

November 21, 2025

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From the Dean



We were honored to host a special **Leaders of Tomorrow** program last week featuring **FSU Provost James Clark** in conversation with **Florida Bar Executive Director Joshua Doyle ('06)**. Their discussion explored leadership, emotional intelligence, and the evolving skill sets new lawyers need to excel in today's collaborative professional environment. Provost Clark is FSU's executive vice president for academic affairs and chief academic officer. He also represents Florida State among national academic leaders and works closely with the Florida Board of Governors on policy and regulation.

During the discussion, the Provost offered students a candid look at the human dimensions of effective leadership. He discussed the influence of personology and psychobiography—fields that examine how life experiences shape behavior—on his own approach to leading teams and institutions. Advising that this type of whole-person analysis provides a deeper context for both clinical and legal judgment.


Drawing on his early career training public defenders and serving on mitigation teams, the Provost underscored a persistent challenge in legal education: lawyers are often trained to operate as "lone rangers," even though complex matters demand coordinated, multidisciplinary teamwork. He encouraged students to develop communication habits that strengthen group dynamics, emphasizing active listening, open-ended questioning, and resisting the impulse to offer quick judgments.

For students eager to lead before they hold formal leadership titles, Provost Clark's advice was both direct and empowering: consistently add value.

We are grateful to Provost Clark and Joshua Doyle for sharing their time, insights, and meaningful guidance with our students.


Dean Erin O'Connor

FSU Law News



Last week, the **FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights** and the **FSU College of Law** hosted **James R. May, the Richard S. Righter Distinguished Professor of Law at Washburn Law**. **Professor Shi-Ling Hsu** moderated the Q&A portion of the event and posed insightful questions that enriched the discussion.

Professor May presented "**Is There a Human Right to a Clean Environment? The International Case Against the U.S. for the Climate Emergency.**" His talk examined how international courts and human rights principles are shaping global and national approaches to climate governance.

He also discussed the recent petition submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on behalf of youth plaintiffs in *Juliana v. United States*, situating the case within a growing rights-based movement in climate litigation.

[Click here](#) to watch the recording.


FSU Law Faculty News

Earlier this month, **Professor Erin Ryan** and four other federalism experts from around the world were inducted into the **Eurac Institute on Comparative Federalism at the Eurac Research Center**.

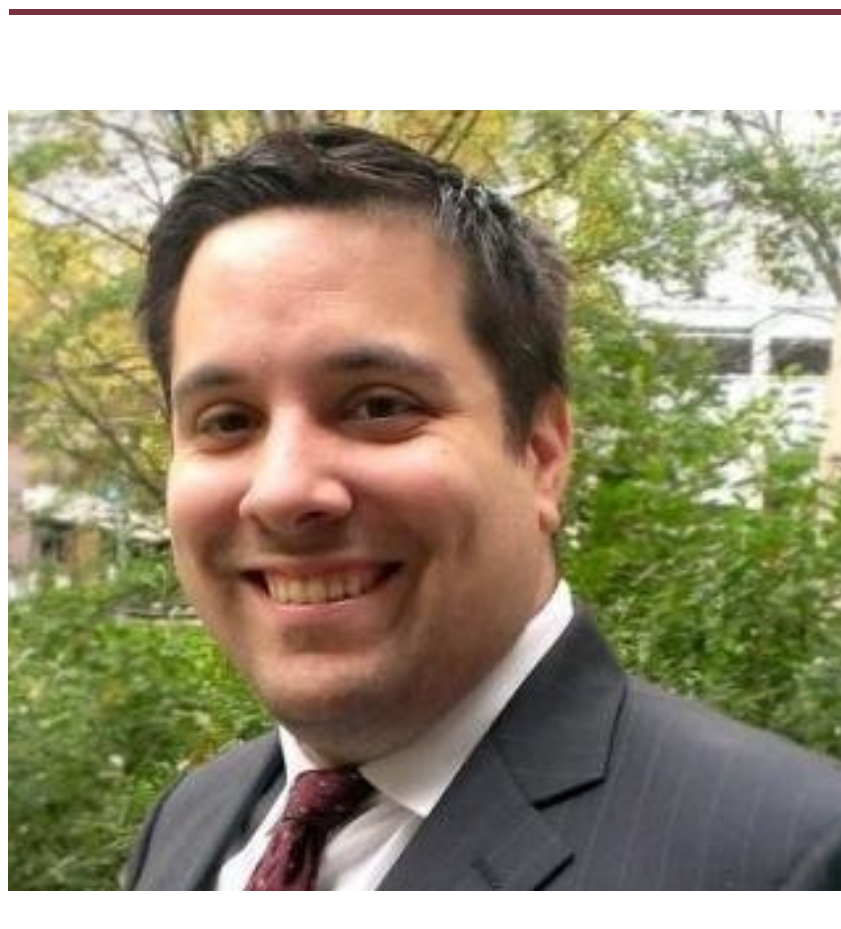
Over the next three years, the **Board of Advisory** members will provide professional guidance on the Eurac Institute's research agenda, collaborations, and long-term strategic planning.

