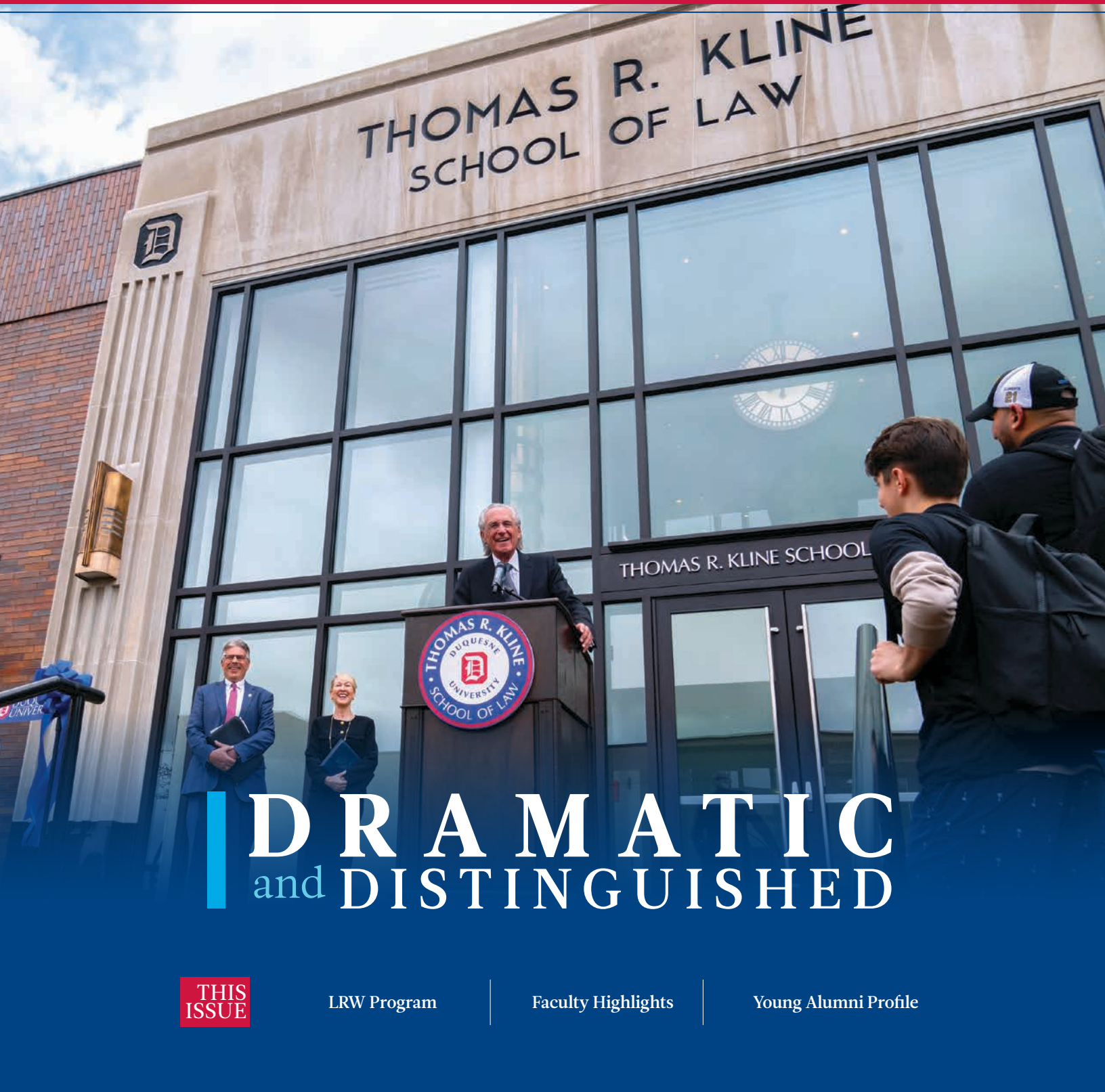


# SALUS POPULI

— THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF THE THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY —  
— SPRING 2024 —



## DRAMATIC and DISTINGUISHED

THIS  
ISSUE

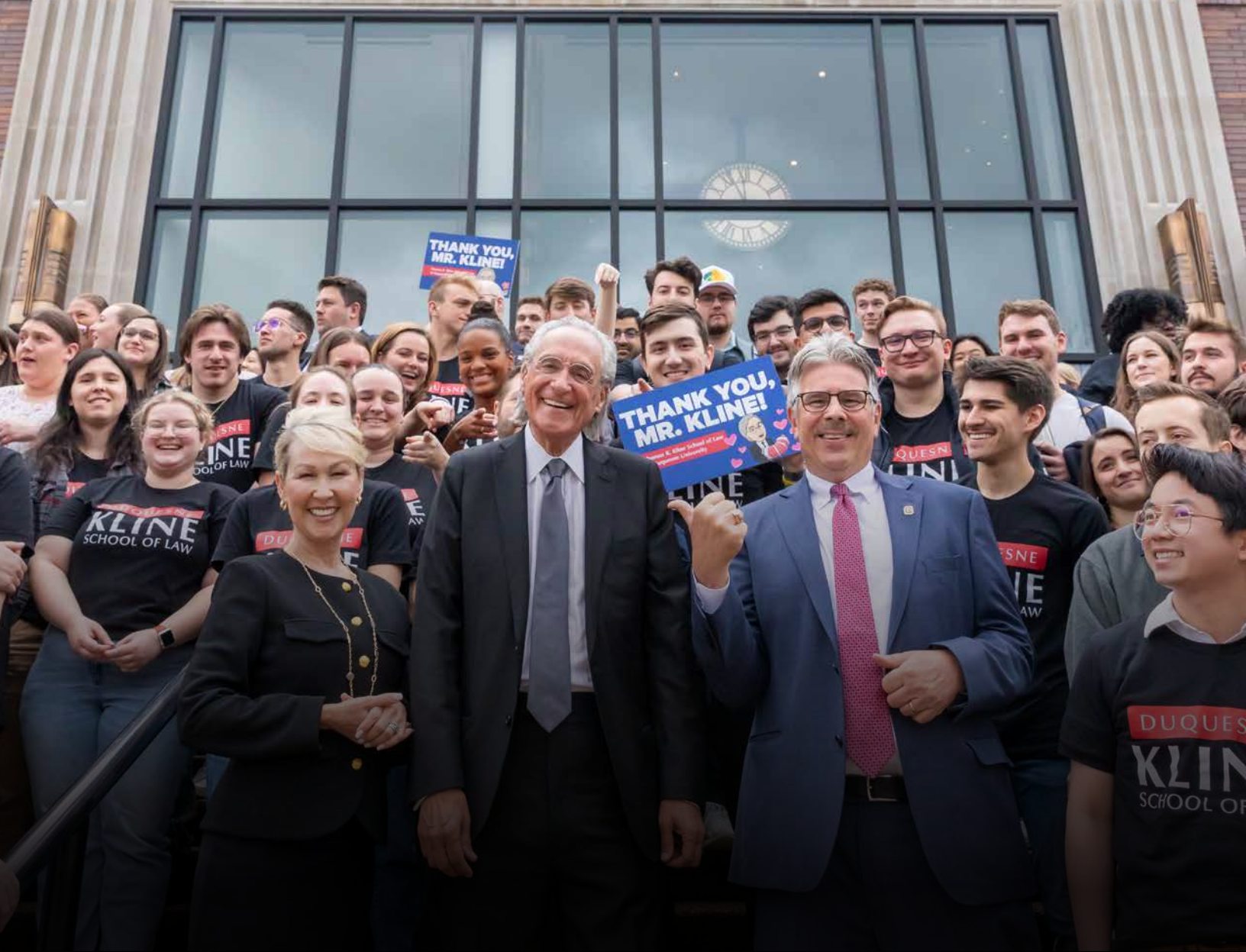
LRW Program

Faculty Highlights

Young Alumni Profile



# THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW



# Dear Friends,

We have reached new heights this year at our Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. We are fortunate for our alumni and friends who care about Duquesne Kline School of Law and selflessly devote their time and resources toward our continued success. We continue to build upon our strong foundation and together we are shaping a future to empower and prepare our students to accomplish their goals.

Hanley Hall has proudly stood as our home for more than 40 years. Thanks to the continued generosity of Thomas R. Kline, L'78, our building received a breathtaking new facade, grand entryway and an impressive third-floor archival conference room. These changes are reflective of the prestige of a Duquesne Kline School of Law degree and mark our rise to a new level of excellence. A building rededication ceremony to showcase these renovations was held on April 10, where faculty, alumni and friends joined us for the building's transformational unveiling (p.10).

Our Legal Research and Writing (LRW) Program has been one of the hallmarks of our Law School for decades. It has been part of our solid education, enabling us to graduate practice-ready lawyers and is embracing generative artificial intelligence (GEN AI) to continue to ensure our students are ready for the paths on which their careers take them. Our legal research and writing principles remain at our core as we add another skillset for our students (p.16).

The upward trajectory of our Law School continues, and for the second consecutive year, Duquesne Kline School of Law has been ranked a *U.S. News & World Report* Top 100 Law School (p. 29). Our employment and bar outcomes, dedicated faculty and staff and your support have been instrumental to this success. Additionally, enrollment has steadily risen over the past five years along with our incoming class profile. Our application volume has increased by 20% over last year, while nationally application volume has not changed during that time.

Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni showed their support once again as the University held its annual Day of Giving in February. The extraordinary donations that day raised \$129,181.00 for our Law School Vision Fund, allowing us to serve our students' needs, recruit excellent faculty, uplift our community and get the word out about our exceptional Law School. Thank you to everyone who gave so generously and to our Duquesne Kline Advisory Board and Emeritus Board members who came together like never before to enable our unmatched success!

Your passion for your Law School has been likewise demonstrated in the countless ways you support our students throughout the year. From hosting students at events, to working with our Career Services Office to conduct interviews, to serving as competition judges, you help to shape their pathways to success. Thank you for your unwavering support. I look forward to a continued bright future. ■

*Thank you and may God bless,*



**April Mara Barton**  
*Dean and Professor of Law*



**We are fortunate for our alumni and friends who care about Duquesne Kline School of Law and selflessly devote their time and resources toward our continued success.**

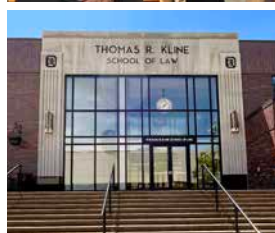




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OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

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# Class of 2023

We are extremely proud to report that 96.4% of the Class of 2023 were employed or pursuing a graduate degree as of March 15, 2024, as reported to the American Bar Association (ABA) in April 2024. This includes 89.1% having full-time, long-term jobs the ABA classifies as either Bar Passage Required or JD Advantage (such as compliance, tax associate, or policy work). By comparison, the national average for full-time, long-term Bar Passage Required and JD Advantage jobs is 85.6%. Employment information about our most recent graduating class is collected annually by the Career Services Office (CSO). This information is used by the ABA and National Association of Law Placement (NALP) to publish information about the nationwide employment picture and inform prospective law students, current law students, legal employers and the public.

As is the case every year, the majority of employed graduates work in private law firms, and the majority of those graduates practice in firms with 2-25 attorneys. Members of the Class of 2023 secured positions in nine states: California, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia. ■

**96.4%**  
of the Class of 2023  
were employed or pursuing a graduate degree  
as of March 15, 2024, as reported to the  
American Bar Association (ABA) in April 2024.

THE TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT REPRESENTED  
BY THE CLASSES OF 2023 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

LAW FIRMS		<b>60%</b>
GOVERNMENT		<b>11%</b>
BUSINESS/INDUSTRY		<b>10%</b>
JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS		<b>10%</b>
PUBLIC INTEREST		<b>6%</b>
EDUCATION		<b>2%</b>

# Students Participate in Small Firm Interview Week

In conjunction with the Duquesne Kline Law Alumni Association (DKLAA), the Career Services Office hosted Small Firm Interview Week March 11-15. Inspired by our employment statistics showing that approximately 35% of the graduating class works in small law firms that have less than 15 lawyers, the CSO encouraged these firms to interview students for law clerk positions and entry-level attorney positions (for 2024 graduates) through this recruitment initiative. Sixteen firms participated in the 2024 event, and more than 100 students applied for positions.

In anticipation of Small Firm Interview Week, the Career Committee of the DKLAA planned “Tips for Acing Interviews with Small Law Firms.” The alumni panelists shared insights about interviewing with small firms and ways in which the students could determine if working at a small firm is a good fit for them. Students then had the chance to network with the panelists and some of the employers that participated in Small Firm Interview Week. The students left the event with a boost of confidence, feeling better prepared for the interviews that were ahead of them. ■



Pictured left to right: Erika Dowd, L'21; Jim Creenan, L'96; Colleen Bratkovich, L'08; and Elizabeth Tuttle, L'16.

# New Faculty Drawn to Duquesne Kline School of Law's Character and Momentum

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University is pleased to announce three new faculty hires beginning their appointments for the 2024-2025 academic year. They are from diversified legal areas, including international, intellectual property, business, land use and government law, and are eager to join a respected faculty community, bringing their own expertise to the education of our exceptional student body.

## JACQUELINE LIPTON

Jacqueline Lipton joins Duquesne Kline as an associate professor of law and the incoming Carol Los Mansmann Chair in Faculty Scholarship. She is a leading international expert in information law, intellectual property law and commercial law. She has held faculty positions at major research universities in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia. Lipton has co-authored casebooks on intellectual property law, cyberlaw and legal writing, and has authored many law review articles in her areas of research in leading journals, including the *Northwestern University Law Review*, the *Iowa Law Review*, *UC Hastings Law Review*, *Harvard Journal of Law and Technology*, and the *Berkeley Technology Law Review*. She is also the author of *Our Data Ourselves: A Personal Guide to Digital Privacy*.

