

# SALUS POPULI

— THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF THE THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY —  
— SPRING 2026 —



## PERSPECTIVE AND PERSEVERANCE

Veterans and Active Military Members Strengthen Law School

THIS  
ISSUE

Law School Love

Historic Win

Giving in Action



# Dear Friends,

As the academic year draws to a close and spring settles over our campus, I find myself pausing to reflect on all that this community has accomplished together. It has been a season of remarkable growth, and I am grateful for the role each of you has played in making it so.

Among the milestones that have marked this year, none speaks more directly to the collective strength of our community than Duquesne Kline School of Law achieving its highest-ever ranking of #85 in *U.S. News & World Report's* rankings of American law schools. This achievement reflects the excellence our faculty, students, and staff bring to their work each day, and the enduring investment you, our alumni and friends, have made in this institution.

Our Spiritan mission calls us to serve with purpose, to act with principled character, and to share our gifts generously in service to others. This year, our students embodied that call in ways that were truly inspiring.

You will find at the heart of this issue a feature of our students who serve, or have served, in the United States Armed Forces (p. 11). Duquesne has been recognized as a Top 10 Military Friendly School, and that distinction is a commitment we live out each day in the way we welcome, support, and learn from our military students and veterans.

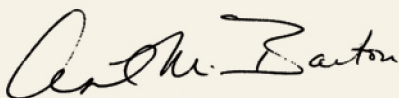
The dedication that defines our student-veterans is very much the same spirit that drove so many other students to remarkable achievement this year. Two students in our Federal Litigation Clinic had the rare opportunity to argue before the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Their poise and preparation were a testament to the rigorous, practice-ready education that defines a Duquesne Kline Law degree.

The accomplishments did not stop there. Olivia Brophy, a second-year student, was named the **#1 Best Advocate** in the United States at the Philip C. Jessup International Moot Court Competition, and her team advanced to the International Rounds — a historic first for Duquesne Kline School of Law. Our appellate moot court teams claimed **first place** at the ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition in Chicago and at the Cleveland State University School of Law's Rock the Court Music Law Moot Court Competition. Our trial advocacy team won the **regional championship** at the American Association for Justice National Student Trial Advocacy Competition, the largest mock trial competition in the country. You will find the stories of these extraordinary students beginning on page 36 and they are sure to inspire.

None of these achievements would have been possible without you. Your generosity throughout the year, and most especially on our Day of Giving, made 2026 your most charitable year yet. Through your presence and example, you give our students a vision of who they can become.

As you turn the pages of this magazine, I hope the stories within fill you with the same hope and joy that sustain me each day. It is a privilege to lead this school, and an even greater privilege to do so alongside a community as generous and devoted as yours. ■

*With deep gratitude and warm regards,*



**April Mara Barton**  
Dean and Professor of Law



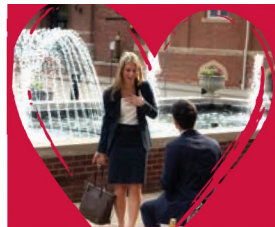
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THOMAS R. KLINE SCHOOL OF LAW  
OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

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# Judge Guido Calabresi Receives the Dr. John and Liz Murray Scholarship Award

By Amanda S. Drumm

The incomparable legal scholar Judge Guido Calabresi visited the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Nov. 20 as part of the Dr. John and Liz Murray Excellence in Scholarship Lecture Series.

Calabresi gave a CLE/CJE presentation, discussing originalism and structuralism and highlighting the advantages and limits of originalism in constitutional interpretation. At the event, University President Ken Gormley and law school Dean April Barton bestowed the University's prestigious Dr. John and Liz Murray Scholarship Award on Calabresi in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to the field of law and his indelible scholarly impact.

Among his many distinctions, Calabresi began teaching at Yale Law School in 1959 and became a full professor in 1961, the youngest in the history of the Yale Law School. He served as Sterling Professor of Law, then dean of Yale Law School for nearly 10 years. Calabresi was subsequently appointed to the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, where he has served for more than 30 years and remains a senior judge. He continues to teach at Yale Law School as Sterling Professor Emeritus and Professorial Lecturer in Law.

Calabresi received a bachelor of science degree summa cum laude from Yale College in 1953, a bachelor of arts degree with first class honors from Magdalen College, Oxford University, in 1955, an LL.B. degree, magna cum laude, in 1958 from Yale Law School, and a master of arts degree in politics, philosophy and economics from Oxford University in 1959. A Rhodes Scholar

and member of Phi Beta Kappa and Order of the Coif, Calabresi served as the note editor of the *Yale Law Journal* in 1957-58, while graduating first in his law school class.

Following graduation, Calabresi clerked for Justice Hugo Black of the United States Supreme Court. He has been awarded more than 60 honorary degrees from universities in the United States and abroad and is the author of eight books and over 100 articles on law and related subjects.

"Judge Calabresi's legal and scholarly contributions are remarkable. He garnered his vast legal knowledge over a career that spans decades, and it was an exceptional experience to hear firsthand about his insights on contemporary legal questions. It was also a distinct privilege to honor his noteworthy career with the Murray Scholarship Award," Gormley said. "When we created that award over a decade ago, then-Chancellor John Murray expressed a hope that Judge Calabresi would one day be a recipient. That made the award presentation even more special."

Barton was likewise grateful for this rare opportunity to host and spend time with Calabresi.

"He is a revered professor, esteemed dean, celebrated judge, and co-founder of the field of law and economics. Judge Calabresi has taught, shaped, and inspired countless legal minds. His supreme intellect, unmatched energy, and gracious warmth were on full display, and it was an absolute pleasure to honor him with the Murray Scholarship Award. The evening served as a powerful reminder of the profound influence one dedicated scholar can have on generations of lawyers and jurists," she said. ■



# Duquesne Kline School of Law's Ascent Continues with *U.S. News & World Report's* #85 Ranking

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University jumped seven spots to achieve a #85 placement\* in *U.S. News & World Report's* 2026-2027 Best Law Schools rankings. Released on April 7, this is Duquesne Kline School of Law's highest ranking yet.

The recently released rankings mark another meaningful rise in *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Law Schools rankings, showing several consecutive years of significant upward movement. The consistent climb coincides with a significant update to *U.S. News & World Report's* ranking methodology in 2022, which placed greater emphasis on bar passage rates and graduate employment outcomes, two areas in which Duquesne Kline School of Law has demonstrated strength. This sustained trajectory reflects the school's deep and ongoing commitment to preparing graduates for successful legal careers.

Year after year, Duquesne Kline School of Law has consecutively outperformed national averages in employment results and state averages in bar results, most recently ranking among the top 50 law schools nationally for its 2022 Ultimate Bar Passage rate, according to the American Bar Association.

Duquesne Kline School of Law Dean April Barton said, "Duquesne Kline Law has always been guided by a commitment to preparing exceptional lawyers who serve their clients, their communities, and the profession with integrity. To see that mission reflected in our continued rise in the *U.S. News* rankings is deeply gratifying. I could not be more proud of our students, faculty, and staff, whose hard work and dedication made this possible."

The flexible part-time evening program offered by Duquesne Kline School of Law also increased, climbing six spots to a #38 placement for the part-time program category in the 2026-2027 rankings. This convenient JD program for working professionals and adults with other commitments has been offered by Duquesne Kline School of Law for more than a century, and is the only part-time JD program offered in the Western Pennsylvania area.

In addition to the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking, Duquesne Kline School of Law is ranked #10 nationally for professor accessibility based on ratings from Princeton Review and ranked #6 in the nation for bar preparation by *preLaw Magazine*. ■

# #85

U.S. News & World Report  
**BEST LAW SCHOOLS\***

**"Duquesne Kline Law has always been guided by a commitment to preparing exceptional lawyers who serve their clients, their communities, and the profession with integrity."**

**- DEAN APRIL BARTON**

\*a top 100 law school



## Tom McGough Appointed Distinguished Faculty Fellow

Duquesne President Ken Gormley announced that the University has appointed W. Thomas McGough, Jr., recently retired executive vice president and chief legal officer of UPMC, as a Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Law and Medicine.

In this role, McGough teaches at both the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University and the Nasuti College of Osteopathic Medicine, bringing his extensive health care leadership experience to future legal and medical professionals.

His appointment began this past spring semester. McGough leads a Health Care Marketplace course at the law school that will include collaborative sessions with students from the Nasuti College of Osteopathic Medicine. The course brings together law and medical students to examine the legal and economic framework that shapes health care delivery in the United States and to develop innovative solutions to current challenges in the health care system.

Prior to his appointment, McGough said, “Our health care system is in a deepening crisis. I look forward to joining Duquesne University’s outstanding faculty in exploring cross-disciplinary responses to that crisis and in enlisting the next generation of legal and medical professionals in that effort.”

McGough was particularly attracted to Duquesne by the Nasuti College of Osteopathic Medicine’s commitment to produce physician leaders focusing on primary care. “If we are serious about fixing health care, we should first address the challenges confronting us in primary care,” McGough said.

“Tom McGough has established himself as one of the leading experts on health care law and the business of health care delivery in the United States,” said Gormley. “This initiative creates a new paradigm for exploring the business of health care and its legal and social impacts in today’s complex environment. Duquesne University is proud to lead the way in this highly relevant field. We’re grateful that Tom is devoting his considerable talent and experience to promote positive change in an area that makes a difference for all members of American society, especially those who are underserved.”

Founded to expand opportunities for those who are marginalized, Duquesne University has worked alongside Pittsburgh communities over its long history to address

**“Tom McGough’s appointment underscores Duquesne’s horizon-expanding approach to interdisciplinary education.”**

– PROVOST DR. DAVID DAUSEY

challenges in health, education, legal access, and economic development.

“Tom McGough’s appointment underscores Duquesne’s horizon-expanding approach to interdisciplinary education,” said University Provost Dr. David Dausey. “By bridging law and medicine, we’re equipping future leaders to design forward-thinking solutions that will help our graduates improve health care delivery for all communities.”

McGough’s practical experience navigating the complex intersection of health care delivery, regulatory compliance, and institutional governance will provide students with invaluable insights into the real-world challenges facing health care and legal professionals.

“Duquesne’s Catholic and Spiritan mission calls the University to engage the world’s most pressing challenges with compassion, integrity, and a deep commitment to justice,” said Duquesne Kline Law Dean April Barton. “Tom McGough has previously taught Duquesne Kline Law students, providing them insight into one of the most complex systems they will encounter. Having him work with both law and medical students on a more formal basis will be an enormous benefit.”

