

SALUS POPULI

— THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF THE THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY —
— FALL 2023 —

Clinics in the Community

Tribone Center celebrates its
10th year of clinic accessibility
and students' practical
application of the law.



**THIS
ISSUE**

International Law

Faculty Highlights

Young Alumni Profile



Dear Friends,

This has been a momentous year for our Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. The upward trajectory of Duquesne Kline is palpable in all we do, from our rankings to our employment outcomes. This ascent has been evident in our students as well, who have shown themselves eager to undertake opportunities to help others and to broaden their horizons.

Our Duquesne Kline students traveled internationally this past summer, opening their eyes and minds to law's global reach and possibilities. Twenty-one students embarked on an educational adventure to Cologne, Luxembourg, and Paris, learning about international law and policy. They brought a new transnational perspective back to their studies in Pittsburgh (p.20).

Our Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education is celebrating its 10th anniversary in its downtown office because of a generous gift from Thomas Tribone, L'85. President Gormley's vision to provide students a law office setting and to allow them to enrich the lives of the local community came to fruition over the last decade. The Tribone Center has provided countless pro bono hours to the community and continues to develop our students' skillsets in the true Catholic and Spiritan mission of service to others (p.14).

Our faculty have embarked on cutting-edge partnerships and shared their ideas worldwide. Professors Kate Norton and Grace Orsatti led the efforts of the Pennsylvania Elder Justice Consortium, a partnership among all Pennsylvania law schools serving the needs of Pennsylvania's aging population. Professor Wes Oliver and Adjunct Professor Morgan Gray, L'19, traveled to Portugal to present their AI and Law research and accomplishments (p.33).

The dedication of our faculty and staff have propelled our momentum and our school has risen on the national stage. The 2023-2024 *U.S. News & World Report* Best Law School overall rankings were released this past spring and Duquesne Kline rose more than any other school and is now ranked in the top 100 of all law schools. We reached a placement of #89 out of 196 ranked schools, positioning us in the top half of law schools in the United States (p.6).

Our entering class is an exceptional group of students who brought the highest median LSAT score and median GPA in more than a decade to Duquesne Kline (p.7). More importantly, they are bright and hardworking, and bring kindness, resilience, character, and maturity that will serve our profession well.

These accomplishments are possible because of our outstanding Duquesne Kline alumni community. Thanks to your unwavering support, your law school is on an upward trajectory by every measure. We have been able to achieve these noteworthy accomplishments because of your guidance, encouragement, mentorship, and support. I am honored and humbled to serve as your dean. ■

With deep appreciation,



April Mara Barton
Dean and Professor of Law



Thanks to your unwavering support, your law school is on an upward trajectory by every measure. I am honored and humbled to serve as your dean.



6-13 | **CURRENT NEWS:**
Top 100, Kline Center

14 | **TRIBONE CENTER**

20 | **INTERNATIONAL LAW**





SALUS POPULI

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF THE
THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW
OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

DEAN

April M. Barton

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Amanda Drumm

CONTRIBUTORS

Krista Bartolomucci
Beth Bauer
Emma Betz
Maria Comas
Amanda Dabbs
Amanda Drumm
Felicia Dusha
Hannah French
Richard Heppner
Beth Licciardello
Dana Neacșu
Kate Norton

DESIGN

Duquesne University Division of Marketing
and Communications

CONTACT US

duq.edu/law | lawalumni@duq.edu
412.396.5215



© 2023 by the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University
Reproduction in whole or in part, without permission of the
publisher, is prohibited.

25 | Young Alumni Profile

26 | Alumni Profile

28 | Class Actions

29 | In Memoriam

30 | Alumni Events

32 | Faculty Highlights

41 | Student Briefs

46 | Juris

Duquesne Kline Ranks in Top 100 of U.S. News & World Report Law Schools

U.S. News & World Report recently released its 2023–2024 Best Law School overall rankings. The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University ranked in the top 100 of all law schools, reaching a placement of No. 89 out of 196 ranked schools. This positions Duquesne Kline School of Law in the top half of law schools in the United States and alongside other Pennsylvania law schools that have the same ranking.

For its 2023–2024 publication, U.S. News & World Report implemented a new methodology that puts greater emphasis on bar passage and employment rates and less emphasis on subjective “peer assessment” scores. U.S. News used objective, verifiable data that all schools must provide to the American Bar Association, and Duquesne Kline School of Law’s new ranking illustrates how successful the school has been in preparing students for pursuing their bigger goals after graduation. These outcomes include Duquesne Kline School of Law’s high 92.31% ultimate bar passage* rate and 93.8% career

“We prepare students for success, and the revised metrics signify the importance of these outcomes and our students’ consistency in achieving them.”
- April Barton, Dean of Duquesne Kline

placement rate**.

“We prepare students for success, and the revised metrics signify the importance of these outcomes and our students’ consistency in achieving them,” said April Barton, Dean of Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Barton is proud of our graduates and these outcomes-based student achievements and is grateful to the dedicated faculty and staff at Duquesne Kline School of Law who make student success possible.

“Our faculty and staff place students first and empower them to accomplish their goals. The determination and guidance of our team continues to enable our next generation of lawyer leaders to be effective, ethical and successful,” she said.

The U.S. News rank is just one of several honors Duquesne Kline School of Law recently received. According to an analysis of the Princeton Review’s 2023 Law School ratings, out of 168 law schools, Duquesne Kline School of Law ranked No. 27 for Career Rating, No. 26 for Quality of Professors Teaching and No. 63 Overall. ■



92.31%

Ultimate Bar Pass Rate



93.8%

Career Placement Rate

*Class of 2019 ultimate bar passage rate use by U.S. News & World Report for all law schools.

**Class of 2022 statistics as reported to the ABA 10 months after graduation. This includes three graduates whose start date was deferred beyond March 15, 2023, and one graduate who is enrolled in full-time graduate studies.

Duquesne Kline Welcomes Entering Class

The Duquesne Kline School of Law entering class began their legal studies on Aug. 21. This is an exceptional group of students who bring to our school the highest median LSAT score and median GPA in more than a decade. These students similarly have unique qualities and accomplishments they bring to our Pittsburgh, Pa., campus. Here are some facts about this outstanding group of legal scholars.



BY THE NUMBERS:

171
Enrolled (FT - 138, PT - 33)

156
LSAT Median

3.52
GPA Median

52%
Female

88
Undergraduate Institutions

38
Majors

51%
One or More Years of
Post-baccalaureate Experience

88%
First Gen Law Students

19%
Underrepresented Minority Students

21
U.S. States Represented

20 - 51
Age Range

6
Military

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2023

Our Class of 2023 celebrated their Commencement on May 13. Olamide Opeyemi, L'23, served as class speaker to the 137 graduates who received the degree of juris doctor that day. They are now part of our nearly 9,000 Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni. Congratulations! ■



Building Belonging

by Maria Comas and Dana Neacșu

Building Belonging – Taking Pride in Pittsburgh’s Multicultural Heritage Through Art, a multi-year collaboration between the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, Duquesne Kline Law Library and Pittsburgh CAPA 6-12, Pittsburgh Public Schools’ Creative and Performing Arts Magnet School, is alive in the art that now hangs on the walls of the law library and inside the library’s McGinnis Multicultural Lab.

Dana Neacșu, Associate Professor of Legal Skills and Director of the Duquesne Kline Law Library, knew instantly that connecting youth-created art and legal education would result in engaging aesthetics that promote important discourse. The art has fueled conversations about local multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion, and social and racial justice.

The collaboration creates an opportunity to connect past, present and future stakeholders at Duquesne Kline School of Law and in our community.

Showing just how small the world is, Bea Bagin, a CAPA student who collaborated with her classmates to create a piece of art that hangs in the McGinnis Multicultural Lab, is the daughter and granddaughter of two law alumni. Her father is Christian Bagin, L’00, and her grandfather is the late Bruce Bagin, L’83.

Christian Bagin captures this spirit of collaboration and legacy: “I am so grateful that through the efforts of Professor Neacșu and Shannon Pultz, the Chair of the CAPA Visual Art department, my daughter Bea was able to contribute to this amazing project at my alma mater. All of these artworks are so well done; it is a testament to the ability of the students to work collaboratively to achieve a shared vision, which speaks to the values of diversity and inclusion. Her late grandfather, Duquesne (Kline School of) Law alum, longtime night law librarian and civil rights champion Bruce Bagin, L’83, would be so proud of her! Perhaps one day Bea will get to enjoy the fruits of this project as a law student herself.”

The significance of green spaces in urban environments and the importance of breaking down barriers to equal access to the outdoors for underrepresented communities were focal points for Bea and her classmates as they created their art.



“I enjoyed this project so much, and I loved collaborating with my fellow students to create pieces that conveyed our perspectives on environmental, racial and cultural justice.”

—Bea Bagin

“I enjoyed this project so much, and I loved collaborating with my fellow students to create pieces that conveyed our perspectives on environmental, racial and cultural justice,” she said. “It especially means something to me that my art is being displayed in a place that has meant so much to my family, and I hope that many other generations of Duquesne (Kline) students and alumni will appreciate it!”

The sense of belonging, which is the ultimate focus of this collaboration, is perfectly painted by Neacșu’s words: “Since my arrival at Duquesne Kline, I have been humbled by the strong sense of empathy-based community building happening every day in our institution. I credit Dean April Barton with promoting this vision of leadership, and Pittsburgh talent with making it all possible. Because what is more inclusive than art?”

“I would like to thank Duquesne Kline alumna, Assistant Dean of Career Services Maria Comas, L’00, for always being an inspiration through her humanity and consummate professionalism, as well as for recognizing the CAPA student-Duquesne Kline alumni connection we happily discovered,” said Neacșu. ■

Duquesne Confers Honorary Degree Upon Retired Costa Rica Justice Solano

Duquesne Kline School of Law Renews Academic Agreement with Costa Rica Supreme Court

Duquesne University President Ken Gormley conferred an honorary law degree upon retired Justice Luis Fernando Solano Carrera of Costa Rica on Aug. 30 in recognition of his work and role in a longstanding Academic Cooperation Agreement between the University and the Costa Rica Supreme Court.

“I stand before you today with a heart filled with gratitude and appreciation for the extraordinary honor bestowed upon me today,” said Solano. “I am excited to see our collaboration and partnership increase with a new agreement to be signed between the Costa Rica Supreme Court of Justice and this prestigious university.”

The agreement, originally forged in 2012 between the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University and the Costa Rica Supreme Court, provides a framework for professional and academic cooperation for lectures, classes, research and exchange programs between the two institutions.

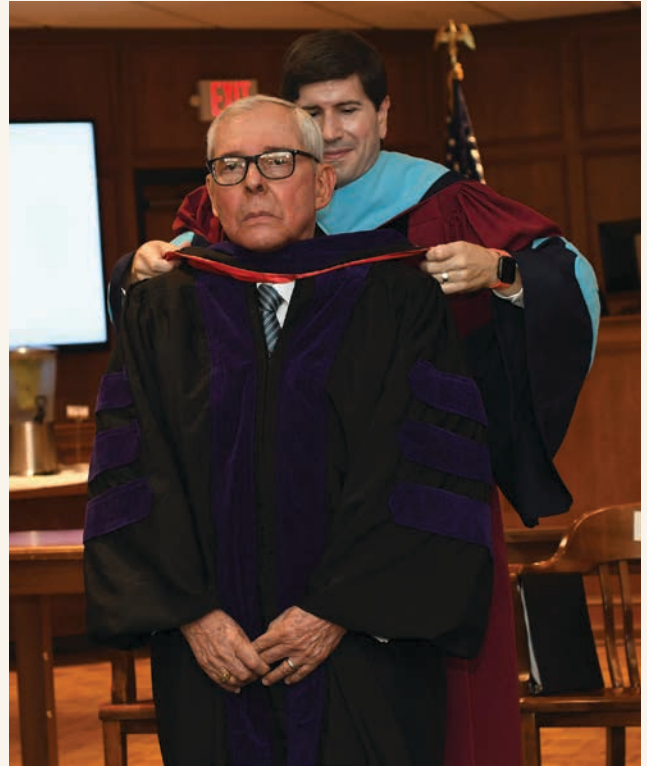
The Duquesne Kline School of Law and the Supreme Court of Costa Rica’s Judicial School have been collaborating for more than 20 years. Duquesne Kline School of Law Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus Robert Barker helped develop this and other opportunities for research and exchange programs for faculty and students.

“The rich relationship that we’ve forged between Duquesne University and the Costa Rica Supreme Court has blossomed into unprecedented opportunities for scholars, students, judges and even businesses in our respective countries,” Gormley said. “The relationship dates back several decades, thanks to the work of Professor Bob Barker, a true scholar of Latin American legal systems.”

During the event, Gormley and Duquesne Provost Dr. David Dausey added their signatures to the renewed Academic Cooperation Agreement between the two institutions.

“Justice Solano has had a long and esteemed career as a justice of the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica, as attorney general of Costa Rica, and as dean and professor of law at the University of Costa Rica,” said Duquesne Kline School of Law Dean April Barton. “Justice Solano, you are a true inspiration to all of us here today.”

In addition, Solano (with his son Fernando acting as interpreter) delivered a presentation to Duquesne Kline School of Law students about Costa Rica’s system of concentrated review of constitutional questions and the interrelationship between national law and international law as developed by the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica. ■





Kline Center Event Features National Expert on Voting and the Political Process

On the afternoon of Sept. 18, Stanford Law School Professor Pamela S. Karlan, a former deputy assistant attorney general in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, captivated an audience of close to 300 attendees at the annual Distinguished Speaker Series hosted by the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University.

