

## From the Dean



(L-R) Moot Court Final Four competitors Tracy, Bauman, Ferreira and Kunin.

On Wednesday, November 4, our Moot Court Team hosted its annual Final Four Competition. This year's virtual event featured four outstanding 2L advocates: Catherine Bauman, Joao Ferreira, Samantha Kunin and Joseph Tracy. The student competitors presented oral arguments before Florida Supreme Court justices while other students, faculty, staff and friends watched via livestream. The Moot Court Team hosted a watch party of the livestream event at the law school and then a reception on the Rotunda Green. This exceptional event was another reminder of how talented our students are and how resilient they have been during COVID-19. Congratulations to all the competitors and to everyone who helped plan and execute the competition. Special congratulations to Ferreira, who was named Best Advocate by the justices. Many thanks to the Florida Supreme Court justices for participating in the event virtually this year and for their consistent willingness to engage with our students.

-Dean Erin O'Connor

## SBA Brings "Noles to the Polls" Series to Students



Tom Spulak addresses students during virtual "Noles to the Polls" event.

This fall, the Student Bar Association (SBA) developed a timely virtual speaker series, "Noles to the Polls," featuring experts on relevant election topics. On October 9, alumnus Tom Spulak ('82), a partner at King & Spalding in Washington, D.C. and former general counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives, kicked off the series with "Practicing Political Law & Other Election Topics." Spulak is also an adjunct professor teaching Political Law during the spring 2021 semester. He provided reflections on his career and spoke about mail-in voting, getting involved in a political campaign and other election topics leading into the 2020 election.

"As the saying goes," said FSU SBA President Chad Revis in his introduction of Spulak, "some states pick corn, we pick presidents."

On October 23, Florida Secretary of State Laurel Lee presented "From the Bench to the Ballots." She discussed the importance of voting and how she has come to admire the public sector after working in private practice, serving as a judge and now serving as the secretary of state and chief elections officer of Florida. Lee also encouraged FSU Law students to take advantage of all the opportunities that come with attending law school in the Florida capital.

Today, Friday, November 6 at 12 pm, FSU Law Professor Michael T. Morley will present "Ballots, Recounts & Court Battles: Election Litigation and What's Next." Morley is an expert in the areas of election law, constitutional law, remedies and the federal courts. In October alone, he has been quoted in The Washington Post, Bloomberg, The Boston Globe, Roll Call, Christian Science Monitor and USA Today. Join today's discussion via Zoom at <https://fsu.zoom.us/j/96076431121>.

## Alumni Event: Law & Business Speaker Series Features Alumni



Jeff Stoops meets with students as part of the Law & Business Speaker Series.

This semester, our business law program has hosted or will host six FSU Law alumni as part of a new Law & Business Speaker Series. The virtual series offers students interested in business law opportunities to hear from alumni practitioners whose jobs are concentrated in a variety of areas. Each speaker has provided valuable insight and advice to students.

On October 12, Alan "A.C." Nash ('07), a shareholder at Marshall, Dennehey, Warner, Coleman & Goggin in Ft. Lauderdale, was the first featured alumnus to speak with students via Zoom. He discussed his practice in the defense of claims made and suits brought against insureds and businesses in product, automobile, commercial, liquor liability, construction and premises liability matters. Later the same week, Jacquelyn Thomas Watts ('14) spoke to students about business torts, the difference between business transactional lawyers and business litigation lawyers, and how law and business play a role in her practice. Watts is an associate at Holland & Knight in Atlanta. Jeff Stoops ('84), who is president and CEO of SBA Communications and a generous supporter of the law school and FSU Law students through scholarships, spoke to students on October 22. Stoops discussed his career and offered advice to students who are hoping to enter the business world after law school. Christina Strasser ('17), an associate at Williams Parker in Sarasota who previously clerked for a judge at the U.S. Tax Court in Washington D.C., met with students on October 27. Strasser spoke about her experience earning an LL.M. after law school and working as an associate with a focus on corporate and tax law. Earlier this week, Alexandra Holt ('14) spoke to students about her work as a trademark attorney and how law and business affect her practice. Holt is an associate at Greenberg Traurig in Atlanta. Marlon Hill ('95), a partner in the Miami office of Hamilton, Miller & Birthisel who practices in the areas of corporate law, intellectual property and government transactions, will speak to students on November 10. Hill will provide general advice and will discuss his profile and what it means to him to be a law and business lawyer.

## Student Profile: 3L Nathan T. Planitz

**Desired Practice Location:** Atlanta area

**Expected Graduation:** May 2021

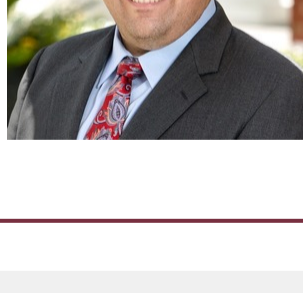
**Field of Law Sought:** Personal injury law

Nathan Planitz is from Parrish, Florida, a small town south of Tampa. He earned an associate's degree in psychology from Santa Fe College and a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of South Florida. Planitz is a first-generation college student who worked 30-hours a week to pay for his undergraduate schooling. He worked several years as financial advisor before entering law school. Last summer, Planitz spent his second summer clerking at Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Sorrels, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner in Houston. Due to COVID-19, there was a skeleton crew at the office, but Planitz continued assisting with cases he worked on the previous summer and was the main point of contact for over 150 clients. During the spring semester of his 2L year, Planitz clerked at Schneider Hammers, where he drafted ante litem notices, interrogatories, complaints, 6.4 letters and other pleadings for this litigation-focused firm. During the fall semester of his 2L year, Planitz clerked for Fasig | Brooks. He drafted complaints, motions, interrogatories, notices, witness and exhibit lists, and other pleadings connected with trial preparation and discovery. He also prepared production of documents for discovery, including requesting medical and public records and assembling exhibits. During his first summer at Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Sorrels, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner, Planitz worked directly under the president of the Houston Bar Association, Benny Agosto, Jr., and aided in discovery matters, indexed medical records, amended interrogatories, drafted demand letters and deposition summaries, reviewed documents for depositions, conducted legal research, and attended depositions, hearings and trials.

Planitz previously served as an executive board member and curriculum advisor for the FSU Tax Law Society. He serves as captain of the FSU Law student team and is a member of the Business Law Society, Student Bar Association and Entertainment, Arts and Sports Law Society. If you are interested in connecting with Planitz or hiring him after graduation, [visit his LinkedIn profile](#).

*"I am eager for the opportunity to work for a firm that values diversity, fosters collaboration and works diligently to meet the needs of its clients. My ideal position would be working at a litigation-focused personal injury firm that will hone my commitment to learning, adapting and winning."*

## Event Reminders



"Noles to the Polls: Ballots, Recounts, & Court Battles— Election Litigation and What's Next!" with Michael Morley,


Assistant Professor, FSU Law

November 6, 2020, 12 pm

[Zoom link](#)

*We're almost there!*

We are within \$50,000 of our Pave the Way campaign goal and need your support for student scholarships. Please visit [law.fsu.edu/pavetheway](http://law.fsu.edu/pavetheway) to learn more and give online today.



*We need your support for student scholarships!*

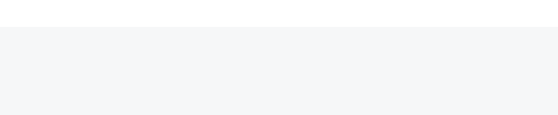
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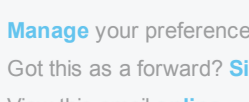
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