



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Professor Nicole Casarez Elected to American Law Institute

HOUSTON (Jan. 8, 2010) Nicole Casarez, J.D., professor of communication, was recognized in December for her legal scholarly work with one of the highest honors of the legal profession - election to the American Law Institute.

The American Law Institute (ALI) is the leading independent organization in the United States producing scholarly work to clarify, modernize and otherwise improve the law. ALI membership is a distinct professional honor limited to 3,000 judges, lawyers and law professors. The Institute drafts, discusses, revises and publishes restatements of the law, model statutes and principals of law that are influential in courts and legislature, as well as in legal scholarship and education.

“Every law student studies the restatement of contracts, the restatement of torts , the model penal code, the uniform commercial code which are all written by the American Law Institute,” Casarez said. “I remember being in law school and one of my classmates asked what so many of us wondered: who is in the American Law Institute? Now I am honored to be a part of that group of judges and law professors and legal scholars.”

By participating in the Institute’s work, its members have the opportunity to influence the development of the law in both existing and emerging areas, to work with other eminent lawyers, judges and academics, to give back to the profession and to contribute to the public good.

Casarez teaches journalism, media law, public relations and media ethics at UST. She also serves as the director of the University of Houston Prelaw Summer Institute. Nicole and her investigative journalism students have participated in the Texas Innocence Network since the fall of 2001. They have investigated many capital and non-capital cases, including the case of Texas death row inmate Anthony Graves. Their Graves investigation has attracted state-wide and national attention.

She received a B.A. in Journalism from the University of Texas, a M.A. in Communication (Public Relations Management) from the University of Houston, and a J.D. from the University of Texas. Recent scholarly publications include “The Student Press, the Public Workplace and Expanding Notions of Government Speech,” The Journal of College and University of Law in 2008 and “Using the Media Strategically in Criminal Defense Cases,” published in Capital Litigation Update in 2006.

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Recent lectures and presentations include “Investigating Innocence Claims,” at the October 2009 Texas Criminal Defense Lawyers Association 7th Annual Forensics Seminar; “Pro Bono: Access to Justice and the Media,: Houston Bar Association /Houston Press Club 2009 Law & the Media Seminar; and “How to Conduct an Innocence Investigation,” at the Texas Criminal Defense Layers Association seminar in September 2008.