“The Kline Center’s Distinguished Speaker Series provides a wonderful opportunity for judges, attorneys, students, faculty and the broader community to gather together to hear thought-provoking ideas from nationally recognized legal experts, such as this year’s speaker, Professor Pamela Karlan,” explained Professor Erin Karsman, the Kline Center’s director.

In her presentation, “The Supreme Court and the Protection of American Democracy,” Karlan — one of the nation’s leading experts on voting and the political process — spoke in the Power Center Ballroom on a variety of



Pamela S. Karlan

related topics, including fragmented politics, demography, the accessibility of voting and the effect of partisan gerrymandering.

Duquesne University President Ken Gormley opened the event, remarking: “We’re extremely proud of the broad

scope of the work of the Kline Center and equally proud to present top-notch legal luminaries as part of this Distinguished Speaker Series.”

Chief Justice Debra Todd of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the first female chief justice in the 300-year history of the court, introduced the speaker.

Also in attendance were Chief Justice Emeritus Thomas G. Saylor, the Kline Center’s Jurist-in-Residence, numerous justices of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, and Thomas R. Kline, the law school’s namesake, who on Sept. 7, 2022, committed a historic \$50 million gift to the Law School — the largest gift in the history of Duquesne University.

As part of his introductory remarks, Gormley also announced the addition of an exciting new opportunity for law students sponsored by the Kline Center: — the Kline Center Fellows Program — and recognized the inaugural group of three Fellows at the Duquesne

continued on page 12



continued from page 11

Kline School of Law: Samuel Baycer, 3L, Jennifer Murray, 3L, and Jason Whiting, 3E.

After the event, Baycer commended the Fellows Program for introducing him to key figures in the legal community as well as providing education on this important topic.

“Professor Karlan’s ability to take exceedingly complicated concepts and communicate them in a way that was understandable was impressive. I greatly appreciated that her discussion and arguments were rooted both in current studies and historical precedent,” explained Baycer.

He cited, as an example, Karlan’s references to the Federalist Papers when discussing hurdles to democracy and W.E.B. Du Bois on the political makeup of the United States, observations she then supplemented “with more modern studies that exemplify the political divide in the United States, and how this has impacted accessibility to voting.”

Baycer said he found Karlan’s comments on how the political process created friction for the movements to admit Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C.,

as states to be particularly “fascinating.”

Murray added that she really enjoyed seeing attorneys from a variety of different practice areas assemble to hear Karlan speak about the pressing issues facing our modern democracy.

“I’ve read differing views on our system of an Electoral College prior to listening to Professor Karlan speak. However, I found her discussion compelling in that the more Americans divide themselves in cities versus rural areas, the greater the controversy over the Electoral College may become,” said Murray, who added that she is “personally fascinated with constitutional law, and how our U.S. Constitution has been interpreted throughout history.”

As a Kline Center Fellow, Murray hopes to gain even more insight into how constitutional interpretation and decision-making are affected by precedent, history and tradition.

Karlan’s presentation, which showcased her incredible recall of detail involving Supreme Court decisions, legal history and the American political system, was punctuated by moments of

humor. She also entertained a handful of insightful audience questions near the end of her presentation.

“The Kline Center is proud to host excellent speakers such as Professor Karlan and last year’s speaker, Chief Judge Jeffrey Sutton of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, and to foster comradery at the cocktail reception that follows the event,” said Professor Julia Glencer, the Kline Center’s associate director.

Added Karsman, “While judicial education is the main focus of the Kline Center, this annual event offers a unique opportunity for judges and lawyers to come together to share thoughts and ideas on key topics that impact the fabric of the law.”

This year’s Distinguished Speaker Series was approved for one credit of Pennsylvania Continuing Judicial Education for judges and one credit of Pennsylvania Continuing Legal Education for attorneys. Plans are already in place for next year’s event. Learn more about the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education at duq.edu/KlineCenter. ■

The 22nd Annual Katie Westbrook 5k & Dog Walk

The 22nd Annual Katie Westbrook 5k & Dog Walk was held Sept. 30 on Duquesne University's campus. There were nearly 100 participants, including two dozen dogs. The participating dog rescue at the race, STOP (Sad Tails of PA), brought adoptable dogs out to enjoy the dog walk.

Professor John Rago provided commentary on Katie's character and antics from when she sat in on some of his classes when she was receiving her cancer treatments, and her mother, Beth Westbrook-Starnes, was present at the race as a distinguished guest.

The Animal Law Society held a dog food and supply drive at the Law School and donated all of what was collected to STOP.

Father John Osei-Yaw of Duquesne University's Spiritan priests provided a blessing of the dogs before the race.

The Duquesne Kline School of Law community gathered on this beautiful morning to remember a beautiful soul, enjoy the campus, play some yard games, relax with coffee and snacks, visit with the dogs, and cheer on the racers.

All money raised from this event was donated directly to the Public Interest Law Fellowship fund, which benefits Duquesne Kline School of Law students who receive summer internships within the public interest law field. ■



Major 2022-23 Supreme Court Cases Explained for Constitution Day



“Major 2022-23 Supreme Court Cases: Duquesne Kline School of Law Faculty Explain” was hosted on Sept. 22, in celebration of Constitution Day. The event was open to all students and was also a CLE.

It featured Duquesne Kline School of Law presenters who discussed cases from the last term. The presenters included Duquesne Kline professors Richard Heppner, Maryann Herman, Wilson Huhn, Rona Kaufman, Bruce Ledewitz, Marissa Meredith, Dana Neacsu, and Ann Schiavone.

These panelists deliberated the implications of the Court's recent decisions in various areas, including free speech,

affirmative action, discrimination, voting rights, environmental regulation, and property rights.

This was the second year for the event, which is held around Constitution Day to remember the basis of our country's founding.

“Constitution Day commemorates the signing of the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787. The meaning of the Constitution is central to the character of the United States. That meaning has always been highly contested, and right now it is being reevaluated and reconsidered throughout the legal system — in courtrooms and the halls of legislatures, in the offices of prosecutors and defenders, and in classrooms at law schools around the country. At Duquesne Kline we celebrate Constitution Day with events like this one, featuring thoughtful exploration and civil discussion of those current constitutional issues and debates,” said Heppner.

Professor Kate Norton, who along with Heppner serves as co-associate dean for faculty scholarship, views this important event as celebratory one that acknowledges the far-reaching and continuing influence of our Constitution.

Norton said, “Continuing with the success of last year's Duquesne Law Faculty Explain program, once again we offered the program for Constitution Day. It is imperative to critically evaluate these decisions by the Court to understand their impact on both the individual and society as a whole. Having the opportunity for our faculty, students, and alumni to discuss these decisions is a truly fitting event to celebrate Constitution Day.” ■





Clinics in the Community

TRIBONE CENTER CELEBRATES ITS 10TH YEAR OF CLINIC ACCESSIBILITY AND STUDENTS' PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE LAW

By Amanda Drumm

It has been said humans have basic needs that are essential for their advancement. The physiological needs vital to life – food, shelter, water – immediately come to mind. There are other unseen needs, such as legal ones, critical for progression and peace of mind but often overlooked because a lack of monetary resources keeps them out of reach. The Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education, celebrating its 10th anniversary, has strived to shrink that gap by concurrently helping the community and providing experience to law students.

Conceptual and in the Community

The Tribone Center, located on Fifth Avenue, is home to seven clinics – Family Law, Federal Litigation, Re-Entry Services, Urban Development, Veterans, Wills and Healthcare Decisions, and Youth Advocacy – as well as the Pro Bono Program. Duquesne Kline students work in these clinics, honing their legal skills and affording significant legal services to the community for free.

“I think that everyone knows the Law School’s mission is to serve others. The clinics are Spiritan-centered and

mission-centered, serving others through our students. It plays out in real time in our clinics where we are face to face with people in the worst possible moment of their lives who need you as a legal professional who fulfills that obligation to use your knowledge,” said Professor Grace Orsatti, director of externships and the Pro Bono Program, assistant professor of clinical legal education and director of the Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic.

The clinic began in 1995, named for a donor and called the Hugo L. Black Law Clinic. It was housed on campus in Fisher Hall but was not easily accessible for students or the community.

“The whole idea was to become its own building. Plus, no one really knew about it before, especially with respect to the community. The clinic wasn’t accessible, and the students did not have room to work. When you are learning to practice law, you need to be in a place that feels like an office, so you can have private interviews. We wanted to make this into a true clinic to serve the community and enable students to learn to practice; to put it in a big building and have all the amenities it needed



to serve disadvantaged people. In the other building, if you had a disability you couldn't get to it. Now it is accessible to everyone," said Thomas Tribone, L'85.

A gift from Tribone in 2013 made the current three-story location, the Tribone Center, possible. In addition to accessibility to the community, an additional giving impetus was providing real-world application for Duquesne Kline School of Law students. Tribone wanted them to have the ability to practically apply their legal education in a mission-oriented base.

"I think it reinforces the idea that Duquesne Kline gives you the conceptual foundation for your profession. It is the practical side. You go before a judge and know how to do things; that was the big driver in getting the clinic. Before it wasn't big enough, but now it is like a law firm where you intake clients. There is also a moot court for practice. It furthers Duquesne Kline's mission of teaching young people how to think and how to do," Tribone said.

Dean April Barton likewise sees the work of the students at the Tribone Center as a direct extension of the school's mission.

"Guided by the Spiritans' moral and ethical imperatives, the

Tribone Center is committed to service, diversity, equity and inclusion. Additionally, it teaches our lawyers to excel in the ethical practice of law and to preserve the highest ideals of our profession," she said.

Filling Community Needs

Professor Kate Norton, director of clinical and international programs, director of the Family Law Clinic and co-associate dean for faculty scholarship, started working for the Tribone Center in 2014, when there were a handful of clinics. She has been an instrumental part of the clinic's development. She furthered its reach and scope by adding and reconceptualizing clinics to meet the varying needs of the community.

"We have seen a shift in needs and have grown our programming in the areas where there are more vulnerable populations, such as more older Pennsylvanians. We've grown primarily with the Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic and Youth Advocacy. Youth Advocacy has helped with providing representation of youth and dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline. Students are directly involved in advocating to make changes for children in the education system. One of the biggest

things we do is shift to address the needs of the communities and focus on our students' growth as future lawyers. For example, our Civil Rights Clinic was rebranded as our Re-Entry Clinic, where students directly work to help individuals overcome hurdles to housing and employment, focusing on recent changes in the law," she said.

Finding Students' Niches

Basic legal requirements are in large demand, and they are difficult for disadvantaged individuals to obtain because of a lack of funds. The Tribone Center bridges that gap with students who identify areas of law important to them and then operate in the community under the clinic's guidance.

"There is so much need in every area imaginable, from immigration with Ukraine and Afghan refugees, to the homelessness crisis, to the Name Change Project. Anything students are interested in, we connect them. We work very closely with the larger legal service community and law firms to find ways to work in their areas of interest," Orsatti said.

Duquesne Kline School of Law students find it rewarding to use their legal knowledge to help their clients and enjoy meeting them and building relationships with them.

"I met with clients and did wills. Older people are the target audience for wills, but everyone should have one. Because we are free, we are designed for lower income people who aren't turned off by the price. They enjoy coming out and talking to someone and telling their story. It is nice to hear them," said

Nathan Polacek, 3L, who worked in the Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic last spring.

He grew his client relationships and ensured his work was thorough.

"You let them talk because you might find little things in there. When they tell you their life story, you may catch something that might need to go in the will that they may have forgotten. Or maybe they forget about somebody until they started talking. Maybe they forgot to mention a former partner, but then we mention that person so it cannot be disputed later," Polacek said.

Ann Cheetham, 4E, also spent the spring 2023 semester working in the Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic.

"I have an interest in healthcare, so advanced healthcare directives were certainly something that interested me. I enjoyed meeting clients and working with people," she said.

Depending on clients' needs, Cheetham would draft financial powers of attorney, wills, advanced healthcare directives and sometimes all three.

"I found it very rewarding. Providing those documents was very important. Some people believe since they are below a certain income level and don't have any money that they don't need a will and don't need a power of attorney, but they do, and we provide a service to people that is valuable. Some people had more urgent needs for those documents, and they could not travel, so we went to them," Cheetham said.

TRIBONE CLINIC BY THE NUMBERS

Hours Of Legal Service To Public In The Last Five Years

	LAW CLINICS	EXTERNSHIPS	PRO BONO
May 2022-May 2023	14,303.00	9,357.50	2,307.15
May 2021-May 2022	14,409.00	6,692.00	1,213.75
May 2020-May 2021	18,019.00	6,235.00	2,279.00
May 2019-May 2020	10,738.00	7,705.00	2,732.00
May 2018-May 2019	12,339.00	7,929.00	2,461.00
May 2017-May 2018	17,282.75	8,723.50	4,276.88
TOTALS	87,090.75	46,642.00	15,269.78

Five year total in all three areas: 149,002.53 hours

With many opportunities to learn and serve available in the clinics, it is about finding the clinic that will best meet a student's passion and interest.

"It is so student-specific to what students' needs are. We connect them to community resources they need to fulfill those goals and show them where to start. You may be in the Wills Clinic and helping someone with cancer who needs to get a will. Every day is different, but we connect needs with resources," Orsatti said.

Cheetham was grateful for the experience to practice in the healthcare area.

"I think it's wonderful to have the chance to work with clients with an attorney like Professor Orsatti supervising. It was a very good way to learn," she said.

Public interest work always appealed to nontraditional student Hannah Dean, 2L.

"Between college and law school I worked in the public interest sector and really liked it. I knew I wanted to go to law school to do more public interest work. It is something Duquesne Kline values and instills in its students. It is a good way to start doing it and learning some of the things you will do as an attorney that does not always show up in doctrinal classes. It is helpful to see how that comes out in practice," Dean said.

