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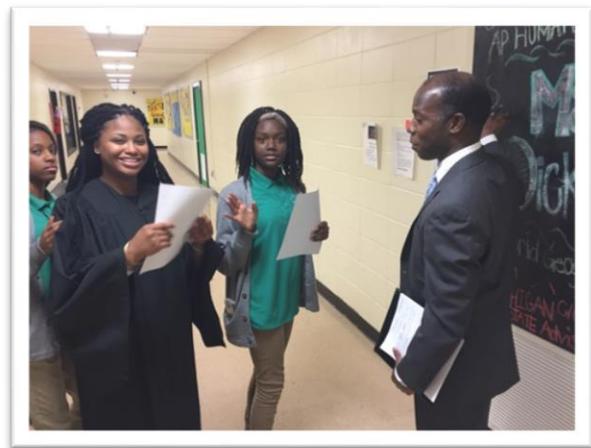
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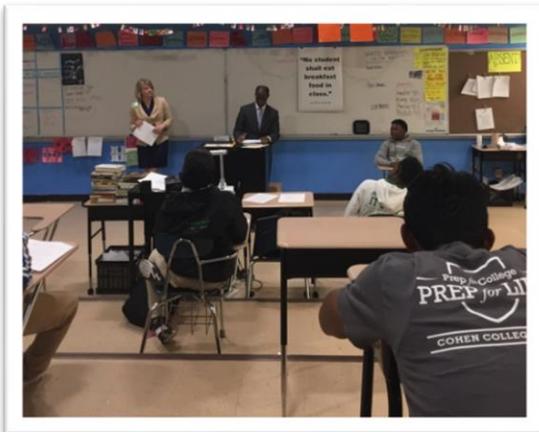
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Gordon Arta Montgomery Barnett Supports Lawyers in the Classroom Program

On April 18, 2018, Gordon Arata Montgomery Barnett associate [Micah Zeno](#) presented made a presentation to students at [Cohen College Prep](#) school in New Orleans as part of Lawyers in the Classroom. [Lawyers in the Classroom](#) is a collaborative program of the Louisiana Center for [Law and Civic Education](#), the [Louisiana State Bar Association](#), and the Louisiana District [Judges Association](#). Through this innovative, volunteer program lawyers deliver lively, interactive presentations to students on a variety of legal topics and share with them practical, real world experiences.



Attorney Micah Zeno helps students at Cohen College Prep prepare for "trial."



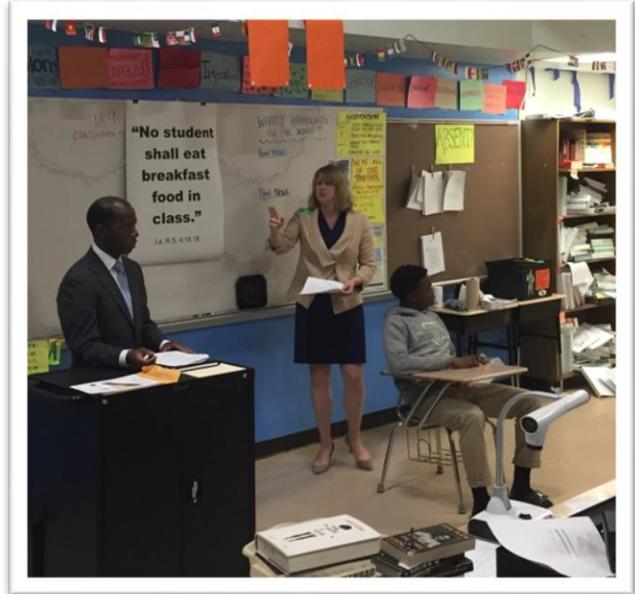
Students listen as Attorneys Micah Zeno and Caroline Bordelon present arguments on statutory interpretation.

Zeno challenged the students by asking them to consider, for example, whether someone could circumvent the law by consuming a banana in liquid form (as a smoothie) instead of eating it in a solid state, and whether a pork chop should be considered breakfast food simply because it is derived from the same source as bacon, a traditional breakfast compliment in the South. Based

Zeno, who has participated in this program for three consecutive years in a row, presented on statutory interpretation to two classes. Zeno hypothetically charged three students with violating a law that prohibits "eat[ing] breakfast food in class." Along with his law school classmate Caroline Bordelon, Zeno presented arguments for and against finding the accused students guilty. The scenarios prompted the students to consider whether eating breakfast related food, drinking a smoothie, and eating breakfast in the afternoon constituted a violation of the law. The students then made their own arguments on why their classmates should—or should not—be found guilty.

on the arguments of the students, one student who served as “judge” determined the fate of her classmates and pronounced the verdicts. As each case was tried, the thirty-nine students learned about the complexities in interpreting the law and were introduced to the concepts of legal research, oral argument, and *jurisprudence constante* (jurisprudence constante is the idea principle that under the civil law of Louisiana, that the decision of a court should be persuaded by an accepted rule of law applied in a long line of previous cases).

Zeno also noted that the students learned how to engage in healthy debate. “It’s amazing to see how quickly the students grasp the nuance in a legal issue,” he commented. “By the end of the presentation they’ve realized that the law rarely is a choice between absolutes, and they’ve learned how to present their opinions and disagree, without becoming disagreeable.”



Attorney Micah Zeno prepares to reply to arguments at “trial.”

[Micah Zeno](#) is an associate at Gordon Arata Montgomery Barnett where he focuses his practice on commercial transactions, property law, and complex litigation. Prior to practicing law, Micah was a commercial banker at Regions Bank (formerly, [AmSouth](#)). He is also a former law clerk for the [Honorable Judge June Berry Darensburg](#), the first African-American female judge in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana. For more information on statutory interpretation or for help in interpreting the law or a contract, please contact [Micah Zeno](#) at (504) 582-1111 or mzeno@gamb.law.