

STETSON

SPRING 2018

# LAWYER

A MAGAZINE FOR STETSON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW ALUMNI & FRIENDS



“STETSON  
TO ME IS EVERYTHING!”

– BRUCE JACOB

*DEAN EMERITUS  
AND PROFESSOR OF LAW*



STETSONLAW

# A LETTER FROM THE DEAN

## Making an Impact on the Community

Stetson's focus on having an impact in the community began shortly after its founding in 1900, pioneering the emphasis on preparing students to be active leaders in their communities—locally, across the country, and around the world. We worked to improve access to justice and were the first law school to launch a public defender clinic, more than 50 years ago. Today, Stetson provides more than 30 clinical opportunities for our students to work hands-on with members of the community. The College of Law was the first in the state of Florida to require pro bono service of its students, and our students volunteer more than 30,000 pro bono hours annually serving our communities.



*Christopher M. Pietruszkiewicz*

We continue to make headway in serving the underserved, through our Veterans Advocacy Clinic in partnership with the University of South Florida, in representing veterans seeking disability benefits based on their service to our country. We work with the Innocence Project of Florida, assisting innocent prisoners in obtaining their freedom, and we drafted petitions as part of the Clemency Project 2014, providing assistance to federal prisoners who would likely have received shorter sentences if sentenced under current guidelines.

Thinking outside the box, we designed a Disaster Research Project last semester in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, where students conducted legal research to assist with a disaster relief hotline created by the American Bar Association Young Lawyers Division, the Florida Bar YLD, and FEMA.

Stetson created the Constitution Hall project, an educational exhibit at the Gus A. Stavros Institute's Finance Park in Largo, Florida, that teaches local eighth grade students about being civically engaged, the three branches of government, and their constitutional rights.

The generous contributions of alumni help make Stetson's experiential travel course on Law and the Civil Rights Movement a reality, giving our students the opportunity to meet the original Freedom Riders who shaped the history of equal rights in America, traveling to Memphis, Nashville, Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma, and Atlanta.

This year, three incredible alumni received the Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Award at the Supreme Court of Florida in January for their extraordinary service to the community, and a half-dozen exemplary alumni were honored at the Supreme Court of Florida last year by the Florida Bar for their work on behalf of poor and indigent clients.

At Stetson, we understand that public service is a lifetime commitment. We hope you will enjoy reading about some of the incredible work that our alumni, students, faculty, and staff do to make an impact on the community in this issue of the *Stetson Lawyer*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Pietruszkiewicz', written in a cursive style.

*Christopher M. Pietruszkiewicz*  
*Dean and Professor of Law*  
*Stetson University College of Law*





# STETSON LAWYER

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### FEATURES

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“Stetson to Me Is Everything”	12
Golf Is a Lifelong Sport	15
From Stetson to Shanghai	16
Getting the Tools for Success	17
A Lifetime of Serving Veterans	18
Celebrating 20 Years as a Global Family	19

### DEPARTMENTS

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Letter from the Dean	2
Briefs	4
Events	21
Faculty Forum	25
Class Notes	28
Philanthropy	31

### STETSON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

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*Stetson Lawyer* magazine is published for alumni and friends of Stetson University College of Law. Stetson University College of Law, Florida's first law school, has prepared lawyers and leaders since 1900. Today, Stetson leads the nation in blending legal doctrine with practical training, evidenced by its top-ranked programs in advocacy and legal writing. Through our academically rigorous curriculum and commitment to social responsibility, Stetson lawyers are ethical advocates ready to succeed in the legal profession.

# STETSON LAWYER BRIEFS



## ALUMNI RECEIVE FLORIDA BAR PRO BONO AWARD AT FLORIDA SUPREME COURT

**T**hree Stetson University College of law alumni, Dan B. Hendrickson J.D. '87, Jo Ann Palchak J.D. '05, and Erica K. Smith J.D. '07, received the Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Award at a Supreme Court of Florida ceremony on Jan. 25.

Hendrickson, honored for his work in the 2nd Judicial Circuit, spent his life in public service, first as an aide in a state hospital and then organizing community services in Appalachia. He began his long career as a public defender in 1989 mostly representing Baker Act and other mental health clients, before retiring in 2014. Hendrickson donates at least 1,000 hours a year in pro bono services, devoting his time to numerous veterans projects since retirement. In 2015, he created the Tallahassee Veterans Legal Collaborative and helped create the legal services program for North Florida homeless veterans called Stand Down, coordinating the program for the past five years.

Palchak, of the 13th Judicial Circuit, has donated approximately 5,500 hours of pro bono service in almost 12 years of practice. While she was still a law student at Stetson, she donated pro bono service in immigration with Gulf Coast Legal Services. As an attorney in private practice, Palchak has contributed approximately 200 hours of pro bono service every year, sometimes exceeding 1,000 hours. Palchak worked on an Innocence Project case for more than eight years; served as Attorney ad Litem to children through Crossroads for Florida Kids and direct appointment; joined other lawyers in bringing a federal lawsuit to

ensure the rights of migrant workers; and represented a federal inmate who was being denied AIDS medication. She regularly donates her time advocating for children, the victims of domestic violence and the homeless.

Smith, of the 6th Judicial Circuit, volunteers with the Community Law Program in St. Petersburg, and as a Guardian ad Litem. Diagnosed with a brain tumor in college, Smith was an honors program student at Stetson who was forced to drop out for a year because of illness. After graduating from law school, Smith became a Guardian ad Litem to two teen mothers, and served as a visiting Guardian ad Litem, making monthly visits to 12 children and volunteering to take one case involving five children. Smith has been involved in approximately 20 cases involving children in the dependency court system who were abused, abandoned, or neglected.

**Dan B. Hendrickson J.D. '87,  
Jo Ann Palchak J.D. '05, and  
Erica K. Smith J.D. '07,  
received the Florida Bar  
President's Pro Bono Award**

The awards were established in 1981 to encourage lawyers to volunteer free legal services to the poor by recognizing those who make public service commitments and to raise public awareness of the substantial volunteer services provided by Florida lawyers to those who cannot afford legal fees.

The Hallisky & Davis law firm, co-founded by alumna Deborah M. Hallisky B.A. '75/M.B.A. '78/J.D. '97, received the 2018 Law Firm Commendation at the annual Pro Bono Awards ceremony. The commendation honors significant contributions in the delivery of legal services to individuals or groups on a pro bono basis. Chief Justice Jorge Labarga presented the commendation on Jan. 25 at the Supreme Court of Florida.



# TEACHING ADVOCACY

BY BRANDI PALMER

## JULIA METTS '04 AND ERIKA MCARDLE '12

### *Julia Metts J.D. '04*

“I always wanted to be a trial lawyer. I wanted to be in a courtroom forever,” said Professor Julia Metts J.D. '04, who joined the Stetson faculty in the summer of 2017 as the director of Trial Programs, teaching trial advocacy.

Metts, who knew at age eight that she wanted to be a lawyer, was the first in her family to finish college, the daughter of a commercial fisherman and a stay-at-home mom who encouraged her to follow her dreams.

After graduating from Stetson, Metts was a career prosecutor, serving with the State Attorney's Office in the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial



*Julia Metts*

Circuit for 14 years trying misdemeanor and felony cases. Her supervisor at the state attorney's office was Judge Richard Howard J.D. '78. While working as a prosecutor, Metts returned to coach the Trial Team and serve as an adjunct professor at Stetson. As a prosecutor training young lawyers, Metts said she saw some gaps firsthand in new lawyers' preparation for the courtroom. When a job opened with the Center for Excellence in Advocacy at Stetson, Metts said she found the possibility of being able to teach young lawyers and to help prepare them for the courtroom very appealing.

“Everyone should take trial advocacy who thinks that superior communication is important,” said Metts. “I encourage people, no matter their goals in life, that it is valuable to learn how to move someone to adopt their position.”



*Erika McArdle*

Stetson's approach to teaching advocacy is different, said Metts. Courses cover the basics of jury selection, trial advocacy, pretrial practice, and negotiation, with a strong focus on legal writing. However, it is the people who make advocacy at Stetson shine.

“The trial advocacy professors, coaches, everyone is personally invested in the success of the students—in staying in contact with them after they graduate to help them with their careers,” said Metts. “They graduate believing that we believe in them.”

### *Erika McArdle J.D. '12*

Professor Erika McArdle J.D. '12 joined Stetson's Center for Excellence in Advocacy five years ago, and has helped Stetson win six competition titles in those five years.

McArdle, who as an undergraduate studied social psychology along with political science, said that she knew from age nine that she wanted to be a trial lawyer.

She began volunteering, starting as a teenager, as a judge in Teen Court in Sarasota.

As a student at Stetson Law, she was a Trial Team champion, and after graduating, worked as a criminal defense lawyer before joining the staff of the Advocacy Center at Stetson.

The director of the Center for Excellence in Advocacy, Professor of Excellence in Advocacy Charles Rose, reached out to McArdle.

“I felt it was my calling to come back, to create the next generation of good lawyering,” said McArdle.

At Stetson, McArdle also helps manage the LL.M. in Advocacy and J.D./LL.M. in Advocacy.

Last year, at the age of 29, she became an adjunct professor of trial advocacy. In addition to teaching at Stetson, McArdle spends her nights and weekends coaching the advocacy teams.

She also teaches the Stetson Method of Advocacy internationally in Dublin, Ireland, and at Oxford University in England. 🏰

## ALUMNI JOIN U.S. SUPREME COURT BAR

Stetson University College of Law alumni Jason Turner J.D. '04, Paul Sabaj LL.M.'10, Keith Appleby J.D./M.B.A. '04, Prineet Sharma J.D. '98, Nicole Andrejko, Amy Rigdon B.A. '05/J.D. '08, Aaron Watson J.D. '09, Marc Levine J.D. '06, Mike Connelly B.A. '93/J.D. '96, and Vince Citro B.B.A. '98/J.D./M.B.A. '00 joined Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz on Nov. 8 in Washington, D.C., at a swearing-in ceremony for the U.S. Supreme Court Bar. 🏛️



(L-R): Jason Turner, Paul Sabaj, Keith Appleby, Prineet Sharma, Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Nicole Andrejko, Amy Rigdon, Aaron Watson, Marc Levine, Mike Connelly, and Vincent Citro. Photo courtesy Assistant Dean Kevin Hughes.

## SERVING THE COMMUNITY THROUGH CLINICAL AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: PROFESSOR CHRISTINE CERNIGLIA

BY BRANDI PALMER

When Professor Christine Cerniglia joined Stetson's faculty in July to direct clinical education and experiential learning, she was not unfamiliar with the campus. Cerniglia first came to Stetson as a visiting skills instructor, teaching legal research and writing in 2008.

Cerniglia was on the path to become a maritime attorney when Hurricane Katrina forever changed her course and led her to a job in Florida as a staff attorney with the 6<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit, and later to a faculty position at Stetson Law. It was at the 6<sup>th</sup> Circuit that Cerniglia met a judge who suggested she apply for a legal writing position at Stetson. Cerniglia was teaching legal writing at Stetson when she received a job offer for a new experiential position at Loyola University, her alma mater. When a position in leading clinical education and experiential learning opened up at Stetson, Cerniglia changed course again, leaving Loyola to return to Stetson.