“Our curriculum presents students with case studies around ethical issues in the profession, and having someone with Tom McGough’s experience will be yet another crucial resource for them to help refine their ethical reasoning,” added Dr. John Kauffman, dean of the Nasuti College of Osteopathic Medicine.

In addition to his past work at UPMC, McGough has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Virginia School of Law, was global head of litigation at Reed Smith and clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice William H. Rehnquist. ■



# Soo C. Song Appointed Distinguished Faculty Fellow

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University is proud to announce Soo C. Song, former attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice, was appointed a Distinguished Faculty Fellow in Law. She began teaching during the spring 2026 semester.

Song served as an attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice for 30 years, where she dedicated her career to seeking justice on behalf of children and other vulnerable crime victims.

“My life’s work has been dedicated to giving voice to survivors and victims of crime in service to the people of the United States. Duquesne Kline Law students are distinctly committed to serving their communities and those in need. I am eager to help students become advocates and active participants in our justice system,” she said.

Duquesne Kline School of Law Dean April Barton thinks Song’s background complements the moral compass of the school. “At Duquesne Kline School of Law, we believe every person deserves dignity, respect, and grace. Through her extensive career, Soo has demonstrated a deep commitment to those values. Our students are going to gain valuable perspectives from Soo and her knowledgeable background,” she said.

In the U.S. Department of Justice Western District of Pennsylvania, Song’s roles included acting United States attorney (2016–2017) and first assistant United States attorney (2010–2018), as well as criminal chief. In those capacities, she supervised federal prosecutions and

national security investigations in the 25 counties of the district. Song was a lead prosecutor in the trial of United States v. Robert Bowers, securing guilty verdicts in federal court for the defendant’s lethal attack upon the Tree of Life Synagogue on Oct. 27, 2018.

**“My life’s work has been dedicated to giving voice to survivors and victims of crime in service to the people of the United States.”**

“Under the Constitution, everyone has the right to worship without fear of violence. As a prosecutor in the Tree of Life Synagogue attack that occurred on October 27, 2018, I sought justice for congregants who were killed and injured in midst of worship, and for the law enforcement officers who risked their lives to rescue survivors,” said Song.

In 2023, she pioneered the role of victims’ rights coordinator in the Western District of Pennsylvania and worked to assure that crime victim rights were respected and advocated for in every federal case.

Prior to joining the United States Attorney’s Office in Pittsburgh in 2004, Song served as deputy director of the Office of Tribal Justice at the Department

of Justice in Washington, D.C. She also served as an assistant United States Attorney in the District of Arizona, with a primary focus on the prosecution of child exploitation and homicides on the Navajo Nation.

Song was a founding member of the federal Veterans Treatment Court in Pittsburgh and BRIDGES (Building Bridges to Reintegration and Empowerment for Successful Reentry) Court, and drafter of the National Heroin Task Force Report to Congress (2015). She has received awards from the attorney general of the United States for the Tree of Life prosecution (2025) and for indicting Russian cyber–espionage intelligence agents (2019). In 2025, the Law Enforcement Agency Directors (LEAD) of Western Pennsylvania honored her with a Lifetime Service Award.

Song was raised in Western Pennsylvania and is a graduate of Yale University and George Washington Law School.

Prior to her appointment she discussed anticipating her new role. “I am eager to engage students in a course on human trafficking, a criminal and dangerous aspect of society and the economy. Students in this course will have a unique opportunity to assist actual human trafficking survivors who are entitled to restitution for the injuries and harms they experienced. Victims of coercive sex trafficking and labor trafficking are exploited in a myriad of ways and are often reluctant to report to law enforcement,” said Song. ■

## New On-demand Continuing Legal Education Options

We are excited to announce the launch of our new online Continuing Legal Education (CLE) center, expanding our CLE offerings to include on-demand asynchronous programs. Pennsylvania attorneys must complete at least six credits through live-online or in-person/classroom courses, and can complete up to six credits through pre-recorded online courses. Duquesne Kline School of Law is proud to be an accredited CLE provider in Pennsylvania for both types of courses.

If you need CLE credit, please visit [duq.edu/CLE](http://duq.edu/CLE) to check out our current course offerings and on-demand portal.

In addition to the CLE portal, we are pleased to be able to offer CLE discounts to all alumni. Make sure to enter your graduation year when registering on the portal or for a live CLE to ensure you receive the discount. We welcome you to come back to your alma mater to hear from our distinguished faculty and alumni.

Have you updated your information with us recently? If not, please visit [duq.edu/UpdateLawInfo](http://duq.edu/UpdateLawInfo) to update your information and receive a coupon code for a free 1-credit on-demand offering on the new CLE portal. ■

## Paralegal Institute Celebrates Graduates

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's newest paralegal program graduates were celebrated at a special recognition ceremony on Dec. 11, 2025. The Paralegal Institute was honored to host them and recognize their achievements alongside their families. Throughout the paralegal program, these graduates demonstrated deep dedication, resilience, and a strong commitment to their studies. Congratulations to these newest paralegals on their accomplishments.

For more information about the program, email Mary Olson, program director, at [olsonm@duq.edu](mailto:olsonm@duq.edu) or visit [duq.edu/ParalegalStudies](http://duq.edu/ParalegalStudies). ■



## World-renowned EU International Policy Law Professor Serves as Guest Lecturer

Marion Ho-Dac, professor of law at the University of Artois, France, visited the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University this spring as a guest lecturer. Ho-Dac is world-renowned in European Union (EU) international policy law and specializes in private international law. This

is her second year lecturing at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

While at Duquesne Kline School of Law, Ho-Dac taught five classes, lecturing to more than 70 law students about EU policy law and artificial intelligence (AI) law, under a transnational and European perspective.

Ho-Dac, who holds a PhD in private international law and EU market law, has written numerous publications in those fields. Her research mainly focuses on the regulation of cross-border private relationships with a specific focus on the interplay between normative methodologies and multi-level regulatory areas/frameworks. Ho-Dac has developed new expertise in the law and regulation of AI technologies during the last few years, particularly in the context of the increasing digitalization of economic and human activities.

She educates many on her work, and is regularly invited to speak at conferences, symposiums and workshops in France and Europe. Ho-Dac has been a visiting professor at various universities, including Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University in France, Bonn University in Germany, and Luxembourg University. She has served as an expert for the French Artificial Intelligence Standardization Committee since 2023.

Ho-Dac brought her vast legal experience into the well-received discussions at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

"Professor Ho-Dac visited my EU law class and gave a lecture on EU judicial cooperation in civil matters. The students were very engaged throughout the session and gained a stronger understanding of the topic," said Dorothee Landgraf, adjunct professor at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Ho-Dac additionally spoke to Duquesne Kline School of Law students about EU understanding and regulation of AI along with other international law topics

"My students and I appreciated Professor Ho-Dac's lecture and her answers to students' thoughtful questions afterwards. We benefited from her lecture and the French perspective on the theory of punitive damages," said Richard Gaffney, associate professor of legal skills at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Duquesne Kline School of Law is appreciative for Ho-Dac's visit, which contributes to students' enrichment and understanding of European Union law and AI and technology.

"We thank Professor Ho-Dac for again visiting Duquesne Kline School of Law and sharing her knowledge with as many students and professors as she did. It is very beneficial for our students to understand international law and to compare and contrast between international and national law to gain a deeper understanding of this quickly changing world, especially in relation to AI and Technology," said Associate Dean for Strategic Academic Programs and Associate Professor of Law Tara Wilke. ■



# PERSPECTIVE AND PERSEVERANCE

**Veterans and Active Military Members Strengthen Law School**

By Amanda S. Drumm

To precipitate learning and growth, it is often necessary to alter thought processes and discover new ways to solve problems. Military and law school environments similarly challenge the mindset of a person because they are fast-paced and intense, and they teach critical thinking. They are designed to foster collaboration and to push and exceed limitations.

Photo: Dean April Barton with law school graduates Lieutenant Commander Joe Kelly and Staff Sergeant Dom Zboyovsky after 2026 Commencement ceremony.

People emerge stronger, with a fresh perspective, and with new skills. The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University has been a welcoming home for veterans and military personnel, building upon their established, unique proficiencies, perseverance, and service mentality while training them for what is next in their careers.

### Prepared for Anything

Unwavering determination and the conviction that quitting is not an option are developed during the military's basic training and are leveraged in law school.

"I think it really helped me for this. You have an idea that it will be hard at first; knowing that it becomes normal helps a lot. My day starts at 5:30 in the morning, and with night classes I don't get home until 10:30 at night. My training helped me to have the perseverance to keep pushing," said Ian Smith, 4E, a veteran of the West Virginia National Guard who works full time for the federal government.

Para Bradshaw, 2L, a veteran of the Army National Guard and co-president of the Military Law Society, credits her military training for her prevailing resilience, especially during her first year of law school.

"The military mentally prepared me for law school. I knew if I could make it through that I could do anything. When it was time for me to come to law school I had that same mentality. The first semester is the hardest. I thought, 'This is my basic training; if you make it, you are fine.' The 1L first semester was difficult, but I was trained to be resilient and adaptable," she said.

Tara Willke, associate dean for strategic academic programs and associate professor of law, is one of several veterans who work at Duquesne Kline School of Law. As an Air Force veteran, she recognizes how her military experience shaped her and prepared her for law school.

"It helped me a lot with the value of structure, organization, and attention to detail. Basic training is a confidence builder. It is hard but it teaches resiliency. You must persevere and work through adversity and work together, too," she said.



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**- PARA BRADSHAW, 2L**

Willke observes this unwavering commitment current military and veteran students who are enrolled at Duquesne Kline School of Law demonstrate.

"They already had to deal with adversity and chain of command. They understand that they are going to have to put in the necessary time. They realize they are going to have to work hard to see the results they want," Willke said.

The challenges Geron Oakley, 1E, faced his first semester were embraced. As an Army Reserve veteran who is currently serving in the National Guard, he credits his recent Officer Candidate School (OCS) training for making his law school transition successful.

"I had just graduated from OCS, which prepares you to be an officer in the National Guard, then came to law school. It got me organized. What you learn in basic training and OCS is you take the time to figure out what you are going to do, this is how I am going to organize this, implement it, and do not deviate from it. This is what I need to do, move forward, how I organize my time and you don't quit, no matter how hard things get. It was tremendously helpful and I attribute OCS to getting me through the first semester of law school," he said.

### Support and Success

Duquesne University retains a dedicated Office for Military and Veteran Students to serve any military member, veteran student or veteran dependent who is receiving a Duquesne degree. The office is responsible for hosting the largest Veterans Day breakfast on any college campus each year and the largest hiring event in Pennsylvania for those who were in the military.

