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NOTES FROM MICHIGAN LAW

Beyond the Stacks

The Modern Evolution of Law Libraries

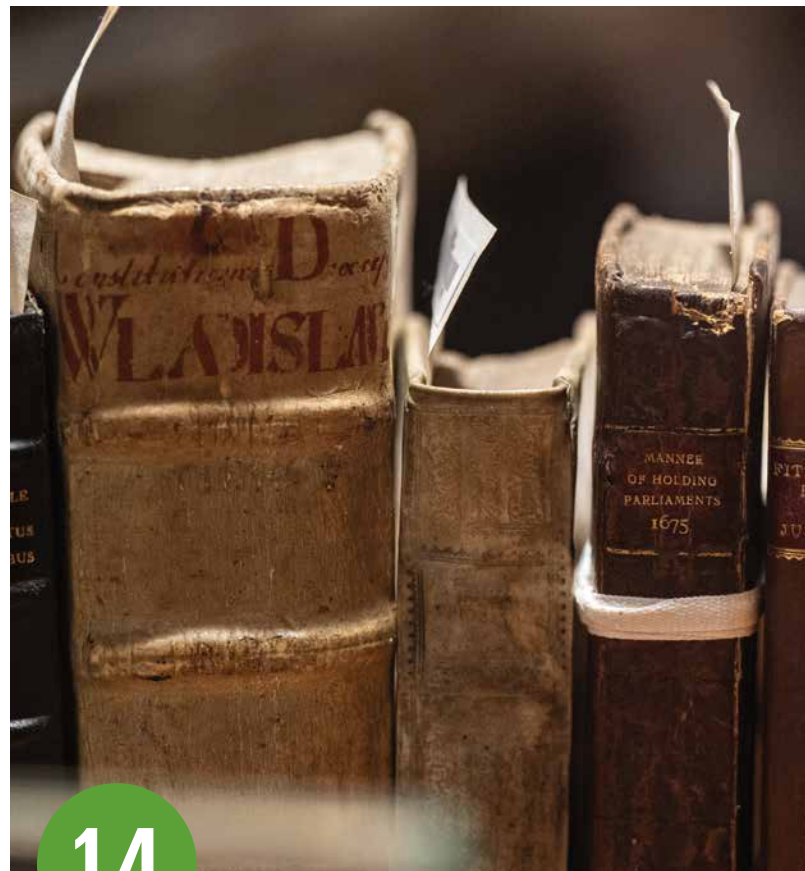


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“The legal academy has been turning to empirical work in recent years to get a better handle on what the world looks like and the impacts of legal change and legal reform.”

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Michigan Law professors cited in US Supreme Court opinions during the 2023–2024 term

Vidal v. Elster: **Jessica Litman**, John F. Nickoll Professor of Law

Smith v. Arizona: **Richard Friedman**, Alene and Allan F. Smith Professor of Law, and **Samuel Gross**, Thomas and Mabel Long Professor Emeritus of Law

Ohio v. Environmental Protection Agency: **Nicholas Bagley**, Thomas G. Long Professor of Law

Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo: **Christopher Walker**, professor of law

McCrory v. Alabama: **Imran Syed, '11**, clinical assistant professor of law and co-director of the Michigan Innocence Clinic

McElrath v. Georgia: **Jerold H. Israel**, Alene and Allan F. Smith Professor Emeritus of Law

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Number of times the Supreme Court has cited Emeritus Professor Jerold Israel's cornerstone treatise, *Criminal Procedure*

“When a ship is going down, the rats begin to flee. The same is true when it comes to the downfall of a powerful public official.”

—Professor from Practice **Barbara L. McQuade, '91**, in a *Bloomberg* op-ed about the federal indictment of New York City Mayor Eric Adams. Before joining the Law School, McQuade was a US attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, where she oversaw the corruption case against former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick.



The British Academy elected **Catharine A. MacKinnon**, the Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law, as an international fellow—one of just three law-related international fellows honored in 2024. MacKinnon specializes in sex equality issues under international and domestic law and pioneered the legal claim for sexual harassment. She is among the most widely cited legal scholars in the English language and has authored more than a dozen books and scores of journal articles. Her approaches to equality, pornography, and hate speech have had worldwide influence.



Justice for Innocence Clinic Clients

Michigan Innocence Clinic client LaVone Hill was released from prison in October (pictured) following an investigation by the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Conviction Integrity Unit. Hill was convicted in 2002, in part due to police corruption, of two murders he did not commit. The prosecutor’s office has said it will not retry Hill. In August, the Michigan Supreme Court overturned the 2006 conviction of Milton “Chazlee” Lemons in the 2005 death of her infant daughter—an alleged case of shaken baby syndrome—and granted her a new trial. The clinic has represented Lemons since 2015.

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William R. Bay, ’78, became president of the American Bar Association in August for a one-year term. Bay is the third Michigan Law graduate to hold the role in the last five years, joining **Patricia Lee Refo, ’83** (2020–2021), and **Reginald M. Turner Jr., ’87** (2021–2022).

An eight-person delegation from the Vietnam Ministry of Public Security, led by Major General Do Anh Tuan, the director of the Department of Training, visited the Law Quad in August. The group met with **Eric Christiansen**, assistant dean for international affairs, and other members of the Law School administration who focus on international academic programming and other foreign engagement.





Alumni Reconnect in the Quad

Law School alumni celebrating milestone anniversaries returned for Reunion this fall to share class dinners, catch up with old friends and make new connections in the Law Quad, and take in some football at Michigan Stadium. The Texas Longhorns' victory during the first Reunion weekend ended the Wolverines' 14-game winning streak during Law School Reunions—but the team got back on its feet a week later with a win over the Arkansas State Red Wolves.





BRIEFS

“Laws written decades before the rise of strategies like green stormwater infrastructure or rooftop solar can inadvertently add significant financial or regulatory barriers for socially desirable practices—in some cases, they ban them entirely. We’re proud to partner with Dearborn to support the city in removing barriers and expanding access to tools that save money, improve public health, and address climate change.”

—**Oday Salim**, director of the Law School’s Environmental Law and Sustainability Clinic, in a *Press & Guide* article. The clinic recently announced a partnership with public health officials in Dearborn, Michigan, through which students will provide the city with pro bono services and recommendations related to the city’s environmental laws and ordinances.

Election Engagement on Campus

Michigan Law students with the Michigan Voting Project (MVP), a nonpartisan law student organization, led a Walk to the Polls event on October 31 (pictured), one of the group’s initiatives to increase U-M student participation in the November 5 election.



65+

Students volunteered with the MVP during the fall election season

700+

U-M students registered to vote through MVP efforts

21

Michigan Law students volunteered at polling locations in Ann Arbor



Professor Thomas to Join State's High Court

Kimberly A. Thomas, clinical professor of law, was elected to an eight-year term on the Michigan Supreme Court. "I am so grateful to the people of Michigan for putting their trust in me, and I am looking forward to serving on the Michigan Supreme Court," she says. "I have deeply enjoyed the past two decades teaching the next generation of lawyers and will miss my colleagues and students here at Michigan Law." Thomas is the co-founder of the Law School's Juvenile Justice Clinic and previously taught in the Civil-Criminal Litigation Clinic.



Talking about Free Speech on Campus

Ekow N. Yankah, the Thomas M. Cooley Professor of Law, moderated a panel discussion about the challenges and opportunities of balancing free expression, including the right to protest, with the need to maintain a respectful and inclusive campus environment. Yankah, pictured at right, was joined by **Karima Bennoune**, '94, the Lewis M. Simes Professor of Law; **Jack Bernard**, '96, a lecturer at the Law School and U-M's associate general counsel; and **Don Herzog**, the Edson R. Sunderland Professor of Law.



Leveraging AI in the Law

Patrick Barry, a clinical assistant professor, launched AI for Lawyers and Other Advocates, a new set of online courses that explore the uses and dangers of artificial intelligence. The series is available free of charge for U-M students, alumni, faculty, and staff and can be found on Coursera and Michigan Online.



Historic Fraud in a Nascent Market

By Sharon Morioka

When fraud charges against Sam Bankman-Fried jolted the financial world in December 2022, it capped several frenetic weeks of work for Nina Ruvinsky, '13. She and her colleagues at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC), in parallel with counterparts at the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York (SDNY) and the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), had brought a first-of-its-kind case involving more than \$8 billion stolen from Bankman-Fried's FTX cryptocurrency exchange.

"It was six weeks from the time the company went bankrupt to the time we brought charges. And that time frame was completely unheard of for the CFTC for a complex trading fraud," she says of the case against Bankman-Fried, FTX, and Alameda Research, the digital asset trading firm that he also founded.

Ruvinsky was involved because she had become an expert in cryptocurrency during her short tenure at the CFTC. She joined the organization—an independent agency of the federal government that regulates the derivatives markets—in 2020, knowing next to nothing about cryptocurrency.

"I was assigned a variety of cases, one of which was a crypto case," she says of her early days with CFTC. "It was the first case that we brought where the company—Polymarket—was operating directly on the blockchain. And I didn't know what the blockchain was."

But she quickly got up to speed, learning from experts at the CFTC about how to apply laws that had been on the books as far back as the 1970s to the area of cryptocurrency. As a result, Polymarket, a prediction market platform, paid a \$1.4 million penalty for illegally operating in the United States. Another result: Ruvinsky was hooked and jumped at the opportunity to become an expert in this relatively new field.

Then came the Bankman-Fried case.

The CFTC's complaint alleged that FTX held itself out as "the safest and easiest way to buy and sell crypto," according to a press release issued in December 2022, and represented that customers' assets were held in "custody" by FTX and segregated from FTX's assets. However, Bankman-Fried's digital trading firm, Alameda Research, routinely accepted and held those assets and commingled them with other Alameda funds. Bankman-Fried and others also used customer funds for their own activities, including luxury real estate purchases and political contributions.

"They took people's deposits on the exchange and spent them as if they were their own money," says Ruvinsky. The complaint also alleged that FTX employees created features in the FTX programming code that favored Alameda and allowed it to execute transactions even when it did not have sufficient funds available.

An investigation in record time

Ruvinsky, then a senior trial attorney and co-chair of the CFTC's Digital Assets Task Force in the Division of Enforcement, says news broke about problems at FTX after an article on the crypto news site CoinDesk alleged a liquidity crisis at the Alameda hedge fund.

"It started with a news article about a leaked balance sheet," says Ruvinsky. "At first, no one seemed sure what was happening. What was the big deal about a leaked balance sheet?" But in less than two days, after a series of activities that included freezing of customer withdrawals and a failed acquisition of FTX, the company was in bankruptcy.

"The Southern District of New York and the CFTC as well as the SEC were all moving quickly to identify and interview witnesses," says Ruvinsky. "As I was on the way to New York for the first witness interview, we got the call that FTX was filing bankruptcy and that all the assets were being frozen, that Sam Bankman-Fried was stepping down as CEO of the company, and that an emergency CEO was being appointed. All of this was happening very, very quickly."

The quick time frame for the investigation was due, in part, to the fact that billions of dollars were on the platform and no one could access their money. Ruvinsky and her colleagues and counterparts had a long to-do list to figure out where the money was, whether assets needed to be frozen or preserved, and who the responsible parties were. Fortunately, many of the people involved in FTX, but not Bankman-Fried, came forward to share what they knew with the CFTC as well as the SDNY and the SEC, which had opened parallel cases.

"There were people who came in to speak with us after a search warrant was executed on their home and their devices," she says. "There were people who were going through mental health episodes, people who were worried they would always be associated with this. These were, in some cases, very accomplished people whose lives and careers were blown up."

Over the course of six weeks, Ruvinsky spent most of her time in New York as she and her counterparts interviewed people, sifted through documents, and quickly pieced the story together. The CFTC worked cooperatively with its federal law enforcement and regulatory partners.

"We prepared our complaint and went through an internal process to have it approved. We didn't want to do anything that was going to interfere with SDNY's covert actions but were ready to file and go public when the SDNY was. As soon as they made the arrest of Bankman-Fried, we filed our cases."

A historic, "generational" fraud case

In November 2023, the jury in *United States v. Samuel Bankman-Fried* found him guilty of several counts of fraud and money laundering, and in March 2024, Bankman-Fried was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

After Bankman-Fried was convicted and sentenced in the criminal action, Ruvinsky continued work on the civil cases against him and the three cooperators who were co-defendants in the CFTC action: Caroline Ellison, Nishad Singh, and Gary Wang. They agreed to liability on the Commodities Exchange Act charges on the civil side, including permanent injunctive relief. On August 8, 2024, the CFTC announced that the US District Court for the Southern District of New York entered a consent order of permanent injunction and other equitable relief in its case against FTX and Alameda. The court ordered them to pay a historic \$12.7 billion to their customers and victims.

"I really learned so much in working on this case and got to see some of the best people in the world in this area of law at work," she says. "It was just the best training ground and learning opportunity you could possibly have. I also had a really tremendous opportunity to be a subject matter expert, because I had been doing crypto all the time. So, in addition to learning from the best, I got to contribute in a valuable way."

Ruvinsky appreciates the support that the team received from the independent CFTC commissioners, including Kristin Johnson, '03.

"All of the Division of Enforcement's recommendations for enforcement must be approved by the commission, which is made up of five commissioners, including Commissioner Johnson," says Ruvinsky. "Our commission was engaged and bent over backwards to make themselves available at all times, morning or night, and allow us to keep up with our counterparts. They made it possible for us to act as quickly as we did."

As she reflects on the case, she also sees how it has affected the world of cryptocurrency and the law.

"It was a moment—not just because of the volume of the fraud, the billions of dollars that people lost—but this generational moment that made people really second guess crypto. I think there are still people whose impression of the industry is colored by that. And along with some other events, it brought on the 'crypto winter,'" she says, referring to a period of lower cryptocurrency prices. "I think in some ways we're still responding to that."



Restitution for Victims of Madoff's Fraud

By Sharon Morioka

In his first job out of law school, John Tepedino, '04, went to work for Debevoise & Plimpton, the New York firm where he had spent his 3L summer. It was a great experience that allowed him to immerse himself in the particulars of US and cross-border corporate investigations and securities litigation.

But after seven years, it was time for a change. So when an opportunity at Windels Marx arose, he made the move. The new job would open the door to bankruptcy litigation, a new area of practice for him, as well as a roster of compelling clients.

Among those clients was one that came with a striking backstory: the trustee for the liquidation of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities. In other words, Tepedino would work on behalf of victims of one of the largest financial frauds in history.

The trustee for the liquidation, Irving Picard, is with BakerHostetler and has retained Windels as special counsel since 2009. As part of that arrangement, Tepedino has led several adversary proceedings for the victims of the fraud.

While the Madoff case is one for the history books, Tepedino says the work is essentially the same as the work he does for other clients.

"The nuts and bolts of it are like any other bankruptcy litigation. It's recovery of estate assets to make creditors whole," he says. But, he acknowledges, "my takeaway from this particular work is the very high-profile nature of it, the size of the fraud, and the large number of cases."

Starting out

Tepedino arrived at Michigan Law on track to becoming a litigator, and he followed that path to his first job at Debevoise & Plimpton. There, he was involved in corporate investigations, such as government or internal investigations, as well as securities litigations, unfair competition cases, and cases under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. He often collaborated with a large team of lawyers, taking a specific slice of the overall work.

The firm also supported his pro bono interests, which included litigation concerning essential services denied to the hearing impaired and a schizophrenia patient as well as securing SSI disability benefits for indigent clients. Tepedino says these cases allowed for more direct client contact and responsibility than young lawyers typically experience on cases for paying clients.

When he joined Windels, a midsize firm with four offices in and around New York City, he expanded his practice to include bankruptcy litigation and began to take on more of a leadership role at the firm.

“One of the very attractive things about the job was that I could have more ownership over things,” Tepedino says of the firm, where he recently made partner. “The idea of litigating my own cases and being able to understand and learn every aspect of how to do that was an important step to take.”

Windels Marx was hiring bankruptcy litigators at the time because of the quantity of Madoff cases. Initially, Tepedino wasn't sure he was a good fit for the job.

“I hadn't done any bankruptcy work before I came to Windels,” he says. “But as I talked to them about the position, it was clear that it was a litigation focus. There are different statutes involved and a different court, but it's the same skill set,” he says. “Part of my journey was learning how these sorts of cases work.”

Tepedino also works on other bankruptcy matters, including representing bankruptcy trustees or creditors, and other aspects of liquidations and reorganizations. In addition, he does straight commercial litigation, often in the New York Commercial Division in state court. While his clients at Windels are generally smaller than those he worked with at Debevoise, the work itself remains interesting and intellectually challenging.

“[Working on the Madoff cases has allowed me] to continue to progress as a litigator. I've learned much more about bankruptcy since I've been at Windels because it's a very significant practice area for the firm.”

A historic case

When Tepedino started at Windels Marx in 2011, the firm had been working on the Madoff case for two years, following the financier's 2008 arrest and Picard's appointment as trustee under the Securities Investor Protection Act. One of the Windels Marx attorneys was appointed the Chapter 7 trustee for Madoff's individual bankruptcy in 2009.

“As part of that initial entree, my firm was retained as special counsel,” says Tepedino. “So we work very closely with Mr. Picard's main counsel, which is BakerHostetler.”

It isn't unusual for a bankruptcy trustee in a large case to retain other attorneys for a variety of reasons, such as to avoid a conflict or needing a lawyer in a different country—something that has been required with a number of Madoff defendants around the world. And although Madoff died in 2021 while serving a 150-year prison sentence, the complex process of recovering funds for victims of his fraud remains ongoing.

“The actual amount of principal was about \$17.5 billion,” says Tepedino. “And in terms of monies returned to investors by the Madoff trustee, I believe it's just about \$14 billion. For a Ponzi scheme, it is almost inconceivable to recover and return that amount of money. You get 10 or 15 percent, maybe, because it's all been dissipated. It's gone. But in terms of the effort overall, that is already an amazingly unusual and positive result, with more to be done. And it's very rewarding to be a part of.”

While he knows his work in the Madoff case will eventually end, Tepedino says he is excited to see what comes next.

“I've done a lot of interesting work,” he says. “I spent my first summer in law school working in the family courts in the Bronx. I thought that was a highlight. Like any other career, you want to think the next thing is potentially the most interesting.”



Beyond the Stacks

The Modern Evolution of Law Libraries

By James Weir

There is a certain timelessness to the sensory experience of the Reading Room: the scratching and shuffling of paperwork, the muffled thump of a closing book, the dull hum of fans in the warmer months. But in recent years, something decidedly more modern has joined in the chorus: the quiet staccato of laptop keyboards.

The emergence of computers and the internet has reshaped nearly every aspect of how libraries operate. At the same time, trends in legal education and the profession have led to changes in collections management, research-based curriculum, scholarship, the student experience, and other aspects of how law libraries support their institutions and the public more broadly.

In the following pages, *Law Quadrangle* speaks with three directors of Michigan Law's library—representing more than eight decades of cumulative service to the Law School and its faculty and students—as well as alumni who have served in leadership roles at the law libraries at Boston University and the University of Notre Dame, to discuss these trends; their impact on students, faculty, and society; and the enduring value of law libraries.

The arrival of digital databases

Academic law libraries are in constant motion, adapting to the times and to the evolving needs of the law schools they support. Michigan Law's library has seen many iterations since it was first housed in the Law Department building at the northwest corner of what is now the Diag. It later moved to the Law Quad in 1931, and its growing demand for space eventually led to the library's underground expansion that opened 50 years later.

In recent history, one trend has most profoundly affected law libraries and legal research: the increasing availability of online information. Decades before smartphones became handheld gateways to the internet, developments in computer technology had already begun to reshape nearly every aspect of how libraries operate.

One of the first signs of major change was the arrival of early computer terminals dedicated to legal research at academic and legal institutions in the late 1970s.

"Law librarians were very affected by the development of Lexis and Westlaw because almost from the very beginning, they became a place where we could do a lot of our research," says **Margaret Leary**, director of Michigan Law's library from 1984 to 2011. "It took some time for them to build their databases backwards, but by providing statutes and case law they offered most of the primary material that we had to work with. Then they fairly quickly added secondary material and became as current as anything we could get in paper."

Barbara Garavaglia, '80, who worked in the Law Library for 32 years, succeeded Leary as the Law Library's director in 2011 until her retirement in

2020. She recalls that few computer terminals were available in the early days of digital databases, and it was a very different experience from using an online resource today: There was only one computer when she was a student at Michigan Law—a dedicated Lexis terminal—and each student was limited to 30 minutes of use per year.

As the research environment began to migrate from the physical realm to be at least partially digital, collections development became more focused on acquiring access to digital databases with content curated by publishers, rather than a traditional approach to collection building managed in-house on a title-by-title basis. And while some digital resources proved their value from the beginning, library leadership had to regularly evaluate the cost and effectiveness of different digital products as they were developed.

Garavaglia recalls meeting with Leary to discuss CD-ROMs, which some libraries had started to buy and incorporate into their collections in the early days of electronic resources. "The different CDs had different software, and updating and maintaining them involved a lot of rigmarole. Many of them weren't even very robust compared to the full text and Boolean search capabilities of Lexis and Westlaw," Garavaglia says. "So we didn't invest very much in CDs because we thought something better would come around."

As digital technology evolved and widely available consumer-facing tools like Google augmented expensive institutional databases, these technologies connected the user to troves of freely available information online—some of it reliable, more of it less so.

This development has required librarians to regularly navigate the large amount of incorrect or outdated information online to find and vet potentially valuable sources of information.



Margaret Leary

Director of the University of Michigan Law Library from 1984 to 2011.