She found her niche under the direction of the clinical legal education staff in the Pro Bono Program. Her practical application of the law and outcomes inspired her.

"It helps develop skills. You learn things you are tested on at the bar," Dean said. "And there's document drafting, communication, time management and practical aspects. I was able to help with the Name Change Project with Reed Smith. We were helping anyone regardless of the goals to get their name changed in documents through the court. It was not lengthy but was confusing. We helped clients do it more easily. It was fun and celebratory to help and to see the progress. It was nice to see it from start to finish."

Ryan Wilityer, L'21, a staff attorney at KidsVoice Child Advocacy Group, worked in the Family Law Clinic when he was a student at Duquesne Kline School of Law. That experience solidified his interest in family law.

"The clinic was a good test to see what it's like in the family law world. You had a sense of being a lawyer and taking all your skills and applying them. I knew I wanted to do some form of work directly helping people," he said.

Wilityer's work in the Family Law Clinic included filing motions, legal research, custody petitions and PFAs.

"It gave me an appreciation for family law. Kate (Norton) was great. She gave great constructive feedback and insight. With her vast experience of family law, she was invaluable. She is a great mentor and only wants to make you the best you can be," he said.

“

“The actual clinic itself resonated with me because I always wanted to help people; it's why I got into the law and went to law school. I wanted to advocate for people who did not have a voice for themselves. Tribone was a way to solidify that I wanted to do that.”

– RYAN WILITYER, L'21

Growing in Service

The Tribone Center encapsulates the mission of Duquesne Kline School of Law, centering on helping the community and giving back. It provides free legal services to those who cannot afford them while teaching students skills and the importance of being empathetic, thoughtful attorneys.

"The actual clinic itself resonated with me because I always wanted to help people; it's why I got into the law and went to law school. I wanted to advocate for people who did not have a voice for themselves. Tribone was a way to solidify that I wanted to do that," Wilityer said.

As for the future, Norton wants to continue to understand current issues the community faces and work together with students to holistically fill those gaps.

"I want to see where we can grow and serve more individuals as needs change," she said. "I want to stay attuned to what is going on in the community, the needs of community, and I want to see where we as lawyers and future lawyers can do the most good. Technology is having a greater impact in the legal field, and we are researching how that impacts the work of our students as future lawyers. Part of the vision of the Tribone Center is to instill in our students that as future lawyers we need to understand what role we play in the legal system and the importance of making it accessible to all, especially for those who cannot afford lawyers." ■

1997

Professor Joseph Mistick, L'79, founded Economic and Community Development Law Clinic (ECD), the first in-house clinic.

1998

Article announcing opening of Law Clinics in Fisher Hall: Civil Justice Clinic, Economic and Community Development Clinic (ECD), Unemployment Compensation Mini-Clinic, and Criminal Defense Clinic.

1999-2001

Clinics include: Civil and Family Justice Clinic, Criminal Advocacy Clinic, Economic and Community Development Law Clinic.

2003-2004

Clinics include: Civil and Family Justice Clinic, Criminal Advocacy Clinic, Economic and Community Development Law Clinic, and Innocence Project.

2008-2009

Clinics include: Bill of Rights/Civil Rights Litigation Clinic, Civil and Family Justice Law Clinic, Environmental law Clinic, Unemployment Compensation Clinic, Community Enterprise Clinic, Criminal Advocacy Clinic, and Urban Development Clinic.

2009-2012

Centers and Clinics include: Center for the Bill of Rights, Civil and Family Justice Law Clinic, Community Enterprise Clinic, Criminal Advocacy, E-Discovery Simulation Clinic, Unemployment Compensation Clinic, and Urban Development Clinic.

2013
JULY 10

Blueprints created for the Anna Shultz Building renovation.

2013
SEPT. 25

Center for Clinical Legal Education is relocated and renamed in honor of Tom Tribone, L'85. His \$500,000 gift funded the move along with a \$500,000 grant from the state's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program and a \$250,000 Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund Grant from Allegheny County's Redevelopment Authority.

2013-2014

Clinics in Tribone include: Civil Rights Clinic, Federal Practice Clinic, Unemployment Compensation Clinic, Urban Development Clinic, and Veterans Clinic.

2014
SPRING

Family Law Clinic opens.

2015-2016

Juvenile Defender Clinic opens.

2016-2017

Education Law Clinic opens.

2017

Pennsylvania Innocence Project opens at Duquesne Kline School of Law with Elizabeth DeLosa, L'10, as managing attorney of the Pittsburgh Division.

2019
FALL

Wills and Advance Healthcare Directives Clinic opens.

2020
FALL

Juvenile Defender Clinic and Education Law Clinic merge to form Youth Advocacy Clinic. It is the only holistic model in the country.

2021
FALL

Civil Rights Clinic renamed Re-Entry Clinic to support the expanded legal needs of the community.

2022
SEPT. 7

Duquesne Law School is renamed the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University after \$50 million commitment from Thomas R. Kline, L'78. This is the largest gift in the history of Duquesne University.

Eye-opening International Law Experience

by Amanda Drumm

There are many gifts traveling bestows. Taking a trip allows a person to see different places and people, changes viewpoints, and offers a rich learning experience. Duquesne Kline School of Law students who journeyed to Cologne, Germany, this past summer benefitted from these intangible presents. The unique experience broadened their legal knowledge, network and horizons.

“I did not have experience with international law or visiting another country before this trip. The trip was helpful for anything I prepare to do; I now have that comparative knowledge. It was also very beautiful and a great opportunity,” said Kristen Podolak, 2L.

Duquesne Kline School of Law students traveled overseas from May 20-June 10. Their main base in Europe was the University of Cologne, founded in 1388 and the largest university in Germany. They traveled elsewhere as a group. Students attended the Seminar in the Public Law of the European Union and visited Luxembourg and Paris, France. While in Luxembourg, they attended the European Court of Justice and the capped off their visit to Paris with a champagne

toast at the top of the Eiffel Tower.

Their counterpart German law students spoke English, and Duquesne Kline School of Law students made friendships with the some of the nearly 5,000 law students who attend the University of Cologne.

“It broadened their perspectives and helped them see how attorneys in other countries manage things. It opened the lines of communication about different approaches to issues,” said Ella Kwisnek, associate dean for students and associate professor of legal skills, who accompanied the students on the trip.

RESUMING STUDY ABROAD

Dean April Barton visited the students in Cologne during their trip. She was glad to have the international program resume for the students.

“We have a recommitted and reinvigorated focus on our international programs,” she said. “The exposure to a robust international law curriculum poises our students to practice law in our increasingly global society.”

This European Union study program was created in 2011 by Kirk Junker,



previous director of international programs at Duquesne Kline School of Law and now professor of law at the University of Cologne. The course has been offered seven times, now alternating summers with the Law School’s study program in Ireland.

This was the first time the trip had been held since the COVID-19 pandemic. Duquesne Kline School of Law students were eager to take advantage of the courses and international travel. The students prepared for the trip in the spring with a German legal system course facilitated by Dorothee Landgraf, adjunct professor of law.

“It seemed like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I always wanted to do a study abroad trip. I did not get to do it in undergrad because of COVID. So, when I saw this trip and the list of places I always wanted to go, I was pleased,” said Jack Indzonka, 2L.

Timothy Lesso, 4E, wanted to go to Germany since the fall of 2021 when he met German exchange students in one of his classes.

“I had Criminal Law with them. They’d tell me about Germany, their law school and that they went to the University of Cologne,” he said.

Lesso found out the University of Cologne did take exchange students, but the practice had stopped with COVID. He did some research and found Junker’s name and told him he was interested if the trip happened again. When Lesso learned in late 2022 the trip was going to resume, he immediately signed up to go.

Lesso, who is an accountant during the day for Crown Castle, took off time from work to go and finished his trip with an internship at the international law firm of Osborne Clark in Cologne. He gained a deeper understanding of the varying legal systems and different office cultures while he was there.

“It had a great impact on me as a person. It was probably one of the greatest decisions I made academically in law school, going on this trip. The classes were great; the professors were great and were all very well-known. It was just wonderful and life-changing; I



made so many friends. I also had an internship while over there, and that was just as fun as the first three weeks. Not only did I get to see difference between law school and German law, but I also saw the difference between office culture,” Lesso said.



COURSES AND COURTS

“My eyes were opened to international law, from a legal aspect and the languages that were involved. We saw more communication across language barriers than we saw in the legal system here. One trial in a German courtroom needed live translators. We went and saw three EU courts, and a dozen language translations were going on at same time with radios, depending on the dial, what was being said, in French, German, Italian and English, etc.” said Jason Whiting, 3E.

The students earned six credits from the courses on the trip and received countless lessons and knowledge on international law from professors at foreign institutions.

“It was great to be able to take classes with professors from these

universities, the University of Cologne and the Sorbonne in Paris; I think it was enriching in that way, it felt more authentic. My eyes were opened to international law – we took three separate courses, social law, privacy law and GDPR,” said Podolak.

GDPR, the General Data Protection Regulation, is a European law establishing protections for privacy and security of personal data of individuals in the European Economic Area. Duquesne Kline School of Law students were fascinated learning about these protections of individuals’ data.

“One thing that really stood out to me was covering GDPR European data protection systems. They talked about how it is international for data and how in Europe you must comply to these rules on data protection. Internationally you

must abide by these where you are for EU individuals. It is global and interesting that a code exists and has impacts on businesses globally. It made me realize you must look beyond the Pennsylvania jurisdiction or the U.S. at times,” Indzonka said.

The trip additionally opened up Indzonka’s worldview and the need to form relationships with legal counterparts.

“It makes you more aware of topics; it broadens what you’d expect to see; it broadens where you think things will come from, not just looking at federal law, because international law comes in at times. I learned about the importance of forming relationships. Professor Junker pointed out international law cases, and the Cologne students you are meeting, you should form relationships with, because a GDPR case may come up and it is nice to consult with someone who would be able to help,” said Indzonka.

Students likewise found the court system and its outcomes educational experiences.

“It was cool getting to see how (the court) was different. We were able to visit a court session, and it was more conversational than our U.S. court sessions. The formality wasn’t the same; everyone was in robes, even the lawyers, and it seemed to be a lot calmer. It was interesting that in Germany there was a focus on rehabilitation, not just prison,” Podolak said.

GLOBAL LEISURE GALORE

The group traveled together and had required courses and courts they attended, but they were also afforded leisure time. Many students took advantage of this opportunity to travel to different cities in Germany and to take the train to other countries in Europe. They felt confident as they made their way through Europe.

“It felt like Cologne was our home base when we traveled to different countries; it was a sense of almost home at Cologne for those three weeks. It wasn’t a scary experience; I thought it would be, being out of the country for the first time.

There were so many people to lean on, and the professors were so helpful and available to us,” Podolak said.

She thought the free time was nice to have. “We had a lot of wiggle room. There were activities we had to do that kept us busy, but there was time to do other things. We broke off and went to Belgium; the second weekend we went to Amsterdam. There were opportunities to do things with the program, but we branched out a bit,” said Podolak.

Whiting took a long weekend in Munich, Germany, with friends from the trip.

“It was nice to relax,” he said. “It was very busy from day to day; the long weekend trip was a nice time to enjoy ourselves.”

Indzonka and his friends explored other parts of Europe.

“We went to Dusseldorf, Brussels and Belgium. At the end, we delayed our flight for three days and went to Amsterdam, then flew out of Frankfurt,” he said.

GIFT OF A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The trip was majestic, the backdrop being storybook European cities with cobblestone streets, outdoor cafes and a different way of life. But the lasting treasure is that students gained a greater understanding of the world, international legal systems and themselves.

“The trip felt magical; it felt like every day something better would happen. And in today’s world, we learned it’s hard to be a very secluded lawyer on Forbes Avenue. Cases can involve parties from other countries and places. It was always emphasized how important networking was to us; these could be people we may work with in the future,” Lesso said.

Being more open-minded and aware of other cultures and systems was garnered from the journey and courses.



“The experience of understanding our legal system is not the only one, not inherently the best one, and other things should be considered. To understand why we do the things we do is important, whether you are a person influencing law, an attorney, a judge or a politician. Having my mind opened and being less insular was important,” said Whiting.

Kwisnek agreed and saw the trip as fitting of the Spiritan mission of Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“In general I think all the international programs are consistent with the mission to help students practice in the global community,” she said. “They gain an understanding of different approaches to legal problems and enhance their ability to work with lawyers from other countries.”

UP NEXT

Students will have the opportunity to travel to Ireland May 18–June 4 with professors Maryann Herman and Marissa Meredith. The group will be in Belfast for one week and Dublin for two weeks. Students will stay at Trinity College while in Dublin and will take classes from professors from the University of Cardiff and the University College Dublin. They will study International Human Rights, International Arbitration and Alternative Dispute Resolution, and Law of the European Union. ■

Tribone Center for Clinical Education Updates

Clinic Receives Matching Award

Annie Haefs, E'22, won the CETR Award for Graduate Research, sponsored by the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching & Research, Office of Research and Innovation, for "Foregrounding Youth Voice: Youth led Research." The judges were very impressed by Haefs' quality of work, and she was invited to submit a paper for online publication in the Duquesne University Scholarship Collection and participate in the Graduate Research Symposium. Professors Tammy Hughes, Ph.D., and Kara Dempsey, J.D., M.S.W., supervised the work. Haefs received a \$250 award, and a matching \$250 was awarded to the Youth Advocacy Clinic to assist them in their continuing holistic legal work with youth in our community.