Prior to joining the law faculty at Duquesne Kline, Lipton held tenured faculty positions at Case Western Reserve University, the University of Houston Law Center, the University of Akron School of Law, the University of Nottingham School of Law (UK) and Monash University. She has also been a visiting professor at the University of Florida Levin College of Law and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law,

where she joined the legal writing faculty in 2020. At the University of Houston, Lipton held the Baker Botts Chair, and at the University of Akron, she held the David L. Brennan Chair. She also served as a co-director of the Law, Technology & the Arts Center at Case Western, and of the Institute for Intellectual Property and Information Law at the University of Houston Law Center.

Before entering academia, Lipton worked in the banking and finance industry in Australia. She currently works as a consultant within the publishing industry, counseling creative artists on their legal rights and obligations. She is a frequent presenter to writers' and artists' organizations on these issues.

Lipton is drawn to the energy at Duquesne Kline and its upward trajectory, including its increased *U.S. News & World Report* rankings.

"It's also an exciting time to join a school like Duquesne Kline which is clearly on the rise with the recent Kline endowment to support innovative programming and high-level teaching and scholarship. Duquesne Kline also clearly prioritizes values that I prize very highly, like diversity, equity and inclusion and social justice," she said.

## BRIAN MILLER

Brian Miller joins Duquesne Kline as an assistant professor of law from the University of Maryland School of Law, where he has served as a visiting assistant professor since 2022. His teaching and scholarship focus primarily on property and land use law, as well as on state and local government and law and religion. Miller is particularly interested in how community institutions and cultural practices affect law and policy surrounding housing and land use. His



JACQUELINE LIPTON



BRIAN MILLER



DAVID NOWS

scholarship has been or soon will be published in the *Southern California Law Review*, *Missouri Law Review*, *Wisconsin Law Review Forward*, *Mercer Law Review* and the *Texas A&M Journal of Property Law*.

Before entering academia, Miller worked as a law clerk on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He also previously served as an associate attorney general at the North Carolina Department of Justice and as a law clerk on the Supreme Court of North Carolina. He received his J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law and his B.A. in political science from North Carolina State University, where he graduated as valedictorian.

The character of the students at Duquesne Kline and the motto of the law school—*salus populi suprema lex*, the welfare of the people is the highest law—were important factors that appealed to Miller when deciding to join Duquesne Kline.

“Law students at Duquesne Kline have a reputation for both sharp thinking and an orientation towards service. Law school should be a place of learning and growth, and it works best if that growth encourages not only greater knowledge, but greater compassion for others, too. I am excited to teach at a school where learning isn’t only about fulfilling personal goals, but about equipping oneself to help others,” Miller said.

## DAVID NOWS

David Nows will serve as an assistant professor of law and as the director of the JD/MBA program and the Business Essentials Micro-Credential program. He has served as an assistant professor of entrepreneurship at Central Michigan University’s College of Business Administration as a full-time faculty member since 2019.

Nows’ main research interest is the financing transactions that fuel entrepreneurial ventures at their earliest stages, recently focusing on the topic of equity crowdfunding. He has authored articles published (or forthcoming) in the *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, the *Nebraska Law Review*, the *Drexel Law Review* and the *Indiana Law Journal Supplement*.

Nows teaches graduate level coursework in the areas of business organizations and securities regulation, as well as an undergraduate course on law and entrepreneurship. In addition to his teaching duties, Nows was active in Central Michigan University’s New Venture Competition, helping to mentor student venture teams.

Nows led CMU’s Entrepreneurship Department for two years as chairperson and during that time, the department doubled its number of full-time faculty and launched a new graduate certificate in venture financing.

Prior to joining CMU, Nows was an attorney in Michigan, advising businesses of all sizes on mergers and acquisitions, and start-up and emerging entities on the breadth of legal questions they face. He is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School and the University of Michigan.

Nows is looking forward to joining Duquesne Kline’s distinguished faculty. “I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to join an excellent group of faculty at Duquesne Kline. It will be wonderful to lead the School of Law’s efforts to build out a business law curriculum that will serve Duquesne Kline students well for years to come.”

Additionally, he is eager to educate on the intersection of ethics, law and business. “I appreciate Duquesne Kline’s emphasis on moral values. Often, complex issues of morality emerge for lawyers counseling clients, and I believe the University’s emphasis on moral values makes it well situated to be a leader in educating ethical future attorneys. I am especially excited to include discussions of using business and the law for societal good in my coursework at Duquesne Kline,” Nows said. ■



## London Receives AALS Section Impact Award

Professor Ashley London received the Impact Award for the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Academic Support Section at the annual AALS meeting. London, director of Duquesne Kline’s Bar Studies program, prepares and supports students for the bar exam and has been a leading voice regarding the inequities of the bar examination and the lawyer licensing process. She is also president of the Association of Academic Support Educators, a nationwide nonprofit organization dedicated to the support and advancement of academic success and bar preparation professionals.

London engages judiciary and legal scholars in conversations about the confluence of legal ethics, the bar exam and bar licensure. Her advocacy and scholarship have raised awareness on the topic and have been a reminder that changes need to be made to promote equity and diversity in the legal profession.

“Receiving this award is a highlight of my career, and I am grateful for the recognition of my talented colleagues,” London said. “I promise to give back with the same generosity of spirit as I have been shown throughout my decade in the academy.” ■



## Barton Co-presents on Leadership in Democracy During AALS Meeting

Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Dean April Barton co-presented “Defending Democracy through Effective Leadership Education” at the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) annual meeting. She presented alongside panel moderator Dean Lee Fisher of Cleveland State University Law School and chair-elect of the AALS Leadership Section; U.S. Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland; Deborah Enix-Ross, immediate past president of the American Bar Association; Mark Alexander, AALS president; and Kellye Testy, CEO and president of the Law School Admission Council.

“We had a remarkable lineup of panelists, all of whom are an inspiration to me through their selfless service, their dedication to our profession, their brilliance and the example they set by leading with compassion, courage and integrity,” Barton said.

The panel explored the role of the lawyer-leader in defending and protecting democracy and the role of law schools in educating students about the traits, values and skills of effective leaders.

“Our democracy needs leaders who display character, create collaborative cultures, model respectful debate and foster inclusive environments that uplift and inspire. Most

importantly, leaders must be motivated by a higher good—democracy, civility, justice and the rule of law,” said Barton, who chaired the AALS section on leadership.

Barton is additionally responsible for the inception of Duquesne Kline’s Leadership Fellows Program for law students and teaches a component for an upper-level course on law in leadership. She thinks leadership—both ethical and effective—is imperative to the legal profession.

“Leadership development in law school is an outgrowth of professional responsibility, a critical part of professional identity formation and a lawyer’s greater duty to advance justice in our society,” she said. ■

Deborah Enix-Ross, immediate past ABA president; U.S. Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland; Mark Alexander, AALS president; Dean April Barton; panel moderator Dean Lee Fisher, Cleveland State University Law School and chair-elect of the AALS Leadership Section; and Kellye Testy, CEO and president of LSAC.



## Faculty Engage in Conversations Around Democracy at National AALS Meeting

Faculty from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University attended the 2024 Association of America Law Schools (AALS) annual meeting in Washington, D.C., Jan. 3-6.



From left professors Ashley London, Marissa Meredith, Maryann Herman, and April Milburn-Knizer at the AALS Meeting.

The theme “Defending Democracy” was woven throughout workshops and sessions, with 11 Duquesne Kline

faculty members contributing through presentations and ideas alongside colleagues from throughout the nation.

Duquesne Kline law professors led important conversations around democracy. Professor Ryan Williams presented as part of a panel on “Democracy Demands Diversity,” exploring democracy, diversity and liberty and how they intersect with election law.

Professor Gene Mazo was part of two sessions. He organized the constitutional law session “Democracy at the Podium: Arguing the Rules of Politics Before Today’s Supreme Court” about the Supreme Court being at the center of how our nation functions—from gerrymandering to voting rights to campaign finance to regulating

presidential elections. Mazo also served as a commentator alongside Professor Bruce Ledewitz for “New Voices on Methods of Defending Democracy Research and Scholarship.”

Professor Tara Willke, associate dean for strategic academic programs and director of the Legal Research and Writing Program, was a commentator for “Legal Writing, Reasoning and Research Work-in-Progress,” highlighting works of those in the field as well as introducing projects and workshopping papers.

Professor Dana Neacsu presented about law libraries and legal education and Professor Rona Kauffman presented as part of the Women in Legal Education section. ■



# D R A





# MATRIC and DISTINGUISHED

By Amanda S. Drumm

The new front entryway of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University is both stately and welcoming. The distinct entrance to the red brick building is set off with a new limestone exterior that wraps around a glass façade. Full-length windows and doors open to a bright foyer where a suspended, lighted clock is visible from the outside. The external limestone bears two Duquesne “D’s,” in classic gothic font, on either side. Granite and golden lights flank the doors, completing an impressive front entrance to the recently renovated Duquesne Kline School of Law.

A rededication ceremony on April 10 celebrated this reimagined exterior as well as the new vestibule and upstairs archival collection room. The momentous event marked a new era for Duquesne Kline School of Law. Like the grand entryway itself, the ceremony reflected the Law School’s rising reputation and its upward momentum.

In September 2022, Thomas R. Kline, L’78, committed \$50 million—the largest philanthropic commitment in the history of Duquesne University—to its School of Law. That transformational gift has supported scholarships for students, awards for faculty excellence and transformational new academic programs.

Only a few months later, Kline generously made another significant gift to Duquesne to renovate the front entrance of the Law School building. Its frontage now symbolizes the distinctive education and increased prestige Duquesne Kline School of Law makes possible for students and graduates.

Kline’s first gift had already boosted the reputation of the Law School, making national news for a 112-year-old institution that consistently achieved impressive and commanding bar and employment outcomes.

“Everywhere I go across the country, people want to talk about Tom Kline’s transformational gift. Not just the fact that it is the largest gift in the history of the University, but there is another aspect, too,” said Duquesne President Ken Gormley. “The fact that Tom Kline would choose to take the fruits of his incredible success as a trial lawyer and now give those to his law school—because it is where he got his start as a law student, enabling him to have such great success as a trial lawyer—is incredibly moving and inspirational. It inspires a new generation of Duquesne Kline Law students and graduates. To devote a portion of one’s life’s fortune to an institution is the biggest endorsement a person can give.”



The most recent gift from Kline reinvigorated the outward appearance of Hanley Hall, the building housing the school, so that its exterior now matches the unparalleled quality of the legal education it offers.

“This breathtaking new façade and archival collection room showcases our upward trajectory,” said Duquesne Kline Dean April Barton. “The dedication of our faculty and staff have consistently helped Duquesne Kline Law School succeed. We have never lost sight on quality education and our Spiritan mission. Our reputation of providing a rigorous, practice-ready education is amplified through Tom Kline’s generosity, commitment and unwavering support of our school.”

### Courting a change

Hanley Hall was dedicated more than 40 years ago, in 1982. Gormley, Barton, and Kline worked together in mapping out and securing every detail for this striking new renovation. This included sharing ideas and Gormley studying other campus buildings for inspiration.

“All of a sudden, a light went off in my head standing near Canevin Hall. It has a beautiful limestone façade and decorative work that is integrated into the bricks; that’s where the idea came from, to use

the beauty of limestone, which changes a building’s whole look,” Gormley said. “I would stare at pictures of courthouses around the United States and wanted a design that gave the feel of pillars of a courthouse. Tom took it to another level by engaging a first-rate architect, Jay Tackett, to help shape the project with the University architects from S/L/A/M Collaborative. Tom wanted something grand and majestic. He added his own touches to shape the final design, which is more striking and beautiful than I had ever imagined.”

Barton agrees. “The new entrance looks and feels prestigious. It is elegant, dignified and distinctive while complementing other traditional buildings on our campus. It sets apart our school to visitors and leaves a lasting impression,” she said.

Through regular visits to the construction site, Gormley and Barton documented the progress being made on the outside and inside renovation, sending regular updates and photos to Kline. The interior doors were once exterior doors, and creating a bump gave extra usable space.

In that new vestibule, visitors are greeted with the law school’s motto, *salus populi suprema lex*—the welfare

of the people is the highest law. Gormley and Barton wanted to honor Kline and his philanthropy with a bronze statue of him that now stands below where the motto is displayed. Located near the front windows stands a load-bearing pole that could not be removed. To make it fit with the new entryway, the pole was stripped down and covered with an elegant bronze façade with lighting. At Kline’s suggestions, wrap-around seating was added to give it a welcoming feel. Looking above, large windows allow light into a distinctive upper-level archival collection room.

“We had proposed including a location on the third floor for an archival display highlighting Tom’s career,” Gormley explained. “Tom had the vision to integrate it into the broader project, by allowing visitors to the archival room the opportunity to look down on the entryway below, creating a dramatic new feature. It has literally changed the look of the Law School, adding a sense of grandeur and elegance from the moment a person walks up the steps and enters the building.”

The archival collection room includes inspirational photos and messages framed around thematic pillars of accountability, advocacy, reform and



“THE ENCLOSED GLASS LETS YOU LOOK OUT OVER CAMPUS. TOM WAS THE ONE WHO HAD THAT VISION—WHEN YOU TOSS AN IDEA TO HIM IT COMES BACK 10 TIMES BETTER.”

