




March 21, 2025

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From the Dean

FSU
Day
AT THE 
Capitol



The Florida Capitol gleamed garnet and gold this week as lawmakers, along with Florida State University alumni and friends came together to celebrate FSU's successes and contributions to the State of Florida.

The FSU College of Law, along with many other academic departments and colleges from across the university, participated in the event, showcasing FSU's world-class colleges and programs and high-achieving students and faculty.

Amid the excitement of the legislative session, the event also marked a significant milestone for the FSU College of Law. The **Election Law Center** is one step closer to ensuring its future through **SB 892**. Sponsored by Senator Corey Simon, this important bill aims to formally establish the Election Law Center in Florida state statutes, ensuring its eligibility for recurring state funding and solidifying its long-term impact.

Read more about the bill in the Tallahassee Democrat's article, "**Under new bill, Election Law Center at Florida State aims for long-term state support**," and stay tuned for future updates.



Erin O'Connor
Dean Erin O'Connor

Book Talk: Professor Shawn Bayern



Join us on March 26 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. in the D'Alemberte Rotunda for a Book Talk featuring **Professor**

Shawn Bayern, Larry and Joyce Beltz Professor of Torts and Associate Dean for Technology at FSU College of Law. Professor Bayern will be discussing his new book, "**Principles and Possibilities in Common Law: Torts, Contracts, and Property.**"

In this engaging conversation, Professor Bayern will be joined by Professor **Larry T. Garvin** of Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and Professor **Mark Gergen** from UC Berkeley Law.

Click here to RSVP. If you are unable to attend in person, **click here** for the live stream.

Faculty News: Professor Rima Nathan



We are pleased to announce that **Professor Rima Nathan** has been selected as a recipient of the **2024-25 University Teaching Award for Community-Engaged Teaching**.

The University Teaching Awards honor educators who demonstrate excellence in a range of areas, including serving as positive role models, fostering respect for truth and a passion for learning, challenging students to think critically, showing deep respect for all individuals, and utilizing innovative teaching methods.

Professor Nathan's recognition highlights her dedication to these principles and her exceptional contributions to both the academic community and beyond.

2025 Alternative Spring Break



1L-3L JD students and an LL.M. student on the 2025 Alternative Spring Break trip.

Last week, students journeyed to Apopka, Florida, for the 2025 Alternative Spring Break Program. Visiting the [Farmworkers Association of Florida](#), the students had a unique and impactful learning experience, exploring the legal and human dimensions of critical issues such as environmental justice, immigration policies, farmworkers' rights, and human trafficking.

Participating students engaged in hands-on learning opportunities, including community gardening and a visit to an industrial nursery. In addition to these immersive experiences, students gained valuable insights through lectures and discussions led by local attorneys and other experts in the field. Each student wrote a reflection following the trip with all participants noting how moving, inspiring, or otherwise impactful the experience had been to them personally.

Offered annually by FSU Law during the first weekend of spring break, this program provides students with a rare chance to connect legal theory with real-world issues and make a tangible impact.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

FSU Law in the News

FSU Law had a big week in the news!

An article featuring coverage on our recently held Election Law Conference, 25th Anniversary of Bush v. Gore. "Bill Cotterell: Florida 2000 — Now that was an election" was syndicated in several publications - [News Service of Florida](#), [Tallahassee Democrat](#), and [Election Law Blog](#).

Also, learn about the newly launched [Bankruptcy Pro Bono Clinic](#). The clinic gives FSU law students the unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience working on federal bankruptcy cases. To read the article and find out more about the clinic, [click here](#). It was also featured in [The Florida Bar News](#).

Additionally, 3L Nicholas Lower's opinion piece, titled "**Florida's proposed bills on solitary confinement is a win for human rights,**" was featured in the **Tallahassee Democrat**.

In the article, Lower discusses the use of solitary confinement and the lack of data on the practice and how the potential induction of Florida Senate Bill 1758 and House Bill 1061 would mandate data collection on solitary confinement in the state.

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



Frontiers in Law and Technology



Join us today at 12:30 p.m. for the Frontiers in Law and Technology webinar, 'Trends and Topics in US Privacy Laws.'