Elder Law Justice Program

This yearlong externship program provided students the opportunity to work directly with Neighborhood Legal Services under the supervision of Professor-Attorneys Melissa Ruggiero and Catherine Martin. Students developed an understanding of the legal and non-legal hurdles that older Pennsylvanians face in civil legal matters. By working directly with clients and attending a weekly seminar, students assisted individuals on such legal issues as evictions, mortgage foreclosures, debt collections and tangled titles. Students met with clients, prepared and filed legal documents, argued at hearings and presented at court proceedings, and provided legal advice. In addition, students developed additional resources, such as a *pro se* handbook for handling small estates and other informational legal materials that will assist older individuals facing civil legal issues, and provided guidance to clients through a holistic service model.

Pennsylvania Innocence Project

On June 9, LaFaye Gaskins walked out of the Pennsylvania State Correctional Institution at Mahanoy, a place he once thought he would never leave. He walked straight into his mother's arms after enduring 34 years of wrongful incarceration for a murder he did not commit.

Gaskins was greeted by his legal team, including Pennsylvania Innocence Project attorneys Nilam Sanghvi and Amelia Maxfield, former Project investigator John Butler, and three attorneys from Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis LLP – Ralph Wellington, Edward Sholinsky and Alexandra Fahringer. Fahringer has been working on Gaskins' case since her law school internship at the Pennsylvania Innocence Project.

Gaskins was looking forward to spending time with his family and friends, especially his daughter Onia, who was born just before he went to prison and was recently honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy.

Public Defender Program

Public Defender Program students received hands-on experiences with people accused of crimes in the Allegheny County Public Defender's offices. Students learned the stages of a criminal case and the impact that the criminal justice system has on the accused while interactively participating in the criminal courts with the prerogative of assisting clients and limiting potential consequences, both direct and collateral. Students had the unique opportunity to prepare, file and argue various motions, handle preliminary hearings before district judges, and participate in diverse interactions in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County under the supervision of Professor-Judge Elliot Howsie, L'98, and Professor-Attorney Stacey Steiner.

Veterans Clinic

Students from the Veterans Clinic and the Family Law Clinic with Professor Dan Kunz participated in the 13th annual Stand Down Pittsburgh event Oct. 7. Stand Down Pittsburgh is a daylong services fair for local veterans who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Free services for veterans include food pantries, clothing, personal hygiene/care items, haircuts, showers, flu shots and other general health care, legal assistance, ID cards, and access to veteran benefits and eligibility for vocational, employment and education resources, and counseling referrals. Our students discussed how our law clinic could assist them with issues they may have in Veterans Court or with custody and child support.

Unemployment Compensation

Even though the Unemployment Compensation Clinic (UCC) closed in December 2022, cases are continuing with the assistance of Attorney Michael D. Simon, L'80. On July 24, a decision from one of the clinic's older cases was received. This was a *pro se* client whose case the UCC took after she lost before the referee and the board more than three years ago. The UCC took the case to the Commonwealth Court, where after an *en banc* argument with students under Simon's supervision was remanded for a further hearing. The board took forever to reschedule a remand hearing, which was held in early January.

When the decision came, it was a victory for our client. They abandoned their original legal theory used to deny benefits and found that the claimant was involuntarily separated by the employer during her resignation period, and that given no willful misconduct could be demonstrated, she was eligible and thus there could be no overpayment.

Originally, because her resignation was midweek during a claim week, the board took the position that this disqualified her from benefits because her separation after the effective date of her resignation was a non-qualifying voluntary separation.

The UCC still has several cases from clinic clients that are awaiting decisions and, in some cases, hearings. ■

Young Alumni

PROFILE

Hannah French, L'21

Hometown:

Shenandoah Junction, W.Va.

Education:

Shepherd University, B.A. in elementary education
Duquesne Kline School of Law, J.D.

What are you currently reading?

The Children of Jocasta by Natalie Haynes

Words you live by:

"Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." – Ruth Bader Ginsburg

What people might be surprised to know about you:

I love musical theater. One of my favorite things to do in Pittsburgh was to see the touring musicals at the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts. I was fortunate to see *Hamilton* in London last year, and it was incredible!

Employment:

Attorney at Bowles Rice LLP

What sparked your interest in presiding as a judge over the Teen Court program in Berkeley County, W.Va., a program providing relief for a crowded court system, a safe space for young offenders and education opportunities for volunteers interested in law?

I believe that education can make a difference. Unfortunately, the criminal justice system is wrought with reoffenders, and many individuals who enter the criminal justice system never leave the cycle. Teen Court tries to break the cycle by focusing on education. Although I serve as the judge for Berkeley County Teen Court, my biggest role is to serve as an educator and mentor. I teach the kids, both juvenile offenders and high school volunteers, about the role of an attorney and the role of the jury. I have advised them on how to make an opening and closing, how to examine a witness, and how to object.

Additionally, part of every juvenile offender's sentence is to serve on the jury a number of times. It is remarkable to watch the juvenile offenders listen to the case and analyze the arguments to come to a sentence. This is where I get to observe the juvenile offenders start to buy into the program. We have had several kids who started as juvenile offenders complete their sentence and become volunteers because they so greatly enjoyed the program.

One of the most valuable aspects of Teen Court is that juvenile offenders and high school volunteers work together to conduct and decide the cases. The kids are the attorneys and the jury. This makes everyone a team and creates a positive environment for growth. The kids are one great team that works together. The volunteers serve as great role models and are able to hone their leadership skills. Many of the volunteers hope to pursue the legal profession, and we have now had several begin college or the police academy.

What is most exciting is that it is working. In the two years I have been with Teen Court, we have worked with over 60 juvenile offenders, and we have not had a single juvenile offender reoffend.



How did your Duquesne Kline School of Law education prepare you not only for the practice of law, but for your civic engagement?

Duquesne instilled in me that community service is an expectation of legal professionals. Lawyers learn such a wide array of skills that can help their community. I was also lucky to be a part of the Trial Advocacy and Moot Court program during my time at Duquesne. The coaches go above and beyond to teach the best way to present a case and polish public speaking skills. I utilize the same lessons that they taught me in what I share with Teen Court.

How would you describe the value of a Duquesne Kline School of Law education in the 21st century?

Duquesne's focus on practical skills is unparalleled. The doctrinal classes provide a foundation of legal knowledge, but Duquesne's practical classes allow students to apply the skills necessary for legal practice. From learning tools and forms for contract drafting, to brief writing, to research skills, to arguing a motion before a circuit court judge, Duquesne makes sure that its graduates have the skills they need to succeed in the modern-day legal profession.

Anything else you'd like to add or share about yourself?

I was incredibly nervous when I first started law school. I grew up on my family farm raising chickens, ducks and turkeys, so moving to Pittsburgh was a huge change. As the first lawyer in my family, I had no idea what to expect, yet I somehow felt like I was already behind. Over the course of law school, I developed confidence in my abilities and realized that I was meant to be a lawyer. I hope that I can continue to help, not only those in Teen Court, but anyone, realize their potential. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any interest in Teen Court or if I can help you in any way! ■

A Mission-Filled Journey

LTC Krista Bartolomucci, BA'01, MA/MBA'03, L'11, recently visited Duquesne Kline School of Law and interviewed and spoke with students interested in pursuing service with the Army JAG Corps. She kindly shared some thoughts about how her career has been impacted by her Duquesne Kline education.



LTC Krista Bartolomucci, BA'01, MA/MBA'03, L'11

What are your primary responsibilities as the staff judge advocate for Army Sustainment Command and Garrison at Rock Island Arsenal in Illinois?

As a staff judge advocate (SJA), my primary responsibilities are varied. First and foremost, I am responsible for providing leadership, vision, and direction for my team of three military attorneys, two civilian attorneys and two paralegals. Within this leadership umbrella, I have a responsibility to establish the climate, provide clear expectations, provide ongoing mentorship and feedback, and lastly, provide formal and informal training and other professional development opportunities for my team. In turn, my team and I are responsible for providing the full spectrum of legal services, including legal assistance, contract and fiscal law, labor and employment law, administrative law, and military justice, to our clients which include U.S. Army Garrison Rock Island Arsenal and Army Sustainment Command and its seven geographically dispersed Field Support Brigades.

How has your law school education influenced your career?

The mission of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University is three-fold: 1) excel in the ethical practice of law; 2) preserve the highest ideals of the legal profession; and 3) promote equal justice and democratic discourse through leadership, service and civic engagement.

Likewise, we in the Army Judge Advocate General's Corps pride ourselves on our four constants: 1) principled counsel; 2) stewardship; 3) mastery of the law; and 4) servant leadership. These four constants are achieved through Knowing Yourself, Knowing your Client, Knowing your Corps, Knowing your Craft, and Knowing your Crew.

Although the terminology used is slightly different, the underlying message remains the same. Be the best service-oriented and ethics-oriented lawyer you can possibly be and represent your organization in the best possible light by remaining grounded in the fundamentals and the "why" behind what we are called to do.

Transitioning into the Army JAG Corps after receiving an education at Duquesne was a seamless transition for me. I understood and embraced the culture of both organizations. I thrived on the personalized attention I received from the faculty and staff at the University and strive to carry that on because that is taking care of people and helping to grow the next generation. I understood and embraced the necessity of maintaining a core set of values regardless of how stressful a situation may be because that is the bedrock for the ethical practice of law. Finally, I embraced the importance of hard work and continuous learning. That is how you build trust with yourself, with your team, and with your clients. In the words of

Teddy Roosevelt, “No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.” But then, you better be competent.

You’re called upon to lead, both in title and in your sense of responsibility and obligation to your fellow soldiers and country. What qualities do you value most in leaders? What leadership qualities do you look for in candidates when you interview them for JAG positions?

This is a great question and a very important one. There are many different types of leaders, and I think it’s important to recognize that there are vastly different yet equally successful approaches to leadership. However, there are some general characteristics all great leaders share.

First, great leaders are genuine. They don’t try to force themselves into a specific mold that is not authentic to who they are as a person.

Secondly, they accept ownership of their own or their team’s mistakes, while giving credit where credit is due. We are human. No one expects us to be perfect. But if we are wrong, we are expected to fix it. And if we don’t know the answer to something, it’s OK to say “I don’t know,” but following up with a timely answer is critical. Humility goes a long way in this profession.

Thirdly, good leaders are able to seamlessly transition between roles. There are times things need to get done and that leader needs to make an executive decision. There are other times where a leader needs to take a step back and let the team collaborate and come up with solutions on their own. Delegate and empower your people. That goes a long way to build trust and it lets you as a leader focus on the big picture and process improvements. But at all times, a good leader is a team player. No task should be below a good leader. Good leaders help out wherever needed, even if it’s not their job and generally are present even when it’s inconvenient.

Fourthly, good leaders know how to read a room and take the time to invest in their people. As stated above, you can’t lead unless you “know your crew,” and that is knowing them at a level deeper than the fact that they are employed by your office. Get to know them as a person. How do they like to be communicated with? What are they passionate about? What are their strengths and how can you leverage these strengths? What are their weaknesses and how can you give them opportunities to improve on their weaknesses in a way that builds their confidence? Do you know what’s going on with them outside of the workplace? Life is more than just our chosen profession.

Finally, leaders must at all times live with honesty and integrity. This goes without saying. As a leader, people are always watching. They are observing what you do and they are observing what you don’t do. Don’t ever give someone

Transitioning into the Army JAG Corps after receiving an education at Duquesne was a seamless transition for me. I understood and embraced the culture of both organizations.

an opportunity to question your integrity. That is how organizations crumble.

As far as leadership qualities in candidates, I don’t expect someone to have held formal leadership positions before applying to the Army JAG Corps or one of our internship programs. However, I am looking for those intangibles. The fundamental question I always ask myself is, “is this someone I’d want to work with?” There are several sub-questions that go into this analysis to include: “Is this someone I can trust to give their best effort and not be afraid to ask for help when they need it?” “Is this someone who is going to bring positive energy to the workplace?” “Is this someone who will be willing and able to step up when required while being a good teammate and colleague to others within the office?” Lastly, “is this someone who will be willing to go the extra mile and volunteer for things that are outside of their current job description?” The Army and our JAG offices are very much team-oriented organizations. You cannot pigeonhole yourself and expect to be successful.

In addition to being a Triple-Duker, you’re part of a Duquesne Legacy, with your dad and your son. Can you speak about the importance of that to you?

It makes me so incredibly proud! As a young child, my dad talked incessantly about Duquesne University, and my two brothers and I never doubted his pride in his alma mater. We practically grew up on the University campus, attending football and basketball games and other University-hosted family events; and even if we weren’t attending a University function, my dad ensured we always detoured through the campus whenever we were headed to the ‘Burgh. It was the same for my son. I encouraged him to apply to other colleges, but he was set on Duquesne for much the same reasons I had been when I was in his shoes nearly 25 years prior! It was a campus he knew and it was a campus where he knew he would feel at home! ■

ClassActions

Stay connected with Duquesne Kline Law!
Update your email by contacting the Law Alumni office at
lawalumni@duq.edu.

1983

The Honorable Kimberly Berkeley Clark

was honored at the History Makers Award Dinner. The Honorable Clark received an award in the field of Law as recognition of her accomplishments in transcending geographic bounds and her commitment to excellence that continues to define our community and deeply contribute to the proud history and collective legacy of our region.



1989

Eric Springer

was selected as a 2022 C-Suite Awards Winner. Eric was nominated for this Award by his peers because of his guidance, raw determination, and unshakeable faith in Sherrard, German & Kelly, P.C. and its people. Eric was selected as a winner by the *Pittsburgh Business Times* panel of judges for his skillful leadership, contributions to his organization, and community involvement.



