

FSU LAW FOCUS

Friday, January 10, 2025

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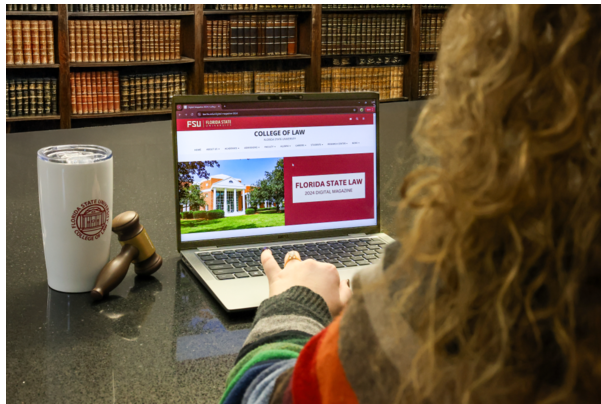
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From the Dean

We are excited to unveil **the 2024 Florida State Law Magazine!**

This year's magazine offers compelling insight into the diverse events and news shaping our campus. It showcases the exciting ways FSU Law continues to lead and innovate, from distinguished guest speakers to cutting-edge legal seminars.



It also highlights alumni with incredible stories, including:

- Matthew C. Russell ('73)
- Jim McConnaughay ('69)
- Danielle DeVito-Hurley ('95)
- The Gross Family
- Steve Ecenia ('80)
- Manuel Farach ('86)
- Howard Dimmig ('78)

Finally, don't miss updated Class Notes, photos, and my insights from this year.

[Click here](#) to read the 2024 FSU Law Magazine.

Dean Erin O'Connor

Celebrating Our Fall 2024 Graduates

On Friday, December 13, 6 J.D. students, 3 LL.M. students, and 102 J.M. students graduated from FSU Law.

We were delighted to celebrate them throughout the day. In the morning, J.D. graduates participated in the



university's special ceremony for doctoral degree recipients and were hooded by Associate Dean Nancy Benavides. Then, on Friday evening, we recognized all our graduates with a special reception and toast at the law school. Many of our newest alums and their guests gathered at the Advocacy Center to celebrate with faculty and staff before J.M. and LL.M. graduates walked across the street to the university commencement ceremony.

Congratulations to our new alumni—we look forward to seeing all of your accomplishments in the future!

[Click here](#) to view photos from the event.

FSU Law in the News: Law School Explores Role Of AI In The Legal Profession

FSU Law was featured in a Law360 article, “**Fla. Law School Explores Role of AI in the Legal Profession**,” which highlighted the school’s forward-thinking initiatives to prepare future lawyers for the challenges and opportunities AI presents.

The article features interviews with Dean O’Connor and Professor Bayern and mentions the work of Professor Scholz and Professor Banteka.

[Click here](#) to read the article or email us for a PDF copy.

FSU Law in the News: Scott Turow Coming to FSU

FSU Law was featured in the the Florida Bar News article "**FSU College of Law Welcomes Best-Selling Author Scott Turow**," which discussed the upcoming event where he will speak about his new book, 'Presumed Guilty,' with FSU criminal law professor Wayne Logan on January 18 at 7 p.m. at FSU's Opperman Music Hall.

[Click here](#) to read the article or [here to purchase tickets](#) to the event.

Faculty News: Jacob Eisler Wins AALS Award



Congratulations to [Jacob Eisler](#), FSU Law James Edmund and Margaret Elizabeth Hennessey Corry Professor, who was **honored by the Association of American Law Schools Awards (AALS) Ceremony Distinguished Scholarship Award in Election Law**. The award is given annually for “a single work that exemplifies excellence in the field and that is published within a given year.” The awards are hosted by several of the association’s 108 sections that are organized around various academic disciplines and topics of interest.

This year’s winners were acknowledged during an awards ceremony at the 2025 AALS Annual Meeting on January 9.

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

In Memoriam: Alum David W. Wilcox ('79)

David W. Wilcox, 75, of Bradenton, Florida, passed away on Saturday, December 7, after a lengthy illness. He was a kind man, a gifted lawyer, a devoted husband to Susan Wills Wilcox, and a father to Andrew. He will be missed by many.



