

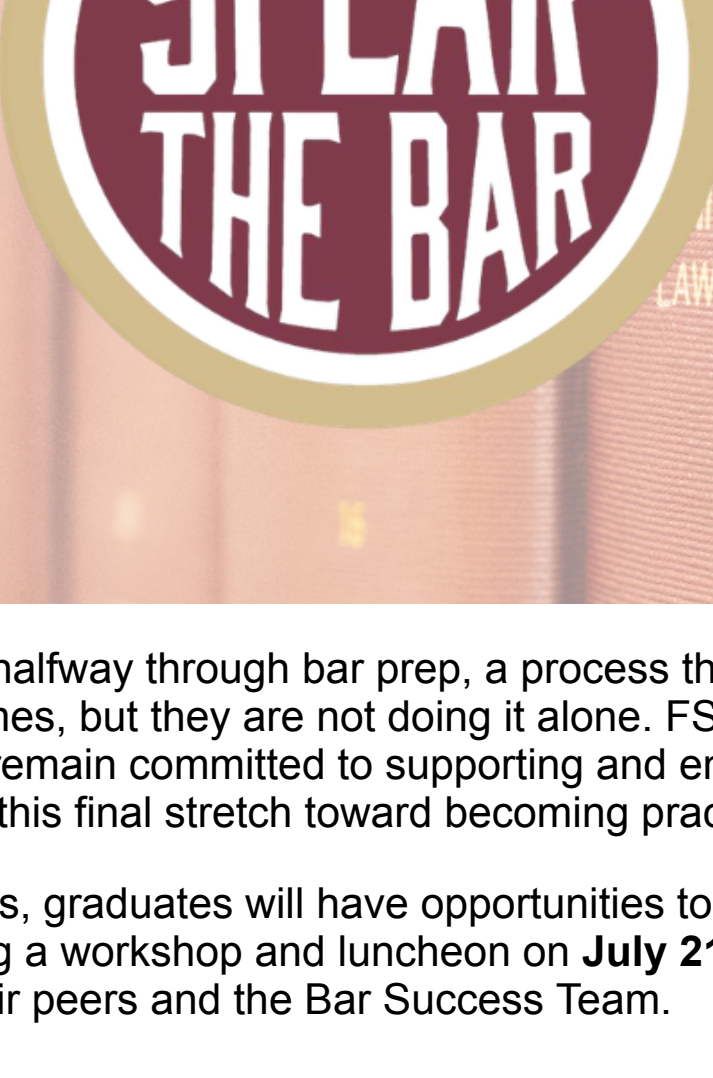


FSU LAW FOCUS

July 3, 2026

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From the Dean



Our graduates are halfway through bar prep, a process that can feel overwhelming at times, but they are not doing it alone. FSU Law and our alumni community remain committed to supporting and encouraging them as they move through this final stretch toward becoming practicing attorneys.

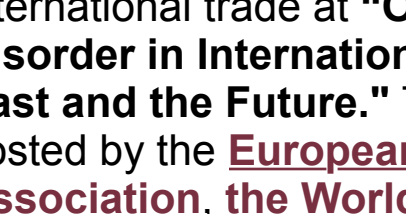
In the coming weeks, graduates will have opportunities to stay engaged and supported, including a workshop and luncheon on **July 21** and continued connection with their peers and the Bar Success Team.

Our Bar Success Team will be there through the finish line, providing lunch in Tampa on **July 28 and 29** to help sustain our graduates taking the Florida bar exam.

Thank you to our alumni who have helped stock the Spear the Bar Essentials Pantry. Contributors to this fund are still welcome. We also encourage you to share well wishes and good luck messages on our online message board.

[Click here](#) to contribute to the Spear the Bar Essentials Pantry.

[Click here](#) to leave a message.



Dean Erin O'Connor

FSU Law Faculty Presentation



(L-R) Professor Ichiro Araki, Dr. Valérie Engammare, Professor Frederick Abbott, and Dr. Werner Zedow.

Frederick M. Abbott, Edward Ball Eminent Scholar Professor of International Law, recently traveled to Bern, Switzerland, to present on the future of intellectual property in international trade at “**Order and Disorder in International Trade: The Past and the Future.**” The conference, hosted by the **European Free Trade Association, the World Trade Institute,** and the **University of Bern**, brought together leading scholars and practitioners to examine the evolving landscape of global trade.

The Florida AI Docket



FSU College of Law's **Institute of Law, Technology & Innovation**, in collaboration with **Lab22c**, is proud to share the latest edition of **The Florida AI Docket**, a legal analysis, legislative tracking, and commentary publication on artificial intelligence governance in Florida. This issue features articles addressing a broad spectrum of current AI legislation in Florida.

[Click here](#) to read the latest issue.