The other Board members represent Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and South Africa.

Professor Ryan will contribute an American perspective, drawing on her expertise in environmental federalism, multilevel climate governance, and cross-boundary environmental management.



Professor Ryan's international engagement continues this month as she travels from Bolzano, Italy, to the Basque Country of Spain to deliver a keynote address at an international conference on the role of multilevel governance in managing the COVID-19 pandemic and future cross-border public health emergencies and natural disasters.



Professor Michael Morley, director of the **Election Law Center** was recently quoted in a *Fox News* article on an intra-party dispute in the U.S. House of Representatives titled "**Democrat civil war erupts after moderate accuses progressive of undermining 'free and fair elections'.**"


Professor Morley discussed how concerns about "gaming the system" relate to democratic norms, while emphasizing that not all democratic principles are enforceable as constitutional claims.

Read the full article [here](#).


Professor Jacob Eisler recently published "**Lessons from the Vieth Dissents: Partisan Gerrymandering, Party Construction, and the Challenge of Judicial Intervention.**" His article looks at the three ardent dissents in Vieth, each of which articulated a different view of when partisanship should be illegal.

Professor Eisler uses the Vieth dissents to demonstrate the intrinsic complexity of party governance and the subsequent challenges for robust judicial intervention.

Read the full article [here](#).



FSU Law Student News



Congratulations to 3L Andrew Barrineau, who earned **Best Cross Examination** and **Overall Best Advocate** at the **8th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Civil Rights Trial Competition**, hosted by UC Davis School of Law.

The team—**2L Ashley Judson**, **2L Olivia Callari**, **3L Ameer Abdelbary**—was supported by coaches **Tiffany Cruz** and **Andrea Diaz**, whose guidance contributed to a strong and successful showing for FSU Law.

This marks the **second consecutive year** that FSU Law has brought home awards from this prestigious competition, continuing the Trial Team's tradition of excellence.