-President Gormley



remedy, concepts drawn from Kline’s distinguished career in law. Memorabilia from Kline is housed in glass cases surrounding the perimeter of the room and is meant to inspire the next generation of lawyers to positively impact society through the practice of law. The glass conference table in the middle of the room details the history of the Law School from inception until present and holds treasured Law School artifacts.

“The enclosed glass lets you look out over campus. Tom was the one who had that vision—when you toss an idea to him it comes back 10 times better,” Gormley said.

### Rededication and reactions

While the entrance originally opened for use in February, on April 10 Kline, dignitaries, alumni and students joined Kline—who flew in from Philadelphia—for the formal

rededication. The new entrance and other enhancements drew enthusiastic, positive reactions. The light that shone off the windows and doors was a vivid reminder of the brilliant future of Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“The changes to the school are fantastic. The outside façade looks great, and it makes the entrance so much brighter,” said Mia Hoetzlein-Sirman, 2L.

Jeffrey Chmay, 2L, agreed. “The new entrance also brings a lot of well-deserved attention to the Law School. The new entrance feels like there is care and thought put into the Law School, which is representative of the thought and care professors and staff at the Law School put in every day to make students successful in their future careers,” he said.

Alumni also feel the renovations are befitting of an esteemed law school. “It looks fantastic. It is amazing how what I will call a slight architectural transformation can change the perception of a building. It now looks formal and prestigious and important, like a building that teaches law should be. It looks like when you walk into a courtroom or courthouse,” said Jon Perry, L’91, partner at Rosen & Perry and chair-elect of the Duquesne Kline Advisory Board.

“It has been magical to see this unfold. I started at the Law School in 1994 and walked through the front entrance 10,000 times,” said Gormley. “To see this magnificent new front that is so beautiful and fits into the campus so well, I almost have to catch my breath when I look at it. It is most striking for me at night with the lighted clock. The clock is truly one of a kind, and now one of the centerpieces of the entire University. It is like a gem that is glittering in the center of the campus.”



Barton said students have taken to high-fiving the bronze statue of Kline as they enter the building. “Tom helped created this beautiful, reimagined law school for us. He has visited and guest lectured to our students. They have gotten to know and admire him and are aspiring to have some of his fantastic success rub off on them,” she said.

The students have always been at the center of Kline’s generosity, and it has been encouraging to watch them make the most of and enjoy his gifts to the Law School, including the

renovation. And they will see even more—a second renovation phase next summer will create a new student lounge area that will flow seamlessly into the beautiful new entryway.

Gormley said, “When I teach my own classes on ‘Presidents and the Constitution’ on Wednesday afternoons, I enjoy seeing the students walking around, knowing they benefit from these improvements. They admire the changes taking place in the Law School and I know that 40 years from now they will see they were part of this historic change.” ■

## Rededication Blessing

The Rev. Raymond French, C.S.Sp., Senior Vice President of Mission & Identity, offered the following blessing during the April 10 building rededication.

We gather today in this beautiful, refurbished space to celebrate and rededicate the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University of The Holy Spirit.

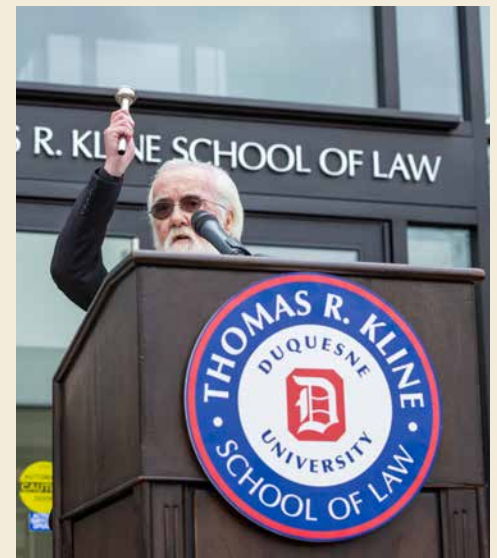
This is not just a building but a thriving community of faculty, staff, students, and alumni who, since 1911, have been advocates of the “little ones,” the underserved, and those who experience themselves on the margins of society. This is characterized by the school’s motto, *salus populi suprema lex*, the Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.

There is no greater role model than Mr. Thomas R. Kline, whom we honor today. You have spent your life seeking justice for your clients, often against powerful multinational corporations and institutions, challenging the status quo and engendering change. There are no

words that can fully express how deeply grateful we are to you for your generosity and vision. Your gift is transformational for our law students now and into the future.

May all who pass through this space realize and understand this is holy ground for many who have walked here before. May our law students be inspired and encouraged by the past, resolute in their journey towards excellence in the present and in the moments of difficulty and adversity, and have faith in God, who asks three things of us: to act with justice, to love with tenderness and to walk humbly with our God.

And so, may Almighty God send his blessings upon us: in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. ■



*There are no words that can fully express how deeply grateful we are to you for your generosity and vision. Your gift is transformational for our law students now and into the future.*



# Artificial Intelligence (AI) & The Future of Democracy: Ethics, Law, and Policy

CLE/CJE held for Lawyers and Judges

The Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education held an independently accredited program for lawyers and judges at the Power Center on April 10, following the day's building rededication. The program, "Artificial Intelligence (AI) & The Future of Democracy: Ethics, Law, and Policy," featured four expert speakers: Duquesne Kline Dean April Barton, Duquesne Kline Professor Ryan Williams, Matt Ferraro, Counsel to the Secretary of the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and Professor Jacqueline Lipton, currently of the University of Pittsburgh School of Law who will be joining the faculty at Duquesne Kline in the fall of 2024.

Barton introduced the program and presented a foundational lecture on the current state of AI and efforts to regulate it. She drew in the audience with her description of AI's truly astonishing capacities as well as its potential for harm. Williams explored the current state of American democracy, after which Ferraro explained how the DHS, as a representative governmental entity, is simultaneously monitoring AI threats to national security while studying how best to deploy it in furtherance of the entity's mission. Finally, Lipton offered insight into how AI can impact human creativity and create difficult issues with copyright law. Pennsylvania Supreme



Court Chief Justice Debra Todd, Justice Christine Donohue, L'80, and Justice Sallie Mundy were in attendance. Donohue kickstarted the Q&A portion by describing AI-related concerns among the judiciary.

The event concluded with an elegant cocktail reception during which Todd gave remarks and Duquesne University President Ken Gormley raised a special toast to Thomas R. Kline, L'78, and the newly rededicated Duquesne Kline School of Law. ■



# The Write Skills

## Practice-ready skills remain the focus of LRW program

By Amanda S. Drumm

For more than two decades technology has increasingly evolved. Lawyers have maintained pace, trading faxes for emails and Blackberries for smartphones. With the advent of generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) and the lightning speed at which it is taking hold, Duquesne Kline's Legal Research and Writing (LRW) program has committed to preparing practice-ready lawyers who possess the inherent research and writing skills paramount to a Duquesne Kline legal education, while designing a curriculum for the practical, ethical application of this new tool.

Gen AI has burst into industries this past year, and many of them stood still while they absorbed its current competencies and its potential future uses. The burgeoning capabilities of this new tool and the speed with which they have taken hold likewise have created questions in law schools nationwide.

"There is not a set of guidelines. We are engaged in dialogue with other law schools across the country to determine how to best integrate this new tool. We want to make sure our students still retain the foundational lawyering skills but are able to harness the efficiencies generative AI can create," said Tara Willke, director of the LRW program, associate dean for strategic academic programs and associate professor of law.

Recognizing that Gen AI can be a powerful tool and helpful if used correctly, it has become a top priority in Duquesne Kline's LRW program to make sure students will be equipped to use it, if necessary, when they practice law. This includes, but is not limited to, Lexis+ AI, ChatGPT and Westlaw's generative AI tool.

Duquesne Kline has employed those capabilities and is actively training faculty on Gen AI, its availability and its uses.

"We had a training session this past fall for faculty on generative AI and are doing additional training and discussion this semester. We are getting everyone up to speed on what it is, how students may use it, and how faculty may be able to use it in their courses," said Willke, who also serves on Duquesne University's generative AI task force.

Part of the education includes staying informed on how the legal community is choosing to implement Gen AI to make sure students have the necessary proficiency for a job that may require its usage. More specifically, though, a student and faculty task force has been formed at Duquesne Kline to ensure that faculty and students engage in regular and active dialogue on the appropriate uses of Gen AI. As part of these discussions, the faculty and students are creating trainings for all 1L and upper-level students this spring.

"We are following the changes in the profession and the impact from the use of generative AI. We are responsive to those changes to adequately ensure students have the tools and skills they need to ethically practice law," said Willke.

### A new era of practice-ready lawyers

"One of our focuses is to continuously adapt and evolve our program to meet not just curricular needs, but to anticipate what our students will need when they become practitioners. We evolve to help them become practice ready as they become practitioners. AI is a huge component of that. It is a huge part of how they complete assignments for partners and do their research," said April Milburn-Knizner, associate director of bar studies and an assistant professor of law who teaches in the LRW program.

Katie Lynch, faculty and outreach services librarian and adjunct professor of law, likewise wants to make certain Duquesne Kline students have the skillsets they need, and teaching them the multiple ways to research is essential.

"We must teach them both ways to do this because we don't know where students end up. If they end up at a firm that doesn't have Lexis+ AI, it is important that they know the different ways of conducting legal research," she said.

Milburn-Knizner knows it is imperative to ensure students can research in AI in an appropriate way. "As we adapt and evolve, AI is playing a critical component of how we do research. Our two primary research engines—Westlaw and Lexis—both have AI components. We must teach our students how to use them properly when conducting legal research," she said.

### Foundation for the future

In addition to research, Gen AI provides some document drafting assistance. Nonetheless, the LRW program at Duquesne Kline continues to emphasize the importance of the foundational research, analysis and writing skills, along with other skills that are essential to law practice.

"One of the things we are doing is trying to keep up with all the changes as rapidly as they happen. We know the foundational skills students need to be competent lawyers—those skills form the basis of our program. We will continue to teach the foundational skills and use these new tools to enhance those skills. In this ever-changing world, we must think of ways we enhance the skills as the world changes, knowing AI is not a substitute for the foundational development of student research and writing skills," Willke said.

"A student's ability to use generative AI may increase their efficiency as an attorney, but it cannot not make them a lawyer," Willke said. "It doesn't think and it cannot reason or exercise judgment."

Thus, the LRW program still focuses on foundational skills necessary for law practice.

"We are really intentional about creating consistency





## We are following the changes in the profession and the impact from the use of generative AI.

throughout the students' educational experience," said Willke.

For instance, all 1L students conduct legal research, analyze legal authorities and write objective memoranda and persuasive documents in the first-year program. Additionally, they engage in other lawyering skills their first year. They meet with opposing counsel to try to negotiate a settlement. They also practice their written and oral communication skills for different audiences by drafting a client letter and engaging in oral arguments.

Milburn-Knizner agrees. "We have slightly revised instruction, but it will always focus on effective legal research and memo and brief writing. Those are all core components. We are making small tweaks and have now allowed ourselves the time to also introduce some of these practical things to students. There is ChatGPT and a number of other similar tools when it comes to the writing

component. We want to teach them how to use them as a tool and to know their drawbacks. We are starting to work with it as an effective tool to help students not just become good, but accurate and efficient. We caution them on how to use it properly as a tool," she said.

### Ethical implications

Students are instructed they should not use any of these programs to do their work or writing for them, as there are consequences, especially in practice.

"AI can be a great jumping off point to get some words on paper to get started, but if you don't have the foundations—how to write memo, how to write a brief, how to read, how to extract relevant facts—there are problems. If you rely heavily on AI, you can face malpractice because your client is paying you to do the work; your client paid you to do the research. When you have an intern in the office, a paralegal, a secretary

or ChatGPT, you need to do your due diligence to make sure everything is accurate and allowing you to be a zealous challenger for your client," said Marissa Meredith, assistant professor of law.

In the fall, Milburn-Knizner delivered an example to her class. She used ChatGPT to generate a memo based on legal research and inputs, then gauged the students' reactions.

"It was an example of a very useful tool, but if you submitted this memo for a grade, it would not be good. More importantly, from a client or partner perspective, it would not be effective. I think they sort of suspected an AI-generated memo would not meet the standards that are necessary or expected. They were surprised at just how ineffective it was, and they recognized its limitations," she said.

The ethical implications to students and the work they produce in school and in their careers is at the center of the approach to Gen AI at Duquesne Kline. The focus is to ensure their legal education prepares students with the modern skills needed to excel ethically in the practice of the law.

"Due diligence, competence, confidentiality and attorney-client privilege, someone is paying you to do the work. We encourage them to use AI efficiently and remember this is a tool, only a jumping-off point. It is a tool in your belt, in your kit of things to make you an efficient lawyer," Meredith said.

Educating on the ethical implications of Gen AI is fundamental, as well as remaining current on its changes and effects. Duquesne Kline faculty are determined to continue to be well-informed forces to navigate and pivot this emerging field.

Willke said, "Ethical use of Gen AI is the key. And we will stay abreast of all the changes that occur. These things are happening very quickly, and our goal is to stay ahead of the changes and determine if we need to make adjustments. It will be a while until it settles down, but we are committed to our students and ensuring they are equipped with the tools they will need to succeed in practice." ■

# Civil Discourse Discussion Centered on Holocaust Education

By Amanda Dabbs

With the dramatic increase in antisemitism across the United States, this year's Civil Discourse event held on campus March 13 focused on the topic of "The Holocaust, Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting and Educating Future Generations."

Duquesne President Ken Gormley launched the Civil Discourse Series in 2017 to provide an opportunity for the University's campus community to explore the importance of respectful dialogue on the most challenging topics.