“Librarians are more important than ever—there is so much information so readily available, and you need someone to help you navigate it all and get you to where you can find what you’re looking for from a source that is credible. No matter the format, there is still a real need for libraries and librarians.”

This vetting process means that when someone finds an external electronic resource via the Law School’s library catalog—such as the Civil Rights Litigation Clearinghouse, a public, online repository run by Michigan Law Professor Margo Schlanger—library staff has deemed the information to be trustworthy.

“Historically, legal research skills were learned within a print collection curated by librarians who ensured the substantive reliability and quality of the books, and building and maintaining that physical collection was a structured endeavor requiring expertise, knowledge of the law and legal systems, and how to conduct effective research,” Garavaglia says. “A library collection is an intellectual space, and today the collections that are a mix of print and electronic holdings are just as curated as the print was. While formats continue to evolve and change, the substantive expertise of librarians and the sophisticated work of curation and management remain critical.”

Changing collections, changing staff

The increasing adoption of digital collections also required the library to rethink its staffing and the different responsibilities that came with online databases versus print collections. “We had a staff that was used to processing print items, and that switchover was kind of threatening because many people weren’t going to be needed anymore,” Garavaglia says. “So there was a lot of change in the type of staff that we have had over the years.”

Kincaid Brown, '96, who has worked in the Law Library for 26 years and succeeded Garavaglia as its director in 2020, says this trend has echoed throughout his tenure at the Law School.

“We used to get 10,000 items a month, and that isn’t the case anymore. So overall, we have fewer people who deal with processing materials and getting them to the shelves,” Brown says. “But at the same time, we have more people who deal with public and research services, because libraries have become much more of a service point for legal scholars and members of the public. We have added more public service librarians who provide these services. Our focus is still faculty and students, but we also field all sorts of questions and requests from people all over the world.”

Another change has been the introduction of tasks for library staff that simply didn’t exist in the predigital era. **Ronald Wheeler, ’90**, associate dean of Boston University’s Fineman & Pappas Law Libraries and associate professor of law and legal research, oversees a team entirely dedicated to managing the library’s electronic resources.

“It takes a village to manage all of this electronic information, and we have a robust technical services team,” says Wheeler. “They are constantly fixing online links and troubleshooting problems with vendors when certain databases aren’t working. And then there’s the issue of data security. Some people say, ‘Who needs librarians now that it’s all online?’ Well, we keep things online, secure, and running, and we make sure the right people have access.”

An evolving faculty focus


The increasing availability of online research materials has made it easier for scholars to access information that would have previously required a librarian to locate a print resource. At Michigan, Brown says this has led to changes in the complexity of the faculty research queries that the staff takes on—and to the composition of the library staff.

“Over time, I’ve learned not to assume the old way is better. When I started in legal research, your ability as a librarian was judged by how well you could use print resources. Then the question became: Could you master commercial electronic resources? Then it was about finding more economical ways of doing research—repositories where you could get reliable information on public websites, for example. And now with AI, it’s about learning how to prompt and verify. It’s always been the case of asking databases the right questions but over time using new technologies.”



Dwight King, '80

Emeritus associate director for research and instruction at the University of Notre Dame's Kresge Law Library.



“On the one hand is document delivery, and the requests have gone down just because so much more is easily available to the faculty or students themselves—they don’t even have to get out of their chair to get it,” Brown says. “But on the research side, we still receive an interesting gamut of requests: literature reviews, accumulations of case law on a particular subject, 50-state surveys, or gathering foreign legal materials for comparative research projects. The overall volume of requests has decreased, but the average research project tends to be more complicated.”

Dwight King, '80, emeritus associate director for research and instruction at the University of Notre Dame’s Kresge Law Library, has witnessed similar trends.

“More recent faculty came in with greater research demands, and the research became more involved,” he says. “That has been particularly true for people pursuing things like interdisciplinary and empirical research, as well as international law research.”

Empiricism has become a focus for a number of faculty at Michigan Law—so much so that the library has added two full-time staff dedicated to the discipline. **German Marquez Alcalá**, who joined the library in 2019 as its first research associate for empirical legal studies, sees value in having dedicated staff to assist with data analysis and related empirical work.

“Most student research assistants can only work with a faculty member for a semester or two, and that’s often not long enough to wrap up a complex project. We provide a steady place for them to keep engaging,” he says. “There is value in having institutional memory for these kinds of research activities, especially for multiple projects that spring from one large data source or one grant that turns into several distinct projects.”

Marquez Alcalá emphasizes the critical role that data can play in assembling a compelling argument, legal or otherwise.

“Empirical research can help us understand the implications of public policy changes so we can move in ways that are evidence-based when theory on its own may not have the answers,” he says. “A good example is a project we worked on with

Professor J.J. Prescott related to criminal record expungement in Michigan, which ended up motivating a lot of legislative changes across multiple states. It was really exciting to be a part of that.”

(For more on data-driven research at Michigan Law, read “Empiricism on the Rise” on page 26.)

Managing increasingly complex collections

Every library evolves to support the goals of the institution it serves. At Michigan Law’s library—one of the preeminent legal research libraries in the world—Brown says that they may be more focused on continuing to build a print collection than some other institutions.

“Our collection is ultimately a research collection, and that means we need to be mindful of what people are going to need to use in the future—it’s not just about the new stuff,” says Brown. “So we have been reticent about going online-only for a lot of things. We still collect many things in print that smaller libraries, or even some of our peer libraries, canceled a long time ago. And that’s because we think it’s important for things we’re going to want forever. Who knows what tomorrow will bring for the web, but the print will still be here.”

The longevity and preservation of access to print archives is in contrast to many of the licenses that govern the use and access of digital materials. Some licenses may provide some form of perpetual access, but most function on a subscription-based model where cancellation eliminates access to the digital materials. To complicate matters further, electronic subscriptions tend to be more expensive than their counterparts in print. A few trends are likely driving the costs, Brown says.

“Part of it is that publishers want to stay in business, and so when they price the electronic version, they try to match the print spend. Also, many publishers have been purchased by larger companies that respond to shareholders. And publishers are rightly worried about their disappearing models for selling things and are trying to make money where they can.”

Brown adds that some of the databases justify their costs by doing more than simply replacing the print version and that increasingly advanced search functions and other product features have made certain types of research much more efficient. He points to Lexis and Westlaw as examples.

“You can now search a number of different things that you want together and then filter down to be specific about a particular code section, for example. You can then find commentary about that code as well as secondary sources and regulations related to a specific subsection. That can be done in a matter of minutes, whereas in the old days it might have taken a few hours.”

Michigan Law began to spend more on electronic resources than print for the first time in the 2020s—relatively late compared with similar institutions. Part of that, Brown says, is the Law School’s duty to the state of Michigan as a print repository and archive for state statutes and related materials. But the trend toward electronic materials continues: “The percentage of print has continued to go down precipitously, and that’s not just cancellations—more and more of the print is just not being made,” Brown says.

At Boston University, Wheeler is constantly weighing the print-versus-digital question.

“The first thing we think about is the user. For us, that usually means electronic because that’s what the law firms are using and we want to train our students to use materials the way they will use them in practice,” Wheeler says. “Law firms aren’t buying much in print anymore—it’s expensive and takes up too much real estate. So the percentage of what we purchase in print goes down every year.”

Wheeler says that strategic questions of acquisitions and collections management have shifted for research institutions as space and budget constraints have made it impossible to procure everything for everyone.

“We are going to maintain the research status of our library, and we will continue to build our collection. But the point is access, not ownership. We have other libraries that we partner with here in Boston, and I know other librarians, like Kincaid at Michigan Law. We can get what our people need.”

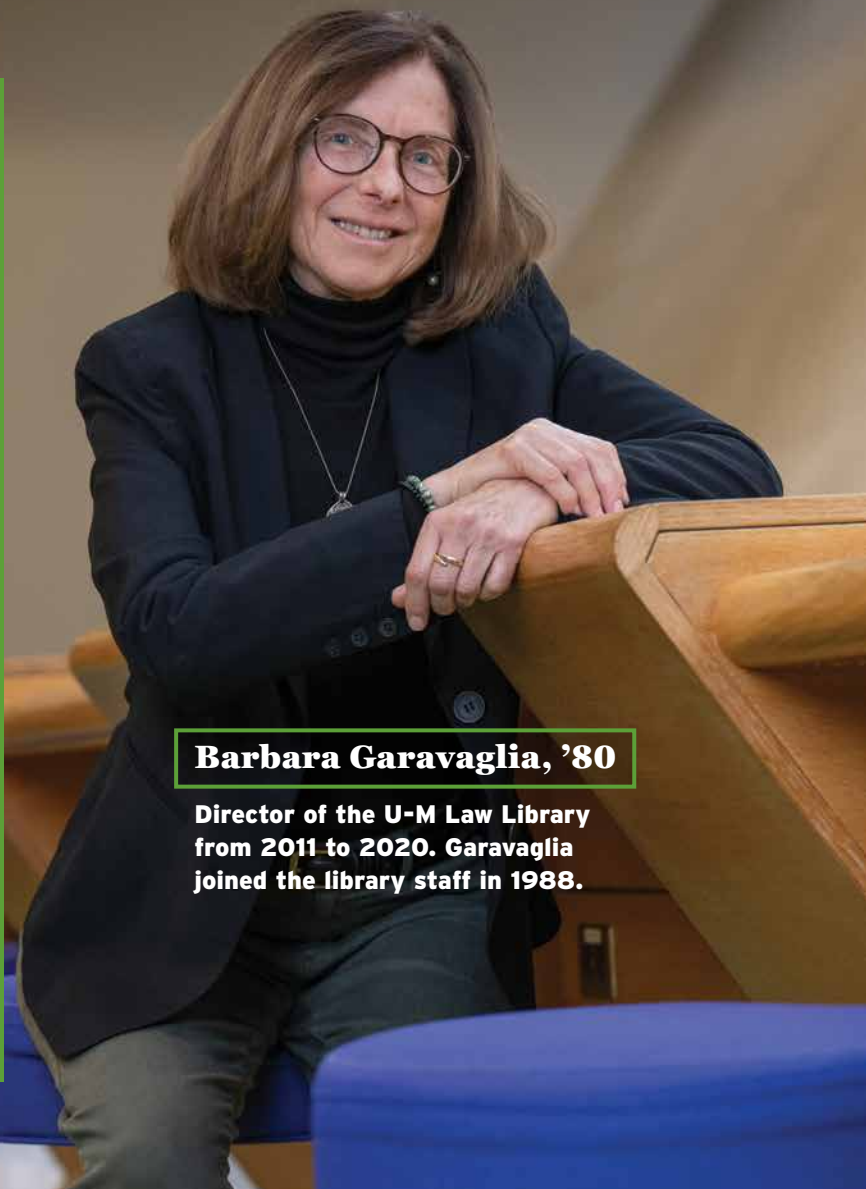
The importance of preservation

“When the web became more prevalent, there was this assumption that you could throw everything away because someone else would probably digitize it, and then you could use that space for something else,” Garavaglia says. “And I remember thinking, ‘Okay, but isn’t there an obligation to the wider world to ensure that legal information is preserved?’”

There are many good reasons to maintain print archives. Michigan Law has always had a particular emphasis on international law because of the Law School’s historic strength in the field. (The University’s founding charter required the Law Department to hire a faculty member specializing in international law.) This focus on foreign collections has resulted in important historical records being preserved.

“Depending on the country, it is especially important to get things in print because there’s no guarantee that the government’s not going to go away,” Brown says. “When the provisional government of Afghanistan was writing the new laws in the early 2000s, they actually interlibrary loaned their historical legal codes from the Law School because the Taliban had burned all of the copies in the country when they were previously in power. So it’s especially important for countries that are not stable. We have a researcher on the faculty who specializes in Cuban law, and our Cuban law collection is very valuable to that research because a lot of that was destroyed during the revolution.”

“Historically, legal research skills were learned within a print collection curated by librarians who ensured the substantive reliability and quality of the books, and building and maintaining that physical collection was a structured endeavor requiring expertise, knowledge of the law and legal systems, and how to conduct effective research. A library collection is an intellectual space, and today the collections that are a mix of print and electronic holdings are just as curated as the print was. While formats continue to evolve and change, the substantive expertise of librarians and the sophisticated work of curation and management remain critical.”



Barbara Garavaglia, '80

Director of the U-M Law Library from 2011 to 2020. Garavaglia joined the library staff in 1988.

It doesn't take the collapse of a government to impede or lose access to important historical information. Garavaglia recalls a time when the Law Library replaced print records of congressional hearings with a digital product, only to realize later that the process had accidentally created a gap in the collection.

“We put a call out around the country and ended up getting back what we had thrown away, but had we waited a few more years, it wouldn't have been available,” she says. “And that's why we always try to avoid wholesale throwing things away when making a migration, because it can be a costly error. It's really labor intensive to repair it—if you're even able to do so.”

Leary, who led the Law Library through three decades of significant technological change,

emphasizes that the way in which print materials are archived is also important, whether that is digital or microfiche.

“You also have to be careful about how accurately the digital version replicates what was in print,” Leary says. “At one time we noticed there was a microfiche producer in Ann Arbor who would eliminate pages from the front and back of the book that they didn't think were important in order to make their product more profitable. But if those pages were indexes, then the pages really did matter. And even knowing what kind of advertising, for example, was in certain types of publications is useful depending on what you're researching. So it is very important to be careful when making those decisions.”

More emphasis on students

For most of the 20th century, law libraries tended to be more focused on supporting faculty research and maintaining their collection than on supporting the student experience and training them in legal research.

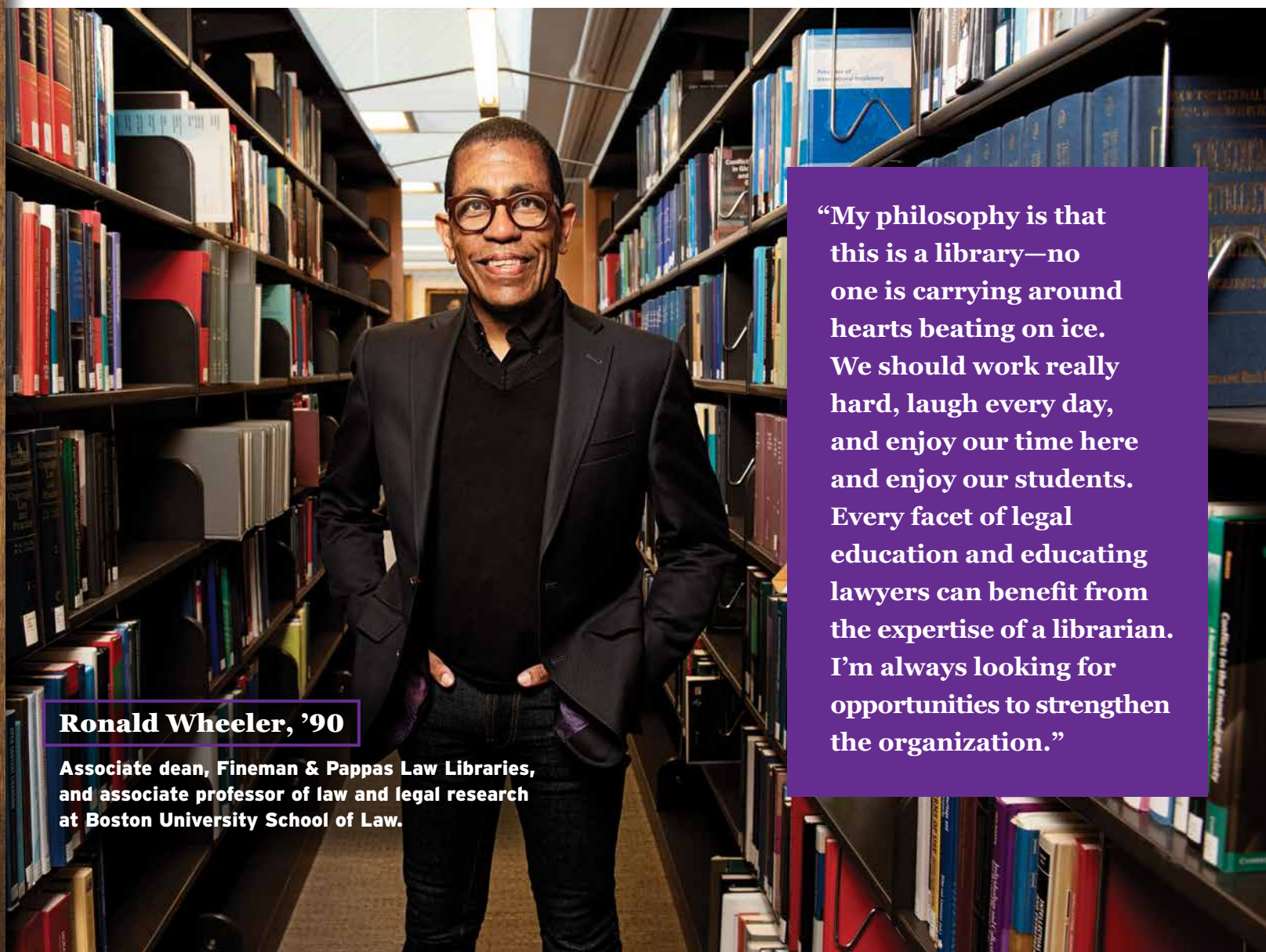
“Librarians teach legal research as a discipline now, but that wasn’t the case when I was in law school. Legal research was called Case Club and taught by third years, and it wasn’t always taken seriously,” says Wheeler, who leads the law library at Boston University. “But there has since been an acknowledgement that legal research is a discipline, and an important one. In fact, it’s one of the most important skills that lawyers need to have.”

And while law schools may have traditionally underemphasized the teaching of legal research,

that doesn’t mean it wasn’t taught or important to the profession—it was more common for those skills to be developed on the job, leaving law firms or other organizations responsible for the training.

Stefanie Weigmann, '90, who works alongside Wheeler as associate director for research and instructional services at Boston University, began her career in private practice. She remembers doing a lot of learning on the job.

“When I first got to the firm, they needed tax people, so that’s what I worked on even though I had never taken a tax law class. So of course the first thing the firm did was teach us tax law research,” Weigmann says. “I don’t know if legal research was underappreciated, it’s just that often firms taught you that when you got to the workplace. Now they’re doing less of that because it’s expensive.”



Ronald Wheeler, '90

Associate dean, Fineman & Pappas Law Libraries, and associate professor of law and legal research at Boston University School of Law.

“My philosophy is that this is a library—no one is carrying around hearts beating on ice. We should work really hard, laugh every day, and enjoy our time here and enjoy our students. Every facet of legal education and educating lawyers can benefit from the expertise of a librarian. I’m always looking for opportunities to strengthen the organization.”



An evolving curriculum

The shift to a more research-based curriculum at law schools has evolved in tandem with legal academia's increasing emphasis on experiential learning. Weigmann says this has been, at least in part, driven by changing expectations from students as well as what the legal industry expects from graduates.

"I think sometimes students got to their third year of law school and started to wonder what they were still doing there. And so clinics and more robust research and writing classes were part of that development to make the curriculum more varied and to make sure the students were more prepared when they started to practice," Weigmann says.

In addition to overseeing a team of six librarians, Weigmann teaches in Boston University's Lawyering Program. The program—which is similar to the Legal Practice Program at Michigan Law—is designed to familiarize first-year students with researching and writing briefs, memos, and other materials they will use in practice. Weigmann and the other librarians teach the research side and partner with a legal writing professor who focuses on the drafting side. That integration is key, Weigmann says.

"When research is a standalone class, a lot of students don't really see how it fits into their day to day. Most people think about being a lawyer as writing a great brief or talking to a client or arguing in court, without realizing all the work that goes on to get to that place where you know what the legal sources are and how to deploy them," Weigmann says. "So the more we integrate it, the more students will see the interrelation between the research and the writing and the understanding of the law."


The profession's increasing focus on legal research as a discipline can also be seen in the content of the NextGen bar exam, which the National Conference of Bar Examiners is developing. The exam is set to debut in certain jurisdictions in 2026 and will include a section on foundational lawyering skills with an emphasis on legal research and writing, among other topics.

At Boston University, librarians are embedded in the first-year program and continue to teach in the second and third year as well, leading classes like advanced legal research and LLM research. In addition, the library offers a series of lectures on legal research each spring, and students who attend a certain percentage of them receive a university-sanctioned certification for legal research for practice—something they can put on their résumé and use when they enter the job market.

But Wheeler also stresses the value of the library as a point of connection. "My philosophy is that this is a library—no one is carrying around hearts beating on ice. We should work really hard, laugh every day, and enjoy our time here and enjoy our students. Every facet of legal education and educating lawyers can benefit from the expertise of a librarian. I'm always looking for opportunities to strengthen the organization," Wheeler says. "When I was hired, the dean said to me that she wanted the library to become the center of the student experience. We do a lot of community events to promote that, and students get to learn about what we do in the library while interacting with their professors and having fun. Our approach facilitates relaxed and casual interactions."

Brown and the staff at Michigan Law's library have similarly made efforts to bolster research training and to become more central to the student experience.

"As things have migrated online, students think less about coming to the library—and that has, in a way, been a disservice to them," Brown says. "So a lot of what we do in the library is not only about information literacy, but research literacy because it seems like students aren't really taught how to research in college as much as they used to. There is so much information out there that it can be hard to know where to start and where to finish and what the steps should be in between. So we do a lot of outreach and a lot more programming to give students bite-size things they can take away to improve their work."



