



April 25, 2025

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From the Dean



We are
FSU
STRONG

The background of the lower section is a maroon-tinted photograph of the FSU campus. It shows a large, ornate building with two prominent towers, palm trees, and a central fountain with water spraying upwards. The text "We are FSU STRONG" is overlaid on this image. "We are" is in a white, cursive script, while "FSU" and "STRONG" are in a large, bold, gold-colored sans-serif font. The letter 'O' in "STRONG" is replaced by a gold heart symbol.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for the unwavering support you've shown as we continue to recover from the tragic events of last week. As we begin to return to our daily routines and prepare to celebrate Commencement, we do so united and stronger than ever.

While we are all still processing and healing, it is in these difficult moments that we find strength and resilience in the FSU community. Our collective spirit will carry us through these difficult times.

To our students, faculty, and staff: please know that you are not alone. If you need someone to talk to, Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) are available 24/7. You can reach them anytime at (850) 644-TALK (8255).

Together, we remain committed to navigating this journey with care, compassion, and flexibility. Please don't hesitate to reach out – we are here for you.

Erin O'Connor

Dean Erin O'Connor



Recently, we had the honor of welcoming FSU Law alumna **Sia Baker-Barnes** back to campus. She is a nationally recognized trial attorney, shareholder at Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart & Shipley, and **President-Elect of the Florida Bar**.

The event was hosted by the [**Women's Law Symposium**](#) (WLS) and Student Advancement. 3L Lexi Cook, president of WLS, opened up the discussion for an engaging and insightful conversation with one of the nation's most respected legal professionals.

During her visit, Sia offered a wealth of knowledge on navigating the business of law, covering key topics including the differences between private practice and alternative legal career paths, the distinction between plaintiff and defense work, and the choice between solo practice and partnerships. She also delved into the journey to becoming a partner and the importance of leveraging personal branding.

We're grateful to President-Elect Baker-Barnes for returning to share her time, experience, and expertise with our students.

FSU Law in the News

FSU College of Law continues to make headlines with the 10-spot leap to 38th overall in the latest *U.S. News & World Report* rankings.

At the same time, important legislative work led by our students is gaining ground. The human trafficking bill—championed by 3Ls Lauren Evans and Tazara Weilhammer, in collaboration with the Human Trafficking Exploitation Law Project and the Public Interest Law Center—is advancing in the Florida legislature and is now moving to the House. Their efforts reflect the power of advocacy and the real-world impact of public interest work.

In addition, the Bankruptcy Law Clinic has also been back in the national news.

Check out the Dean's take on the ranking on *WFSU Radio*, [**"New Rankings Show FSU Grad Programs on the Rise."**](#)

Florida Bar, [**"FSU Law Jumps 10 Spots in U.S. News Rankings"**](#)

Florida Politics, [**"Takeaways from Tallahassee"**](#)

Tallahassee Democrat, [**"FSU College of Medicine, Law, Business Get High Ranks in the U.S. News Best Graduate Schools"**](#)

Florida Record, [**"FSU College of Law Receives Historic Ranking From U.S. News & World Report"**](#)

FSUView, [**"FSU Law Rises 10 Spots in U.S. News & World Report's of the Nation's Best Law Schools"**](#)

FSU News, [**"Florida State University's College of Law Receives Historic Ranking From U.S. News & World Report"**](#)

Florida Politics, [**"Human Trafficking Education Bill Ready for House Floor"**](#)

WLRN, [**"Bill Would Require Training in Human Trafficking for Florida's Public Educators"**](#)

The Floridian, [**"House Committee Favors Bill Requiring School Employees to Identify Potential Human Trafficking Victims"**](#)

PreLaw Magazine, [**"FSU Law launches new bankruptcy law clinic"**](#)

Share Your FSU Law Journey

As a part of the 60th celebration in 2026, we are inviting alumni to tell their FSU College of Law story. Once the collection is complete, these stories will be compiled into a book that celebrates our alma mater and the remarkable legacy of FSU Law.

