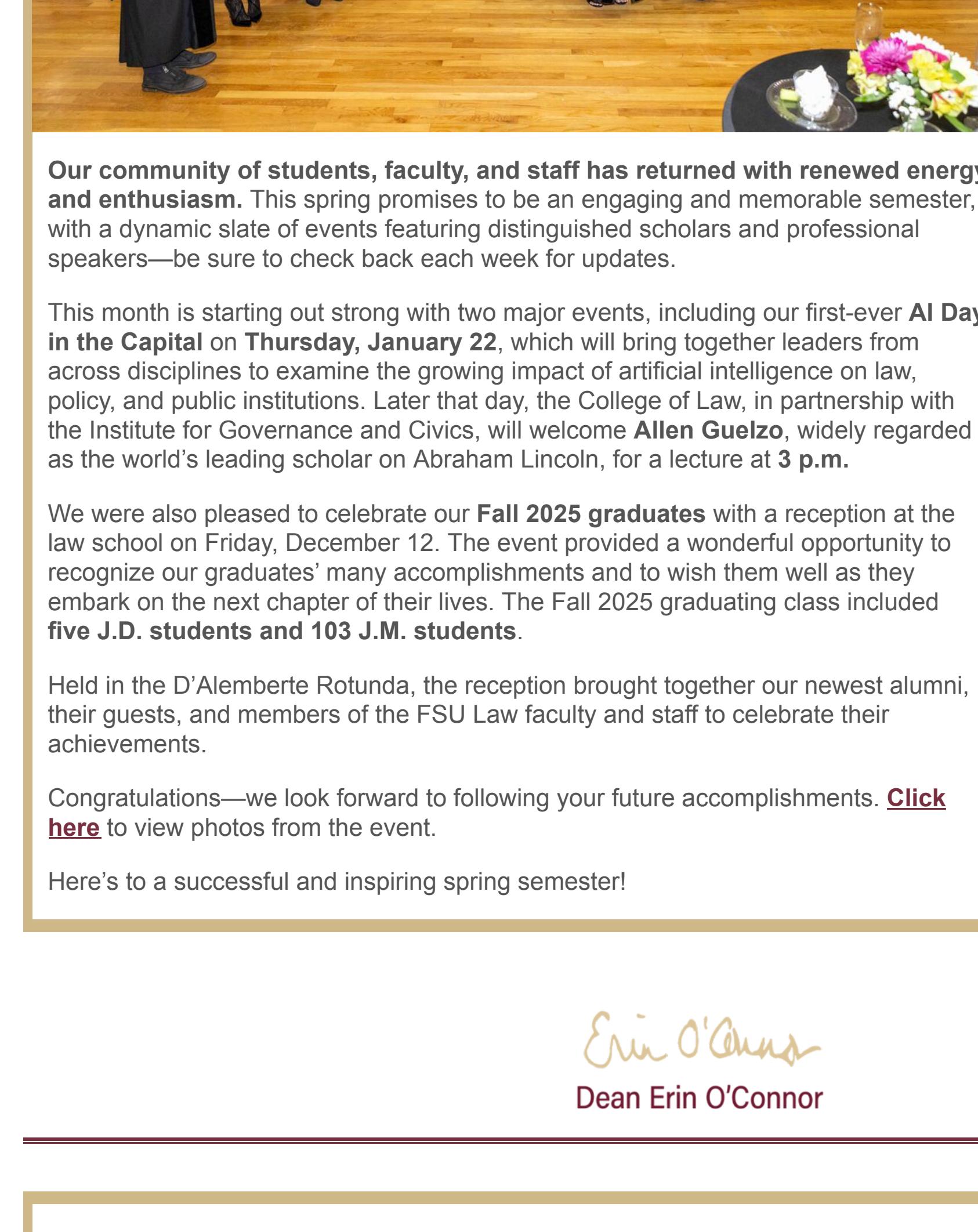


January 9, 2026

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## From the Dean



Our community of students, faculty, and staff has returned with renewed energy and enthusiasm. This spring promises to be an engaging and memorable semester, with a dynamic slate of events featuring distinguished scholars and professional speakers—be sure to check back each week for updates.