"As a Catholic and Spiritan university and a valued institution of higher education, we understand the importance of providing a forum in which our campus can respectfully engage in and discuss important and thought-provoking issues," said Gormley. "This year's Civil Discourse topic is particularly relevant to today's students and our campus community. At Duquesne, our commitment to civil discourse and ethical engagement is core to our identity."

Duquesne Honors Program student Claudio Simione, a senior accounting major and legal studies minor, and Gormley welcomed an audience of approximately 200 people in the Power Center Ballroom.

The event was moderated by Dr. John Mitcham, associate professor and chair of history at Duquesne University, and panelists were: Dr. Michael Bernebaum, former project director, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum; director, Sigi Ziering Institute; and distinguished professor of Jewish Studies, American Jewish University, and Dr. Maggie



Top; Dr. Maggie Feinstein, Dr. John Mitcham, center, and Dr. Michael Bernebaum. Bottom left; President Ken Gormley and Dean April Barton with prospective law students from Waynesburg University. Bottom right; Gormley talks with Feinstein and Mitcham.

Feinstein, executive director, 10.27 Healing Partnership.

"The notion of civil discourse is something enormously important in the world in which we live. We used to take it for granted, and the catastrophe of our world is that we can't take it for granted. It's a privilege to be here and to participate in such a program," remarked Bernebaum.

"Civil discourse has to start with the people right next to us," said Feinstein. "Love and curiosity are almost always the answer to anything."

Prior to the main Civil Discourse event, the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University

invited top students throughout the region with a passion for law, government and issues of social importance, along with their advisors, to a special luncheon with the esteemed panelists.

These prospective law students represented Gannon University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, PennWest Clarion, Point Park University, Robert Morris University, St. Francis University, Washington & Jefferson College and Waynesburg University.

Duquesne University pre-law students and their advisor, Dr. Kristen Coopie, who teaches with Gormley, also attended the luncheon.



Learn more about the annual Civil Discourse Series at [duq.edu/CivilDiscourse](http://duq.edu/CivilDiscourse). ■



# Kline Center Updates

The Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education hosted numerous educational programs for judges and lawyers throughout the 2023–2024 academic year. In November, the Kline Center hosted an important and timely four-hour virtual Continuing Judicial Education (CJE) program in conjunction with the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC), on parental liability for the violent acts of children. In December, the Kline Center commenced an annual, independent CJE offering for judges featuring speakers with new and interesting ideas on the blend between judicial writing and ethics.

The Kline Center kicked off the new year with an independently accredited two-hour virtual program for judges on performance and copycat crime. In March, the Kline Center worked with Duquesne Kline Professor Wes Oliver and Adjunct Professor Morgan Gray to host a two-hour virtual CJE program in conjunction with the AOPC on “Demystifying Artificial Intelligence (AI): Understanding Natural Language Processing in Today’s Legal Landscape.”

The Kline Center’s marquee event for the year was held in April as part of the special building rededication. This program, which was accredited for 2 ethics credits of both Continuing Legal Education (CLE) and CJE, featuring four

expert speakers on “AI & The Future of Democracy: Ethics, Law & Policy.” The event concluded with a special capstone reception, featuring a toast to the building rededication by Chief Justice Debra Todd, President Ken Gormley, and Dean April Barton.

In May, the Kline Center hosted its second annual “Book Talk,” an independently accredited two-hour virtual CJE program. This year’s book, selected by the Kline Center’s Jurist-in-Residence, Chief Justice Emeritus Thomas Saylor, was Professor Thomas Healy’s *The Great Dissent: How Oliver Wendell Holmes Changed His Mind—and Changed the History of Free Speech in America*. Healy reviewed the seminal World War I-era free speech opinions that laid the groundwork for modern First Amendment law. He then examined the influences that led Supreme Court Justice Holmes to change his views on free speech and write his canonical dissenting opinion in *Abrams v. United States*, which introduced the concept of the “marketplace of ideas.” Healy also explored the value of free speech and the role of judges in a democracy.

In 2023–2024, the Kline Center also envisioned and created the Kline Center Fellows Program to model and instill values of excellence, professionalism, and respect for the judiciary and the

court system. Three Duquesne Kline Law students were chosen through a competitive application process to serve as the inaugural Kline Center Fellows: Samuel Baycer, 3L, Jennifer Murray, 3L, and Jason Whiting, 3E. The Fellows attended weekly enrichment sessions with Director of the Kline Center Erin Karsman and Associate Director of the Kline Center Julia Glencer, as well as other events, including the Kline Center’s Distinguished Speaker Series event, sessions with Saylor to explore federal and state Constitutions and the history of the judicial system of Pennsylvania, formal lunches with recent Law School alumni exploring the benefits of law clerking and exciting court appearances, and an intimate session with Saylor and Justice Christine Donohue, L’80, to explore what judges look for and expect in clerkship candidates.

In April, before a select audience of alumni, professors, the Dean of IT and students currently serving as judicial externs, the Fellows each presented a capstone project, identifying a topic worthy of being built into a judicial education program. Next fall, the Kline Center plans to expand the number of students selected as Kline Center Fellows. ■

# Tribone Center for Clinical Education Updates

## Pennsylvania Innocence Project

The Pennsylvania Innocence Project continues to work on behalf of



Harold Staten

Pennsylvania men and women who have been convicted of a crime they did not commit. While always busy, the Project has hit the ground running in 2024 by already celebrating the exoneration of

longtime client Harold Staten. He spent 38 years in prison for a crime he did not commit, and on Feb. 5 was finally welcomed home. You may read more about Staten's case and all of the other 31 Pennsylvania Innocence Project exonerates at [www.painnocence.org](http://www.painnocence.org).

The work continues, and this semester six interns from the Duquesne Kline School of Law and six from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law have been asked to assist Project lawyers with a special pattern of practice investigation into dozens of potential false confession cases. False confessions are a leading cause of wrongful conviction occurring in nearly one in four wrongful convictions throughout the nation. We will also be gearing up for oral arguments before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and a long-awaited post-conviction evidentiary hearing in Westmoreland County.

## Family Law Clinic

The Duquesne Kline Family Law Clinic continues to serve Allegheny County and the greater Pittsburgh area through various programs and services. Students help income-qualified individuals with custody, divorce, and support related matters through a limited legal services model, proudly serving more than 50 clients each semester. Students consult

with clients and provide advice, draft pleadings and motions, and represent clients during hearings. Students also further develop their professional identities and learn the practice of family law through weekly class meetings where collaboration and brainstorming are encouraged. The clinic expanded its horizons this semester to engage in a more holistic form of representation by having guest speakers such as attorneys from KidsVoice, who represent children in the juvenile dependency process. The students in the clinic also often volunteer at events like Stand Down, a fair where countless services are made easily accessible to veterans, and Elder Justice Day, a day full of presentations about various services available for older Pennsylvanians. Additionally, the clinic is in the process of conducting a service project to create a comprehensive resource guide for older Pennsylvanians.

## Elder Law Project

The students in the Elder Law Project visited local senior centers to present on wills and powers of attorney and how to avoid financial exploitation and scams. Local attorneys and Neighborhood Legal Service Association attorneys have presented to the clinic students about family law, with a discussion about grandparents gaining custody of their grandchildren, neglect, abuse and prevention, wellness, balance and professional identity, and lawyer skills such as drafting motions.

## Re-Entry Legal Services Clinic

The Re-Entry Legal Services Clinic was successful in its recent pardon hearings, obtaining pardons for three clients this past semester.

## Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic

The Wills and Healthcare Decisions Clinic was very busy this semester. Students conducted estate planning community clinics as well as interprofessional medical-legal events geared at incapacity planning and alternatives to guardianship, including the Second Avenue Commons clinic on alternatives to guardianship/powers of attorney for the unhoused, the Macedonia FACE Senior Center/Thelma Lovette YMCA Estate Planning and Power of Attorney Clinic, the LIFE Pittsburgh medical-legal Incapacity Planning/ Alternatives to Guardianship Clinic, and the UPMC Mercy Hospital Employee Incapacity planning, estate planning and alternatives to guardianship seminar.

For 2024-2025, the Wills Clinic was awarded funding through the McElhattan Foundation and American College of Trusts and Estates Council (ACTEC).

## Other Clinic Notes

In April 2024, supported by the American College of Trusts and Estates Counsel (ACTEC) and McElhattan Foundation, the Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education and partners hosted Ask the Attorney Day at the Allegheny County Law Library/Carnegie Libraries of Pittsburgh.

## Externships

On Feb. 28, the Duquesne Kline Externship Program, along with other Pennsylvania law schools' externship programs, hosted a CLE for externship supervisors titled "Making a Mentor: How to Effectively Mentor and Supervise Externs." Jamilah Wesley, 3L, was a featured speaker along with Supervising Attorney Katherine Goelz, Professor Ashley London and Tracey McCants Lewis, L'00. ■



# Young Alumni PROFILE

## Natalie Tupta, L'18

### Hometown:

Charleston, W.Va.

### Education:

B.A. in Latin from Marshall University

M.A. in English as a Second Language from the University of Texas-Pan American

J.D. from Duquesne University School of Law

### What are you currently reading?

*The Upward Spiral* by Alex Korb and *One Last Stop* by Casey McQuiston

### Words you live by:

I am inspired by Duquesne's Spiritan mission, particularly the commitments to maintaining authentic relationships and walking with those on the margins.

### What might people be surprised to know about you?

Hiking and exploring new areas on foot are some of my favorite ways to relieve stress. I wish the Trails Club had existed when I was in law school!

### Employment:

Child Welfare Policy Advisor for the Foster Care Court Improvement Program within the Maryland Judiciary

### What sparked your interest in pursuing a career in child advocacy, and how have your roles continued to develop your passion for public interest work?

I came to law school with a desire to use my law degree to help people. In law school, I worked in the Civil Rights Clinic, where I developed a passion for serving individuals and families affected by the criminal legal system. I loved helping clients pursue expungements and pardons as they stepped into new chapters of greater freedom and forgiveness.

As I began my legal career, my interest broadened to serving families impacted by the criminal and family legal systems. I spent my first several years of practice representing mothers who were recovering from substance abuse disorder and who were in prison diversion programs. That advocacy helped me understand how intergenerational cycles of poverty, health challenges, violence and criminalization harm families. After learning from my individual clients and their families, I became interested in focusing on systems-level issues, which is what led me to join the Maryland Judiciary.

### How did your Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University law education prepare you not only for the practice of law, but for your work in public interest?

My 2L year of law school, I met a Duquesne Law alumnus who shared with me that Duquesne alumni have a reputation for their preparedness. While at Duquesne, I focused on becoming the best lawyer I could be by preparing thoroughly for trial advocacy competitions, learning skills needed to compassionately serve clients in the Civil Rights Clinic and conquering bar exams in two states with support from the Bar Studies program.



When I began practicing as a civil generalist in a legal aid organization, I often found myself faced with addressing legal issues I knew very little about but that made such a big impact in my clients' lives. It was intimidating trying to understand these unfamiliar legal issues, but I recognized law school could not have possibly made me an expert in every area of law. However, I constantly repeated to myself the words of the alumnus who told me the mark of a Duquesne lawyer is preparation. I made sure I entered every client meeting, hearing and settlement negotiation with a strong grasp of the facts of the case, a well-researched understanding of the law, carefully crafted arguments and the confidence and calm that come with this level of preparation. I am grateful to have learned the fundamental skills for practicing law at Duquesne, which served my clients and I well in my first years of practice.

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

At a time when so many people are isolated, lonely and disconnected, Duquesne offers an opportunity to study in an environment where staff, professors, alumni and students genuinely care about each other.

A legal education in general is so valuable because constitutional law conflicts are happening not only nationally but also in our communities and families. Our government is currently making critical choices about rights that affect workers, consumers, families and the criminally accused, often with impassioned input from citizens and noncitizens alike. I am honored to be a Duquesne-educated lawyer because I am trained to consider the social justice impact of the work I do and the choices I make every day.

### Is there anything else you'd like to add or share about yourself?

My legal practice has been enriched by connections with non-lawyers and professionals in other fields. I have found it helpful to work with social workers, teachers, paralegals, doctors, community organizers and researchers, each of whom has a unique perspective to offer on the legal issues I am focused on. I encourage current law students to build and maintain relationships with people who challenge their thinking and who keep us grounded as we pursue justice. One way I did this at Duquesne was by participating in events hosted by the Graduate and Professional Student Council, where I was able to meet graduate students from other disciplines. ■

# ClassActions

Stay connected with Duquesne Kline Law!  
Send us your accomplishments, news you would like to share, and updates to your contact information at [lawalumni@duq.edu](mailto:lawalumni@duq.edu).

## 1977

### George Janocsko

recently retired from the position of Solicitor at the Allegheny County Law Department. Allegheny County recognized Janocsko's 46-year career by proclaiming Dec. 1 to be "George Janocsko Day" in the county, and by renaming the Reading Room of the Allegheny County Law Library in the City-County Building in his honor.



she retires from the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

## 1984

On Jan. 4, 2024, **Stephen Zappala Jr.** was inducted as District Attorney of Allegheny County. Zappala was first elected District Attorney in 1998 and has served Allegheny County for over 25 years.



Security Act, the Affordable Care Act, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act and HIPAA.

## 1995

### Anthony Ditka,

a public finance attorney at Dinsmore, will be recognized as the North Allegheny Foundation's 2023 Distinguished Alumni in Law. Since 2018, the Distinguished Alumni Awards have been sponsored by the North Allegheny Foundation and are bestowed upon graduates of North Allegheny High School to recognize alumni who have made significant contributions to society or outstanding professional achievements in the areas of Arts, Business, Community Service, Education, Government, Law, Medicine, Science and Young Alumni.



workshops on wellness for Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers Pennsylvania, a free confidential service for legal professionals and law students who struggle with mental health/substance abuse issues.

