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From the Dean



(L-R) 2L **Kennedi Ray**, 2L **Patricia Waltz**, 2L **Zack "Gambill" Dallas**, 2L **Theodore "Teddy" Fronczak**, Speaker of the House **Daniel Perez** (Center), 2L **Andrew Louis**, 2L **Juan Castro Jordan**, 2L **Amy Kurtz**, and 3L **Sarah Augustine**

We are proud to announce that all eight of the **2025-26 Legislative Fellows** are Florida State University College of Law students.

Through this prestigious program, our students gained firsthand experience in the legislative process while working with Florida House committees and leadership offices. Their contributions at the Florida Capitol reflect both their dedication to public service and the strength of our academic and experiential learning programs.

This year's Fellows include: **2Ls Kennedi Ray** and **Zack "Gambill" Dallas** (Commerce Committee), **3L Sarah Augustine** (Health & Human Services Committee), **2L Teddy Fronczak** (Judiciary Committee), **2L Juan Castro Jordan** (Majority Office), **2L Andrew Louis** (Minority Office), **2L Patricia Waltz** (Rules & Ethics Committee), and **2L Amy Kurtz** (Ways & Means Committee).

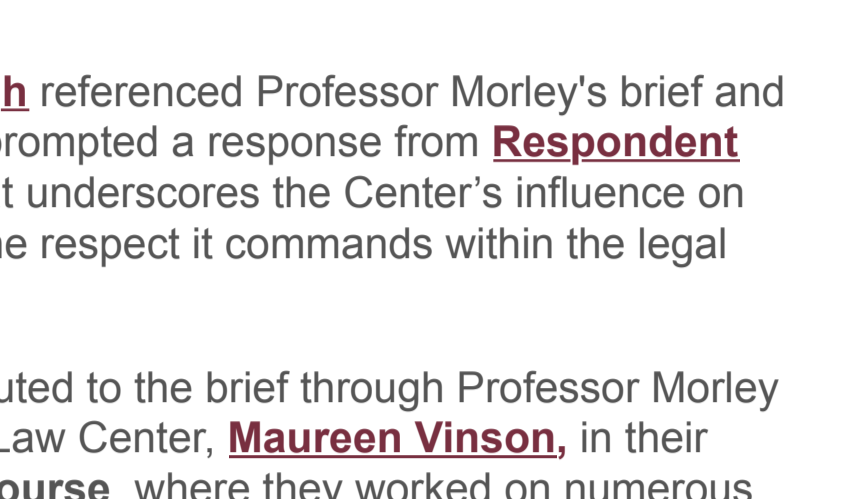
We are grateful for the opportunity to have our students work alongside **Speaker Daniel Perez** and other legislative leaders, and we commend each Fellow for their professionalism, initiative, and commitment to serving others.

Established in 1967 through legislation sponsored by then-Senator Lawton Chiles, the Florida Legislative Fellows Program provides graduate students with a unique opportunity to engage directly in the policymaking process. For more than 50 years, the program has helped shape future leaders by offering meaningful insight into the inner workings of state government.

Erin O'Connor
Dean Erin O'Connor

FSU Law Faculty News

Michael T. Morley, Sheila M. McDevitt Professor of Law and Faculty Director of the Election Law Center, filed an amicus brief on behalf of the **FSU Election Law Center** in the case **Watson v. RNC**, which was discussed during oral arguments at the U.S. Supreme Court. The **Watson** case seeks to clarify the meaning and scope of federal Election Day statutes, specifically, whether ballots received after Election Day remain valid under federal law.



During oral arguments, **Justice Kavanaugh** referenced Professor Morley's brief and the Election Law Center's position, which prompted a response from **Respondent Counsel Paul Clement**—an exchange that underscores the Center's influence on important, timely election law issues and the respect it commands within the legal community.

Notably, current FSU Law students contributed to the brief through Professor Morley and the Executive Director of the Election Law Center, **Maureen Vinson**, in their **Spring 2026 Supreme Court Litigation course**, where they worked on numerous amicus briefs addressing election law issues this term, including research, drafting, and cite-checking. These 2Ls and 3Ls had the extraordinary opportunity, within a single semester, to help prepare a brief and then witness it being considered and debated in the nation's highest court. It is a rare and unparalleled experience, offering students the chance to engage with—and contribute to—legal questions at the highest level of our judicial system. The **Watson** amicus brief discussion reflects both the depth of their analysis and the high quality of their efforts.