“Libraries are a public good that supports everybody. That’s especially true of public libraries, and it’s the value of Michigan’s Law Library as well. It’s the preservation of the materials that you’re not going to be able to get ever again. It’s a safe service point for students who come from all sorts of different backgrounds to ask for help in a nonjudgmental space. And one thing that hasn’t changed over time is that librarians want to help. That’s what we’re here for.”

Kincaid Brown, '96

Director of the U-M Law Library since 2020. Brown joined the library staff in 1998.

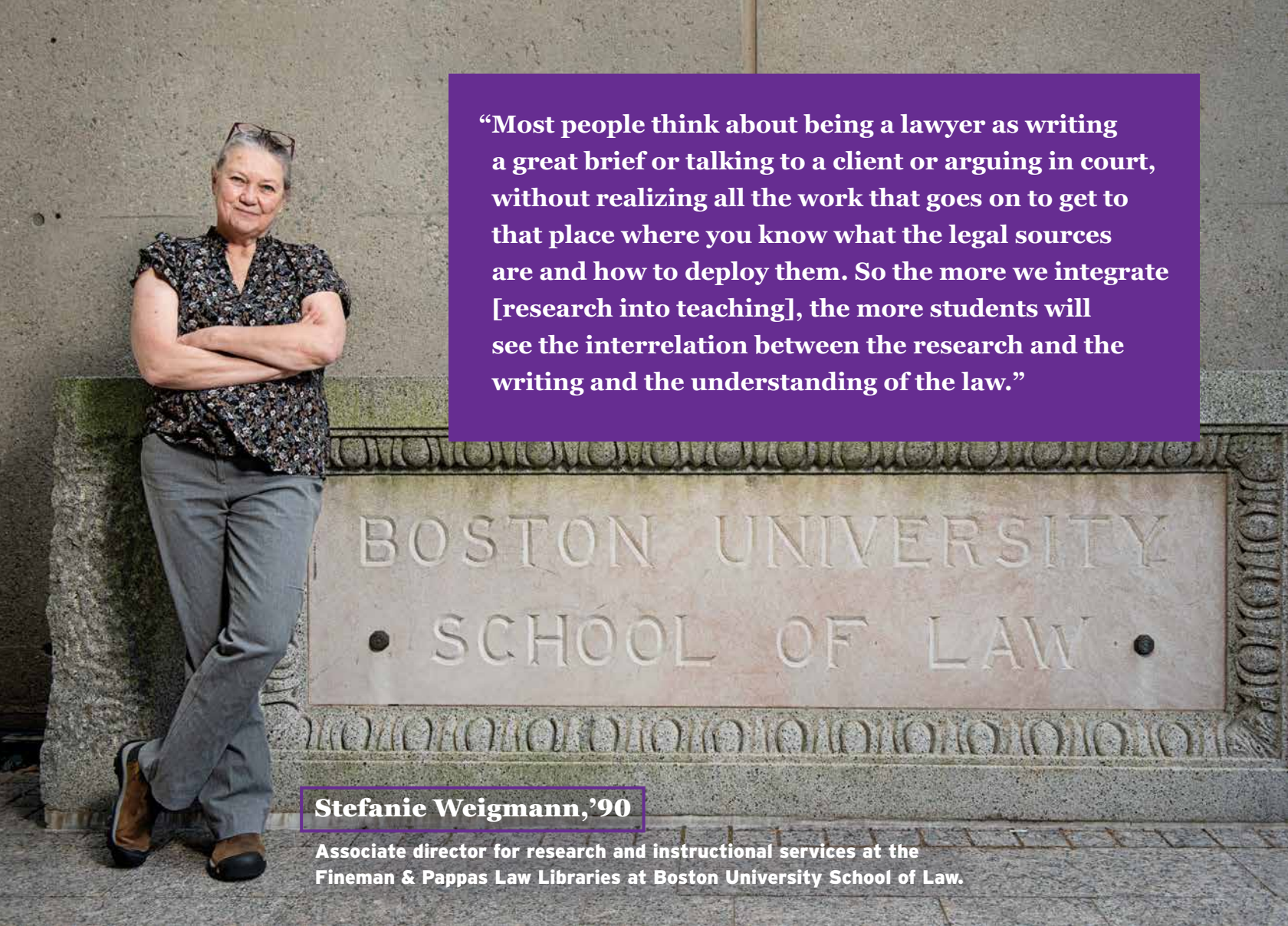
Training students for the research of tomorrow

Many of the library’s programs at Michigan Law focus on practical skills that would be valuable in the course of students’ education as well as in practice—much of which centers on emerging digital tools and other resources. There is a session about properly redacting digital PDFs, for example, to ensure confidential or otherwise sensitive information isn’t accidentally shared by improper digital redactions. Other subjects include training and best practices related to artificial intelligence (AI) chatbots and other AI tools, as well as an introduction to the different types of digital citation managers that are available and how to properly use

them. At Michigan and elsewhere, the focus on AI has grown in recent years.

“I’m teaching legal research this year, and we’re really concentrating on AI. We are emphasizing the Lexis AI product, which is searching curated materials rather than the whole internet,” says King, the emeritus librarian at Notre Dame who has continued to teach during his retirement. “We know AI is part of the future of legal writing and research, and it’s something that will likely help people be more efficient and will become more prevalent. But as with all legal research, you have to verify.”

And while AI remains an emerging technology—and therefore flawed—King says it’s important to embrace new opportunities and not cling to past ways of doing things.



“Most people think about being a lawyer as writing a great brief or talking to a client or arguing in court, without realizing all the work that goes on to get to that place where you know what the legal sources are and how to deploy them. So the more we integrate [research into teaching], the more students will see the interrelation between the research and the writing and the understanding of the law.”

Stefanie Weigmann, '90

Associate director for research and instructional services at the Fineman & Pappas Law Libraries at Boston University School of Law.

“Over time, I’ve learned not to assume the old way is better,” he says. “When I started in legal research, your ability as a librarian was judged by how well you could use print resources. Then the question became: Could you master commercial electronic resources? Then it was about finding more economical ways of doing research—repositories where you could get reliable information on public websites, for example. And now with AI, it’s about learning how to prompt and verify. It’s always been the case of asking databases the right questions but over time using new technologies.”

And while formats and research methods may change with the times, the enduring value of law libraries and the support they provide remains clear—whether that’s ensuring easy

access to online information or helping someone dig up a dusty tome from deep in the stacks.

“Because of the political power of the publishers and copyright holders, it’s very clear to me that if libraries didn’t already exist, it would be a really hard sell to start the first library now. But libraries are a public good that supports everybody. That’s especially true of public libraries, and it’s the value of Michigan’s Law Library as well,” Brown says. “It’s the preservation of the materials that you’re not going to be able to get ever again. It’s a safe service point for students who come from all sorts of different backgrounds to ask for help in a nonjudgmental space. And one thing that hasn’t changed over time is that librarians want to help. That’s what we’re here for.”

Empiricism on the Rise

Shift in Legal Academic Research Focuses More on Data-Driven Issues

By Bob Needham

Academic legal research isn't what it used to be.

Historically, legal scholars focused largely on theoretical work—poring over dusty law books to track down the intended meaning of a particular legislative clause, for example. Yet recent years have seen a new development: the rise of empirical, data-driven, and collaborative research in the legal academy—often aiming to study the real-time effects of the law on people and institutions.

"The legal academy has been turning to empirical work in recent years to get a better handle on what the world looks like and the impacts of legal change and legal reform," says J.J. Prescott, the Henry King Ransom Professor of Law, co-director of the Empirical Legal Studies Center, and co-director of the Program in Law and Economics. He is one of several Michigan Law faculty members who are actively pursuing empirical research projects. "There are a lot of perceptions about how the system works, and often we have no real data to back up those perceptions," Prescott adds. "They can be quite different from what's actually going on."

The value of empirical research

"To really understand law, we need to have a description of how legal actors behave and how the world actually works," Prescott says. "That often requires thinking about measurement and framing. You need data, but you also need to think very carefully about distance, angle, and perspective if you want to draw out the most important aspects of any descriptive account. We need to understand not only the gist but also the amount of uncertainty and the underlying mechanisms that create our world. And that's hard."

Albert Choi, the Paul G. Kauper Professor of Law, started shifting his focus from theoretical research and doctrinal analysis to more empirical work six or seven years ago. "I wanted to get a better understanding of the impact of changing laws," he says. "These are questions that cannot be readily answered by theory. I wanted to see what is actually happening at the ground level."

Eve Brensike Primus, '01, is the Yale Kamisar Collegiate Professor of Law as well as director of the MDefenders program and the Public Defender Training Institute. "I think a lot of legal doctrines can be and should be informed by actual practices about what is happening in the world," she adds. "For example, in my field of criminal procedure, there are a lot of standards where the court asks, what is a person's reasonable expectation of privacy under certain circumstances? We can stand back in the abstract and have judges opine about what they think privacy expectations should be, or we can give them data about what people think."

Not surprisingly, researchers hope their work will ultimately have an impact in the world outside academia, and empirical work can help accomplish that.

"Empirical research is important because the law is a human institution," says Assistant Professor Roseanna Sommers, who also holds a PhD in psychology and is well known for her research on issues of consent and autonomy. "It's meant to govern real people who are not always perfectly informed or perfectly rational. So if we're trying to use the law to either govern people's behavior or shape their attitudes, we have to understand how people think and behave. Empirical research can help us understand where the law departs from ordinary intuition and hopefully bridge that gap where translation is necessary."

Professor Edward Fox, an expert on tax issues, adds: "In my work, I'm hoping to inform policymakers about the relevant trade-offs of different choices and trying to make better policy. You can't really understand that without understanding the empirical data and understanding the effects that laws are having in the real economy. That's the primary thing."

Other changes in academic legal research

Empirical research requires data. Often, it requires lots of data—data that may be hard to find, or scattered in a number of different places, or that exists but hasn't been collected in any meaningful way.

The increase in publicly available databases and other digital tools is one trend running parallel to the rise in empirical research—and helping to enable it. Primus noted that her work drawing on old newspaper articles, for example, would have been impossible before the digital era.



Albert Choi

**Paul G. Kauper
Professor of Law**

What Are You Working On Now?

Faculty members typically have several research projects underway at any given time. Following are a few current examples from faculty doing empirical work.

"Since the emergence of the Robinhood stock-trading app, and since several large brokerage firms dropped their commissions, we have seen a new trend: a large increase in individual, retail shareholders. One of the biggest puzzles within corporate finance is how this change in shareholder base affects the corporate governance of the firms. I have more or less completed one project related to this—on the phenomenon of meme stocks—but that has led to some follow-up projects: looking at the influx of retail shareholders much more broadly, across all publicly traded companies. Specifically, I'm studying the impact of the increase in retail stock ownership on various metrics, especially on corporate governance. This is a massive project that requires a lot more data. We're making good progress on the project."

"It used to be really challenging to find briefs that lawyers had filed in cases, and now there are databases where you can find those briefs. Finding social science research used to be far more challenging for those in law fields, and now there are lots of different ways you can do that," she says. "As we get into the world of generative AI, I imagine that all of these databases and what they can do will continue to evolve."

Sommers mentioned another practical change that technology has enabled: She recruits study participants and conducts surveys online, saving countless hours.

One trend that started earlier but continues to develop is an increase in interdisciplinary research involving law and another field, such as psychology, sociology, or philosophy. Fox—whose work combines law and economics—says, "I think it really helps introduce new perspectives into the law and often additional rigor. But I also think it has some drawbacks—particularly when judges regard law scholarship as less useful than it used to be because it's less doctrinal."

Sommers noted a related trend developing over recent decades: moving from purely observational research into more complex analyses. In the past, she says, a researcher might "tally up the cases that all have this feature or that feature. It didn't involve statistical analysis." More recently, though, "people with interdisciplinary training or serious technical training in economics or political science or psychology are going beyond counting to test hypotheses, to try to establish causality. It's gotten more sophisticated."

One other change relating to all these is a rise in collaborative research. "For a long time in legal research, the standard was solo-authored works," Prescott says. "Now collaborative research is much more common, and it has become easier because of technology. My co-authors and I are constantly emailing, texting, or on the phone, plus we have regularly scheduled Zoom meetings. We have a lot of different ways to communicate, even when we're on different continents."



Edward Fox

Professor of Law



J.J. Prescott

**Henry King Ransom
Professor of Law**

"One current project focuses on the realization rule, which is the idea that increases in the value of assets are not subject to tax until the assets are sold. The first part of the project uses data from the Federal Reserve Survey of Consumer Finances to measure how much unrealized income is out there, and from that to try to understand what portion of total income (including unrealized gains) the current tax base captures. The other part of the project involves this idea in the popular press of 'buy, borrow, die'—where rich Americans purchase assets, borrow against the appreciation of those assets, consume that cash, and roll over those loans until they die. There's no income tax on unsold gains held at death, so the net result is that they never pay a dime in income tax. This seems like a problem, but we don't know anything systematic about how prevalent this practice is. We're trying to get a handle on that empirically."

"I'm evaluating Michigan's adoption of automatic expungement of criminal records for those who qualify with Sonja Starr at the University of Chicago. This is different from traditional, petition-based expungement, which presents those eligible with a number of barriers—such as the person not having the money or expertise to complete the process or even not knowing that it's available. Automatic expungement is designed to reduce those barriers. The idea is that the state can just check your record, and if you're eligible, you receive record relief behind the scenes. The problem is notice; with automatic expungement, you may have no idea that you now have a clean slate to work with, so you continue to work under the table or decide not to apply to certain jobs because you think you have a record. We really don't understand what kind of impact automatic expungement will have on people's lives, and such reforms already affect millions of people across many states. We're currently at the data collection stage."

The continuing value of law libraries

For most of legal history, research has meant libraries. As the work becomes more empirical, more digital, and more collaborative, do libraries still have an important role?

Michigan Law researchers strongly feel they do, even as the libraries' roles continue to evolve. The Michigan Law Library currently has two research associates dedicated to empirical studies, as well as a faculty research librarian, Shay Elbaum, '14, who manages the library's faculty research services. Professors regularly turn to these staff members for assistance.

For example, Choi often works with the library staff to learn which types of relevant datasets may be available for a given project, and they have also helped him get access to some of that data when it's not fully available to the public. "The library has been hugely helpful," he says.

Prescott has worked with one of the empirical research associates, German Marquez Alcala, on a number of papers. "He has played an important hands-on role with the empirical analysis or has helped me present or visualize the results—or even just read my papers with empirical chops to help critique and improve them," Prescott says.

The researchers all agreed that the library will continue to play an important role in future research. "Moving to a more digital world doesn't change the fact that we will still need repositories," Primus says. "But I also think of libraries as expert institutions. It's not just the collections, it's the people working on the staff.

"There are a lot of people in my field, and probably in other fields, who don't truly understand the expertise that people who work in libraries have and how much they can be partners in helping you think about how to approach research and in assisting you when you're dealing with complex, large projects. I would encourage more people to think about the expertise of law librarians as integral to the work that they're doing. I think they'll find the quality of the work they're able to do as a result will improve."



Eve Brensike Primus, '01

**Yale Kamisar Collegiate
Professor of Law**



Roseanna Sommers

Assistant Professor of Law

"I'm working on a project about delays in the appointment of public defenders or indigent defense attorneys. In many parts of the country, we're seeing circumstances where an individual is accused of committing a crime and because of a dearth of available lawyers, they're languishing in jail waiting for counsel. I am collecting data about the ways in which different public defense or indigent defense delivery systems operate—such as, in a given jurisdiction, how long after somebody gets arrested is a lawyer made available to them, how many cases does that lawyer have, and how much time does that lawyer have with them? Through the aggregation of that data around the country, we can figure out when there are constitutional problems, and we can also often figure out how jurisdictions that are doing it better are able to do so."

"I just published a paper with Kate Weisburd, a criminal procedure scholar at the University of California College of the Law. We ran a survey looking at how ordinary people understand Miranda rights—not what Miranda rights are, but how to invoke them. What do you need to do in order to, for instance, invoke your right to silence or to invoke your right to counsel during an interrogation? That study exposed a disconnect between the way that the case law has developed to require quite a high bar for invocation and the way the public tends to understand Miranda. Various courts say that it's not enough for a person to say, 'Maybe I should get an attorney,' or 'It'd be a good idea for me to get an attorney.' The law says those statements are too ambiguous or equivocal. You have to speak clearly and unambiguously. We're studying whether regular people think statements like that are perfectly clear and whether they expect the law to recognize that kind of language as an invocation."



Wrongful Arrest Leads to Historic Settlement

By Sharon Morioka

The Civil Rights Litigation Initiative secured a first-of-its-kind settlement on behalf of a man falsely arrested based on flawed facial recognition technology, achieving the strongest police department policies in the US regarding use of the technology.

On a January afternoon in 2020, Robert Williams was at work when he got a call from the Detroit police saying he should turn himself in. Clueless, he asked, “For what?” Because the caller wouldn’t answer his questions about the crime, he assumed it was a joke. But after leaving work and phoning his wife, Melissa, he learned that the police were at his home. When he approached his driveway, he passed the waiting police car, which pulled in behind him and blocked him in. Again, he asked why he was being arrested. Again, they refused to explain, saying, “You don’t get to ask questions.”

Then, in front of Melissa, their two young daughters (then ages 2 and 5), and the neighborhood, the police handcuffed and arrested Williams.

“When they were handcuffing me, my daughter came outside and I told her to go back in the house,” he says. He tried to reassure her, saying, “I’ll be right back.”

After demanding to see an arrest warrant, he finally learned that he was being accused of felony larceny, but the police did not provide any other details. As they led her husband away, Melissa asked where they were taking him. The detention center in Detroit, they said. When she asked for the center’s phone number, they told her to Google it. None of it made sense. Why were police from Detroit arresting her husband, who lived in suburban Farmington Hills and worked in Rochester Hills? “Are these even real cops?” she wondered.

The confusion assumed Kafkaesque proportions as Williams was processed at the detention center. For more than a day, he sat in a filthy cell with several other men, waiting to learn more about why he was arrested. He received no food and lay on the concrete floor due to overcrowding.

All the while, he knew he had broken his promise to his daughter that he’d return soon.

The following morning, he pleaded not guilty at his arraignment and waived his right to remain silent because an officer said he would explain the arrest if he agreed to speak. During this time, Williams finally learned that facial recognition technology (FRT) had identified him as the person who stole watches from an upscale store in Detroit. He then saw an enlarged still from the surveillance footage.

“I said, ‘That’s not me,’” he says. Seeing another picture, “I said, ‘That’s not me, either. This doesn’t even look like me.’” Eventually, the officers agreed but lacked the authority to release him. He waited eight more hours before he was freed and was told to wait outside for his ride home. On a cold, rainy night, Melissa made her way to an unfamiliar part of Detroit to bring him home, where he found his daughter waiting.

“She was crying and mad,” he says. “She asked why I lied about coming right back.”

Flawed technology

Following his nightmarish arrest, Williams worked with Michigan Law’s Civil Rights Litigation Initiative (CRLI), the ACLU of Michigan, and the national ACLU to make sure that no one else had to experience a similar arrest due to the incorrect results of FRT.

More than four years later, in June, his journey concluded with a first-of-its-kind settlement that requires the Detroit Police Department (DPD) to implement policy changes in its use of FRT. The agreement achieves the nation’s strongest police department policies and practices constraining law enforcement’s use of FRT. (See the sidebar on the following page.)

“I’m grateful and happy it’s over,” Williams says about the circumstances that upended his family’s life. “We didn’t want them to proceed with use of FRT, but we would rather they proceed with these guidelines in the use of the technology [as opposed to having no guidelines at all].”

Between his arrest and the settlement, the DPD falsely arrested two other Black people based on faulty use of FRT. The flaws in the technology are especially pronounced when it is used to identify people of color because most of its algorithms are built by analyzing a data set consisting primarily of white faces. Digital cameras also can fail to provide the degree of color contrast that the FRT algorithm needs to produce and match face prints from photos of darker-skinned people.

According to a 2017 study by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, of 140 face recognition algorithms, rates of false positives are highest in East and West African and East Asian people.

“This effect is generally large, with a factor of 100 more false positives between countries,” the study states. Despite these flaws, police departments around the country continue to use FRT.

“Police face pressure to use whatever tools they can to fight crime,” says Michael J. Steinberg, professor from practice at Michigan Law and CRLI director. “The problem is that technology, especially in the



Robert Williams, pictured with his family after his settlement with the Detroit Police Department, was arrested outside of his home for a crime he did not commit. The police had identified Williams as a suspect based on faulty information from flawed facial recognition technology.

Far-Reaching Impact

Michael Steinberg, director of Michigan Law's Civil Rights Litigation Initiative, says the settlement agreement brought on behalf of Robert Williams includes important equitable remedies that will have a far-reaching impact across the country in police departments that continue to rely on facial recognition technology. Following are key components of the settlement:

- Police will be prohibited from arresting people based solely on facial recognition results or on the results of photo lineups directly following a facial recognition search.
- Police will be prohibited from conducting a lineup based solely on a facial recognition investigative lead without independent and reliable evidence linking a suspect to a crime.
- Police will be trained on facial recognition technology, including its risks and dangers and that it misidentifies people of color at higher rates.
- An audit will be conducted of all cases since 2017 in which facial recognition technology was used to obtain an arrest warrant.

early stages, can be misused. FRT is so inaccurate at identifying people of color that many municipalities have refused to allow their police departments to use it. And unless police officials adopt safeguards such as the ones mandated by the settlement, FRT will continue to result in wrongful arrests and the wholesale violation of innocent people's civil rights."