## 1999

### Michael Lamb

recently joined McNees Law's growing Pennsylvania team. Lamb will practice from McNees' Pittsburgh office in the Public Finance and Government Services Group, a growing practice area of the firm.



## 1981

### Donna Allen-Rosemond

has been recognized by the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network with the Outstanding Attorney Advocate Award for the work she has done as a Senior Staff Attorney with Neighborhood Legal Services. This award recognizes Allen-Rosemond's forged legacy of excellence through outstanding work that embodies the true spirit of commitment and compassion in civil legal aid.



## 1993

### Douglas Gerwick

was re-elected to a second term as a Grove City Area School District board member. He assumed office in December 2019 and currently serves as the chair of the Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee.



## 1996

### Kristen Del Sole

serves as Co-Partner-in-Charge of Porter Wright's Pittsburgh office. Del Sole is a highly motivated attorney who thrives on collaboration and client service. She also gives back to the community as well as to the legal profession and has served as a board member of Every Child, Inc. and has also worked with KidsVoice.



### Matt Smith, Chief

Growth Officer with the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, was recently named to the *Pittsburgh Business Times'* Pittsburgh Power 100's most influential leaders of 2024.



## 1982

### Art Rooney II,

Owner and President of the Pittsburgh Steelers, was recently named to the *Pittsburgh Business Times'* Pittsburgh Power 100's most influential leaders of 2024. Rooney also received the Law Outstanding Achievement Award in 2000 and the Century Club Award in 2000.



### Christine O'Hara

is a partner at Flaherty & O'Hara, P.C., where she handles all aspects of liquor licensing, concentrating her efforts on national hotel and restaurant portfolios, transactions involving multi-unit chains, and providing general legal advice to hotel clients.



## 2000

### Tracey R. McCants

Lewis, the Pittsburgh Penguins' Chief People Officer and General Counsel, received the Judge Livingstone M. Johnson Legacy Award at the 2024 Whitney M. Young, Jr. Service Awards Dinner, an event that celebrates individuals who are actively shaping a brighter future for disadvantaged youth. McCants-Lewis is also the recipient of the 2024 Chuck Cooper Foundation Trailblazer Award that honors pioneering professionals whose efforts continually drive significant change and reflect Chuck Cooper's legacy of trailblazing and leadership.



## 1994

### Sandra Mihok

recently joined Epstein Becker Green, a national law firm with a primary focus on health care and life sciences; employment, labor, and workforce management; and litigation and business disputes, as a Member of the firm's Employee Benefits practice. This expansion of the firm's national Employee Benefits practice will advise on matters for all kinds of employee benefit plans, including compliance with the Internal Revenue Code, the Employee Retirement Income



## 1997

### Erin Siciliano,

co-chair of the Pennsylvania Bar Association (PBA) Quality of Life/Balance Committee, was recently recognized for her consistent efforts to research and present information to help attorneys balance their professional and personal lives. A leader on the committee for several years, Siciliano has created numerous CLE presentations that were adopted by PBA committees and sections and county and regional bar associations in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. She has also presented



## 1983

### The Hon. Kim Berkeley Clark,

a distinguished alumnus, was recently honored at the August Wilson African American Cultural Center, celebrating her many achievements as





## 2001

### Donald Walsh, Jr.

was recently promoted to Director of Maiello Brungo and Maiello, LLP's Real Estate and Tax Assessment Team. Walsh has been a key member of the firm's Real Estate, Tax Assessment, Business Law and Litigation teams, and has 30 years of success at the administrative, trial court and appellate levels. As Director, Walsh will oversee all commercial real estate tax assessment disputes on behalf of private and public entities.



owners on infrastructure projects, with a primary emphasis in the water, energy, transportation and waste sectors.

## 2009

### Joseph Romano,

a Member in the Workers' Compensation Group at Burns White, LLC, who focuses his work on the defense of a variety of employers and insurance companies throughout Pennsylvania, was recently promoted to Equity Membership Status.



**Gillian Flick**, an attorney with Steptoe & Johnson PLLC, was recently named Women's Energy Network Global President for 2024.



The Women's Energy Network was founded in 1994 with the purpose of fostering the development and advancement of women in energy by developing a strong network. Flick's role as president will allow her to assist in growing the global organization, which supports 25 chapters in North America, including a chapter in Mexico and the newest chapter in the Dominican Republic.

## 2002

### Nick Delulii,

President and CEO of CNX, was recently named to the *Pittsburgh Business Times'* Pittsburgh Power 100's most influential leaders of 2024. Delulii also received the Law Outstanding Achievement Award in 2014.



## 2010

### Kaitlynd Kruger

is a partner at Flaherty & O'Hara, P.C., where she handles all aspects of alcohol beverage licensing with an emphasis on multi-state transactions involving retail licensees. Kruger manages the firm's proprietary software platform responsible for the renewal of thousands of liquor and non-liquor licenses annually for hotels, restaurants, airlines, concessionaries, grocery stores and convenience stores.



### Brittany Fox

has been promoted to Member at Atencio Hall Attorneys at Law. Fox represents energy clients on a wide range of transactional matters and also counsels clients in various industries and matters related to corporate law, real estate, and regulatory matters. She provides creative and critical solutions to meet client needs and also lends her time and skillset to supporting regional energy industry trade groups, including serving as the Executive Membership Director of the Greater Pittsburgh Chapter of the Women's Energy Network.



## 2003

### Elisabeth Molnar,

an experienced custody and divorce litigator and certified collaborative law attorney, recently joined Pittsburgh family law firm Pollock Begg as a Partner.



### Tia Churchfield,

a seasoned transactional attorney who has experience with due diligence for energy industry transactions and has a background in the preparation of certified mineral title and certified division order title opinions, was recently promoted to a Member Attorney at Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC.



### Ellen Freeman

is a senior associate at Flaherty & O'Hara, P.C., where she concentrates her practice on Pennsylvania license transactions, state police enforcement matters, and Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board and municipal hearings, as well as related litigation at both the trial and appellate level. Freeman specializes in the representation of the retail tier of the alcohol industry.



## 2006

### The Hon. Jill Beck

was recently appointed and sworn in as a Judge of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania.



## 2011

### Nicole Daller

has spent over 50 years developing her trial skills and reaping success in employment, business or investment disputes. Daller's work focuses on righting a wrongful discharge, accounting for improper firing of a whistleblower and holding financial firms responsible for investment losses.



### Peter Patsakis

recently joined Peacock Keller, a full-service law firm headquartered in Washington, Pa., as an Associate focusing his practice in the areas of development of energy generation projects and the acquisition, sale and trade of commercial real estate assets.



**David Renner** is a founding partner of a new technology-driven, full-service law firm called PierFerd. PierFerd will be serving clients from markets across the United States and is founded on principles of professionalism, responsiveness and trust, providing unparalleled technological capabilities for the firm's clients.

## 2012

### Joshua Gallo

recently rejoined Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC, as Of Counsel, focusing his practice on energy and mineral title law in the firm's Energy & Natural Resources Department.



**Keith Pisarcik** was recently promoted to the position of Senior Corporate Counsel with HomeServe USA Corporation, an independent provider of home repair service solutions servicing customers in North America.

### Ashley Sharek

started Sharek Law Office LLC in 2018 to focus on providing estate planning and elder law services in a more modern way.



### Christi Wallace

is the sole and first female Partner at a distinguished plaintiff employment firm and is now a key Partner at MKO Employment Law. Wallace has also been honored as a three-time Super Lawyer.



## 2007

### Robert Gallagher

was recently appointed managing partner of law firm Troutman Pepper's Pittsburgh office. As a partner in the firm's construction practice, Gallagher represents technology companies, contractors and



## 2013

### Gabrielle Carbonara,

a member of Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C.'s Energy and Real Estate Groups and an active member of the firm's Pro Bono Committee, was recently elected as a Shareholder at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, a leading national law firm based in Pennsylvania.

**Cara Murphy Fialkoff** recently started a new position as Senior Counsel at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP.

**Kelsey Hitchcock** was recently elected as a Partner at McGuire Woods and focuses her practice on advising private equity funds, independent sponsors and their portfolio companies in mergers and acquisitions, divestitures, commercial transactions and corporate governance matters.



## 2014

**Paul Roman**, a member of Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C., who concentrates his practice in the areas of commercial litigation, including trade secret matters, intellectual property disputes, appellate practice, bankruptcy/working and real estate litigation, was recently elected as a Shareholder at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, a leading national law firm based in Pennsylvania.



**John Zappone** joined Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP, as an Associate in the Product Liability Practice Group. Zappone represents pharmaceutical, automotive, recreational vehicle, aircraft and firearm manufacturers in state and federal courts across the country. He was recently recognized as a Rising Star by Pennsylvania Super Lawyers and has tried cases and obtained defense verdicts as first chair counsel throughout the commonwealth.



## 2015

**Laura Veith**, a commercial litigation attorney who focuses her practice in insurance coverage and complex commercial litigation, was recently elected as a Partner at the global law firm K&L Gates, LLP. Veith is also a recipient of the 2024 Duquesne Kline Woman of the Year Award and was honored at a reception at the Chuck Cooper Center in March.



## 2019

**Taylor Baublitz** was recently appointed to a new position as a Staff Attorney with the Pennsylvania State Education Association.

**Dominic Carrola** recently joined Peacock Keller, a full-service law firm headquartered in Washington, Pa., as an Associate focusing his practice in the areas of civil litigation, medical malpractice defenses, landlord-tenant disputes and tax assessment appeals.



## 2020

**Samuel Nolan** recently joined Epstein Becker Green as an Associate, joining the firm's national Employee Benefits practice and focusing his practice on advising on matters for all kinds of employee benefit plans, including compliance with the Internal Revenue Code, the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, the Affordable Care Act, the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act and HIPAA.



## 2021

**Rachel Hileman** recently started a new position as Senior Manager, Legal Function Consulting, at EY.



**Christian Sesek** recently joined Peacock Keller, a full-service law firm headquartered in Washington, Pa., as an Associate in the firm's estate administration, estate planning, real estate and business departments.



## 2022

**Kathleen Begley** recently rejoined Steptoe & Johnson, PLLC, as an Associate, focusing her practice on mineral title and property practice in the firm's Energy and Natural Resources Department.



## 2023

**Jesse Marra** joined Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP, as an Associate in the Commercial Litigation and Employment & Labor Practice Groups. Marra was formerly a legal intern at the United States Attorney's Office of the Western District of Pennsylvania and also spent time as a judicial intern for the Hon. Christine Donohue of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and gained significant experience as a law clerk at two civil law firms.



**Carla Notte** is an associate at Flaherty & O'Hara, P.C., where she concentrates her practice on Pennsylvania licensing matters for the retail tier of the alcohol industry. ■



The following Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni have been named to *Pittsburgh Magazine's* Women In Law sponsored section:

**Nicole Daller (L'11), Kristen Del Sole (L'96), Kaitlynd Kruger (L'10), Christine O'Hara (L'93), Ellen Freeman (L'11), Carla Notte (L'23), Ashley Sharek (L'12), and Christi Wallace (L'12).**

*Pittsburgh Magazine's* new Women In Law sponsored section highlights powerful and notable women in the legal field who are both achievers and leaders.



Nicole Daller



Kristen Del Sole



Kaitlynd Kruger



Christine O'Hara



Ellen Freeman



Carla Notte



Ashley Sharek



Christi Wallace



# In Memoriam

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

Paul A. Beck, Esq.	1962
Ms. Amy C. Black Kuneman	2009
Alvin P. Brannick, Esq.	1959
David R. Brown, Esq.	1967
Dr. Jennie K. Bullard	1990
Jack L. Cherkin, Esq.	1970
B. Mark Chernoff, Esq.	1954
Virginia Davison, Esq.	1985
P. Louis DeRose, Esq.	1970
Jerome Deriso, Esq.	1967
Thomas A. Dougherty, Esq.	1962
Mark P. Fallert, Esq.	1981
Roger J. Gaydos, Esq.	1972
Raymond G. Hasley, Esq.	1958
Thomas G. Lemons, Esq.	1974
Frank M. McClellan, Esq.	1970
Karen Lynn Myers, Esq.	1987
Frank C. Rote, Esq.	1958
Aaron W. Smith, Esq.	2010
Stephen S. Strunck, Esq.	1978
George A. Verlihay, Esq.	1976
Larry C. Victum, Esq.	1980

*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.*

## NEW BOOK FEATURES DUQUESNE KLINE LAW ALUMNI



Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Dean April Barton celebrated the Allegheny County Bar Association Homer S. Brown Division's launch of its first children's book, "Black Lawyers of the Burgh," that introduces children to careers in law through the journeys of Pittsburgh-based lawyers. She was joined by the Hon. Dwayne D. Woodruff, L'88, and the Hon. Cynthia Baldwin, L'80, both of whom are among the Duquesne Kline alumni featured in the book. The book is available for purchase on Amazon. ■

## 2024 Law Alumni Reunion

Save the date for our annual Law Alumni Reunion, Friday, Sept. 27, 2024. We hope you join us for a fun evening of connecting with the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University alumni and community.

## Alumni News

### Pennsylvania Justice Administers Bar Oath to Duquesne Kline School of Law Graduates

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University hosted a swearing-in ceremony Nov. 7 for alumni who passed July's Pennsylvania Uniform Bar Exam.



Duquesne Kline alumni attended the ceremony, officiated by Justice Christine Donohue, L'80, Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Dean April Barton, University President Ken Gormley and Assistant Professor of Law and Bar Studies Director Ashley London gave remarks to the group, who later enjoyed a celebratory reception.