As Hurricane Irma engulfed the state of Florida in the fall of 2017, Cerniglia jumped at the chance to participate in a program pairing students with attorneys to help the victims of the hurricane. At Stetson, Cerniglia worked on a concept for a Disaster Research Project with Holland & Knight attorney Anthony Palermo. In the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, lawyers across the country and the state of Florida mobilized to provide free legal services to people struggling to rebuild their lives. Palermo helped coordinate the efforts of the Florida Bar Young Lawyers Division, ABA Young Lawyers Division, and FEMA to launch a disaster research hotline for people in need of legal assistance, with more than 400 attorneys across the state volun-

teering to help disaster victims. Through the Disaster Research Project (DRP) launched at Stetson in the fall, students paired with attorney research projects to help with the relief effort while building relationships with legal practitioners.

"Clinical education is about finding and serving the needs of the community," Cerniglia said. "Part of the Stetson mission is serving the community."

Law students at Stetson have an opportunity to participate in experiential learning, clinics, and externships that help them hone skills that translate into real practice.

"I want students to get off campus and interact with the community," Cerniglia said. "I want them to have an experience beyond the classroom."

Cerniglia shared that this higher level of engagement provides students with incentives to study for the bar exam. Once they are engaged with the practice, students are motivated to pass the bar and get started in their careers, Cerniglia said. 🏛️



Christine Cerniglia.



Faculty and staff worked together on the DRP.



PROFESSOR ROBERTA FLOWERS:

## RE-ENERGIZING TEACHING THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL SABBATICAL WITH ALUMNI

BY KAI SU

**P**rofessor of Law Roberta Flowers has taught at Stetson for 28 years. For her most recent sabbatical during the fall of 2017, she chose to take a non-traditional approach, organizing an immersive sabbatical shadowing four elder law attorneys, all Stetson Law alumni.

Professor Flowers' goal was to energize her teaching, to examine whether there are real-world legal practices that are not being taught on campus, and to observe whether the LL.M. in Elder Law program at Stetson helps create exceptional elder law lawyers as a result of their advanced degrees.

She worked with attorneys in four settings: Amos Goodall LL.M. '09 in State College; Donna Jackson LL.M. '10 in Oklahoma City; Stephanie Edwards LL.M. '10 in St. Petersburg; and Justin McDermott LL.M. '14 and Stu Zimring in Los Angeles.



Roberta Flowers.



Professor Flowers and Amos Goodall LL.M. '09.

All attorneys, with the exception of Zimring, are graduates of Stetson's LL.M. in Elder Law program.

She said that the experience impressed upon her the importance of teaching students how to investigate facts. Students are given facts in the form of a fact pattern, but in the real world, attorneys must discover facts on their own, Flowers said.

"The other thing that became apparent to me is how much the business of law is very much a part of the practice," Flowers said.


Flowers was struck by the need to teach students more about business skills like marketing and setting fees—issues lawyers often struggle with in the real world—because elder law attorneys typically own small or solo practices. Other issues were how to interact with different personality types, how to communicate effectively with clients, and how to cultivate work-life balance.

Flowers is also writing an article about the holistic practice of law, which discusses her observations and how lawyers look "at the total person and what the total person needs" when working with clients.

Stephanie Edwards said she applauded Flowers for spending time in the field and appreciated that she could seek advice from Flowers on how to navigate some ethical issues that arose.

"One of the most challenging aspects of elder law is answering the question 'Who is your client?'" Edwards said. "It is challenging because, when mom or dad are not as independent as they used to be, determining what to do next tends to be a question that all the children want to participate in answering."

Flowers said she left her sabbatical feeling proud of Stetson's LL.M. graduates.

"They are all spectacular lawyers," Flowers said. "It was so heartwarming to see that the education they get here at Stetson in the LL.M. program really does make them exceptional lawyers." 

# FALL 2017/SPRING 2018 ADVOCACY UPDATES

Stetson's advocacy boards took home multiple accolades in the Fall of 2017 and Spring of 2018. For the first time in its 17-year history, Stetson's Dispute Resolution Board achieved a perfect four-for-four record, advancing to nationals in all four dispute resolution competitions sponsored by the American Bar Association, in arbitration, client counseling, negotiation, and mediation. Stetson is the first law school to ever advance in all four competitions.

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Stetson's Dispute Resolution team of Brooks Robinson and Alicia Winterkorn won the William & Mary Law School Negotiation Tournament in Virginia on Nov. 12. Student Cymoril White also won the Best Advocate Award. This was



Stetson's DR Board advanced to nationals in all four dispute resolution competitions sponsored by the American Bar Association.



(L-R): Professor Joseph Morrissey, Martin Musichi, Jade Turner, Matthew Ceriale, Taofikat Ninalowo, Ahmed Mohamed, and Associate Dean Stephanie Vaughan J.D. '91.



(L-R): Mark Joseph and Julia Alley won the American Bar Association Representation in Mediation competition.



(L-R): Cymoril White, Brooks Robinson, and Alicia Winterkorn at the William & Mary Law School Negotiation Tournament.

the second year in a row that Stetson won the national competition and the best advocate award. Stetson Law alumnus Bill Greiner J.D. '07 and professor James Sheehan J.D. '77 co-coached the team.

Students Maximillion Brown, Caroline Garrity, Olivia Mejido and Meghan Sullivan won the regional rounds of the ABA Law Student Division Arbitration Regional Competition on Nov. 12, 2017. Stetson Law professors Kelly Feeley J.D. '95 and Roberta Flowers co-coached the team, and Stetson Professor of Law and Dispute Resolution Director Kristen Adams and Associate Director for the Center for Excellence in Advocacy Erika McArdle J.D. '12 traveled with the students. Stetson students Julia Alley, Mark Joseph, Jade Mattheys and Martin Musichi advanced to the semifinal rounds of the regional competition. Stetson students were also finalists in the ABA Law School Division Regional Negotiation Competition hosted by St. John's University in New York on Nov. 5, 2017.

Stetson Law's Dispute Resolution team of Jahanna Azarian and Vanessa Denk won the regional rounds of the ABA Law Student Division Client Counseling Competition on Feb. 11. A second Stetson Dispute Resolution team of Jade Mattheys and Keongela Norton advanced to the final rounds in the regional competition, hosted by Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. Stetson alumna Emily VanOosting J.D. '12 coached the team.

Stetson's Dispute Resolution team of Matthew Ceriale, Ahmed Mohamed, Martin Musichi and Jade Turner won the

(L-R): Maximillion Brown, Caroline Garrity, Olivia Mejido, and Meghan Sullivan at the ABA Law Student Division Arbitration Regional Competition.



(L-R): ABA LSD Regional Negotiation Competition finalists Christina Huckfeldt, Allison Belanger, Professor James Sheehan, Kira Ramirez, and Su-Woei Hao.



**Number of Advocacy Wins:**

- 5 World (International)
- 71 National Championships
- 84 Regional Championships
- 47 State Championships
- 56 Brief Awards
- 153 Best Oralist/Best Advocate Awards
- 5 Professionalism Awards, including Spirit of Jessup Award and 4 Most Professional awards

Florida Bar International Law Section Richard DeWitt Memorial Vis International Commercial Arbitration Pre-Moot in Miami on Feb. 17. Ceriale was named Best Oralist. The Stetson team was coached by student Taofikat Ninalowo and Associate Dean for Student Engagement and Professor of Law Stephanie Vaughan J.D. '91 and Professor of Law Joseph Morrissey. The team won the Vis anniversary video contest in Vienna at the Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot on March 23. Ceriale received an honorable mention as an oralist.


Stetson students won the ABA regional mediation competition in Connecticut on Feb. 25. Students Julia Alley and Mark Joseph won the ABA Representation in Mediation competition at Quinnipiac University School of Law. Amy Catledge J.D. '02 coached the team.

**MOOT COURT**

Students Jordan Koziol, Logan Manderscheid and Tyler Troyer won the 11th Annual Civil Rights and Liberties Moot Court Competition at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, on Oct. 22, 2017. Stetson sent two teams to the competition. A second Stetson team of Kathryn Bonti, Anne Boyle and Joseph Kemmerling were quarterfinalists in the competition. Stetson Moot Court Director and Professor Brooke Bowman J.D. '02 and Jason Lambert B.B.A. '02/J.D. '12 co-coached the teams.

Students Valeria Villaverde, Dale Tan and Brooks Robinson were recognized as having the best draft agreement for their client at the Transactional LawMeets regional competition at Nova Southeastern University on Feb. 25. Stetson Law professors James Sheehan J.D. '77 and Kirsten Davis co-coached the team. This was Stetson's first LawMeets competition.

**TRIAL TEAM**

Students Ethan Dunn, Christopher Hallett, Amara Benitez-Rodriguez, and Joseph Sise won the regional American Association for Justice Student Trial Competition on March 4 in Miami. It is the second year in a row that Stetson has won the regional competition. The Stetson team was coached by Associate Director of the Center for Excellence in Advocacy and Professor Erika McArdle J.D. '12 and Patrick McArdle J.D. '12. Stetson sent two teams and a second team advanced to the semifinals. 



(L-R): Dalton Allen, Zach Morrison, Jessica Viola, Amara Benitez-Rodriguez, Ethan Dunn, Chris Hallett, Joseph Sise, Ashleigh Thornton.




(Front row L-R): Jordan Koziol and Kathryn Bonti.  
(Back row L-R): Tyler Troyer, Logan Manderscheid, Anne Boyle, and Joseph Kemmerling. Photo courtesy Professor Brooke Bowman.

**CLASS SHINES AT STETSON'S FALL GRADUATE CELEBRATION**

On Dec. 14, Stetson University College of Law in Gulfport celebrated 22 fall 2017 degree candidates at its Graduate Celebration.

Among the December class were Kaarl Brandon and Trisha Cram, recipients of the Victor O. Wehle Award for trial advocacy; Shaheen Nouri, recipient of the Walter Mann Award for outstanding leadership; Neisha-Rose Hines, Public Service Fellows Recognition Award recipient for her commitment to community, public service and pro bono work; Kali de Vlaming, recipient of the E. Harris Drew Memorial Award; and Mary Joellen Wold, who received the Raphael Steinhardt Award for character, leadership, and service to the community.

The December class included 17 J.D. students, one LL.M. in Advocacy student, three LL.M. in Elder Law students, and one LL.M. in International Law student. 



# BIODIVERSITY INSTITUTE SUMMARY

# APPLYING LAW TO THE ENVIRONMENT

BY ERIN OKUNO J.D. '13

**S**tetson continues to provide environmental education, scholarship, and service at the local, national, and international level.

Stetson's Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy director and Professor of Law Royal Gardner and Dr. Max Finlayson of Charles Sturt University are the lead authors of the forthcoming *Global Wetland Outlook: State of the World's Wetlands and their Services to People*, the Ramsar Convention's flagship publication to be launched during the 13th Conference of the Parties in the UAE in October 2018. Professor Gardner continues to serve as chair of the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel through 2018.

