# THE COMMENTATOR

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## NYU Law Dems: Philly Election Wiz's

**KIMBERLY NORTMAN '08**

Fourteen members of the NYU Law School Democrats (LawDems) traveled to Philadelphia this election day. They weregoing as volunteers for the Committee of Seventy's election protection efforts.

Election protection, an activity devoted to encouraging fair elections and protecting every citizen's right to vote, has become a hot issue since the Florida recount in the 2000 presidential election. Throughout the recount, concerns arose that citizens had been turned away from the polls.

"Sometimes citizens aren't allowed to cast their votes, just because a volunteer poll-worker may not understand the rights of the voter. Election protection helps to ensure that everyone who has a right to vote gets to cast that vote," said Colin Parent, former President of the LawDems.

Professional lawyers' associations have led election protection efforts, because lawyers are in a unique position to protect legal rights.

"Election protection provides law students with a rare opportunity to break out of our ivory tower of academia and experience first hand how our laws play out," said Justin Erlich, President of the LawDems. "Through our election protection efforts, we had the opportunity to see how voting issues are being dealt with on the ground."

Nonpartisan election protection groups, like the Committee of Seventy, do more than seek to protect each citizen's right to vote on election day. They also document the issues that arise at the polls, and they use that information to resolve those issues before the next election.

Some law students saw the trip to Philadelphia as a way to be involved in the election in a way that uniquely uses their skills and knowledge as attorneys-in-training.

"Primarily, I found it rewarding to contribute to the development of an infrastructure that might help increase voter confidence in the election system and maybe even turnout in subsequent elections," said Sarah Montgomery, a second year law student from Tennessee.

Others viewed their efforts as a way to contribute to the political process, despite the time constraints of law school.

"Having worked on the Kerry campaign in 2004, it's been hard not being more involved in 2006," Erlich said. "It's such an important time in our country, so just being able to do something, no matter how small, makes you feel that you were part it."

The LawDems traveled to Philadelphia because of the national spotlight on the Pennsylvania races.

"We went to Philadelphia so we could volunteer in a battleground area that had national import," Erlich said.

In addition to working a five hour shift, walking from polling station to polling station, the LawDems took the opportunity to learn about the history and culture of Philadelphia.

"My favorite part of the trip was proving to the rest of our group that a Philly cheesesteak is best ordered 'with wiz,'" said Parent.

Erlich, who had never experienced a Philly cheesesteak firsthand, learned the consequences of ordering with provolone the hard way.

"It didn't come melted, and that's when I realized that cheese wiz actually would taste better," Erlich continued. "But I couldn't bring myself to ask for it, so I had to ask my friend to get some wiz for me."

## Bahá'ís in Iran & the SBA at NYU

**JOHNATHAN SMITH '07**

Several weeks ago the SBA passed a resolution, entitled: "A Resolution Denouncing the Denial of Higher Education to Bahá'ís in Iran." This resolution, which criticized the Iranian's government policy of persecuting Bahá'ís in Iran by denying them the opportunity to achieve higher education because of their religious faith, called for the NYU student body and administration to take a stand against this religious intolerance. (The full text of the resolution will be available on the SBA website shortly.)

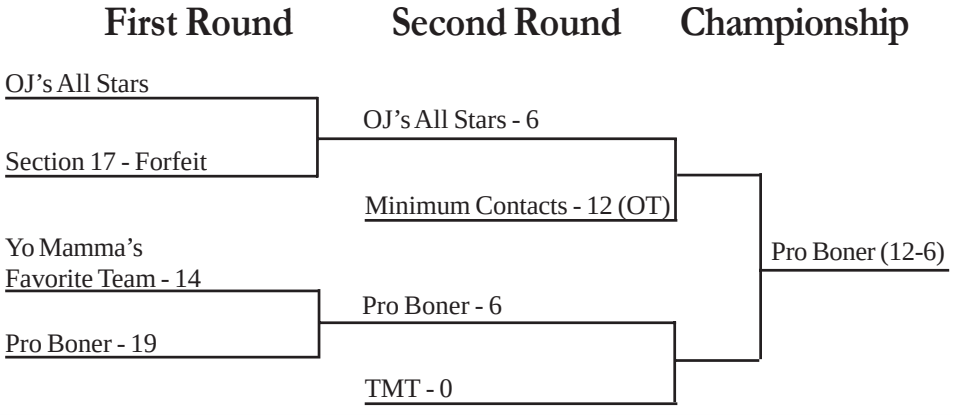
Some have asked (and I have no doubt many more may be wondering), why the SBA would pass a resolution such as this. On the surface, it may appear that these issues have very little to do with life and issues at NYU School of Law. However, I would like to suggest that in fact it does have to do with our community here in New York City. First, there are members of the NYU community who are either Bahá'ís or who have family members or friends who identify with that religious tradition.

Second, as students who attend a very privileged university of higher learning we have an obligation to speak out against injustice. As Martin Luther King Jr. once wrote, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Thus, the fact that there are people who are being denied an opportunity to further their educations should concern us all.

There is a good argument as to what effect our SBA resolution will actually have, but at least it is a first step in the right direction.

## Full Contact Playoff Results!!!

As ever, SLAP scores are approximate.




## LC Final Standings

| | Wins | Loss | Ties | Forf | TPD | TScore |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Flag Burners | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 57 | 35.57 |
| Little Lebowski Urban Achievers | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 120 | 31.2 |
| Death Angel Punishment Massacre | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 108 | 31.08 |
| Crow T Robot Likes Pizza on a Bagel | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 71 | 25.71 |
| Red House | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 58 | 25.58 |
| The Baby Choppers | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 25.5 |
| Todres's Tortfeasors | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 25.36 |
| The Real Balendras | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 25.31 |
| Barely Legal | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | -11 | 24.89 |
| The Testatrix | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 45 | 20.45 |
| Section 4 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 37 | 20.37 |
| Carla's Team | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 20.09 |
| The Electric Mayhem | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | -18 | 19.82 |
| Jones-Peacekeepers | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | -19 | 19.81 |
| Joint Tortfeasors | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | -43 | 14.57 |
| Crazy Naked Octopus | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | - | 10 |
| Law Talking Guys | 2 | 5 | 0 | 0 | - | 10 |
| Miller's Maniacs | 2 | 5 | 0 | 1 | - | 5 |
| Section 6 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | - | - |

## SLAP Playoff Schedule

The final standings are in, and it's time for the playoffs! There were 6 two-loss teams tied for only 5 remaining playoff spots, so honorable mention goes to Barely Legal, who lost the tiebreaker. Friday, November 17, 2006:

**QUARTERFINALS (2pm) (Refs needed)**

- **#1 Flag Burners v. #8 The Real Balendras**
- **#2 Little Lebowski Urban Achievers v. #7 Todres's Tortfeasors**
- **#3 Death Angel Punishment Massacre v. #6 Baby Choppers**
- **#4 Crow T Robot Likes Pizza On A Bagel v. #5 Red House**

**SEMIFINALS (3pm)**

- **Winner of #1/#8 v. Winner of #4/5 (Refs: Losers of #2/7 and #3/6)**
- **Winner of #2/#7 v. Winner of #3/6 (Refs: Losers of #1/8 and #4/5)**

**CHAMPIONSHIP (4pm) (Refs TBD)**