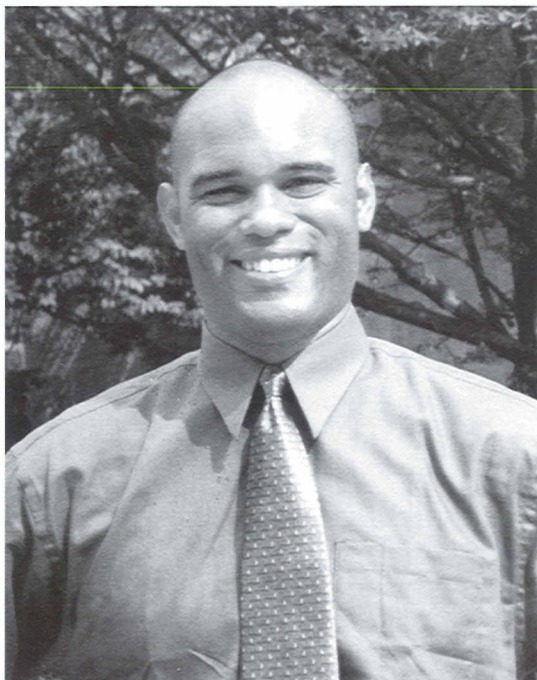
### THOMAS MITCHELL

THOMAS MITCHELL JOINED THE UW Law School faculty this Fall as an assistant professor, specializing in real estate law, remedies, and rural land tenure issues. Professor Mitchell earned his B.A. in English at Amherst College and his J.D. at Howard University School of Law. He worked as an attorney for the law firm of Covington & Burling in Washington, D.C., and served as judicial clerk for the Hon. Emmet G. Sullivan, who sits on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

Thomas Mitchell first joined the Law School community in 1996, as a William H. Hastie Fellow, completing his LL.M. degree in December 1999, with a thesis titled *From Reconstruction to Deconstruction: Undermining Black Landownership, Political Independence and Community Through Partition Sales of Tenancies in Common*. This study, published in article form in this Winter's issue of the *Northwestern University Law Review* (Vol. 95, No. 2), underscores Professor Mitchell's research interests in land tenure issues in rural communities.

Professor Mitchell has gained hands-on experience in the land tenure field through his work as director of the four-year-old Summer Law Extern Program, a joint program of the Law School and the UW Land Tenure Center, which he has helped to build over the past three years. Through this program, law students spend summers working throughout rural America in communities whose lack of access to legal services has placed their land ownership at risk. The project has now expanded to six sites around the country, including a site in eastern Kentucky (in Appalachia); a site in North Carolina with a public interest law firm that primarily serves black farmers and landowners; a site in New Mexico where the student extern works with the Navajo Indian Nation; and two sites along the Texas-Mexico border with organizations that serve Mexican-American clients living in informal settlements. (See the article that appeared in *Wisconsin Week* on March 1, 2000 at <http://lwcweb.ltc.wisc.edu/nap/napnews.html>), reprinted in this issue on page 35.

A related project of Professor Mitchell's made headlines when a grant proposal that he co-wrote



**Assistant Professor Thomas Mitchell**

with four other professors and a graduate student in other departments at UW and Tuskegee University received a \$3.5 million allocation from the USDA in January 2000 for funding a "Center for Minority Land and Community Security," to be co-directed by the Land Tenure Center and Tuskegee University. Professor Mitchell wrote the section of the grant creating legal education programs for minority communities that have lost substantial amounts of land. "Often," he says, "these communities become victims of legal processes they do not comprehend." The program will train nearly 40 community-based paralegals within under-served rural, African-American, Hispanic-American and Native-American communities.

Professor Mitchell's land tenure interests have also taken him beyond U.S. borders. In 1997, he traveled to South Africa to conduct research on the restitution of land rights in post-apartheid South Africa. Further, he spent several weeks in Zimbabwe and South Africa in the Spring of 2000 as part of a team assembled by the Land Tenure Center and the University of Zimbabwe that is studying alternative models of land reform in southern Africa. ♦