The July Pennsylvania Bar results were released in October. Highlights from the Pennsylvania results include:

- Duquesne's first-time pass rate of 82.93% outpaced the statewide first-time pass rate average of 78.75%.
- This marks the eighth consecutive year the Law School has outperformed the state average.
- Duquesne's overall pass rate of 78.36% exceeded the statewide overall passage rate of 71.38%.

We congratulate our alumni and know you are prepared for what's next in your careers. ■



### Alumni Admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States

On Nov. 16, alumni, faculty and staff from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University had the honor of participating in an Admission to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States Ceremony in Washington, D.C.

University President Ken Gormley was pleased to motion 38 proud Duquesne Kline alumni before the United States Supreme Court. Duquesne Kline alumni traveled from across the United States—from Arizona, Nevada, Michigan and more—to attend the prestigious Supreme Court event with Gormley and Duquesne Kline Dean April Barton.

"It was a privilege for our Duquesne Kline community to join our nation's highest court in this admission ceremony. It was a once-in-a-lifetime, special event that I am glad we were able to share together," Barton said.

The night before the ceremony, Duquesne Kline hosted an alumni reception in Washington at the City Club for those attending the ceremony and for local Duquesne Kline alumni. More than 70 alumni and friends attended. ■



# 2024 Woman of the Year and Recent Graduate of the Year Honored at 32nd Annual Event

By Amanda S. Drumm

Laura K. Veith, L'15, and Joanne Parise, L'20, were honored during the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's 32nd annual Woman of the Year event March 14. Veith received the Woman of the Year award and Parise received the Recent Graduate of the Year award. These awards have been given to many distinguished women in the legal field over the last 30 years, including judges, prominent attorneys, professors, deans and authors.

The Woman of the Year award is given to an alumna who promotes gender equality, gives back to the community, demonstrates professionalism and leadership and raises awareness about issues affecting women. She maintains a meaningful connection with female Duquesne Kline Law students and pioneers a new path for women in the legal profession.

"As a first-generation lawyer, Duquesne Kline Law gave me the tools and the opportunities that continue to shape my legal career," Veith said.

Veith is a partner at K&L Gates in Pittsburgh, where she focuses on insurance coverage and commercial disputes. She represents clients in high-stakes disputes and litigation to obtain favorable resolution or through trial.

Veith is very active at K&L Gates, serving on the hiring committee and participating in the LCLD mentoring program. She was named the first recipient of K&L Gates' Mary L. Thibadeau Excellence in Practice Award and received the 2023 Associate Mentor of the Year Award.

Veith previously served as a pre-trial chamber legal intern for international judges for the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials in Phnom

Penh, Cambodia. She volunteers for the United Way Bridges Society and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Keystone Chapter.

"Receiving the Woman of the Year Award from Duquesne Kline Law is very meaningful and humbling, considering the outstanding community of lawyers that Duquesne has produced," Veith said. "I am grateful for the foundation that Duquesne Kline Law provided and the community that I continue to be a part of in this profession and in this great city."

The Recent Graduate of the Year award is given to an alumna who exemplifies the characteristics of the Woman of the Year and who has graduated in the last five years.

"I am grateful for the tools and opportunities provided to me by Duquesne Kline that have allowed for a solid start to my career and the privilege to be a member of the Duquesne Kline community," Parise said.

Parise is an associate attorney at Williams Coulson Johnson Lloyd Parker & Tedesco, LLC, and focuses her practice on estate planning, business matters and real estate.

While earning her Juris Doctor degree as an evening student, Parise served on the *Duquesne Law Review* and the Student Bar Association, as a research assistant, and as a student attorney and student manager of the Unemployment Compensation Clinic and competed in the trial advocacy program. She graduated *summa cum laude* and received the Distinguished Student Award.

Parise is active in the Allegheny County Bar Association, where she serves as a county coordinator of the Wills for Heroes program, which provides estate planning documents to first responders



Laura K. Veith



Joanne Parise

and military veterans free of charge. She also served as a member of the Young Lawyers Division Council and as a co-chair of the Young Lawyers Division Diversity Committee. In her community, she volunteers as a firefighter and emergency medical technician.

"I am honored to be considered to possess the qualities associated with the award by fellow members of the Duquesne Kline community," she said.

Dean April Barton, who gave remarks at the event, was impressed by the accomplishments of Veith and Parise.

"They both exemplify the service and scholarship of a Duquesne Kline lawyer," she said. "They serve their clients with justice. On behalf of the whole Duquesne Kline community, I congratulate them for these deserving honors, and I look forward to seeing what they will continue to accomplish in their careers." ■

# 1911 Society Fellows and PILA Award Recipients Honored

Duquesne Kline School of Law 1911 Society Fellows were honored at a special reception on April 9, where Public Interest Law Alumni (PILA) Awards were also given.

The 1911 Society Fellows program continues its pledge of excellence by supporting the mission of Duquesne Kline School of Law through cumulative financial support of more than \$10,000. Fellows of the 1911 Society are committed to supporting key initiatives in the Duquesne Kline School of Law. These generous gifts transform the lives of our students and our School of Law.

### Join us in welcoming our newest 1911 Fellows:

The Estate of William R. Harper, L'66–Second Century  
 Katrina L. Brantley, Esq., L'08, and Bryan C. Brantley, Esq., L'04–Hanley  
 Judith M. McVerry, BS'66–Hanley  
 The Honorable Robert E. Kunselman, L'62–Fitzsimons  
 Madelyn A. Reilly, Esq., L'85, and Dr. Rabindra Girdhar–Fitzsimons  
 Shanicka L. Kennedy, L'01, and Mr. Damon Kemp –Fitzsimons  
 Harry J. Sichi, L'64–Fitzsimons

### Thank you to the following 1911 Society Fellows who have achieved elevated levels of support in 2023:

Rodney W. Fink, Esq., L'73–Second Century  
 Gretchen R. Haggerty, Esq., L'80, and James R. Haggerty, Esq., L'79–Hanley  
 The Honorable Donetta W. Ambrose, L'70–Hanley  
 Marie Milie Jones, Esq., L'85, and Cameron W. Jones, B'85–Hanley  
 Robert F. “Bob” Daley, Esq., L'84, and Danielle Daley–Rockwell  
 Kenneth P. Davie, Esq., L'73, and Edna Capone–Davie–Rockwell  
 Gretchen W. Cornett, Esq., L'93, and J. Michael Cornett–Rockwell  
 Andrew M. King, Esq., L'10–Rockwell

Robert J. Perkins, Esq, L'05, and Turahn L. Jenkins, Esq, L'04, of Allegheny Lawyers Initiative for Justice, were awarded PILA Law Alumni awards at the event. These are awarded annually to Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni who demonstrate a commitment to the Public Interest Law Association's values and goals through professional and personal conduct and service. The 2023 PILA Fellows who received scholarship awards were present at the reception and offered appreciation to the Pittsburgh area law firms supporting the PILA scholarship fund. ■



To learn more about the 1911 Society Fellows or how you can support the Public Interest Law Association, please contact the Duquesne Kline Law Alumni & Development office at [lawalumni@duq.edu](mailto:lawalumni@duq.edu).





# U.S. News & World Report Ranks Duquesne Kline School of Law as Top 100 Law School

**The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of  
Duquesne University proudly remains in the top 100  
of law schools in the nation, placing 94 out of 196 ranked  
law schools in the newly released *U.S. News & World Report's*  
2024–2025 Best Law School overall ranking.**

Duquesne Kline School of Law achieved the highest jump of any law school in the nation in last year's 2023–2024 *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Law School overall rankings, placing it in the top 100 of law schools. Last year's 2023–2024 increase of 40 spots was driven by methodology that recognized Duquesne Kline School of Law's consistent over-performance in employment and bar outcomes. Those same extraordinary student outcomes were recognized in this year's top 100 rank.

*U.S. News* calculated the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 rankings by utilizing objective, verifiable data that all schools must provide to the American Bar Association. Duquesne Kline School of Law's two-year top 100 ranking illustrates the successfulness of the Law School in preparing students for pursuing their careers after graduation. These outcomes include the Law School's high 90.63% Ultimate Bar Passage\* rate and excellent 93.8% career placement rate\*\*.

"I credit how well our graduates perform. I also praise our faculty and staff; they excel in legal pedagogy and focus on the post-graduation skills our students will need, thoroughly preparing them for the bar exam and their careers," said April Barton, Dean of Duquesne Kline School of Law.

The accomplishments of Duquesne Kline School of Law graduates reflect the dedication of the students during their law studies and the commitment of the Law School's faculty and staff to their success.

"Our focus has always been student-centered, guiding them to lead ethically and effectively in their future workplaces," said Barton. ■

\*Class of 2020 Ultimate Bar Passage rate.

\*\*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.

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

By **Katherine Norton**, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship, Director of Clinical and International Programs, and Assistant Professor of Law, **Richard Heppner**, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship and Assistant Professor of Law

## The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University faculty contribute widely to public scholarship, sharing their knowledge and advocating throughout the community.

Faculty scholarship takes many forms. In addition to traditional legal scholarship—publishing books, law review articles, and treatises—the Duquesne Kline School of Law faculty participate actively in public scholarship. Public scholarship can be hard to define, but the hallmark is that it reaches outside of the academy to engage a larger legal community and the public, addressing contemporary topics that directly impact legal practice and people’s lives. Our faculty’s public scholarship has been wide-ranging this year, from regular articles in local papers to presenting at the first ever Pennsylvania Guardianship Justice Summit.

Starting off the academic year, **Professor Grace Orsatti** presented at the first Pennsylvania Guardianship Justice Summit. The Summit, organized by the Office of Elder Justice in the Courts and the Advisory Council on Elder Justice in the Courts, brought together a multidisciplinary group of speakers to work to improve guardianship within Pennsylvania. Relatedly, Orsatti published “Restoring Rights — a Path towards Guardianship Reform” in *The Hill*. And she is often sought to consult and discuss these important issues relating to elder justice. She also presented continuing education programs to the Pennsylvania Bar Association on guardianship and incapacity planning and to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Partnership for Aging on law, aging and social determinants of health, collaborated with the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine for Med-Ed Day, and created a podcast for the Allegheny County Medical Society and Allegheny County Bar Association Life Planning Fair.

**Professor Marissa Meredith’s** prior scholarship about the legal issues with online dating apps came to the fore this year. When the deaths of eight tourists were linked to their use of dating apps and the U.S. State Department issued a travel advisory for Medellin, Colombia, Meredith was interviewed by the *Rest of the World*, a digital magazine in Colombia, and *Bloomberg News*, Tech Reporter.

**Professor Ashley London’s** public scholarship this year has focused on ensuring equity in law licensure and advocating for the importance of the role of legal ethics at the center of the profession. She has been actively

working with the Pennsylvania Board of Law Examiners and the Pennsylvania Bar Association to answer questions and share concerns about the NextGen Bar Exam. She presented to faculty from around the country at the AccessLex Building Bar Skills Conference in Philadelphia on how to best prepare students for success on the NextGen Bar. She has been interviewed by *Legal Intelligence* and Reuters on professional licensing, responsibility and ethics topics. She often presents continuing legal education programming on these topics, including an all-day Jones Day CLE Academy program on ethics regarding social media use and text message advertising and a presentation to the National Association of Appellate Court Attorneys on judicial recusal in light of the new Supreme Court of the United States ethic rules.

**Professor Kara Dempsey**, in her first year on the Duquesne Kline faculty, has continued the work of our Youth Advocacy Clinic to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline. Dempsey speaks throughout Western Pennsylvania, coordinating with local community advocacy groups to provide Know Your Rights workshops to empower parents. Through these workshops she helps parents identify their children’s needs and provide them with the tools to request evaluations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. In addition to these community events, she focuses on training lawyers, judges and other professionals who work within the juvenile education, delinquency and dependency systems to understand the intersectionality of disability, education and juvenile justice involvement.



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**Professor Gene Mazo**, also in his first year at Duquesne Kline, is engaged in several public scholarship activities. He worked with Judge Felipe Restrepo to organize the plenary panel at the 2023 Third Circuit Annual Judicial Conference, titled “Election Law in Transition: A Discussion on Fairness, Integrity and What’s Next.” He appeared on television in Pittsburgh, Pa., discussing presidential politics and on the radio in New Jersey discussing election fairness and ballot design. And he lectured at Carnegie Mellon University on the politics of ballot design.

Another highlight from this year is the number of multidisciplinary conferences that our faculty have participated in about artificial-intelligence policy and the use of technology in the legal field and legal education.

**Professor Wes Oliver** and Adjunct Professor Morgan Gray, L’19, have presented at national and international conferences on the role of artificial intelligence in law. Some of their recent public presentations include CLE presentations at Duquesne Kline and at Jones Day, and a CJE for the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, on artificial intelligence and the law, as well as presenting “Collaborating to Bridge the Justice Gap with Legal Technology” at the American Bar Association Tech Show in Chicago. **Professor Tara Wilke**, who worked last summer on developing programming and webinars for law schools throughout the country on the use of technology within legal education, is now working to develop and advance policies on the use of generative AI in higher education. **Dean April Barton** has been active in presenting about and advancing policy around artificial intelligence on a more global level. This year she served as a panelist on several continuing education programs and conferences. She was a presenter for the Grefensette Center for Ethics in Science, Technology and Law 2023 Tech Ethics Symposium. This symposium brought together leaders in the field of technology and ethics, culminating in a closing plenary of “Generative AI and the Future of Policy” with Barton, the Hon. Conor Lamb and Alka Patel (former chief of responsible AI, U.S. Department of Defense).