David was proud to be a native Floridian and patriotic American, born at Eglin Air Force Base. He lived around the world as a child since his father was in the Air Force. David graduated from Tampa Robinson High School. After graduation, he enlisted in the Air Force, serving in Southeast Asia. After an Honorable Discharge, he enrolled in Manatee Junior College and was a member of the debate team. I was fortunate to meet and serve with Dave in campus leadership activities at MJC and I found a loyal friend for life.

In 1973, he transferred to Florida State University, receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. As an undergraduate, Dave was a campus leader in organizations like ODK. He then attended the Florida State University College of Law, where he was business manager of Law Review. Dave was also a leader with me in the Phi Delta Phi law school leadership fraternity. Dave loved classic American cars and drove us in style to college functions and dinners at the panhandle coast in his prized Oldsmobile 442. He enjoyed taking us fishing at his parents' lake home at Okeechobee. Dave had a deep respect for history and tradition. I fondly recall his mother Hazel telling us stories of early Manatee County involving places like "Punkin Center."

It was at FSU that he met his future wife, Susan, on the lawn of her Alpha Gamma Delta sorority house. He graduated with his Juris Doctor in 1979, before he moved to Bradenton to begin his law career at the firm of Icard, Merrill. After one year, he moved back to Tallahassee to serve as Governor Bob Graham's assistant general counsel. He was very proud to be the sole Republican in a roomful of Democrats. He spent two legislative sessions with Gov. Graham and then moved back to Bradenton, returning to practice with Icard, Merrill. After two years, he opened his own law office and was a sole practice attorney for more than 40 years.

David was very active in his community and beyond. He served as President of the Manatee Kiwanis Club and was a recipient of the George Hixson Award. He was President, General Chairman, and Captain of the DeSoto Historical Society. He served as Treasurer of the Manatee County Bar Association and received the Manatee County Bar Association's Lifetime Community Service Award. He was on the Board of Directors of the FSU Law School and of

Manatee Glens and was a founding member of Take Back Bradenton and MOR Music TV. He also served as Chairman and Founder of Coast Bank and President of the Sportsman's National Land Trust. He was a co-founder of the Committee for Open Democracy.

His hobbies included rooting for his beloved FSU Seminoles, even in the bad years. He was an avid sporting clays shooter, becoming one of Manatee County's best shots. He grew orchids, and he enjoyed bird watching, participating several times in the Manatee County Audubon Society's Christmas bird count. He also loved sitting on his back deck, feeding peanuts to the local squirrel population.

David is survived by his wife of forty years, Susan, and his son, Andrew (Hannah). He is predeceased by his parents, Carl M. and Hazel (Simpson) Wilcox, Sr., and his brother, Carl M. Wilcox, Jr.

- Tribute written by FSU Law alumnus Maury Kolchakian ('78)

Alumni News: G.C. Murray II ('12)



Congratulations to alumnus G.C. Murray II, **who recently delivered opening remarks on the Rule of Law in Jakarta, Indonesia, on behalf of the U.S. Embassy.**

The address focused on the critical role of the rule of law in upholding democratic values and ensuring equal protection under the law. In his speech, Murray highlighted the foundational importance of the rule of law in American society and its broader implications for global governance and civil rights.

"The rule of law is truly the bedrock of any great society. It saved America in many ways, particularly through the Civil Rights Act, which focused on ensuring that every

person, no matter who they were or what they looked like, would be equal under the law."

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

Student Feature: Mores Medal Recipient Tara Bagherlee

Congratulations to 3L Tara Bagherlee, who is this year's recipient of the Mores Medal from the Alumni Association Board of Directors!

The Mores Medal recognizes and provides a scholarship to a student who is a good citizen of the College of Law but who does not hold a decorated position that would garner attention or large stipends. Good citizenship includes volunteer service to the law school, demonstration of collegiality, teamwork, integrity, honesty, humility, and generosity in daily life as an FSU Law student.



Bagherlee was recognized with the Mores Medal during the 2024 homecoming weekend.



We invite 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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