FSU Law Faculty News



Erin Ryan, Associate Dean for Environmental Programs and Elizabeth C. & Clyde W. Atkinson Professor, was recently featured in a *WFSU* article titled, “**Amid environmental concerns, some Florida counties are banning AI data centers.**”

The article examines how two Florida counties are adopting policies to limit the development of AI data centers to protect local ecosystems, wildlife, and agricultural resources.

[Click here](#) to read the article.



Michael Morley, Sheila M. McDevitt Professor of Law and Faculty Director of the Election Law Center, presented “**Survey of Recent Cases in Election Law**” at the **Florida Bar Government Lawyr Section's Inaugural Legacy & Leadership Symposium**, held at The Florida Bar Annex Building in Tallahassee.

Additionally, Professor Morley has been featured in an *Axios Miami* article titled “**Broward Power Play: Mark Bogen's Next Run Puts Term Limits on Trial.**” Broward County Mayor Mark Bogen prepares to seek another term in 2026, but his eligibility may depend on how the county's term-limit rules are interpreted.

[Click here](#) to read the article.

Professor Morley was also featured in a *Tallahassee Democrat* article titled “**Post-election audits work. Leon County voters can see them.**” The article discusses Leon County's expansion in election transparency by making its post-election audit results publicly accessible, allowing voters to independently review how ballots were counted and verified.

[Click here](#) to read the article.

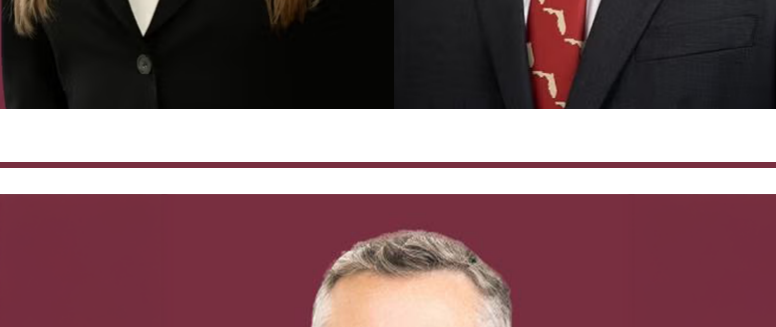
Professor Morley was also featured in a *WTSP* article titled “**Lawsuit challenges Florida's new congressional map, raising questions ahead of midterms.**” He weighed in on the lawsuit challenging Florida's new congressional map and on the courts' decision whether to block it.

[Click here](#) to read the article.



Rima Nathan, Clinical Professor and Director of the Claude Pepper Elder Law Clinic, was recently featured as a guest on *The Elder Law Coach*, a leading elder law podcast hosted by nationally certified elder law attorney **Todd Whatley**. The episode “**How A Law School Elder Law Clinic Trains Practice Ready Attorneys (Plus other good stuff)**” explores important legal issues affecting older adults and highlights Nathan's expertise in the field.

[Click here](#) to listen.

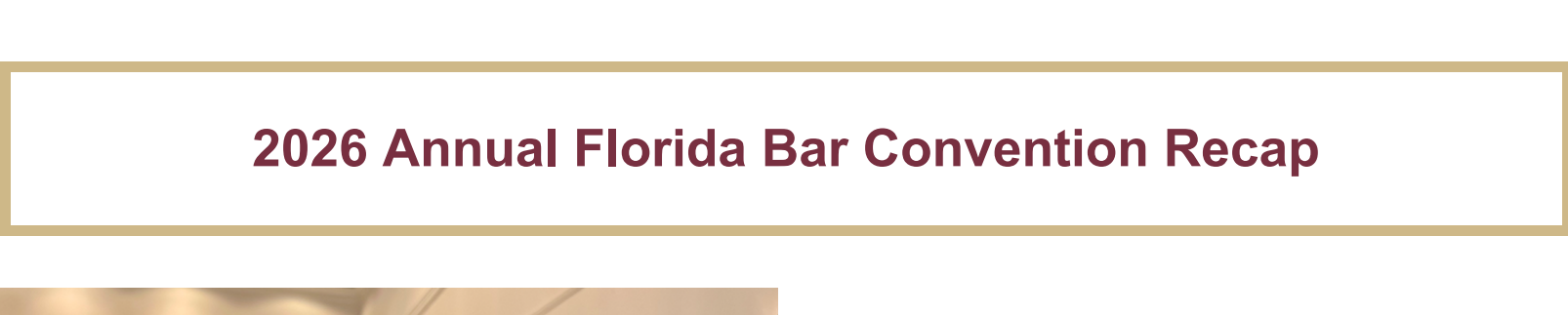


Denise Harla, Clinical Professor and Director of the First Amendment Clinic, and **Ryan Owens**, Affiliate Faculty and Director of the Institute for Governance and Civics, were recently featured as faculty experts available for media interviews on issues including the U.S. Supreme Court, constitutional government, education policy, free speech, and the role of states in American democracy.



