

From the Dean



The class of 2021 pictured at last week's 1L Orientation.

The fall 2018 semester began this week, and we are delighted to see so many familiar faces and to welcome all of our new students to FSU Law! Our newest J.D. students were on campus for orientations last week and it was my pleasure to meet the 1Ls, who are a very energetic, inquisitive group. At 213 members, the class of 2021 is the largest group we have welcomed since 2009. This class is also record-setting, with the highest percentage of women – 55% – and the highest median GPA – 3.63 – of any class to matriculate at FSU Law. They are also one of the most diverse classes in our history, in terms of their experiences and backgrounds. They represent 49 majors at 61 undergraduate schools and 8% hold graduate or professional degrees. Collectively, this class has 897 years of work experience in jobs ranging from biologist to financial advisor to Korean cryptologic linguist. This class is also one of our most diverse in terms of ethnicity/race, with 31% of students identifying as something other than Caucasian. Forty-four of our newest J.D. students hail from outside of Florida (representing 24 states and three countries); not since the entering class of 2009 has a class had more out-of-state students. This rich diversity will enhance the educational experiences of our students and we are eager to watch them flourish!

- Dean Erin O'Connor

Administration & Alum Profile: Glenda L. Thornton ('89)

[Glenda L. Thornton](#) joined FSU Law in July as assistant dean for strategic initiatives. She is an experienced executive and licensed attorney with more than 25 years of achievement in the law, business, healthcare and nonprofit environments. As assistant dean for strategic initiatives, Thornton spearheads special projects related to advancing the core mission and future direction of the College of Law and advises the dean on current legal trends. Before joining FSU Law, Thornton served as regional vice president, revenue cycle sales, at Accretive Health Inc. in Chicago. She previously served as general counsel at the Florida Lottery, of counsel at Bateman Harden, P.A. and a partner at Foley & Lardner, LLP. In addition, she is a very active community volunteer and has served as chair of many community boards, including the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce. She also chaired the United Way of the Big Bend's 75th Anniversary Campaign. Thornton earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of South Alabama in her hometown of Mobile and her J.D. from Florida State University. While in law school, she served as an articles and notes editor for the *Florida State University Law Review* and earned a national championship with her partner, Robin Suarez, as a member of the Moot Court Team. She has remained very engaged as an alumna of FSU Law. Thornton received the law school's 2005 Distinguished Alumni Award and served for several years on our Board of Visitors.



"I am delighted to return to the law school, where it all began for me, and contribute to advancing the strategic goals and image of the College of Law, while also cultivating financial support and community engagement."

Alum Profile: The Honorable Stephanie Ray ('95)

[The Honorable Stephanie Ray](#) has been a judge on the Florida First District Court of Appeal since 2011 and currently serves as chief judge designate. Prior to her appointment to the bench, Ray chaired the Florida Public Employees Relations Commission and was an assistant and associate dean at FSU Law. She began her law career at Ausley McMullen in Tallahassee. Among her many professional activities, Ray serves on the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Civil Cases, The Florida Bar Appellate Court Rules Committee, and the Executive Council of The Florida Bar Labor and Employment Law Section. She is also an active member and past president of the First District Appellate American Inn of Court and the William H. Stafford American Inn of Court. Ray is a frequent instructor for continuing judicial and legal education courses, and is a member and past chair of the Florida Conference of District Court of Appeal Judges Education Committee. Ray remains engaged with the College of Law, where she has served as a moot court coach since 2013 and an adjunct professor since 2015.



"I'm extremely grateful to be a part of the life of the law school through teaching, coaching moot court teams and mentoring students. In these small ways, I hope to give back to the law school that has given so much to me."

Student Profile: 2018 Grad Kelly Kay

Desired Practice Location: Jacksonville
Specialization: Corporate law; Business law

Originally from Tampa, Kelly Kay earned a bachelor's degree in marketing from FSU. When she graduated from FSU Law in May 2018, she earned the Business Law Certificate in addition to her J.D. Kay was a member of the *Journal of Transnational Law*, the Student Bar Association and the Chester Bedell American Inn of Court. During the spring semester of her 2L year, Kay clerked for the Tallahassee Veterans Legal Collaborative, where she interviewed veteran clients to evaluate past and current legal issues. She drafted memos recommending services and coordinated with supervising attorneys to resolve legal issues. During the summer after her 2L year, Kay clerked with the in-house counsel of Jabil Inc., where she originated and post-contract dealings conducted by business unit managers and staff attorneys for the automotive division of the international manufacturing company. She also drafted, analyzed and revised various contract agreements for staff attorneys and helped create a risk analysis profile of liabilities and recalls of a target for acquisition. If you are interested in hiring Kay, [visit her LinkedIn profile](#).



"The knowledge and experience I have gained from my time at FSU College of Law have been invaluable. As I pursue the next step of my legal career I am eager to apply the skills I have obtained and to continue to grow as a professional."

The Florida State University College of Law and Upchurch Watson White & Max present:

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION/MEDIATION CME/CLE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2018 - 7:30 AM-5 PM
@ THE FSU COLLEGE OF LAW

A detailed schedule and registration forms are available online.



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