1995

Alison Smith

was selected by the Pennsylvania Bar Association as a recipient of the Louis J. Goffman Award for Outstanding Pro Bono Service. Alison serves as senior counsel for PNC Bank NA, Pittsburgh, and was previously chair of the PBA Real Property, Probate and Trust Law (RPPT) Section where she formed partnerships with local agencies and law schools in Pennsylvania to establish estate planning clinics to aid low-income individuals with drafting wills, powers of attorney, and advance health care directives. Her work helped the section launch the Pro Bono Life Planning clinic. The RPPT has held eight clinics and served 56 low-income clients with the assistance of 85 volunteer attorneys and 45 law students, who were mentored during the process. All volunteers contributed 325 pro bono hours.



1998

Gerald Mullery was recently appointed Deputy Secretary for Compensation and Insurance by the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Nancy Walker.



2001

David Velegol, Jr.

was inducted into the West Virginia University Academy of Chemical Engineers for his 36 years of engineering achievements and his public service with 12 years as Mayor and 10 years as Municipal Judge of Follansbee, W. Va.



2003

Marla N. Presley, managing principal and litigation manager of the nationwide employment law firm Jackson Lewis P.C.'s Pittsburgh office, has officially been sworn in as the President of the Allegheny County Bar association (ACBA). Her term began July 1, 2023, following a year serving as the President-Elect.

2004

Holly Deihl was recently named an *Unsung Hero* by *The Legal Intelligencer* as part of its Professional Excellence Awards, an honor that recognizes attorneys who have gone above and beyond, often behind the scenes, in service to their clients and community.



2005

Matthew Mohn, a Pittsburgh-based partner at Reed Smith, has become the Co-chair of Reed Smith's Global Corporate Group.



2007

Eleanor Vaida Gerhards

was selected to the Franchise Times 2023 Legal Eagles list. This annual list highlights attorneys who "live and breathe franchising and truly understand the nuances of the unique business model."



2015

Pollock Begg Associate **Lindsay A. Nemit** recently earned certification for mediation, joining four of her colleagues at the Pittsburgh family law practice



in offering this specialized service to clients. Nemit also earned "2024 Best Lawyers in America: Ones To Watch" recognition, an honor given to attorneys who exhibit outstanding professional excellence in private practice early in their careers. She was spotlighted for her expertise in family law and alternative dispute resolution.

2023

Anna Maria Scenica

was awarded the Professor Louis Del Duca Memorial Award in Business Law. This prestigious award, given by the Pennsylvania Bar Association, is given annually to one graduating student at each of the nine ABA accredited law schools in Pennsylvania in memory of Professor Del Duca. He was an internationally recognized leading scholar in commercial and comparative law with legendary contributions to the Business Law Section and the Pennsylvania Bar Association. This award honors students who demonstrate academic excellence, especially in courses related to business law, and intend to practice law in Pennsylvania.



Michael T. Victor Way Opens at Mercyhurst University

On Sept. 15, also known as Hurst Day, Mercyhurst University and President Kathy Getz honored the 12th President of Mercyhurst, Michael T. Victor, L'86, with the opening of Michael T. Victor Way.

The event included a ribbon cutting and a celebration outside of the Mercyhurst Athletic Center. Michael T. Victor Way is a path traveled daily by hundreds of students and student-athletes.

Victor's tenure at Mercyhurst University included many accomplishments, including the construction of both Ryan Hall and the Cyber Education Center, the redesign of Grotto Commons, the addition of the Tom and Michele Ridge Archives, and the restoration of the carillon.

In an email, Getz said she believes the designation of Michael T. Victor Way, situated between the Mercyhurst Athletic Center to the north and the Ice Center to the south, is meaningful in two ways. She said, "President Victor was committed to cultivating a beautiful landscape that would honor the legacy of our founding Sisters of Mercy while enriching the lives of our college community. As well, while his accomplishments were many during his six-year tenure, the completion of the Laker for Life athletics campaign is among those that made visible improvements to campus. The athletic fields and the Mercyhurst Athletic Center are among the most beautiful in D-II athletics, and naming the path upon which many students, especially student-athletes, travel each day is a relevant tribute."

Mercyhurst University noted the additional significance of the pathway in relation to Victor's tenure. "East of the pathway in the Student Union is The Roost, an authentic Irish pub that Victor created with the help of John Melody, an alumnus, former soccer coach and owner of six Erie restaurants. Melody was also one of the university's first international students, hailing from Dungarvan, Ireland, Erie's sister city. The area surrounding the walkway is also one of the campus locations that morphs into a playground of climbing walls, dunk tanks, and inflatables for the annual fall fest known as Hurst Day, a tradition started by Victor."

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we list the following law alumni who passed away:

Richard G. Beer, Esq.	1990
Kathleen Cabraja, Esq.	1982
Frank L. Cecchetti, Esq.	1976
James S. Curtin, Esq.	1970
Janis A. Domzal, Esq.	1992
Daniel T. Fitzhenry, Esq.	1996
Joseph Gariti III, Esq.	1966
David J. Graban, Esq.	1973
William Kelleher, Jr., Esq.	1979
Debora M. Lelik, Esq.	1989
The Hon. D. Gerard Long	1966
Brian E. Manning, Esq.	1984
Garry A. Nelson, Esq.	1982
Lucas Pavlovich, Esq.	1986
Alexander T. Poorman, Esq.	2015
John E. Rigney, Esq.	2010
Mark S. Seewald, Esq.	1987
Carl T. Severini, Esq.	1960
Angela L. Steltzer, Esq.	2002
Meghan F. Wise, Esq.	1983

This list is provided through the Duquesne University Advancement Records Office and may not be complete. If you have information about an alumnus who passed away this past year and is not listed, please contact the Duquesne Kline School of Law Alumni Office at 412.396.5215 so that we may update our records.

*77th Thomas R. Kline School of Law
of Duquesne University*

LAW ALUMNI REUNION RECEPTION

Honorees Recognized with Awards at Annual Law Alumni Dinner

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University celebrated its 77th annual Law Alumni Reunion dinner on Oct. 6. During that event, Duquesne Kline School of Law celebrated three honorees for their achievements and bestowed awards on them.

The honorees were the Honorable Janice M. Holder, L'75, state Sen. Lindsey Williams, L'08, and Dean Ronald R.

Davenport. Justice Holder was conferred the Distinguished Alumna Award and Senator Williams was presented the Outstanding Alumni Award. Dean Davenport received the Dr. John E. Murray, Jr. Meritorious Service Award for his historic, pioneering service and commitment to Duquesne Kline. Read more about the honorees:

duq.edu/LawAlumniAwards. ■



Tom Kline Speaks at 109th Commencement Ceremony and Receives Honorary Degrees

Thomas R. Kline, L'78, returned to his alma mater to serve as the speaker at the Duquesne Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's 109th Commencement ceremony May 13. It was less than a year after a special celebration announcing that Kline made the largest philanthropic commitment to Duquesne University in its 145-year history, and the first Commencement ceremony with the Law School bearing his name.

As part of Commencement, the University awarded Kline an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. He was also awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters in recognition of his lifelong pursuit of learning and higher education.

Kline spoke to the audience and gave graduates lifelong advice "in Bar review style" with accompanying colorful bitmojis. His 10 lessons, abridged, included:

- 1) Find Happiness, especially a work-life balance
- 2) Follow Your Dreams, leave room to make a mistake
- 3) Be Yourself because we are all unique and all have something special to offer
- 4) Build and Guard Your Reputation because at the end of the day your reputation is all you have and is the most important thing you own
- 5) Take Care of Yourself; while Tom walks 10 miles a day, you find something that takes care of yourself physically and emotionally
- 6) Listen and Ask Questions; Tom's mother told him nobody ever learned anything while you're talking, and Kline also said there is no such thing as a dumb question
- 7) Find a Mentor and Be a Mentor; the process of learning has just begun - find someone who will help set the way for you
- 8) Control your Electronic Destiny, which includes thinking before you send emails, not letting social media consume or rule you, not making mistakes on

social media and certainly not disparaging others there, as it is unbecoming and unprofessional

9) Give Back, to your family, friends, community and people who need us as stalwarts of democracy

10) Live by the Spiritan ideals of one heart, one spirit of service to others and service to the community

Kline ended his speech by congratulating the class of 2023. The Duquesne University community was eager to welcome Kline home for this ceremony.

"I was thrilled to have Tom Kline return to the Bluff as our Commencement speaker," said Duquesne President Ken Gormley. "As a Duquesne alumnus, he has supported the Law School where he got his start in numerous ways, enhancing educational opportunities and providing generous gifts that will benefit our students, faculty and the profession itself for generations to come. It's fitting that he addressed the first class to of law graduates to earn their degrees from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University."

Kline's philanthropic commitment to his alma mater has broadly supported student scholarships, faculty grants for excellence in teaching and scholarship, the school's noted Bar Preparation program, new clinical offerings that benefit the community and other strategic priorities. Kline has given the University wide latitude in how best to invest the resources to maximize the benefits for students and the faculty of Duquesne Kline School of Law generally.

He made an additional significant gift to Duquesne Kline School of Law this past spring, including a new limestone, granite and glass façade at the building's Locust Street entrance; a refreshed two-story open grand entrance hall; and an exhibit and conference room overlooking the entranceway.

In an earlier gift in 2018, Kline committed \$7.5 million to establish



the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education at Duquesne, to support the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in its ongoing efforts to enhance the administration of justice through high quality continuing education for judges across the Commonwealth.

"Tom Kline's commitment to Duquesne, the profession and most importantly our students is truly extraordinary," said April Barton, dean of the Duquesne Kline School of Law. "Our students continue to excel, our pass rate for the Pennsylvania Bar Exam is consistently one of the best in the state, and our employment outcomes impressively outpace national averages – proof that we prepare our students for practice and what's next in their careers. We look forward to further enhancing our legal education and skills training programs in a variety of ways, thanks to Tom's wonderful gift."

A champion of legal education, Kline is acknowledged as one of America's most respected and influential lawyers. He is a founding partner of the firm Kline and Specter, and his groundbreaking cases have helped shape the law and resulted in corporate, institutional and governmental change and justice for his clients.

A graduate and recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award at Albright College, Kline earned his Master of Arts degree from Lehigh University and his J.D. from Duquesne's School of Law in 1978, where he received the Distinguished Student Award and later earned the Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2008. He is also an inductee into the Century Club of distinguished alumni at Duquesne. ■

FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

Faculty Receive Awards at 2023 Commencement

On May 13, the 109th Commencement ceremony and the first as the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University was celebrated. At the event, faculty were presented with special awards, honoring them for their teaching and service. Congratulations to all recipients on their well-deserved honors!



Adam Tragone

ADJUNCT FACULTY AWARDS

Recipients were selected based on enthusiasm for teaching and learning, interest in students, sensitivity to the learning environment, and innovation of instruction. This year's recipients were **Adam Tragone** (fall semester) and **David Jamison** (spring semester).



David Jamison

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

Professor **Ashley London** was selected for outstanding contributions in teaching. The recipient demonstrated the ability to engage students actively in the learning process through teaching that is intellectually rigorous and innovative.

THOMAS R. KLINE EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

Awarded to the full-time faculty member who, as determined by the dean, best demonstrates overall excellence in and adherence to our mission in teaching as evidenced by student and peer evaluations. The inaugural award in this area goes to Professor **Jane Moriarty** for her exceptional teaching in the areas of evidence and professional responsibility. She is adept at both in-person and online teaching, providing students with the knowledge and tools they need to succeed in difficult substantive areas of law, and is highly thought of by both students and faculty peers.



Ashley London



Jane Moriarty

THOMAS R. KLINE INNOVATION IN TEACHING AWARD

Awarded to the full-time faculty member who best demonstrates innovative and creative teaching methods that serve the pedagogical needs of our students and advances legal pedagogy generally. The inaugural award in



Wes Oliver

this area goes to Professor **Wes Oliver** for his innovative Coding for Lawyers class, which is one of only four similar classes taught in U.S. law schools. The course has gained national attention, and students from the course have gone on to successfully represent Duquesne Kline School of Law at law and technology competitions across the country.

THOMAS R. KLINE MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Awarded to the full-time faculty member(s) whose contributions to the Law School and its mission exceeded expectations and had a significant positive impact on the University and our community partners. The inaugural award in this area goes to Professors **Kate Norton** and **Grace Orsatti** for their outstanding work developing the elder law justice consortium, a partnership among all Pennsylvania law schools, serving the needs of Pennsylvania's aging population and providing opportunities for law students to learn and serve their communities.



Kate Norton



Grace Orsatti

MURRAY SCHOLARSHIP FACULTY AWARD

In 2011, Chancellor John Murray honored the school's 100th anniversary by making a substantial gift. The gift was to establish the Murray endowed fund for faculty scholarship. The fund has allowed us to invite nationally acclaimed legal scholars to the Law School. The fund also enables us to recognize our own outstanding faculty scholars each year. The Murray Award for Faculty Scholarship was bestowed upon Professor **Richard Heppner** for his scholarship in appellate procedure and judicial interpretation.



Richard Heppner



Morgan Gray (left) and Wesley Oliver (right) discuss their work with student Denzel Gregg.

Oliver and Gray Present Work at International Artificial Intelligence and Law Conference

Professor Wesley Oliver and adjunct faculty member Morgan Gray, L'19, attended the International Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Law in Braga, Portugal, at the University of Minho on June 20.

Gray presented a paper titled “Automatic Identification and Empirical Analysis of Legally Relevant Factors.” He presented for the team, which, along with Oliver, included Kevin Ashley, professor of law and intelligent systems at the University of Pittsburgh, and Jaromir Savelka, a postdoctoral student in computer science at Carnegie Mellon University.

The International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Law is the world’s leading conference on AI and law and is held every other year. Gray’s paper was part of two additional papers at the conference. All the papers appeared in the published “Proceedings” of the conference.

Oliver additionally presented for the team of Gray, Ashley and Savelka with a paper titled “Computationally Assessing Reasonable Suspicion in Drug Interdiction Stops” at the Law and Data Science Conference in New York City July 31-Aug. 1. That conference was co-hosted by Fordham Law School, the University of Virginia School of Law and ETH Zurich. They are seeking to publish that paper in an American law journal.