Ryan Owens, Affiliate Faculty and Director of the Institute for Governance and Civics, recently co-authored an article at the *Washington Examiner* titled, “**Congress: The guards who left their post.**” The article examines the need for congressional reform, advocating for a return to regular order through single-subject legislation, meaningful committee deliberation, timely appropriations, and clearer statutory drafting consistent with constitutional principles.

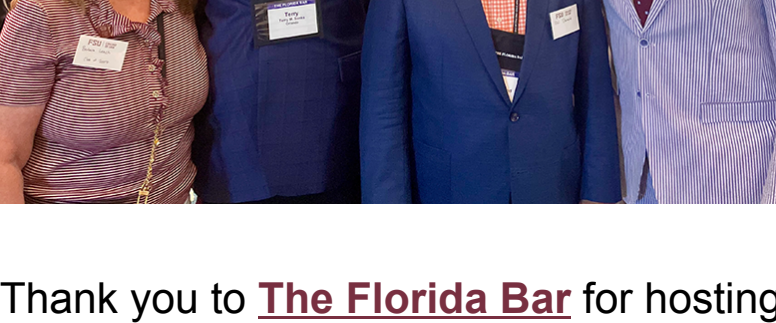
[Click here](#) to read the article.



Professor Owens was also quoted in *Florida Politics*, “**Sunburn — The morning read of what's hot in Florida politics.**” The discussion highlights findings from the Institute for Governance and Civics' new poll examining Americans' views on the tradeoff between higher fuel prices and efforts to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

[Click here](#) to read the article.

2026 Annual Florida Bar Convention Recap



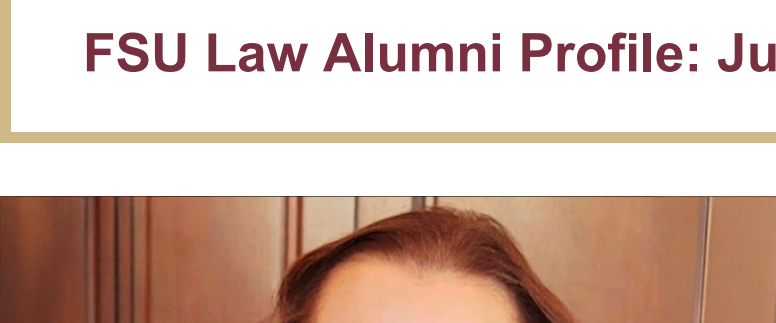
FSU College of Law had the pleasure of attending the **2026 Annual Florida Bar Convention** in Orlando. We were thrilled to reconnect with and welcome more than 124 alumni and friends from across Florida to our alumni reception. The event provided an opportunity to renew friendships, strengthen professional connections, celebrate shared accomplishments, and reflect on the enduring impact of our college.

Thank you to **The Florida Bar** for hosting another outstanding convention, and thank you to our alumni for continuing to represent Florida State Law with such distinction.

[Click here](#) to see more photos on FSU Law Connect.



FSU Law Alumni Profile: Judge Jacqueline B. Steele ('95)

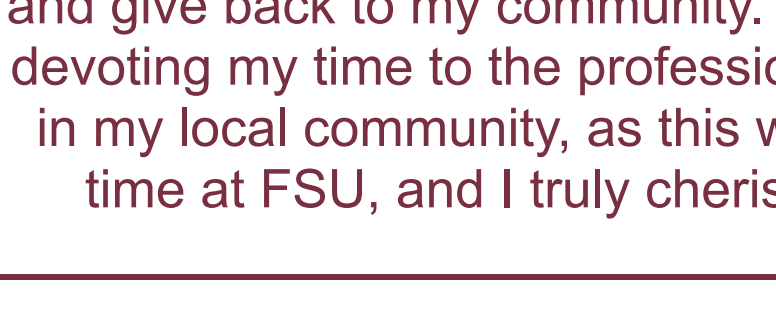


Jacqueline B. Steele ('95) serves as a County Court Judge in the **Twelfth Judicial Circuit**, overseeing criminal and small claims cases in Manatee County. Judge Steele enjoys serving in her community and church. She is currently the Vice President of the **Manatee Chapter of the Florida Association for Women Lawyers (FAWL)** and was honored to receive the **2026 Leader in the Law Award** for the Manatee Chapter at the Statewide FAWL Gala during the Annual Florida Bar Convention in Orlando last month.