This discussion is captured in the **oral argument recording** at approximately 1:32:15–1:32:44, when Justice Kavanaugh raises a question referencing the brief, followed by a response from Paul Clement for the respondents at 1:33:33-1:35:00.

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

Professor Morley was also recently featured in **Law.com** for his work on a major case before the U.S. Supreme Court examining the legality of counting mail-in ballots received after Election Day. The case centers on a Mississippi law allowing ballots postmarked after Election Day to be counted if they arrive within a short grace period, raising significant questions about the balance of power between federal election law and state authority.

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

Date Change: Dean O'Connor's Last Lap Event

Join us in honoring Dean Erin O'Hara O'Connor on **Thursday, April 30, from 4 to 6 p.m. in the D'Alemberte Law Rotunda.**



For the past decade, Dean O'Connor has been a cornerstone of the Florida State University College of Law community, guiding the College through a period of remarkable growth and national recognition. Under her leadership, FSU Law has strengthened its academic programs, expanded experiential learning opportunities, and elevated its national reputation.

Guests are also invited to share memories, photographs, messages, and well-wishes on our online **message board** in recognition of her leadership and lasting legacy.

We are grateful to our generous sponsors, Phil and Rita Blank.

[RSVP](#)

FSU Law Student Alternative Spring Break Programs



(L-R) 1L **Josh Carson**, 1L **Meghana Raj**, 1L **Grace Patterson**, 1L **Kiara Videla**, and 3L **Jessica Featherston**

Last week, twelve FSU Law students participated in the **2026 Alternative Spring Break Program in Apopka, Florida**. In partnership with the **Farmworkers Association of Florida**, students gained insight into the needs and experiences of migrant farmworkers.

The program provided our students with a deeper understanding of pressing issues such as immigration, environmental justice, labor rights, and human trafficking—examined through both legal and personal perspectives. Students engaged in hands-on activities, including working alongside farmworkers in a community garden and greenhouse, and participated in meaningful discussions with attorneys, advocates, and local leaders. Following the trip, students reflected on their experiences, noting the program's lasting impact on their personal and professional development.

Hosted annually by FSU Law, Alternative Spring Break continues to offer students a powerful opportunity to connect classroom learning with real-world advocacy and service.



(L-R) Bottom Row: 2L **Nicola Strouse**, 1L **Raya Hughes**, 1L **Christian Christakos**, 1L **Nathan Grodsky**, 1L **Jane Orr**, and 1L **Joseph Serrone**

Additionally, FSU Law students were featured in **The Florida Bar News** for their participation in **Jacksonville Area Legal Aid's Alternative Spring Break** program, alongside students from several other law schools. During the immersive, weeklong initiative, FSU Law students—1L **Jane Orr**, 2L **Nicola Strouse**, 1L **Raya Hughes**, 1L **Joseph Serrone**, 1L **Nathan Grodsky**, and 1L **Christian Christakos**—spent their spring break serving the Jacksonville community by providing pro bono estate planning assistance to seniors in need.

Working alongside volunteer attorneys, students helped draft essential documents such as simple wills, advance directives, and powers of attorney, gaining valuable hands-on legal experience while making a meaningful difference in their clients' lives.

