

Sooner Lawyer Archive

Volume 2011 | Issue 1
Spring/Summer 2011

2011

Parting is Such Sweet Sorrow for New Alumna Christa Evans

Jonella Frank

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/soonerlawyer>



Part of the [Legal Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Frank, Jonella (2011) "Parting is Such Sweet Sorrow for New Alumna Christa Evans," *Sooner Lawyer Archive*: Vol. 2011 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/soonerlawyer/vol2011/iss1/5>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the OU College of Law Archives at University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sooner Lawyer Archive by an authorized editor of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact darinfox@ou.edu.

PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW
FOR NEW ALUMNA

Christa Evans

BY JONELLA FRANK

Christa Evans, a member of the Class of 2011, has wanted to be a lawyer ever since she was a child. When she was in the second grade, she even went so far as to dress like a lawyer for Halloween, donning a second-hand suit and carrying an old briefcase. However, now that she is well on her way to fulfilling her childhood aspiration, she is still getting used to the idea of being an alumna rather than a student of the University of Oklahoma College of Law. This conflict of self-identity is understandable because she's still in study mode as she prepares to take the Oklahoma Bar Exam.



“OU does a tremendous job of **fostering mutual respect and appreciation** between students and professors.”

In November 2010, Evans was named by the Oklahoma Bar Association as the Outstanding Law School Senior Student from the OU College of Law. One look at her resume explains why she was selected for this award. She served as president of her law school class during her first two years and president of the Student Bar Association in her final year and still found time to participate in a variety of other activities and keep up with her classwork. She described her high level of involvement as a “labor of love, like a hobby.”

Evans was born and raised in Cherokee in northwestern Oklahoma. She is the younger of two daughters of Tom and Cheryl Evans. She described her hometown as not exactly cosmopolitan, but quickly added that it boasts irreplaceable small town charm. “You never had to lock your house or your car. I didn’t even own a key to our home until I was in college,” she said.

After graduating from Cherokee High School in 2003, Evans attended Northwestern Oklahoma State University in Alva, where her mother was a professor. As a sophomore she ventured farther from home, transferring to Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee. During the summer after her first year at OBU, Evans traveled to England for what she described as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to study Shakespeare at Oxford University. In 2007, she graduated with honors from OBU, earning a bachelor’s degree in English.

After college, Evans’ next adventure took her to Guadalajara, Mexico, where she attended La Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara for a language immersion program. She studied Spanish at the university and lived for nine months with a host family. “I got off the plane and could barely order a taco,” she commented. “I fell in love with la cultura Mexicana. In the process I learned I’m a lot better at eating salsa than dancing it.”

While living in Mexico, Evans had the opportunity to help a college friend in her mission work with underprivileged Mexican children. It was an eye-opening experience for Evans. “I’d never seen true poverty before. It really put things into perspective for me. It made me realize how fortunate we are and remember the things that truly matter in life,” she stated.

After returning to Oklahoma from Mexico, Evans moved to Norman to begin law school. However, as 1L orientation approached, she wasn’t sure what to expect. She’d seen the movies and heard scary stories about the Socratic method and cut-throat competition between students. “On orientation day, I braced myself for the worst, but I encountered the best. Instead of weeding students out, OU Law draws them in. I was amazed at the warmth and sincerity of the faculty, staff and students,” Evans explained.

In the fall semester of 2008, the College of Law was undergoing an evaluation for re-accreditation. Evans was one of the students who met with the site visit accreditation team to respond to questions about their law school experience. In a conversation after a session with the students, one of the evaluators commented to Evans that in her more than 30 visits to law schools, she had never encountered students as friendly or as happy as the OU Law students.

“Until she pointed it out, I didn’t understand how special and unique the OU College of Law community was and is. The student comments were sincere, not just an act for the accreditation committee,” Evans said. “There’s a reason students are so proud of and loyal to their teachers here. OU does a tremendous job of fostering mutual respect and appreciation between students and professors.”

During her three years at the College of Law, in addition to her presidential duties, Evans was on the American Bar Association Arbitration Competition Team, acted as a



Christa met regularly during her three years in law school with Assistant Dean Stan Evans, who served as the adviser to the class officers and the Student Bar Association.

Christa and her parents, Cheryl and Tom Evans, visit the OU College of Law booth at the OBA Annual Meeting in Tulsa prior to her receiving the award for the Outstanding Law School Senior Student from OU.

Christa Evans, Jenna McCarthy, Leah Agers and Amanda Essaili discuss Student Bar Association business.

The peacemaking and diplomacy aspects of mediation came naturally to her. “It’s so gratifying to watch the initial hostility between parties evolve into an amicable and open discussion.”

student ambassador for prospective student recruitment efforts, was a student representative on the Oklahoma Ethics Commission, served on the OU Provost’s Integrity Council and participated in the Luther Bohanon American Inn of Court. She also worked in the OU College of Law Civil Clinic, acted as a certified mediator through the Oklahoma Supreme Court Early Settlement Program and worked as a licensed legal intern for Trimble Law Office PC and the OU Office of Legal Counsel.

Evans credits other OU Law alumni with assisting in her legal education. Preston Trimble (’60), Jennifer Needham (’03) and Amy Pepper (’87) guided her as she worked as a legal intern and proved to be invaluable resources in her development as a lawyer. Additionally, Stan Evans (’03), assistant dean for students, mentored her as adviser for class officers and the Student Bar Association. After meeting with him almost weekly for three years, she said of him, “He has been one of the most influential and encouraging people in my life. He will be one of the faces I miss most after graduation.”

Her work with the Early Settlement Program piqued her interest in mediation. She explained that because she doesn’t have a very adversarial nature and her first inclination is to wonder how a dispute can be worked out, the peacemaking

and diplomacy aspects of mediation came naturally to her. “It’s so gratifying to watch the initial hostility between parties evolve into an amicable and open discussion. It’s neat to be a part of that,” she added.

For Evans, graduating was bittersweet. She’s ready to move on to the next phase of her life, but she will miss many people from her three years of law school. “I’m so grateful for my experience here,” she said. “I’ve met incredible people in the legal profession and have made wonderful friends.”

Dean Stan Evans said she is a student who epitomizes why he loves his job. “Christa has always been a leader and her skills have multiplied while here. What has really grown is her ability to not only see the big picture, but also to communicate her view and to get others to buy into it. She has an amazing range of strengths and abilities.”

Wherever her career takes her, there’s little doubt that this people-oriented, project-loving young woman will be a hard-working, principled member of the profession and an excellent representative of the OU College of Law. And she will be a real lawyer — not just dressed like one for Halloween. | **SL** |