This month is starting out strong with two major events, including our first-ever **AI Day in the Capital** on **Thursday, January 22**, which will bring together leaders from across disciplines to examine the growing impact of artificial intelligence on law, policy, and public institutions. Later that day, the College of Law, in partnership with the Institute for Governance and Civics, will welcome **Allen Guelzo**, widely regarded as the world's leading scholar on Abraham Lincoln, for a lecture at 3 p.m.

We were also pleased to celebrate our **Fall 2025 graduates** with a reception at the law school on Friday, December 12. The event provided a wonderful opportunity to recognize our graduates' many accomplishments and to wish them well as they embark on the next chapter of their lives. The Fall 2025 graduating class included five J.D. students and 103 J.M. students.

Held in the D'Alemberte Rotunda, the reception brought together our newest alumni, their guests, and members of the FSU Law faculty and staff to celebrate their achievements.

Congratulations—we look forward to following your future accomplishments. [Click here](#) to view photos from the event.

Here's to a successful and inspiring spring semester!

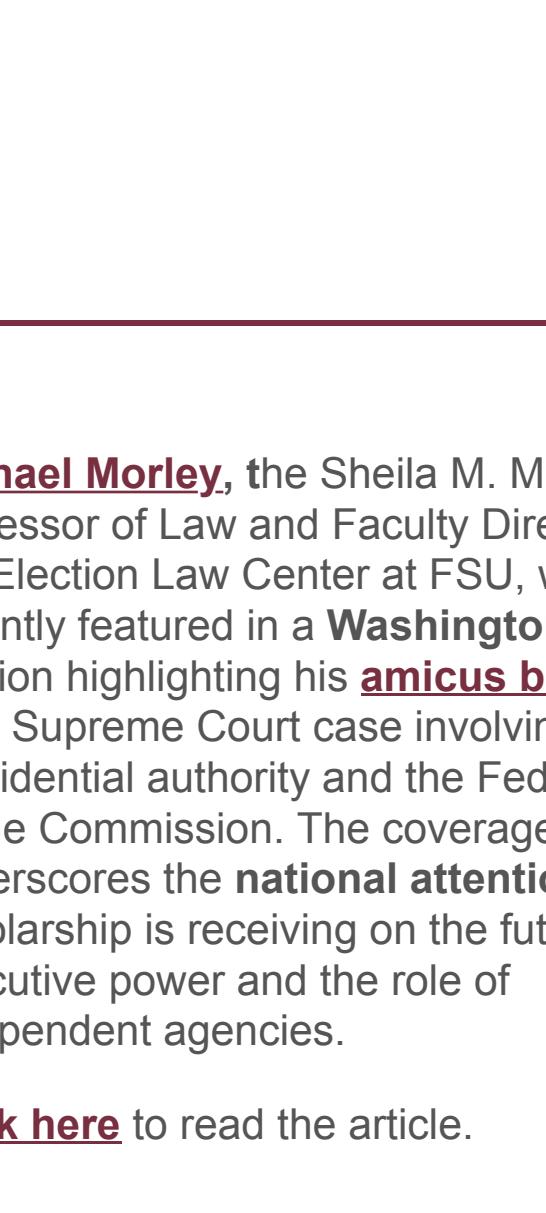
*Erin O'Connor*

Dean Erin O'Connor

## January Events

Mark your calendars for the inaugural **AI Day in the Capital** on **Thursday, January 22**, beginning at 9 a.m., at the **FSU College of Law**.

**AI Day in the Capital** will bring together leaders in government, law, technology, and academia to examine the rapidly evolving landscape of artificial intelligence and its implications for public institutions, civic infrastructure, and ethical governance.