Its director, Christopher Boissonnault, is a Marine Corps veteran and a tireless advocate for military and veteran students. They regularly visit him for routine needs—like free printing, copying services, and snacks—to larger

necessities, such as financial assistance from the University's Veterans Resource fund and assisting with essential items such as parking, groceries, gasoline, or diapers at times when veterans may encounter difficult monetary situations.

"We also provide counseling services and have our own counselor from the VA who is available 24/7. When a veteran comes to me, we make it better," Boissonnault said.

Dom Zboyovsky, 4E, is currently serving in the Air Force as a reservist and is serving in his first semester with the Veterans Court. He is personally grateful for the help from the Office for Military and Veteran Students.

"I just really appreciate how military-friendly Duquesne is. The stuff they do throughout the year, the Veterans Day program, the veterans breakfast. It is other things, too. Last semester Chris secured funds for parking for military students and veterans. It is a lot of little things that really make us feel appreciated," he said.

Understanding the transition and needs of service members returning to school is a top priority for the Office for Military and Veteran Students.

"A lot of people just thank you for your service, but we support you. It is the students' needs that drive me. Many come in with medical, psychological, or family problems, and at the end of the day, it is all about taking care of fellow veterans, military members, dependents, and ROTC," Boissonnault said.

The service to veterans has earned Duquesne University many accolades, including recognition as a 2025 Top 10 Military Friendly School for Veterans. Currently, there are 12 veterans and 17 military dependents enrolled in Duquesne Kline School of Law. They are part of the Duquesne University total of 189 military/veteran students,

581 dependents and 89 ROTC students. Together, they have an average GPA of 3.68.

"These are students who have unique stories, and a lot have seen some things. Most have had good days, bad days, and hardships. They have experienced challenging times and think outside of the box. They are taught discipline and are on time; there is no such thing as being late in the military. They participate, help in group projects, and are mindful of deadlines," he said.

Austin Miller, 1L, a veteran of the United States Air Force who served stateside and in Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Germany, England, Ireland, Canada, Lithuania, Romania, Portugal, and Estonia, agreed that from the onset of law school veterans and military personnel greatly contribute because they are accustomed to challenges and a fast-paced environment, and are persistent.

"I am a fifth-generation service member and was taught the importance of discipline, respect, and accountability early in life. My father also taught me selflessness, humanity, and virtue. My experience in the military furthered my personal growth in leadership, communication, resilience, and patience," he said.

### **Spirit of Community and Service**

Armed service members learn quickly in their drills that teamwork is essential. The wisdom of fellowship remains with them as does the vocation to be service-driven. They have found both in Duquesne Kline School of Law's communal atmosphere and the Military Law Society, and through clinical opportunities, especially the Veterans Clinic.

"The community here is great. I made quite a bit of friends; one happened to be



**"It got me organized. What you learn in basic training and OCS is you take the time to figure out what you are going to do, this is how I am going to organize this, implement it, and do not deviate from it. This is what I need to do, move forward, how I organize my time and you don't quit, no matter how hard things get."**

**- GERON OAKLEY, 1E**

a vet who is currently serving. It is kind of nice to have a group of people who you constantly come back to and recognize the faces have something to talk about outside of your classes," said Smith.

Joe Kelly, 3L, knows about community and collaboration. He served in the Coast Guard for 10 years, including two on the Coast Guard cutter Resolute and three as part of a Maritime Safety & Security Team in New York City. He has likewise formed a tight group of veterans at Duquesne Kline School of Law.



**“I just really appreciate how military-friendly Duquesne is. The stuff they do throughout the year, the Veterans Day program, the veterans breakfast. It is other things, too. Last semester Chris secured funds for parking for military students and veterans. It is a lot of little things that really make us feel appreciated.”**

**- DOM ZBOYOVSKY, 4E**

“Duquesne Kline does an excellent job supporting veterans, both during enrollment and throughout the law school experience. I’ve met many other veterans, and we’ve built a strong community. I stay in close contact with several of them and maintain those relationships on a daily basis,” he said.

The Military Law Society is an additional area on campus for connection. Meetings and programs are held throughout the year to allow students to bond with one another, and in true military fashion, the organization intersects with service to others.

“Military and veterans sometimes have a difficult time finding things to be engaged in. The Military Law Society is a nice network, where we still look out for each other, but is not just for veterans or active military. Anyone can be involved. It is heartening that this is a school that looks out for veterans and everyone,” Bradshaw said.

The group holds service events, including donation drives for deployed military. They also volunteer for the Allegheny County Bar Association’s Wills for Heroes event. “It is a way for us to still give back,” said Bradshaw.

Miller agreed. “I highly recommend it to anyone interested in learning about military law and assisting retired veterans with legal work,” he said.

Zboyovsky, a member of the Military Law Society, additionally volunteers his time to Duquesne Kline’s Veterans Clinic.

“I have had the privilege of helping several clients with various legal issues they have. It is super rewarding when someone needs help with something and I have knowledge and skills to do that. I now have half a dozen clients. I check in, make sure there is nothing outside of Veterans Court they need help with. The Veterans Clinic is an awesome experience,” he said.

The mission of Duquesne Kline School of Law naturally complements the purpose-driven attitudes of service members and veterans.

Willke said, “The Duquesne Kline School of Law mission resonates with them because it is all about service. The military is about service before self, and the missions are very similar in that way. In the military I had a purpose, and I felt that here. It is more of a purpose-driven environment than other law schools.”

### **Flexible and Welcoming**

Adaptability is second nature to active-duty military members and veterans, and they are dutifully cognizant of their obligations. One reason Duquesne Kline School of Law is a preferred choice for them is because of the flexible program offerings, allowing them to simultaneously meet their responsibilities and expand their education.

The evening program was a natural fit for Zboyovsky because it enabled him to continue working his reserve job in a data analytics and maintenance group while furthering his education.

“The evening program was a big part of my choice because I always worked while I was in school and wanted to continue to work full time,” he said.

Likewise, the flexible evening program has made it possible for Pertrina Supler, 3E, to work, care for her family, and go to law school. She is a veteran of the Army and National Guard who served in Iraq and Kuwait.

“I care for my three sons and can work part time in addition to going to law school. I help train students who have disabilities. The job is great and helps give

me focus on other directions,” Supler said.

Oakley, a government staffer who is employed by a state legislator, is also part of the evening program. He said, “I enjoy working and wanted to continue working.”

Bradshaw was interested in attending law school during the day, and it was the hospitable environment and the bar and employment success that drew her to Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“I felt very welcome immediately and knew that everyone here is going to do their best to make sure I succeed. I felt I will leave here with everything, a degree in hand, passing the bar, and becoming a successful attorney. I did not get that feeling from anywhere else except for Duquesne Kline,” she said.

### **Experienced and Empowered**

Espousing leadership, being a team player, selflessness, and pushing oneself harder are lessons our veterans and military personnel are learning twice. They are empowered because of the experiences they brought into law school and ready for their legal careers because of the ones they are taking with them as they leave.

“I think one of the things about having the military experience and being in law school that they tie together is being exposed to so many different things that otherwise I wouldn’t have been exposed to, people, cultures, and geography,” said Supler.

Zboyovsky is fulfilling his goals because of his staunch determination and drive. He was selected to commission with the Air Force’s Judge Advocate General Corps after he graduates from law school and passes the bar.

“I went to law school to be a JAG in the Air Force, and this is a full circle moment for me because all that hard work paid off,” he said.



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**“I am a fifth-generation service member and was taught the importance of discipline, respect, and accountability early in life. My father also taught me selflessness, humanity, and virtue. My experience in the military furthered my personal growth in leadership, communication, resilience, and patience.”**

**– AUSTIN MILLER, 1L**

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Kelly is also realizing his dreams coming to fruition. After his graduation, he will return to an active-duty billet. He is awaiting orders to confirm the location, but he will be transitioning into the Coast Guard’s Judge Advocate General Corps.

“Depending on the assignment, Coast Guard attorneys can work on maritime and environmental enforcement, including pollution response and

compliance matters, support counterdrug and interdiction operations with complex jurisdictional issues, and handle military justice and command advising that directly affects unit readiness and good order and discipline. Whatever the assignment, I know I will learn something new and support the service’s 11 statutory missions,” Kelly said.

Veterans are enhanced by attending Duquesne Kline School of Law, and the law school and its students are also better because of their presence.

“For me the bottom line is they enrich the student body so much, from them sitting in classrooms, sharing their experiences, and becoming that peer role model for other students in the way they carry themselves and the way they talk. Other students think, ‘Wow, that’s cool; I want to be like that person.’ Some 1Ls want to be JAGs and are amazed by our veteran students and how they conduct themselves. They are great role models,” Willke said.

They are always thinking of others, too. When asked how the military shaped him, Kelly said, “I have had the honor of serving alongside consummate professionals who have become my lifelong friends. I see so many similarities with the class of 2026 here at Duquesne Kline and look forward to seeing how successful our great class becomes.” ■

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*Pictures of Duquesne Kline School of Law military veterans in uniform, or quotes relating to their law school experience or military service, are not intended, and do not denote, an endorsement of Duquesne Kline School of Law by the Department of Defense, the Department of Homeland Security, or any Armed Force.*

# Law School Love

## Alumni Share Sweetheart Stories of Meeting at Duquesne Kline School of Law

By Amanda S. Drumm

Sometimes romance is formed instantly; other times it is a spark that takes longer to ignite. The Thomas R. Kline School of Law has served as a backdrop to instant and gradual love connections.

Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni shared their special moments of meeting on campus, bonding, and how their romances grew (and thrived!) during the rigors of law school.

### LRW: Love, Research and Writing

Amanda Betts, L'15, and Brandon Betts, L'15, met on their first day of Legal Research and Writing (LRW) with Professor April Milburn-Knizner. They sat beside each other and have remained next to one another since that initial class.

“Meeting in law school, we were really able to understand and appreciate the commitment law school requires and support each other through it. We also got to celebrate each other’s accomplishments together,” said Amanda.

The couple married in the Duquesne Chapel in 2018, with all their close friends from law school in attendance. Their dear friend, now Duquesne Kline School of Law Professor Martin McKown, L'15, who they met as 1Ls, gave the blessing at their wedding.

Amanda said, “Duquesne Kline Law will always hold a special place in my heart. It is where I met my husband as well as some of my best friends who I will treasure for a lifetime. We love Duquesne Kline Law School and hope the current and future students have as much of a positive experience as we did.”

Amanda and Brandon are now parents to two little boys who keep them very busy. Amanda works for Judge Laura Tocci in Beaver County as a judicial law clerk, while Brandon works for Logan Mettley & Newcomer PLC practicing employee benefits law.

