



FSU LAW

Focus

April 26,
2024

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From the Dean



(L-R) Professors Justin Sevier and Steve Johnson

Congratulations to two of our outstanding faculty members who have been selected for top awards. Justin Sevier, our Charles W. Ehrhardt professor of litigation, was selected to receive FSU's 2023-2024 Distinguished Teacher Award, which is the university's most prestigious honor for teaching. It is presented to one faculty member at the university annually. Nominations for the student-oriented award are submitted by students and alumni. We are delighted Professor Sevier was selected for this much-deserved honor! You can [read more about his dedication and engaging](#)

teaching style in an FSU article about the award. Professor Sevier received the award at a special university ceremony earlier this week.

At the same ceremony, Steve Johnson, our Dunbar family professor, received FSU's Outstanding Graduate Teaching award for being outstanding in the many aspects of teaching which contribute to successful teaching and learning.

Erin O'Connor
Dean Erin O'Connor

Nominate Alumni for the Exemplary Public Service Career Award



Rex Dimmig ('78) received the 2023 Exemplary Public Service Career Award during a virtual ceremony in September 2023.

FSU Law is seeking nominations of alumni who have devoted their entire careers to public service for the 2024 Exemplary Public Service Career Award. In addition to recognizing alumni who have dedicated their careers to public service, the award honors people who have demonstrated exceptional character, integrity, leadership, humility, and professionalism, as well as the highest regard for ethics. The award also aims to recognize public servants whose dedication to the profession may otherwise go unnoticed. Additional considerations include:

- Length of the nominee's public service career
- Impact of the nominee's public service career (number of people served, significant legal achievements benefiting a large number of people, etc.)
- Nominee's demonstrated ability to inspire others

- Nominee's genuine concern for others, as displayed in various facets of the nominee's personal and professional life

All previous nominations will be considered for the 2024 award, therefore if you nominated someone in the past, you do not need to nominate them again. Please **submit new nominations online** by Friday, May 10, 2024. All nominations should include the nominee's name and an explanation of how they meet the award criteria. You may also send additional documentation, including links to sources of information about the nominee. The award winner will be recognized during a special Zoom ceremony and at this fall's 2024 Homecoming festivities. In addition, a painted portrait of the award recipient will be displayed at the College of Law.

Alumni Receive Inaugural BAN Awards



BAN presented alumni with awards during a virtual ceremony on March 28.

Congratulations to the following alumni, who recently were presented with inaugural alumni awards by FSU Law's Black Alumni Network (BAN). Markenzy Lapointe ('99) received the Distinguished Alumni Award, Judge Anthony Miller ('00) received the Jurist of the Year Award, Judge Jessica Goodwin Costello ('09) received the Most Outstanding Young Alumni Award, Ben Crump ('95) received the Enduring Legacy Award, and Jasmyne Henderson ('15), Salesia Smith-Gordon ('92), and Kareem Spratling ('06) received the President's Award of Excellence. The alumni were

recognized for their outstanding contributions to the legal profession and the community during a special virtual presentation on Thursday, March 28, 2024.

“These individuals’ achievements are a beacon of excellence and dedication, and we were thrilled to honor them,” said BAN President G.C. Murray II (’12).

Student Profile: 3L Careena Lall

Desired Practice Location: Palm Beach, Broward, Miami, Tampa/St. Petersburg, or Orlando area

Expected Graduation: May 2024

Field of Law Sought: Commercial law, real estate law, community association law, or civil litigation

Careena Lall is from West Palm Beach, Florida, and earned her bachelor’s degree in criminology from the University of Florida. She will graduate from FSU Law this May. Lall currently works at the Florida Department of Management Services Office of the General Counsel, where she performs legal research on issues involving the procurement contract process and on litigation matters. During the fall 2023 semester, Lall was a land use and environmental extern with the City of Tallahassee City Attorney’s Office. There, Lall performed research and studied regulations concerning city ordinances and governing law on a variety of matters, including zoning, building permitting, stormwater regulation, code enforcement, and community redevelopment. During the summer before her 3L year, Lall was a summer associate in the West Palm Beach office of Wicker Smith. At the firm, Lall gained insurance defense experience in a variety of practice areas, including premises liability, trucking, wrongful death, and medical malpractice litigation. During her 2L year, Lall was a law clerk with the Florida Department of Financial Services Workers’ Compensation Division. Lall’s work experience consisted of conducting legal research; drafting memos, pleadings, motions, and discovery documents; and attending a variety of hearings, depositions, and mediations. During her 2L year, Lall also was a legislative intern at Dean, Mead & Dunbar, where she tracked action items, drafted advocacy papers and talking points, and attended hearings on bills of interest to the Real Property, Probate & Trust Law Section of The Florida Bar. During the summer before her 1L year, Lall was a judicial intern to Magistrate Judge Ryon M. McCabe, of the Southern District of Florida, where she assisted in research on recommendations and reports on order of reference from U.S. district judges for constitutionality issues. Prior to joining FSU



Law, Lall was an executive legal assistant for three years at Barfield, McCain, Ayoub, P.A., a real estate law firm, where she gained experience in landlord/tenant law and general real estate contract litigation.

At FSU Law, Lall currently serves as a vice president of the school's Real Property, Probate & Trust Law Society, and she was a member of the Raising the Bar Professionalism+ Program Student Advisory Board. If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Lall after graduation, email her at cl21@fsu.edu.

“I believe success is achieved by ordinary people with extraordinary determination. As a first-generation law student at FSU Law, I am grateful for enriching experiences that equipped me with the skills to adapt quickly to different legal settings and connected me with professionals who supported my academic development and pursuit of knowledge.”



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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