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UC Irvine debuts on U.S. News law school rankings at No. 30

By Don J. DeBenedictis

Dean Erwin Chemerinsky launched UC Irvine School of Law a half-dozen years ago with the promise it would be ranked immediately among the top 20 in the country.

He almost made it.

U.S. News & World Report released its influential rankings of law schools late Monday, including UC Irvine for the first time. The school came in at No. 30.

Although his stated goal back in 2008 was that the school would "be a Top 20 law school, by every measure, from the moment we open our doors and from our first rankings," Chemerinsky on Tuesday said he was very pleased by UCI's showing in 2015.

"I was thrilled," he said. "It's a great debut ranking."

U.S. News Rankings for California Law Schools					
School	2016 Rank	2015 Rank	2014 Rank	2013 Rank	2012 Rank
Stanford	2 (+1) [*]	3	2	2	3
UC Berkeley	8 (+1)	9	9	7	9
UCLA	16 (0)	16	17	15	16
USC	20 (0)	20	18	18	18
UC Irvine	30	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
UC Davis	31 (+5)	36	38	29	23
Pepperdine	52 (+2)	54	61	49	54
UC Hastings	59 (-5)	54	48	44	42
USD	71 (+8)	79	68	65	67
Loyola	75 (+12)	87	68	51	54
Santa Clara	94 (+13)	107	96	96	84
Chapman	127 (+13)	140	126	110	104
USF	138 (+16)	Tier 2	144	106	100
Cal Western	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2
Golden Gate	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2
McGeorge	Tier 2 (-8)	146	124	101	100
Southwestern	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	129	121
T. Jefferson	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2
Western State	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2
Whittier	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 2

* Parenthesis indicates change from last year

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Top Deals



Wednesday, March 11, 2015

Entertainment & Sports

Jury awards \$7.4 million in "Blurred Lines" infringement case

Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams were found to have infringed Marvin Gaye's "Got To Give It Up" with their smash 2013 pop hit. Half of their publishing revenue and a third of their individual profits went to the Gaye heirs.

Education

UC Irvine debuts on U.S. News law school rankings at No. 30

California law schools generally did well this time around. Of the 13 to receive numerical rankings, 11 schools moved up or stayed the same, and only two fell.

Law Practice

A ruling worth the State Bar's attention

We can predict that the bar will view a recent high court ruling as an ephemeral nightmare or falsely rationalize that it does not apply to it, or that its current practices somehow comply. By **Robert Fellmeth**

Litigation

Toyota, Ford, GM sued over potential cyberattacks on vehicles

A Texas plaintiffs' firm Tuesday launched a federal class action against three of the world's largest automakers, alleging vehicles manufactured with high-tech capabilities were vulnerable to hackers.

California law schools generally did well this time around. Of the 13 to receive numerical rankings - seven more are listed but not ranked and the provisionally accredited University of La Verne law school was not evaluated - 11 schools moved up or stayed the same, and only two fell.

In particular, Santa Clara University School of Law and Chapman University Fowler School of Law each moved up 13 spots. The University of San Francisco's school moved even higher, rising out of the unranked, second tier category to No. 138.

A key reason for the upward trend was the improving California economy, according to Derek T. Muller of Pepperdine University School of Law, who has studied rankings. U.S. News includes each school's success at placing graduates in jobs as lawyers within its rankings calculations, so the uptick in legal hiring boosted California law schools' tallies.

That factor, however, appears to have hurt UC Hastings College of the Law, which fell from No. 54 to No. 59 this year. According to a U.S. News table, only about 47 percent of Hastings' 2013 alumni had full-time, long-term jobs nine months after graduation. The non-California schools on either side of Hastings in the rankings had employment rates closer to 75 percent.

The school reportedly also offered acceptances to many more students last year, a negative. A Hastings spokesman did not return a call seeking comment on the rankings.

The University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law also dropped steeply in the new rankings, falling from No. 146 last year into the unranked second tier of schools. McGeorge officials released a brief statement acknowledging the slide but highlighting the school's appearance on four of U.S. News' specialty rankings. Its trial advocacy program ranked No. 10, its international law program came in at No. 20 and its part-time program landed at No. 35, the school noted.