### The Sweetest First Words

In the library during Orientation, Michele (Mellick) Johnson, L'19, was saying goodbye to friends when she first encountered Corey Johnson, L'19. They did not know one another, but he jokingly called out, “I love you!” making everyone around them laugh. The moment was fleeting but it was one they would both remember.

Later, on Valentine’s Day, Corey asked Michele to the Barristers’ Ball. Michele recalls not being sure if Corey liked her or if he felt bad for her after her plans had fallen through. She was reassured when he showed up the night of the dance with flowers and a gift, and he opened every door for her. That night became their first date, and they now appreciate that Corey’s first words ever to her—“I love you”—ended up being true. They married in 2022 and have a son named Bryson and another little boy on the way.

Michele said, “The law school holds a special place in our hearts because it’s where we both accomplished our goals of becoming attorneys and fell in love. Going back to campus always reminds us of the classes we took together, the friends we made, and the many hours we spent studying. We even returned to the Bluff for Bryson’s baptism.”

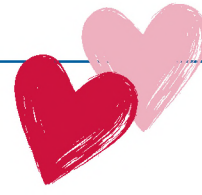
Corey works as an assistant district counsel at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Michele is senior commercial counsel for GE Vernova.



Brandon and Amanda Betts



Corey and Michele Johnson



## Bar Buddies

It was not until their third year of law school that Amber Reiner Skovdal, L'13, and Finn Skovdal, L'13, connected. Their story began when they sat together in the lounge waiting for their night classes. They dated after that and later enjoyed studying together for the biggest test of their lives.

“As crazy as it sounds, we had a great summer after graduation while we studied for the bar exam. Spending time together between study lessons gave us something to look forward to and broke up the monotony and stress of bar prep,” Amber said.

The couple became husband and wife in 2017. They have two daughters who they say are “the light of their lives.”

Amber is now an associate general counsel for Bohler Engineering, a mid-sized civil engineering firm. Finn ran a successful solo criminal defense practice and recently merged with Kilkenny Law to expand into municipal law, serving as solicitor to municipal entities across the greater Philadelphia area as a complement to his criminal practice.

Duquesne Kline School of Law holds a special place in the hearts of Amber and Finn because it is where they began their professional lives, and where they found each other.

Amber said, “We will always treasure our time at Duquesne Kline because it was the start of our legal careers, but it was made so much more special by the fact that we found each other there.”



## Laughter Leads to Love

Hattie (Parent) Weaver, L'18, and Lisle Weaver, L'18, were in the same section, but only began to interact during their 2L year.

“We were introduced when we were both studying late in the library for finals in the fall of 2016 when Lisle was joking with a mutual friend—shoutout to Allen Page, L'18—and I couldn't stop laughing. That spring, we were both in Judge [Jeffrey] Manning's trial advocacy class and were assigned to be opposing counsel in the mock trial. We walked to our summer clerkships together throughout the summer of 2017 and finally started dating at the beginning of our 3L year,” Hattie said.

Lisle fondly remembers one of their first meetings differently. He said, “Right before our very first final in Torts was to start, Hattie was jogging up to the front of the classroom in a panic because one of her No.2 pencils broke. I looked at her and thought ‘she's stressing me out; I can't be around her.’ It wasn't until I made a stupid joke in the library during a late-night study session that made Hattie crack up laughing that I thought she might be fun to hang out with. Fast-forward a few years, and ironically, she's now the calm one when the dog is throwing up while our toddler is screaming because *Goodnight Moon* was left in the car.”

When Hattie and Lisle started to date, they gained more friends and learned more about different parts of the law.

“Being together merged our friend groups and made 3L year really enjoyable. It also allowed us both to glimpse into each other's preferred areas of law. I observed several cases Lisle's boss, now partner, Tom Farrell, L'91, tried. Lisle got to hear all about civil disputes I assisted with during my clerkships,” said Hattie.

Hattie and Lisle are forever fond of Duquesne Kline School of Law because that is where their relationship began and because of the many people from the law school that they continue to have in their friend circle.

“Duquesne Kline Law holds a special place in my heart because obviously it's where I met the love of my life. But it also introduced me to lifelong friends,” said Lisle.

In 2022, Hattie and Lisle married. They are parents to a daughter, Carmella. They have a dog, Archie, named after one of their favorite places to take a study break. They are parents again to a baby boy, born in March and named Hanley, after the law school building where they met (Hanley Hall)!

Lisle is a partner at Farrell, Weaver and Okun LLC, specializing in criminal defense. Hattie is a senior attorney at FedEx.





### An A+ A Walk Proposal

Maria (Carr) Hanley, L'20, and Jacob Hanley, L'20, met during their 1L year and were in separate sections.

"We only knew of each other (or at least I knew of Jacob). Knowing that Jacob also played college soccer, I convinced him to join the intramural law school soccer team during our 2L year. We became friends through playing intramural soccer and in our appellate moot court class. We started dating the summer before our 3L year," said Maria.

Since the two started to date during the summer after their 2L year, they scheduled most of their 3L year classes together, becoming inseparable. Jacob later found a creative way to integrate Duquesne Kline School of Law into his proposal to Maria.

"I didn't think Jacob could possibly think of a way to catch me off guard with a proposal. After work one day, he asked if I wanted to run up to the law school with him to catch up with a professor we both had in school. I agreed, thinking nothing of it. Seeing construction at the front of the law school, Jacob recommended we walk around to the back. As soon as we stepped onto A Walk, Jacob reached into his suit pocket, I looked ahead and spotted rose petals on the ground, and I knew he had pulled off the ultimate surprise. So yes, the law school certainly holds a special place in both of our hearts," Maria said.

The Hanleys married in October 2023 and have a 13-month-old son named Jack. They stayed in Pittsburgh: Maria works at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, while Jacob works at Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC.

They are still active at Duquesne Kline School of Law, coaching two appellate moot court teams, the 2L and 3L teams. "They are a great group of talented, hard-working students," Maria said.

### Friends First

Kristine Marsilio, L'13, and Nick Marsilio, L'13, were in the same Legal Research and Writing class and became close friends. The duo even attended the Barristers' Ball their first year with other dates.

"Thankfully, life had a better plan, and what started as a friendship turned into something so much more, and we're grateful for that every day," said Nick.

The solid foundation from friendship and being in a relationship brought them closer during the difficult time of bar preparation.

"One of the most special parts of our time together at Duquesne Kline was actually during the summer we spent studying for the bar. It was a long and oftentimes grueling stretch but going through it together made it manageable. It taught us to how to support each other under real pressure. Passing the bar felt incredible but doing it together made it even more memorable," said Nick.

Kristine and Nick married in September 2015 and recently celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary. They have two children, Ellie and Jack.

The couple now resides in Harrisburg. Kristine is a special counsel at Duane Morris LLP in the gaming group, representing and advising various gaming platforms, while Nick is a deputy chief counsel with the Unemployment Compensation Division for the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry.

"Our Legal Research and Writing professor was one of the most demanding and memorable professors we had. Getting through her class together definitely fast-tracked our friendship into something more. Years later, having that very professor attend our wedding felt like a perfect full-circle Duquesne Kline Law moment," said Nick.

"Duquesne Kline Law will always hold a special place in our hearts. It's where we met, formed lifelong friendships, and discovered our calling in the law. All of which have laid the foundation for both our careers and the family we've built together," Kristine said.

*Thank you to these couples for sharing their unique Duquesne Kline School of Law stories. If you want to share how you met your love at Duquesne Kline School of Law, please email Amanda Drumm at [drumma@duq.edu](mailto:drumma@duq.edu). ■*



# Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education: Expanding National Reach

The Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education recently achieved a significant milestone, becoming the first and only law school-based judicial education provider to receive independent accreditation through a state Supreme Court system. “This recognition reflects the quality of the Kline Center’s programming and its focus on delivering practical and thoughtful courses that respond directly to the needs of the judiciary,” said Erin Karsman, executive director of the Kline Center.

Building on that foundation, the Kline Center launched its new AI and the Courts initiative, its first independent Continuing Judicial Education (CJE) series offered to Pennsylvania judges and beyond. The four-part curriculum, delivered over Zoom throughout 2026, brings together leading scholars from across the country to examine how artificial intelligence is impacting the courtroom and judicial decision-making. Sessions address foundational AI concepts

and courtroom applications, the admissibility of AI-generated evidence, judicial review of automated decisions, and the ethics of using AI in judicial writing. The series has already drawn significant participation from judges beyond Pennsylvania, reflecting both the importance of the subject matter and the Kline Center’s growing reach. “Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the legal landscape. Programs like this ensure that judges are equipped to understand and respond to these changes,” noted Dean April Barton, who served on the faculty for the series’ inaugural program.

Collaboration has also been central to the Kline Center’s growing national reputation. A recent highlight was the Kline Center’s partnership with the National Association of State Judicial Educators (NASJE) during its Annual Conference and 50th Anniversary Celebration in Philadelphia, led by NASJE President Stephen M. Feiler, PhD, director of the Judicial Education Department at the Administrative Office

of Pennsylvania Courts. The conference brought together judicial educators representing nearly every state judiciary and several foreign countries. President Ken Gormley, Chief Justice Emeritus Thomas G. Saylor and Karsman led a plenary session offering attendees a blueprint for establishing partnerships between state courts and law schools, underscoring the Kline Center’s mission and the significance of its newly awarded accreditation. The Kline Center also hosted the conference’s signature networking reception at the Museum of the American Revolution, giving NASJE members an opportunity to learn firsthand about the center’s operations and the resources it offers to judges nationwide.

As it expands its reach, the Kline Center remains focused on its core mission: providing Pennsylvania judges with practical, high-quality continuing judicial education that responds to the demands of the bench. ■



“This recognition reflects the quality of the Kline Center’s programming and its focus on delivering practical and thoughtful courses that respond directly to the needs of the judiciary.”

– ERIN KARSMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE KLINE CENTER



## The Duquesne Kline School of Law

# Externship Experience

By Rebecca Edmiston, L'18

The Duquesne Kline School of Law one-semester externship program allows students to earn academic credit for their work with government offices, nonprofit legal organizations, judges, law firms, and more. As a result, students have the opportunity to get hands-on legal experience and develop practical professional skills throughout law school to better prepare for legal practice post-graduation. Students and supervising attorneys alike have found the externship experience to be highly rewarding and mutually beneficial, and we are proud to share more of their experiences with you.

