



# FSU LAW

## Focus

April 19,  
2024

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## From the Dean



*Natalia Rivera-Pacheco speaks about her Public Interest Law Center experiences after being recognized as the Outstanding Clinical Student Advocate Award recipient.*

Last Friday, April 12, our Public Interest Law Center (PILC) held its year-end celebration and award ceremony. During the event, several students were honored for their advocacy excellence with PILC's annual awards. Third-year law student Natalia Rivera-Pacheco received the Clinical Legal Education Association (CLEA) Outstanding Clinical Student Advocate Award, which is presented to one student per law school each year for excellence in class participation and client advocacy. Second-year law students Zoe Chaskel and Tazara Weilhammer received the Advocate on the Rise Award for their professional growth in public interest advocacy.

LL.M. student Yazmin Rocio Herrera received the Exceptional Pro Bono Service Award for her pro bono services to the Farmworker & Immigration Rights Clinic. In addition to the student awards, PILC also presented the Community Advocate Award to Dr. Thomas Clark and Sarah Halsell ('03), a Tallahassee attorney, for outstanding pro bono services to PILC clients and clinical programs. During the event, professors also discussed many accomplishments by PILC clinical students during the 2023-2024 academic year. Congratulations to all the award recipients on their much-deserved recognition and to PILC on a very successful academic year!

*Erin O'Connor*

Dean Erin O'Connor

## Homecoming 2024 Events Scheduled for November

# HOMECOMING 2024 SAVE THE DATE



The law school's Homecoming 2024 events are scheduled for November 22-24, 2024, and alumni and their guests are invited to join us for the festivities. Law school events begin Friday evening with a reception for all alumni. The event is sponsored by Tim Meenan ('90) and Meenan P.A. On Saturday, November 23, all alumni are invited to our Law Alumni Association Board meeting, and all alumni and their families are invited to the Law Alumni Tailgate Party on the law school's James Harold Thompson Green prior to the FSU v. Charleston Southern football game.

Events will conclude on Sunday, November 24, with a 50-Year Alumni Brunch celebrating the Class of 1974. In addition, the classes of 1974, 1984, 1994, 2004, and 2014 are celebrating reunions, and we encourage members of these classes to connect at our festivities. You can visit our website to [learn more about the events and register to attend](#).

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## In Memoriam: David Oliver ('85)

On March 18, 2024, College of Law Class of '85 alumnus David Oliver passed away unexpectedly in Orlando. For almost 40 years, David was among the most highly regarded lawyers in Central Florida. From his meteoric rise up the ranks at Carlton Fields, to his many years as a star litigation shareholder at Greenberg Traurig, to co-founding Morgan & Morgan's commercial contingent fee group, to his last several years as a partner at Gray Robinson, David exemplified excellence and professionalism. He was a versatile, creative, and fearless lawyer with a pragmatic, common-sense approach. Despite formidable trial skills, he always sought to resolve litigation. He cared deeply about his clients—always putting their interests ahead of his own. In the courtroom, he was a first-rate trial lawyer. Commanding, credible, and thoroughly likable. A devastating combination.



David was well known for his easy-going, ever-smiling, laid-back personality. While his demeanor was genuine, it was also a potent weapon. Opponents who mistook his easy manner for a lack of tenacity or toughness would come to regret it.

David was also a wonderful father to his two beloved daughters and a valued friend to many. He had a passion for playing his many guitars, The Rolling Stones, The Twisted Lemurs, and FSU football. He also held a deep reverence for veterans, always giving thanks and showing the utmost respect for their sacrifices and service. His death is a heavy loss to his law partners and to the broader legal community. He will be greatly missed.

David is survived by his wife, Terry, daughters Chelsea and Alexis, and granddaughter Nellie.

- Tribute written by FSU Law alumnus John A. Boudet ('85)

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## Student Profile: 3L Ryan Stocks

**Desired Practice Location:** Tampa, St. Petersburg, Orlando, Miami, or Fort Lauderdale

**Expected Graduation:** May 2024

**Field of Law Sought:** Environmental law

Ryan Stocks is originally from Duluth, Georgia, and he completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Georgia, where he earned a Bachelor of Business Administration with majors in economics and international business and a minor in environmental economics and management. When he graduates from FSU



Law in May, he will also earn the Environmental Law Certificate. During the summer before his 3L year, Stocks was a legal intern with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, where he drafted pleadings, motions, and briefs on topics such as wetland delineations, storage tank compliance, solid waste management, and riparian rights; conducted legal research and wrote memoranda on issues pending before the agency; and observed hearings, preparation of expert witnesses, depositions, and settlement negotiations. During the summer before his 2L year, Stocks was a law clerk with Gramling Environmental Law in Tampa. There, he conducted legal research, formulated arguments, and wrote memoranda concerning Clean Water Act citizen suits, CERCLA, brownfields, hazardous waste management, FDEP's Drycleaning Solvent Cleanup Program, solid waste facilities, and federal asbestos regulations. He also drafted various legal documents, including answers to complaints and motions to withdraw as counsel; reviewed court documents, such as complaints and consent orders; analyzed contracts, environmental site assessment reports, groundwater and soil sampling data, FDEP site inspection reports, and property records; and attended site visits, client meetings, and consultations, as well as meetings for The Florida Bar's Environmental & Land Use Law Section. Stocks also assisted with researching and drafting a law journal article about successor liability claims for environmental contamination.

At FSU Law, Stocks has been a member of the Environmental Law Society (ELS) and Phi Alpha Delta (PAD) for all three years. For ELS, he served as mentor chair during his 2L year and as vice president during his 3L year, and for PAD, he served as marshal during his 2L and 3L years. If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Stocks after graduation, visit his [LinkedIn profile](#) or email him at [rcs21h@fsu.edu](mailto:rcs21h@fsu.edu).

*"I love to learn and have a genuine passion for*



*environmental law. I believe that these traits, in addition to my positive attitude, will make me a great addition to any team.”*

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We are inviting all alumni and students to [join FSU Law Connect](#), a new platform exclusively for the FSU Law community. Alumni can keep in touch with the College of Law and other alumni, post jobs, and access career development tools. If you haven't already joined FSU Law Connect, please join today to help us increase engagement and connection.

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