

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EPA General Counsel to lead off UH Law Center's Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Center Spring Speaker Series

Topics include EPA's role in setting policy, enforcement and protection, and effects of recent environmental disasters.

Jan. 23, 2015 –The Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Center (EENR) at the University of Houston Law Center will welcome three prominent members of the environmental public sector community during its Spring 2015 Speaker Series.

“The speaker series presents a great opportunity for our students to hear from prominent leaders in energy and environmental policy,” said Tracy Hester who teaches environmental law and helps organize the speaker series. “Our speakers this spring will discuss key national issues, including the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) role in shaping future environmental policy, how NAFTA’s promises on environmental enforcement and protection are being kept, and the effect of recent industrial and environmental disasters on U.S. energy and environmental legal policies.”

On Jan. 28, the series will feature Avi S. Garbow, general counsel of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the federal agency with primary responsibility for enforcement of the nation’s environmental laws. Before taking office as general counsel, Garbow served for four years as the agency’s deputy counsel, where he was engaged in significant legal and related policy issues in the EPA’s media programs, including air, water, waste, and toxic materials.

From 1992 to 1996, Garbow served in the EPA’s Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. He then served as a federal prosecutor in the Department of Justice Environmental Crimes Section. In private practice, Garbow was a litigation partner and junior partner at two major international firms.

On March 25, the series will feature Irasema Coronado, Ph.D., who since December 2012 has served as executive director of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), a

collaboration between the United States, Canada, and Mexico to protect the countries' shared environment through the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (**NAAEC**). The NAAEC came into force in 1994 with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and supports cooperation among the three nations to address environmental issues of continental concern.

Before joining the commission, Coronado was a political science professor at the University of Texas at El Paso, where she was also an affiliated faculty member with the Environmental Science and Engineering Ph.D. program.

In late spring, the series will welcome Rafael Moure-Eraso, Ph.D., who since June 2010 has served on the U.S. Chemical Safety Board (CSB), a federal agency charged with performing root cause investigations of chemical accidents at fixed industrial facilities. The CSB is a non-regulatory, independent agency that makes recommendations to plants, other agencies, and industry and labor groups.

Prior to his appointment to the CSB by the president, Moure-Eraso served as a professor and graduate coordinator for the Department of Work Environment in the School of Health and Environment at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. He has been a faculty member of the University of Massachusetts for more than two decades. Prior to his life in academia, Moure-Eraso served for 15 years as an industrial hygienist with two international unions, the Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW) and the United Automobile Workers (UAW).

All three sessions of the speaker series will be held at noon on their respective dates at the University of Houston Law Center, with lunch provided. Each session will include one hour of Continuing Legal Education credit. Details on each event will follow.

The EENR Center Speaker Series is sponsored by Blank Rome LLP, Bracewell & Giuliani LLP, Vinson & Elkins LLP, and the Environmental & Natural Resources Law Section of the State Bar of Texas.

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About the University of Houston Law Center

The **University of Houston Law Center** is the leading law school in the nation's fourth-largest city. Founded in 1947, it is a top-tier institution awarding Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees. The Law Center is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.