### WORDS FROM SOME OF OUR ESTEEMED EXTERNSHIP SUPERVISORS ...



#### **Sarah Weikart, L'16**

Deputy District Attorney, Allegheny County District Attorney's Office

“Supervising externs/interns is one of the most rewarding parts of my role. I remember how important hands-on experience and meaningful mentorship were during my own time in law school, and I strive to provide that same opportunity to Duquesne Kline students. Watching externs gain confidence in the courtroom, engage thoughtfully with victims and law enforcement, and begin to understand the responsibility that comes with representing the commonwealth is incredibly fulfilling. It is a privilege to help shape the next generation of attorneys and to support students as they discover the kind of lawyers they want to become.”



#### **Judge Nicola Henry-Taylor, L'96**

Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, Civil Division

“Supervising students through the Duquesne Kline externship program is one of the most rewarding aspects of my work. Our layered mentorship model, in which my mentee and law clerk, Samantha Dorn, a Duquesne Kline graduate, directly supervises interns and externs, creates meaningful opportunities for professional growth. Watching students progress from their initial to final evaluations, gaining confidence, skill, and a deeper understanding of professionalism, confirms that intentional mentorship truly shapes the future of our profession.”



**Judge Jill Beck, L'06**  
Superior Court of Pennsylvania

“My staff and I enjoy having students working in my chambers. We have been fortunate to work with bright, enthusiastic, and intellectually curious externs who have provided different perspectives, thoughtful analyses, and an incredible work ethic to the job, all of which enhances our work. In my view, the externship program has many benefits, including helping to train the next generation of lawyers in the practice of law, exposing law students to areas of the law that they may not have otherwise had the opportunity to learn about in the classroom, providing practical experience to students that they can apply following graduation and creating interest in an area of law that may ultimately translate into full-time employment. The Duquesne Kline School of Law’s externship program is a wonderful resource for students interested in appellate practice and judicial clerkships.”

**WORDS FROM SOME OF OUR DEDICATED STUDENT EXTERNS ...**



**Lewis Richardson, 3L**

Extern with Judge Thomas Hardiman,  
U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

“Externing with Judge Thomas Hardiman at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit was a defining experience of my law school career. Working alongside his clerks gave me a front-row seat to federal appellate practice—from researching complex jurisdictional questions to observing oral argument—and reinforced my commitment to pursuing a career in federal litigation. Judge Hardiman’s chambers operates with a level of rigor and intellectual depth that pushed me to become a sharper thinker and a more precise writer. I’m incredibly grateful for the opportunity and would encourage any student with an interest in federal courts or appellate work to pursue a similar experience.”



**Emily Tyler, 3L**

Extern with KidsVoice

“By working at KidsVoice, I advocate for children to have safe homes and bright futures. Not only do I get to prep my own cases and present in front of a judge, but I get to solve real-life problems and make a remarkable impact in my community.”



**Alexia Facchiano, 4E**

Extern with McNeese, Wallace & Nurick, LLC

“My externship with McNeese Wallace & Nurick in their Estate Planning Department has furthered my legal education in more ways than I could have anticipated. I was able to learn hands-on skills pertaining to estates and trusts such as helping draft powers of attorney, simple wills, and health care powers of attorney. McNeese was flexible and accommodating with my schedule, which was great as an evening student. This in-office experience has been incredibly beneficial to both my growth as a law student and as a future practicing attorney.”



**Hayley Smith, 2L**

Extern with Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office

“My experience at the Allegheny County District Attorney’s Office has been invaluable because it has given me a realistic understanding of what the job entails and has connected me with incredible attorneys who have taught me so much. It is endlessly fascinating work with an empowering nexus of mentorship.”



**Belle Chapman, 2L**

Extern with Judge Thomas Caulfield, Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas

“My work with Judge Caulfield at Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas has provided me with valuable insight into the judicial process and a deeper understanding of the criminal justice system in practice. Through this experience, I have come to appreciate the pragmatic balance between legal theory and courtroom realities.”

If you are interested in supervising externs from Duquesne Kline School of Law, please contact **Rebecca Edmiston, externship and pro bono supervisor**, at [edmistonr@duq.edu](mailto:edmistonr@duq.edu).

# Career Services Office Employment Picture

CLASS OF 2025  
**92.8%**  
 Employment Rate

Every year the Career Services Office (CSO) collects information about the employment of our most recent graduating class. This information is used by the American Bar Association and National Association of Law Placement (NALP) to publish information about the nationwide employment picture and inform prospective law students, current law students, legal employers, and the public. We are extremely proud to report that 92.8% of the Class of 2025 were employed as of March 16, 2026, as reported to the ABA in April 2026. This includes 89.5% having full-time, long-term jobs the ABA classifies as either Bar Passage Required or JD Advantage (such


as compliance, tax associate, or policy work). By comparison, the national average for full-time, long-term Bar Passage Required and JD Advantage jobs is 87.7%.

As is the case every year, the majority of employed graduates work in private law firms, and the majority of those graduates practice in firms with 2-25 attorneys. Members of the Class of 2025 secured positions in 15 states/jurisdictions: Arizona, California, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia. ■

## The Types of Employment Represented by The Class of 2025

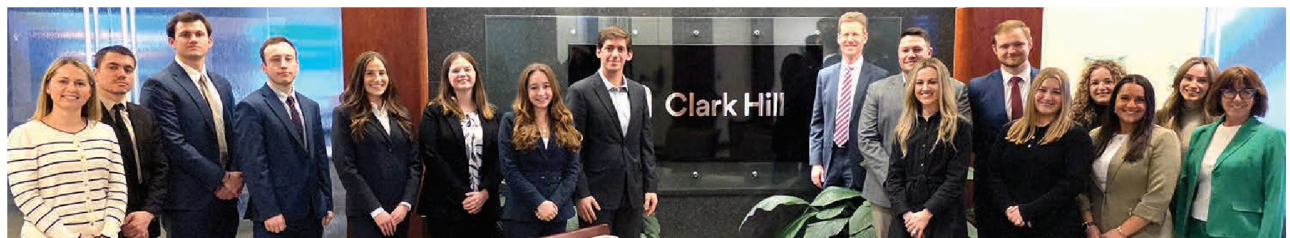
	<b>Law Firms:</b>	<b>65%</b>
	<b>Government:</b>	<b>14%</b>
	<b>Public Interest:</b>	<b>11%</b>
	<b>Judicial Clerkships:</b>	<b>6%</b>
	<b>Business/Industry:</b>	<b>4%</b>

*Thomas R. Kline School of Law  
 of Duquesne University*

 Detailed information about the three most recent graduating classes' employment status can be found at [duq.edu/LawEmploymentStats](http://duq.edu/LawEmploymentStats).

# THANK YOU!

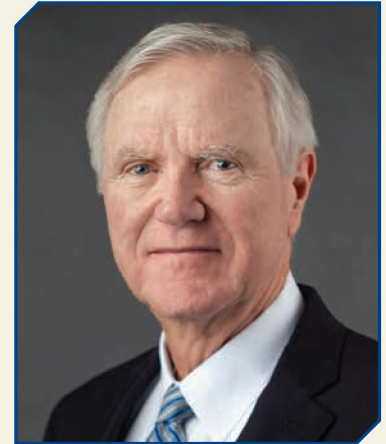
The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University is fortunate to have alumni who go above and beyond to remind our students that they are part of something far greater than themselves. Whether visiting campus, opening your offices for experiential learning, sharing your wisdom as mentors and coaches, or joining us at events, you show up in ways that make a lasting difference. We are deeply grateful for your generosity and continued dedication to the Duquesne Kline School of Law community. Thank you.



## Alumni Profile

# Roger J. Peters, L'75

Leading Construction Mediator,  
Former General Counsel at Dick Corporation



**Where is your hometown?** I moved to Pittsburgh when I was 15 years old and lived there for more than 45 years, so I consider Pittsburgh my hometown. For the last 15 years, I have been living in the Clearwater, Fla., area and consider that as my home.

**What is your educational background?** I received a BA from Penn State University in 1971 and a JD from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, Evening Division, in 1975.

**Do you have any motto or guiding principle that you live by, or any specific words you live by?** To be successful/happy in life, I have found you need to have passion in whatever you do, whether it is a sport activity, business profession, or family. Likewise, I have found that having the passion to serve the construction industry in the alternative dispute resolution arena over the last 20 years as a mediator, arbitrator, or dispute review board member has been particularly exciting, interesting, and rewarding.

**What is something about you that might surprise people?** I grow orchids to display in prominent places in our home.

**How did your time at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University prepare you for your previous position as general counsel at Dick Corporation and your current role as a leading construction mediator?** Duquesne [Kline] Law taught me how to read and understand complex construction legal issues and how to perform under pressure. It was not easy attending law school at night and working and traveling for my then employer. Reading and studying cases while on a plane and finding the time to prepare for exams was a challenge, but perseverance and determination proved that I could meet those challenges and succeed. As a result, I was well prepared to accept the challenges confronting me with the Dick Corporation, which had never before had employed an in-house attorney.

**The American Arbitration Association (AAA) selected you to serve on its Mega Panel of Construction Neutrals for large and complex construction cases, not only as a mediator but also as an arbitrator. As one of only two attorneys from Pittsburgh invited to join this organization, and the only Duquesne Kline School of Law alumnus among them, how has this distinction shaped your professional perspective and practice?** When attorneys and parties are looking for experienced and skilled mediators and arbitrators on large disputes administered by the AAA, they generally look to the Mega Panel's roster, which is made up of less than 50 construction mediators/arbitrators to

find someone that they think "fits the bill." Having been nominated by my peers and vetted by the AAA to be invited to be on the Mega Panel adds credibility to my resume and puts me in a class among highly thought of mediators and arbitrators, which greatly enhances my opportunities to serve.

**You were inducted as a Fellow of the American College of Construction Lawyers (ACCL), a highly selective organization with approximately 245 members nationwide. What does this recognition mean to you, and how does it reflect your contributions to the construction legal profession and your community?** Being nominated and then inducted into the ACCL by a select group of the leading construction lawyers in the country was to me the equivalent of being inducted into the construction law hall of fame. The induction was based upon my service of 32 years as general counsel to a very large general contractor, my service on many dispute review boards to prevent/resolve construction disputes from going to litigation, and my service to many contractors, owners and design professionals as a mediator to help them resolve large and complex disputes. As part of my give-back to the construction industry, I have made many presentations over many years to industry groups on the merits of alternative dispute resolution. In addition, I have served and continue to serve as president of my community's homeowner association, which is made up of more than 700 homes. Moreover, I have been active serving as a volunteer on construction committees for the country club and beach and yacht club to which I belong here in Florida.

**How would you describe the value of a Duquesne Kline School of Law education in the 21st century?** Having recently attended my 50th reunion at the School of Law, I was tremendously impressed with updated facilities that the law students now enjoy compared to what I experienced 50 years ago. In addition, listening to the presentations of the dean and others, I was very impressed with the ranking of the law school on a nationwide basis, along with its ability to place graduates in the legal workforce. Combining all of these attributes, I would think this would make the Duquesne Kline School of Law an attractive venue for any prospective law student.