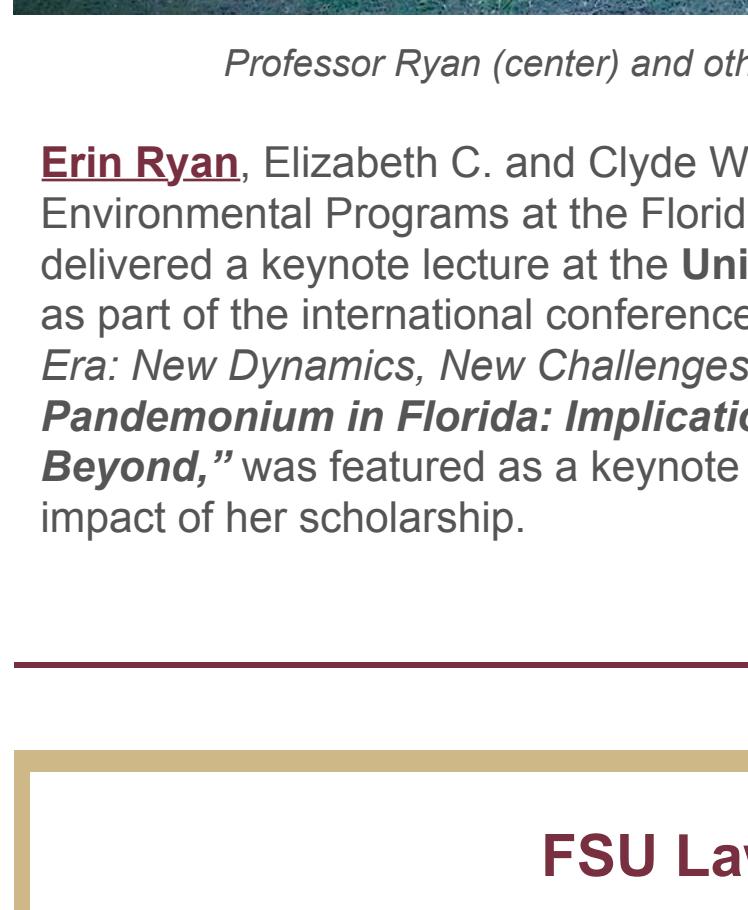


The event will explore how AI can be responsibly integrated into state systems, enhance public services, expand access to justice, and support informed policy development across Florida and beyond.

Alongside panel discussions and keynotes, AI Day in the Capital will feature hands-on demonstrations in the D'Alemberte Rotunda from departments across FSU's campus, showcasing their applications of AI in the classroom and in research, including healthcare, atmospheric research, and legal applications.

Thank you to our sponsor, **Amazon**. CLE credits will be available.

[Click here](#) to learn more and see the full schedule of events.



The College of Law will host a lecture by **Allen Guelzo**, widely regarded as the world's leading expert on **Abraham Lincoln**, at 3 p.m. on **Thursday, January 22**, in **Room 101**. The event is presented in partnership with the **Institute for Governance & Civics** and is sponsored by the **Florida Supreme Court Historical Society**.

Guelzo, a professor at the University of Florida, will speak on **The Statesmanship of Abraham Lincoln: How Did the 16th President Hold Together a Nation—and How Can We Do It Again Today?** A moderated question-and-answer session will follow.

The lecture will examine Lincoln's leadership through the lens of statesmanship, focusing on his deep understanding of the rule of law and its role in sustaining democratic governance. Professor Guelzo will explore how Lincoln's commitment to law provided a vital balance between tyranny and anarchy and why those principles remain relevant in addressing today's civic and constitutional challenges.

