

What a leap!

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linda.campbell@tulane.edu



Once a dancer and musician, Laura Avery is soon to be a lawyer practicing maritime law in New Orleans. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Laura Avery helped found an experimental dance theater in New York City and performed in avant garde opera. She did commercial voiceover gigs, traveled the United States as a performer and went on a world music tour that started in Croatia and ended in Amsterdam.

But the life could be grueling. So she took the LSAT and applied to law school.

She hasn't slowed down, either.

While at Tulane Law School, Avery clerked for a federal judge, attended a summer program in Siena, Italy, served as a justice on the Moot Court Board, has been president of the American Constitution Society chapter and tutored first-year students. She also has worked as a research assistant for professors Amy Stein, who writes about environmental, energy and regulatory law, and Gabe Feldman, who focuses on sports law and antitrust.

Born in New York City, Avery grew up in Los Angeles but returned east to attend New York University. She says she planned on law school all along but wanted to explore her artistic side first.

"I wanted to be a lawyer ever since I was a little kid," she says. But waiting until she was 30 to start that journey proved to be the right move.

"This was the best choice of my life, law school in general and Tulane specifically," Avery says. "The student life here is ridiculously collegial," adding that professors have been "awesome and really accessible."

After [graduation](#) on May 17, Avery is set to start as an associate attorney at King, Krebs & Jurgens in New Orleans, primarily doing maritime defense litigation, and working with partner Patricia Krebs, a 1983 Tulane law graduate.

"I decided to stay in New Orleans to practice because of my many positive experiences in the legal community here," Avery says.

She also took to the city, which she never had visited before a law school apartment search.

"It's beautiful. I see new things every day. It offers so much in terms of culture, and a culture that's all its own."

Linda P. Campbell is director of communications for Tulane Law School.