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FSU LAW FOCUS

August 21, 2026

From the Dean

This week, we welcomed 116 new members of the **FSU College of Law** community as our incoming 1L students arrived for orientation. Their energy, curiosity, and enthusiasm have brought a renewed sense of excitement to campus.

The Class of 2029 is our most academically accomplished entering class to date, with a record median **LSAT score of 169** and a median undergraduate **GPA of 3.93**. They bring a broad range of experiences, representing 37 undergraduate institutions and 35 different academic majors, with six students already holding advanced degrees. Collectively, these students represent 28 states, 11 countries, and have traveled to 91 countries. Out of 3,265 applicants, only **13.7% were selected for admission**—making this one of the most selective entering classes in FSU Law history.

Throughout orientation week, students met their classmates and faculty, learned about FSU Law's history and community, and got an early start on their legal education through introductory classes on contracts, legal analysis, and case briefs. Additionally, they participated in a mock exam and in practical workshops on technical tools and career planning. Students were also sorted into "houses" to help them build connections with classmates throughout their first year. The week included a coffee break with the Tallahassee Bar Association, where students networked with local practitioners, and a particularly meaningful milestone as U.S. Magistrate Judge Nathan Hill led the incoming class in its oath and pinning ceremony.

We are honored to welcome this outstanding group of students to FSU Law and look forward to supporting them as they learn, grow, and make their mark on our community.

Regular classes for the **Fall 2026** semester begin **August 24**.

Dean Erin O'Connor

Annual Fund 2025-26 Results

We are proud to share the results of FSU Law alumni contributions to our **Annual Fund** during the **2025-26 campaign year.**

We had an incredible participation rate of **12.93%**, **1,361** donors, and received **$560,818.25** in donations.

Your contributions support and shape the legal education and environment at FSU Law – enhancing student success, strengthening academic programs, and expanding opportunities across the College. We invite you to watch our Annual Fund video, which highlights how alumni like you are providing students with opportunities to excel in a changing legal landscape and the greater impact of giving back.

Click here to watch the full-length Annual Fund video.

FSU Law Faculty News

Jake Linford, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Loula Fuller & Dan Myers Professor, was recently featured on *Jeff Starr's Not Bad: Films podcast* episode, **"Fender's Legal War: A Copyright Lawyer Explains."** In the episode, Professor Linford discusses copyright and trade dress rights (or the lack thereof) in Germany and the U.S. for Fender's Stratocaster guitar.

Click here to watch the episode.

Shawn Bayern, Associate Dean for Technology and Larry & Joyce Beltz Professor of Torts, was recently featured in the *WIRED Digest* article, **"People are Marrying Chatbots, These Lawmakers Want to Stop Them."** In the article, Professor Bayern suggests that questions of "AI rights" are better conceived in terms of useful functions and potential harms, rather than as matters of human dignity.

Click here to read the article.

Congratulations to Professor Rima Nathan, who will serve as Co-Director of Clinical Externship Programs starting Fall 2026. In this new role, Professor Nathan will help connect students with off-campus opportunities to gain valuable real-world legal experience while earning academic credit.

In other news, Professor Nathan recently participated in an interview with *All Home Care Matters* , where she discussed the Claude Pepper Elder Law Clinic and its purpose and impact within the community.

Click here to watch the podcast interview.

FSU Law Upcoming Events

Join us at the Herbert Werthheim College of Business for the **Future of NIL Summit, September 4, at 2:00 p.m.**

This event, hosted by the **FSU Stoops Center for Law and Business**, **Sport Management Student Organization**, **Jim Moran College of Entrepreneurship**, and **Herbert Wertheim College of Business**, in collaboration with **Lauren Angulo ('17)** of **Venustas Law** and **Alexander Onaindia** of the **Distinction Agency**, will feature panel discussions exploring the world of NIL in college athletics. Learn from and connect with professionals shaping the future of sports.

This event is approved for 3.0 CLE credits by the Florida Bar.

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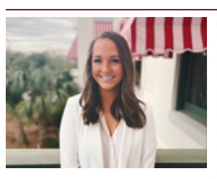
FSU Law Alumni News

Congratulations to **Laverne Lewis Gaskins ('93)**, who has been elected Vice Chair of the **Board of Trustees at Voorhees University.** Her nearly 30 years of legal experience include serving as University Attorney at **Valdosta State University**, Senior Legal Advisor at **Augusta University**, and Deputy General Counsel at **Tuskegee University**, and as a former Georgia Special Assistant Attorney General and Administrative Law Judge.

She has extensive litigation experience in personal injury, civil rights, criminal law, employment law, family law, juvenile matters, and other civil matters. Gaskins also recently represented FSU Law at **Voorhees University's** 2026 commencement.



Daley Pajcic ('23) received the **2026 Mission Vision Values Award** from **Melissa Nelson**, state attorney for the 4th Judicial Circuit. The annual award is presented to an employee whose everyday work fully embodies accountability, dignity, fairness, and respect, and adheres to the office's values and principles.

Click here to read more.

FSU Law Social Spotlight

Congratulations to our 2026 Summer Juris Master (J.M.) graduates! We are proud to celebrate their accomplishments and the dedication they have shown throughout the program.

As they will be applying knowledge of legal risk management and perspectives gained at FSU Law to their respective fields, we look forward to seeing the impact they will make in their professions and communities.

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.

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