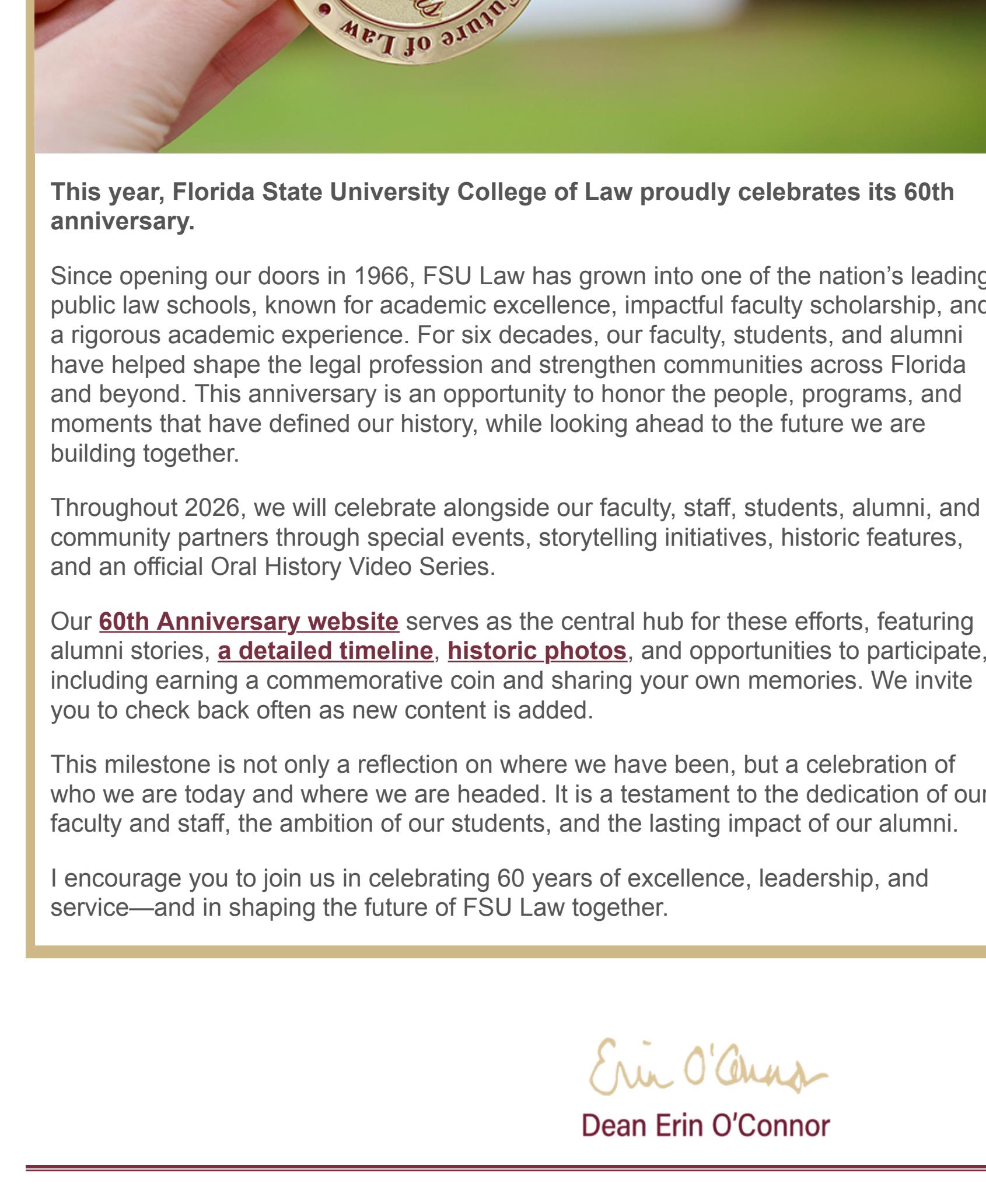


# FSU LAW FOCUS

February 6, 2026

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## From the Dean



This year, Florida State University College of Law proudly celebrates its 60th anniversary.

Since opening our doors in 1966, FSU Law has grown into one of the nation's leading public law schools, known for academic excellence, impactful faculty scholarship, and a rigorous academic experience. For six decades, our faculty, students, and alumni have helped shape the legal profession and strengthen communities across Florida and beyond. This anniversary is an opportunity to honor the people, programs, and moments that have defined our history, while looking ahead to the future we are building together.

Throughout 2026, we will celebrate alongside our faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners through special events, storytelling initiatives, historic features, and an official Oral History Video Series.

Our [60th Anniversary website](#) serves as the central hub for these efforts, featuring alumni stories, [a detailed timeline](#), [historic photos](#), and opportunities to participate, including earning a commemorative coin and sharing your own memories. We invite you to check back often as new content is added.