Williams's case is historic because it is the first in the country where policy changes have been negotiated as part of a settlement. Although it will not abolish the use of FRT, the settlement will ensure that what happened to Williams doesn't happen to anybody else in Detroit.

"Even if Detroit police continue to use the technology, there will be more protections in place so they can't just run a search and then arrest someone without using other tools to conduct an investigation," says Julia Kahn, '24, one of 18 CRLI student-attorneys who worked on the case.

Sloppy investigative work

According to the complaint the CRLI filed, the DPD adopted the technology without establishing quality control provisions or providing adequate training of personnel. Additionally, in Williams's case, it relied too heavily on FRT without doing additional investigative work.

Making matters worse, the video was grainy, the perpetrator (who was never caught) wore a hat that partially obscured his face, and the lighting was poor.

"They fed a poor-quality probe image into the Michigan State Police's facial recognition technology system," says Steinberg. "And it came back with dozens of possible matches." From those, the police chose to focus on the photo on Williams's expired driver's license.

"His updated driver's license photo didn't come up. And, according to the technology, his expired license photo was the ninth-most-likely suspect," says Steinberg. "Nonetheless, they decided to focus on Williams."

The police also conducted a lineup of six photographs after they'd identified him through FRT. However, the person who viewed the photos—employed by the store's security firm—had not actually been present at the time that the robbery occurred and instead based her identification on the poor-quality surveillance footage.

When the CRLI team spoke with the magistrate judge who issued

William's arrest warrant during the course of the civil rights litigation, she said that she was misled by the police in the information the police provided and if she had known all the factors of the investigation, she never would have issued the arrest warrant for Williams. Even police officials, at a July 2020 Detroit Board of Police Commissioners meeting, admitted error in the investigation. The police chief at the time, James Craig, said that "this was clearly sloppy, sloppy investigative work." For example, the police did not take witness statements from people who were at the store when the theft occurred or collect evidence such as fingerprints or DNA.

Says Steinberg, "Before arresting Williams, the police should have, at minimum, tried to figure out where he was on the day of the theft."

Williams actually had an alibi: At the time of the crime, which happened in October 2018, he was driving from his job in Rochester Hills to his home in Farmington Hills, an approximately 24-mile route that would have taken him nowhere near the store in Detroit. His proof was in a live stream of his commute home that he had posted on Facebook.

"The Detroit Police Department made numerous mistakes that led to Robert's arrest," says Nethra Raman, '24, a former student-attorney in the CRLI. "We argued that, given the inaccuracy of facial recognition technology, it was unconstitutional to seek a warrant or conduct a photo lineup based on FRT alone."

Regulating FRT use

All of these issues illustrate a need for rules constraining the use of FRT, says former CRLI student-attorney Collin Christner, '24.

"The growing use of facial recognition technology by police should worry everyone, but particularly because of the intersection between privacy issues and race," Christner says. "Because facial recognition technology is worse at identifying Black people, this case also raises issues of racially disparate policing.

"We don't know how this technology is going to develop tomorrow or next year or five years from now, so we need to be thinking proactively," he adds. "One of the reasons this case is so important is that it is educating lawmakers about the dangers of FRT. We need Congress and state legislatures to enact laws regulating the use of the technology."

Toward that end, Robert and Melissa Williams have become what she terms "unintentional activists" as they've sought to raise awareness about the use and possible dangers of FRT. Robert credits Melissa with learning about the dangers of the technology before he, himself, fully understood it. And he has spoken in hearings around the country to state legislatures that are considering legislation controlling the use of the technology. Williams hopes that his testimony and his efforts to promote awareness in the broader community will translate into action.

"In California, the legislature had previously banned the technology but was thinking of changing that because the legislation was sunseting," says Kahn. "Then Robert shared his story. And instead of the bill that would simply allow local police departments to use the technology, the ACLU of California was able to pass a bill that was much more protective of freedoms of individuals and of privacy."

Four years on, Williams continues to deal with the fallout from the arrest, both legal and personal. He's not sure the arrest led to a series of strokes he suffered in October 2020, but he has been diagnosed with PTSD stemming from the wrongful arrest. He and Melissa also continue to be concerned about the impact of the arrest on their daughters.

"I would say that it doesn't just affect the person who is arrested. I have a whole family, and they were also affected by this," he says. "Four years ago, I would have thought that I was on board with the use of facial recognition technology. But now I think they have a long way to go because there are so many ways that it could go wrong."

Students Contribute to Landmark Settlement

From late 2020 until June 2024, more than a dozen Michigan Law students worked on the landmark case of *Williams v. City of Detroit*. It was a singular experience that the most recent students felt privileged to participate in.

"We were working with the most brilliant attorneys at the ACLU and the ACLU of Michigan," says Nethra Raman, '24, currently a legal fellow in the MacArthur Justice Center's Supreme Court & Appellate Program. "Learning how amazing civil rights lawyers are thinking about these issues and being able to bring that knowledge into my career was really, really exciting."

For Julia Kahn, '24, currently a legal fellow at The Signals Network, the case was an opportunity to put her past studies to positive use.

"In college, I was a science technology studies major, and that's when I first started thinking about data, privacy, and bias in technologies such as facial recognition technology," she says. "Coming to law school—having this interest and knowing I wanted to do public interest law—I felt very passionately about working on this case. It has really been the highlight of my law school experience."

Her colleague Collin Christner, '24, cites the range of work he was involved in—from filing motions for summary judgment to sitting first chair for expert depositions—as particularly interesting.

"The chance to work on something with such national impact was pretty awesome," says Christner, currently a clerk in the US District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. "It is just an opportunity that a lot of people don't get in law school."



Student-attorneys from Michigan Law's Civil Rights Litigation Initiative met with Robert Williams (center) following his settlement with the Detroit Police Department. Ewurama Appiagyei-Dankah, Julia Kahn, Collin Christner, and Nethra Raman, all 2024 graduates, are pictured from left to right.

ICJ Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf Delivers Bishop Lecture

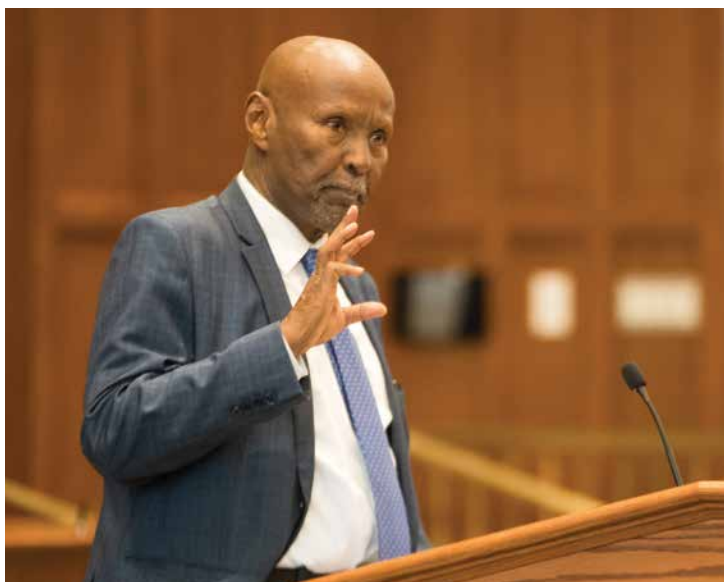
Judge Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) delivered the seventh William W. Bishop Lecture at Michigan Law in October. His talk, “Establishing Legal Rules for an Interdependent World,” outlined the interconnected nature of countries and the role of international law in a peaceful world order.

Originally from Somalia, Judge Yusuf has served as a judge at the ICJ—based in The Hague, the Netherlands—since 2009; he was the court’s president from 2018 to 2021. He is the founder of the African Institute of International Law in Arusha, Tanzania, and of the *African Yearbook of International Law*.

Judge Yusuf emphasized from the outset the growing interdependence among states in which a complex web of international legal rules facilitates and informs a range of international activities, from cross-border transportation to multilateral trade and investment. However, he said, the challenges of today require that we move beyond international law that is designed to deal with interstate relations on the basis of reciprocal interests or bilateral transactions.

“We need to move to a global law that can safeguard the common interests of humanity,” he said. “Unless we act collectively in confronting pandemics, erosion of biodiversity, and climate change, the development of a normative framework that can inform and inspire global action cannot be facilitated.”

The William W. Bishop Lecture is the marquee international and comparative law lecture at Michigan Law, welcoming luminaries who share their perspectives and expertise with students and professors. The lecture, presented every five years, honors William Bishop, ’31, a 30-year member of the Michigan Law faculty who was one of his generation’s foremost international law scholars and who helped establish the Law School as a leader in the then-nascent field.



Mine Orer, LLM '18, Clerks at the ICJ

This fall, Mine Orer, LLM '18, began a clerkship at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the judicial body of the United Nations. She is clerking for the Hon. Dalveer Bhandari of India, one of the ICJ’s 15 judges.

Orer studied law at Koç University in Istanbul before doing a lawyer traineeship in Ankara, Turkey. While at Michigan Law, she immersed herself in classes with the goal of becoming an academic. But she quickly realized that international law wasn’t only for academics.

“I think my interest in the area of international economic law developed more during my time in Michigan,” she says. “My entry into that was through Professor [Steven] Ratner’s class on international investment law. So that’s where my focus has been—international trade, sustainable development, investment law, those types of topics.”

She was drawn to the ICJ in hopes of seeing its work from a practitioner’s perspective. “I want to be an advocate before courts and tribunals in my career, so being able to get into the minds of how the judges are thinking about these topics is exciting. I want to work more in the field of international arbitration, and a lot of these judges are working as arbitrators as well. So it’s a good way to think deeply about these international law topics.”

Halberstam Invited to SCOTUS/CJEU Closed-door Meeting

Daniel Halberstam, the Eric Stein Collegiate Professor of Law, was one of two academics (and the only American academic) invited to attend the Luxembourg Forum in September, in which a delegation from the US Supreme Court—including Chief Justice John Roberts Jr., Associate Justice Elena Kagan, and Retired Associate Justice Stephen Breyer—paid an official visit to the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

The visit included working sessions on recent trends and developments in judicial management and procedures, the rule of law and the protection of judicial independence, and the protection of privacy in the digital economy.

Halberstam is the only legal scholar to have worked both in the chambers of a judge at the European Court of Justice (ECJ), the top court of the CJEU, and as a clerk at the US Supreme Court. “I’ve had the privilege of being part of these exchanges since the first time the US Supreme Court visited the European Court of Justice in 1998, when I happened to be working in the chambers of the Austrian judge at the ECJ,” Halberstam says.



“Participating in some capacity in most of these meetings over the past 25 years provides a useful perspective on these two apex courts, especially for someone working on EU, US, and comparative constitutional law.” He is pictured above at the far left.

Alumnae Clerk for the Court of Justice of the European Union

Three Michigan Law alumnae were in Luxembourg this fall as clerks for the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU). Each was funded, in whole or in part, by Michigan Law’s Clara Belfield and Henry Bates Overseas Fellowship.

Grace Bruce, ’24, is clerking for Advocate General Maciej Szpunar. She had planned to start work this fall in the dispute resolution practice at Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer in its Washington, DC, office. But she put those plans on hold when the clerkship opportunity arose. “So many of the firm’s clients are having to grapple with both American legal issues and EU legal issues,” she says. “By going to the CJEU and getting a better sense of European regulatory frameworks and how the court is interpreting those frameworks, I hope to eventually become a better and more globally integrated counselor to my future clients.”

Emily Hammerslough, ’24, is clerking for Advocate General Tamara Čapeta. She worked in Namibia’s Ministry of Justice during her 1L summer and for the International Service for Human Rights as a Geneva extern. She also served on the *Michigan Journal of International Law*. “I tried to take advantage of every international opportunity that Michigan Law offers,” Hammerslough says. She plans on a career in human rights law

and sees the clerkship as practical experience in how the EU system works, especially related to citizens’ fundamental rights. She was also intrigued to learn how the CJEU integrates the legal systems of EU member countries.

Sarah Siegel, ’22, is clerking until February for the Hon. Ulf Öberg, in between two federal clerkships in the US. Judge Öberg’s court takes cases involving competition law (similar to antitrust in the US), anti-dumping law, digital markets law, trademark law, and procedural law, among others. A dual American/Irish citizen, Siegel will then spend four months this spring interning for Rossa Fanning, LLM ’00, the attorney general of Ireland. “I am interested in working in Europe, especially with my Irish citizenship, and so I couldn’t think of a better way to get exposure to EU law,” Siegel says.

In recent years, the Law School has steadily increased the number of international clerkship opportunities. “A work opportunity like clerking at the CJEU is a shining highlight on anyone’s résumé,” says Eric Christiansen, assistant dean for international affairs. “But for graduates of non-EU law schools, it highlights a truly unique set of skills and experiences that will open a host of doors in European and international law.”



The Enduring, Little-Known Legacy of Edward S. Rogers

Professor Jessica Litman's book chapter brings new attention to trademark law pioneer

By Bob Needham

In the early 20th century, Edward S. Rogers was a prominent and influential lawyer. He led two law firms, litigated high-profile cases, wrote and spoke widely—and taught for years at his alma mater, Michigan Law.

Although not well known today, Rogers left an enormous legacy. He spent decades crafting the language for what would become the 1946 Lanham Trademark Protection Act—and persuading Congress to enact it. Seventy-eight years later, Rogers's language is still the cornerstone of US trademark law.

Jessica Litman, the John F. Nickoll Professor of Law and an expert in copyright and trademark law, has contributed a chapter on Rogers to a new book, Robert G. Bone and Lionel Bentley's *Research Handbook on the History of Trademark Law*.

"Rogers is unquestionably the most important historical figure in United States trademark law, but he isn't currently famous," Litman says. "I've been an Edward Rogers fan for 42 years. He's a distinctive and distinguished alumnus, and we ought to be very proud of him."

Litman—who has co-authored (with Jane Ginsburg, Mary Kevlin, and Rebecca Tushnet) the casebook *Trademark and Unfair Competition Law: Cases and Materials*—first became fascinated with Rogers when she was a law student, and her interest in his work has been cited twice in US Supreme Court cases.

An early start on trademark law

In a way, Rogers's career and US trademark law grew up together.

As recounted in Litman's book chapter, Rogers was born in Maine, and he graduated from the Orchard Lake Military Academy after his family moved to Michigan. His first degree

from Michigan Law, in 1895, was an LLB—earned in a two-year undergraduate program, and essentially a precursor to today's JD. He would later return to Michigan Law to earn an LLM and a PhD as well.

As a student, Rogers attended lectures on copyright law delivered by Chicago attorney Frank Fremont Reed—a U-M (though not a Law School) alumnus who played on Michigan's first football team—and after graduation, Rogers went to work at Reed's firm. The two developed a practice in the developing field of trademark law, and a few years later, they split off to open their own firm, Reed & Rogers. Later Rogers would also co-found Rogers, Ramsay & Hoge in New York, practicing with both firms simultaneously.

As a litigator, Rogers tried a series of major trademark cases for clients including Coca-Cola, Bayer Aspirin, Kellogg's, and the Merriam Webster Dictionary Company. "He was a gifted oral arguer, and he had a talent of explaining that his position was the sensible position and any other position was not sensible. Judges, senators, and representatives complimented him on that ability," Litman says. "So he won, more often than not." He also wrote extensively on trademark and copyright issues.

In addition, Rogers found time to teach, returning to Michigan Law as an adjunct faculty member in trademark and copyright law for 18 years. Somewhere along the way, he took it upon himself to commission a design for a coat of arms for the University of Michigan, and it was displayed in the Michigan Union for years. "He was really interested in heraldry because it was sort of the trademark of the gentry back in Europe. It was a trade symbol in much the way contemporary trademarks are," Litman says.

Yet all this activity took place alongside Rogers's greatest professional achievement: authorship and eventual passage of a core US trademark law, an effort that took decades to succeed.

An act of a lifetime

As Litman recounts in her chapter, Rogers’s authorship of the Lanham Act began with a 1914 article in the *Michigan Law Review* criticizing the current trademark registration law. That led to a well-received American Bar Association speech, followed by an invitation to return with a proposed new bill.

Two key elements of Rogers’s draft bill were a continued reliance on common law authority, which had traditionally governed US trademark law, and one big exception to it: creation of a civil action for willful use of any “false trade description.” Litman calls this “a significant departure” from extant common law, and it was an idea that ultimately survived in the approved Lanham Act.



Litman describes how the following years saw numerous presentations, amendments, rewrites, and occasional competition to Rogers’s bill. A version was introduced in Congress in 1924—with 18 other versions introduced in later years—but things like the Great Depression,

the New Deal, World War II, political pressure, and simple inertia got in the way.

Ultimately, “the Supreme Court grew disenchanted with the idea of a national general common law, which they thought made so much sense in the 19th century,” Litman says. “That change unmoored the legal basis of trademark law from its common-law foundations. So I think that is what finally spurred people to get behind some kind of statutory solution.”

Even so, it would take several more drafts before Congress would pass the Lanham Act in 1946. By then, Rogers had retired from active practice, but the approved version was mostly his work. He died three years later, at his home in Greenwich, Connecticut, at age 74.

Influence and impact

Litman first learned about Rogers as a student at Columbia Law School in 1981 while writing a note on a trademark question. “I read all of the hearings relevant to the 1946 Lanham Trademark Act and discovered Edward Sidney Rogers,” Litman says. “It seemed to me it was quite unusual that this young

lawyer from Chicago had written this draft statute, and he was coming back every year and trying to talk the House and the Senate into enacting it. I made a ton of notes, and I still have them.” The US Supreme Court cited Litman’s student note, published in the *Columbia Law Review*, a few months later in *Inwood Laboratories v. Ives Laboratories*.

In 2021, Litman spoke at a symposium celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Lanham Act. That led to a second Supreme Court citation tied to her work on Rogers, in a concurrence in *Vidal v. Elster*, decided earlier this year.

“When I was invited to contribute a chapter to a collection of trademark history essays, I hauled out my 40-year-old notes and read or reread all of Rogers’s published writings, all of his litigated cases, many of his briefs, and all of the congressional hearings,” Litman says. “With the Law Library’s help, I was able to do additional research to fill in historical details of Rogers’s life and the lives of the other people in the story.”

Litman’s chapter notes that one of Rogers’s main goals in writing a trademark law—preserving the legal protections offered by the common law of trademarks and unfair competition—was not only realized at the time, it still holds true.

“The Lanham Act was very much Edward S. Rogers’s story, and what made it into the trademark act was very much a product of what he thought should go into it,” Litman says. “Now here we are, 76 years later, and the trademark statute is essentially unchanged from the statute he wrote and Congress enacted in 1946. This is an individual who really has shaped our trademark law.”

According to an article in the 1931 Michiganensian, Edward Rogers was inspired to commission a university coat of arms as a way to decorate the dining room at the University Club of Chicago. Working with the College of Arms in London and a professional heraldic painter, Rogers developed a design based on the university seal but adding “mantling” on the sides, a helmet, and a wolverine crest. (The English designer being unfamiliar with Michigan’s mascot, Rogers reportedly asked him to create a “sort of brunette badger.”) Rogers then had an expert in heraldic carving create two versions of the design in wood—one of which went to the University Club, and the other hung for years in the Michigan Union.



New Faculty Join Michigan Law Community

Michigan Law welcomed four full-time professors beginning in the 2024–2025 academic year, with research and teaching interests focused in areas as diverse as antitrust, civil rights, criminal law, education, economics, and immigration.

PAULINA D. ARNOLD



Paulina D. Arnold worked with detained migrant parents directly after college, and that drove her desire to go to law school. And now, as a law professor, civil detention is a primary focus of her research.

Arnold became involved with detention issues while working in Queens, New York, for a legal nonprofit that did family defense with immigrant parents. She remained active in immigration and detention issues as a student at Harvard Law School, and she worked with the Bronx Defenders, the ACLU of Southern California, and a variety of clinics and community organizations. Arnold also has clerked for two federal judges and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, and was a Forrester Fellow at Tulane University Law School.

“I’m really interested in the coercive power of the law and how the law shapes people’s lives,” she says. “The more that I worked and got a practical grounding in the law, the more I felt like there was a gap in the scholarship in the immigration world and in the prison space about civil confinement. It’s an area of law that has an enormous impact on thousands of people’s lives but can be under-theorized in the academy.”

JENNA COBB



Jenna Cobb joins the faculty as co-director with Imran Syed, ’11) of the Michigan Innocence Clinic. She succeeds the clinic’s co-founding co-director, David Moran, ’91. It is something of a homecoming for Cobb, who grew up in Detroit and whose father is a Michigan Law graduate.

Cobb developed her dedication to public-service work early. After earning her JD at Harvard Law School in 2007, she spent two years at Covington & Burling in Washington, DC, where her litigation practice included criminal postconviction pro bono work. Then she spent two years clerking for the US District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.

After earning her master of divinity at Yale in 2014, Cobb worked for nearly eight years in the Special Litigation Division of the District of Columbia’s Public Defender Service. While doing that work, she also started teaching legal writing as an adjunct professor at the University of the District of Columbia. Most recently, she worked in Boston College’s criminal defense clinic.

“Walking someone out of prison after decades—someone you’ve come to know and develop a relationship with, who has been through so much and has so much to give—It is difficult to think of moments that are as rewarding in your career,” she says.

ALBERT PAK



The value of education and helping community organizations are two common themes in Albert Pak’s life. Now he’s combining those interests by joining the Community Enterprise Clinic, which works with neighborhood-based organizations, from nonprofits to small businesses.