**Professor Bruce Ledewitz** continues to speak and write extensively about a myriad of topics from climate change to campus free speech, and from presidential politics to the role of law in a secular society. This past year, he has written articles, columns and letters in newspapers from the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* to the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, and on websites from PennLive and TribLive to Only Sky and The Mortal Atheist, and has been interviewed and quoted in even more (including the AP, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and Law360). He has appeared on radio (WMBS) and podcasts (Interfaith Encounters). The Duquesne Kline Law Library has recently compiled and shared years of Ledewitz’s public scholarship on the library’s Digital Commons and has collected and published all the posts from his *Hallowed Secularism* blog.

**Professor Joseph Sabino Mistick’s** years of public scholarship will likewise soon be collected and archived by the Duquesne Kline Law Library. He

has been a weekly Sunday newspaper columnist for the *Tribune-Review* since 2002. He has written and published nearly 1,200 columns on current affairs, government, politics and public policy. For over 20 years, he was the Democratic half of the political talk show “Roddey Mistick,” first on WQED public television and then on PCNC, the public affairs channel of WPXI television, an NBC affiliate. Mistick is a regular panelist on “Around the Table with Stacy Smith,” a twice-monthly discussion about government and politics aired by KDKA-TV News and CBSN-Pittsburgh. And he is a frequent guest and speaker on other local and national television and radio news programs.

**Professor John T. Rago’s** public scholarship takes the form of hands-on involvement in statewide policy and government bodies. He works closely with members of law enforcement, Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association, legislators and the innocence community on policy and conviction integrity issues. His work with the Joint State Government Commission in Harrisburg produced the report of the Advisory Committee on Wrongful Convictions, which influences policy reforms throughout the commonwealth. He is also a member of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court Subcommittee for Suggested Standard Criminal Jury Instructions, which is published by the Pennsylvania Bar Institute (PBI). He serves as one of two reporters for the ongoing Parolee Homicide Review Team, a statewide body of stakeholders charged with reporting annually to the legislature and the governor on policy related to homicides committed by individuals on parole. He is an appointed member on the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing and is a special counsel/facilitator of the Allegheny County Criminal Justice Advisory Board. And Rago recently presented the keynote address “Pillars of Truth: Navigating Freedom with Integrity in the Shadows of Wrongful Conviction” at a campus-wide event at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pa.

**Professor Rona Kaufman** has made numerous public presentations on the legal, political and moral issues surrounding antisemitism and the war in Israel and Gaza. Here at Duquesne Kline, she presented “Understanding Zionism and Anti-Zionism,” hosted by the Jewish Law Student Association. She participated in “A Conversation on Israel and Antisemitism” at an event hosted by Stand With Us in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Pa. And she gave two presentations — “How the Events of Oct. 7 & the Israel-Gaza War are Affecting the U.S. Legal Academy” and “Anti-Feminist Anti-Zionism” — at the third annual Law vs. Antisemitism Conference at Florida International University in Miami.

As this brief description demonstrates, the Duquesne Kline School of Law faculty reach beyond the traditional bounds of legal scholarship. They are active and engaged advocates and educators, advancing the profession and influencing policy through their work in the legal community and the community at large. ■

## STUDENT BRIEFS

## RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

By Amanda S. Drumm



Sam Baycer

When Sam Baycer, rising 3L, was presented with information about the Data for Difference Making Challenge, hosted by Duquesne University Palumbo School of Business, he was immediately interested. The competition was open to graduate students and Baycer, who is a JD and MBA candidate, thought

it would be a practical application of his studies for both of his degrees.

The contest, sponsored by water technical company Xylem, paired Duquesne graduate students of different fields with other graduate students who did not know each other. Baycer was matched with two information systems graduate students, Keval Lathiya and James Cole.

“I did not know my teammates before we went into this. They tried to vary the background of the teams,” he said.

Once the six teams were set, they were given their challenge. “The issue that they presented to us was basically about forever chemicals, known as PFAS, that are present in water. The competition was broadly phrased on how to present a solution on how to remove PFAS in drinking water,” Baycer said.

The teams had less than 72 hours to find a solution. That time included the team researching data—a lot of which came from government statistics and published reports. The team also had to utilize that time to develop a marketing plan for their problem.

Since Xylem has existing technology on how to remove PFAS, Baycer and his team turned their attention to comprehensively executing that technology to provide the largest benefit to the most amount of people.

“We focused our solution on implementing their technology. We took three cities—Philadelphia, New York and Los Angeles—and came up with a marketing plan. We selected those three cities from stats and data. We looked at the budget

of those cities, their populations and the specific water departments served. That gave us a total estimate of between 5 and 6 percent of the United States population that our work would impact,” said Baycer.

In this research, Baycer’s two main conclusions took him by surprise. One was clean water inequity. “I didn’t realize how big the disparity was between water quality standards in the United States. We looked at tested levels of forever chemicals in water across the country. There are very big disparities between tested levels. Some parts of East Coast cities have huge increases above what is considered safe,” he said.

Baycer’s second takeaway encompasses the practicality of the competition. “I was surprised at how much two other people and I were able to accomplish in 72 hours. When we started, we barely knew what a forever chemical was. We knew nothing of water quality standards, but by the end of it we had a really good idea of what they are and created a strategy for implementing technology based off what a water quality company had been doing and target three cities in less than three days,” he said.

Competing in this challenge gave Baycer a greater appreciation for his JD and MBA degrees and the impact he will be able to make with his knowledge from both.

“It does not matter what type of law you practice; you need to know data and business principles some way. There is a lot of law that is implicated in water quality and its regulations, and it is increasingly integrated in areas of business. I was able to see this firsthand with this challenge,” he said.

Baycer’s next challenge begins when he competes with Duquesne University students and those at other higher education institutions, including Carnegie Mellon University, the University of Pittsburgh and West Virginia University, at the 2024 Super Analytics Challenge. The competition is similarly situated to the Xylem challenge, but topic has shifted to employment and development opportunity.

Baycer said, “Over the next few months, my team—which will be comprised of students across universities and academic disciplines—will research, explore and present a solution on the topic. Additionally, we will have access to workshops, coaching sessions, and other opportunities made available by the resources of the five universities.” ■



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# Appellate Moot Court Updates

## Students Advance to Final Four in 30th Annual NatTel Moot Court Competition

The Duquesne Kline School of Law Appellate Moot Court Board (AMCB) sent two teams to compete in the prestigious 30th Annual NatTel Moot Court Competition at The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, in Washington, D.C., Feb. 9-10. Many of the judges were D.C.-based practitioners specializing in telecom and regulatory issues. This year's problem involved the

intersection of administrative law, telecommunications, regulatory power, and the First Amendment.

The team of Jason Whiting, 3E, and Megan Penn, 2L, advanced to the final four, narrowly losing to George Washington University School of Law in the semifinal round. Whiting and Penn also won the coveted Best Brief award.

The team of Daniel Kennedy, 2L, Olivia Bondi, 2L, and Emma Romig,

2L, had strong showings against the University of Virginia School of Law and the eventual winners, New York University Law School. Along the way, the AMCB teams faced teams from The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law, American University Washington College of Law and the University of Colorado Law School. The teams were coached by Professor Adam Tragone, L'16. ■

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## Students Earn Awards at National Appellate Advocacy Competition

The Appellate Moot Court Board sent two teams to compete in the prestigious ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition—Las Vegas regional Feb. 15-17. Thirty-one teams from across the country competed at the competition.

After arguing on and off brief four times, Duquesne Kline School of Law's team of Edward Walsh, 3L, Alex Giorgetti, 2L, and Reilly Wagner, 2L, advanced to the semi-final round where they lost in a very close split decision. Along the way, the team beat teams from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Law, University of Chicago Kent School of Law and University of Southern Illinois Law School. The team also earned an award for writing the fourth Best Brief in the competition.

Duquesne Kline School of Law's team of Madison Lawrie, 2L, Annabelle LaRosa, 2L, and Andrew Hill, 2L, had three impressive rounds of competition, which included beating a strong team from University of Illinois Chicago, but narrowly failed to advance to the round of 16. In addition, out of over 90 advocates at the competition, Madison Lawrie received an award for being one of the top 10 advocates. The teams were coached by Professor Erin Karsman, who also directs the Appellate Moot Court program. ■



## Students make it to Sweet 16 of Thurgood Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition

Third-year Appellate Moot Court Board students Logan Bennett and Jesse Nelms had an impressive showing at the Thurgood Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition, hosted by the Federal Bar Association in Washington, D.C., March 22-24. Bennett and Nelms advanced to the Sweet Sixteen round out of 40 total teams before narrowly losing in a close contest against a strong

team from UCLA.

The team argued before state and federal judges, skilled federal litigators and experienced attorneys over two days, receiving strong commendation for their exceptional advocacy skills. The team was coached by Devon Ferris, L'16. ■

## Team Competes in Prestigious 32nd Annual Duberstein Bankruptcy Moot Court Competition

After applying to compete at the 32nd Annual Duberstein Bankruptcy Competition, the Appellate Moot Court Board was invited to send a team to compete in the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, Fourth Circuit and D.C. Circuit's "mini" regional bankruptcy moot court competition. The regional competition is hosted by the American College of Bankruptcy and the American Bankruptcy Institute and took place Feb. 19 in Washington, D.C. Winning both on and off-brief in the two preliminary rounds, Duquesne Kline School of Law's team of Jim Vinski, 3L, Cateri Christinis, 3L, and Samantha Tipton, 3L, advanced to the final round, bringing home second place.

After a second-place finish at the regional competition, the same team of Vinski, Christinis, and Tipton competed at the 32nd Annual Duberstein Bankruptcy Moot Court Competition—the first time in Appellate Moot Court Board's history. Duquesne Kline School of Law argued on and off brief for a total of three times during the preliminary rounds and beat 36 other teams to advance to the two octo-final rounds as the fifth-place seed. Notably, Christinis won a best advocate



award, one of five given out of more than 100 students.

The team was coached by Duquesne Kline School of Law Appellate Moot Court Board alumna and past president, Professor Amy Kerlin, L'18, a bankruptcy attorney at Reed Smith. ■

## Dean Jerome Prince Memorial Evidence Competition

A talented team from the Duquesne Kline Appellate Moot Court Board consisting of Jennifer Murray, 3L, Morgan Null, 3L, and Andrew Lawrence, 3E, competed at the prestigious 39th annual Dean Jerome Prince Memorial Evidence Competition. The competition took place April 4-6, in Brooklyn, N.Y. Murray, Null, and Lawrence performed exceptionally well, just narrowly missing advancement. The team was coached by Kate Montgomery, L'16. ■

## Duquesne Kline School of Law Shines at Prestigious 31st Annual Judge John R. Brown Admiralty Moot Court Competition

Two teams from Duquesne Kline School of Law showcased their talent and preparation at the 31st Annual Judge John R. Brown Admiralty Moot Court Competition, held April 11-13 in Seattle, Wash. The 3L team, composed of Olivia Donia and Mari Miller, demonstrated exceptional advocacy skills and legal acumen throughout the competition, facing teams from the University of Houston Law Center, Roger Williams University School of Law and Washington University School of Law (St. Louis). Meanwhile, the 2L team, featuring Brian Davis, Makenzie Violette and Dylan Walczak, exemplified the promise and potential of rising legal scholars, facing teams from Charleston School of Law, University of Florida Levin College of Law and South Texas College of Law Houston. Among the highlights of the competition was Olivia Donia's stellar performance, earning her the Fifth Place Best Oral Advocate award out of a pool of 92 individual competitors. The competition, which saw participation from 32 teams representing 20 law schools nationwide, presented a challenging case in admiralty law, involving a whale-watching tour operator seeking a declaratory judgment regarding liability in a serious passenger injury incident aboard one of its tour boats. Martin McKown, L'15, was a coach for the Admiralty Competition. ■



Left to right: Marissa Miller, 3E, Dylan Walczak, 2L, Martin McKown, L'15, Olivia Donia, 3L, Brian Davis, 2L, and Makenzie Violette, 2L.



## BLSA hosts “The Scoop”

“The Scoop” was a panel event hosted by the Duquesne Kline chapter of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA), a national organization that promotes the needs and goals of Black law students and aims to encourage change in the legal community. The panel consisted of four Black attorneys who are a part of the Pittsburgh legal community, ranging from academia to in-house counsel, big law and public interest. Students were able to hear about each of their unique experiences and ask questions as they embark on their legal education journey. It was an informative event that allowed attorneys and students to connect on a more personal level. The Duquesne Kline BLSA chapter



strives to create an impactful legal education experience for all students so they can assist in helping to increase the number of Black attorneys in the Pittsburgh legal community. ■



### LEGGE CON BRIO RETURNS

On Feb. 27, the Duquesne Italian American Law Society (DIALS) hosted the first Legge con Brio since the COVID-19 pandemic. Students, faculty and alumni participated and performed to raise money for Panucci's Promise to purchase therapeutic chairs and support chemotherapy patients at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital. This year's event raised \$2,570 and featured musical acts, raffles, an Italian bake sale, and the wit and wisdom of our beloved emcees, Professors Joseph Sabino Mistick and John T. Rago. DIALS plays bocce, hosts scopa tournaments and connects students over a shared love of Italian American culture, heritage, food and its connection with the legal community. ■

## Alumni Share Experiences with Leadership Fellows

The Duquesne Kline Leadership Fellows Program had an all-star panel of alumni visit the School of Law to share their leadership journeys with students. The Hon. Maureen P. Kelly, L'87, Magistrate Judge, United States District Court; Charlotte Jefferies, L'80, a leader in the field of healthcare law while serving as a Senior Partner at Horty Springer and Mattern; Jon Perry, L'91, partner at Rosen & Perry; and Alan Braverman, L'75, retired Senior Executive Vice President, Secretary and General Counsel of The Walt Disney Company, shared their heartfelt wisdom with Duquesne Kline aspiring lawyer leaders. ■



## High School Students Join Annual Future Voices of the People Event

Duquesne Kline hosted its third annual Future Voices of the People event on March 14. More than 130 high school students visited from 10 school districts—Aliquippa Junior/Senior High School, Baldwin Senior High School, Brentwood Junior-Senior High School, Central Catholic High School, Imani Christian Academy, Lincoln Park High School, Oakland Catholic High School, Propel Andrew Street High School Homestead, Steel Valley High School, Westinghouse High School, West Mifflin Area High School and McKeesport Area High School—to learn about the journey from undergrad education to law. They toured Duquesne Kline School of Law and joined in a law school classroom experience.