Prominent tech and privacy lawyers [Talia Boiangin Behar](#) and [Tyler Thompson](#) from Reed Smith LLP will do an in-depth webinar on the latest trends and developments in U.S. privacy law. With extensive experience navigating the complex legal landscape of data protection, cybersecurity, and emerging technologies, Behar and Thompson will provide a comprehensive survey of the current regulatory environment and what lies ahead.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Register

Faculty News: Professor Jacob Eisler



Congratulations to **[Jacob Eisler](#)**, James Edmund and Margaret Elizabeth Hennessey Corry Professor whose recent article, "**Discrimination, Private Liberty, and Public Accommodations Law**," was published in the Texas A&M Law Review.

The Supreme Court's *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis* decision allows businesses to refuse service based on First Amendment rights, potentially weakening anti-discrimination laws. The article argues that the Court's view of businesses as private entities limits regulation, and suggests the government should consider businesses' social power when regulating them.

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

Alumni in the News: Honorable Nikki Clark ('77)

Congratulations to FSU College of Law alumna, the **[Honorable Nikki Clark](#)**, who was recently honored with the 2025 Oasis Legacy Award by the Oasis Center for Women and Girls. This prestigious award recognizes trailblazers who have made significant contributions to the community.

Judge Clark, now retired, leaves behind a remarkable legacy of leadership and "firsts." Starting at FSU College of Law, Clark was among the first Black women to graduate. She went on to become the first Black judge and the first female judge appointed to the Second Judicial Circuit, which includes Leon County.



After 14 years, another Black judge was appointed to the Second Judicial Circuit, but by that time, Judge Clark had already moved on to the Florida First District Court of Appeal, where she made history again as the first Black woman to serve in that role.

Throughout her distinguished career, Judge Clark also served as a staff attorney for Legal Services of North Florida, a Florida Assistant Attorney General, a Cabinet Aide to the late Governor Lawton Chiles, and as an instructor at FSU College of Law. She dedicated 20 years to serving on the bench, leaving an indelible mark on Florida's legal community.

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

Student Profile: 3L Alyssa Gagnon

Desired Practice Location: Tampa, FL

Expected Graduation: May 2025

Field of Law Sought: Civil litigation including general liability, real estate, employment, and environmental law including governmental entity and property/licensing

Alyssa "Lyss" Gagnon, a proud native of Bradenton, FL, earned her Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Criminology, graduating cum laude from The University of Florida. She began her JD journey at St. Thomas University College of Law in Miami, FL, before transferring to FSU College of Law in the spring of her 2L year.



Currently, Gagnon serves as a teaching assistant for the FSU College of Law Juris Master's program and is a volunteer legal intern at the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County. During the summer before her 3L year, Gagnon worked as a summer associate at Hall, Booth, Smith, P.C. While under the supervision of an experienced attorney, she drafted pleadings and motions for various civil litigation matters—primarily in medical malpractice and general liability defense—prepared deposition questions and detailed notes and contributed to client meetings and settlement conferences.

Prior to starting law school, Gagnon served as a law clerk at Howard M. Rosenblatt Law in Gainesville, FL. In this role, she drafted legal documents, including wills and trusts, researched probate statutes, and supported trial preparation by organizing exhibits and maintaining client files.

A standout student-athlete during her 1L year at St. Thomas, Gagnon set the school record and the NAIA Sun Conference record for the Women's Outdoor 800m, and she competed in the NAIA Outdoor Track & Field National competition. She was also an active member of the Business Law Society and the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and contributed to the university's sports journalism as a writer for Track & Cross Country. Gagnon was invited to join the Law Review staff upon completion of her commentary on copyright law before transferring to FSU College of Law.

At FSU College of Law, Gagnon continues to demonstrate leadership and involvement, currently serving as treasurer of both the Environmental Law Society and the Transfer Student Organization.

If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Gagnon after graduation, visit her [LinkedIn profile](#) or email her at ang23g@fsu.edu.

"I'm motivated by a sense of purpose and the opportunity to make a meaningful impact while being part of something greater than myself. I strive to show up with focus and steadiness every time."



FSU LAW CONNECT

Spring into FSU Law Connect Events!



Stay ahead of the curve by **signing up for FSU Law Connect** and be the first to hear about exciting regional alumni events, along with other professional and social networking opportunities. Whether you're looking to reconnect with old friends or expand your network, FSU Law Connect keeps you in the loop.

Don't miss out—sign up today and make the most of your FSU Law connections!

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