

School of Law: *Empowered to Lead; Prepared for What's Next*

Being part of Duquesne Law is belonging to a community that cares for one another and for society at large. That has been especially evident as we worked together during recent challenging and uncertain times. Not knowing what the future holds, but knowing that we are stronger together, we have collaborated with determination, resilience, grace, and the faith to forge ahead with our shared bigger goals in mind.

As the only Catholic and Spiritan Law School in the United States, we are truly special. We serve God by serving our students, who, in turn, go on to serve our society in meaningful and impactful ways. Our Mission unites us during challenging times and we are driven to act with responsibility and respect. We are grounded in our common bond of humanity and honor the dignity of others through our words and actions.

Our 2020-21 academic year may have been different than past years, but was equally marked by unique opportunities for growth. We found impactful ways to continue our Catholic and Spiritan Mission while setting our law students apart from the field.

Below we share our vision for our future—a vision that requires us to stretch and challenge ourselves to articulate a path and the pillars that will guide that journey. We are humbled that our generous benefactors have contributed to these opportunities to make an impact by strengthening our existing programs while providing the opportunity to grow and achieve even greater results.

We invite you to consider these vital priorities:

The Vision Fund

The Vision Fund encompasses three pillars that are essential to keeping Duquesne Law School on the forefront of legal education:

Developing Collaborative Learning Opportunities: Today, lawyers must know more than the law. They must understand the confluence of disciplines that influence their work and society. To prepare our students to practice law in this changing world, our approach to legal education also must change. We must provide interprofessional and multidisciplinary experiences—focused on teaching **financial literacy, business acumen, and emerging technologies**.

With your support, **we have already begun to create collaborative opportunities** for our students. In **January of 2021** we offered our first **Financial Toolkit for Lawyers**, a **week-long intensive course** to be designed to give Duquesne Law students a **practical introduction to finance as applied to law**. Law students were exposed to accounting concepts, financial statements, balance sheets, income statements, and time-value of money exercises.

We also recently launched our **Business Essentials for Lawyers Micro-Credential program**, a partnership with Duquesne's Palumbo-Donahue School of Business. The distinctive micro-credential started this fall semester and offers our law students practical skills in business, finance, and management to meet the demands of modern practice.

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**DUQUESNE
UNIVERSITY**

Jeanine DeBor, Director, Law Alumni Relations and Development
201 Hanley Hall • 600 Forbes Avenue • Pittsburgh, PA 15282
412.396.5215 • www.duq.edu/law



Teaching Principles of Leadership: Duquesne Law is uniquely positioned to draw from our Spiritan ethos in guiding a mindset that emphasizes servant leadership and value-centered leadership. We have committed ourselves to educating students who understand the importance of inclusive leadership and who develop their self-awareness, cultural awareness, and global awareness as conscientious world citizens.

We continue to reframe our required course in Professional Responsibility and Legal Ethics to include the role of attorneys as leaders. While still teaching the all-important **Rules of Professional Responsibility**, we teach with **inspiration and guidance from the Preamble of the Rules and set the standard for excellence as we aim to inspire lawyer-leaders.**

We are in the third year of our **Leadership Fellows Program** which allows our student leaders to come together to **focus on their own leadership development.** Students reflect on qualities of great leadership, grow their leadership skills, and articulate their own core values to inform their value-centered leadership style.

In addition, we will be offering a new and innovative **Law and Leadership** course, taught by Dean April Barton and William Generett Jr., J.D., Vice President of Civic Engagement and External Relations. This course will equip students with a leadership mindset and prepare them for leadership positions as lawyers by building awareness and habits that will serve them in their professional and personal development.

Fostering Student Well-Being: Our first priority under this pillar is ensuring that the Law School is a welcoming and **supportive environment for all.** As an academic community grounded in the Catholic intellectual and spiritual tradition, we teach that truth is one, that faith and reason are complementary, and that all persons are equal in dignity irrespective of their attributes and accomplishments.

In accordance with our Spiritan Mission, we seek to energize minds, hearts and spirits to overcome the affliction of discrimination and racial inequality.

The **Dean's Diversity Action Council** continues to foster a culture of inclusion and belonging so that our students of color and other historically underrepresented students flourish.

Finally, we are focused on making student and attorney well-being a top priority. Not only are we here for our students in time of need and crisis by working together with Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of PA and our Campus Counseling and Health Services, we are also focused on integrating **sustainable life habits** and creating a **culture around healthy and fulfilled living.** Our Docket newsletter begins each week with well-being tips around healthy eating, mindfulness, sleep, and self-care.

Raising Our Profile: Those associated with Duquesne Law understand the strength of our program and the powerful impact it has. We are working to share that message in an ambitious marketing campaign. The goal is to raise our profile and communicate we create practice-ready lawyers who are empowered to lead and prepared for what's next. The Vision Fund not only enhances the Law School's programs and initiatives; it also provides resources that help us to share our advances with prospective students, legal professionals and the general public.

Bar Preparation

Duquesne Law is committed to assisting graduates to achieve first-time bar passage by providing comprehensive training. Our bar studies program of individualized student support begins during new student orientation, continues throughout our program of legal education, includes specific bar exam training, and continues after graduation.

For the 2021 bar exam, our graduates outperformed the statewide average by almost 11 percent. Our "first-time" taker pass rate exceeded the statewide average by more than seven percent. We were in the top three of 11 Pennsylvania-area schools. Additionally, our most recent Ultimate Pass Rate is 93.33 percent.

Keeping this program at the cutting edge requires continual investment. Through your generous support, the Law School will continue to ensure all students are thoroughly prepared for the practice of law.

Strengthening Our Programs for Working Professionals

Our Law School began as an evening program so that working people could pursue a legal education. Women and underrepresented populations were welcome early on. The legacy of our evening division is truly extraordinary—it is part of who we are and should always be a part of who we are.

In addition to our evening division, we are developing **innovative ways for students who work full time to obtain their law degree with new hybrid and hyflex course offerings** that allow students more flexibility to earn their degrees. With your support, we will not only strengthen our existing evening division, we will create better opportunities for working professionals to obtain their law degrees.