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

FSU Spring Break Courses

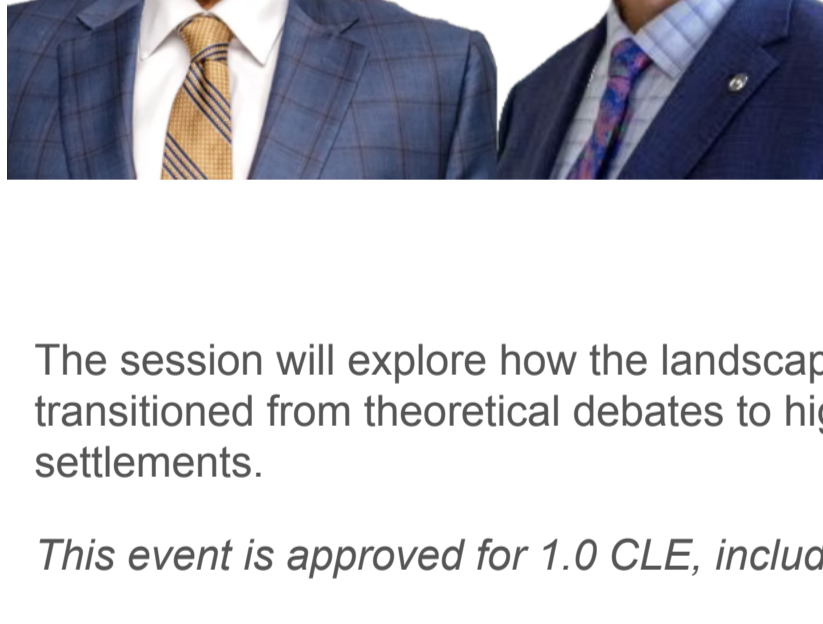


On campus during spring break last week, students had a unique opportunity to engage with one of the legal profession's fastest-evolving frontiers through a week-long "AI and the Law" seminar led by Adjunct Professors **Rich Harper** and **Ben Odom (04)**.

Drawing on their extensive experience in private practice and as in-house counsel, Harper and Odom guided students through the complex and rapidly changing intersection of artificial intelligence, business, and the law.

The immersive course emphasized real-world application, equipping students with the tools to navigate emerging legal and ethical challenges surrounding AI. Through practical examples and dynamic discussion, students explored how attorneys can effectively advise clients, manage risk, and communicate across disciplines in an increasingly technology-driven landscape.

Upcoming Frontiers Webinar



Join us **Tuesday, March 31, at 12:30 p.m.** for the next **Frontiers in Law and Technology** webinar on "Intellectual Property & Artificial Intelligence - Who Owns What, and Who's Suing Who."

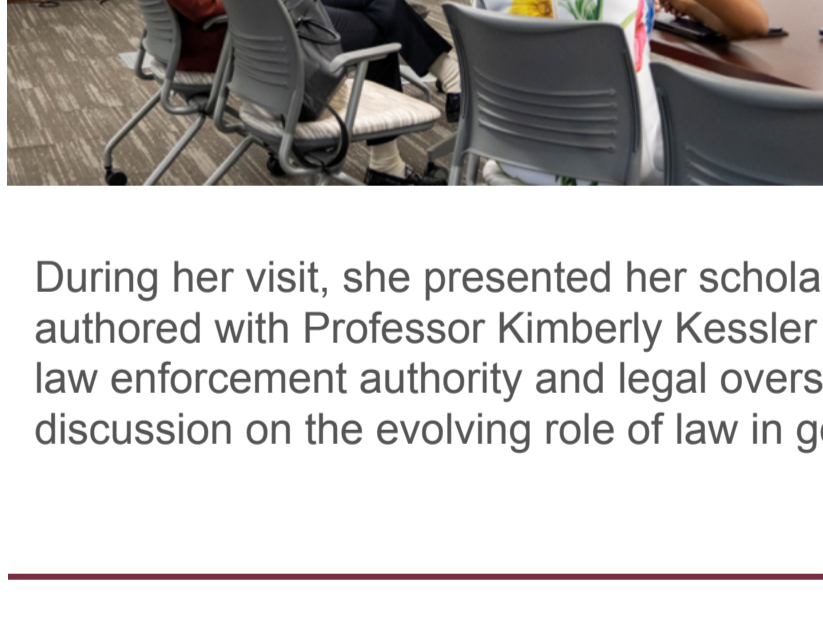
Led by **Jake Linford**, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at FSU College of Law, and **Terry M. Sanks**, PLLC, the webinar will discuss the current state of AI litigation and settlements in intellectual property cases.

The session will explore how the landscape of AI intellectual property litigation has transitioned from theoretical debates to high-stakes judicial precedents and watershed settlements.

This event is approved for 1.0 CLE, including Technology Credit by the Florida Bar.

[Register](#)

FSU Law Event Recaps



The College of Law recently welcomed **Rachel Harmon**, the Harrison Robertson Professor of Law at the University of Virginia School of Law, as part of its **Faculty Enrichment Speaker Series**.

A nationally recognized scholar in criminal law and policing, Professor Harmon's work examines how legal frameworks shape police practices and how regulation can promote more effective, equitable, and accountable systems.

