The Center for Japanese Legal Studies enjoyed another busy and productive year in 2006-2007. The bond between Columbia Law School and the Japanese legal community continued to strengthen through the Center’s programs, which included faculty exchanges, a speaker series, and several fellowships. Students and scholars with an interest in Japanese law remain a key component of Columbia Law School’s vitality. Dean David Schizer also named three Japan-based alumni to its new International Advisory Board, a sign of Japan’s importance to the law school.

RECORD ENROLLMENT IN JAPANESE LAW:
A record number of students enrolled in Professor Curtis J. Milhaupt’s course, Japanese Law and Legal Institutions, in the spring semester. Forty students completed the course, a big increase over the typical enrollment of between twenty to thirty students. The students were also an especially diverse group, including Japanese LL.M. candidates, several Korean LL.M. candidates, LL.M. students from Taiwan and Singapore, as well numerous American J.D. students with a wide range of backgrounds. The study of Japanese law is thriving at Columbia Law School!

JAPANESE LL.M. CLASS SIZE CONTINUES TO GROW:
The number of Japanese students in Columbia Law School’s LL.M. class continues to grow. In 2005-2006 Columbia Law School welcomed nineteen LL.M. students from Japan, plus two who had studied law in Japan, one from Bulgaria and one from China. This past year, 2006-2007, the number of Japanese LL.M. students jumped to twenty-eight. Next year, the law school expects the incoming class to count at least thirty-five. The presence of Japanese LL.M. candidates remains an essential and growing element of the law school community.

MORRISON & FOERSTER SUMMER PUBLIC INTEREST FELLOWSHIPS:
Columbia Law School and Morrison & Foerster entered the second year of the Japan Public Interest Fellowship by selecting two exceptional fellows: Anjali (Sara) Bonner (below) and Kyongeun (Heidi) Lee (upper right), both from the class of 2009.

Sara will intern at Refugees International Japan. RIJ operates out of Tokyo and assists refugees through grants to NGO charities working in the field. Sara will document and analyze RIJ funding; work with student groups to develop activities to be introduced in universities; develop strategies to attract and inform donors, sponsors and supporters; work on school exchanges; and research refugee law in key regions.

Heidi will intern at Human Rights Now. HRN is a Tokyo-based NGO in which lawyers, academics, journalists, and activists attempt to raise awareness of and implement international human rights standards, with a special focus on Asian countries. Heidi will examine international influences on Japanese human rights law and explore how Japanese human rights perspectives might be relevant to other countries. She will focus on women’s rights and coalition-building with other NGOs.

NAGASHIMA OHNO & TSUNEMATSU FELLOWS: Columbia Law School named two new Nagashima Ohno & Tsunematsu Fellows: Kaleb McNeely and Akane C. Tsuchiya-Saltzman. These students are members of the Class of 2010 and will begin their studies at Columbia Law School in Fall 2007.

Kaleb was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. He was home schooled and graduated from Thomas Aquinas College in 1997. He then traveled to Japan and lived for nine years in a small coastal city in Shikoku. For six of those years he worked as a freelance English-as-a-foreign-language instructor.

Akane graduated from Columbia College in 2004. She earned a degree in history with a focus on Japan. Akane has Japanese heritage, and she helped found an organization for students with part Asian ethnicity. She tutored underserved local children and worked as an editor for the Columbia Asian Journal. After graduating, she worked for three years in Japan teaching high school English.

ISAAC AND JACQUELINE WEISS SHAPIRO FELLOWSHIP IN JAPANESE LAW: Each year the Center awards the Shapiro Fellowship to a student with a serious academic commitment to Japanese law. For the 2006-2007 academic year, the Center named Boyoon Choi, ’08, as the Shapiro Fellow. Boyoon studied for one year at Sophia University in Tokyo as an undergraduate, and has a multicultural background emblematic of the Columbia Law School student body today. She was born in

Japanese
Korea, raised in Argentina, and attended college at Barnard in New York. Boyoon will conduct research on foreign investment under Professor Milhaupt’s guidance.

DEAN SCHIZER NAMES THREE JAPAN-BASED ALUMNI TO INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD: Columbia Law School formed an International Advisory Board (IAB) in 2007. The IAB’s objective is to advise the school’s long-term planning of international programs and curriculum as well as to enrich the school’s relationship with its international alumni and prospective students. The IAB is comprised of approximately twenty-five graduates living in Europe, Asia, and North America who, as leaders in their fields, have unique perspectives on the global marketplace. The three Japan-based alumni who were named to the board are Akihiro Wani, ’82 LL.M., partner, Linklaters; Satoshi Kawai, ’95 LL.M., partner, Mori Hamada & Matsumoto; and Mark Hunsaker, ’93, managing director and general counsel, Nikko Citigroup Limited. Dean Schizer, former deans, Professor Milhaupt, and the Center have all worked closely with these important alumni over the years, and we look forward to their advice and guidance on the direction of the law school’s international activities.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SPEAKER SERIES: This spring, the Center welcomed Professor Mark Ramseyer and Professor Salil K. Mehra, two distinguished Japanese legal scholars from American universities, as guest lecturers. Professor Mark Ramseyer of Harvard Law School spoke on February 20. His lecture was based on a study in which he and co-authors used micro-data on high-income taxpayers from the Japanese National Tax Agency to explore the levels and determinants of Japanese lawyer incomes. The authors described a radically bifurcated market. The most talented lawyers earn a premium on their abilities if they practice in Tokyo, while other lawyers earn higher incomes by practicing in the provinces.

On March 29, Professor Salil K. Mehra of Temple University Beasley School of Law spoke about criminalizing internet libel in Japan. Criminal libel statutes exist in the United States but are rarely enforced. In Japan, however, such laws have become vital tools in policing injurious speech on the Internet. Defamatory postings lead to police intervention and even arrest. Because the United States is considering regulation of online speech, including, potentially, criminal penalties, the U.S. can learn from Japan’s experience. He explained why criminal libel law is not a good choice for Japan and why it would be an even worse choice for the United States.

VISITING FACULTY: In Spring 2007, the Center hosted two distinguished scholars from the University of Tokyo, Faculty of Law. Professor Daniel Foote (top left), who specializes in law and society, was in residence at Columbia Law School from February 24 through March 9. Norio Higuchi (bottom left), an expert in Anglo-American law, law and medicine, and trust law, was in residence from March 17 through March 29. Both visitors were guest lecturers in Professor Milhaupt’s course, Japanese Law and Legal Institutions.

JAPAN ALUMNI REUNION DRAWS LARGE TURNOUT: On June 7, 2007, Professor Milhaupt and the Center hosted an alumni reunion at Tokyo’s Kanto Club. Approximately one hundred alumni attended the event, which also served as a tribute to the late Toshiro Nishimura, ’64. During the evening, Professor Thomas Merrill gave an address titled, “The Roberts Court: A Preliminary Assessment.”

Summary of “The Roberts Court: A Preliminary Assessment” by Tom Merrill
The transition from the Rehnquist Court to the Roberts Court has been amazingly smooth. Immediately before the death of Chief Justice Rehnquist, the Court was split roughly 3-2-4. The departure of Justices Rehnquist and O’Connor, and their replacement by Justices Roberts and Alito, appears to have recast the Court into a 4-1-4 configuration, with Justice Kennedy holding down the middle. To this extent, the departure of Justice O’Connor has made a difference, as the recent partial-birth abortion decision indicates. But when Justice Kennedy is so inclined, as in the global warming case, liberal coalitions are still possible. This may change, as justices have been known to migrate in their orientation after they are appointed to the high bench.