

**TJSL Associate Dean Arnold Rosenberg, shares insights on the panel he moderated as well as his thoughts on online LL.M. programs:**

The panelists included Prof. Ellen Podgor of Stetson University College of Law, who has written about online legal education; Barry Kozak of John Marshall Law School in Chicago, who directs its Elder Law LL.M. program and is Associate Director of its online LL.M. program in Employee Benefits Law; Michael Hunter Schwartz of Washburn University, who is co-Director of the Institute on Law Teaching and Learning at Gonzaga University; and Amy Peterson, Senior Vice President of EmbanetCompass, the nation's largest service provider for online education programs.

Last year's AALS Annual Meeting program sponsored by the Section on Postgraduate Legal Education featured a "headhunter" from the nation's largest legal recruitment firm, Major, Lindsay & Africa, who was of the view that, apart from LL.M. degrees in tax and possibly financial services, or unless one wants to practice in a different country, LL.M. degrees generally don't enhance a U.S. law graduate's marketability. For law graduates interested in a career in tax law, however, he agreed that an LL.M. is almost mandatory.

However, some of the other panelists at last year's program strongly disputed his opinion, particularly Marshall Tracht, who is Director of New York Law School's LL.M. program in Real Estate Law.

"I think getting an LL.M. at a highly ranked law school can spruce up a resume for a graduate of a lower-echelon law school, especially if the LL.M. is in an area of specialization that is starting to emerge as a hot area," said Dean Rosenberg. "At last year's program, Marshall Tracht gave real estate as an example; many lawyers exited from or avoided real estate law practice due to the near-collapse of the real estate market in the past few years, but now that the real estate market is starting to turn up again, there is a dearth of specialists in that field in certain parts of the country, which (he said) means new lawyers with an LL.M. in real estate have an edge in competing for the new jobs."

"LL.M. programs also have reputations of their own that sometimes outstrip the overall reputation of the law school that houses them, added Dean Rosenberg. " Examples would include the excellent LL.M. programs in environmental law at the University of Oregon, where I taught last semester, and at Vermont Law School, or the LL.M. program in Tax at Golden Gate University in San Francisco, which is well-regarded. I also think TJSL's online LL.M. program in International Tax and Financial Services has a strong reputation of its own as well as an alumni network that is more extensive than most. Many of our online LL.M. students already have jobs in tax or financial services and are in the program to get ahead or shift their area of specialization rather than to land a job, but we also do have students for whom the LL.M. has been a big help in getting jobs, particularly in international tax and in certain areas of financial services, such as the Bank Secrecy Act and compliance with laws that govern international financial transactions."