



FSU LAW

Focus

August 11,
2023

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From the Dean



On August 4, we recognized our summer 2023 graduates with a special reception at the law school. Some of our newest alumni and their guests gathered at the Advocacy Center to celebrate with faculty and staff members before walking across the street to the university commencement ceremony. Earlier that day, a few of our J.D. grads attended a special university ceremony with hooding for doctoral degree candidates. This summer, nearly 100 J.M., 11 LL.M., and nine J.D. students graduated from the College of Law. We are very proud of our new alumni and look forward to hearing about their many accomplishments in the future!

Erin O'Connor

Dean Erin O'Connor

Incoming 1Ls Gather Around Florida



Incoming 1Ls, current students, and Admissions Office team members met in Tampa in July.

The FSU Law Office of Admissions hosted several meet-up sessions this summer in various cities across Florida to allow admitted students to connect with each other before the fall semester begins! The sessions, which took place in Hollywood, Tampa, Orlando, and Tallahassee, also provided incoming students with an opportunity to ask questions of admissions professionals and of one another as they prepare to begin law school. Many members of the incoming 1L class have already shown great interest in campus involvement and have taken the initiative to connect with one another in several other ways before the semester begins, including through social media. FSU Law looks forward to having these students on campus for orientation in a little over a week!

In Memoriam: Alum Hon. James C. Hankinson ('79)

The Florida State University family lost an accomplished alumnus, friend, and supporter when Judge James “Jimmy” Hankinson passed away on July 6, 2023. Jimmy graduated from Davidson College in 1974 and the Florida State University College of Law in December 1978.

Jimmy spent the first decades of his career practicing criminal law as an assistant state attorney in Pensacola and Tallahassee and as an assistant United States attorney in Tallahassee.

Jimmy maintained particularly fond friendships with Professor Charles Ehrhardt and his classmates Paul Liepshutz and Pete Antonacci. Paul and Jimmy always especially enjoyed cooking and serving the homeless families of the Hope Community.



Jimmy particularly enjoyed his service as a Kiwanian and built many ramps for disabled people throughout Tallahassee. When Jimmy's brain cancer finally took his mobility, Kiwanians built a ramp at his home.

Jimmy loved attending FSU sporting events, especially baseball and basketball with Rick Combs, another career prosecutor.

Jimmy's many years of service as a circuit judge are well known. He presided over some of the most serious criminal cases with an even, authoritative demeanor. He was respected and beloved by every good lawyer and a source of some anxiety for the poorly prepared.

Jimmy taught advanced criminal law topics to judges throughout the state. His colleagues on the Second Circuit routinely benefited from his good judgment and wise counsel. He was a generous friend and patient instructor.

- Tribute written by FSU Law alumnus Hon. Jonathan Sjostrom ('89)

Student Profile: 3L Chase Jones

Desired Practice Location: South Florida, Florida panhandle, or Tampa area

Expected Graduation: May 2024

Field of Law Sought: Real estate law; also interested in learning more about trusts and estates

Chase Jones was born and raised in Ocean City, New Jersey, but after high school, his family moved to Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. He attended the University of South Carolina for his undergraduate studies, earning a bachelor's degree in sports



management. He will graduate from FSU Law in May. During the summer, Jones interned at Novak Law Group, PLLC, in Port St. Joe, Florida. In this role, he worked on a wide array of real estate cases and title work. Earlier in the summer, Jones interned with Cohen Norris Wolmer Ray Telepman Berkowitz & Cohen in North Palm Beach, Florida. In this position, Jones learned a substantial amount about real estate law and about civil litigation. During the summer before his 2L year, Jones interned with Teitler & Teitler, LLC, in Ocean City, New Jersey, which specializes in real estate law and title work. Jones's main responsibility there was assisting one of the partners with preparing applications for zoning and planning board meetings.

At FSU Law, Jones is a student ambassador with the Office of Admissions. If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Jones after graduation, visit his [LinkedIn Profile](#) or email him at cdj21d@fsu.edu.

“I am a dedicated worker who wants to be the best possible attorney I can be. I am still young and in the early stages of mastering the law, but I am excited for the challenges ahead.”

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