Shortly after graduating from the University of Pennsylvania, Pak helped launch 12 Plus, a nonprofit that provides postsecondary pathway assistance to high school students in underserved areas of Philadelphia. Then, while in graduate school, he spent a summer interning with the philanthropy arm of a large Detroit-based corporation, focusing on education issues in the city.

After graduating from law school at the University of Pennsylvania—and earning a master’s degree from Princeton University’s School of Public and International Affairs, both in 2018—Pak won a prestigious Skadden Fellowship. He spent two years with a pro bono legal assistance nonprofit in Michigan and then worked at Bodman PLC in Ann Arbor.

“Throughout my career, I have seen the often unsung and underappreciated impact that nonprofits, small businesses, and other neighborhood-based organizations have in the community,” Pak says. “I’m excited to be working for a clinic that is devoted to supporting these organizations.”

SPENCER D. SMITH



Spencer D. Smith was initially drawn to the law as a way to make positive change in the world. He has put that drive into practice at the US Department of Justice and as a Supreme Court law clerk. As he

joins the Michigan Law faculty, the desire to spur change continues to motivate him.

Smith earned his bachelor’s degree in economics and mathematics from U-M, then a master’s and doctorate in economics from Oxford University, where he studied as a Marshall Scholar. He earned a JD from Harvard Law School. Smith has served in two different roles at the Justice Department and also as a law clerk to Justice Sonia Sotomayor.

Smith was drawn to academia for two main reasons: the example of his parents, who were both public school teachers, and the chance to make a difference in the world through research and advocacy. While Smith has written on a number of topics, from taxation to torts, his recent focus, both in practice and in research, has been antitrust law, which he will teach in the winter term. He encourages students of all backgrounds and interests to study the subject.

“Antitrust has it all: civil and criminal litigation, fascinating history, crossover politics, statutory interpretation, administrative law and regulatory policy, even some constitutional questions,” he says. “There’s something for everyone.”

Fellows Join Michigan Law

The Law School also welcomed four early career academics and practitioners this fall through various fellowship programs.

MICHIGAN FACULTY FELLOWS

Alma Diamond is a native of South Africa who became interested in the law as a child, as her country adopted a new constitution and transitioned to democracy. She has taught as a lecturer at four law schools, most recently the University of Chicago. Her primary research is in law and philosophy, with a focus on contracts. Specifically, she says she studies how contractual norms reflect or distort social norms and social practices. “It’s an interesting approach in which we’re not really making the law; we’re taking it from everyday practices and then, in turn, shaping those practices again.”

Austin Nelson most recently served as a clerk for the US Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. His primary professional interests are constitutional law, federal jurisdiction, and election law. “The part of federalism that I find interesting [is] how it’s used as a way to get people and communities with very different ideas about how to govern themselves to work together,” he says. “In my recent research, I’ve been looking at the development of federalism before the Civil War through the lens of bankruptcy, which isn’t a view that most people take.”

CLINICAL AND RESEARCH FELLOWS

Matt Blaszczyk is serving as the Law and Mobility Program fellow. A native of Poland, Blaszczyk comes to Michigan Law from a research fellowship in law and technology at the Dickson Poon School of Law at King’s College London. The Law and Mobility Program is a natural fit for his research interests, which include AI regulation, copyright, and antitrust. He is conducting research and managing the *Journal of Law and Mobility*. “The broad spectrum of topics that we can cover within the umbrella of law and mobility is very appealing,” he says. “I can bring my research interests and apply them to something truly tangible.”

Olivia Vigiletti, ’22, worked in the Michigan Innocence Clinic as a student-attorney, and she returns this year as a clinical fellow. After graduation, she worked for the Georgia Innocence Project and then as a public defender. Vigiletti is helping team-teach a seminar on wrongful convictions, working directly on cases (either investigating or representing the client), helping students with the clinic’s cases, and overseeing the clinic’s efforts to change public policy. “I’m really interested in getting law students, who might practice all across the criminal legal system, interested in and attuned to how easy it is for criminal cases to go awry,” she says.



Professor Frank Vandervort met weekly with Nithya Arun (center) and Hiba Dagher as they worked on their guardian ad litem case.

1L Advocacy Clinic Provides Early Exposure to Real-world Lawyering

By Sharon Morioka

As 1L students during the winter 2024 semester, Nithya Arun and Hiba Dagher were fresh off a fall semester where they had been immersed in doctrinal classes. While knowing those classes provided a firm foundation for their law school education, each had decided that their second semester would include a completely different experience: serving as guardians ad litem in a divorce case as part of the 1L Advocacy Clinic.

Each student had come to Michigan Law with the goal of effecting positive change in people’s lives, and the clinic seemed like a natural step on that journey. But as they drove to their first meeting with one of the parents in the case, some not-so-helpful questions plagued their thoughts.

“We were really stressed out,” says Dagher. “We were like, ‘How are we going to ask them questions? We feel totally unprepared. Are we ready for this?’”

Like their classmates, neither Rana Thabata nor Grace Martin had a legal background for the immigration case they were assigned in the clinic that same semester. And, like their classmates, they felt apprehensive as they started work—helping a survivor of domestic violence self-petition for lawful status and permanent residency under the Violence Against Women Act.

“At first, I was so excited and confident in myself,” says Martin. “But then we met our client, and I was so nervous. Having only a semester of law school, I did not feel qualified to handle the complicated and heavy details of our client’s case.”

Fast forward to the end of the semester, and both teams had mastered the steep learning curve.

“Getting hands-on experience and being able to help make a difference in our client’s life reminded me why I wanted to go to law school,” says Martin. “And it taught me skills that we don’t get in the classroom. Working with our client in the clinic was one of the highlights of my 1L year.”

Learning by doing

As Michigan Law's 1L students navigate their first semester in classes such as Constitutional Law, Torts, and Contracts, they know that experiential offerings, from externships to pro bono service, await them in their 2L and 3L years.

But the opportunity to put their learnings into practice comes sooner for a select group of students working in the 1L Advocacy Clinic during the winter semester. In the winter 2024 class, 22 students worked in teams of two on guardian ad litem cases while six worked in teams of two on immigration cases.

Michigan is one of the few law schools in the country to house such a clinic for first-year students. While the Michigan Supreme Court allows only 2L and 3L students to appear as lawyers under the student practice rule, 1L students are allowed to work as guardians ad litem because guardians do not need to be licensed to practice law. Additionally, law students can practice and appear before US Citizenship and Immigration Services and the immigration court if they are part of a law school clinic and are supervised by an attorney.

"They love to do something that they describe as 'real,' not just reading cases and case books," says Frank Vandervort, clinical professor of law and co-director of the 1L Advocacy Clinic, who advises the guardian ad litem students. "The clinic gives them a chance to actually get a taste of what it means to be a lawyer and to start to figure out who they are as lawyers."

The chance to give 1L students such experience was the goal of creating the clinic. And their evolution over the course of the semester is something to behold.

"Seeing their transformation into compassionate legal advocates is one of the greatest privileges of supervising their work," says Julianna Lee, '05, clinical assistant professor of law, who advises the immigration students. "They learn how to talk to their clients, often about deeply sensitive and intimate details, and then how to transform those conversations into a compelling narrative that satisfies the legal requirements and resonates with the client."

Hiba Dagher and Nithya Arun: guardians ad litem

While Arun and Dagher, now 2L students, were new to experiential learning, they were not thrown into the deep end of their case. That first uncertain car ride to meet their client was preceded by a few weeks of classes to prepare them for the work they would do, such as learning more about the law of guardians ad litem, how to interview children, and how to conduct themselves in court.

Both say that the classroom discussions, along with weekly meetings with Vandervort, guided them in the work that followed.

"We were tasked by the court with learning about each of the parents and how the children fared with each of the parents," says Arun, who went on to intern with the ACLU the summer after her 1L year and was an extern with the ACLU of Michigan during the fall 2024 semester. "Ultimately, the goal was to advocate for the best interests of the children in assigning parenting time and a custody arrangement that would work out for everyone involved."

While well prepared, Arun and Dagher agree that they were initially uncomfortable with delving into the most intimate details of their clients' lives.

"The clinic gives them a chance to actually get a taste of what it means to be a lawyer and to start to figure out who they are as lawyers."

—FRANK VANDERVORT,
clinical professor of law and co-director
of the 1L Advocacy Clinic

“Seeing their transformation into compassionate legal advocates is one of the greatest privileges of supervising their work.”

—JULIANNA LEE, '05,
clinical assistant professor of law

“When you’re meeting someone for the first time, you probably wouldn’t ask them about one of the most tragic events of their life. So that took some getting used to. But we realized that although this might be a little bit awkward for us and awkward for them, it’s necessary for us to discern that information for the best interests of the children,” says Dagher, who worked at Lakeshore Legal Aid following her 1L year, where she went on to extern during the fall 2024 term as well as working in the Law School’s Child Welfare Appellate Clinic.

As the semester progressed and they met more frequently, their nervousness faded due to the sense of urgency for the job they had to do. Additionally, their work on the case became more substantive. In addition to home visits with the family, they met with a child psychologist to get her take on the situation and see what kind of services they could advocate for the children.

Perhaps the most poignant part of their work was their interaction with the children, whom the students knew had already experienced trauma. But learning how to interpret the way children speak and how to get them to open up was a vital part of their work. Looking back on that experience, Arun says meeting them in their home environment provided important context for the case.

“As an attorney, it is imperative to listen to all sides with no immediate judgment and go from there to inform next steps,” she says.

In the end, the divorcing couple reconciled, bringing a happy but premature end to the students’ work. If the case had played out like most in the clinic, they would have seen the case from beginning to end, says Vandervort.

“It gives the students a really well-rounded experience,” he says. “In the course of a semester, they interview a number of people, including the child they represent; write the report; and present their report in court. In most of these cases, they have the opportunity to see this portion of the case from the beginning to the end.”

Even though Dagher and Arun didn’t experience the full cycle, the case made a strong impact.

“Day in and day out, I was focused on what the children’s needs might be and what the parents’ needs might be and how to come up with the solution that respects and observes what each party would need,” says Arun. “They played a huge role in my life that semester.”

Rana Thabata and Grace Martin: immigration

Like the guardian ad litem students, Thabata and Martin spent the first few weeks of the semester learning about the law—in this case, the Violence Against Women Act. The law allows survivors of domestic violence who were married to a US citizen or legal permanent resident to self-petition for eligibility to apply for permanent residency, which also puts them on a path toward citizenship. By doing so, they do not have to rely on a petition by their abusive spouse.

“None of our doctrinals from the fall informed our immigration work. It was an entirely different ball game,” says Thabata, who worked in the Civil Rights Litigation Practicum in fall 2024 before enrolling in the Civil Rights Litigation Initiative for the winter 2025 semester. “And so it felt like we were not only assigned to a client, but we were learning an entirely new section of the law.”

They were also learning how to work within the constraints of a language barrier. “For the self-petition to be submitted, you have to write a declaration about your experience of abuse and violence at the hands of your former spouse or former



Rana Thabata (left) and Grace Martin were two of several 1L students in the clinic during the winter 2024 semester.



Professor Julianna Lee, '05, (right) helped Grace Martin (left) and Rana Thabata learn to apply the law as they worked on an immigration case.

partner,” says Thabata. “That was really hard. English was not her first language, and we wanted to make sure that her voice was still very much heard.”

The clinic’s immigration clients, who are referred by the Michigan Immigrant Rights Center, frequently deal with related issues—such as trauma, removal proceedings, and ongoing domestic violence—that add complexity to their cases and require additional advocacy by the students. Through their weekly meetings with Lee and their ongoing work, Thabata and Martin started to feel confident in their knowledge and ability to help their client. That included learning more about domestic violence.

“The domestic violence that our client faced was the most compelling aspect of our case,” says Martin. “It was difficult to make her relive all of the details, but we needed a complete understanding so that we could put forth the best petition for her.”

Unlike the guardian ad litem cases, the type of immigration process the students follow can take up to two years for each applicant. Therefore, much can happen after the students have moved on to their 2L year.

“As a child of Palestinian immigrants, I had been exposed to the immigration system before,” says Thabata. “But I never realized how the immigration laws can change from one presidential administration to the next. It’s something that obviously isn’t in our hands. You put so much work into your client, and you give them hope. In reality, though, it’s a very long process, and we don’t really know what will happen next.”

But that kind of uncertainty can be another learning experience for the students—one of many for those in the 1L Advocacy Clinic.

“Having an opportunity to apply the law and the skills they’re learning in their first year to real clients responds to a strong desire among many 1L students to experience the practice of law,” says Lee. “Getting to do it as a 1L is important because the skills they start to learn of client communication and counseling, holistic advocacy, storytelling and writing, and fact finding are all a significant part of their professional development.”

Valuable Experience, and Meaningful Contributions

During its relatively brief existence, the 1L Advocacy Clinic has provided first-year Michigan Law students with experiential learning opportunities—about 120 hours per student on average. It also has provided clients with guardian ad litem and immigration services. Here are just a few of the numbers showing the impact of the clinic since its first semester in winter 2023.

GUARDIAN AD LITEM

44
STUDENTS

24
CASES

5,280
HOURS

IMMIGRATION

10
STUDENTS

6
CASES

1,200
HOURS

Four Takeaways from “Our Clean Energy Future”

In September, the Environmental and Energy Law Program hosted a two-day conference, “Our Clean Energy Future.” Keynote addresses from Ann Carlson (formerly of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, NHTSA) and Allison Clements (formerly of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) highlighted four themes:

1. Rulemaking for the environment is difficult—but it can be done.

“Rulemaking is hard, and CAFE [Corporate Average Fuel Economy] rulemaking is especially hard,” Carlson said. But, through “a very intensive process where we met almost weekly with EPA, White House counsel, and the White House Climate Policy Office, we not only did it, we did it on time. She noted that model years 2024 to 2026 “were the largest [improvements to auto standards] in the history of the CAFE statute.”

2. The courts pose a potential threat to progress.

Carlson said while the EPA is threatened by the major questions doctrine, the statute covering the NHTSA is more likely to withstand such challenges. “The inflexibility of the NHTSA

statute, which I found to be very difficult and one of its weaknesses, might turn out to be a legal strength as we move forward and see what the courts have to say about the validity of these regulations.”

3. Improving existing energy infrastructure is critical.

“The grid is no less than the backbone for a modern, resilient, competitive, and peaceful economy in the United States, period,” Clements said. “If you do anything [after leaving the conference], try to get your policy makers, your investor-owned utilities, and your municipalities and cooperatives to make the existing grid more efficient.”

4. Adding more infrastructure is also important—and not easy.

“We have the technology; we have the solutions,” Clements said. “We need political will.” She added that there must be a sensitivity to communities that have already been overburdened and underserved relative to infrastructure—and we must build infrastructure that works for these communities.

Clark’s New Video Series Discusses Effective, Ethical Persuasion



Sherman Clark, the Kirkland & Ellis Professor of Law, launched a six-episode video series, *Arguably Better*, that explores empathy, efficacy, and ethics in argumentation.

“It is about why persuasion is so difficult, how we might get better at it, and what sort of ethical considerations ought to attend our getting better at it. If we’re going to get better, we ought to be doing it ethically as well as effectively,” Clark says.

Persuasion—not just argument narrowly, but all forms of coming to terms—is one of the central themes in Clark’s research and teaching. “Persuasion is central to our profession,” Clark says. “I also think it’s a valuable human individual skill and a valuable civic or public capacity.” He added that, in general, we don’t do persuasion well. “We often fail to persuade and come to terms, and that has big costs professional work and public life.”

Watch the series on YouTube by searching “Arguably Better.”

Bagley Elected to the American Law Institute



In October, Professor Nicholas Bagley was elected to the American Law Institute (ALI).

Bagley, the Thomas G. Long Professor of Law, is an expert in administrative law and health law. He’s currently writing a book, tentatively called *Why*

We Can’t Have Nice Things (Norton, 2026), that documents how administrative law has become an impediment to progress in the US.

Bagley says, “It’s an honor to be elected to the American Law Institute, which does immensely valuable work to make the law both clearer and fairer. And it wouldn’t have been possible without the support of my colleagues here at the Law School.”

In 2020 and 2022, Bagley served as special counsel and then chief legal counsel to Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. He currently is serving a two-year term on the Administrative Conference of the United States.

“Nick will bring not only world-class academic expertise but also practical experience as an exceptional government lawyer. Many ALI projects will benefit from his participation,” says Interim Dean Kyle Logue.



for what's next ▶

Look to Michigan Law

As the world embraces new technologies and faces unprecedented global challenges, the future of the legal profession holds immense promise.






Legal education is evolving to meet these demands, equipping future lawyers with the tools to address the most complex issues.

In this ever-changing environment, the University of Michigan Law School has an important role to play—in training excellent lawyers, generating new insights, and offering innovative solutions.

Forward-thinking lawyers require forward-thinking legal education.

Join us in creating opportunities, supporting solutions, and building on a legacy that will stand the test of time.

Look to Michigan Law School Campaign Priorities

 Student Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scholarships• Fellowships• Debt management	 Innovation and Research <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professorships and faculty support• Groundbreaking research• Experiential education	 Engagement and Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transformative programming• Global problem-solving	 Building our Campus <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Law Library renovation• Classroom enhancements and improvements	 Law School Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible, unrestricted annual support
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Campaign Goal — \$225M



Jonathan D. Lowe, '76: A Lifetime of Community Enrichment

By Annie Hagstrom

Immersed in the Michigan Law community first as a student and later as the leader of the Law School's development and alumni relations team, Jonathan D. Lowe, '76, credits the school with shaping much of his life—and he is still paying it forward.

Lowe has spent his career fostering meaningful connections between individuals and institutions, and he is a true believer in the impact of philanthropy. He and his wife, Beth, recently gave a \$100,000 gift to the Law School to establish the Jonathan D. Lowe Scholarship Fund.

"It's a small token of our appreciation," he says. "The Law School is foundational to who I am and how I've approached my career—it's a part of me."

From legal practice to fundraising

Lowe comes from a family that has connections to the University of Michigan dating back to the 1940s. He skipped a grade in elementary school and then completed his undergraduate degree at Oakland University in two and a half years; he was the youngest in his cohort when he entered Michigan Law as a summer starter at age 19.

"I was thrust into this class of brilliant people, most of whom were older than me," says Lowe. "I studied alongside professionals who had life experiences I couldn't even imagine, and it was fascinating."

Lowe entered private practice after graduating from the Law School and specialized in probate and estate planning at Clark, Klein, Winter, Parsons & Prewitt (now Clark Hill PLC) and later at Sommers, Schwartz, Silver & Schwartz (now Sommers Schwartz PC). However, an unexpected call from Roy Proffitt, '48, marked a new direction for his career.

Proffitt, a double Wolverine, served Michigan Law for 30 years as a professor and administrator whose accomplishments included helping to create the Law School Fund, the oldest annual fund at the University. He enlisted Lowe to help with fundraising efforts. Lowe, eager to support his alma mater, balanced his legal practice with volunteer fundraising for a number of years until Proffitt announced his retirement. Then,

the Law School asked Lowe to fill Proffitt's role as assistant dean for Law School relations, a job he held for a decade.

"When I returned to the Law School as a full-time employee, it was a different ballgame," he says. "I got to sit in the faculty lounge listening to Jerry Israel and Yale Kamisar, both of whom were my professors."

Lowe built strong relationships with alumni throughout his tenure at Michigan Law and increased donor participation to nearly 50 percent of the Law School's alumni network. He also helped facilitate building support, which led to named spaces like the Squires, Sanders, and Dempsey Classroom.

After a decade at the Law School, the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit recruited him for fundraising. Throughout his three decades with the federation, he and his team established crucial social services for the Jewish community, including the Dorothy and Peter Brown Adult Day Program for individuals with Alzheimer's, which operates two facilities in Oakland County.

"It's been a wonderful career, both at the Law School and the federation," he says. "I enjoyed practicing law, but I find it most satisfying to help people match their desires with the goals of an organization."

An everlasting legacy

Despite facing significant health challenges in recent years, Lowe remains positive and continues to inspire those around him. As a retirement gift, his team at the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit assembled a book with dozens of gratitude letters, showing their appreciation for his positive impact on the community. He believes this gift, in some way, has given him the strength to overcome challenging moments.

"In dealing with the reality of my illness, I spoke with one of my rabbis," Lowe recalls. "He said, 'The only thing you can take with you is what you've given away.' I found that inspiring, especially when I reflect on my life and career."

Ambassador W. Robert Kohorst, '78: Maintaining Michigan Law's Preeminence through Faculty Support

By Annie Hagstrom

From a humble \$10 donation upon his graduation to cumulative lifetime giving of more than \$1 million, former Ambassador W. Robert Kohorst, '78, has transformed an initial act of generosity into a lasting legacy of support at Michigan Law.

Kohorst has contributed to several key Law School initiatives over the years, including the campaign that built what is now Jeffries Hall, and has supported the Law School Fund for decades. Most recently, he has focused on faculty recruitment.

"My wife, Shelley Allen, and I focus on educational institutions that have helped us succeed, and Michigan Law is high on that list," he says. "We enjoy seeing the direct result of what our gifts can do, especially if they enrich the educational experience and help maintain Michigan Law's stature as a premier institution."

The Kohorsts' most recent gift emerged from a conversation with then Dean Mark West about the ongoing need to recruit visiting faculty to further enrich the academic experience at Michigan Law. One hurdle was Ann Arbor's limited supply of adequate, short-term housing near campus—so the Kohorsts decided to purchase a house near the Quad and make it available for visiting scholars.