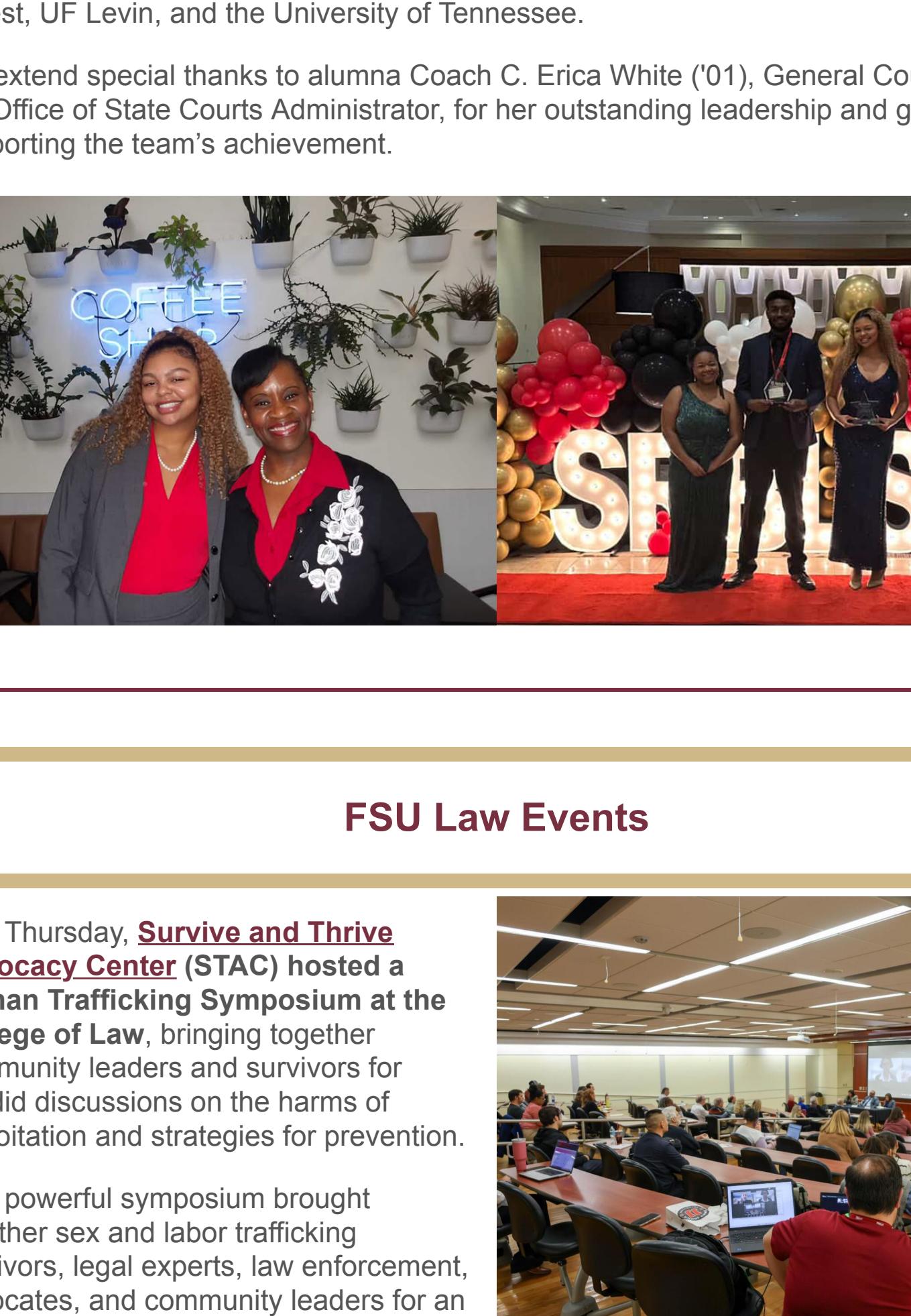
This milestone is not only a reflection on where we have been, but a celebration of who we are today and where we are headed. It is a testament to the dedication of our faculty and staff, the ambition of our students, and the lasting impact of our alumni.

I encourage you to join us in celebrating 60 years of excellence, leadership, and service—and in shaping the future of FSU Law together.

*Erin O'Connor*

Dean Erin O'Connor

## 2026 Miami Blockchain Symposium



(L-R) Professor Yuliya Guseva, Commissioner Hester M. Peirce, and Lilya Tessler, Partner at Sidley

**The Stoops Center for Law and Business** and the **Institute of Law, Technology, & Innovation**, in partnership with the **Rutgers Center for Corporate Law and Governance Blockchain and FinTech Program** and **Sidley Austin LLP**, recently hosted the **2026 Miami Blockchain Symposium**.