Stetson hosted the 22nd International Environmental Moot Court Competition (IEMCC) finals on the Gulfport campus on March 22–24, 2018. A team from the University of the Philippines College of Law won the IEMCC this year. Stetson's IEMCC is the world's largest moot court competition devoted exclusively to global environmental issues, with rounds in Africa, Brazil, Colombia, India, Ireland, Korea, the Philippines, Ukraine, and the U.S. The topic of this year's problem focused on responses to highly pathogenic avian influenza and transboundary wetlands.

Dick and Joan Jacobs have generously endowed the "Dick and Joan Jacobs Environmental Law Externship Fund" to enable students at Stetson Law to participate in meaningful environmental law externships around the country and the world.

Thanks to the continued, generous support of Bonnie Foreman B.A. '68, the Institute offers the Edward and Bonnie Foreman Biodiversity Lecture Series, which is free and open to the Stetson community and the public. The fall 2017 speakers were Dr. Dwight T. Pitcaithley (former chief historian of the National Park Service), Tonya Long (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission), and Dr. Max Finlayson (Charles Sturt University, Australia). Vivek Menon (Wildlife Trust of India), Anne Harvey Holbrook (Save the Manatee Club), and Dr. Ruth Cromie (Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, UK) presented as part of the series in spring 2018.



Royal Gardner

Also during the spring, Stetson Law offered a special short course about illegal wildlife trafficking and state, national, and international legal and policy issues related to illegal wildlife trade.

Students interested in pursuing careers in land development, environmental, land use, and real estate law at Stetson Law participated in a "Careers in Land Development Law" networking



event, sponsored by Stearns Weaver Miller Weissler Alhadeff & Sitterson, P.A. in January 2018.

In 2017, the Environmental Law Institute and Stetson's Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy received a two-year Wetland Program Development Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency for a project to support the ability of states, tribes, and local governments to develop rigorous in-lieu fee mitigation programs that yield ecologically effective and sustainable compensatory mitigation.

### Stetson Law continues to support the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, an intergovernmental treaty that promotes the wise use and conservation of wetlands.

In November 2017, Stetson Law hosted the Fifth Annual ELI-Stetson Wetlands Workshop, coordinated with the Environmental Law Institute and co-sponsored by the Environmental and Land Use Law Section of The Florida Bar and Mechanik Nuccio Hearne & Wester, P.A. The workshop focused on the status and conserva-

tion of reefs, mangroves, and seagrasses, and the use of compensatory mitigation to offset coastal wetland impacts. The workshop featured a morning field trip led by Tampa Bay Watch to nearby aquatic restoration sites.

To learn more about Stetson's Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy and how to support its programs and initiatives, visit [www.stetson.edu/law/biodiversity](http://www.stetson.edu/law/biodiversity).



*Vivek Menon, Wildlife Trust of India, spoke on elephant conservation.*



## STETSON RANKS NO. 1 FOR TRIAL ADVOCACY

It is the 20<sup>th</sup> time in 24 years that Stetson has been ranked the top law school for Trial Advocacy.

Stetson University College of Law in Gulfport, Florida, is again ranked the No. 1 law school for Trial Advocacy and is ranked No. 2 for Legal Writing in the U.S., according to *U.S. News*.

“Our advocates are powerful, compassionate, and persuasive – keeping the promise of a commitment to excellence in word and deed that is the hallmark of a Stetson education.”

— Charles H. Rose III, Professor of Excellence in Trial Advocacy and director of the Center for Excellence in Advocacy at Stetson.

“We are committed to teaching and studying legal communication at Stetson and leading the way in legal writing,”

— Kirsten K. Davis, Ph.D., Stetson's director of the Institute for the Advancement of Legal Communication.

**20** wins **24** years

More information about Stetson's distinguished top national programs is available online at [www.stetson.edu/law/advocacy](http://www.stetson.edu/law/advocacy) and [www.stetson.edu/law/academics/lrw](http://www.stetson.edu/law/academics/lrw)

For more information on the *U.S. News* 2019 “Best Grad Schools,” visit [www.usnews.com/grad](http://www.usnews.com/grad)

# “STETSON TO ME IS EVERYTHING!”

BY CURTIS KRUEGER

After decades at Stetson, Dean Emeritus and Professor of Law Bruce Jacob retires this year

**B**ruce Jacob does not hesitate when asked to explain how important Stetson University College of Law has been to him.

“It’s been my life,” said Jacob, who graduated from Stetson in 1959 and spent 13 years as dean and two decades after that as a professor. He has mentored countless Stetson students as a teacher and friend.

But now that Jacob is retiring, an even better question might be: How important has Jacob been to Stetson?

Dean Christopher M. Pietruszkiewicz puts it this way: “For an institution that has been around 118 years that has done some pretty incredible things, perhaps the thing that we are most proud of is that Bruce has been affiliated with us for so long.”

Jacob’s credentials as a lawyer are impeccable. He argued his first case before the U.S.

Supreme Court at age 27. For half a century, he has tirelessly represented hundreds of defendants pro bono in criminal cases. He loves legal research as well as the practice of law, and has received advanced law degrees from Harvard, the University of Florida, and Northwestern.

But if anything symbolizes Jacob’s impact at Stetson Law, it may simply be his passion for helping students. Jacob relishes any chance to discuss the practice and principles of law.

“He is so focused on helping students learn and he genuinely cares about his students; he wants them to learn and succeed,” said Erin Okuno, a 2013 Stetson law graduate who is now Foreman Biodiversity Fellow for Stetson’s Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy. “He’s a really great storyteller and he’s done so many unique, amazing things that it’s fun just to sit and listen to him.”

Jason P. Stearns J.D. ’08, who practices complex commercial litigation, said that “even in a place where the norm is to have caring, engaged, involved professors, he’s still above and beyond.”

Stearns said Jacob’s passion and obvious concern in the classroom made him want to learn more about the professor, so he would often stop Jacob in the hallway or find him after class.

“He always wanted to talk. He never was too busy,” said Stearns.



*Bruce Jacob J.D. '59 presented Gideon v. Wainwright at the U.S. Supreme Court*

Stearns recalls the day he lost a rather expensive textbook while taking administrative law from Jacob. Stearns explained that he would not be prepared in class that day.

And how did the professor react?

Jacob gave his own copy of the book to Stearns and said, “You can have it for the rest of the semester; just get it back when you’re done.”

“That’s just his style,” Stearns said.

Jacob graduated from Sarasota High School, where he had excelled in academics and the half-mile, and then from Florida State University, where he continued running and played violin in the school’s symphony orchestra.

A full scholarship drew him to Stetson, and so did the knowledge that he would be closer to his parents and sisters, who operated the Oleander restaurant in Sarasota.

At Stetson, he said he was lucky to have several excellent professors, but two faculty members stood out. One was the remarkable Harold L. “Tom” Sebring, who had earned a law degree on the side while coaching the University of Florida’s football team in the 1920s, and who went on to serve as a Florida Supreme Court justice, a judge in the Nuremberg trials, and as Stetson’s dean. The other was James Tenney Brand, a former Oregon Supreme Court chief justice and Nuremberg judge.







Bruce Jacob (back row far right) with his graduating class.

After graduating, Jacob was pleased to get a job as an assistant attorney general, which brought him back to Tallahassee, where he had attended FSU. He handled criminal appeals, did legal research and more. He had only been practicing law for a couple of years when he was handed a case that would change American legal history ~ and solidify a basic constitutional principle.

It was *Gideon v. Wainwright*, the case of a Florida prisoner who had been convicted and sent to prison after being forced to represent himself at trial.

Jacob went to the U.S. Supreme Court to argue the case. Representing the state, it was Jacob's job to argue against *Gideon* ~ to say the state should not necessarily be required to provide lawyers for indigent defendants.

The high court ruled 9-0 for *Gideon*, a decision that led to the establishment of public defender offices across the nation.

**“He is so focused on helping students learn and he genuinely cares about his students; he wants them to learn and succeed.**

— Erin Okuno

The landmark ruling also produced a side benefit for Stetson. While all American law students study *Gideon*, hundreds of those at Stetson have learned the case from one who was there.

As Jacob taught *Gideon* in class, he never displayed bitterness or disappointment about losing the case ~ because, he said, he simply didn't have any. He has always said the *Gideon* decision was the right one. But the American legal system works best when lawyers provide vigorous, well-reasoned arguments on each side.

To anyone who has heard Jacob teach *Gideon*, it's clear that one case does not define him. If anything does define him, it may be what he did immediately after the ruling was announced.

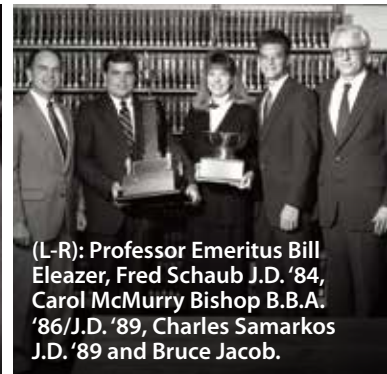
Jacob signed up to become a volunteer public defender in Florida's 10th Judicial Circuit. Now that the Court had made its ruling on behalf of indigent defendants, Jacob wanted to help them.

In a sense, Jacob had two legal careers after this: One as an academic and one as a pro bono attorney for indigent defendants.

Interested in an academic career, Jacob went to Northwestern University and received an LL.M. degree. He then joined the faculty of Emory University, where he taught classes and also established a legal assistance program for inmates at an Atlanta penitentiary. Next he headed to Harvard University, where he helped establish a legal assistance program for Massachusetts inmates. He also received an S.J.D. degree from Harvard.



Matt Towery J.D. '87 with Jacob.



(L-R): Professor Emeritus Bill Eleazer, Fred Schaub J.D. '84, Carol McMurry Bishop B.B.A. '86/J.D. '89, Charles Samarkos J.D. '89 and Bruce Jacob.



(L-R): Jacob, retired Oregon Supreme Court Chief Justice and Professor James T. Brand, and Professor Wallace Storey '59, longtime member of the Board of Overseers and Dana Law Foundation.



Professor Mike Finch, Ann Jacob, the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia and Jacob.

In the 1970s, Jacob went to The Ohio State University College of Law to serve as a law professor and director of clinical programs.

It was a wonderful job, he said, and he had no intention of leaving ~ until Mercer University contacted him about possibly becoming dean of the law school. So he went to Mercer, and that too was a wonderful job he had no intention of leaving.

Until Stetson called.

For Jacob, coming to Stetson would mean a chance to be closer to family. It also meant his wife Ann could manage a family orange grove in central Florida.

But it also meant a chance to shape and improve the school he loved. He became dean in 1981.

High on Jacob's list of goals was improving Stetson's scholarship. He was pleased the college now had a law review, unlike when he attended, but he wanted more. He worked to reduce the number of class hours professors taught, so they would have additional time for writing and research.

"We probably are more practically oriented than some law schools, but I certainly did not want to neglect the other side, and that's why I made a push for more scholarly research and writing."

Jacob also championed the college's participation in moot court competitions. Unlike some other law schools, Jacob wanted to make sure professors became hands-on mentors for the competitors. He pushed for the team to enter all possible contests. He still wears a watch from 1993-94 commemorating Stetson for winning five national championships in the competitions.