"My brother-in-law graduated from U-M's Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning and is an architect based in Ann Arbor," says Kohorst, referencing Chris Allen, BS.Arch '86, M.Arch '89. "I decided to buy a duplex within walking distance from the Law School and worked with him to remodel it. We created two apartments that each house visiting faculty members for the duration of their time at Michigan Law. Shelley oversaw the furnishing and decorating of the spaces. It was a fun project for my family and our way to innovatively benefit the Law School and its standing in the collegiate community."

As a Michigan Law student, Kohorst had the classic residential experience, living in the Law Quad for three years.

"My time there consisted of camaraderie and close access to sports activities, the classrooms, and the Law Library," says Kohorst, who earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Dayton. "It was a great environment."

A varied and successful career

After graduation, Kohorst clerked for the Hon. Albert J. Engel on the US Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. He practiced law at a midsize firm in California until one of the firm's clients, Public Storage, recruited Kohorst as an investment banker.



He worked for Public Storage for six years before leaving to pursue his goal of owning a business. He bought and served as CEO and principal of Tiger Shark Golf Inc. and Masquerade International Inc. One year later, he founded KH Financial Inc. (now Everest Properties), which purchases and operates apartment, self-storage, and retail properties.

Giving back for the future of others

Kohorst's diverse career has deepened his philanthropic interest. His gifts to Michigan Law are just one of many instances in which he has stepped in to serve a greater collective.

From 2018 to 2021, he was the US ambassador to the Republic of Croatia. He took this position after asking then White House chief of staff Reince Priebus how he could be of service.

"I had a desire to serve the country in a meaningful way," he says. "For those three years, I utilized my business philosophy to get things done and make an impact."

Kohorst, now retired from business, has handed off control of Everest Properties to his two sons. However, he remains busy with other endeavors, including being part of the LA Olympic Committee leadership, where he will be the liaison between the committee and Croatia and between the committee and the sport of team handball for the Summer 2028 Games.

As he continues to inspire others through his philanthropy and leadership, Kohorst proves that true success is measured not just by personal achievement but by the legacy we leave for those who follow. He is pictured above with his wife, Shelley Allen, and their granddaughter, Audrey.

Stuart Feldstein, '63: Innovating Communications, Inspiring Generosity

By Annie Hagstrom



In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell transmitted the following message to his assistant using his new invention, the electric telephone: "Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you."

Throughout the next century, the Bell System evolved alongside other innovations: telephotography, the precursor to the fax machine;

satellite and cable television; and cellular devices.

Stuart Feldstein, '63, spent his career navigating the complexities of an ever-evolving telecommunications industry. He began his career in government service with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and later entered the private sector, where he helped shape policy, law, and the industry more broadly for nearly 50 years. He credits the Law School with preparing him for a successful career and has long felt impelled to give back.

Becoming a telecommunications specialist

Feldstein, a double Wolverine, entered the University of Michigan as an undergraduate to study business and enrolled at the Law School after graduation. He found the academic rigor in the Law Quad energizing and challenging right from the start.

"The professors knew your strengths and weaknesses," says Feldstein. "I had to learn to focus my otherwise scattered brain on the substance of a topic rather than just learning facts that I would repeat back on an exam."

Feldstein joined the FCC in Washington, DC, after graduating. He worked with the agency for eight years before going to work for the National Cable Television and Telecommunications Association (NCTA), a trade association that represents the interests of the telecommunications industry.

"Shortly after I started with the NCTA, I became the general counsel and oversaw lobbying and litigation for the industry," he says. "I traveled to give talks to state cable associations and helped plan for the annual conventions. It was an all-encompassing job, and I was very busy. There was never an idle moment."

During Feldstein's tenure, the NCTA won a crucial copyright case at the US Supreme Court, successfully obtained amendments to the Communications and Copyright acts, and saw the FCC's regulation of cable television considerably reduced. He was with the NCTA for seven years before joining Fleischman and Walsh (now Locke Lord LLP), where he continued to apply his expertise in telecommunications law.

While at the firm, Feldstein played a formative role in the creation of a cellular communications company, Metro Mobile, which steadily grew before going public in the 1980s. In 1992, Bell Atlantic (now Verizon) acquired Metro Mobile in what the *New York Times* reported was the third-largest merger in the history of the telecommunications industry. Feldstein also assisted an entrepreneur in acquiring multiple cable systems starting in 1996, and the resulting company, Medicom, went public in 2000. Feldstein also successfully argued a case against the FCC before the US Supreme Court, involving the imposition of regulatory fees.

The impact of community and giving back

After 47 years of living in the Virginia home where they raised their children, Feldstein and his wife, Ellen, recently moved into a retirement community in the Washington Metropolitan Area. They are active in their local Jewish community and are members of the Beth El Hebrew Congregation, where Ellen was an officer and the editor of the synagogue's newsletter for 25 years.

"The synagogue has been a part of our lives since 1963," he says. "Our children were educated there, and we have been very active members. It has served us well as part of the community."

The Feldsteins are also longtime philanthropists. In 1992, they documented a planned gift at Michigan Law through a charitable remainder annuity trust and established the Stuart and Ellen Feldstein Scholarship Fund. They have continued to add to the trust in the years since, and in 2023 increased their gift to the Law School to \$3.4 million.

"We knew we wanted to make an impact and that law school has become increasingly expensive," says Feldstein. "I loved Michigan Law while I attended, and I've grown fonder of it as the years go by. It was the fuel that got my engine started."

R. Charles McLravy II, '77: From Law to Literature

By Annie Hagstrom

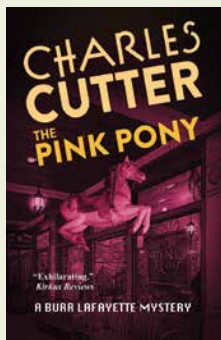
Navigating the twists and turns of murder trials was a challenge R. Charles McLravy II, '77, never anticipated. And yet he finds himself surrounded by courtroom intrigue and entangled in case after case—through Burr Lafayette, the fictional protagonist in McLravy's series of mystery novels.

McLravy says that Michigan Law prepared him not only for his successful legal and business career but also gave him the intellectual breadth to invent a world where a seasoned litigator-turned-defense attorney can entertain and shock readers in equal measure. In his award-winning, five-book mystery series, with the sixth installment underway, McLravy takes readers throughout Northern Michigan and into the courtroom for vivid and sometimes grisly legal thrillers.

With the combination of his lawyering experience, entrepreneurial success in the media business, and passion for storytelling, McLravy demonstrates a literary way to utilize a legal education.

Trading law for media

McLravy, an avid reader since childhood, comes from a literary family. His mother taught at Michigan State University (MSU) after earning her bachelor's, master's, and doctorate in English there. Following in her footsteps, McLravy earned his undergraduate degree in English and finance from MSU before matriculating at Michigan Law.



"The most important thing I learned in law school, and it didn't take long for me to learn it, was that I wasn't the smartest guy in the room," he says. "That was a humbling but valuable experience. It took an awful lot of work for me to do well."

McLravy's next challenge was applying his legal degree to the real world. In the four years following his graduation

from the Law School, he experienced what it was like to work in Big Law, a small private law firm, and even an ad agency.

But in 1981, he became what he calls a "serial entrepreneur." Specifically, McLravy found himself in the business of buying and selling radio and television stations, tower companies, and, later, billboard companies.

"This was well before the internet and social media," he says. "When I bought my first radio station, they were where most



people got their popular culture, and I was very interested in that."

McLravy is still working in the media business and, through Showtime Outdoor, owns digital billboards.

A lifelong literary calling

Though he found success in his entrepreneurial pursuits, McLravy's creative itch led him back to school. In the early 1990s, he returned to MSU to take writing courses and began writing screenplays and short stories before embarking on his first novel.

"I became interested in the mystery and thriller genres through the different stories I grew up with," says McLravy. "There's an Agatha Christie play that's been adapted a couple of times called *Witness for the Prosecution*, and I really liked Alfred Hitchcock movies. That's how it all started."

McLravy writes under a pen name, Charles Cutter, which was inspired by the cutter sailboat his parents owned and the difficulty people had with his last name. Sailing is only one of the themes from McLravy's life that he includes in his literary world. He is also an avid conservationist—an interest he has imparted on a handful of his characters—and his characters' canine companions often are inspired by McLravy's real-life dogs.

The latest book in the series, *The Lady Slipper*, is almost complete. A key element of the mystery centers on an endangered Northern Michigan orchid by the same name.

When he's not writing or closing billboard deals, McLravy focuses on philanthropy. Recently, he established a \$250,000 planned gift at the Law School, which will create the R. Charles McLravy Law Scholarship Fund.

"Even though I didn't practice law for long, I learned so much at the Law School," he says. "The fact that my law degree is from the University of Michigan opened so many doors for me, which is a debt I could never repay. I also wouldn't be writing these books if it weren't for my law degree."

New Endowed Fund Will Support Michigan Law's Black Alumni Reunion in Perpetuity

By James Weir

Elizabeth Campbell, '78, recently made a gift to establish an endowed fund that will support the Black Alumni Reunion and related efforts in perpetuity. Campbell's gift will be combined with surplus funds from previous Reunions—more than 50 alumni have made gifts over the years—to establish the Black Alumni Reunion Fund.

Campbell has served as a volunteer executive co-chair for every Reunion since the first event in 2014. While fundraising has been an important part of each Black Alumni Reunion, Campbell's motivation was to establish something that would endure and provide an opportunity for others to make a lasting contribution.

"I wanted to do something that will encourage others to give at modest levels because, collectively, we can create something special," she says. "Endowing the fund means that it will live on, and the proceeds will enable us to keep supporting our students into the future."

Michigan Law's Black Alumni Reunion is held every three years and supports the recruitment, matriculation, and success of Black students at the Law School. To support these efforts, volunteers raised \$26,000 during the first Reunion to put toward subsidizing production costs and registration fees for the event—in particular for admitted and current students as well as recent alumni and those working in the public interest sector. Fundraising to support the Reunion continued for the 2017, 2020, and 2023 events.

The inclusive nature of the new fund exemplifies the ethos of the Reunion program, which is open to all alumni of the Law School as well as all current and admitted students. It also builds on the legacy of another community-supported fund at Michigan Law, the Alden J. "Butch" Carpenter Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded each year at the Black Law Students Association's annual gala. The Carpenter scholarship was established to honor a Black student who died in 1978 during his first year at Michigan Law.

"I remember watching the Carpenter scholarship fund and annual event grow and grow," Campbell says. "What began as a modest scholarship is now endowed in the seven figures, and I'm very proud of that history. With the Reunion, and now this new fund, we hope to replicate the success of that community effort."

Campbell's gift, combined with existing surplus funds, totaled around \$80,000 when the fund was established in the spring of 2024—\$20,000 short of the Law School's threshold for permanently endowed funds. Per the agreement with the Law School, supporters of the fund have until the end of 2027 to meet that threshold.

Signs suggest, however, that it won't take until the end of 2027 to permanently establish the fund. When it was announced to members of the Reunion's steering committee in May 2024, one longtime volunteer immediately pledged to match up to \$10,000 in gifts from others—inspiring a number of on-the-spot commitments. As of November 2024, gifts intended for the fund have totaled nearly \$95,000.

For Campbell, the goal of the new fund and Reunion program is ultimately about doing what she can for others and working to better the Law School and its community. It's also why she attends the Black Alumni Reunion and encourages aspiring lawyers to attend Michigan Law.

"If we're fortunate enough, we will do something in our lifetimes that can be our legacy, and this work is driven by the fact that we want to contribute to a rich experience for all students, prospective students, and alumni," she says. "Michigan is creating the leaders of the future, and the impact of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging is critical to that endeavor. And that's the value of this mission: bringing diverse perspectives together and intellectually creating the foundation to solve tomorrow's problems."



Michigan Law's first Black Alumni Reunion—then known as the African American Alumni Reunion—took place in 2014. The Reunion has since been established as a recurring event held every three years, and alumni returned to the Law Quad and participated in increasing numbers in 2017 and 2023. (The March 2020 Reunion was postponed due to the pandemic and was reenvisioned as a virtual event the following year.)

The **Black Alumni Reunion Fund** will support activities and programs that demonstrate that Michigan Law is a welcoming and inclusive place for all students, particularly for Black students. As outlined in its establishing documents, the goals of the fund are that:

- The Reunion, its programs, and its support for increasing Michigan Law's representation of the diverse populations from which its students come will thrive in perpetuity;
- And that through these efforts, Michigan Law will continue its tradition of excellence in producing some of the country's, and the world's, best lawyers.

CLASS NOTES

1967



Richard D. McLellan has endowed the Richard D. McLellan Prizes for Advancing Free Speech and Expression at the Russell Kirk Center

for Cultural Renewal, an educational nonprofit based in Mecosta, Michigan. The prize will award a total of \$75,000 annually to support writing, creative work, and other actions that advance the First Amendment principle of free expression.

1969



Robert M. Meisner is a member of *Michigan Lawyers Weekly's* Class of 2024 Hall of Fame for his contributions to the field of community association law,

including his role in drafting the 1978 Michigan Condominium Act and amendments to the law in 2001. Meisner is the principal founding member of The Meisner Law Group PC in Bingham Farms, Michigan.

1970

Ralph Wellington received the 2024 Award for Exceptional Service from Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts for his commitment to supporting low-income artists and small arts organizations through volunteer legal services. Wellington is of counsel at Dilworth Paxson in Philadelphia, where he is a partner in the litigation department and focuses on class actions, aviation and railroad law, business and corporate disputes, art law, and trusts and estates.

1971

R. Joseph Kimble has published the second edition of his book *Writing for Dollars, Writing to Please: The Case for Plain Language in Business, Government, and Law* (Carolina Academic Press, 2023). Also, he recently won the Golden Pen Award from the Legal Writing Institute, a nonprofit dedicated to improving legal communications, for his contributions to the field. Kimble has been editor of the "Plain Language" column in the *Michigan Bar Journal* for 36 years.

1973

John K. Villa recently received two recognitions from *Chambers USA: 2024* Star Individual in the law firm defense category and Senior Statesperson in the financial services regulation category. Villa is a partner at William & Connolly LLP in Washington, DC, where he specializes in the defense of law firms and companies in cases involving malpractice, negligence, breach of fiduciary duty, fraud, and securities violations. He is co-chair of the firm's financial services and banking group and served on the firm's executive committee for 15 years.

1974

Larry D. Thompson has published *Quiet Counsel: Looking Back on a Life of Service to the Law* (Disruption Books, 2024), a memoir that chronicles his career in public service, corporate law, and academia. Among other significant roles in the public and private sectors, Thompson served as a deputy US attorney general from 2001 to 2003, led worldwide legal and government affairs functions for PepsiCo, and specialized in political corruption and drug trafficking prosecutions as a US attorney for the Northern District of Georgia.

1975



Walter Mugdan retired in 2023 after nearly five decades with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), where he most recently served as the deputy

regional administrator for EPA Region 2. He is the president of the Udalls Cove Preservation Committee on Long Island, New York, and the Westmoreland Association. He also is a member of the board of directors for the EPA Alumni Association, Alley Pond Environmental Center, and Douglas Manor Environmental Association. Additionally, he works with the Environmental Protection Network to provide pro bono technical assistance to persons and groups with environmental questions.

1977



Jim Olson, LL.M., has published a new book, *People of the Dune* (Mission Point Press, 2024). The novel covers a legal battle over the mining of a coastal

dune on a freshwater inland sea. As a lawyer, Olson has represented citizens and communities in courts for five decades and authored articles, papers, and blogs on law and the environment, water, and natural resources. In 2010, he founded For Love of Water, a nonprofit law and policy center, to protect the public commons in water, lands, and communities.

Did you get a new job or a promotion? Were you recognized with an award? Share your news with classmates in an upcoming issue of the *Law Quadrangle*. Email LQNCClassNotes@umich.edu or complete the online form at law.umich.edu/classnotes



George Pond received a Band 1 rating from *Chambers USA* for his work in energy law in New York. Pond is a partner at Barclay Damon LLP, where

he represents electric and gas utilities, pipeline companies, generators, and marketers in administrative proceedings and commercial matters. He is a former trial attorney in the Antitrust Division of the US Department of Justice and a former federal regulatory affairs attorney.

1978

The Hon. Roger L. Gregory is the 2024 recipient of the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Law, which is presented annually by the Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the University of Virginia. The law medal, along with its counterparts in three other disciplines, is the university's highest external honor. Judge Gregory is the first Black judge to serve on the US Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and has served as its chief judge. He is a past member of the Judicial Conference of the United States.

1979



John J. McCullough III won reelection as mayor of Montpelier, Vermont, for a two-year term. He became mayor following a special election in 2023

and has served on the City Council since 2018. McCullough began his career at Legal Aid of Western Michigan in Grand Rapids, before joining the Montpelier office of Vermont Legal Aid. He also is the longtime project director of Vermont Legal Aid's Mental Health Law Project, directing and representing clients in hospitals and outpatient settings in voluntary mental health proceedings throughout the state.

1980

Ronald Nessim was named a 2024 Legal Legend by the *Hollywood Reporter*. He is a partner at Bird, Marella, Rhow, Lincenberg, Drooks, & Nessim LLP in Los Angeles, where he practices commercial and entertainment litigation and white-collar criminal defense. Nessim has argued numerous appeals in federal and state courts, including in the US Supreme Court.

1981



David Calzone co-founded Calzone Hiser PLLC in January 2024 with **Susan Hartmus Hiser, '91**. The firm, located in Metro Detroit, provides neutral mediation,

arbitration, investigation, and Title IX hearing officer services. Throughout his career, Calzone has practiced on behalf of public and private sector employers in the areas of employment discrimination, labor litigation, labor arbitration, appellate litigation, mediation, and complex class action litigation. He is a former director and shareholder of Vercruysse Murray & Calzone PC and is a fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers.



Michael Kump, founding partner and trial attorney at Kinsella Holley Iser Kump Steinsapir LLP, was named a 2024 Legal Legend by the *Hollywood Reporter*. Kump

represents plaintiffs and defendants across matters involving intellectual property, entertainment, media, contract, and business litigation and counseling. He represents a number of well-known media figures, including the Kardashians and the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, as well as media outlets like Blumhouse Television, Live Nation Entertainment, and HBO Latin America.

1982

Gerald Laderman has been elected chairman of Kemper Corporation's board of directors. He joined the board in 2020 and has since served on its audit and investment committees. Laderman is the executive vice president of finance for United Airlines. He has nearly 35 years of experience in the airline industry, serving in various leadership roles for both United Airlines and Continental Airlines.



Myint Zan, LLM, has edited a book written by his late mother and professor of medicine, Myint Myint Khin. The book, *Burmese Women Through*

the Ages: The Heritage (Dr. Myint Zan, 2024), includes an introduction written by James Boyd White, the L. Hart Wright Collegiate Professor of Law Emeritus at Michigan Law. Zan's most recent academic journal publication is "The Dudley & Stephens and Palmer Cases Juxtaposed: A Few Legal and Moral Considerations," which was published in the *Commonwealth Lawyer* (33, No. 3, 2023). He also published a collection of articles on 28 Burmese personages born between the mid-18th and mid-20th centuries in his book *Glimpses of Myanmar Personages II* (Dr. Myint Zan, 2023). In August 2023, the Hon. Hilary Charlesworth of the International Court of Justice delivered the inaugural Myint Zan Law and Philosophy Lecture at the Australian National University, another of Zan's alma maters, on the topic of "Assessing International Adjudication: The World Court at 100."



CLASS NOTES

1985

Stanley P. Jaskiewicz recently published “Life Lessons from Boy Scout Camp (For Those Returning to the Office)” in the American Bar Association’s April 2024 *Voice of Experience* e-newsletter. The Boy Scouts of America (now Scouting America) republished Jaskiewicz’s article in its popular *Aaron on Scouting* blog. Jaskiewicz also published “The Train Ride of a Lifetime” in the July 2024 issue of *Voice of Experience*. He is a member of the Philadelphia-based law firm Spector Gadon Rosen Vinci PC.

1986

Margaret Seif was elected to Kopin Corporation’s board of directors. She has held various positions, including corporate secretary, chief people officer, and chief legal officer, at Analog Devices Inc. (ADI). Before joining ADI, Seif also held various positions at RSA Security Inc. She serves on the board of advisers for Community Servings Inc. and the New England regional council of the Smithsonian Institution.

1988

Ray Espinosa, LL.M., joined the board of directors for EEI Corporation, a construction company in the Philippines. He is an attorney and the director of the Philippines-based telecommunications company PLDT, where he is a member of its technology strategy and data privacy committee and the information security committee. He also serves as a director, chairman, and/or trustee of several corporations, holding companies, foundations, and trust funds.

Did you get a new job or a promotion? Were you recognized with an award? Share your news with classmates in an upcoming issue of the *Law Quadrangle*. Email LQNCClassNotes@umich.edu or complete the online form at law.umich.edu/classnotes

1990

Audrey Anderson was appointed interim general counsel at Dartmouth College. She is an attorney at Bass, Berry & Sims PLC and previously served as vice chancellor and general counsel and university secretary for Vanderbilt University. She remains an adjunct faculty member at Vanderbilt Law School, teaching higher education law and a seminar on the Supreme Court. Earlier in her career, Anderson worked in the Department of Homeland Security and also served as a partner in the education and litigation practice groups at Hogan & Hartson LLP, where she represented and advised public school districts in litigation and other matters, as well as advised clients in a range of complex civil litigation and appellate litigation.



Colin Zick received a Band 1 rating for health care law in Massachusetts from *Chambers USA*. He is a partner at the Boston office of Foley Hoag LLP, where he serves as chair of the health care compliance practice and co-chair of the privacy and data security practice. His work often involves the intersection of health care and compliance issues in investigations, administrative proceedings, or litigation.