UC Irvine's clinical program scored a No. 10 spot on that specialty ranking. Like McGeorge and several other California schools, it also did well on the U.S. News diversity rankings.

UCI officials are putting a positive spin on its spot on the list, noting that its showing at No. 30 is the best inaugural ranking ever. The law school at the University of Nevada Las Vegas hit the U.S. News list at No. 82 in the mid-1990s.

A couple of the factors that U.S. News tallies for its rankings held the school back, according to Chemerinsky.

One is the reputation ratings from other law school deans and professors and from lawyers and judges, which count for a quarter of a school's ranking calculation. UC Irvine got a 3.0 out of 5.0 from deans, compared to No. 31-ranked UC Davis' 3.3 and No. 59-ranked UC Hastings' 3.1.

The peer evaluation scores "take time to develop," Chemerinsky said. He predicted they will go up in the future.

Another trouble spot was graduate employment. About two-thirds of UC Irvine's 2013 graduates found jobs within nine months of graduation, less than, for instance, UC Davis, which had a 73.5 percent employment rate.

Chemerinsky said next year will be better. Already, nearly 85 percent of the 2014

Civil Rights

Controversy over attorney jailed for contempt heats up

Caree Harper, the lawyer for the homeless woman beaten by a California Highway Patrol officer, said she has hired prominent plaintiffs' attorney Mark J. Geragos to represent her in a dispute with U.S. District Judge Otis D. Wright II.

Health Care & Hospital Law

Firms deal with growing pressure of health data security

Because law firms are ramping up their privacy know-how to help clients and themselves comply with HIPAA, industry experts stress that health care attorneys should be not only versed in their practice area but also in data privacy.

Litigation

U.S. Navy faces \$65 million lawsuit

An aviation manufacturer is seeking damages from the U.S. Navy under the Federal Tort Claims Act for the demolition of its cargo air blimp, according to a lawsuit filed Monday in federal court.

Public Storage loses fight with Sprint over terminated cell tower leases

The contract dispute was remarkable because of the ferocity with which Public Storage pursued its claims despite their relative low value and the high price of their legal counsel at Quinn Emanuel.

Government

Judges hope bill to pay for court repairs succeeds

With court leaders estimating they need \$2 billion in repairs to facilities, a bill to place a \$2 billion bond measure before voters to help pay for state infrastructure maintenance is drawing judges' attention.

Litigation

California federal judges have above-average workload, report says

New federal filings held steady in 2014, rising less than 1 percent from the year prior, but California judges bore more of a burden than average, according to a new report issued Tuesday by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts.

graduates have good jobs as lawyers, he said.

The No. 30 ranking this year "makes me much more confident that we will be a Top 20 law school," he said.

As for his original goal, Muller noted, "the legal education market is a little bit different [now] than it was in 2008."

don_debenedictis@dailyjournal.com

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Discipline

Merced County judge faces discipline inquiry

Superior Court Judge Marc A. Garcia could be disciplined because he allegedly received \$250,000 from his former law firm after taking the bench without disclosing it, the state Commission on Judicial Performance announced Tuesday.

Litigation

Kleiner Perkins attorney grills Ellen Pao in gender discrimination trial

A lawyer for Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers tore into Ellen Pao's portrayal of her relationships at the venture capital fund Tuesday during a cross-examination that featured emails and text messages.

Law Practice

Industry-run boards should look over both shoulders

These boards (including state bar associations) may have to look over their left shoulder to watch out for antitrust claims, and over their right, to look out for takings claims. By **Ken MacVey**

Entertainment & Sports

What happened to the sports page?

Chief Justice Earl Warren once told me that in reading the newspaper, he always read the sports page first to read about mans' accomplishments, and then the front page to read about their failures. By **Richard M. Mosk**

Administrative/Regulatory

Regulate privacy without stifling innovation

The Obama administration is working on several topics: breach notification, data security, national security, and regulation on "big data." By **Mark Mao and Victor Chen**

Judicial Profile

Laura Matz

Superior Court Judge Los Angeles County (Glendale)

Law Practice

Smaller litigation shops teaming up more, hiring less

Boutiques and small firms focusing on litigation in