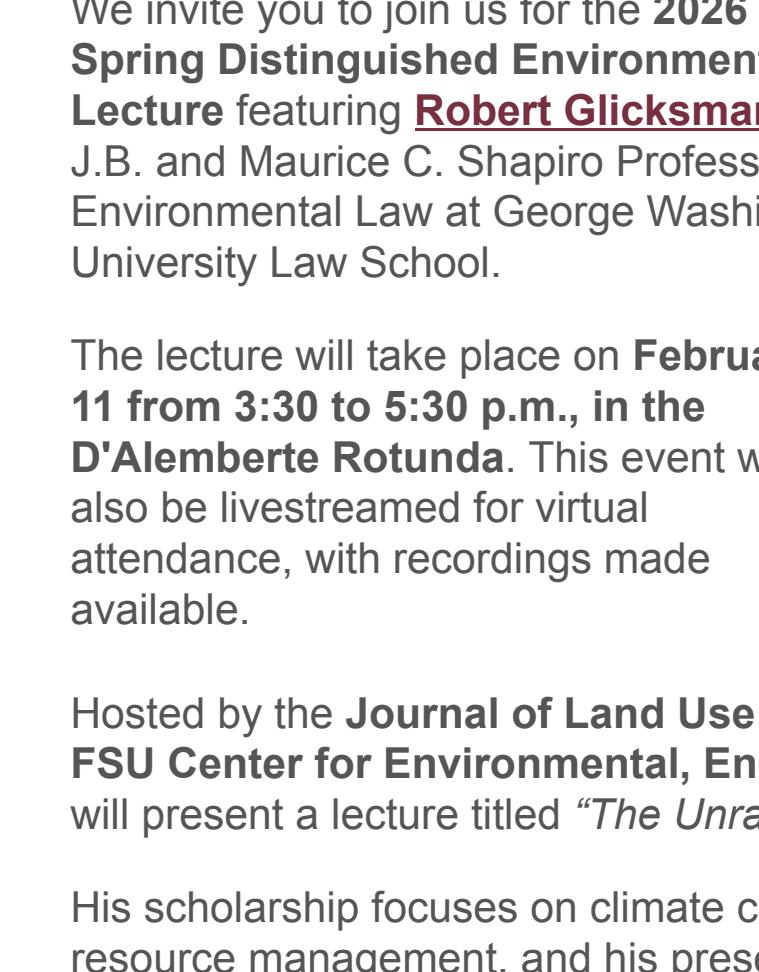
The full-day program brought together innovators, policymakers, financial industry leaders, and academic experts from Sidley Austin's Miami office to examine the legal, regulatory, and market forces shaping digital asset and blockchain innovation. The symposium featured a full schedule of panels, discussions, and presentations exploring regulatory developments, emerging technologies, and evolving business models in the digital asset space.

Dean Erin O'Hara O'Connor opened the program with welcome remarks, and **Professor Yuliya Guseva**, Kevin Wood and Mary Jo Peet Professor of Law, moderated a featured fireside chat with U.S. Securities and Exchange Commissioner **Hester M. Peirce**, designated leader of the SEC's Crypto Task Force.

Commissioner Peirce shared timely insights into the evolving regulatory landscape and the future of digital assets, adding valuable perspective to the day's broader conversations.

We are grateful to Commissioner Peirce, our partners, and all participants for helping make the symposium a success and for advancing thoughtful dialogue at the intersection of law, technology, and business.

## FSU Law News



**The Florida State University College of Law Black Law Students Association (BLSA)** Mock Trial Team recently earned first place at the **2026 Southern Regional Black Law Students Association's Constance Baker Motley Mock Trial Competition** in Birmingham, Alabama.

With the regional championship, the team advanced to the national competition in Portland, Oregon. Special recognition to 2L Annalisa Smith, who was named Best Advocate of the competition.

(L-R) 2L Álvaro Molina, 2L Andrew Louis, 2L Kennedi Ray, and 2L Annalisa Smith

The team's success reflects months of rigorous preparation, discipline, and exceptional advocacy, as they competed against teams from Faulkner, FAMU, Kentucky, Wake Forest, UF Levin, and the University of Tennessee.

We extend special thanks to alumna Coach C. Erica White (01), General Counsel for the Office of State Courts Administrator, for her outstanding leadership and guidance in supporting the team's achievement.



That same day, **Professor Paolo Annino**, Glass Professor of Public Interest Law and Director of the Public Interest Law Center and the Children's Advocacy Clinic, presented at an event titled **Advocacy in Action: Strategic Legal Tools for Human Trafficking Cases Involving Children**, with the help of two 2L students, Emma Smith and Valerie Bustos, both members of **Human Trafficking and Exploitation Law Project (HELP)**.

Wrapping up the day, at the STAC awards ceremony, Professor Annino received the **2026 Imagine Freedom Gratitude Award** in recognition of his leadership and dedication to the HELP program, which allows law students to represent children who have survived sex and labor trafficking, provides community presentations and outreach on human trafficking, and advocates for legislation to prevent trafficking in Florida and the United States.

We are proud of Professor Annino and our students' continued efforts to combat human trafficking.

## FSU Law Upcoming Events



The **Election Law Center** will host its Third Annual Distinguished Public Lecture in Election Law featuring **Professor Richard Pildes**, the Sudler Family Professor of Constitutional Law at NYU Law.

The lecture will take place on **February 17** from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the D'Alemberte Rotunda. This event will also be livestreamed for virtual attendance, with recordings made available.

Professor Pildes is one of the nation's foremost scholars of constitutional law and a leading expert on the legal foundations of democracy. A former law clerk to Justice Thurgood Marshall, he has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Law Institute, and has been recognized as both a Guggenheim Fellow and a Carnegie Scholar.

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