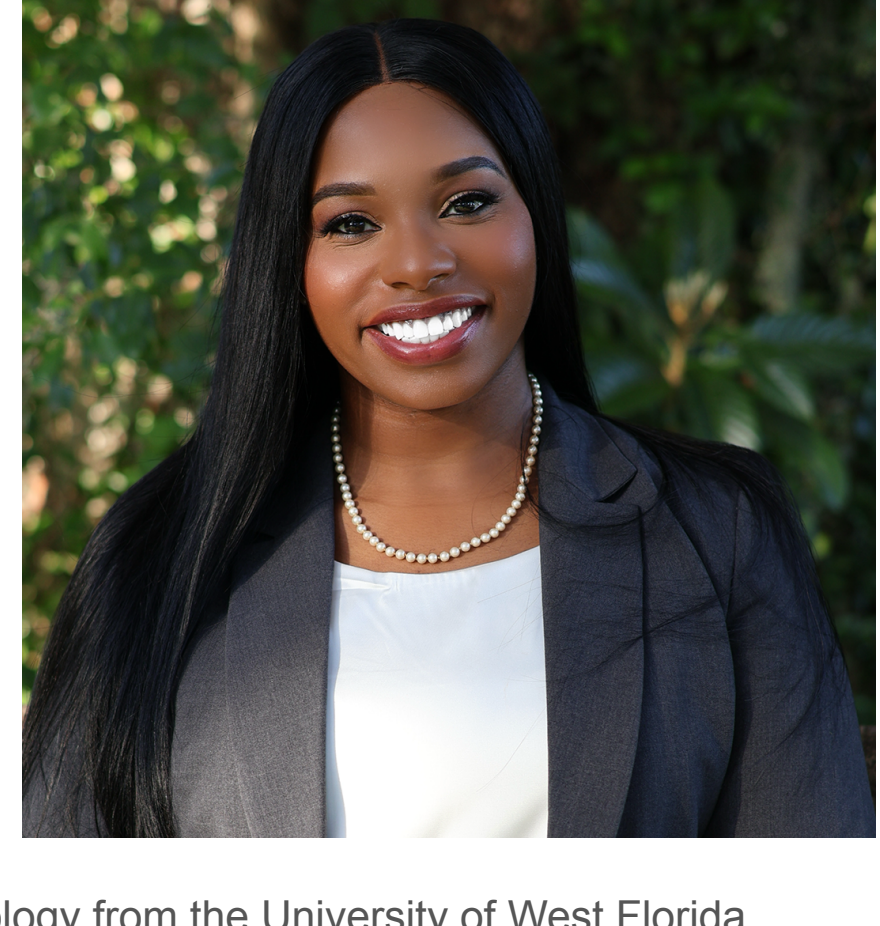
2L Zenani Johnson transferred to FSU Law with a clear goal in mind: to make meaningful impact in the lives of others. While working with the **Claude Pepper Elder Law Clinic**, she observed that several clients lacked reliable transportation.

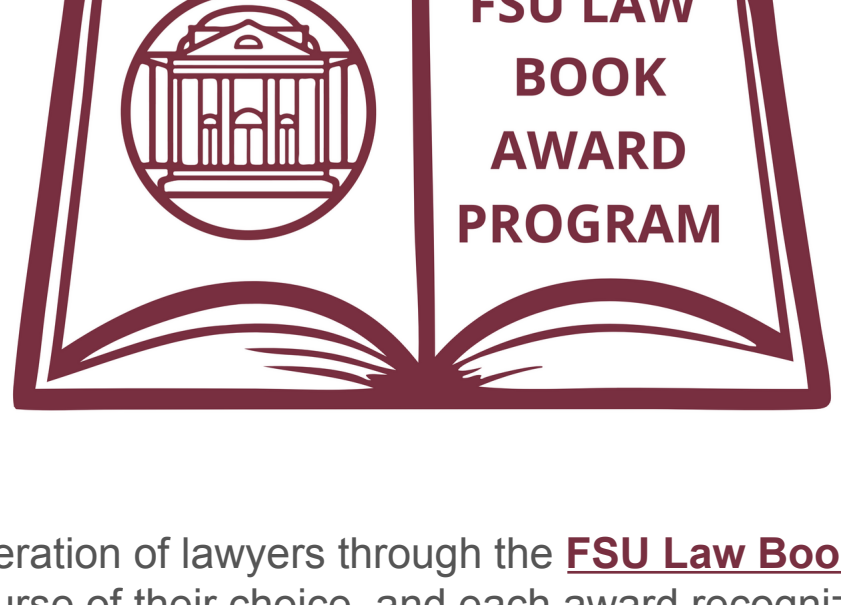
Determined to find a solution, Johnson reached out to **Uber** and was able to secure a \$5,000 donation to ensure that clients have safe, accessible transportation to the Clinic. Her initiative has also expanded the clinic's ability to serve vulnerable seniors in our community.

She holds her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of West Florida where she served as Student Body President, part of the Board of Trustees, and student representative on the Florida Board of Governors.

"I'm excited for this new partnership with Uber, especially because it allows us to provide additional services to our clients and expand transportation access for community members. This is the true power of public and private partnerships, and I'm blessed to play a part in it. I'm also deeply grateful to the FSU Law faculty and administration for their unwavering support and encouragement in bringing this idea to life."

- Zenani Johnson





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