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Winners of First Annual *Legal Affairs* Writing Contest Announced Competition Promotes Clear, Accessible Writing About the Law

NEW HAVEN, Conn., April 20, 2004 – *Legal Affairs* magazine has announced the winners of the **First Annual *Legal Affairs* Writing Contest for Law Students**, sponsored by The Marbury Institute of Piper Rudnick LLP.

The annual writing competition provides a unique opportunity for law students to be published in a highly regarded general-interest magazine. *Legal Affairs* launched the contest to help engage students in writing for a general readership and to raise awareness of the links that clear, intelligent writing about the law can forge between the legal world and the broader society.

Students from all accredited law schools in the U.S. were invited to submit an argument about a pertinent topic in the law. The contest attracted 126 entries from 63 law schools. The essays covered a wide range of topics, including what's wrong with law school and why polygamy should be legal. Three of the most popular subjects were religion and the Constitution, international human rights, and same-sex marriage.

In a blind judging process overseen by the law firm of Tyler Cooper & Alcorn, the editors of *Legal Affairs* evaluated the entries without knowing the names or law schools of contestants until the judging was completed. The entries were evaluated on their accessibility for general readers, ingenuity of reasoning, style and clarity of writing, and strength of support for the argument.

"The judges were impressed with the quality of the submissions, the time and thought that went into them, and the broad range of topics chosen by the students," said Lincoln Caplan, the editor and president of *Legal Affairs*. "We believe the contest will reinforce the idea that it's possible to write about legal issues in a manner that's sophisticated and well-informed, as well as engaging and appealing to the general public. The magazine looks forward to the Second Annual *Legal Affairs* Writing Contest, which will be announced in the fall."

Kate Andrias was selected as the first-place winner of this year's contest for her entry, "Locked Out." In it, she argues that employers are curtailing workers' rights by requiring them to sign arbitration agreements that bar pursuit of their interests in court. Andrias will receive a prize of \$2,000 and her entry will be published in the "Argument" section of the May/June 2004 issue of *Legal Affairs*. She is a third-year student at Yale Law School who will clerk for a federal appeals court judge when she graduates.

Legal Affairs, which is celebrating its second anniversary this month, is the first general-interest magazine about the law for non-lawyers as well as lawyers. It is an independent non-profit publication with an educational mission. The contest's sponsor, The Marbury Institute, was founded by Piper Rudnick to enhance the firm's commitment to professionalism. The Marbury Institute's components include formal and informal litigation and corporate skills training, a Wise Men and Wise Women's speaker series, ethical roundtables, lectures by scholars, and a variety of other programs focused on professionalism in the law. Piper Rudnick's Chief Operating Officer Jeffrey F. Liss said, "We're truly delighted that the contest generated so much interest and produced so many quality essays, including the prize winners. It is a source of great pride for our firm that we are doing our part, through our sponsorship of the *Legal Affairs* contest, to encourage clear, persuasive writing about the law."

Additional winners of this year's contest are Tom Saunders, second place (\$1,000 prize), for "Ballot Box Budgeting: Why Voters Should Tie Their Own Hands to Keep Their States Out of Court," Yale Law School; and Vicky Ko, third place (\$500 prize), for "A Stately Affair: Why American States Should Be Allowed to Have a Say About the Kyoto Protocol," University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Honorable mentions were given to Jennifer Lauren for "Discrimination With a Small 'd': At-Will Employment Makes No Sense to the Public and It Shouldn't Remain in the Law," University of Washington School of Law; and to Chris Giovinazzo for "Does the Bush Administration Support States' Rights? Not When the Environment is Involved," Harvard Law School.

Legal Affairs was launched in 2002 to critical acclaim from legal leaders and from media such as *The Nation*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The Boston Globe*, the *New York Daily News*, *The Washington Post*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, NPR, C-SPAN, and CNN. Nat Hentoff, the legal columnist for *The Village Voice*, said, "*Legal Affairs* is now by far the best legal magazine in the business because there's so much first-rate reporting as well as opinion in it." The magazine won the National Headliner Award for magazine feature writing and was the silver medal winner of the Ozzie Award for Best Design of a New Magazine.

For more information about the contest or about *Legal Affairs*, please contact Amanda Harvey at 203-789-1510, x14 or at amanda.harvey@legalaaffairs.org.