From the Dean

In December 1, 2021, Dean Erin O’Connor was appointed to the Florida Supreme Court by Governor Charlie Crist. O’Connor has been a prominent figure in the Florida legal community for many years, having served in various positions at the state and federal levels. She is known for her expertise in environmental law and her commitment to public service.

O’Connor’s appointment follows the retirement of Justice Barbara Lagoa, who had served on the court since 2018. Lagoa is a distinguished jurist and a former law professor at Florida State University College of Law, where she taught constitutional law and environmental law. She is also a former member of the Florida Bar Board of Governors and a recipient of the college’s Distinguished Alumna Award.

O’Connor takes office as the court begins its term on January 10, 2022. She will serve the remainder of Justice Lagoa’s term, which expires in December 2022, and will be eligible for reappointment after that. She inherits a court that is facing a number of significant challenges, including the ongoing pandemic and the need to modernize the court’s operations.

Susan L. Stephens

Student Profile: Peter Meisenbacher

Meisenbacher earned his bachelor’s degree in International Relations and Business from the University of Florida. He then worked as a legal intern for the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, where he assisted in the development of policy and regulatory initiatives. He is currently a third-year law student at FSU College of Law.

Alum Profile: Susan L. Stephens

Stephens is a partner at Stearns Weaver Miller and is known for her expertise in environmental law. She is a member of the Florida Bar’s Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section and has served in various leadership roles for the section.

Stephens has also served as an adjunct professor at FSU College of Law, teaching Florida Environmental Permitting. Prior to joining Stearns Weaver Miller, she was a partner at Holland & Knight. She is a member of the Florida Bar’s Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section and has served in various leadership roles for the section.

Student Profile: Tanya Forgie

Forgie is a first-year law student at FSU College of Law. She is originally from Medford, Oregon, and is currently a member of the Florida Bar’s Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section. She plans to focus on environmental law during her time at law school.

Stephens is currently a member of the Florida Bar’s Environmental and Natural Resources Law Section and has served in various leadership roles for the section.

"I hope you enjoy this issue and find it interesting as I have been researching environmental law in my professional and personal life. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to me at Susan.L.Stephens@stearnswawermiller.com. I look forward to connecting with you in the future."