1991



Susan Hartmus Hiser co-founded Calzone Hiser PLLC in January 2024 with **David Calzone, ’81**. The firm, located in Metro Detroit, provides neutral mediation, arbitration, investigation, and Title IX hearing officer services. Throughout her career, Hiser has focused her practice on employment litigation, workplace investigations, and counseling employers on matters including discrimination and harassment, FMLA compliance, ADA

accommodations, and disciplinary matters. Before co-founding Calzone Hiser, she was a partner at Fisher Phillips LLP. She also is a fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers.



Dan Kim has become the vice president for marketing and communications at Quinnipiac University. Before joining Quinnipiac, Kim was senior vice president for communications, marketing, and external relations at Brandeis University. Earlier, he served as vice president for marketing and communications at the College of the Holy Cross.

1992

Margaret A. Walker joined the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion board of trustees. She is the executive vice president of legal affairs and corporate communications at HMTX Industries, a global flooring company headquartered in Norwalk, Connecticut. Before joining HMTX, Walker spent more than two decades at the Xerox Corporation. She has served on the boards of New Beginnings Family Academy Inc. and LifeBridge Community Services. Walker also is a founding member of the Black Bar Association of Rochester, New York.

1993

John W. Rees joined Reising Ethington PC in Troy, Michigan, as a senior attorney. Rees’s practice specializes in a broad range of technologies, including medical devices, machine-based inspection systems, and automotive-related products, with an emphasis on control algorithms. He has represented global clients across intellectual property matters, including US and foreign patent preparation and prosecution, trade secret protection, product reverse engineering studies, product and trademark clearances, and intellectual property due diligence.



Charles Lowery, '79: Connecting the Dots at the DC Bar

By James Weir

It's not every day that garbage collector and steel mill employee appear on a résumé alongside roles at the NAACP, the Department of Defense, and in nonprofit housing and mortgage services. But for Charles Lowery, '79—who recently completed a one-year term as president of the District of Columbia Bar Association—his nontraditional path to the law, and his varied experiences within it, provide perspective that has served him well in his career and in his work with professional associations.

"The idea of being president of the bar was an interesting challenge because my background is in government and the nonprofit and legal services arena, and generally the presidents of the bar come from law firms," he says. "I wanted to show that different people with different experiences can also lead the organization."

Bringing people together

Lowery, who was most recently a senior policy director at the National Housing Conference, assumed the role of bar president in summer 2023, and he brought a simple mantra with him: Connect the dots. The legal community in Washington, DC, offers a wealth of associations and other groups dedicated to the profession, but Lowery says there are additional opportunities for beneficial collaborations.

"I've been in a lot of different jobs, and all of those experiences gave me a sense of relationship building—and that's one of the key things I wanted to bring to the bar," he says. "If you can connect the different pieces that are around you, you can move things forward or help someone, or make a new connection that could be valuable down the road."

One initiative that Lowery spearheaded was organizing a meeting with DC-area law school deans to discuss how to connect law students more effectively with the activities of the DC Bar and other local professional associations. Deans from the law schools at American University, The Catholic University of America, George Washington University, Georgetown University, Howard University, and the University of the District of Columbia convened with Lowery and his colleagues to discuss challenges facing law students and young lawyers.

"It was pretty amazing to see them in the same room with the DC Bar and for them to talk about the law students and what they are going through, especially around artificial intelligence and other trends," he says. "It was valuable to discuss with them the work the DC Bar is doing and how we could connect on these issues. And now they have that relationship, and they can build on that with the next president and the staff."



Broadening partnerships

Lowery also spent considerable time deepening the relationship between the DC Bar and other professional associations, such as voluntary bars like the Washington Bar Association, which represents the interests of Black lawyers in DC, as well as other affinity-based groups, including the Hispanic Bar Association of the District of Columbia and the Asian Pacific American Bar Association of DC.

"Sometimes you find that members of the DC Bar are very involved with voluntary bars, but they're not as engaged with us. So connecting with those groups has been helpful in demonstrating the benefits of being a member of the DC Bar," he says. "For people working in nonprofit or government, annual bar dues are a pretty substantial payment, so we have been trying to show what the bar has to offer—resources like continuing legal education classes, our leadership academy for young lawyers, groups organized around practice areas, and so on."

He also participated in an event with the presidents of the Maryland and Virginia bar associations to celebrate all three groups being led by Black men for the first time. Lisa Helem, '09, the executive editor at Bloomberg Industry Group, moderated the panel.

Lowery is one of many Michigan Law alumni who have risen to leadership positions in prominent bar associations.

"At the University of Michigan, I think there's a sense of service and giving of yourself and your skills, and that stays with us after we leave Ann Arbor," Lowery says. "Sometimes you're serving from a variety of perspectives, as a volunteer, or part of an organization, or even leading the bar. It's a service in helping others and helping things move forward to be better."

CLASS NOTES



Alec Rogers has joined Ford Motor Company's Washington, DC, office as a government affairs executive and director of tax and finance policy.

His appointment follows 18 years as senior director for Xerox Corporation and a decade on Capitol Hill, where he was senior counsel to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee. Before working on Capitol Hill, Rogers was in private practice in Birmingham, Michigan, and Washington, DC.

1996

Ashby Jones has been named deputy economics editor at the *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)*. He first joined the *WSJ* in 2009 as an editor and went on to hold a number of positions at the organization, including most recently as deputy coverage chief for US news. Jones led the *WSJ's* legal coverage from 2016 to 2019, which included working with a team of reporters and editors who received the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting.

Stephen Kuperberg joined Feldesman Leifer LLP in Washington, DC, as a partner in the firm's health care and litigation and government investigations practice groups. His practice encompasses a broad spectrum of litigation, regulatory, and advisory matters, with a particular focus on issues related to the 340B drug discount program, health care fraud, contract disputes, and the False Claims Act.

Nathaniel Marrs has joined Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP as a partner in the firm's Chicago office and is a member of Willkie's asset management department. Marrs has more than 25 years of fund formation experience and focuses on private funds investing in the real estate, infrastructure, and energy industries. He previously was a partner at DLA Piper LLP.

Thomas Trujillo joined McGuireWoods LLP as chief innovation and artificial intelligence (AI) officer in the firm's Charlotte, North Carolina, office. He manages the development and deployment of business solutions, including the use of AI-enhanced tools, to better serve clients and improve firm operations. He also joined the firm's technology committee. Trujillo served as director of MWAccel before joining McGuireWoods and continues to hold this position alongside his new role.

1997

William "Bill" Quick received the 2024 Distinguished Service Award from the Kansas Bar Association. Quick is a partner at Polsinelli PC's Kansas City office. He is the chair of the firm's Corporate Transparency Act practice and focuses on managing the corporate portfolios of business enterprises and family offices on an array of corporate, finance, transactional, and related legal needs.

Michaune D. Tillman joined Corning Inc. as senior vice president and general counsel. Tillman previously was general counsel and corporate secretary for Worthington Steel Inc. and has extensive experience in corporate governance matters, litigation, commercial transactions, regulatory, antitrust, environmental health and safety, cyber security, data privacy, import/export, labor and employment, intellectual property, and compliance.

Pryce Tucker joined Schouest Bamdas Soshea BenMaier & Eastham PLLC as a partner in the firm's new Dallas location. He defends clients against wrongful death, catastrophic personal injury, and property damage claims and also specializes in product liability cases. Before joining Schouest Bamdas, Tucker worked for more than 20 years at Hartline Barger LLP.

1998

Steven Feenstra joined Nixon Peabody LLP as counsel in the firm's community development finance practice in Washington, DC. His practice focuses on negotiating business arrangements between a large low-income housing tax credit syndicator, investors, and developers in order to build affordable housing projects. Feenstra also reviews proposed projects to confirm compliance with tax code requirements and addresses essential development matters on behalf of the syndicator and its investors.

Brian Steinhardt was appointed co-head of Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP's banking and credit practice. He is based in the firm's New York City office, where he currently serves on the opinion committee and has previously served on the compensation and business development committees. Steinhardt represents private equity and infrastructure sponsors and their portfolio companies in connection with a broad range of corporate finance transactions.

1999

Andrew Feller joined Kohn, Kohn & Colapinto as senior special counsel, specializing in securities and commodities laws. Feller most recently was the associate general counsel and executive principal for The Options Clearing Corporation. Before that, he spent 12 years as senior counsel in the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Division of Enforcement, including three years as senior counsel and policy adviser to the SEC commissioner. Earlier, he was in private practice, representing clients in capital markets matters and securities fraud litigation.

The Hon. J. Chris Larson was appointed to the 20th Judicial District Court by Colorado Gov. Jared Polis. He was an assistant US attorney in the Civil Division of the US Attorney's Office for the District of Colorado. He also has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Colorado Law School. He sits on the board of directors for IN! Pathways to Inclusive Higher Education, a nonprofit designed to create inclusive college opportunities in Colorado for students with intellectual disabilities.

Jonathan Lewis joined Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP as counsel in Washington, DC. He is an antitrust and consumer protection attorney who advises clients from the consumer products, pharmaceutical, manufacturing, chemicals, and health care industries. Lewis joins Hunton from Lowenstein Sandler LLP, where he was a partner and member of the firm's antitrust group.

Benjamin Zainea was selected by *Michigan Lawyers Weekly* as a 2024 Go To Lawyer for business transactions. He is an attorney at the Grand Rapids-based law firm Mika Meyers PLC. Zainea specializes in transactions, mergers and acquisitions, business formation and succession planning, general business and real estate law, estate planning, commercial lending, and manufacturing.

2000

Kimberly D. Bailey was named associate dean of academic affairs at the University of Cincinnati College of Law (UC Law). Bailey joined UC Law in 2023 and has taught criminal law; criminal procedure; evidence; and sex, gender, sexuality, and the law. Before joining UC Law, she was an associate professor and the Norman and Edna Freehling Scholar at Chicago-Kent College of Law.

Maria Kaplan joined the National Labor Relations Board as director of its Office of Equal Employment Opportunity. Kaplan most recently served as director of the investigations and compliance division in the Office for Civil Rights, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). During her almost 10 years with the EEOC, she also served in senior-level positions across multiple offices, including the office of general counsel, federal operations, and equal opportunity.

Jeffrey Talbert joined Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP as a partner in its Boston and Newark, New Jersey, offices. As a member of the environmental practice, he advises clients on environmental litigation, permitting, due diligence, and risk management. Before joining the firm, he worked as a trial attorney in the Environmental Enforcement Section of the US Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division.

2001

Michelle Foster, LLM, is now serving as dean of the University of Melbourne Law School, where she also is a professor and the director of the Peter McMullin Centre on Statelessness, which she helped establish in 2018. Foster, an international authority on refugee law, human rights, and statelessness, is a research associate at the University of Oxford's Refugee Studies Centre and research affiliate at the Refugee Law Initiative at the University of London. She is a fellow of the Australian Academy of Social Sciences and the Australian Academy of Law.



William P. Johnson has been named rector and vice president of Saint Louis University's (SLU) Madrid Campus. Most recently, he served as the dean of SLU's

School of Law for more than seven years. He also served as director of the Center for International and Comparative Law and, concurrently, as director of the School of Law's Summer Law Program in Madrid. Before becoming a law professor, Johnson was in private practice in the business law department of Foley & Lardner LLP.

2003

Amit Trehan joined Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP in New York as a partner in the firm's bankruptcy and restructuring practice. He represents financial institutions, hedge funds, direct lenders, corporate clients, ad hoc groups, and derivative counterparties. Trehan joined Cahill from Barclays PLC, where he was a principal in special asset management.

2004

Tony Shin was appointed general counsel of STIIIZY, a Los Angeles-based cannabis company. He has spent his career advising publicly traded and multinational companies and emerging high-growth organizations across a number of industries. Most recently, Shin was the associate general counsel at Aerojet Rocketdyne Holdings Inc. Before his role at Aerojet, he was a partner at Los Angeles-based TroyGould PC, where he represented and advised emerging growth, middle market, and public company clients in corporate and securities matters.



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Judith Conway, '14: Representing David in a World of Goliaths

By Sharon Morioka

Judith Conway, '14, vividly remembers one day during her first-year torts class when Professor Scott Hershovitz asked the students if anyone wanted to practice tort law.

"I raised my hand, and he joked, 'You know, I've taught this class six or seven times. You're the only person who's ever raised their hand—I had a perfect record.'"

Conway followed through on that pledge and now works as an associate at Cooney & Conway, a midsize plaintiff's law firm in Chicago. She represents victims of serious personal injury and wrongful death, specializing in cases involving asbestos-related diseases. For her efforts, she won the 2024 Young Lawyer of the Year award from the Illinois State Bar Association and *Forbes* named her one of Chicago's Best Wrongful Death Lawyers of 2024. While she also works on wrongful death cases and mass torts, the majority of her work involves victims with asbestos-related diseases.

Holding the powerful to account

During her law school days, Conway remembers feeling like she was seeking an "alternate career" by pursuing plaintiffs work and not going into Big Law or public interest law like her classmates. But she says she has enjoyed working on behalf of her clients against the people and corporations who have harmed them.

In her asbestos cases, she enjoys fighting for the "little guy" against those companies who knowingly chose to expose her clients to cancer-causing asbestos. Most of her clients are shocked to learn that corporations and manufacturers would act as badly as the asbestos litigation defendants have in knowingly exposing them to asbestos to protect their bottom line. She views holding bad actors to account as a foundational aspect of the justice system, finding the work both important and gratifying.

Conway says the work is fulfilling but acknowledges that it is difficult and time consuming. As part of her cases, she has had to immerse herself in the minutiae of her clients' diseases, learning the medical and scientific aspects of her cases. She works with

physicians and experts such as economists, who can show a client's lost earnings, and industrial hygienists, who can quantify and evaluate a client's asbestos exposure.

But, she never forgets the days when she first started working and had to "Google almost every other word."

"I try to take the most complicated concepts and distill them into something that juries can understand—and eventually get them to the conclusion that my client was injured and that we have to hold the defendant responsible," Conway says.

Working against unforgiving disease

For her asbestos cases, the diseases her clients contract happen because they inhale asbestos fibers, often at work, or they experience secondhand exposure from the clothing or shared living quarters of a loved one. The fibers then become trapped in the lining of body cavities (the mesothelium) or lungs and, after a latency period that lasts decades, cause asbestosis, cancer, mesothelioma, and other diseases. People have been exposed to asbestos in a variety of products, from insulation materials and car brake linings to talcum powder and cosmetics.

"Mesothelioma progresses rapidly," says Conway. "A lot of our clients present to the ER with fluid on their lungs, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath—and then through biopsies will get diagnosed. Unfortunately, some don't get diagnosed until they pass away.

"We have yet to have any client survive and beat mesothelioma," Conway says. That results in another challenge in her work: knowing that many of her clients, to whom she has grown close, won't make it to the end of their trials.

"A lot of them are coming to me at some of the worst times in their lives, after they've been diagnosed with terminal cancer or lost a loved one," she says. "I fight with every ounce of my being and make sure that they get the best representation they can. It never gets easier to lose a client, but knowing that I'm protecting their access to courts and that I'm fighting for them inside and out of the courtroom is really important to me."

2005

Brenda Abdelall recently served as deputy director of Arab American voter outreach for the Harris-Walz presidential campaign. Abdelall is an Egyptian-American lawyer who has served in a number of roles at the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS), including chief of staff and senior adviser for the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, assistant secretary for partnership and engagement, and, currently, senior counsel to the secretary. Before joining DHS, Abdelall worked at New York University as a deputy chief compliance officer and resident instructor and at the Washington, DC-based Muslim Advocates as a director.

2007

Tara J. Plochocki joined Sequor Law as a partner and head of the firm’s new Washington, DC, office. She is an asset recovery attorney and ICC FraudNet member who handles high-profile cases and unravels complex cross-border financial schemes. In addition to her international civil litigation practice, Plochocki represents individuals in connection with congressional and law enforcement investigations. She also advises on extradition law and regularly serves as an expert in proceedings in the UK and other Commonwealth countries.

2008

John Lyons joined Boies Schiller Flexner LLP as a partner in the firm’s New York office. His practice focuses on protecting companies against class actions and individual claims in state and federal court, along with complex litigation outside the US. Before joining Boies, Lyons was a partner at Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP. He is active in pro bono matters through the Pennsylvania Innocence Project and the New York Legal Aid Society.

Michelle Silverthorn was named one of *Inc. Magazine’s* Top 250 Female Founders for 2024. She is the founder and CEO of Inclusion Nation, a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) service company. Silverthorn was recognized for delivering DEI training to 3,500 students online and delivering more than 75 speeches to clients worldwide. Before founding her company, Silverthorn was the diversity and education director for the Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism. She lives in Ann Arbor.

2009

Elizabeth Crouse joined Holland & Knight LLP as partner in the firm’s Portland, Oregon, office. As an energy and tax law attorney, she advises clients on a range of US federal income tax matters, including tax credits for the renewable energy industry. Before joining the firm, Crouse was a partner at Perkins Coie LLP. She is the co-director of the Seattle chapter of Women of Renewable Industries and Sustainable Energy and co-chairs the tax committee of the Coalition for Renewable Natural Gas.

Samantha Funk was appointed as a full-time faculty member at the University of Colorado Law School, where she has spent the past year as a visiting legal writing assistant professor. Before teaching, Funk practiced commercial litigation and represented clients at the trial and appellate levels in state and federal court. Her practice involved a broad range of civil matters, including class actions and franchise or contract disputes. After working as a civil litigator, she conducted civil rights and Title IX investigations at the University of Washington.



Lisa Helem, the executive editor at Bloomberg Industry Group, moderated the 2024 DMV Bar Presidents’ Panel in Washington, DC, which included the presidents of the Virginia and Maryland state bar associations as well as **Charles Lowery Jr., ’79**, who then was the president of the DC Bar. (Helem and Lowery are pictured right and left, respectively.) The event commemorated the first time that African American men led all three bar associations. Previously, Helem was editor-in-chief of the *National Law Journal*, practiced law at an Am Law 100 firm, and wrote for outlets including *Newsweek*, *People*, and the *Philadelphia Daily News*.

John Parsi joined the faculty at Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law Center, where he teaches criminal law, administration of criminal justice, family law, and health law, as well as remedies and science and technology law. His research and scholarship focuses on bodily autonomy at the intersection of health, science, and technology law. Previously, he taught at the University of Nebraska College of Law and Arizona State University.



Andrey Spektor joined Norton Rose Fulbright’s regulatory, investigations, securities, and compliance practice in the firm’s New York office. He represents companies, boards of directors, and individuals in criminal actions, government inquiries, civil enforcement proceedings, complex commercial litigation, and appeals and helps clients navigate criminal and civil investigations as well as to design, enhance, and implement risk-based compliance programs. Before joining Norton, Spektor was a partner at Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP.

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CLASS NOTES

2010

Austin Ownbey joined Akerman LLP as a corporate partner in the firm's Washington, DC, office. He is an antitrust and cannabis regulatory practitioner who counsels and represents clients across industries, including health care, pharmaceuticals, private equity, venture capital, technology, and energy. Ownbey also represents cannabis entrepreneurs in preparing license applications and other cannabis regulatory compliance matters. Before joining Akerman, he was competition counsel at Foley Hoag LLP, where he specialized in antitrust counseling and Hart-Scott-Rodino Act filings.

Daniel Trump was appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom as legal adviser to the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), where he has been a regional attorney since 2011. Before his role at the California PERB, Trump was a law clerk and field organizer for the National Treasury Employees Union.

2011

Michael Huston was named a Law360 2024 Rising Star. He is a partner and firmwide appellate practice co-chair at Perkins Coie LLP and practices out of the firm's Washington, DC, and Phoenix offices. He assists clients in high-stakes litigation matters, especially complex appeals and matters involving administrative law. Huston has briefed, argued, and won cases in the US Supreme Court and in federal and state appellate courts around the country. Before joining Perkins Coie, he was an assistant to the solicitor general at the US Department of Justice.

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Melissa "Mel" Jordan has been recognized by Lawdragon for the second year running as a Global 100 Leader in Legal Strategy and Consulting for her work as founder and CEO of Jordan's Ladder Legal Placements LLC. Jordan specializes in high-end partner placements in major metropolitan markets and has worked with partners in a number of practice areas, including finance, trusts and estates, tax, and privacy.

2012



Justin Benson joined Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP as counsel in the firm's Washington, DC, office. He practices complex federal litigation with an emphasis on the representation and defense of corporations and individuals doing business with, or regulated by, the federal government. Benson has extensive experience in litigation relating to the procurement and performance of government contracts and private sector participation in government programs. In addition, he represents clients in complex trial and appellate litigation in federal and state courts.

Elizabeth Bock is a Law360 2024 Rising Star. Bock is a partner at O'Melveny & Myers LLP in Los Angeles who represents health care organizations in a variety of complex regulatory, enforcement, and litigation matters. She represents clients in matters involving Medicare, Medicaid, and the Affordable Care Act, including compliance with regulatory requirements, payment models and underlying data, and related topics such as medical loss ratio, payment integrity, and quality metrics.

Sharon Brett joined the University of Kansas School of Law (KU Law) faculty as an associate professor. Her scholarship focuses on structural, procedural, and doctoral impediments to systemic reform of government institutions, with a particular focus on the criminal legal system and policing. Before joining KU Law, Brett was the legal director at the ACLU of Kansas, where she led complex civil rights litigation in Kansas state courts as well as federal courts. She has first-chaired numerous trials and argued several appeals on cases regarding voting rights and redistricting, the Fourth Amendment, and LGBTQ+ rights.