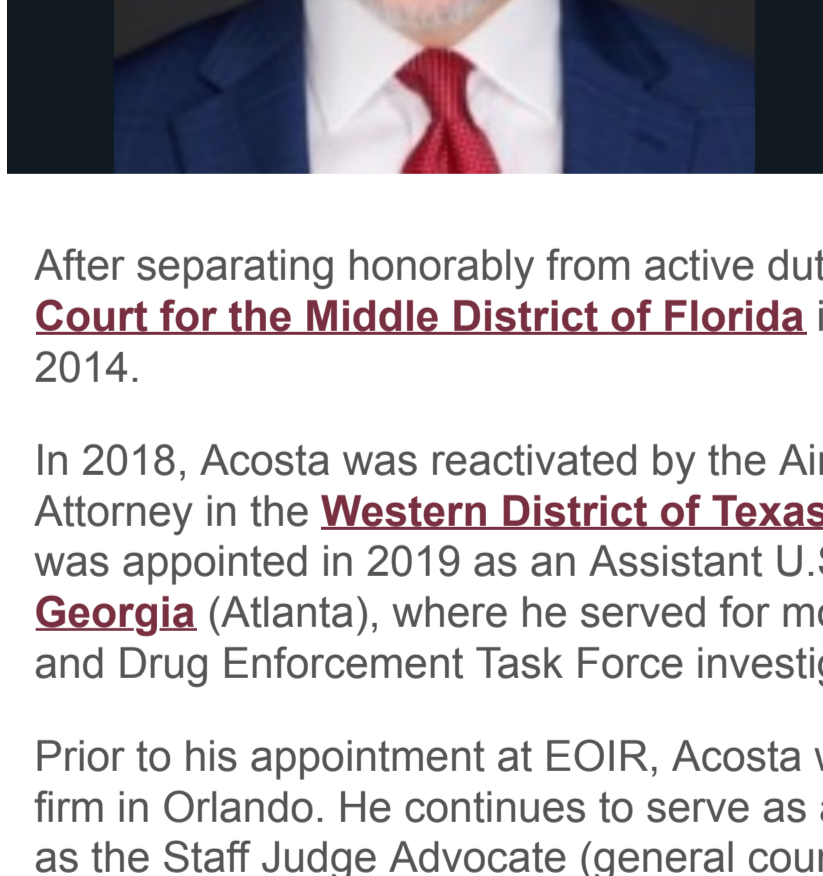
During her visit, she presented her scholarship, "**What We Owe the Innocent**," co-authored with Professor Kimberly Kessler Ferzan, which explored the intersection of law enforcement authority and legal oversight, engaging faculty in a thoughtful discussion on the evolving role of law in governing policing practices.

Students gained practical insight into government practice at the recent **Lunch & Learn: Administrative Law in the Real World** event hosted by the **Career Services Office** in collaboration with the **Administrative Law Section of The Florida Bar**. The program featured an administrative law judge and experienced practitioners who shared candid perspectives on what administrative law looks like in practice.



Panelists discussed career paths, day-to-day work within administrative agencies, and how administrative law intersects with nearly every area of legal practice.

FSU Law Alumni News



Congratulations to alumnus Lieutenant Colonel **Miguel R. Acosta (02)** on his appointment by the U.S. Attorney General as General Counsel for the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), a federal agency within the Department of Justice.

Acosta began his legal career on active duty with the U.S. Air Force as a Judge Advocate, including a deployment to Iraq in 2009.

After separating honorably from active duty in 2012, he clerked for the **U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida** in Orlando before entering private practice in 2014.

In 2018, Acosta was reactivated by the Air Force to serve as a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the **Western District of Texas** (El Paso). Following his military service, he was appointed in 2019 as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the **Northern District of Georgia** (Atlanta), where he served for more than four years, leading Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force investigations.

Prior to his appointment at EOIR, Acosta was a partner at **Gobel Flakes, LLC**, a law firm in Orlando. He continues to serve as a lieutenant colonel in the Air National Guard as the Staff Judge Advocate (general counsel) for the Savannah Air National Guard Base in Georgia.

FSU Law Social Spotlight

Meet the **Law Review Volume 53 Board**!

We are proud to recognize the students leading this year's publication and excited for Volume 53 to be published soon.



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