The presentations and papers are the result of the team’s current research, which involves creating a way to computationally read 40,000 U.S. court decisions that evaluated whether officers had reasonable suspicion to detain a car stopped for an ordinary traffic stop until a drug dog confirmed or dispelled the officer’s suspicion that the motorist was a trafficker.

Oliver and Gray additionally received accolades for their related AI work this past spring. They were recognized with Duquesne University’s Creative Teaching Award for their project, “The Development and First Offering of Coding for Lawyers Course.” Oliver also was honored with the Duquesne Kline School of Law’s Innovation in Teaching Award at the 2023 Commencement. The award-winning Coding for Lawyers is a cutting-edge course offered to Duquesne Kline School of Law students. Duquesne Kline School of Law students who have taken the course are among an elite group of students in law schools; there are only three other law schools nationally where a similar course is taught.

In the spring 2024 semester, Duquesne Kline will add to the computational law curriculum with a second programming class, Statistics and Machine Learning for Lawyers. ■

New Faculty and Distinguished Lecturers Welcomed

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University welcomed new faculty who began their appointments during our fall 2023 semester. These full-time faculty members and distinguished lecturers bring extensive experience from diverse areas including politics, medicine, intellectual property and education.

PROFESSORS OF LAW

Professor Maryann Herman

joins the tenure-track faculty at Duquesne Kline School of Law as an assistant professor of law teaching property law. Her scholarship also focuses on property rights and comparative law. Herman formerly served the school as an assistant professor of legal skills and director of academic excellence. Having taught legal reasoning and law school skills courses,



she strives to integrate skills concepts into the doctrinal classroom, improving the learning of all her students.

Prior to joining Duquesne Kline School of Law, Herman served as the director of academic success and bar preparation studies at the Appalachian School of Law, where she also taught Business Associations. She formerly worked at BarBri Bar Review and practiced at the

Chicago Legal Clinic, an organization serving low-income clients. Herman received her Juris Doctor from Wayne State University in Detroit, Mich.

Herman writes in the area of real property, and her article, “An Easement For Public Benefit: A Stick In The Bundle For Those Displaced By Eminent Domain,” is forthcoming in the *University of Pittsburgh Law Review*. She is committed to her students’ growth and understanding of property law.

“I’m looking forward to continuing to help students learn, and to explore with them in greater depth how our laws regarding property affect the way we live,” said Herman.

Professor Eugene Mazo

joins the full-time faculty as an associate professor of law, after serving the past year as visiting faculty at Seton Hall University School of Law. Mazo is a nationally recognized scholar of election law and will teach contracts and remedies. He will also serve as associate professor of political science (by courtesy) at the University’s McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts.

Mazo’s scholarship concerns the theory and practice of democracy, both in the United States and around the world. He is the author of dozens of articles and the editor of several books, including *The Best Candidate: Presidential Nomination*



in Polarized Times (Cambridge University Press, 2020), *Democracy by the People: Reforming Campaign Finance in America* (Cambridge University Press, 2018) and *Election Law Stories* (Foundation Press, 2016). Mazo is a past chair of the Section on Election Law at the Association of American Law Schools (AALS), where he created the John Hart Ely Prize in the Law of Democracy and the Distinguished Scholarship Award in Election Law, the two most prominent awards in his field.

The son of immigrants, Mazo graduated from Columbia College before earning his master’s degree from Harvard University, a doctorate in politics from Oxford University and his law degree from Stanford University.

Duquesne Kline School of Law was founded to provide immigrants a path to legal education, and that mission resonates with Mazo.

“I’m a democracy scholar. So, a

school whose mission it is to promote democratic discourse through leadership, service and civic engagement is where I want to be. I'm also a first-generation immigrant. I want to teach at a school where the students come from backgrounds that are similar to my own. In a nutshell, that's Duquesne," he said.

Professor Ryan Williams

joins the faculty as an associate professor of law. He received his undergraduate degree from Yale University and his law degree from Georgetown University. In 2014, he was named one of the top young law professors of color in America. Williams



has more than 10 years of teaching experience focusing on Torts, Civil Procedure, Race & the Law and National Security Law, the latter of which is the focus of his scholarship. His most recent article discusses the Jan. 6, 2020, Capitol riot and its impact on the future of American democracy.

Williams teaches Torts, National Security Law, and Race and the Law at Duquesne Kline School of Law and is anticipating his work empowering students.

"I am looking forward to working

at Duquesne Kline Law because of the opportunity it provides to students who might not otherwise go to law school. I see it as an opportunity for me as well, to provide the tools necessary so other people can literally satisfy their dreams. How can you beat that?" he said.

Kara L. Dempsey, JD, MSW

is the new director of the Youth Advocacy Clinic and assistant professor of clinical legal education. Dempsey's clinical practice and research at the clinic focuses on dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline by keeping children in school and out of detention centers, juvenile placement facilities and jail. Dempsey represents children in delinquency proceedings as well as school discipline and special education matters.

Dempsey said, "(I) strongly believe in holistic representation to meet as many of the client's needs as possible, rather than



solely addressing the immediate legal need that brings them to the clinic. As such, the clinic operates as a holistic representation model and features an ongoing partnership with master's-level social work students from the University of Pittsburgh and doctorate-level school

psychology students from Duquesne's School of Education."

Dempsey also engages in policy and advocacy work and serves on the boards of both the Gault Center and the Juvenile Defenders Association of Pennsylvania. She attended Vanderbilt University for her undergraduate studies, where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in American studies. She continued her education by obtaining her Juris Doctor from DePaul University School of Law, and then went on to receive her Master of Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh.

Duquesne Kline School of Law's mission resonates with her as it aligns with her personal and professional values.

"As both a lawyer and a social worker, I have dedicated my career to serving the most vulnerable populations within our community, and it is such an honor to be able to do this work within the service-oriented community of the University," she said. "The emphasis upon service permeates throughout the University and is very apparent throughout the interactions that I have with faculty members, who are always so supportive, and the law students themselves, who are always ready and willing to zealously represent our children and families year after year. I am honored to be a faculty member at Duquesne Kline because I am confident that our law students graduate with a commitment to service regardless of the area of law they choose to pursue and will continue to fulfill the University's mission."

Megan E.K. Montcalm

joined Duquesne Kline School of Law as the director of academic excellence and assistant professor of legal skills. In this role, she designs, implements and administers a program of academic support benefiting all law students, and



especially those students in their first and second years of study.

For the past four years, Montcalm has administered a similar program at New York Law School in New York, N.Y., where she served most recently as the assistant dean for academic success.

Montcalm draws upon a wealth of real-world legal experience in her work with law students. Before joining New York Law School, she served as senior counsel in the Appeals Division of the New York City Law Department, where she briefed and argued dozens of civil appeals on behalf of New York City, the mayor and local government agencies in federal and state appellate courts. Her caseload there reflected the tremendous breadth of the city government’s dealings, raising issues in the contexts of, e.g., civil rights, torts, and employment, family and administrative law. She was previously a senior associate in Vinson & Elkins LLP’s Commercial & Business Litigation Practice and a litigation associate at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP. While in private practice, she worked extensively on a series of interrelated international arbitrations and represented clients in securities matters and other commercial disputes.

From 2010 to 2011, Montcalm served as a law clerk for the Honorable Alvin K. Hellerstein on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. From 2009 to 2010, she served as a law clerk for the Honorable John M. Rogers on the U.S.

Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

She graduated with highest honors from The George Washington University Law School and earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in experimental psychology, summer cum laude, from the University of South Carolina.

Montcalm is passionate about increasing access to the legal profession for historically underrepresented groups and takes seriously the responsibility of educating tomorrow’s leaders.

“In past roles, I have had opportunities to work closely with and celebrate the successes of law students from a range of backgrounds and circumstances, including some who are the first in their families to go to college, and some who immigrated to our country and learned English to pursue an education,” she said. “I expect to have similar opportunities in my work with students here at Duquesne Kline School of Law. By giving students from all backgrounds the crucial support and resources they need to succeed in law school, and by striving to instill within them the values of service, leadership and civic engagement, we will not only diversify and strengthen our profession, but we also will make strides toward a more just, inclusive and prosperous society.”

DISTINGUISHED LECTURERS IN LAW AND EXPERTS IN RESIDENCE

Duquesne Kline School of Law has appointed three new part-time faculty: Professor Dan Brean, who will serve as Intellectual Property Expert in Residence; Professor Kathy Cerminara, who is the new Distinguished Health Law Expert in Residence; and former Congressman Conor Lamb, who will serve as a Distinguished Lecturer of Law.

Professor Dan Brean

has extensive experience in both law practice and teaching and will be assisting the Law School in further developing its intellectual property and technology innovation curriculum. He

is currently senior intellectual property counsel for Philips, a multinational health technology company. Previously, he was an assistant professor at the



University of Akron School of Law, where he taught courses on patent law, patent litigation, international intellectual property and licensing.

Brean is a registered patent attorney and a former partner at The Webb Law Firm, where his practice focused on patent litigation with particular emphasis on appeals to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. He also clerked for Judge Jimmie V. Reyna on the Federal Circuit. Brean earned his J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law and his Bachelor of Science degree in physics from Carnegie Mellon University.

The critical role Pittsburgh is playing as a technology center is exciting to Brean.

“As an intellectual property and technology person, and as a Pittsburgh native, I am really energized by Pittsburgh’s reemergence as an innovation hub in recent years,” he said. “I am excited to help train the next generation of attorneys to support the region’s growing population of scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs.”

Professor Kathy Cerminara

in anticipation of the opening of Duquesne University College of Medicine, is joining the Duquesne Kline School of Law faculty from Nova Southeastern Law School, where she served as a professor of law specializing in health law. Cerminara will help to build partnerships and synergies between the Law School and the new medical school. She bridges the medical and legal professions with her work on patients' rights in the end-of-life decision-making arena. Her scholarship most recently has focused on the intersection between end-of-life care, palliative care and health care coverage policy.



Cerminara has enjoyed national and international recognition for her scholarship and service. Most recently, she was awarded the 2023 Distinguished Health Law Service Award from the Association of American Law Schools' Law, Medicine & Health Care Section. In 2017, she received a Scholars Award for innovative interprofessional work with the Broward County Mental Health Court. In 2013, she won an American Health Lawyers Association 2012 Pro Bono Champion award for co-organizational work on Wounds of War: Meeting the Needs of Active-Duty Military & Veterans With Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a symposium held at NSU law school.

Cerminara received her J.D. magna cum laude from the University of Pittsburgh and her LL.M. and J.S.D. from Columbia University. She is an affiliate member of the Health Law and Tort Trial and Insurance sections of the Florida Bar, a retired member of the Pennsylvania Bar, and a member of organizations such as the American Bar Association and the American Society of Law, Medicine and Ethics.

She is ready to serve the Pittsburgh community, combining law and medicine.

"The Spiritan mission of Duquesne Kline Law emphasizes educational excellence and service to the community. There is a great deal of service to be done among the medically and legally underserved people living in the coal valleys, farming communities and steel towns outside of Pittsburgh. I look forward to helping pave the way toward the University's serving those people with a mix of medical and legal professional services," said Cerminara.

Congressman Conor Lamb

will teach a Faith and Democracy course. The former congressman served on the committees of Science, Space and Technology, Veterans' Affairs, Transportation and



Infrastructure. Prior to his election, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney in Pittsburgh. He received his J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania.

A Pittsburgh native, Lamb is anticipating the value he can add to the Law School community and the region.

"I am looking forward to teaching at Duquesne Kline because of its impact in western Pennsylvania, and because the University's Spiritan tradition is an important source of strength for our community," he said.

Lamb is eager to carry on the Duquesne Kline School of Law legacy.

"I see Duquesne Kline as a law school that aims to train students to become excellent lawyers without forgetting that lawyers are more than mere technicians. They have a special role in safeguarding our democracy and promoting its values, many of which emerge from or overlap with our religious values," he said. "My grandfather was a Duquesne Law School graduate who lived his life in this way, and he was a major source of inspiration for me." ■

Steven Baicker-McKee, Joseph A. Katarincic Chair of Legal Process and Civil Procedure and Associate Professor of Law

- Baicker-McKee and Janssen, *Federal Civil Rules Handbook* (Thomson Reuters) (2023 ed.).

April Barton, Dean and Professor of Law

- AALS Program Committee for 2024 Annual Meeting, “Defending Democracy.”
- Grefenstette Center for Ethics in Science, Technology, and Law, *How Can We Create an Ethical World with Generative AI? Closing Plenary, Generative AI and the Future of Policy* (November 2023).
- Baylor Law Review, *The Power of Speech: Creating Environments in which Free Speech and Civil Discourse Thrive* (October 2023).
- Eckert Seamans 2023 Update: Legal Primer, *Ethical Leadership in the Legal Profession, Pittsburgh* (August 2023).
- AALS Annual Conference, *How Teaching Leadership Can Make a Difference*, San Diego, (January 2023).
- The Association for American Law Schools Deans’ Steering Committee.
- The Association for American Law Schools Leadership Section Chair.
- Pittsburgh Legal Diversity & Inclusion Coalition Board Member.