**What advice would you give to young lawyers and law students who hope to follow a similar path?** There are many areas of law that a law student will have the opportunity to choose; however, I have found that construction law and alternative dispute resolution can provide unique opportunities for a successful legal career. Once a student makes the commitment to these disciplines, they need to be pursued with great passion in order to achieve a successful outcome. ■

## Alumni Profile

# Allison Warden Sizemore, L'09

Managing Partner of Reed Smith, Pittsburgh



### Where is your hometown?

I grew up in Bosque Farms, N.M., just outside of Albuquerque.

### What is your educational background?

I graduated from St. Pius X High School in Albuquerque. I then attended and graduated from St. Bonaventure University in Olean, N.Y., in 2004 with a B.A. in political science, and then from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University in 2009.

### What are you currently reading?

I rarely have time to read other than work-related items or when I am on vacation. For the next vacation, I'll likely pick up a mystery thriller.

### Do you have any motto or guiding principle that you live by, or any specific words you live by?

Stepping into any stressful or difficult situation, I put myself in the shoes of other people and fairly consider their perspective/arguments. This helps to respond with empathy and awareness and to feel prepared. Similarly, I give others the benefit of the doubt as much as possible.

### What might people be surprised to know about you?

I often crochet in my spare time. I'm currently fulfilling very specific "orders" for custom blankets requested by my two kids.

### Can you share your employment history and how it led you to your current role as a leading employee benefits and executive compensation lawyer?

I was privileged to work at Cohen & Grigsby during my 2L summer while in law school at Duquesne [Kline], and I started there as an associate. After three excellent years, I lateraled to Reed Smith in 2012 and made partner in 2017. As I moved through my career as a partner at Reed Smith, I believe that taking ownership of matters and being a consensus-builder are the traits that most contributed to me being entrusted with leadership positions.

### How did your experience at Duquesne Kline School of Law help prepare you for the leadership roles you now hold as managing partner of Reed Smith's Pittsburgh office and chair of its U.S. Employee Benefits

### and Executive Compensation Group? Were there particular courses, mentors or formative experiences that shaped your trajectory?

My experience at Duquesne [Kline] helped equip me with many of the skills needed to be successful both as a big law firm partner and as the Office Managing Partner for our Pittsburgh office—time management, inquisitiveness, tenacity, and concise and direct communication. In particular, I loved my time at Duquesne [Kline] working with the tax professors, including Dr. Jordan and Professor Yochum, and being a part of the appellate tax moot court team. I was also privileged to have Dr. Murray as my professor of contracts when I was a 1L; he was a fabulous teacher who quickly interested me in word choice and alternative meanings.

### How would you describe the value of a Duquesne Kline School of Law education in the 21st century?

Law school should teach you how to be a lawyer, not just about the law. And Duquesne delivered on that for me. It's a toolbox you can go back to over and over, whether the challenge is a tricky legal analysis, people management, or transitioning between jobs or phases of life.

### The legal landscape is constantly evolving. What do you see as the biggest challenge or opportunity facing lawyers today?

I have to say AI. But rather than go on about AI, I will add that lawyers are facing ever-increasing expectations for speed of responsiveness, and it's important against that backdrop to remember that our role is to advocate responsibly, be an informed expert, and understand and respond to our clients in a practical way.

### What advice would you give to young lawyers and law students who hope to follow a similar path?

Goals that are too far off in time are too difficult to measure against and can be overwhelming. Focus on what measures of success or accomplishments you want to achieve in the next 1-2 years, and then write down (yes, really write down) concrete action steps that would contribute to that goal. And then refresh annually. Also, in the law, so much is about relationships, practicality and dependability. Do your best on the small things, even if no one cares, and you will prove yourself worthy of handling bigger issues. ■

# ClassActions

Stay connected with Duquesne Kline Law!  
Send us your accomplishments, news you would like to share, and updates to your contact information at [lawalumni@duq.edu](mailto:lawalumni@duq.edu).

## 1973

**Hon. Joy Flowers Conti** delivered the keynote address for Jackson Day at the Warren County Courthouse.

## 1978

**Karen Balaban** was elected as Harrisburg City Controller.

## 1980

**Justice Christine Donohue** won the retention election for the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

## 1983



**Hon. Kim Berkeley Clark** was recognized as a Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania, was awarded the Key to the City of Pittsburgh, and was named a Community Champion Awardee by the Hear Foundation.

## 1984



**David Lamm** joined Hawkins Parnell & Young LLP as Partner-in-Charge of the firm's new Pittsburgh office.



**John Sweeney** was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Westmoreland Land Trust, a land conservancy non-profit.

## 1985

**Hon. Edward Borkowski** won the retention election for the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

## 1986

**Hon. Shawn White** won the retention election for District Attorney of Venango County.

## 1988

**Hon. Dwayne Woodruff** received the A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr. Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Minority Bar Committee and won the retention election for the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

## 1992

**Hon. Tammy Bernstein** won the retention election for the Court of Common Pleas of Cambria County.

## 1993

**Hon. Melissa Amodie** won the retention election for Magisterial District Judge.

## 1995

**Barbara A. Simanek** joined the tax, estate planning, and personal wealth group as Of Counsel in the Pittsburgh office of Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP.

**Alison Smith** was appointed as Co-Chair of the Estate Planning Group at McNeese Wallace & Nurick.

## 1996

**Hon. Quita Bridges** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

**Kristen Del Sole** has been named Partner-in-Charge in the Pittsburgh office of Porter Wright. She served as Co-Partner-in-Charge since 2023.

## 1997

**Laura Reinhart** was appointed Pittsburgh office Managing Partner of Cozen O'Connor. Laura also was appointed Vice Chair of the Business Litigation practice group.

**Hon. Harry Smail, Jr.** won the retention election for the Court of Common Pleas of Westmoreland County.

## 1998

**Michael Comber** was named a Community Champion Awardee by the Hear Foundation.

## 1999

**Hon. Christopher Ferro** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of York County.

## 2000

**Joyce Novotny-Prettiman** is lending her talents to developing leaders of bar associations across Pennsylvania. She is serving as Secretary of the Conference of County Bar Leaders' Executive Committee for 2026 and will serve as Vice President in 2027.

## 2001

**Christopher Hega** was promoted to Shareholder at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C.

**Hon. Oscar Petite, Jr.** won the retention election for Magisterial District Judge.

**Hon. Heather Schmidt Bresnahan** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

**Terry Schrock** was named Managing Partner of the Pittsburgh office of Maron Marvel Bradley Anderson & Tardy LLC.

## 2002

**Sandra A. Kozlowski** joined Margolis Edelstein as a Partner.

**Hon. Jennifer Staley McCrady** won the retention election for the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

**Melissa Walls** was named Treasurer of the Quaker Valley School Board.

## 2003

**Hon. Lawrence Keith** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Lawrence County.

**Marla Presley** was recognized as a Woman of Influence 2026 by the *Pittsburgh Business Times*.

## 2004

**Holly L. Deihl** was awarded Woman of the Year by the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Women's Law Association.

## 2005

**Angela Platt** started a new position as Managing Director and Market Team Lead in the Pittsburgh Office of J.P. Morgan Private Bank.

## 2006

**Christopher Azzara** was elected to the Board of Directors at Dinsmore & Shohl LLP as part of the firm's 2026 leadership appointments.

**Ben Irwin** started a new role as Special Counsel at Bowles Rice.

## 2007

**Hon. Jarah Heeter** was elected as a Magisterial District Judge in Clarion County.

## 2008

**Hon. Katie Charlton** won the retention election for District Attorney of Armstrong County.

**Hon. Pier Hess Graf** won the retention election for District Attorney of Lebanon County.

**Jessica Tully** was selected as the recipient of the 2026 Solo and Small Firm Project Award from the American Bar Association GPSolo Division.

## 2009

**Nicholas Bell** was named Shareholder at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC.

**Hon. Brandon Neuman** was elected as a Judge of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania.

**Joseph Romano** was named as a Co-Chair of the Workers' Compensation Group at Burns White LLC.

**Hon. Matthew Schimizzi** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Westmoreland County.

**Allison Warden Sizemore** started a new role as the Managing Partner of the Pittsburgh office of Reed Smith LLP.

## 2011

**Jonathan Bechtel** started a new position as Partner and Associate General Counsel at Chartwell Law.

**MacKenzie Grills** was named Partner at Leech Tishman.

**Erin Logue Smith** started a new role at World Wide Technology as a part of the Governance, Risk and Strategy: Global Security Solutions practice.

## 2012

**Shaina Druker** was elevated to Partner at Wilson Elser.

**Jeff Fromknecht** was promoted to Shareholder at Dentons Cohen & Grigsby.

**Matthew Pilsner** was named Shareholder at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC.

**Hon. Christopher Simms** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Greene County.

## 2013

**Hon. Jaime Hickton** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

**Pernille Frankmar Hoffman** was named Partner at Lieber Hammer Huber Paul & Hoffman, P.C.

**Kristine Marsilio** was promoted to Special Counsel at Duane Morris.

**Jason McConnell** was promoted to General Counsel at Spectrum Automotive Holdings Corp.

**Hon. Matthew McCune** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Butler County.

**Hon. Matthew Rudzki** was elected as a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County.

**Andrew Shannon** started a new role as an Attorney at Edgar Snyder & Associates.

**Finn Skovdal** started a new role as an Associate at Kilkenny Law, LLC.

## 2014

**LuAnn McClelland** was promoted to Director at BNY.

**Amanda M. Scarpo** was named Shareholder at Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC.

**Francesca Schiavone** was elected to serve on Leech Tishman's Management Committee.

## 2015



**Lindsay A. (Nemit) Sifers** was promoted to Partner at Pollock Begg.

## 2016

**Alexandria Crist** started a new position as Associate General Counsel at Owlet Baby Care.

## 2017

**Maggie Di Vito-Yanda** began a new role at DICK'S Sporting Goods as Director, Corporate Counsel—Digital, Privacy, and Data.

**Jamie Inferrera** was elevated to Partner at Dinsmore & Shohl LLP. She also was appointed to the Pennsylvania Women in Public Finance Board and elected Secretary. The organization supports women professionals in expanding their networks and learning from industry leaders.

**Anne McFadden** joined Hawkins Parnell & Young LLP as an Associate in the firm's new Pittsburgh office.

**Filip Rams** joined Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky as a Director.

## 2018

**Phillip Raymond** was promoted to Deputy Attorney General III at the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General.

