



Silvia Kim '07

Student

Accepting a position in a major law firm, with a focus on

international law, is a dream and a perfect fit for Silvia Kim, who will graduate this May from Washburn University School of Law.

Kim is originally from South Korea. When she was three, her parents moved to Costa Rica and in 2004 Kim moved to the United States. Adding to her cultural diversity, Kim fluently speaks Korean, Spanish and English.

In Costa Rica, Kim graduated from law school and practiced as an attorney for Corrales & Associates, an intellectual property firm there. She worked for such clients as Microsoft, Sony Music, and a major Costa Rican newspaper, handling mostly anti-piracy campaigns. In 2000 she moved to South Korea and worked as a branch manager for a staffing company and as a regional account manager for a software company. In South Korea, Kim met her husband who was serving in the U.S. Army. After they married, they relocated to Fort Riley, Kan., in 2004.

After moving to Kansas, Kim soon realized if she wanted to practice law in the states, she would need to attend an ABA accredited law school. To practice law in Costa Rica, students take one year of general studies then five years of legal study. Kim's Costa Rican degree is considered an undergraduate degree in the States even though she was a practicing attorney in Costa Rica. "I was overwhelmed, but my husband was always by my side reminding me that I had been a lawyer in Costa Rica and continued to be a lawyer in my heart." Kim asked several attorneys who she worked for in Kansas about law schools (some Washburn Law alums and some not); when they all told her great things about Washburn Law, her choice was made.

Previous experience practicing law in Costa Rica helped prepare Kim for law school in the U.S. "In Costa Rica, I attended classes in the evenings and worked full time at an intellectual property law firm. The experience of having to perform well at work and at the same time

do well at school helped me learn to manage my time and handle pressure. That is, in part, the reason why I have clerked since day one of law school. I don't feel I perform as well if I have too much free time," said Kim.

Kim recently accepted a job offer with Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP in Kansas City, working in international litigation. "I always wanted to work in this area but did not know if I would be able to do it in Kansas. I will be able to put my language skills to use as well," said Kim. When asked where she wants to go from here she quickly responded, "I just want to be the best that I can, contribute to my firm, and become a good lawyer."

When discussing her job at Shook, Kim is quick to note that she learned of the position through the Professional Development office at the law school. "Margann Bennett and Cindy Moyer were always there. They made me feel that the school cared about helping me get the job I wanted and gave me confidence to go through the interviewing process," stated Kim.

One of the things Kim found most beneficial at Washburn Law in addition to the help she received from the Professional Development office, was her pre-trial and trial advocacy classes. "Not only do they teach you a lot, but they give you access to excellent attorneys who share their experience and knowledge with you," said Kim. "I would advise future and current students to work at least a few hours a week during school. Although good grades are great, experience plays a vital role in your job search process. Sure it is nice to take five classes and have plenty of free time to do your homework; however, employers give experience a lot of value these days," remarked Kim.

"My husband told me that I would never be happy doing anything other than practicing law in the U.S. and he was right. Sometimes we go through life thinking there have to be easier ways to make your dreams come true. Going through law school, I have confirmed that the only way to achieve your dreams is hard work," states Kim. Her hard work has paid off and now Kim will be able to enjoy the results of that hard work, practicing in an area of the law that she always dreamed of doing.