Fred Schaub J.D. '84, the felony division director for the Pinellas-Pasco State Attorney's Office, said Jacob's leadership helped bring Stetson's trial advocacy instruction to national prominence.

"I think that he is the single most important person in the success of this law school," Schaub said.

Jacob had another goal as Stetson Law's dean. "I wanted to make it a more friendly place," Jacob said. At the time, many schools felt the way to teach law was with an intimidating, hard-nosed style ~ think John Housman's character in *The Paper Chase*.

Jacob begged to differ. He said he thinks Stetson is now "a friendly place," much more conducive to learning.

After 13 years as dean, Jacob felt the need to return to being a professor. He said he missed exploring legal issues in depth. And so, after serving as dean, he picked up one more advanced law degree ~ an LL.M. in taxation from the University of Florida.

If Stetson values the academic as well as the practical, the same is true of Jacob. For more than half a century, he has been poring over letters from inmates and finding other pro bono cases on behalf of indigent defendants.

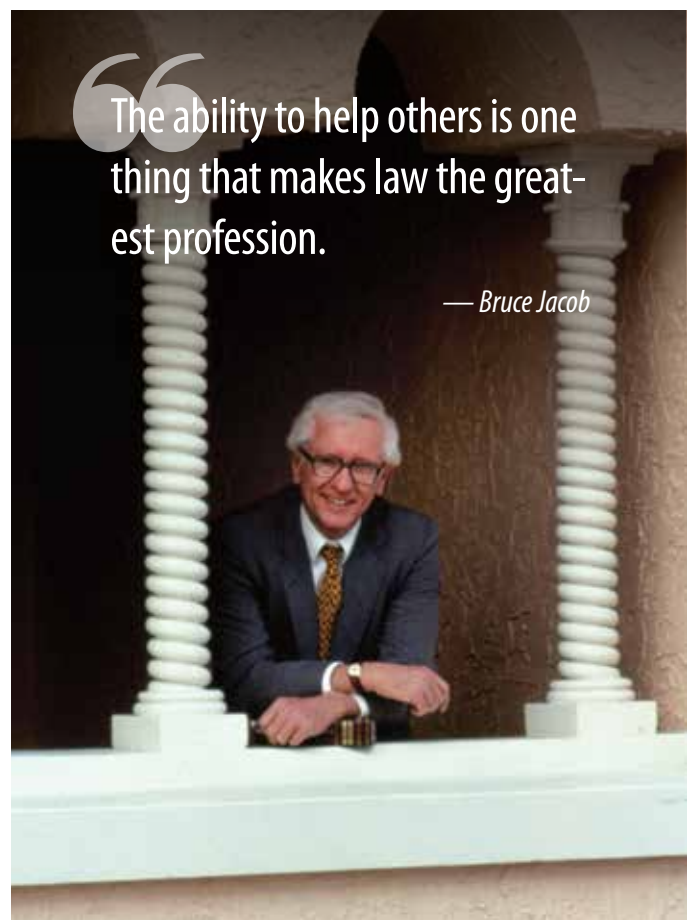
In 1968, Jacob returned to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Kaufman v. the United States*, arguing that illegally obtained evidence had been used to convict his client of bank robbery. This time, Jacob prevailed.

"That's always been my instinct, to help the downtrodden," he said. "I think every lawyer should do a lot of free work for indigent people." The ability to help others is one thing that makes law "the greatest profession" Jacob said.

At 83, Jacob has decided to retire from teaching, and he also is scaling back his legal defense work. He and Ann will continue to enjoy time they spend with their family.

But Bruce Jacob is still Bruce Jacob, and that means he will never be far from Stetson. In fact, he will keep an office on campus and he has a list of upcoming writing projects. It's not hard for him to explain why.

"Stetson to me is everything," he said.



"The ability to help others is one thing that makes law the greatest profession."

— Bruce Jacob



# ALUMNI SUCCESS STORIES

## GOLF IS A LIFELONG SPORT

BY TRESSA GILL FANOE J.D. '07

### Fred Ridley: For the Augusta National Golf Club chairman, golf and law go together.

**F**red Ridley J.D. '77, a Tampa-based partner at Foley & Lardner, became the seventh chairman of the Augusta National Golf Club and the Masters on Oct. 16, 2017.

Ridley's history with golf is longstanding.

He reminisced, "I tie the significant relationships in my life to golf."

Ridley spent his childhood golfing with his father. A member of his University of Florida golf team introduced him to his wife Betsy. He met all the previous Augusta National chairmen, and many became his friends. Augusta National, of which he has been a member since 2000, has been a great source of friendship for Ridley.

Thanks to the help of Jack Grout, Jack Nicklaus's lifelong teacher, Ridley's golf game peaked just as he was graduating college, but he kept his commitment to attend Stetson Law. In the summer of 1975 after his first year of law school at Stetson, he played in a number of tournaments and won the U.S. Amateur.

He recalled, "It set into motion a series of events that had an impact on the rest of my life, but it did not change my decision to go to law school." He was back in class at Stetson a week later.

In 1976, Ridley took an eight-month sabbatical from law school to play in more tournaments, including as an amateur at the Masters, in which he was paired with the 1975 winner Jack Nicklaus. Ridley played in both the Masters and the Walker Cup in 1977, the year he graduated. In 1978, he again played as an amateur in the Masters. Then he took a nine-year break from golf to focus on his career. In 1987 and 1989, he returned to golf as the non-playing captain of the Walker Cup. Since then, he has served as the United States Golf Association



Jack Nicklaus with Fred Ridley walking the fairway during the 1976 Masters


(USGA) president in 2004, a captain of the 2010 World Amateur Team, and a member of both the rules and competition committees of Augusta National.

Bobby Jones, one of the founders of Augusta National and the Masters, like Ridley was an amateur golfer who retired early from golf to practice law. Jones believed that amateurs should be showcased at the Masters and this tradition has continued to today. As chairman, Ridley said he is continuing with the founders' mission to promote the sport, increase participation, and give back to the game of golf.

### "I tie the significant relationships in my life to golf."

Together with the USGA and the R&A, the domestic and international golf governing bodies, Augusta National and the Masters have created amateur events in Asia and Latin America. The R&A is the ruling authority of golf throughout the world with the exception of the U.S. and Mexico, where the USGA is responsible.

The Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship is an annual tournament that started in 2009 with 43 participating countries. The winner competes as an amateur in the Masters. Three years ago, they replicated this by creating the Latin America Amateur Championship. Now over 50 percent of the players are competitive, causing governments to fund programs, national teams, and school teams.

"[The tournaments] bring people together," Ridley said. "In a way, our motivation is not just to create more competitive golfers, but to promote friendships. I always emphasize that whether they turn professional or whatever they do, they are making friends." 

# FROM STETSON TO SHANGHAI

BY BRIAN AUBREY SMITH



**Ying White has grown into the premier Chinese market counsel, thanks to her strong foundation at Stetson Law**

When Ying White J.D. '97 was working in a Chinese restaurant during her first year in the United States, a career as one of the world's foremost international funds and asset management lawyers might have seemed unattainable. But when White's husband suggested that she consider an M.B.A., she began to research graduate degrees and realized she would be better suited for law school. From there, a productive meeting with the late former College of Law Dean Gary Vause, a natural aptitude for international law, and a great deal of dedication led her to a J.D. at Stetson and to the top of the world of international law.

While considering applying to Stetson, White scheduled a tour and a meeting with the law school dean at the time, Gary Vause.

"(Dean Gary Vause) actually took an interest in me. He studied Chinese when he was young so he always had an interest in China. He was an expert on Chinese labor law," said White.

Their conversation led White to apply, and, after her acceptance, she realized she had selected the right school.

"The atmosphere is so different. It's a small law school and very personable. The professors who taught me, the professors who didn't, the whole faculty, services, in fact the whole school is like a family," she said.

White relied on that close-knit environment to succeed at Stetson despite some early struggles following classes given in English at the law school level. With the help of some special support and professors with open-door policies, White built on her Stetson experience, culminating with her graduating magna cum laude in 1997, to graduate from Columbia Law School as a Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar with her LL.M. in 1998.

She chose to forego a career at a Wall Street firm, which was likely to assign her to work in China, instead choosing the D.C. firm King & Spalding, where she worked on international trade law and U.S. export controls.

"At the time I thought, I'm new to this country, I haven't achieved my American dream, so I wasn't ready to go back to China," she said.

After a year and a half in the nation's capital, an opportunity came for Ying to move to a more international and multi-cultural platform, the World Bank, where she acted as legal counsel for its financial operations and the pension fund. In 2006, she worked as an advisor to the Chinese national pension fund, which was investing in the world markets for the first time.

*"The atmosphere is so different. It's a small law school and very personable. The professors who taught me, the professors who didn't, the whole faculty, services, in fact the whole school is like a family."*

— Ying White J.D. '97

Her expert work for that fund, coupled with her rare combination of Chinese expertise and knowledge of asset management law, opened up new opportunities in China. She returned in 2007 and joined Clifford Chance as a partner in 2012. There, she developed the British Magic Circle firm's China investment funds and asset management practice, which does far more work in the Asia Pacific than most U.S. firms. She said she has enjoyed the opportunity to help the firm grow and to be recognized for her expertise, but she especially enjoys the chance to connect China and the United States.

"The practice is a bridge. I'm the China counsel for big U.S. asset managers and funds when they seek to enter the Chinese market," said White. She also helps Chinese companies and financial institutions set up funds abroad in order to invest overseas, allowing her to use her knowledge of both U.S. and Chinese law. This work has helped her become well-known in her field and among the most respected legal authorities in China asset management and financial services.

Additionally, she enjoys the challenge of a practice that she said requires the understanding of two different legal systems, two different markets, two different language skills, (and) two different cultural skills.

After two decades at the top of international law, White still credits Stetson with helping her find her footing in the legal world.

"To me the (Stetson) J.D. education is the best in the world. For 20 years, I've been able to see that that's so true... Stetson gives you a good foundation."



# GETTING THE TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

BY RACHEL WISE

## Charlie Martinez has one main focus: the client.

**A**s a founding partner at Martinez Roman Goehl, P.A., Carlos “Charlie” Martinez, Jr. J.D. ’93 practices Workers’ Compensation Defense, Longshore and Harbor Workers’ Compensation Defense, Uninsured Employer Defense, Liability Defense and Appeals.

The older of two brothers, Martinez grew up in Miami, Florida, with his father, a Cuban immigrant, and his mother, a Florida transplant from New York. He is the first in his family to earn a doctorate degree.

He was inspired to become a lawyer after getting a ticket as the result of a traffic accident and hiring a local attorney. “I really enjoyed the courtroom experience, albeit traffic court,” said Martinez. “I realized then that if I became an attorney, I could help others as my attorney had helped me.”

While at Stetson, Martinez served as an honor court justice, clerked at the local VA hospital and was involved in mock trials. He interned at the Miami-Dade State Attorney’s Office under Janet Reno. Martinez credits Stetson with equipping him with the tools he needed to be a successful litigator right after graduation. He told a story about his first job out of law school as a paralegal awaiting his bar results at Walton, Lantaff, Schroeder and Carson, a large insurance defense firm.