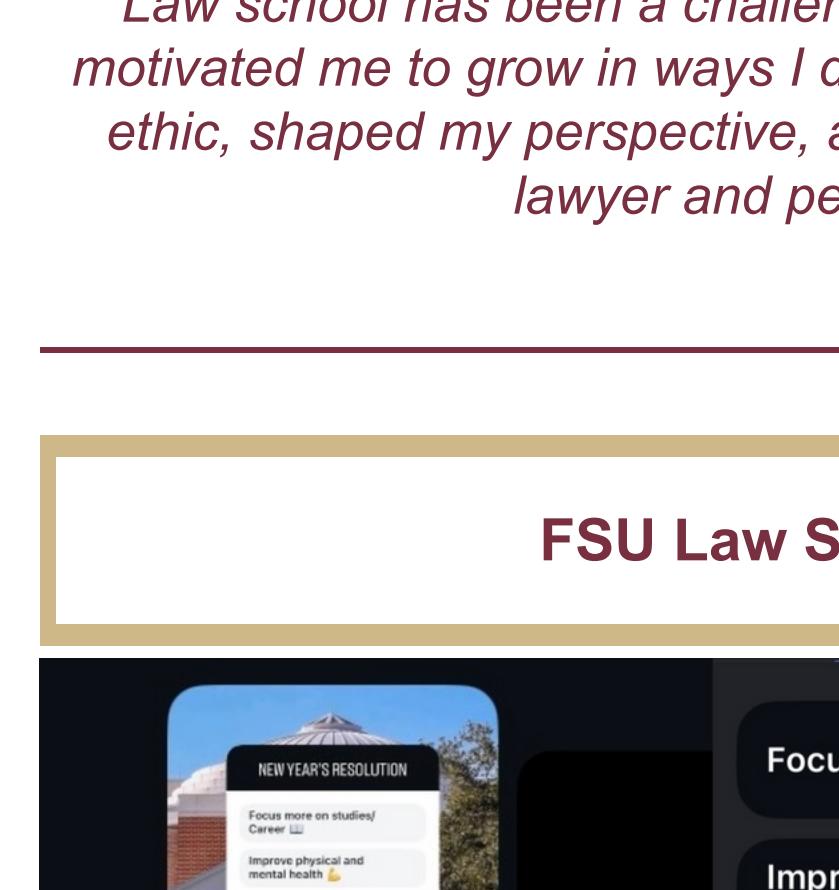
## FSU Law Faculty News

**Congratulations to D'Alemberte Professor Shi-Ling Hsu** on being elected to the **American Law Institute** (ALI)—a distinguished professional honor recognizing his significant contributions to legal scholarship and leadership in shaping the future of the law.



ALI membership reflects a commitment to advancing the law in both established and emerging areas of law. Through the Institute's work, members collaborate with leading judges, practitioners, and academics to influence legal development, strengthen the profession, and serve the public good.

[Click here](#) to view the complete list of new members.



**Michael Morley**, the Sheila M. McDevitt Professor of Law and Faculty Director of the Election Law Center at FSU, was recently featured in a *Washington Post* opinion highlighting his **amicus brief** in a U.S. Supreme Court case involving presidential authority and the Federal Trade Commission. The coverage underscores the **national attention** his scholarship is receiving on the future of executive power and the role of independent agencies.

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

*"Had Congress known the Constitution bars it from protecting the heads of ostensibly independent agencies from at-will presidential removal, it would probably have written the Federal Trade Commission Act - and other laws - differently to prevent presidential abuse. For example, Congress might have 'narrowed the scope of the powers it conferred,' 'required the agency to follow additional procedures before exercising those powers' or 'expanded the scope of judicial review' of agency actions."*

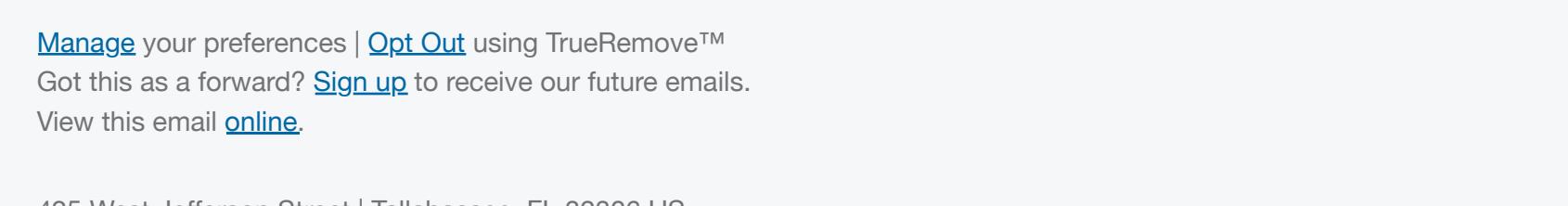
- Professor Michael Morley



Professor Ryan (center) and other attendees at a conference in Bilbao, Spain.

