

## From the Dean

The new *U.S. News & World Report* (2018) rankings are out and we are the nation's 47th best law school overall and the 24th best public law school! The overall ranking is up one spot from 2017 and keeps Florida State ranked among the nation's top law schools. *U.S. News* also ranks Florida State's environmental law program the nation's 10th best, up from 14th last year. The overall ranking reflects the school's strong employment and student selectivity numbers.

Florida State is the best law school in Florida and 43rd nationally in terms of the percentage of 2016 graduates employed 10 months after graduation in full-time, long-term jobs that require bar passage and were not funded by the school. The law school's 2017 entering class has a median LSAT of 159 and a median GPA of 3.61.



We are thrilled that *U.S. News* continues to rank us among the nation's top law schools and that we continue to improve in these rankings. We are also delighted that the strength and robustness of our environmental program is reflected in the top 10 ranking.

- Dean Erin O'Connor

## Faculty Profile: Steve R. Johnson

[Steve R. Johnson](#), the FSU Law Dunbar Family Professor, is a nationally recognized scholar in tax litigation and procedure, including legislative and administrative law topics in tax. Among other courses, he teaches Income Taxation, Taxation of Business Entities, Business Planning, International Tax and Administrative Law. His publications include two casebooks, *Civil Tax Procedure* (with Jerome Borison & Samuel Ullman) and *Tax Crimes* (with Scott Schumacher, Larry Campagna & John Townsend), as well as numerous articles and book chapters on tax procedure and tax law. He has been a columnist for *State Tax Notes*, an associate editor of the *American Bar Association Section of Taxation NewsQuarterly* and a national co-reporter for the European Association of Tax Law Professors Congress. His work has been cited by the U.S. Supreme Court, many lower federal courts, the U.S. Solicitor General's Office, the IRS and the National Taxpayer Advocate. Johnson practiced tax law in New York City, after which he served as a senior attorney with the IRS Chief Counsel's Office and a Special Assistant United States Attorney. Prior to joining the FSU faculty in 2011, Johnson taught at Indiana University School of Law-Bloomington, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Law and the University of Alabama School of Law. He has also been a visiting professor at Chicago-Kent College of Law and the University of California Hastings College of the Law. Johnson holds a B.A. from St. Francis College in New York and a J.D. from New York University.



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*"A pianist who plays only the white keys or only the black keys is deficient in his art. Similarly, a tax lawyer must display across-the-board skills. She must work 'up close' by carefully and accurately parsing dense statutes; yet she must be able to step back to sense when narrow interpretation would thwart the tax law's general animating principles. She must understand enough administrative law to know when an IRS rule may be invalid because it was improperly promulgated or exceeds the authority delegated by Congress. In the frequent 'gray areas,' she must be able to assess outcome probabilities with sensitivity and precision to correlate her clients' levels of risk aversion, her own professional obligations and moral compass, and bureaucratic and judicial realities. She must grasp both the opportunities and the limits of her roles as planner, drafter, advisor and advocate."*

## Alum Profile: Kathleen Tuohy ('10)

Kathleen Tuohy joined FSU Law in 2017 as a recruiting and information manager in the Career Services and Professional Development Office. In addition to advising students on their job searches, Tuohy is responsible for collecting, managing and reporting data. She also works with the 1L judicial extern program and advises students interested in judicial clerkships. Tuohy previously worked for five years at Florida Coastal School of Law, where she gained experience in the areas of preparing students for the bar exam, facilitating experiential learning opportunities and counseling students in preparation for their legal careers. She also previously served as an assistant state attorney at the State Attorney's Office for the Fourth Judicial Circuit in the misdemeanor and felony divisions.



*"I am excited to be back at FSU Law and a member of a team committed to helping our students launch their careers. Advising students on how to reach their goals is extremely fulfilling."*

## Student Profile: 3L Lillian Sharpe

**Desired Practice Location:** Interested in returning to South Florida or relocating to Tampa  
**Graduation Date:** May 2018  
**Specialization:** Business law  
**Field of Law Sought:** Prefers to work in corporate/business law, whether transactional or litigation based; also interested in real estate law or civil litigation



Originally from West Palm Beach, Lillian "Lilly" Sharpe earned her bachelor's degree in sociology and political science from FSU. Sharpe, who is the current FSU Student Bar Association president, will graduate with her J.D. this May and also earn the Business Law Certificate. During her 1L year, Sharpe served as the 1L representative for the Women's Law Symposium and as a member of the Student Government Association Elections Commission. The commission is responsible for hearing appeals of student government election violation decisions. During her 2L year, Sharpe served as secretary of the Student Bar Association (SBA) and as vice chair of the Student Government Association Elections Commission. The 2016-17 FSU Student Bar Association was recognized as the nation's top SBA chapter by the American Bar Association's Law Student Division in August 2017. Currently, Sharpe serves as a member of the Law Student Council (LSC) and on the American Bar Association (ABA) Law Student Division's Nominating Committee, which interviews and forwards candidates for ABA Law Student Division leadership positions. The summer after her 1L year, Sharpe externed at the Fortune 500 company HD Supply in Orlando. The externship allowed her to review and redline contracts, review business agreements, conduct legal research at the local, state and federal levels, and to observe negotiations. Last summer, she clerked at Kubicki Draper, an insurance defense litigation firm in West Palm Beach. She still clerks for them remotely, and has been exposed to general litigation and worked on cases involving personal injury, premises liability, bad faith and wrongful death claims. If you are interested in hiring Sharpe after graduation, [visit her LinkedIn profile](#).


*"My time at the Florida State University College of Law has been extremely rewarding. Having worked closely with both student leaders and the administration over the past three years, I have developed strong communication and problem-solving skills, and a heightened sense of accountability."*

## Summer Program Applications Due March 30

Do you know someone who may be interested in our Donald J. Weidner Summer for Undergraduates Program, May 21-June 15, 2018? The free program is a medium-long immersion into legal study for rising sophomores, juniors and seniors-in college—pass this along to someone you think may be interested! The application deadline is Friday, March 30. Check out [our brochure](#) and [visit our website](#) for more information.

**THE 36-HOUR GREAT GIVE CAMPAIGN ENDS AT 9 PM TODAY, 03/23.**

**PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING TO FSU LAW. CLICK HERE.**



*Thank you for your support!*

**PALM BEACH ALUMNI RECEPTION**

**WEDNESDAY APRIL 18 FROM 6-7:30 PM AT THE PALM BEACH YACHT CLUB**

*PLEASE EMAIL*  
**ALUMNI@LAW.FSU.EDU**  
**TO RSVP BY APRIL 11**



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