“After submitting a pleading I had worked on to one of the partners, he came in, held up the document and said, ‘Who are you?’” Martinez recollected. “He was very impressed with the pleading and said, ‘When you pass the bar, we have a job for you.’” At that firm, Martinez tried his first case approximately six months in and went on to represent clients including Liberty Mutual, BellSouth and American Airlines.

“I chalk that up to Stetson getting me ready and making me feel really comfortable with both litigation and research and writing,” he said.

Martinez then went to Kelly, Kronenberg, Kelly, Gilmartin, Fichtel & Wander prior to starting his own boutique firm in 1999, which has grown to host four attorneys with offices in Miami-Dade, Broward and Hillsborough counties handling mostly workers’ compensation defense matters. The firm serves clients including the Miami-Dade County School Board, Miami-Dade College, Bloomingdales, Macy’s, State of Florida, G4S, the Cheesecake Factory, and PF Chang’s/Pei Wei.

Regardless of the size of the case, Martinez, a self-proclaimed perfectionist, has one main focus: the client. “We focus on



“Stetson put me in a really great position to be where I am today and I often recommend the school to friends whose children are considering law school

— Carlos “Charlie” Martinez, Jr. J.D. ’93

providing the client with the best representation we possibly can,” he explained. “When you secure a new client, the catch is always enjoyable, but being able to help them meet their needs in a cost-effective fashion is always the goal.”

Outside of work, Martinez and his wife of 21 years, Christine, are the proud parents of two daughters: Abigail, 16 and Gabrielle, 19. “My favorite thing is being a father,” he said.

Abigail will be attending a summer medical program at UCLA and Gabrielle is considering following in her father’s footsteps by attending law school. Gabrielle is attending UF where Martinez graduated in 1990. His wife, whom he adores, is his best friend and the firm’s CFO.





# A LIFETIME OF SERVING VETERANS

BY SHANNON TAN J.D. '08

## James Byrne is VA general counsel

The Honorable James M. Byrne's decades-long commitment to public service was accelerated at Stetson. After graduating from the U.S. Naval Academy and serving six years in the Marine Corps, Byrne entered Stetson. Byrne J.D. '95, a three-year Public Service Fellow, conducted intake at Gulfcoast Legal Services, volunteered at Stand Down programs for homeless veterans in Tampa, and participated in the Public Defender Clinic.

"That was the start of my service within the legal community," said Byrne, who was nominated by President Trump as general counsel of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and confirmed by the Senate in August 2017. "It had an impact on me."

The Stand Down programs are sponsored by the VA and local agencies to provide benefits counseling, medical, dental and "street law" services to help the nation's estimated 67,000 homeless veterans "combat" life on the streets, get back on their feet and once again become productive members of society. "You're showing them respect and dignity," he said. "From the legal perspective, we're helping them deal with issues in life that can prevent them from getting better physically and mentally."

From law school volunteer to active military service to assisting veterans through public service, Byrne has come full circle.

"I like to think of public service as being in my DNA," said Byrne, whose father and father-in-law served in the U.S. military, and two sons and son-in-law serve in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Byrne has spent the better part of his career in service. He's served as the Deputy Special Counsel with the Office of the United States Special Counsel, and both General Counsel and Assistant Inspector General for Investigations with the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. He served as a deployed Marine Infantry Officer and a U.S. Department of Justice international narcotics prosecutor, and is the recipient of the Secretary of Defense Medal for the Global War on Terrorism and several military decorations including the Meritorious Service Medal.

### Defending the Constitution

Byrne said his call to duty and commitment to specifically serve veterans can be traced back to 2004, when he was activated from the reserves into the Global War on Terrorism for 18 months. He was assigned as Officer in Charge of the Marine Liaison Office at the then National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

A Marine corporal named Jason Dunham was severely injured near the Syrian border when he threw himself and his helmet over a grenade dropped by an insurgent he and two other Marines were



struggling to subdue. Cpl. Dunham was taken to the Naval hospital in Bethesda where, as recounted in the book *The Gift of Valor: A War Story*, Byrne counseled Dunham's parents.

Byrne recited from memory his favorite quotation to Dunham's parents, "We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm."

"Your son is one of those rough men, and you can be very proud of that," he told them.

Byrne was by Dunham's bedside – his final battlefield – when Dunham was taken off life support. Dunham was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

"It was a brief and powerful experience during an extremely honorable and sad time in my life," recalled Byrne. "That experience and several others like it had a profound effect on me in so many different ways. It was a wake-up call to serve even more than I already have."

For the past decade, Byrne volunteered on the executive board of Give an Hour, a non-profit organization that has developed national networks of volunteer professionals providing free mental health services to post-9/11 veterans, service members and their families.

Byrne, who had to resign from the board when he joined the VA, is now devoting some of his efforts to forming partnerships between VA medical centers and the local bar associations, law schools, and other legal service organizations to set up pro bono clinics in such hospitals.


"There is currently no appropriated funding in the VA to provide street law assistance, such as handling misdemeanor offenses, getting someone's record expunged, or landlord-tenant issues," he said. Approximately half of the VA hospital centers have signed a memorandum of commitment with the local bar associations, he said.

### Battling Vet Suicide

Byrne is also personally invested in reducing the number of veteran suicides. He witnessed a Marine under his command take his life.

"To this day I remember his name," he said. "I remember the circumstances. . . I didn't lose any Marines in combat. This one seemed to be preventable."

A VA study has found that 20 veterans commit suicide each day.

"Deployments are very stressful on families. If there is a small issue it's going to be magnified by stress and unpredictability," Byrne said. "The military life is unlike any other job. Our veterans deserve our help." 



# THE LL.M. IN INTERNATIONAL LAW: CELEBRATING 20 YEARS AS A GLOBAL FAMILY



*Marilena (Irina) Goga*

BY BIANCA LOPEZ

**T**rinkets from around the globe adorn Manager of International Programs Velaine Paryzek’s office, from a German beer stein to giraffe statuettes to cultural masks to the Turkish nazar. International Programs is located in the little blue house on Stetson’s Gulfport campus, a renovated home with offices and a big couch in the living area situated under a series of world clocks. It is an aptly cozy location for a program that considers its students family.

“That’s the best part of the job, really. Getting to know the students and where they’re from,” Paryzek said. “They like to give gifts, so I like to display them in the office.”

Paryzek has been with Stetson since 1990. Former College of Law Dean Gary Vause created the Office of International Programs and first proposed an LL.M. in International Law. The first LL.M. class consisted of seven students in the fall of 1998. Today, the program has 17 students and is in the process of recruiting its 20th class for the fall of 2018.

The LL.M. in International Law is the first LL.M. Stetson offered; it is now accompanied by the LL.M. programs in Elder Law and Advocacy. However, the International Law LL.M. is the only LL.M. program that Stetson offers which meets in person – interspersed within J.D. classes – rather than online.

“The LL.M. in International Law program at Stetson was established to leverage the international and comparative law expertise of our faculty members while training some of the best and brightest foreign and domestic attorneys in this area,” said Assistant Dean of International Programs JR Swanegan.

A unique element of the LL.M. in International Law program is the students themselves, who primarily come to Stetson from foreign countries. The program’s more than 200 alumni have traveled from 55 countries as far away as Tajikistan and Mauritius. While some alumni have continued their studies to earn their J.D. degrees, others have found success with their LL.M. alone or paired with degrees earned in their home countries.

“Our students come to us with a diversity of backgrounds and experiences and it is reflected in their amazing breadth of careers”

— *Swanegan*

Marilena (Irina) Goga, a current LL.M. in International Law student, moved from Romania to the U.S. to earn her J.D. but instead decided to pursue an LL.M. Goga is working on her externship requirement with Judge Pamela Campbell J.D. '89. She obtained her masters in criminal and civil law in Romania, and an LL.B. from the University of Bucharest, working as an attorney for three years in Bucharest.

Because Romania operates under the civil code system rather than common law, Goga, like many LL.M. in International Law students, had to adjust her thinking.



“[The international LL.M. students] stuck together as a group; we had a lot in common even though we were from different places,” Sabaj said. “We felt very special, in a good way, within the community of students.”

*Paul Sabaj LL.M. '10*

“Our students have to completely change their way of thinking about the law while translating what they are studying in English,” said Paryzek.

Paul Sabaj LL.M. '10 came to Stetson from Poland for the LL.M. in International Law program after studying law for five years and practicing in Warsaw. After graduating from Stetson, Sabaj moved to New York and opened his own shop, holding his first client meeting on the same day he was admitted to the bar.

“I’d never been to New York before coming to take the bar,” Sabaj said. “I packed my little convertible, drove to New York City the week before the bar, and rented a room in Brooklyn. Something was telling me that New York was the city to go to, the city of dreams. I found my life here.”

Sabaj still visits Warsaw often, with his practice covering both Warsaw and New York. He calls Warsaw “the New York of Eastern Europe.” Sabaj is working on expanding his practice, hoping to find a Tampa partnership to supplement the partnerships he has cultivated in New Jersey and Chicago.

He looks back on his time in Stetson’s LL.M. in International Law program fondly.

“[The international LL.M. students] stuck together as a group; we had a lot in common even though we were from different places,” Sabaj said. “We felt very special, in a good way, within the community of students.”

Sabaj said he enjoyed every day of his student life, reminiscing about playing intramural soccer and hanging out at O’Maddy’s Bar. Most impactful, though, was the way members of the Stetson community would make him and other international students feel welcomed.

“Every year, Professor Gardner invited the whole group to his house for Thanksgiving,” Sabaj said. “His daughter made name tags with flags for where everyone was from. We watched football and played pool. It was something else. I wouldn’t expect a professor to open his own home to us.”

Paryzek beams while talking about the graduates’ recent career advancements and marriages and children.

“I’ve made a lot of really good friends over the years,” Paryzek said. “They come back and visit, and we always say ‘mi casa es su casa.’ When they come here, my house is their house, when I go there they open up their home to me.”

On Sept. 14, the Office of International Programs will host their alumni family in Gulfport to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the LL.M. in International Law. 🏰



# STETSON LAWYER EVENTS



*Patrick Iyampillai '16, Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Savannah Mixon '16, Harold Velez B.A. '13/J.D. '16 at the South Florida Alumni Chapter in Boca Raton.*



*Shannon Finucane '17, Kayli Santa '16 at Holiday Open House.*



*The Hon. Kenneth Marra '77 with Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz at the South Florida Alumni Chapter in Boca Raton.*



*Mallory Thomas '14, Benjamin Thomas '14 at the Holiday Open House.*



*Ben Hill '97, Bernie McCabe B.A. '69/J.D. '71, Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Debbie Brown '87 at the Holiday Open House.*



*The Hon. John Lenderman '69, Candy Lenderman, Jim Martin B.S. '71/J.D. '74 at the Holiday Open House.*



*Susan Gordon, Seymour Gordon '60 at the Holiday Open House.*





*Hanh Nguyen '16, B.J. Okular '05, Mason Wolfe '16 at the Miami Alumni Reception at Greenspoon Marder.*



*Rachel Swansiger '16, Elizabeth Buchwalter '17, Stan Abramenko '16 at the Tampa Bay Alumni Chapter event at Big Storm Brewing.*



*The Hon. Irene Sullivan '77 with Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz at the Holiday Open House.*



*Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Jennifer Eden '90, Danny Kavanaugh '16, Kate Hollis '11 at the Orlando Alumni Reception at Gray Robinson.*



*Catherine Ourand J.D. '17, Chantay N. Perry J.D. '17, Scott G. Hubbard J.D. '17 at the Orlando Alumni Reception at Gray Robinson.*



*Crisa Marder, Melvyn Trute '66, Debbie Swink at the Miami Alumni Reception at Greenspoon Marder.*



*Mike Casey; Marielly Abzun Brittany, candidate for J.D.; Evan Dix '17 and Brittany Bird J.D./M.B.A. '17 at the Tampa Bay Alumni Chapter event at Big Storm Brewing.*



# 2017 HALL OF FAME

## STETSON INDUCTS TWO INTO HALL OF FAME

Stetson University College of Law inducted two new members into its prestigious Hall of Fame during an evening ceremony on Oct. 28 in Gulfport.