Richard Heppner, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship and Assistant Professor of Law

- *Rooted: Metaphors and Judicial Philosophy in Artis v. District of Columbia*, 56 INDIANA L. REV. 329 (March 2023).
- *Let the Right Ones In: The Supreme Court’s Changing Approach to Justiciability*, 61 DUQ. L. REV. 79 (Winter 2023).
- “Law as Allegory in Charles Dickens’s *Bleak House*” Law & Literature Discussion Group, Southeastern Association Law Schools 2023 Annual Conference, Boca Raton, Fla. (July 27, 2023).
- “Figurative Language in the Supreme Court’s ‘History and Tradition’ Approach to Constitutional Rights” Modern Language Association Annual Convention, San Francisco, Calif. (virtual) (Jan. 6, 2023).
- Duquesne Kline, Dr. John and Liz Murray Award for Excellence in Faculty Scholarship in the field of Appellate Procedure and Judicial Interpretation (2023).
- Duquesne University, John G. Rangos Sr. Prize Award (Advancing Applicant) (2023).

Maryann Herman, Assistant Professor of Law

- *An Easement for Public Benefit: A Stick in the Bundle for Those Displaced by Eminent Domain*, 84 U. PITT. L. REV. 205 (2022).
- “Demonstrating How to Engage and Motivate Students” (moderator) Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference, Boca Raton, Fla. (July 2023).
- “New Voices in Justice and Inequality” (commenter) Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, Section on Minority Groups, San Diego, Calif. (January 2023).
- “Fold in the Cheese: Training Students to Incorporate Feedback into Future Work” Association of American Law Schools Annual Meeting, Section on Teaching Methods, San Diego, Calif. (January 2023).
- “Can Law Schools Do It All? Preparing Students for the Bar, Practice,

and Critical Thinking” Southeastern Association of Law Schools Annual Conference (discussion group), Sandestin, Fla. (July 2022).

- “Thinking Inside the Box: Teaching the ‘A’ in IRAC Using Charts” Association of Academic Support Educators National Conference, St. Mary’s University School of Law, San Antonio, Texas (May 2022).
- Elected Chair of the Ethics Hearing Board of the City of Pittsburgh (September 2023).

Rona Kaufman, Associate Professor of Law

- *Patriarchal Violence*, 71 Buff. L. Rev. 509 (2023).
- *Privacy Pre- and Post-Dobbs*, 61 Duq. L. Rev. 62 (2023).
- “Panes of the Glass Ceiling,” FIU Symposium on Professor Kerri Stone’s Book *Panes of the Glass Ceiling*, Florida International University School of Law, Miami, Fla. (Feb. 17, 2023).
- “19th Amendment Panel Discussion” (panelist) Allegheny County Bar Association, Pittsburgh, Pa. (Sept. 27, 2022).

Bruce Ledewitz, Adrian Van Kaam Endowed Chair in Scholarly Excellence and Professor of Law

- *An Alternative to the Independent State Legislature Doctrine*, 61 Duquesne Law Review 114 (2023).
- *No Balancing for Anti-Constitutional Government Conduct*, U. ILL. L. REV. ONLINE 80 (May 25, 2023).
- “Is there a future for American Law?” opening address 2022 Wisconsin Law Review Symposium on *Controlling the Supreme Court: Now and “far into the future”* (co-host).
- Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures, Made Local (March 3, 2022).
- Appeared on podcast *Parallax Views with J.G. Michael* (May 17, 2022).
- Appeared on podcast *Supreme Myths* (April 21, 2023).
- Interviewed on podcast *Interfaith Encounters* by Robert Hunt, Director of Global Theological Education (April 25, 2023).

Jan Levine, Professor of Law

- The Association of Legal Writing Directors Marjorie Rombauer Award (2023).
This award has been presented by the Association of Legal Writing Directors only four times since its inception in 2000. The award “salutes a person who has contributed significantly to the field of legal writing: by education about the importance of legal writing; by published scholarship that advances the teaching of legal writing and the understanding of its underlying principles; by contributions to national legal writing organizations; by contributions to individual legal writing programs; and by efforts to improve the status of legal writing faculty.”

Ashley London, Director of Bar Studies and Assistant Professor of Legal Skills

- “Cleaning Our Own House: The Role, Reality & Challenges of Rule 8.4(g) and its Attempts to Advance Professionalism” National Association of Appellate Court Attorneys 2023 Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, Pa.. (with Thomas Farrell) (July 12, 2023).
- “NextGen Bar: What Does it Mean for Incoming Students?” Law

London (continued)

School Admission Council 2023 Annual Meeting and Educational Conference, San Diego, Calif. (with Marsha Griggs) (June 2, 2023).

- “AASE Question & Answer with the NCBE” Plenary 2, 10th Annual Association of Academic Support Educators Conference, Santa Clara University School of Law, Santa Clara, Calif. (with Marsha Griggs) (2023).

Eugene Mazo, Associate Professor of Law, Associate Professor of Political Science

- *The Lawyer-Hero: Lessons in Leadership from Watergate to the Present Day*, 54 *TOLEDO L. REV.* 359 (with Paula Franzese and Lawrence Spinelli) (2023).
- “Election Law in Transition: A Discussion on Fairness, Integrity, and What’s Next” Third Circuit’s Annual Judicial Conference, Philadelphia, Pa. (with Judge L. Felipe Restrepo) (May 12, 2023).
- “The Next Generation of News: Regulating the World’s Largest Social Media Companies” American Constitution Society, Columbia Law School, New York, N.Y. (March 28, 2023).
- “The Forgotten History of Election Day” Summit on Global Constitutionalism, University of Texas School of Law, Austin, Texas (March 18, 2023).
- “The Contested Right to Vote” The Bonnie and Richard Reiss Graduate Institute for Constitutional History Seminar, New-York Historical Society, New York, N.Y. (with Richard Briffault of Columbia Law School) (May 3-June 10, 2022).

Marissa Meredith, Assistant Professor of Law

- *Is a Party Required to Reassert in a Posttrial Motion a Purely Legal Issue Rejected at Summary Judgment to Preserve the Issue for Appellate Review?*, 50 *ABA PREVIEW*, no. 7, 26 (April 2023).
- *Future Implications of SFFA v. Harvard: Potential Curtailing of Diverse Environments*, *ABA THE INNOVATOR* (Summer 2023).
- “Amplifying Diverse Voices and Ideas in the Legal Writing Classroom” (Co-Presenter) Georgetown University School of Law, Legal Writing Institute, 2022 Biennial Conference (July 2022).
- “Starting Out Solo” Law to the People (May 2023).
- “Read Before You Write: Teaching a Summer Course or Orientation Session on Reading Case Law” (Moderator) Southeastern Association Law Schools 2023 Annual Conference, Boca Raton, Fla. (July 2023).

Jane Moriarty, Carol Los Mansmann Chair in Faculty Scholarship and Professor of Law

- “Unmasking Public Health” Petrie-Flom Center at Harvard Law (February 2023).
- Giannelli, Imwinkelried, Roth, Moriarty & Beety, *Scientific Evidence* (6th ed. 2020) (Three Volumes, Lexis/Nexis); (Fall 2022 Supplement to 8 chapters in Vol. I).
- “Hysteria Redux: Gaslighting in the Age of Covid” Gender, Health & the Constitution, The Center for Constitutional Law at The University of Akron School of Law, Akron Oh. (Oct. 13, 2023).
- “Off-Label Neuroimaging Evidence” Law & Neuroscience Workshop, sponsored by the Harvard Medical School Center for Bioethics

and MGH Center for Law, Brain & Behavior and the Weaver Family Program in Law, Brain Sciences, and Behavior (March 2023).

Katherine Norton, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship, Director of Clinical and International Programs and Assistant Professor of Law.

- *Accessing Justice in Hybrid Courts: Addressing the Needs of Low-Income Litigants in Blended in-Person and Virtual Proceedings*, 30 *Geo. J. on Poverty L. & Pol’y* 499 (2023).
- *Family Law Appellate Pro Bono Program*, Pennsylvania Family Lawyer, Volume 45, Issue No. 2, Pennsylvania Bar Association (with Morgan Gray and Victoria Bedick) (2023).
- *Pennsylvania Law Schools Form Consortium in Support of Justice for Older Adults in Pennsylvania*, *The Pennsylvania Lawyer* (with Katherine Pearson) (Spring 2023).
- “Come Together: Clinic Collaboration Across Law Schools for Greater Impact” AALS 2023 Clinical Legal Education Conference, San Francisco, Calif. (with Richard Frankel) (April 2023).
- “Empowering Parties through Artificial Intelligence” ACT (Autonomy Through Cyberjustice Technologies) International Midterm Conference: Empowering Litigants while Disempowering Abuse, Cyberjustice Lab of the University of Montreal, Canada (October 2022).
- Co-Principle Investigator, *Utilizing Technology to Enhance Access to Custody Appeals* American Bar Endowment Opportunity Grant Program (April 1, 2022-March 30, 2023).
- Duquesne University, Creator Innovator Award (2023).
- Duquesne Kline, Co-Recipient of the Thomas R. Kline Meritorious Service Award (2023).

Wesley M. Oliver, Director of the Criminal Justice Program and Professor of Law.

- *Automatic Identification of Empirical Analysis of Legally Relevant Factors*, Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Law (with Morgan A. Gray, Jaromir Savelka, Kevin D. Ashley) (June 2023).
- *Toward Automatically Identifying Legally Relevant Factors*, Proceedings of the 35th International Conference on Legal Knowledge and Information Systems (with Morgan Gray Jaromir Savelka, Kevin D. Ashley) (December 2022).
- “Computationally Assessing Reasonable Suspicion in Drug Interdiction Stops” Conference on Data Science and Law (co-sponsored by Fordham Law School, University of Virginia School of Law, ETH Zurich), New York, N.Y. (July 31, 2023).
- “Teaching Computer Programming to Lawyers” AALS Technology Law Summer Webinar Series (with Morgan Gray) (June 14, 2023).
- “Nineteenth Century Treatise Writers and Legal Codifiers Created a Fossil Record of Framing Era Miranda Warnings” Legal Information Symposium – The Legal Treatise: Past, Present, and Future, Yale Law School (March 23, 2023).
- “Writing Code with Law Students” *Talking Legal Ed* podcast (hosted by Linda Jellum of Idaho Law and Billie Jo Kaufman of Mercer Law) (March 2023).

Grace Orsatti, Director of the Externship Program, Pro Bono Program and Assistant Professor of Clinical Legal Education.

- *Attorneys as Healthcare Advocates: The Argument for Attorney-Prepared Advance Healthcare Directives*, 50 J. LAW, MED. ETHICS 157 (2022).
- “Embracing Non-Traditional Experiential Projects” Southeastern Association Law Schools 2023 Annual Conference (workshop), Boca Raton, Fla. (July 2023).
- “Emerging Considerations for Clinics at the Intersection of Law Office, Course, and University Unit” Southeastern Association Law Schools 2023 Annual Conference (workshop), Boca Raton, Fla. (July 2023).
- “Critical Evidence Concerns Across the Curriculum” Southeastern Association Law Schools 2023 Annual Conference (workshop), Boca Raton, Fla. (July 2023).
- “What’s Happening in PA: Lightning Round of Agencies’ & Organizations’ Guardianship Initiatives” Pennsylvania Guardianship Justice Summit (Sept. 20-22, 2023).

- “Advance Planning, POAs & Health Care Representatives” Pennsylvania Guardianship Justice Summit (Sept. 20-22, 2023).
- *Yinz are Good* Podcast, Episode 83 Allegheny County Medical Society & Allegheny County Bar Association Life Planning Fair (March 2023).
- American College of Trusts and Estate Council Elder Justice Grant (2023-2024).
- E. Louis Feldman Charitable Trust Grant for Elder Justice Programming (2022-2023).
- Duquesne Kline, Co-Recipient of the Thomas R. Kline Meritorious Service Award (2023).

Ann M. Schiavone, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Law

- *A Tale of Two Disciplines: Legal Writing a World of Haves and Have-nots*. 6 STET L. REV. FORUM 1 (2023).
- *A Mere Shadow of a Conflict: Obscuring the Establishment Clause in Kennedy v. Bremerton* 61 DUQ. L. REV. 40 (2023).



STUDENT BRIEFS

Courting Costa Rica

Student Spends Portion of Summer Interning at Costa Rica Supreme Court

by Amanda Drumm

Josef Raszewski, 3L, spent the second part of this summer in the sunshine and warmth of Costa Rica. His time was not spent adoring the vast wildlife, relaxing in the coastal waters or vacationing in the tropical climate, but rather working as an intern at the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Costa Rica through a special Academic Cooperation Agreement Duquesne Kline School of Law has with the Court. This experience proved to be invaluable to him. Raszewski gained knowledge about a justice system different than the one in the United States and had the opportunity to work on important cases.

"I'm not allowed to go into detail, but I did work on a very important case for the Supreme Court of Costa Rica. I was surprised at how much involvement I had. The decision was very influential for the country," Raszewski said.

He went into the internship in Costa Rica with little familiarity of the country, but embraced the opportunity to learn about it and its legal system.

"I did not know much about Costa Rica but heard about this internship from Professor Robert Barker in International Law. As soon as I heard about it, I thought it would be a fantastic experience," Raszewski said.

He additionally welcomed the chance to study in real time the Spanish language and to hone a working knowledge of it.

"I didn't know any Spanish, and I went from being semi-conversational to conversational. I'm not fluent but had to do most of my talking in Spanish. My host mother Xinia Flores did not know any English, and she was amazing. She and her daughter Fabbi taught me a lot of Spanish. I had to jump into Spanish frequently, so when I heard it, I was translating from Spanish to English and back in my head," he said.

While in Costa Rica, Raszewski interned for Justice Salazar and Justice Fernando Castillo. They and their staff shared

confidence in him, and he is grateful for the unique legal experiences they provided to him.

"I was very lucky to have the opportunity to write a 20-page brief/memo of law of the United States and Costa Rica. It was a very interesting case. My boss, who was my connection to the Supreme Court, asked me for that paper. We discussed so much," said Raszewski.