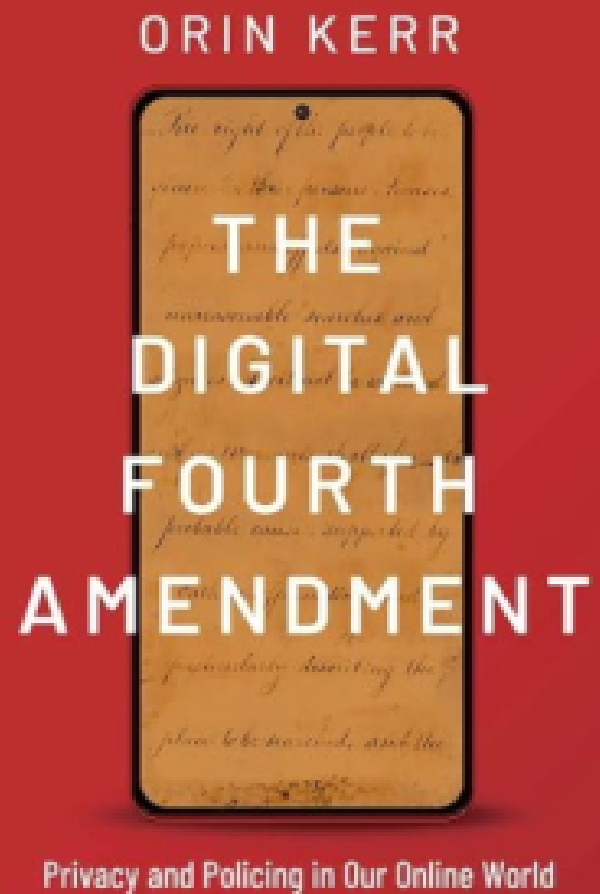
This opportunity is made possible through a partnership between the FSU College of Law and Publishing Concepts, Inc. (PCI). In addition to collecting stories, PCI is assisting the FSU Law team in gathering updated biographical information from alumni to ensure we stay connected with graduates.



Alumni will be receiving a postcard and email from PCI with more information on how to share their stories. Stories will be collected via a phone call.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

Book Talks in Governance Ethics & Technology



Join us today at 12:30 p.m. for **Book Talks in Governance Ethics & Technology**. We will be joined by Professor **Orin Kerr** from Stanford University Law School. He will be discussing his new book, **"The Digital Fourth Amendment."**

Professor Kerr in conversation with **Nadia Banteka**, Gary & Sallyn Pajcic Professor at FSU College of Law about his book, "The Digital Fourth Amendment." Professor Kerr is widely considered the leading scholar of the Fourth Amendment of his generation, he has been cited by courts over 400 times, including in several major Supreme Court cases. He regularly appears in lists of the most influential and most cited law professors, and his writing has appeared in publications such as The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal. Before becoming a law professor, Kerr was a computer crime prosecutor at the United States Department of Justice. He has engineering degrees from Princeton and Stanford and a law degree from Harvard Law School. He is a former law clerk for Justice Anthony M. Kennedy of the United States Supreme Court.

Register

PILC Toy Drive



Professor Emmalyn Dalton and 3L Joey Capers with the mountain of toys collected for the incredible kids served by the **Children's Advocacy Clinic**. The Clinic supports some of the most vulnerable children in our community by providing full legal representation across a wide range of issues like foster care, adoption, immigration, special education, and more. We're proud of the work our students do and the impact they're making!

Student Give Back Campaign



Earlier in the spring semester, we held our annual Student Give Back Campaign and our students made us proud with a 72.60% giving rate! Students participated in this year's campaign by donating their time or money to benefit FSU Law. They contributed over \$3,000 and more than 300 hours of community service! We are all so grateful for their support. Thank you also to the 43 faculty and administrators who issued challenge gifts to inspire giving!

To show our appreciation, we recently held an event featuring food trucks and yard games. It was a fun way to thank our students.



We invite all alumni and students to [join FSU Law Connect](#), a 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 and start connecting.

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