



MARK MOVSESIAN

Mark L. Movsesian is the Frederick A. Whitney Professor of Contract Law at St. John's School of Law in New York and the Director of the Center for Law and Religion. He teaches a course about law and religion and is doing research on the role of law in Christianity and Islam.

Professor Movsesian decided to follow in the footsteps of his own professors at Harvard Law School and pursue a career in teaching after finishing his clerkship with Supreme Court Justice David H. Souter.

About this choice, he said, "At the end of my clerkship, I had to decide between teaching and practicing law in DC. Around that time, I was reading Robert Bolt's play, *A Man for All Seasons*. In the play, Sir Thomas More advises an

ambitious young lawyer that he should forgo politics and take up teaching. Teaching, he says, allows you to have an impact on those you really care about. It sounds funny, I guess, but I took the advice as applying to me, and I chose academics. As it turns out, I now teach at a university with a church on campus dedicated to Thomas More. I must've made the right choice!"

Born and raised in Queens, New York, Professor Movsesian grew up very close to St. John's Queens campus. Although he remembers the university from his high school days, he believes St. John's School of Law is more than just a return to his roots; it is an opportunity to be a part of one of the nation's most important legal communities. He explained, "For generations, St. John's has done an excellent job producing leaders in the legal community, both in New York and around the country. I'm proud to be part of an institution with that legacy of achievement. I also value being part of a global university with campuses around the world. My work increasingly involves international and comparative research and St. John's global connections are very helpful."

His scholarship has appeared in several prestigious journals, including the *Harvard Law Review*, the *Oxford Journal of Law and Religion*, the *American Journal of International Law*, the *Harvard International Law Journal*, and the *Virginia Journal of International Law*. He has also been a visiting professor at Notre Dame and Cardozo Law Schools.

Voted professor of the year in 2007 by St. John's Student Bar Association, Movsesian says his main goal when he teaches is to train students to "think like lawyers." He explained the conceptual framework needed for success as a lawyer. "I try to teach my students how to analyze people's legal problems and find solutions. I tell them that to become a successful lawyer, it's not enough to memorize doctrine. You have to appreciate the reasons the rules exist and the human needs they're meant to serve."