We thank the Hon. Dwayne D. Woodruff, L'88, and the Hon. Cynthia Baldwin, L'80, for welcoming our visitors, and our other alumni who joined us to meet these students and explained the role and societal function of lawyers. We also thank our many Duquesne Kline School of Law student volunteers who made this event a success. ■



# Mock Trial Competition Updates

## Buffalo–Niagara Mock Trial Competition

Duquesne Kline team Ben Fisher, Emily Buchman, Victoria Thorpe and Stefan Hoffman, supported by Abby Hudock, advanced to quarterfinals in the 2023 Buffalo–Niagara Mock Trial Competition this past fall. The team faced off with Pace University, Ohio Northern University and the University of Pennsylvania in preliminary rounds, sweeping two of the three ballots and thereby securing their advancement. The Dukes were narrowly defeated by the runner-up of the competition, University of Missouri–Kansas City School of Law. The Duquesne Kline team finished seventh out of 30 total teams in this national trial competition. ■



## Team Advances to Semifinals at American Association for Justice Advocacy Competition

Victoria Thorp, Emily Buchman, Anna Donnelly and Emily Rossetti (pictured) of Duquesne Kline advanced to semifinals at the American Association for Justice (AAJ) 2024 Student Trial Advocacy Competition in March, where they were defeated by Drexel University Thomas R. Kline School of Law. A special congratulations to Buchman, who earned a rare perfect ballot in Round 2.

Alex Giatras, Jordan Jiles, Antonio Cheetham and Megan Penn were narrowly eliminated. They defeated Massachusetts School of Law at Andover and Western New England, winning two of three ballots in each round, but lost the round to Drexel (who went on to win the region) by a slim point margin. ■



## 3L Team Advances at Texas Young Lawyers National Trial Competition Regionals

The Duquesne Kline 3L team of Emma Betz, Abby Hudock and Stefan Hoffman went undefeated in the preliminary rounds, besting Pennsylvania State University, Dickinson, Seton Hall and the University of Pennsylvania to advance to the semifinals in Philadelphia.

The 2L team of Megan Koma, Leigha Pertz and Nick Spinelli competed well, but unfortunately did not advance beyond the preliminary rounds. ■



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## Dukes defeat Akron at Academy of Trial Lawyers Mock Trial Competition

Dominic Hite, Melissa Zentz, Corinne Chaplin and Chantal Naum presented a strong defense case in the Academy of Trial Lawyers Mock Trial Competition in Pittsburgh, Pa. besting a competitive plaintiff team from Akron School of Law. The competition, in which students use a case file from an actual civil case, featured guest expert witnesses, required thorough preparation by the advocates. The Hon. District Judge Patricia L. Dodge of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania presided over the trial. ■

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## Dukes Advances to Octo-finals in South Texas Competition

The Duquesne Kline team advanced to the octo-finals at the South Texas Challenge, one of the toughest national invitational competitions in the country. Unfortunately, they were narrowly defeated by UC-Hastings that round.

The Duquesne Kline team of Bella Biancone, Olivia Bondi, Benjamin Fisher and Sydney Sauer faced Ohio Northern, BYU and American University in the preliminary rounds.

A special congratulations to Fisher, who won the Outstanding Advocate award for the preliminary rounds. ■

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR ALUMNI COACHES!

Margaret Cooney, L'18

Taylor Corn, L'18

Bob Daley, L'98

Shreya Desai, L'21

Annette Dohanics, L'20

Anthony Hassey, L'17

David Martin, L'20

Ryan Naumann, L'17

Matthew Newman, L'17

Autumn Pividori-Kitson, L'14

Emily Sanchez-Parodi, BA'17, L'20

A special thanks to  
Pete Giglione, L'02,  
our faculty advisor!





# JURIS Magazine

## Spring 2024 Preview

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### ■ Freedom Behind Bars: First Amendment Rights of Incarcerated Individuals

By Felicia Dusha, Editor-in-Chief

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution protects freedom of speech, the press, assembly and the right to petition the government for a redress of grievances. However, in prison, individuals lose crucial First Amendment rights along with their physical freedom. Currently, incarcerated people “retain only those First Amendment rights that are not inconsistent with their status as a prisoner or with the legitimate penological objectives of the corrections system.” This means that incarcerated persons have no affirmative First Amendment right to interviews with the press and that media representatives are restricted from taking photographs or audio or video recordings of incarcerated people. Over the years, the United States Supreme Court has struggled to establish a consistent standard for the restriction of First Amendment rights in prisons, leaving certain issues unresolved to this day.

### ■ Waiting in Limbo: Unacceptable Conditions in County Jails

By John Brophy, Features Editor

Across the county, individuals accused of crimes are held in county jails while awaiting further proceedings. A county jail houses individuals from initial arrest to the final disposition of their case, with the potential that some or all of a sentence will be served inside the jail. Unfortunately, these institutions are hazardous to those who are still cloaked in a presumption of innocence, awaiting some finality in their case. County jails across the nation have been found to be unsanitary, understaffed, and poorly run, and have led to countless tragic in-custody deaths. With an ever-rising population of individuals held in local institutions, it is critical to examine the conditions of these institutions and the impact they have on the community at large.

### ■ Alabama Supreme Court Holds IVF Embryos to Be Considered Children

By Amelia Trello, Features Editor

On Feb. 16, 2024, the Alabama Supreme Court held that frozen embryos are considered children under Alabama state law and “those who destroy them could be held liable for wrongful death.” This case centered around the alleged death of embryos kept in a cryogenic nursery. In December 2020, a patient from a center’s adjoining hospital wing wandered into a fertility clinic through an unsecured doorway, entered

the cryogenic nursery and removed several embryos. This resulted in the embryos becoming nonviable. The couples sought punitive wrongful death damages under Alabama’s Wrongful Death of a Minor Act. The all-Republican Alabama Supreme Court held that “the Wrongful Death of a Minor Act applie[d] on its face to all unborn children, without limitation.” The ruling raised questions about the future of IVF in Alabama as well as other states.

### ■ Retail Spyware—The Data Risks of Purchasing Items From Temu

By Jack Bradley, Blog Editor

On the heels of the Super Bowl, many people are questioning how a company selling cheap “knock-off” items can afford millions of dollars’ worth of ad time. The answer may be startling. In addition to employing questionable labor practices, Temu has allegedly committed an array of privacy violations that has given the online shopping platform access to “literally everything ... [on a user’s] phone.” A complaint filed in federal court alleges that Whaleco Inc., under the trade name Temu, “has secretly and invasively amassed massive amounts of extremely private information and data about its users by tracking their activity on third-party websites” through its in-app browser. Until lawmakers take charge, Temu will continue to obtain and use consumer data, setting a dangerous precedent for online retailers in the future.

### ■ For Pitt’s Sake, Change the Jones Act!

By Edward Walsh, Blog Editor

Historically, Pittsburgh has been a center of business and commerce thanks to its geography. Pittsburgh sits at the head of the Ohio River, a branch of the interconnected Mississippi-Missouri River system, the longest connection of navigable rivers in the entire world. This is a tremendous economic asset. It is 10 times cheaper to ship goods via water than it is over land. This simple fact has given Pittsburgh an advantage over other cities in terms of economic development. This asset was largely taken away from Pittsburgh with the passage of the Jones Act, a 1920s protectionist law requiring ships travelling between American ports to be American made, American built and American owned. After the passage of the Jones Act, shipping costs rose, and producers moved their operations away to where they could get the cheapest shipping costs. As the global economy changes in favor of domestic supply chains, Pittsburgh’s geography can once again work to its advantage, if this century-old law will let it.

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## ■ Environmental Personhood: The New Frontier in the Environmental Rights Movement?

By Hannah Dean, Staff Writer

The concept of environmental personhood, which grants environmental entities like rivers or mountains the status and rights of a legal person, emerged as a legal theory in the United States in the 1970s. Initially, this concept sought to address challenges with establishing standing in environmental litigation by giving rights directly to the environment itself. Since then, environmental personhood has been used to enshrine constitutional protections for the rights of nature in Ecuador and Bolivia, protect a saltwater lagoon in Spain and sea turtles in Panama, and even create a Bill of Rights for Lake Erie. Supporters of these laws applaud their potential as an innovative approach to environmental protection amidst the worsening effects of climate change. However, others are concerned that these changes are largely symbolic and will not contribute significantly to protection or restoration efforts.

## ■ How Pennsylvania is Leading Efforts to Support Incarcerated Mothers

By Jenna Anderson, Staff Writer

Over the past four decades, the rate of incarceration for women in the U.S. has increased tenfold. As the number of incarcerated women rises, so too does the number of inmates who are pregnant and/or mothers of young children. In Pennsylvania, the number of women in state and federal prisons located within the commonwealth doubled between 1990 and 2021. The significant increase in the number of incarcerated mothers poses unique challenges and necessitates a specialized response. In Pennsylvania, pilot programs and legislative proposals that holistically support maternal bonding within the criminal justice system have shown promising results and can serve as a model for other states to follow.

## ■ Mass Incarceration Reveals Massive Disparity in Justice System

By Elizabeth Stern, Staff Writer

Over 1.2 million people are in the United States prison system. Mass incarceration levels have risen 500% in the last 40 years, a number that is forecasted to keep growing. Sentences within the prison system have a tendency to be long—1 in 7 people in the U.S. who are in prison are serving a life sentence. These startling statistics indicate a larger human rights issue of discrimination and neglect within the justice system. The National Library of Medicine considers mass incarceration a public health issue due to communities disproportionately affected suffering in social health and physical illness. Significantly, Black male Americans are 3.6 times more likely to be imprisoned than white men of their same age. Mass incarceration is a human rights issue used to facilitate social disparities.

## ■ The Oldest Form of Alternative Dispute Resolution: Trial by Combat

By Brian Davis, Staff Writer

Trial by combat demands appear sporadically despite litigants never engaging in the practice in American history. These demands provide a curious look into the way in which some legal processes are not annulled, but simply abandoned. The Ninth Amendment, applicable to the states via the 14th Amendment, is similarly abandoned by modern legal curriculum. But it is where trial by combat is couched within the Constitution. Preserving rights retained by the people in 1791 as flowing from British common law, trial by combat theoretically falls within the ambit of the Ninth because Parliament did not abolish the practice until 1819. The framers had duels; it is not inconceivable to suggest they preserved trial by combat. Yet, it has never once happened in America. How do we as a legal community rectify those laws and practices that, for better or worse, disappear?

## ■ The Impact of Uncovered Coal Cars on Our Right to Clean Air

By Mia Hoetzlein-Sirman, Staff Writer

Clean air should be regarded as a fundamental human right because there is an overwhelming amount of evidence that air pollution is heavily linked with adverse health effects. Despite this there continues to be lax environmental regulation that allows citizens to be exposed to unhealthy levels of toxins. The transportation of uncovered coal across the nation is a major air pollution problem that often affects the poorest communities the most substantially. Regular exposure to coal dust causes high levels of DNA damage, impacts on birth weights of babies, and increased occurrences of high blood pressure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. Coal is mainly transported by uncovered rail cars, allowing thousands of pounds of coal to pollute the air and land near train tracks. Numerous groups are calling for the EPA to establish legislation to protect the communities by railroads from this pollution.

## ■ Exploring What Constitutes A “True Threat” Under The First Amendment Following The Scotus Decision In *Counterman V. Colorado*

By Jurry Bajwah, Staff Writer

Determining what constitutes a “true threat” under the First Amendment is a complex legal issue that has significant implications for potential victims. One camp believes that a true threat under the First Amendment requires proof that the defendant had a subjective understanding of the threatening nature of his or her statement. In contrast, another camp is of the opinion that a true threat requires a demonstration of an objective understanding of the nature of the threat under the First Amendment; in other words, what a reasonable person would construe. In *Counterman v. Colorado*, the Colorado Supreme Court denied review of the defendant’s conviction for making a true threat to a musician, after the Colorado Court of Appeals affirmed the conviction under the objective test. The United States Supreme Court granted certiorari. In a 7-2 decision, SCOTUS upheld the subjective test, seemingly vindicating the subjective test camp.



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## **THANK YOU** for Your 2024 Day of Giving Support

Our 2024 Day of Giving, held on Feb. 7, was a success because of you! Your extraordinary Day of Giving support and generous donations enabled us to raise \$129,181 for our Law School Vision Fund, allowing us to serve our students' needs, recruit excellent faculty, uplift our community and get the word out about our exceptional law school!

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University raised more than any other school or college on campus and broke our previous Day of Giving record of \$83,149! Thank you to everyone who gave so generously and to our Duquesne Kline Advisory Board and Emeritus Board members who came together like never before to enable our unmatched success. ■

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