**Andrew Yetzer** started a new position as Custody Hearing Officer at the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas.

## 2019

**Keith Hodgens** started a new position as Corporate Counsel at Paychex.

**Marissa Stewart** was appointed Chief Public Defender of Greene County.

## 2020

**Tricia Martino** started a new position as an Associate at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP.

**Sarah Linder Marx** was named to *Pittsburgh Magazine's* 2025 40 Under 40.

**Derrick Maultsby, Jr.** was named to *Pittsburgh Magazine's* 2025 40 Under 40.

## 2021

**Jacob Guerra** started a new position as an Associate Attorney at Lewis Brisbois.

**Alexandria Iwanenko** was awarded Recent Graduate of the Year by the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Women's Law Association.

## 2022

**Malika Fields-Harris** started a new role as an Associate at Burns White LLC and joined the Neighborhood Allies Board of Directors.

**Melanie Lewis** started a new role as an Associate Attorney in the Delmont office of Zacharia Brown & Bratkovich.

**Gregory Logan** started a new position as an Associate in the Strategic Transactions and Licensing group at Gunderson Dettmer.

**Peyton Myers** started a new position as an Associate Attorney at Burns White LLC in the firm's Healthcare Litigation Group.



**Mike Sweeney** started a new role as an Associate at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP.

## 2023

**Delaney Jones** started a new role as a Law Clerk to the Hon. Judge Michael Barrasse in Lackawanna County.

**Madison Krause** started a new position as Associate Counsel with First Liberty Institute.

**Alexa R. Shello** started a new position as an Associate at Sherrard, German & Kelly, P.C.

**Josh Weinberg** started a new role as an Associate at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, P.C., focusing his practice in the area of medical malpractice.

**Liza Zulick** started a new position as an Associate at Harry S. Cohen & Associates, P.C.

## 2024

**Logan Bennet** was named a Community Champion Awardee by the Hear Foundation.

**Shira Elovic** started as an Associate Attorney at Cullen and Dykman LLP in the firm's Commercial Litigation practice.

**Morgan Null** was named to the *Pittsburgh Business Times'* 30 Under 30 list.

**Emma (Betz) Wolf** started a new position as an Associate Attorney at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP.

## 2025



**Cameron Gallentine** started a new role at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP in the Estate & Trust Litigation; Estate Planning and Administration Practice Group.



**Madison Lawrie** started a new role at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP in the Commercial Litigation Practice Group.

**Ryan McCann** was recognized as the Distinguished Bankruptcy Law Student for the Third Circuit.

**James Miller** was chosen by the Allegheny County Bar Foundation's Access to Justice Committee for the Law Student Pro Bono Award in recognition of his commitment to the Pittsburgh Pardons Project.



**Brooklyn Thomas** started a new role at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP in the Product Liability Practice Group. ■

## In Memory of Justice Jerry Garguilo, L'77



Justice Jerry Garguilo, a respected jurist known for his integrity, intellect, and commitment to justice, passed away on Sept. 13, 2025.

He began his career as a law clerk with the Pennsylvania Supreme Court before serving as an assistant district attorney in Suffolk County, N.Y., and entered private practice in 1980. Garguilo later relocated his own practice to St. James, N.Y., working out of the town's first schoolhouse—a cherished historic landmark—where he found great pride in serving the community he called home. Elected to the New York State Supreme Court in 2009, Garguilo presided over commercial and asbestos litigation, but his most prominent contribution came as coordinating justice for New York's landmark opioid litigation. In that role, he managed one of the largest and most consequential mass tort cases in state history, guiding dozens of counties, cities, and municipalities in their fight for accountability against major pharmaceutical companies. His leadership was widely recognized as a model of fairness, efficiency and humanity. He also served as associate justice of the Appellate Term.

Garguilo is survived by his loving wife of 52 years, Angela; daughters Nicole (Kevin), Joelle (Chris), and Jacqueline (AJ); and five grandchildren, Gianna, Viviana, AJ, Ava, and Anthony Gennaro. He also leaves behind his siblings Anthony, Michael, Neil, and Mary, and many nieces and nephews.

Garguilo will be remembered as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, and judge whose legacy of fairness, compassion and dedication to justice will endure. ■

Garguilo will be remembered as a devoted husband, father, grandfather, brother, and judge whose legacy of fairness, compassion and dedication to justice will endure. ■

*This piece is adapted from Garguilo's obituary.*

## In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we list the following  
law alumni who passed away:

Robert S. Bailey	1970	Leno D. Mescolotto	1969
David J. Brightbill	1970	John A. Mika	1969
Dominic Ciarimboli	1961	Robert D. Mintz	1969
Charles A. Getty	1972	Melanie D. Naro	1993
Richard D. Gilardi	1962	Richard A. O'Neil	1983
Richard E. Goldinger	1976	Alka A. Patel	2001
Stuart J. Horner	1966	James O. Schlicht	1978
George W. Jacoby	1979	Alan P. Skwarla	2002
Edward L. Korwek	1979	Dennis W. Trohaugh	1977
Craig M. Lee	1991	Louis P. Vitti	1968
Daniel D. Malinowski	1976		

*This list is provided through the Duquesne University Advancement Records Office and may not be complete. If you have information about an alumnus who passed away this past year and is not listed, please contact the Duquesne Kline School of Law Alumni Office at 412.396.5215 so that we may update our records.*



## *Honoring the Life and Legacy of Shayna Bennett, 1L*

This spring, the Duquesne Kline School of Law community mourned the loss of Shayna Maya Bennett, a first-year law student whose life, though far too brief, left a profound and lasting impression on all who knew her.

Bennett came to law school with a clear sense of purpose. From a young age, she aspired to become an attorney so she could give children a voice and leave no child behind. Her passion for public service law was not abstract, it was deeply personal, shaped by her empathy, compassion and unwavering belief that the law could be a force for justice and protection for the most vulnerable among us. Bennett carried that commitment into every part of her life, and it guided her path at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Those who knew Bennett remember her infectious laugh, her warmth, and her kindness. She was actively engaged in the life of the law school and the University, a proud member of the Jewish Law Students Association, and Women's Law Association, and someone whose presence brightened classrooms and conversations alike. Bennett embodied the very best of what it means to pursue the law in service of others.

In partnership with Bennett's family, Duquesne Kline School of Law is honored to establish the Shayna Bennett Scholarship for Advocacy and Service. This scholarship will support incoming law students who share Bennett's dedication to public service and demonstrate both financial need and a commitment to making a difference through the law.

When fully endowed, this scholarship will do more than provide critical financial support; it will strengthen our ability to recruit and enroll purpose-driven students who might otherwise be unable to pursue a legal education. Year after year, it will open doors for future advocates while permanently bearing Bennett's name, ensuring that her values, her compassion, and her vision for justice live on at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Alumni and friends are invited to join in honoring Bennett's memory through support of this endowed scholarship. Together, we can transform grief into opportunity, and remembrance into impact, creating an everlasting legacy that reflects the life Bennett hoped to lead and the difference she was already beginning to make.

Bennett will always be part of the Duquesne Kline School of Law community. Through this scholarship, her light will continue to guide future generations of Duquesne Kline lawyers committed to public service and the pursuit of justice. ■



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To lend support, visit: [duq.edu/ShaynaScholarship](https://duq.edu/ShaynaScholarship)  
or contact Janice Devine, Assistant Dean  
for Advancement, at [devinej6@duq.edu](mailto:devinej6@duq.edu)  
or (412) 396-4703.

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# Giving in Action

## Perry's Promise Kept

by Amanda S. Drumm

Jon Perry, L'91, has built a distinguished legal career and a life grounded in humility, gratitude, and service.

After beginning his career at a major Pittsburgh firm, he went on to start his own practice and today serves as managing partner of Perry Calder Law. Married to his high school sweetheart, Joni, the couple raised two young men who are beginning their own legal careers.

Though his success may appear effortless, Perry's journey has been shaped by discipline, sacrifice, and the transformative power of educational opportunity.

Perry grew up in a working-class family. He earned scholarships allowing him to attend and earn his undergraduate degree from Pennsylvania State University. Then he moved to Pittsburgh and decided to pursue law. Perry received a full first-year scholarship from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, renewable only if he remained in the top three of his class. He never forgot the impact of that support.

"Without that scholarship, I wouldn't go to law school. All I did was study. I studied like my life depended on it. It did. I kept the scholarship for all three years, and I told myself I would pay it back someday. I have full appreciation of what Duquesne Kline has done for me and my family, and I thought it was time to give a larger gift," Perry said.

His gratitude recently culminated in a major philanthropic commitment: a \$113,000 gift to Duquesne Kline School of Law. Half of that gift supports the Vision Fund enhancing the student experience,

“Without that scholarship, I wouldn't go to law school. All I did was study. I studied like my life depended on it. It did. I kept the scholarship for all three years, and I told myself I would pay it back someday.”

and the other half strengthens the Public Interest Law Association (PILA). Perry chose these areas intentionally, noting the profound impact of public interest work and the leadership of Dean April Barton.

"Those were the two most important things to me. PILA is an important organization to help those less fortunate, a lifelong passion of mine. Dean Barton is extraordinary, and her empathy and concern for students is like none I have ever seen. What she does with the Vision Fund to make law school a great environment where the student experiences are better is remarkable, and

I wanted to reward that as well," he said.

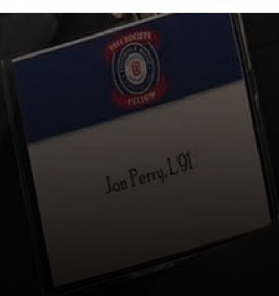
Perry's generosity extends far beyond this single gift. Over the years, he has become one of the law school's most engaged alumni, sharing his expertise through the Leadership Fellows Program, championing the University's Day of Giving, and consistently supporting PILA. His ongoing contributions help expand public interest opportunities, fund summer fellowships, and expose students to the urgent legal needs of underserved communities.

"It helps children and people who would otherwise not be receiving legal services. The experience opens our students' eyes to the needs of the world," he said.

Jon and Joni also founded Pennies from Heaven, a nonprofit organization inspired during their son Trevor's battle with childhood cancer. It ensures that no child is left alone in the hospital by helping families cover essential expenses so they can remain at the bedside of their children. Since its inception, the charity has raised more than \$3 million, an extension of the same compassion that fuels Perry's commitment to Duquesne Kline School of Law.

Reflecting on his philanthropy, Perry remains grounded in the values shaped during his early years. "To me, it is the right thing to do. Joni and I enjoy helping people. If the ball had bounced a little differently, I wouldn't be where I am today," he said.