Traveling abroad opens a new world, one which Raszewski felt prepared to enter. He had spent the beginning of his summer with an externship with the Federal Bankruptcy Courts of Western Pennsylvania. That, coupled with his Duquesne Kline School of Law background, afforded him the confidence to undertake this experience.

"In the first year you learn your foundation of law. Duquesne Kline did a fantastic job of that, especially in legal writing and research. My professor, Jan Levine, gave me the tools to really be able to do this research. Courses like international law and constitutional law

with Professor (Bruce) Ledewitz and a variety of contract and corporate courses really helped. I knew it; at a certain point you internally know law and know it is developing and moving trends. Duquesne Kline really teaches you to be a good lawyer. I'm glad I trained with Duquesne Kline before I went to the Costa Rican courts," said Raszewski.

Now in his last year of law school, Raszewski acknowledges this experience changed him, and he has adapted his post-graduation plans. He said, "Out of law school, I'd like to work in Costa Rica because it was such an amazing experience and I practically have family down there now. Or I'd like to work in a U.S. firm with a branch in Costa Rica or a company or corporation that would need a U.S. attorney to deal with corporate law." ■



Josef Raszewski

Anna Maria Sicenica Honored with Prestigious Louis Del Duca Memorial Award



by Amanda Drumm

Anna Maria Sicenica, L'23, was named the winner of the Louis Del Duca Memorial Award this spring. This prestigious award, given by the Pennsylvania Bar Association, is given annually to one graduating student at each of the nine ABA-accredited law schools in Pennsylvania in memory of Professor Del Duca. He was an internationally recognized leading scholar in commercial and comparative law with legendary contributions to the Business Law Section and the Pennsylvania Bar Association.

Sicenica's career as a student at Duquesne Kline School of Law has been a success, and this is one of many honors she has earned. Others include the CALI Award for the highest grade in Legal Research & Writing (fall and spring), Business Associations and Immigration Law. She has excelled in her Business and Contracts classes, which have cultivated her passion for this field.

Additionally, Sicenica has served as a teaching assistant in Legal Research & Writing for Professor April Milburn-Knizner during the last two years at the Duquesne Kline School of Law.

"Anna Maria could not be more deserving of this prestigious award. Not only has she excelled academically, Anna Maria never turns down an opportunity to serve, both here at Duquesne Kline and in her community. She embodies our Law School's mission of promoting the highest ideals of our profession, and uniquely combines her superior legal knowledge and skill with compassion and empathy," said Milburn-Knizner.

During this past year, Sicenica also served as president of the Appellate Moot Court Board and production editor for the *Duquesne Law Review*, and thrived in those roles.



“Working with 1Ls and 2Ls in these roles has been the highlight of my Law School experience, as I have loved getting to know the students and seeing their progression in their writing and oral advocacy.”

-Anna Maria Sicenica, L'23

“Working with 1Ls and 2Ls in these roles has been the highlight of my Law School experience, as I have loved getting to know the students and seeing their progression in their writing and oral advocacy,” she said.

Sicenica, who is from Croatia, also has a heart for spirit. She has been volunteering with the Special Olympics since 2015 after receiving notification the Croatia team was down a volunteer.

“After receiving that call, I flew out to LA to help during the World Games as one of Team Croatia’s delegation liaisons. Those weeks working and living with the athletes were the busiest but most rewarding of my life. I served as an interpreter for the athletes, coaches, trainers and Special Olympics coordinators, helped make sure the athletes had everything they needed and coordinated events for the athletes outside of their events,” she said.

In 2019, Sicenica officially joined the National Federation of Croatian Americans Cultural Foundation (NFCACF), which is Team Croatia’s No. 1 donor. Since then, she has served as the NFCACF’s secretary and co-chair for the Events Committee, working on Special Olympics fundraising events.

“I’m happy to say that the NFCACF has raised more money this year than we have ever before. This push has been to help support the team which is heading to the Special Olympics World Games occurring in Berlin

this June! If it wasn’t for bar preparation, I would fly to Germany and support them, but I nonetheless hope to visit the team when I go to Croatia later in the year,” she said.

Her service extends far beyond the Special Olympics. She was drawn to Duquesne Kline School of Law for its Spiritan mission, and her passion for it has been reflected in her work.

“The school’s Spiritan roots reflect an evident dedication to serving the city’s disadvantaged. This mission continues today, as there is still a core commitment to helping and serving others. In particular, pro bono work is encouraged at the Law School through its numerous clinics and volunteer opportunities. For example, through the school, I was able to take part in the Unemployment Compensation Clinic and directly work with clients in need of free legal services,” Sicenica said.

After graduation and taking the bar, Sicenica traveled with friends and visited her family in Croatia. This fall she returned to McGuireWoods in its Pittsburgh office, where she had her summer associate position last summer.

“I am fortunate to learn from and work for the debt finance group at McGuireWoods and continue my pro bono work there,” she said. ■

Duquesne Kline Student Wins CUBE Innovators Invitational

by Amanda Drumm

Duquesne Kline School of Law student Natasha Patel, 3L, won first place at the Center for Urban Business Entrepreneurship (CUBE) Innovators Invitational at Brooklyn Law School. Patel's first-place win was for a business proposal she developed, the Property Assessment Appeal Toolkit (PAAT), a property tax assessment analyzer and appeal assistant.

The business idea sprung from a class project this fall in the Coding for Lawyers course designed by Professors Wesley Oliver and Morgan Gray, L'19. This Duquesne Kline School of Law course is one of less than a handful of courses of this nature offered across the country at law schools. In that class, she worked as a team with Samuel Baycer, 3L, Benjamin Eaton, 3L, and Jesse Nelms, 3L, on initially developing a tool to make property assessment easier to define and fairer.

"I had been thinking about it for a year or so. The idea happened selfishly when I was buying a house. As a first-time homebuyer, you finance for mortgage and rainy-day funds, then you get hit with a property tax bill around closing. I got surprised. I knew



but didn't understand the whole process, or how you can appeal this. I investigated that to see if we were given fair tax assessment," said Patel.

What she learned was that Allegheny County was part of a major lawsuit regarding appeals in the Court of Common Pleas.

"The court found that Allegheny County had an inflated common level ratio. This ultimately meant a higher tax bill for those whose assessments were after 2012. When we took the Coding for Lawyers class, we started to toss around the idea of a practical tool for homeowners and lawyers through coding. We were learning how to manipulate data and found that Allegheny County provides an Excel spreadsheet of

property assessment data,” she said.

In their research, they learned there is not a product like PAAT on the market. The group took this burgeoning idea and tried to make a real-world tool from it, something to aid taxpayers, law firms and those who handle a high volume of property taxes annually.

“We all agreed this was something practical. This past fall, we built part one, the analyzer. It uses factors of home, square footage, size, etc.,” Patel said.

“This is so everyone pays their fair share. If your property tax is inflated, it is not like a personal income tax where you receive a refund if you overpay. The burden is on the homeowner to know whether an appeal is appropriate, and that process can be intimidating.”

Her team developed an initial prototype for the project. After the class, Professor Ella Kwisnek informed her of the CUBE competition. Patel, with the blessing of her group, decided to further develop the project into a business plan to compete.

According to Patel’s executive summary in her business plan, the tool “serves to provide an initial predictive assessment value and allows attorneys and homeowners to build evidence packets necessary for an appeal hearing.”

Her plan and subsequent win is a facet of what Oliver was hoping law students would glean from his class, a new way of looking at legal challenges.

“Natasha is one of the many students that exemplifies in the best possible way what we are hoping to do. She didn’t have any computer science background, but was interested enough to take the course and found it interesting. She grabbed this thing and ran with it,” he said.

Patel, who received a cash prize as part of her win, wants to put that money toward getting PAAT to the market.

“Ideally the goal is to develop it into phase 1 and test the prototype in Pittsburgh. We need to work out the legal and technical issues and test it out in a few firms,” she said. “The tax cycle ended on March 31; we will run those numbers to see how accurate we can get the model. The goal is to do the same testing in other cities to work out different codes. It will be an accessible tool for law firms that take on a high volume of property tax appeals. It will take minutes for a lawyer to run these numbers, versus potential hours. The goal is getting a marketable product.” ■

According to Patel’s executive summary in her business plan, the tool “serves to provide an initial predictive assessment value and allows attorneys and homeowners to build evidence packets necessary for an appeal hearing.”

JURIS Magazine

Fall 2023 Preview jurismagazine.com

■ **Holistic Defense: A New Model of Legal Advocacy** | *By Felicia Dusha, Editor-in-Chief*



The collateral consequences of criminal justice involvement can be dire, far-reaching and long-lasting. For indigent individuals, these aftereffects are especially severe. Criminal charges alone may cause loss of employment, public housing, custody of one’s children and immigration status. In the 1990s, holistic defense emerged as a model of legal advocacy that involves a broader approach to public defense. Under the holistic model, not only is a person’s immediate criminal case addressed, but also their underlying needs. The Bronx (New York) Defenders pioneered the holistic defense model, which involves social workers and public defenders working collaboratively to support indigent clients going through the legal system. In recent years, other public defense offices have begun implementing this model. According to proponents, the holistic defense model may radically transform the justice system.

■ **From Perfect to Polluted: Recent Developments in the EPA’s Crusade Against ‘Forever Chemicals’** | *By Edward Walsh, Blog Editor*



In March of this year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed new regulations limiting the amount per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS) in our drinking water. Under these new regulations drinking water can only have 4 parts per trillion of PFAS in it. For a sense of scope, that is equivalent to 4 drops of PFAS in 20 Olympic size swimming pools. The EPA has decided to heavily regulate the amount of PFAS, also known as “forever chemicals,” because they pose a significant health risk. Recent EPA-led research has found that PFAS, chemicals largely used in manufacturing, can cause cancer, developmental delays in children and decreased fertility. This major change has left many water treatment facilities unprepared. Over a fifth of the country’s water treatment facilities fail under these new regulations. A large investment into updating our water treatment infrastructure is needed for it to be compliant with the EPA’s ambitious new goal.

■ **Competing Standards for Character Evidence Testimony** | *By John Brophy, Feature Editor*



Should Pennsylvania modify its rules on character evidence and adopt the federal standard? Currently, Pennsylvania restricts character evidence testimony to reputation only, while the federal standard permits character evidence in the form of opinion. Character evidence is critically important in criminal cases, as character evidence in itself can create a reasonable doubt leading to acquittal. Without the ability for character witnesses to testify in the form of opinion, criminal defendants in Pennsylvania risk losing invaluable testimony from a witness if they are not “within the community.” To the contrary, the federal standard imposes no such spatial relationship to the admissibility of a character witness. Opinion testimony provides greater assurances to the criminal defendant, so long as they can procure the character witness for trial.



@jurisduqlaw



Juris Magazine

■ **Should Forms of Creative Expression Be Admissible in a Criminal Trial?** | *By Jack Bradley, Blog Editor*



Photo courtesy of Pexels.com

The admissibility of forms of creative expression in criminal trials is a challenging issue that must strike a delicate balance between justice and artistic freedom. In the past few years, several popular rap artists such as Young Thug, Tekashi 6ix9ine and YNW Melly have had criminal proceedings in which their musical lyrics were used as evidence. Creative expression, especially rap lyrics, has been used as evidence in criminal trials for over 30 years. However, California legislators have recently introduced Cal. Evid. Code § 352.2 E.C., which requires a judge to consider the probative value against the prejudicial or inflammatory impact of “creative expression” before admitting it as evidence. It is time that other states follow suit to ensure that artists are more fairly protected during a criminal proceeding.

■ **Oregon and California Petitioning for Bar Examination Alternatives** | *By Amelia Trello, Feature Editor*



Photo courtesy of unsplash.com

Law school students typically spend three years in law school and three additional months solely studying for the bar. The bar examination itself costs \$650. The exam is an additional \$100 to \$159 if applicants plan on using a computer. Further, many applicants use bar preparation courses such as Themis and Kaplan to prepare for the exam. Those bar prep courses cost thousands of dollars. Overall, the journey to becoming a licensed attorney takes a great deal of time and money. California and Oregon have recognized that this time and money sink can pose an issue and have taken measures to create an alternative licensing path for aspiring attorneys. The Oregon Supreme Court is now up to vote on a proposal allowing law school graduates to bypass the bar and become licensed attorneys. On Sept. 21, 2023, the California Bar’s Board of Trustees voted to take public comments on the alternative licensing program.

■ **Yes In My Backyard Movement Attempts to Change Zoning In Pittsburgh** | *By Mia Hoetzlein-Sirman, Staff Writer*



Photo courtesy of unsplash.com

The Yes In My Backyard Movement (YIMB) has garnered nationwide support due to the recent increase in housing costs. The local YIMB group in Pittsburgh is working with the developer Craft General to push for the Irish Centre to be turned into 162 condominiums. They are also proponents of the Oakland Crossing project which promises to deliver hundreds of new apartments in the Oakland neighborhood. Opponents of the redevelopment have expressed their concerns regarding the project, especially the rezoning that would be required. Currently, the Irish Centre is zoned as “P” which is a park zone thus not allowing for multifamily units. The developers and the YIMB movement are attempting to get approval for a “use variance” from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Further, the YIMB movement wishes to allow more flexibility in housing types built regardless of zoning ordinances.



Duquesne University
Thomas R. Kline School of Law
600 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15282

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 390
Pittsburgh, PA



Participate in the Professional Development of Duquesne Kline Students

The Career Services Office (CSO) invites alumni to participate in our networking events! You may choose to host a luncheon for a Lawyers on Location event or a table in our Student Lounge to share information about your firm or legal organization for our Table Talk Tuesday series. The CSO sincerely appreciates your time and commitment to the professional development of Duquesne Kline students. If you are interested in participating or would like to learn more about how to get involved in our various events, please email lawcareers@duq.edu.