**Erin Ryan**, Elizabeth C. and Clyde W. Atkinson Professor and Associate Dean for Environmental Programs at the Florida State University College of Law, recently delivered a keynote lecture at the **University of the Basque Country** in Bilbao, Spain, as part of the international conference **Multilevel Governance in the Post-Pandemic Era: New Dynamics, New Challenges**. Her talk, **"COVID, Federalism, and Pandemonium in Florida: Implications for Multilevel Governance in the U.S. and Beyond,"** was featured as a keynote address, underscoring the international reach and impact of her scholarship.

## FSU Law Student News



We are pleased to share that eight outstanding FSU Law students have been selected for the 2026 **Funding Florida Legal Aid (FFLA) Civil Legal Aid Summer Fellowship**. From a highly competitive pool of 106 applicants representing 17 law schools, FSU Law had the highest number of students selected statewide.

Please join us in congratulating 1L **Aaliyah Andrews**, 2L **Leia Bamas**, 1L **Joshua Carson**, 1L **Celina Corvea**, 1L **Aaliyah DeBarros**, 2L **Laney Fox**, 2L **Jenny Said**, and 1L **Adalyn Woeiste** on this outstanding achievement.

The FFLA Civil Legal Aid Summer Fellowship is a 10-week full-time, paid

program that places legal law students with

meaningful civil legal assistance to low-

income and working-poor Floridians.

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

*"Law school has been a challenging and rewarding experience that motivated me to grow in ways I didn't expect. It strengthened my work ethic, shaped my perspective, and gave me a clearer picture of the lawyer and person I want to be."*

- 3L **Justin Couceyro**



On New Year's Eve, we shared an interactive poll inviting students and followers to share their New Year's resolutions.

- Focus more on studies/career
- Improve physical and mental health
- Maintain school-life balance

The top choice was improving physical and mental health! 🌟

Be sure to follow us for more fun and engaging posts.



## FSU Law Student Profile: 3L Justin Couceyro



Desired Practice Location: Tampa, or  
Florida Law Graduate: May 2026  
Field of Law: Commercial Litigation and  
Business  
Law  
Justin Couceyro, a native of Miami,  
Florida, earned his bachelor's degree in  
Marketing from the Florida State University's  
College of Business Administration.

During his time at law school, Couceyro has gained extensive legal experience through various internships and clerkships, which enabled him to develop practical skills in  
litigation, practice, discovery disputes, and evidentiary hearings.

In 2024, Couceyro interned at the **Eleventh Judicial Circuit of Florida**, under Judge  
Gina Bevilles, where he gained insight into judicial decision-making and  
rule interpretation. This experience also provided him with the opportunity to work on a Florida Judicial  
Colloquy lesson plan focused on attorney fees and damages.

Couceyro expanded his litigation experience as a Summer Associate Law Clerk  
for **Petersen Lopez**. In this role, he worked directly with the firm's attorneys, conducted  
discovery, and assisted with trial preparation. He also participated in mediation, arbitration, and  
trial proceedings.

Since the summer of 2024, Couceyro has clerked at the **Florida Department of Financial  
Services**, where he assisted the Executive Secretary in the preparation of legal briefs and  
memoranda, conducted research, and assisted with the administration of the department.

In addition to his legal training, Couceyro has remained actively engaged in the FSU  
Law community. He is a member of the **Environmental Law Society** and the **Florida Law  
Review**. During his second year and the **Florida Law Ambassador Program**, he  
organized a symposium on the future of law.

If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Couceyro after graduation, visit his  
[LinkedIn profile](#) or email him at [jcouceyro@fsu.edu](mailto:jcouceyro@fsu.edu).

[Click here](#) to read his full profile.



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## FSU Law Book Award Program

**Support the next generation of lawyers through the FSU Law Book Award Program.**

Contributions while helping the College of Law recruit and retain top talent.

Contributions are fully tax-deductible.

[Become a Book Award sponsor today and make a lasting impact.](#)



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