Luis Prats B.A. '78/J.D. '81 and Leslie Reicin Stein J.D. '76 are the newest members of Stetson Law's Hall of Fame.

### Luis Prats

Luis Prats was born in Havana, Cuba, and became the first person in his family to graduate from college. As a young trial lawyer, he won the case of *Mason v. State of Florida* before the Florida Supreme Court, making law on whether a mentally impaired person can receive the death penalty. During the 1980s, he established a career as a top construction lawyer in the state. He won one of the biggest judgments in a construction case in the Florida



*Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Joseph Prats, Lu Prats B.A. '78/J.D. '81, Katy Prats '83, Jessica Murray B.S. '10/J.D. '14, Ryan Murray, Jackie Prats '15, Seth Kohler.*

Panhandle. Named among Florida's Top 100 Lawyers by Super Lawyers several times, Prats was inducted into the invitation-only American College of Construction Lawyers and is listed among the Best Lawyers in America, Florida Trend's Legal Elite, and in the Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Business Lawyers. Prats has served as a leader of several organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, the American Bar Association Forum on Construction Law, the American College of Construction Lawyers, and the

Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce. Prats is a shareholder and the construction practice group leader at Carlton Fields law firm. Appointed to Stetson University's Board of Trustees, he chaired the board for the past three years. Prats also served on the Stetson Law Board of Overseers 2008-2011. Stetson presented Prats with the Paul M. May Meritorious Service Award in 2006 and the George and Mary Hood Award in 2016.

### Leslie Stein

Leslie Stein grew up in Chicago and followed her dream to attend law school with a bequest from her grandmother. At Stetson, Stein graduated cum laude, was editor-in-chief of the Stetson Law Review, and received the Walter Mann Award for Most Outstanding Law Graduate; she also became a new mother after her second year of law school. After graduating from law school, Stein was associate general counsel of the University of South Florida, where she taught as lecturer and instructor, and became president of the Association of State University Systems Attorneys. In 1980, she began a 24-year career at GTE Florida, negotiating the first



*Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Leslie Stein '76, President Wendy Libby.*

nationwide collective bargaining unit contract and serving as an international technology lawyer. She also served as director of the Children's Home, chair of the City of Tampa Civil Service Board, national vice chair of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, president of both the Florida and Hillsborough Associations for Women Lawyers, and as an adjunct faculty member at Stetson Law, where she taught for more than 20 years. She worked for Special Data Processing Corporation as senior vice president for human resources and general counsel and at Publix as special projects counsel before opening her own firm in 2009. Stein has received awards including Florida's Outstanding Young Woman of the Year, the Hillsborough Association for Women Lawyers Leader in the Law, and the Hillsborough Bar Association Outstanding Lawyer. She is a lifetime member of the Stetson Law Board of Overseers and served as president of the Dana Foundation. She also received the Paul M. May Meritorious Service Award for Outstanding Service to the Stetson Alumni Association. 🏛️

## STETSON CELEBRATES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Stetson University College of Law Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz welcomed scholarship recipients to a special Spring Scholarship Banquet celebration on Saturday, Feb. 17, on the Gulfport campus. More than 100 students celebrated receiving over 50 scholarships at Stetson Law.

Student scholarship recipient Alexis Deveaux spoke about what receiving a scholarship meant to her. Law alumni Prineet Sharma J.D. '98 and Shamila Sharma J.D. '96, husband and wife who met at Stetson as students, presented the new Sharma Family Veterans Scholarship.

“Scholarship plays such a critical role in making a legal education more affordable for our law students and in enabling them to pursue the careers of their choice without crippling debt after graduation,” said Assistant Dean for Development & Alumni Relations Kevin M. Hughes. “This banquet is a wonderful opportunity to honor and recognize our students for their achievements and to celebrate the supportive community environment that defines Stetson Law.”



J. Lamar Woodard, Professor Emeritus & Director of the Law Library; Judge Raphael Steinhardt '63; Millie Brown.



Keongela Norton, 2L student; Ken Rogers, Cora Williams, Diane Weidemeyer, Carleton Weidemeyer '61.



Don Smith '78, Cheryl Smith, Professor George Peirce.



Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz, Alexis Deveaux, 1L student and student speaker at the Scholarship Banquet.



Prineet Sharma '98, Shamila Sharma '96, Dean Christopher Pietruszkiewicz. Prineet was the alumni speaker at the Scholarship Banquet.

## MLK DAY OF SERVICE



Jamie Haskins, Brent Williams, Jeremy Clark, Jazmin Haskins, Michael Jenkins, Professor James Sheehan (back), Jessica White, Amika Jeffries (back), Andrea Snipes-Booker, Cymoril White (kneeling), Keongela Norton, Forest Sutton (back), Taofikat Ninalowo, Assita Toure (kneeling), Justin Bell, Kerissa Nelson, Greg Payton, Assistant Director for Career and Professional Development Kamilah Clark, Associate Dean Darryl Wilson (back), Javier Centonzio J.D. '12/LL.M. '13.

Stetson University College of Law students, alumni and faculty honored the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by marching in the annual parade in St. Petersburg in January.

“It was an honor to walk in the 2018 MLK Parade alongside my Stetson family,” said student Keongela Norton, who walked in the parade representing Stetson Law. “The most gratifying moment was being stopped by a young girl who said that she wanted to be a lawyer, just like us.”



Justin Bell, Raymond James, Cymoril White, Senator Darryl Rouson, Amika Jeffries, Keongela Norton, Assita Toure, Jake Black, Alexis Campisi.



# STETSON LAWYER FACULTY FORUM

October 2017- January 2018

■ **KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS**, Professor of Law, and Professor Candace Zierdt, along with practitioner Thomas Hemmendinger, presented a webinar on the Basics of UCC Article 2 -- Understanding Sales of Goods, for the American Bar Association (ABA).

■ **LINDA S. ANDERSON**, Professor of Law, presented Research Challenges: Digital Natives, Ethics, and Algorithms, at the Legal Writing Institute One-Day Workshop hosted by the University of Arizona.

■ **PAUL BOUDREAUX**, Professor of Law, served as the editor of the *Journal of International Wildlife Law and Policy*, overseeing a group of law student editors. He also spoke at the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) annual conference on the topic of urban "infill." His recent article on the subject will be published by the Fordham Urban Law Journal.

■ **BROOKE J. BOWMAN**, Professor of Law; Director of Finances, Advocacy Boards; and Director, Moot Court Board, coached, with Jason Lambert, B.B.A. '02, J.D. '12, two moot court teams at the 11th Annual Civil Rights and Liberties Moot Court Competition, at Emory University School of Law. One Stetson team was a quarterfinalist, and the other Stetson team won the competition.

■ **CHRISTINE E. CERNIGLIA**, Assistant Professor of Law, and Director of Clinical and Experiential Education, recently published the book chapter, "The Fundamental Skill of Client Interviewing Throughout the Curriculum: How to Build Simulations to Live-Client Clinic," *Experiential Learning Book*, Carolina Press (2017). Professor Cerniglia also spoke at the Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers 6th Annual Conference in Denver, giving the presentation, "Serving the Community and Students through Court-house Self-Help Desks."

■ **KIRSTEN K. DAVIS**, Professor of Law and Director of the Institute for the Advancement of Legal Communication is serving on the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS) Conference Planning Committee for Legal Writing Programming for the 2018 Conference. The programming, titled "Writing Connections," spans 2 1/2 days of the SEALS Conference and is designed to facilitate a conversation about the connections between legal writing, communication, and other parts of the law school curriculum. Dr. Davis was reappointed to the Florida Bar Standing Committee on Professionalism and she serves as Chair of the Education and Resource Working Group. She recently published "Avoid Acrimony: Get Rid of Blaming Language and Get Results" in

the Fall 2017 edition of *The Professional*, the newsletter of the Harry Latimer Center for Professionalism.

■ **CAROL E. HENDERSON**, Professor of Law, and Director and Principal Investigator for The National Clearinghouse for Science, Technology and the Law (NCSTL) at Stetson, spearheaded a grant application resulting in a \$500,000 grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice. The grant, which runs through September 2019, facilitates training in forensic science and expert testimony to assist lawyers in avoiding wrongful convictions. Since 2003, the Clearinghouse has received over \$14 million and trained more than 15,000 lawyers, judges, law enforcement personnel, and forensic scientists.

■ **KELLY M. FEELEY**, Professor of Law and Coordinator of Legal Research and Writing continues to serve as the ABA Law Student Division Competitions Committee Co-Chair. The committee oversees four competition committees: Arbitration, Client Counseling, Negotiation, and National Appellate Advocacy. Additionally she served as Chair of the Arbitration Committee last year, is currently a member of the Negotiation Committee, and continues to serve on the National Appellate Advocacy Competition committee that runs six regional competitions around the nation in state

and federal courthouses. She also coached Stetson's two ABA Law Student Division Arbitration teams, along with Professor Roberta K. Flowers. One team was a Regional Semi-Finalist and the other Regional Champion, advancing to the National Arbitration competition in January 2018.

■ **ROYAL C. GARDNER**, Professor of Law and Director of the Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy, led a writing workshop in Switzerland to produce a second order draft of the *Global Wetland Outlook*, a wetland status and trends report that will be the Ramsar Convention's flagship publication. He served as an expert witness on the Ramsar Convention at a World Bank arbitration, provided input regarding Myanmar's draft national wetland policy, and advised the Society of Wetland Scientists and the Association of State Wetland Managers on Clean Water Act matters. Professor Gardner was selected by the graduating students to give the faculty address at the Fall 2017 Graduate Celebration.

■ **LANCE N. LONG**, Professor of Law, presented "Environmental Advocacy: Teach Legal Writing and Save the World" at the New England Consortium of Legal Writing Teachers Conference and "The Kids Are Alright: Suing the State to Save the Environment" to the Student Organization for Society and Natural Resources at Utah

State University.

