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Pandemic

Fall 2020

Joseph DeMarco '22: Reflections on the Fall 2020 Semester

Joseph DeMarco

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Joseph DeMarco '22

Reflections on the Fall 2020 Semester

In what ways did the law school community rise to the challenge?

I think the community has shown a lot of empathy and togetherness. Community members that I connected with throughout the semester recognized that the pandemic, the national conversation regarding racial justice and social reform, and election-related stress were impacting everyone in an individual and unique way. Specifically, the Student Bar Association representatives made great efforts to stay in touch with the needs of the student body and advocate for those needs. Our administrators have also been active in soliciting feedback from the student body since the beginning of the pandemic. Because we have such strong student advocates and open-minded administrators, I always trusted that the decisions being made were well-informed and in the best interest of the community.

What were some of the obstacles you faced in classes and other law activities? Do you feel you got past them satisfactorily?

Online learning was certainly a unique challenge. I was surprised at how much I missed the informal learning opportunities that we benefit from when we see our classmates in the library or walk out of class together. I also definitely missed our community members that we are not in class with, especially the café staff. I think those interactions contribute to the law school experience in a really powerful way, and it's difficult to recreate those connections in a virtual learning environment.

However, I still learned a tremendous amount this semester. I think our professors worked hard to transition the law school classroom experience into remote instruction. It was often challenging to stay focused in the virtual setting. However, all of our classes were recorded, so it was easy to catch up on anything we may have missed during the class session.

How did you keep yourself healthy and grounded?

Throughout the semester, I tried to keep a consistent routine and exercise daily. I also tried to study outside as much as possible. The law school set up a tent with chairs in front of the law school. On nice days, it was great to get out of the house and meet with friends to study under the tent.