Gautam Hans received the 2024 M. Shanara Gilbert Emerging Clinician Award from the Association of American Law Schools Section on Clinical Legal Education. Hans is an associate clinical professor of law and the founding director of the Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Clinic at Cornell University Law School. Hans, who joined the Cornell Law faculty in 2022 as the associate director of the First Amendment Clinic, is an expert on First Amendment law and technology policy.

2013

Anika Fischer joined DiamondRock Hospitality Company as senior vice president and general counsel. Previously, Fischer was deputy general counsel at Essex Property Trust Inc., where she led its legal department in capital markets transactions, securities and corporate governance, and other matters. Fischer began her career as an associate at Kirkland & Ellis LLP in the firm's real estate group.

2014

Judith Conway was recognized as the 2024 Young Lawyer of the Year by the Illinois State Bar Association. For more, read her profile on page 58.





Emily Rutkowski, '16: Transforming a Legal Career into a Mission of Global Support

By Annie Hagstrom

When Emily Rutkowski, '16, was working at Morrison and Foerster's corporate department in Palo Alto, California, she was a long way from the front lines of war. Her primary focus at the firm was international corporate transactions, but she did have the opportunity to work on a number of pro bono cases—an experience that helped her discover a passion for advocacy that has shaped her decisions ever since.

Rutkowski has followed that instinct to help others through a number of transitions in her career and personal life—including a move to Ukraine to support fundraising and other aid efforts related to the ongoing war.

Navigating career crossroads

Rutkowski majored in international relations and Arabic as an undergraduate at Michigan State University and took a number of international law classes at Michigan Law. Her favorite experience at the Law School was working directly with clients through the International Transactions Clinic, which influenced her decision to join Morrison and Foerster after graduation. At the firm, Rutkowski found the most satisfaction in pro bono projects, including work on asylum cases, voter protection, and immigration naturalization.

Around the same time, her grandmother fell ill, and she left Morrison and Foerster to return to Michigan. While back home, she took on legal contract work online and helped care for her grandmother.

In February 2022, shortly after her grandmother died, the war in Ukraine began. Rutkowski, whose family is Polish and Ukrainian, soon became involved with relief efforts in the Detroit area.

On-the-ground engagement

Rutkowski's education and experience at a law firm helped her quickly become a valuable member of local volunteer groups working on Ukrainian relief efforts.

"When the war on Ukraine began, I got involved as soon as possible," she says. "I helped distribute first aid kits, participated in a walkathon, and helped raise funds for their schools."

Rutkowski worked with the Ukrainian American Crisis Response Committee of Michigan, where she chaired the government advocacy and outreach committee. She helped draft the Ukraine Invasion War Crimes Deterrence and Accountability Act, which

condemned Russia for the kidnapping of Ukrainian children. With the help of US Sen. Gary Peters, Congress passed the resolution in April 2023.

"The resolution helped draw attention to the issue," says Rutkowski. "I never thought I would draft language for something like that, but it was a great experience."

In April 2024, former US Rep. David Bonior led a small delegation to Ukraine. Rutkowski helped organize meetings for the group with Ukrainian mental health organizations focused on treating veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and with organizations training Ukrainian soldiers.

Rutkowski's commitment to making a tangible impact on the lives and safety of Ukrainian soldiers and citizens led her to move to Ukraine. When she first arrived in Kyiv, she raised funds and led outreach efforts at the International Legion Fund, a nongovernmental organization that operates in Ukraine, and she later began fundraising through her own organization, Misha's Angels, on social media platforms. Rutkowski's cat, Misha, who was rescued from a trench on the frontlines of the war, became the face of her fundraising efforts on social media and often accompanies Rutkowski when she is distributing supplies. Rutkowski has raised more than \$100,000 to date, which has been used to supply soldiers with protective gear, tourniquets, and other medical and humanitarian aid.

Helping survivors of war

Rutkowski made an unexpected return to the US in summer 2024 when her boyfriend, a US Marine veteran, was wounded while fighting in Ukraine. She is still fundraising through Misha's Angels and supporting other relief efforts related to the war in Ukraine. She also hopes to pursue a master's in social work and is particularly interested in the treatment of PTSD through narrative therapy.

Wherever this next chapter takes her, Rutkowski wants to be involved with supporting survivors and veterans of war.

"My dad and uncle were in the Navy during Vietnam," says Rutkowski. "Growing up, I remember hearing about my dad's experience as a corpsman. My uncle developed significant health problems as a result of exposure to Agent Orange and had to live in a veteran's home in Michigan. I want to do what I can to help with the physical and mental healing that needs to happen for veterans and their families after war."

CLASS NOTES

Nicholas A. Fedewa joined Spencer Fane LLP in the firm's Denver office as an associate in the real estate practice group. He helps clients navigate a range of real estate and business transactions with a focus on providing counsel for capital markets financing and other complex financial transactions.

Jenny Kim joined the University of Connecticut School of Law, where she teaches legal practice as an assistant clinical professor of law. Previously, she was the inaugural clinical fellow with Duke University School of Law's Immigrant Rights Clinic. She also has worked at the Amica Center for Immigrant Rights, Asian Americans Advancing Justice Southern California, Church World Service, and the Kings County District Attorney's Office.

Julian Kleinbrodt was named one of Law360's 2024 Top Attorneys Under 40. He is a partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP, where his nationwide labor and employment practice focuses on discrimination and class action claims. He handles a variety of antitrust matters through trial and appeal; he also represents clients in civil and criminal investigations by the US Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission, and he regularly counsels clients on antitrust compliance.

Did you get a new job or a promotion? Were you recognized with an award? Share your news with classmates in an upcoming issue of the *Law Quadrangle*. Email LQNCClassNotes@umich.edu or complete the online form at law.umich.edu/classnotes

2015

Luis Gomez was promoted to global class action counsel at Ford Motor Company, managing high-profile class actions involving allegations of product defects, breach of warranty, false advertising, and Telephone Consumer Protection Act violations. He also advises business stakeholders and executives on litigation risk and mitigation strategies. Previously, he was in-house counsel at Ford and managed complex consumer litigation nationwide. Gomez is a trustee and chairs the in-house counsel section of the Detroit Bar Association and serves as secretary for the Hispanic Bar Association of Michigan.

Andrew Knauss joined the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, part of the US Department of Labor, as a general attorney. He is based in Washington, DC, and focuses on litigation in all areas of labor and employment law. Previously, he was an associate at the Virginia-based firm Potter & Murdock PC, where he specialized in employment litigation and investigations.



Gabriel Lopez was appointed counsel at Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP. He represents clients in a broad range of domestic and cross-border transactions, including mergers and acquisitions, debt financings, joint ventures, and other commercial transactions throughout the United States and Latin America.

2016

John Scudato was appointed director of artificial intelligence and innovation at Latham & Watkins LLP in the firm's Fort Worth, Texas, office. Before joining the firm, he was a senior legal engineering and data strategy manager at Gunderson Dettmer LLP. Scudato is a founding member of the Open Cap Table Coalition and serves as chair of its technical working group.

2017



Adele Daniel was promoted to partner at Keller Rohrback LLP. Daniel works on automotive defect and data-privacy class actions as well as environmental litigation on behalf of states and municipalities. Her pro bono practice focuses on amicus briefing for Washington nonprofits. Before joining Keller, Daniel clerked for the Hon. Michael Mosman on the US District Court for the District of Oregon and the Hon. Ronald Gould on the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

2018



Ava Jill Morgenstern joined Meltzer Hellrung LLC as an associate in the firm's Washington, DC, office. She advises clients on employment-based immigration matters, including immigrant and nonimmigrant petitions, and has extensive experience in naturalization matters. Morgenstern represents clients across all industries, with an emphasis on the IT consulting industry. Before joining the firm, she was an associate at Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen & Loewy LLP.

2019

Dale A. Bellitto joined the San Francisco office of Ogletree Deakins as an associate. Her practice focuses on defending employers against wrongful termination, discrimination, retaliation, harassment, and wage and hour causes of action in both state and federal courts. Bellitto also counsels employers on various personnel matters and employment practices, including matters related to the Family and Medical Leave Act and the California Family Rights Act.

Robert M. Kuhn joined Ackerman & Ackerman PC as an associate. Prior to joining the firm, Kuhn clerked for Justice Brian K. Zahra of the Michigan Supreme Court and as the sole law clerk to Chief Justice Annette K. Ziegler in the Wisconsin Supreme Court. He also clerked for the Hon. Robert H. Cleland on the US District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.



Hinh D. Tran was a fellow for the 2024 Law Program of the Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics. He also was named a Carnegie Ethics

Fellow for the 2023–2025 term. He is lead counsel at Ramp, a financial technology startup, and a lecturer at the University of Southern California Gould School of Law. Previously, Tran worked at Kecker, Van Nest & Peters in San Francisco and clerked for the Hon. Dale A. Drozd on the US District Court for the Eastern District of California.

2020



Adam Shniderman joined Alexander Dubose & Jefferson LLP as an associate. He most recently served as a staff attorney for Justice Evan A. Young of the Supreme Court

of Texas. Prior to working with Justice Young, Shniderman clerked for Justice Brett Busby of the Supreme Court of Texas and the Hon. Jay S. Bybee of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. He also worked at Winston & Strawn LLP in the firm’s Dallas office, overseeing motions in state and federal trial courts, appeals, and a petition for certiorari before the US Supreme Court.



Chaila Fraundorfer was a fellow for the 2024 Law Program of the Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics. She is an associate at Linklaters

London, where she works in capital markets.

Chase Johnson joined Dinse, Knapp & McAndrew PC as an associate attorney in the firm’s business department. Prior to joining the firm, Johnson worked as an attorney with Goulston & Storrs, where he represented clients in complex commercial transactions and land use matters. His practice areas include corporate transactions and governance, renewable energy transactions, and nonprofits.

2021



Sean J. Brennan was a fellow for the 2024 Law Program of the Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics. He is an assistant

US attorney in Washington, DC, where he prosecutes crimes arising from the January 6, 2021, attack on the US Capitol. Previously, Brennan worked as an associate attorney at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP.

2022

Altamush Saeed, LL.M., received the Humane Society of the United States’ first-ever Diversity Equity and Inclusion Spark Award. Saeed is the founding managing partner of Environmental and Animal Rights Consultants, Pakistan’s first dedicated animal and environmental law practice. He also co-founded the nonprofit Charity Doings Foundation, which supports a variety of initiatives related to human and animal rights as well as environmental issues. Saeed serves on the boards and as an international animal rights expert for several organizations, including Pro-Veg, Northwest Animal Rights Network, World Animal Justice, Green Islam, and Asia for Animals.



Elisabeth Brennen was a fellow for the 2024 Law Program of the Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics. She is a third-year litigation associate

at Milbank LLP in New York. Brennen primarily works in civil litigation and maintains an active pro bono practice, focusing on public international law and immigration assistance.

Robert L. Knauss, '57



Robert "Bob" Lynn Knauss, '57, an educator and academic leader who served on the Michigan Law faculty from 1960 to 1972, died in Saugatuck, Michigan, on October 16, 2024. He was 93.

Knauss graduated from Cooley High School in Detroit and Harvard College on a Navy ROTC scholarship. He went on to serve as an officer aboard a destroyer during the Korean War.

After graduating from Michigan Law, Knauss taught in the Law Quad for a year before joining Pillsbury, Madison & Sutro (now Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman) as an associate attorney in San Francisco. In 1960, he returned to the Law School as a professor, focusing his scholarship and teaching on corporate and securities law. At Michigan, Knauss and former Professor Alfred Conard co-authored a widely used textbook, *Enterprise Organization*.

Knauss also distinguished himself as an academic administrator early in his career. He was elected president of the U-M Faculty Senate and was named the University's first vice president of student services during a period of student activism and social unrest on campus in the late 1960s.

Knauss left the Michigan Law faculty in 1972 to become dean of Vanderbilt Law School. He left Vanderbilt to assume the deanship at the University of Houston Law Center from 1981 to 1993. During this time, he also held visiting professorships at the University of Vermont Law School and the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College.

Later in his career, Knauss served as a director of nine public companies and took a leadership role in an attempt to begin privatizing the Soviet airfleet by creating Air Baltic in Latvia. Knauss remained professionally active until his death; at the time of his passing, he was serving as chairman of a public company—making him the oldest elected board member of a publicly traded company in the country.

Knauss's ties to the University of Michigan remained strong long after he left the Michigan Law faculty. His two sons, Robert Knauss, '79, and Charles Knauss, '81, graduated from the Law School, as did his grandson, Andrew Knauss, '14. His daughter, Kathy, earned her master's degree from U-M's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts. His immediate family holds nine additional U-M degrees among spouses and grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife, Angela; three children; one stepson; eight grandchildren; and his former wife, Barbara.

I N M E M O R I A M

1950s

John B. Houck, '53	6/20/2024
Clifford L. Sadler, '53	5/21/2024
Curtis L. Trevor, '53	6/22/2024
Norman I. Brock, '55	10/17/2024
Edmond R. Wolven, '56	9/13/2024
Charles W. Arderly, '57	8/15/2024
John A. Beach, '57	10/22/2024
Francis R. Grebe, '57	9/12/2024
Donald M. Haskell, '57	10/16/2024
Robert L. Knauss, '57	10/16/2024
Frank R. Morris, '57	5/14/2024
A. Duncan Whitaker, '57	6/21/2024
Lee J. Colling, '58	8/31/2024
Datta S. Kharbas, '58	8/10/2024
Robert S. Trinkle, '58	9/20/2024
R. Max Daniels, '59	8/7/2024
James W. Donegan, '59	11/28/2023
David L. Genger, '59	5/17/2024
Frank J. Kinn, '59	6/27/2024
Melvyn I. Mark, '59	5/15/2024
Joseph H. Pilkington, '59	10/21/2024
John F. Powell, '59	9/3/2024
Peter E. Ulmer, '59	1/17/2024

1960s

Thomas G. Frangos, '60	7/8/2024
William M. Lane, '60	6/13/2024
Frederick E. Smith, '60	6/19/2024
Thomas M. Comporet, '61	8/22/2023
Patrick J. Conlin, '61	7/19/2024
Charles A. Crampton, '61	9/19/2024
John J. Esposito, '61	7/7/2024
John L. Etter, '61	4/4/2024
Richard C. Smith, '61	7/31/2024

Edward H. Ward, '61	10/5/2024
Melvyn H. Fruit, '62	5/26/2024
Fred Gordon, '62	3/1/2024
Paul W. Jones, '62	8/14/2024
L. Ray Bishop, '63	7/19/2024
Charles R. Frederickson, '63	10/19/2024
Peter V. Fazio, '64	10/16/2024
Rocque E. Lipford, '64	7/25/2024
Elmer E. White, '64	5/11/2024
Barry R. Whitman, '64	7/24/2024
John P. Fernsler, '65	7/10/2024
Thomas W. Ruggles, '65	7/7/2024
Louis A. Smith, '65	8/13/2024
Charles S. Tappan, '65	11/2/2024
Nathaniel P. Breed, '66	4/27/2024
Douglas M. Cain, '66	9/22/2024
James F. Companion, '66	9/18/2024
Kenneth R. Harker, '66	6/16/2024
David R. Sturges, '66	10/26/2024
Jeffrey H. Miro, '67	10/4/2024
Philip A. Nicely, '67	7/5/2024
Robert J. DeGrand, '68	9/6/2024
Richard C. Marsh, '69	9/27/2024
John N. Thomson, '69	7/17/2024

1970s

Frederick J. Amrose, '70	4/30/2024
Gordon B. Conn, '70	1/10/2024
Frans J. Lavrysen, '70	1/1/2023
Frank B. Lienhart, '72	9/15/2024
Joseph J. Norton, LLM '72, SJD '73	6/9/2024
Michael R. Fayhee, '73, LLM '20	8/5/2024
Mark M. Levin, '73	9/4/2024
Fred J. Pinckney, '73	8/23/2024
Richard D. Thaler, '73	2/15/2024

William J. Travis, '73	8/26/2024
Jon Y. Arnason, '74	7/15/2023
Stephen R. Moore, '74	11/17/2023
Alveraize T. Saizan, '75	8/22/2024
David P. Hanson, '76	5/19/2024
Keith D. Patten, '76	2/15/2023
Santiago Peregrino, '77	9/4/2024
Douglas J. Golden, '78	11/4/2024
George G. Martin, '79	4/25/2024
Kim S. Mitchell, '79	9/21/2024

1980s

Harold M. Hickok, '81	8/14/2024
Phyllis P. Jones, '82	10/10/2024
Kirk D. Messmer, '82	4/12/2024
Peter H. Trembath, '82	7/25/2024
Timothy F. McCormack, '83	6/2/2024
Mitchell R. Meisner, '84	6/20/2024
Cynthia B. Cohen, '85	8/2/2024

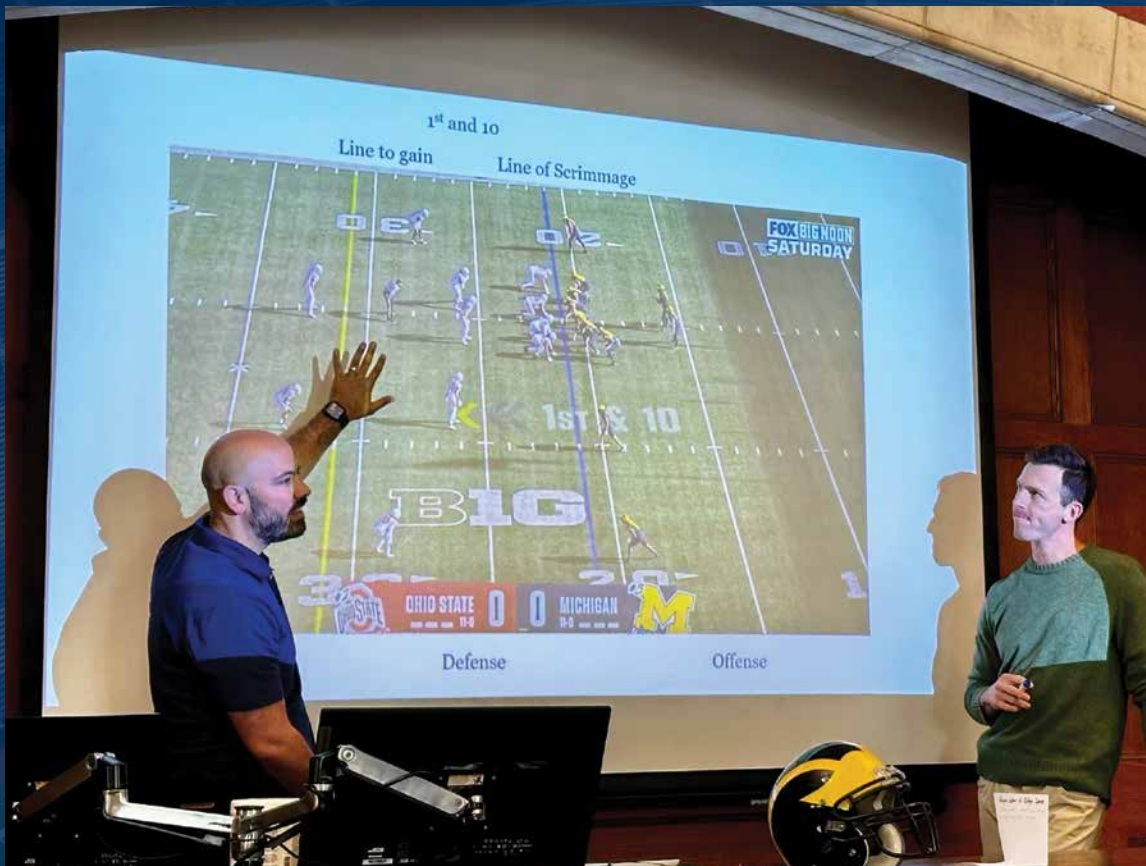
1990s

Robert A. Graham, '93	9/17/2024
Natalie R. Harrington, '93	5/25/2024
Paige J. Malcom, '96	5/2/2024
Jonathan D. Morris, '98	5/13/2024

2000s

Philip C. Maxwell, '06	5/1/2024
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CLOSING



First and What?

Learning the nuances of the law while adjusting to life in another country is a lot to take on for many international students at the Law School. Add in the unique rules and sporting culture of American football—not to mention the sheer scale of 107,000 people screaming, “Sack him!” and then muttering about pocket protection—and it might be easy for newcomers to Ann Arbor to feel like they’ve been left on the sidelines of a significant community event.

So with all eyes on the Wolverines after their undefeated national championship season last year, Assistant Dean Ramji Kaul, '05, an avid fan and season ticket holder, and 1L Jordan Barpal, a former member of the U-M team, taught an American Football 101 class for international students unfamiliar with the sport.

“There were some quizzical looks from the international students as we explained the rules and traditions—I imagine professors see the same expressions sometimes,” Barpal says. “But as one might expect, the students asked great questions, and it was fun to see the sport from their perspective.”

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Reunion

EUROPEAN ALUMNI

BERLIN, JULY 11-13, 2025

Michigan Law's European Alumni Reunion will feature substantive programming about pressing international legal issues as well as opportunities to catch up with old friends and make new connections within the Law School community.

All Michigan Law graduates—as well as those who have visited the Law Quad as research

scholars, faculty, and lecturers, or who are otherwise friends of the Law School—are invited.

Registration will open in March. In the meantime, save the date for this special event.

Visit michigan.law.umich.edu/alumni/alumni-events for more information about the European Alumni Reunion and other Law School events.