■ **LUZ ESTELLA NAGLE**, Professor of Law, was appointed a Trustee of the IBA Human Rights Institute Trust for a three-year term, and continues her appointment as the IBA's Latin American Regional Forum Liaison Officer of Access to Justice and Legal Aid. She recently published the book, *Understanding Human Trafficking, Corruption, and the Optics of Misconduct in the Public, Private, and NGO Sectors: Causes, Actors and Solutions*, Carolina Academic Press (2017). Her article, "When Is a Fish Just a Fish: Yates v. United States," was published in the International Enforcement Law Reporter. Professor Nagle was the honored recipient of the E.J. Salcines Spirit of Tampa Award by the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association in recognition of her mentoring, guidance, and community involvement for young Hispanics in the Tampa Bay area.

■ **ELLEN S. PODGOR**, Gary R. Trombley Family White-Collar Crime Research Professor and Professor of Law, received the ABA Raeder-Taslitz Award, given to one law professor each year who exemplifies ethical and professional conduct, demonstrates excellence in scholarship, teaching or community service, has made a significant contribution to promoting public understanding of criminal justice, justice and fairness in the criminal justice system, or best practices on the part of lawyers and judges. Professor Podgor also presented a paper at Mercer Law School as part of its 2017 Law Review Symposium

on Disruptive Innovation in Criminal Defense. Additionally, she served as a Discussant at Houston Law School's White Collar Crime Workshop. Professor Podgor presented a paper, co-authored with Professor Louis J. Virelli III, at the ABA-AALS Criminal Justice Section Work-in-Progress Academic Roundtable. Professor Podgor was reappointed for another term of the AALS Membership Review Committee, and served as part of a law school site-inspection team for the ABA and AALS.

■ **THERESA J. PULLEY RADWAN**, Professor of Law, recently published the article, "Not So Friendly to Frenville: The Split Among Courts Regarding Accrual of Claims in Bankruptcy," 68 *Baylor L. Rev.* 728. Professor Radwan is also a co-author of the recently published book, *Elder Law in Context*, Aspen Casebook Series, Wolters Kluwer (2017), along with Professors Rebecca C. Morgan, Mark D. Bauer, Roberta K. Flowers, and Joseph F. Morrissey.

■ **CARLA L. REYES**, Visiting Assistant Professor of Law, organized and hosted the Coalition of Automated Legal Applications (COALA) Florida Blockchain Workshops, Oct. 28-31, 2017.

■ **CHARLES H. ROSE III**, Professor of Excellence in Trial Advocacy, Director, Center for Excellence in Advocacy, agreed to write the 3rd edition of the legal treatise, *Military Crimes & Defenses*, for Matthew Bender. Professor Rose traveled to Akron, OH to present the Cornerstone Award posthumously to the widow of

the first recipient, Larry Sutter. Professor Rose presented Judge Felipe Restrepo with the 2018 Cornerstone award. Judge Restrepo is a sitting federal judge for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals. Professor Rose presented at a conference on Fourth Amendment issues related to cell phone searches, and to the Family Law Section of the Naples County Bar Association on the topic of ethical lawyering. He also spoke to the civil bar section of the Sarasota County Bar Association on Expert Evidentiary Issues in Florida, and to the Criminal Law Section of the Hillsborough County Bar on "Everything You Wanted to Know about Impeachment But Were Afraid to Ask." Professor Rose is one of the founding members of the new AALS Leadership in Law Schools Section.

■ **CIARA TORRES-SPELLISCY**, Leroy Highbaugh Sr. Research Chair and Associate Professor of Law, is the incoming Chair of the Election Law Section of AALS. Professor Torres-Spelliscy presented a paper at the AALS annual conference in San Diego for the section on legislation, discussing fundraising's impact on Congress. She has a forthcoming article in the ABA's Human Rights magazine about the Supreme Court case "Jesner v. Arab Bank," and a forthcoming article in the *Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy* about money in politics and boycotts.

■ **LOUIS J. VIRELLI III**, Professor of Law, agreed to publish a short article, "(A Bit More) on Judicial Speech and the First Amendment," in the *Ohio State Law Journal*. He

currently serves on the Board of Trustees of the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS), and as chair of the SEALS Works-in-Progress committee. He is also a member of the executive committees of the Administrative Law and Constitutional Law sections of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS). He was responsible for coordinating the New Voices in Administrative Law program at the AALS annual meeting, which brought together junior and senior administrative law scholars from all over the country. He is the interim (for calendar year 2018) Editor-In-Chief of the ABA Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice's quarterly publication, the *Administrative and Regulatory Law News*. Professor Virelli is regularly interviewed by numerous press outlets (television, radio, and print) regarding national, state, and local legal issues concerning constitutional law.

■ **DARRYL C. WILSON**, Associate Dean for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives, Attorneys Title Insurance Fund Professor of Law and Co-Director, Institute for Caribbean Law & Policy, attended the Educating Tomorrow's Lawyers' annual conference sponsored by the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System in Denver, CO. He also oversaw the acquiescence by the American Bar Association in the College of Law's institution of a new Master of Jurisprudence degree for non-lawyers in the field of Health Law Compliance. Dean Wilson supervised students in the American Caribbean Law Initiative (ACLI) clinic



in Miami, where he and Professor Dorothea A. Beane also participated in governance meetings as ACLI board members. Dean Wilson continued as a contributory editor to the ABA Probate & Property magazine columns, Keeping Current Property and Keeping Current Probate. He also retained his role as Chair of the Code Enforcement Commission for the City of St. Petersburg and Pinellas County, and as a Hearing Officer for the Pinellas County Housing Authority. 🏛️

## STETSON LAWYER

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



*Lance Long and Clay Henderson*

Stetson professors **Lance Long** and **Clay Henderson** co-authored the right to a clean and healthy environment amendment to the Florida Constitution. The amendment provides that “the natural resources of the state are the legacy of present and future generations” and asserts that “every person has a right to a clean and healthful environment, including clean air and water.” Stetson law student Kai Su helped prepare the proposed amendment by researching similar provisions in other states.



*Luz Nagle*

Professor of Law **Luz Nagle** was honored on Feb. 8 as the first tenured Hispanic law professor at Stetson University College of Law by the U.S. District Court Middle District of Florida during a special luncheon in Tampa celebrating pioneering firsts. Professor Nagle received tenure in 2004.



*Dorothea Beane*

Professor of Law **Dorothea Beane** was honored by the U.S. District Court Middle District of Florida on Feb. 8 as a pioneering first in Tampa Bay. She is the first minority professor of any ethnicity or gender to be awarded tenure at Stetson University College of Law.



*Ruthann Robson*

Distinguished Professor **Ruthann Robson J.D.** '79, a Stetson Hall of Fame inductee and visiting professor, was honored as one of the first female judicial law clerks in the Tampa Federal Courthouse by the U.S. District Court Middle District of Florida.

Stetson Law alumni honored among Tampa Bay firsts by Tampa's U.S. District Court included **Emmy Acton J.D.** '80, the first female Hillsborough County judge; **Pam Bondi J.D.** '90, honored as the first female attorney general of Florida; Judge **Susan Bucklew J.D.** '77, honored as the first female county judge in Hillsborough County; Judge **Elizabeth Kovachevich LL.B.** '61, the first woman jurist in Tampa Bay, elected to the Sixth Judicial Circuit; Judge **Mac McCoy J.D.** '01, the first openly gay person to be sworn in as a federal judge in the Middle District of Florida; Judge **Catherine McEwen J.D.** '82, the first female appointed U.S. bankruptcy judge in the Tampa division of the Middle District of Florida; and **Marsha Rydberg J.D.** '76, the first female president of the Hillsborough County Bar Association.

Justice **Peggy Quince**, an overseer at Stetson Law, was also honored by Tampa's U.S. District Court for being the first African-American woman to lead a branch of government, serving as Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court. 🏛️

# STETSON LAWYER

# CLASS NOTES

**What's New in Your Life?** Tell us. Email us at [alumni@law.stetson.edu](mailto:alumni@law.stetson.edu) or visit [www.stetson.edu/law](http://www.stetson.edu/law). Please send us your high-resolution photo, too.

## 1960s

PuppySpot.com welcomes **Kenneth H. Vail** J.D. '69 to its Scientific Advisory Board.

## 1970s

**Larry Stewart Hersch** J.D. '75, Dade City, FL, has been appointed by the Florida Supreme Court to membership on the Florida Board of Bar Examiners by the Supreme Court of Florida.

## 1980s

**Luis "Lu" Prats** BA '78, JD '81, has been named office managing shareholder of Carlton Fields' Tampa office. Prats was inducted into the Stetson University College of Law Hall of Fame in 2017.

**Judge Catherine Peek McEwen** J.D. '82, a judicial officer of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Middle District of Florida, has been appointed by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. to serve a two-year term as the non-voting bankruptcy judge observer at the Judicial Conference of the United States, the national policy-making body of the federal courts.

**Joe G. Durrett** J.D. '83, has accepted the offer of partner at the law firm of McConnaughay, Coonrod, Pope, Weaver & Stern, P.A.

**Lynn Welter Sherman** J.D. '83, has been selected to the Board of Directors of the International Women's Insolvency & Restructuring Confederation (IWIRC) Florida Network for 2018.

**Caroline Black Sikorske** J.D. '84, shareholder and managing partner at the law firm of Sessums Black Caballero Ficarrotta P.A., accepted the 2017 Small Business of the Year award by the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce in the 5-20 employee category for her law firm. Sessums Black Caballero Ficarrotta P.A. was awarded the honor based on its financial success, community involvement and ethical business practices.



**G. Donald Thomson** J.D. '84, has been named chair of the Bonita Springs Estero Economic Development Council.

**Gerard Joseph Curley Jr.** J.D. '85, of the Gunster law firm, has been appointed to the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court.

## 1990s

**Mark A. Catchur** J.D. '93, is the new managing partner of the Schumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP Tampa office.

**Greta K. Kolcon** J.D. '94, recently was named a 2017 Attorney of the Year in Rochester, NY, where she received the "Leaders in Law" Award. She is a member of the law firm of Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP, focusing on complex litigation and dispute resolution. She handles private mediations and serves as a mediator on the neutral panel for the U.S. District Court of the Western District of New York.

Governor Rick Scott appointed **Cynthia Sullivan Oster** J.D. '95, to the Hillsborough County Court.

Burr & Forman LLP announced that Orlando counsel, **Vivien J. Monaco** J.D. '97, has been appointed to the Urban Land Institute's Florida Community and Housing Development Product Council, where she will serve a three-year term.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott promoted Miami-Dade County Judge **Jason E. Dimitris** J.D. '98, to the 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, filling the vacancy created by the resignation of Judge Victoria R. Brennan.

Fernandina Beach City Attorney **Tammi E. Bach** J.D. '99, was named to the Board of Directors of the Florida Municipal Attorneys Association.

## 2000s

**Vincent Citro** J.D. '00, has been appointed to the Orlando Grievance Committee for the U.S. District Court, Middle District of Florida, for a three-year term. Citro also met the standards of certification by the Florida Bar and is now a Board Certified Specialist in Criminal Trial Law.

**Patrick J. Cunningham** J.D. '00, was named as the executive director of the Florida State Boxing Commission.

**Jennifer L. Griffin** J.D. '00, has joined the Trenam Law firm as a shareholder. She is a member of the firm's Private Client Services Group and works in the firm's Tampa office. She is listed in The Best Lawyers in America and was included in *Florida Trend* magazine's "Florida Legal Elite." Griffin is a member of Tampa Bay Estate Planning Council, Metropolitan Ministries Professional Advisory Council, American Red Cross Planned Giving Committee, and David A. Straz, Jr., Center Planned Giving Committee.



