

Report from Dean Neil H. Cogan on the July 2006 Bar Passage Rate

I am delighted to report that 124 Whittier Law School graduates passed the July 2006 California Bar Examination. According to our staff's calculations, our students passed at a rate of 59.33%. The passing average will be reported online and in the press as 59%.

The College and Law School extend their heartiest congratulations to the members of the Class of 2006, who deserve our praise for their hard work, their energy, and their spirit. They studied and prepared during a difficult time, and they will be remembered for their great achievement.

The 59% rate is the highest pass rate achieved by WLS graduates since the 1990's and is 29 points higher than the rate achieved just three years ago. While we are still assessing the results to understand fully what produced this outstanding improvement, we know that the pass rate is due to several prominent factors. Plainly, the members of the Class of 2006 were highly qualified students who took seriously the task of studying for the bar and who were dedicated to the mission of improving our first-time bar passage rate.

But in addition to their entering credentials, skills, and dedication, the members of the Class of 2006 had the benefit of the country's best bar preparation program, initiated in 2001 and led superbly by Associate Dean Mario Mainero, and assisted by five excellent Academic Support Professors, Rebecca Flanagan, D'lorah Hughes, Scott Johns, Eric Leach, and Paula Manning. Those graduates taking 60% of the Summer Supplement passed at 83%. We must also thank Legal Skills Professors John Funk and Jen Mertus, the Legal Skills Institute, our alumni, staff, and faculty mentors, and those associated with the various programs provided by the Law School last summer.

Plainly as well, the faculty of the Law School deserves important recognition. They are a group of first-class teachers. Many of them refined their teaching specifically to focus more on the California Bar Examination, and help assure this success.

Recognition is deserved as well for the College Administration and the College Board of Trustees for providing support and resources for our programs.

And behind all of those named above are the dedicated staff members who work behind the scenes to support our students and our faculty. The improvement we celebrate today is due truly to a community-wide effort. I offer my congratulations to the Class of 2006 and to the entire community.