She also enjoys participating in a variety of events with the Manatee **Inns of Court** Chapter and **Bradenton Kiwanis**. Prior to her appointment to the bench by Governor Ron DeSantis in 2020, Judge Steele spent 25 years in private practice in the field of workers' compensation defense. She has served as the Chair of the **E. Earle Zehmer National Workers' Compensation Moot Court Competition** for over 25 years, encouraging law students' interest in the field of workers' compensation and appellate advocacy.

“Florida State provided me with the tools necessary to become a successful lawyer and judge, but it also fostered a spirit to serve and give back to my community. I enjoy mentoring law students and devoting my time to the professional development of young lawyers in my local community, as this was modeled to me throughout my time at FSU, and I truly cherish my memories from that time.”

FSU Law Alumni News



Khari James ('17) has been appointed by Governor Ron DeSantis to the **Statewide Council on Human Trafficking**. James previously served as an Assistant United States Attorney for the **Northern District of Florida** and as a **Human Trafficking Attorney with Legal Services of North Florida**. She currently serves as Senior Legal Counsel for the **National Center on Sexual Exploitation**.

[Click here](#) to read the article.

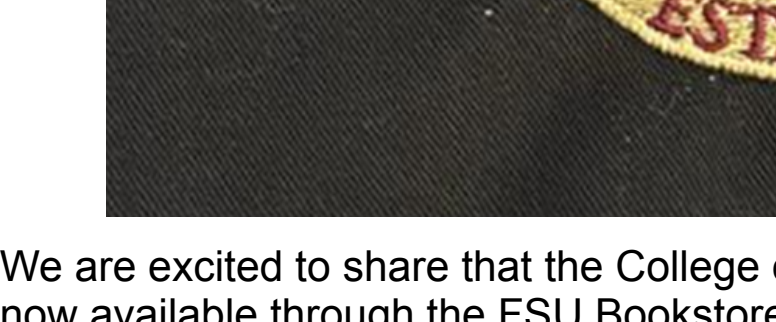
FSU Law 60th Anniversary Apparel



We are excited to share that the College of Law's 60th Anniversary merchandise is now available through the FSU Bookstore. Apparel and accessories bearing the 60th Anniversary logo can be purchased to celebrate this special milestone.

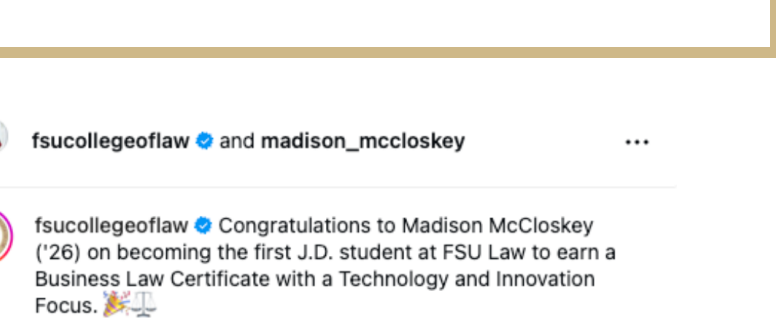
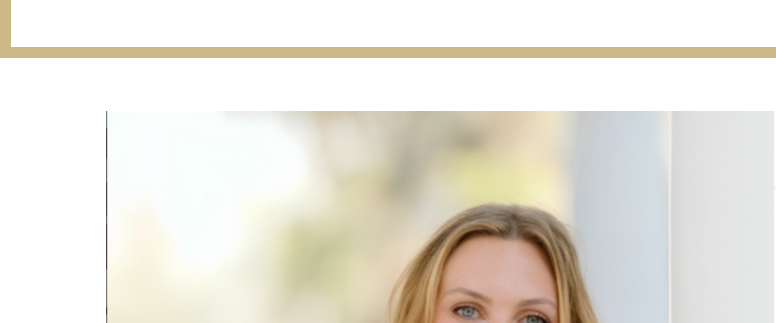
[Click here](#) to shop FSU Law 60th Anniversary merchandise.

FSU Law Social Spotlight



We love celebrating the accomplishments of our students. From historic milestones like **Madison McCloskey becoming the first J.D. graduate at FSU Law to earn a Business Law Certificate with a Technology and Innovation Focus**, to competition wins, scholarships, externships, and career announcements, we share the stories that make our community proud.

Follow us to stay connected with student success, faculty achievements, alumni news, and life at FSU Law.



FSU College of Law has produced a **60-Year Commemorative Coin** to recognize participation in supporting the law school during its 60th year anniversary.

Alumni can earn a 60-Year Commemorative Coin by Donating **\$250+ AND** joining and engaging on FSU Law Connect. **OR** attending an in-person Alumni Event. These actions must be taken **between January 1 and December 31, 2026** to be eligible for the coin.

[Find Details on Eligibility Requirements for FSU Law's 60-Year Coin.](#)