**Kristen Coons McRae** J.D. '00, has been certified by the Florida Bar in City, County and Local Government Law and serves as an Assistant City Attorney for the City of Tallahassee.

**Heather Quick** J.D. '00, CEO of The Quick Law Group, divorce and family law for



women, has been named a Woman of Influence by the *Jacksonville Business Journal*. The award recognizes Ms. Quick's involvement in shaping the Jacksonville business community and the entire region by her involvement in business, non-profits and public sectors. The Quick Law Group ranked number 45 on the Law Firm 500 Honorees List of the top 100 fastest growing law firms in America.

**Kimberly J. Doud** J.D. '01, an attorney in the Orlando office of Littler, the world's largest employment and labor law practice representing management, has been elevated to shareholder.

**Jennifer Erlinger** J.D. '02, along with her colleague, recently published their first book, *Florida Family Law: Enforcing Your Legal Rights and Rebuilding Your Life*.

**Richard L. Barbara** J.D. '04, has been named chief operating officer of Coral Gables Title + Escrow. He is a founding partner of the new firm. Barbara was a founding partner at Alvarez Barbara, where he practices real estate law and general civil and commercial litigation.

**Jack W. Brown III** J.D./M.B.A. '04, a second-generation collection agency owner and president of Gulf Coast Collection Bureau, Inc., in Sarasota, will be the president of ACA International for the 2017-18 term.

**Bert Reeves** J.D. '05, has been elected to the Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group.

**Paul V. Suppicich** J.D. '05, a professional international educator prior to law school, now an immigration attorney with Maney, Gordon, Zeller, P.A. in Tampa, has been appointed by the president of the Florida Bar Association to its Law-Related Education Committee.



**Scott A. Griffith** J.D./M.B.A. '06, has joined the Kelley Kronenberg law firm's Tampa office. Griffith, who joins as an attorney, assists in handling matters related to mortgage banking and lending services, primarily involving mortgage foreclosure litigation.

**Dionne C. Fajardo** J.D. '06, has been named a shareholder of the Wiand Guerra King law firm.

**Elinor H. Portivent** J.D. '06, has been appointed Gordon County Schools attorney.

**Katherine "Katie" Cole** J.D. '07, of Hill Ward Henderson, P.A., has been reappointed by Florida Governor Rick Scott to the District Board of Trustees, St. Petersburg College.



**Traci McKee** J.D. '07, of the law firm of Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A., was selected as one of *Gulfshore Business* magazine's 40 Under 40 list, which honors local young professionals who have distinguished themselves in their professions and in the community.

**Brian Watson** J.D. '07, has joined the Sloane & Johnson, PLLC firm as a partner in the Corporate and Finance practice groups. The name of the firm has been changed to Watson Sloane Johnson PLLC.

**Rachael Wood** J.D. '07, has joined Johnson, Pope, Bokor, Ruppel and Burns, LLP.



**Genevieve R. Whitaker** J.D. '07, a 2016 Fellow for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights International Decade of People of African Descent (IDPAD), was selected to serve as a Delegate for the 2nd IDPAD Regional Meeting for Europe, Central Asia and North America held in November in Geneva, Switzerland.

**Elizabeth J. Barber** J.D. '08, was named shareholder of Dunlap & Moran.

**Adam B. Brouillet** J.D. '08, of Trenam Law, has been announced as a member of the Leadership St. Pete Class of 2018.

**Scott A. Richards** J.D. '09 has joined Carlton Fields as an associate in the Orlando office. He is a member of the firm's National Trial practice group's Business Litigation section.

Hill Ward Henderson is pleased to announce that **Jill Bell** J.D. '09, was recently selected to join the Leadership Tampa Bay Class of 2018.

**Stacey L. DiDomenico** JD '09, of Couzens Lansky is one of the recipients of the Michigan Super Lawyers Rising Stars for 2017. DiDomenico was recognized for her expertise in the business and corporate practice area.

2010s

**Ashley Nicole Ward-Singleton** J.D./M.B.A. '10, of FordHarrison LLP, has been announced as a member of the Leadership St. Pete Class of 2018.

**David Brickhouse** J.D. '11, an associate in the Tampa office of Broad and Cassel LLP, has been elected to the Leadership Tampa Bay Board of Directors.

**Jeffrey M. Guy** J.D. '11, was named partner at Kirk Pinkerton Law Firm.

**Spencer S. Hathaway** J.D. '11, rejoins the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit State Attorney's Office as the Managing Attorney for the Daytona Misdemeanor Division.

**Rachael M. Stanger** J.D. '11, Sarah Chaves Law Office, has been announced as a member of the Leadership St. Pete Class of 2018.

**Grant A. Beardsley** J.D. '12, Eau Claire, WI, was elected shareholder at Weld Riley. Beardsley is a member of the firm's real estate, business & corporate, and frac sand, mining & minerals sections.

**Matthew P. Snyder** J.D. '12, was named the new assistant general manager of the Vallejo Admirals.

**Alexa R. Larkin** J.D. '13, started her own law firm, Larkin Law, LLC, which focuses exclusively in the area of marital and family law.

**Michael Millett** J.D. '13, has been appointed by Florida Governor Rick Scott to serve on the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority – a five county regional board that plans, develops, finances, constructs, and operates multi-modal transportation systems. He is the vice president of

operations at Weatherford Partners, a private equity and advisory services business based in Tampa.

**Kayla Richmond** J.D./M.B.A.



'13, of the law firm of Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, P.A., was elected to serve on the Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida's Board of Directors.

**Michael "Brandon" Robinson** J.D. '15, has joined the law firm of Barnes Walker, Goethe, Hoonhout, Perron & Shea, PLLC. A combat veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, Robinson is a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs accredited attorney, a member of the Florida Bar, and is licensed to practice before the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. He formerly served as the Elder Consumer Protection Fellow in Stetson's Center for Excellence in Elder Law.

**Kristi L. Benson** JD '16, has joined the BrewerLong firm as an associate attorney in its Maitland office.

**Viktoryia Johnson** J.D. '16, former executive editor of the Stetson Law Review, of FordHarrison LLP, had an article published in the Florida Bar Journal.

**Thomas H. Stanton** J.D. '16, wrote the ChannelProNetwork Blog, "You Created It, You Own It. You Need to Protect It Too."

**Natalie Yello** J.D. '17, has joined GrayRobinson's Orlando office. She focuses her practice on construction, employment and labor and litigation matters

Weddings

**Irene Plank** JD '89 married Linda Baxter on October 10, 2015.



In Memoriam

William "Bo" McGillivray Morrison Jr LL.B. '50 August 14, 2017.

David J. Kadyk J.D. '51 August 17, 2017.

Wilson E. Sheridan LL.B. '58 July 24, 2017.

Jean M. Maxwell LL.B. '60 July 24, 2017.

Charles Diez LL.B. '61 November 5, 2017.

Thomas J. Prior LL.B. '61 October 21, 2017.

William A. Ottinger LL.B. '62 July 31, 2017.

Russell K. Peavyhouse LL.B. '63 August 29, 2017.

Rom W. Powell LL.B. '63 December 15, 2017.

Robert S. Dravecky J.D. '69 June 20, 2017.

Burton Ginsberg J.D. '70 August 15, 2017.

David E. Bryant J.D. '74 June 3, 2017.

Michael E. Allen J.D. '75 January 26, 2018.

James R. Campbell J.D. '75 August 22, 2017.

John A. Ouimet J.D. '75 August 4, 2017.

Peter M. Tourison J.D. '75 September 14, 2017.

Roger L. Ashby J.D. '76 November 16, 2017.

Mark E. Becker J.D. '80 December 27, 2017.

Daniel P. Mitchell J.D. '80 August 20, 2017.

Peter J. Aldrich J.D. '81 October 28, 2017.

Neil R. Arther J.D. '81 July 10, 2017.

Joseph B. Crace J.D. '86 October 3, 2017.

Sheree C. Fish J.D. '90 November 17, 2017.

Meredith E. Level J.D. '94 October 5, 2017.

Audrey M. Johnson J.D. '05 October 2, 2017.

Amy Brooke Swan J.D. '05 September 3, 2017.



# WHY I GIVE

## Jenay & Kevin Iurato

BY SHANNON TAN J.D. '08

Husband-and-wife team Jenay E. Iurato (J.D./MBA '00) and Kevin M. Iurato (J.D.'00) want to provide future students with the same opportunities that they received at Stetson.

Not only did their life together start at Stetson, where they met, but the seeds of their professional career were also planted at Stetson. The couple founded the Iurato Law Firm in Tampa several years ago.

The Iuratos are committed to giving back to Stetson, establishing the Iurato and Martínez Family Scholarship in 2018 to provide need-based assistance to a Hispanic student in good academic standing.

“My father is a barber, my mother a stay-at-home mom, and with both being Spanish, my father learned all of his English from my mother,” said Jenay Iurato, who wanted to be an attorney since she was a child. “They both worked very hard to supplement their income for my sister and me to obtain an education they never received. I know there are many other Hispanics who grew up similarly so I would like the opportunities I was given to impact someone like me.”

She said her father taught her the importance of giving back, telling her that “If you are giving and it doesn't hurt, then you're not giving enough.”

“As young donors, we hope to set an example to other alumni that demonstrates even if you are raising young children, giving to various charitable organizations, and/or have other obligations, it's important to remember how Stetson played a vital role in where you are today and you should always give back.”

Kevin Iurato received a merit-based scholarship from Stetson so he knows that every dollar helps.

“It's not about how much money you have, it's about what you choose to do with your money,” he emphasized. “We established this scholarship because for us it was the right thing to do. The school needs people like us to do this. We have two children and if they chose to attend law school I would hope that they would have the opportunity to earn a scholarship.”

The Iuratos are also dedicated to giving back to the community. Jenay Iurato is president of the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association and has received the Tampa Hispanic Bar Association Luis “Tony” Cabassa Award for her human trafficking

advocacy and pro bono legal assistance to human trafficking survivors and victims.

“It's horrific,” said Jenay Iurato of human trafficking. “And, that's why no one should turn their back on it. Every victim and survivor deserves help and a voice.”

“Every person who graduates from Stetson receives a very unique education,” said Jenay Iurato. “I can't imagine not giving back to Stetson because what Stetson gave me is something I would never be able to repay. Stetson gave me the skills to not only be a lawyer but to also be an advocate to help people that I didn't even realize I would be able to help.”



# STETSON UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF LAW

Development & Alumni Relations

1401 61st Street South

Gulfport, FL 33707

## UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE  
14

### **Alumni Reception**

*Florida Bar Convention, Orlando*

OCTOBER  
6

### **Hall of Fame Ceremony, Gulfport**

OCTOBER  
26/27

### **Class of 1968 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion, Gulfport**

For more information on these events, please visit:  
[www.stetson.edu/law/alumni](http://www.stetson.edu/law/alumni) and click Alumni Events.

