he focuses on complex business litigation.

MAURICE A. JONES has been named chief executive officer of Local Initiatives Support Corp., a nonprofit headquartered in New York City. The corporation invests in building and preserving affordable housing and supports projects in health, safety and job creation that help revitalize struggling neighborhoods across the U.S. Jones previously served as Virginia's secretary of commerce and trade.

In the spring, BERNIE LINK completed a master's of science in national resource strategy, with a specialization in shipbuilding, at the National Defense University's Eisenhower School. Link is the deputy director of the Office of International Health and Biodefense at the Department of State.

MICHAEL WU, senior vice president, general counsel and secretary of Carter's Inc., organized and moderated a general counsel panel at Emory University School of Law titled "Diversity Speaker Series." The panelists included Raquel da Fonseca, general counsel, GE Digital Energy; Reginald Hedegbeth, general counsel and chief ethics and compliance officer, Spectra Energy; CRAIG SILLMAN '94, executive vice president, public policy and general counsel, Verizon; and Lawrence Tu, senior executive vice president and chief legal officer, CBS Corp.

DRIVING AMBITION

ROMAN LIFSON '92 has been fascinated by cars as long as he can remember. Growing up in Moscow, he took the long way to school so he could go by the hotel where Westerners parked their "huge" American cars. One Buick station wagon, he recalled, was several times larger than any car he'd ever seen.

Lifton learned to drive in a Dauntless 300SX and drove an Audi coupe through college. By the time he got to the Law School, he had a 1987 Toyota Supra Turbo. He became interested in racing when a friend invited him to an event at Virginia International Raceway in 2006.

Soon he was hooked. He took his BMW M3 to a number of high-performance driver education events, reaching speeds of more than 160 mph. When he decided he needed something safer than a family sedan, he outfitted a BMW M3 with harnesses, a roll cage, a head and neck restraint device and fire system. Then came racing school with the BMW Car Club of America.

Road racing, which is his forte, is very different from a NASCAR race. The course includes varied turns and changes in elevation. His first road race was at Virginia International Raceway, an 18-turn, 3.27-mile course considered one of the best in the U.S. It was there, two years later, that he had his most challenging moment behind the wheel. His brakes failed as he came into the first turn at 135 mph. In a split second he had to maneuver the car into the least hazardous position. He veered off onto grass and hit a wall made of bunted tires. His car sank into the rubber all the way up to the doors, but he walked away without a scratch.

The demands of the sport, he said, are in some ways similar to those of practicing law—the need for strategy, sound and timely judgment, risk management in challenging conditions, and “perhaps more than anything else, the ability to thrive when the unexpected happens,” Lifson said.

“In trial work, as much as we try to control what happens in court, we can never reliably control what judges, witnesses and juries do,” he said. “It’s in the unexpected that the greatest challenges, and often the greatest opportunities, exist. Being able to not only deal with the unexpected but to benefit from the challenge the unexpected presents often plays a large role in the outcome.”

Lifton’s passion for racing has also become a focus for his law practice. He is a partner with Christian & Barton in Richmond, where he represents racetrack operators, event organizers, racing teams and individuals, bringing his deep experience in the racing world to his work.

—Rebecca Barns

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