Through his leadership, generosity, and unwavering gratitude, Perry continues to fulfill and exceed the promise he once made to himself, to give back so that others may have the same chance to succeed. ■



## Woman of the Year and Recent Graduate of the Year Honored at 34th Annual Event

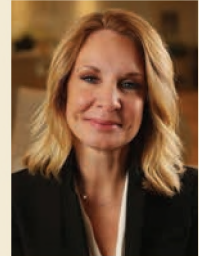
Holly L. Deihl, L'04, and Alexandria Mai Iwanenko, L'21, were honored during the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's 34th annual Woman of the Year event on March 18. The evening event, hosted by Duquesne Kline School of Law's Women's Law Association, recognized these two special alumnae with the Woman of the Year and the Recent Graduate of the Year awards.

The two awards have been given by the organization to many distinguished women in the legal profession for more than 30 years, including judges, prominent attorneys, professors, deans, and authors. Duquesne Kline School of Law Dean April Barton recognized Deihl and Iwanenko for encompassing the highest ideals of the legal profession as well as leadership, service, integrity, and sacrifice.

Deihl, a partner at SWMW Law in Pittsburgh, received the Woman of the Year Award at the packed event. She was honored to receive the recognition and is committed to continuing to be an example to other women in the law profession.

Iwanenko was the recipient of the Recent Graduate of the Year Award. She is an immigration law attorney at Amicangelo & Theisen in Erie, Pa. She has never thought of her important work assisting others as a means of credit, but she is very grateful to receive the award.

Of Deihl and Iwanenko, Barton said, "Both women are lawyer leaders who exemplify service and dedication. They have made it their calling to assist others and are true examples of living Duquesne Kline School of Law's Spiritan mission." ■



Holly L. Deihl, L'04



Alexandria Mai Iwanenko, L'21

## Alumnae Receive Keys to the City

Two extraordinary alumnae were honored with keys to the City of Pittsburgh on Dec. 22.

Former Mayor Ed Gainey presented this distinguished honor to the Hon. Cynthia A. Baldwin, L'80, retired Pennsylvania Supreme Court justice, and the Hon. Kim Berkeley Clark, L'83, senior judge and retired president judge of the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania.

This prestigious recognition celebrates Baldwin's and Clark's distinguished careers, unwavering commitment to justice, and lifelong contributions to service and leadership, and to Pittsburgh. They now join an esteemed list of Pittsburghers who have been awarded this special honor. ■



## Judge Nicola Henry-Taylor, L'96, Receives Drum Major Award

The Hon. Nicola Henry-Taylor, L'96, received the prestigious Drum Major for Justice Award on Jan. 19 at the 27th annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Prayer Breakfast and Program. The annual event is hosted by the Allegheny County Bar Association Homer S. Brown Division and commemorates the life of King and his contributions to changes in law and social justice.

Henry-Taylor, a respected member of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, was honored with this award for her career that reflects a deep and enduring commitment to advancing justice, equity, and meaningful access to the legal system.

She was introduced by the Hon. Kim Berkeley Clark, L'83, senior judge and retired president judge of the Fifth Judicial District of Pennsylvania. Both exemplify the values of service, justice, and excellence that King championed. ■



## 1911 Society Fellows and PILA Award Recipients Honored at Annual Reception

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's 1911 Society Fellows, Public Interest Law Association (PILA) Champions, PILA Fellows and the Public Interest Law Alumni Award recipient were honored at an annual reception for all alumni on April 9.

The 1911 Society Fellows were recognized for supporting the mission of Duquesne Kline School of Law through cumulative financial funding of more than \$10,000. Fellows of the 1911 Society are committed to supporting key initiatives in the Duquesne Kline School of Law, and their generous gifts

transform the lives of Duquesne Kline School of Law students.

Also at the event, Chair of the Dean's Advisory Board Jon Perry, L'91, recognized the 2026 PILA Champions, as well as seven PILA Fellowship recipients. PILA Champions donate funds that directly support students who have otherwise unpaid summer internships with public interest organizations. Concluding the evening, the Public Interest Law Alumni Award was presented to Brandon Herring, L'13, by PILA President Mavourneen Carr, 3L. ■

### 2025 Fellows

Gerard Bigley, Sr., L'70, and Maureen Bigley-Fitzsimons; Frank L. Brunetti, L'73-Fitzsimons; Terry A. Lerman, L'71-Fitzsimons; Angela Liberto, L'10, and Joshua Rex-Fitzsimons; Caroline Mitchell, L'73-Fitzsimons; Matthew Mohn, L'05-Fitzsimons; Stephen G. Walker, L'71-Fitzsimons; the Children of Jennifer Otto Giotto-Rockwell; Thomas Giotto, L'83, and Sandra Giotto-Rockwell; Cozen O'Connor-Rockwell; Teresa Kelleher-Rockwell; and Paul A. Manion, L'61, and Jeanne D. Manion-Second Century.

### 1911 Society Fellows who achieved elevated levels of support in 2025

Edwin Dashevsky, L'67-Rockwell; the Hon. Christine Donohue, L'80-Rockwell; the Hon. Thomas Hardiman-Rockwell; Vincent Quatrini, L'74-Rockwell; Richard Serbin, L'74-Rockwell; Charles Volpe, L'85-Rockwell; Carol P. Cocheres, L'75-Hanley; Robert Barker, L'66-Second Century; Barbara Carlin, L'82-Second Century; John Hovan, L'70-Second Century; and Jon Perry, L'91-Second Century.

### 2026 PILA Champions

The Hon. Jeffery Deller  
Lindsay Fouse-Hopkins  
Glenn Mahone  
Babst Calland  
Comber Miller LLC  
Duquesne Kline Law Alumni Association  
Epstein Becker Green, P.C.  
Jack Goodrich & Associates, P.C.  
Goodrich & Geist  
JonesPassodelis, PLLC  
Massa Butler Giglione & Dirlam  
Meyer, Unkovic & Scott LLP  
Perry Calder Law  
Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti, LLP  
Quatrini Law Group  
Reed Smith LLP

# FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

## Scholarly Update

By **Katherine Norton**, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship, Director of Clinical and International Programs, and Associate Professor of Law and **Richard Heppner**, Co-Associate Dean for Faculty Scholarship and Associate Professor of Law

The Duquesne Kline School of Law faculty have been busy! They have presented and shared their insights at numerous conferences and symposia. They have published articles, think pieces, blog entries, and book chapters. Here is a roundup of the highlights.

In January 2026, the American Association of Law Schools (AALS) held its annual conference in New Orleans, La. Duquesne Kline School of Law was well represented.

Professor **Ashley London** presented “Beyond NextGen: Licensure Reform and Equity in Attorney Licensure” at a “Hot Topic” session regarding licensure reform that brought together licensure experts from all corners of the country for a critical discussion about the new bar exam and the state of reforms in the attorney licensure process.

Professors **April Milburn-Knizner** and **Megan Montcalm** presented (along with Mary Basick, Assistant Dean of Academic Skills, University of California, Irvine School of Law) an AALS Open Source Program: “Teaching So Gen Z Students Can Learn.” The program examined ways that Gen Z law students’ formative experiences have put them on a collision course with traditional legal education methodologies, inviting attendees to consider and explore practical teaching strategies for Gen Z students.

Professor **Brian Miller** presented his paper *Exclusive Property Harms* at the New Voices in Property Law session, examining a conflict in how courts interpret the right to exclude and arguing for a reconceptualization of when injunctive relief should be available for violations of that right.

Professor **Gene Mazo** was elected as the new chair of the AALS Section on Scholarship and also as the chair-elect of the AALS Section on Constitutional Law.

Closer to home, the inaugural Lake Erie Junior Scholars Workshop was hosted by Case Western University School of Law in November 2025. Three Duquesne Kline School of Law faculty members carpoled to Cleveland to share their work with colleagues from around the region.

Professor **Maryann Herman** presented a paper titled *The New Substantive Due Process* examining how the Supreme Court has recently reconceptualized and elevated the importance of property rights in the context of constitutional takings and elsewhere.

Professor **Marissa Meredith** presented *Regulating Romance: Australia’s Bold Experiment in Dating App Governance*, a comparative law paper about novel approaches to regulating dating apps.

Professor **Martin McKown** presented *Check-Ride for Legal Writers: Using Aviation Pedagogy to Rethink Legal Writing Assessment in the Age of Generative AI*, which explores how techniques from pilot training could be used to prepare legal writing students to grapple with AI in the future.

Given Duquesne Kline’s focus on the role of AI in the future of legal education and legal practice, it is unsurprising that faculty wrote and spoke in numerous venues about how AI needs to be ethically integrated into practice.

Dean **April Barton** spoke at Duquesne University’s Grefenstette Center symposium on a panel titled “Ensuring an Ethical Future for AI: A Policy Conversation,” where she was joined by Nikki Pope (Senior Director, AI and Legal Ethics, NVIDIA) Bry Pardoe (Deputy Secretary for Information Technology & CIO, Gov. Josh Shapiro’s Office) and Duquesne University’s Provost (and now President-Elect) David Dausey. She also presented at the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education at the School of Law’s first of a four-part series on “AI and the Courts” to more than 70 state and federal judges along with Professor Cary Coglianese from University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School and Professor Deven Desai from Georgia Tech.

Professor **Jacqui Lipton** explores the impact of AI on issues of authorship, publishing and copyright. She presented on AI in publishing at the Cuyahoga County Public Library William N. Skirball Writers’ Center. She presented a paper on contracting around AI in publishing at the Three Rivers IP & Tech Symposium—which was hosted this year by Duquesne Kline School of Law, and which Lipton organized. And she has been invited as a Visiting Fellow to the University of Melbourne’s Centre for AI and Digital Ethics to work on comparative projects about copyright law’s response globally to AI-generated works. (In addition to her work on AI, Lipton also taught a workshop on “Publishing Law 101” to the San Diego Ink writers’ group and a masterclass on the law and business of the publishing industry to the South Carolina Writers Association.)

Professor **Ashley London** shared her work on the intersections of AI and legal ethics at numerous venues. She presented “From Policy to Practice: Navigating AI in the Legal Profession” at a symposium hosted by

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the University of Detroit Mercy Law Review. Her article *Advocate, don't hallucinate!* was featured in *The Advocate*, the quarterly newsletter of the Western Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers Association. And she was invited to speak about AI in the courts to the Supreme Court of West Virginia's 2026 Law Clerks' Education Conference.

Professor **Kate Norton** continues to discuss AI usage in family law. She moderated a panel on AI at the Pennsylvania Bar Association Family Law Section Winter meeting in January and presented to the Allegheny County Bar Association on AI in Family Law in April.

Professor **Wes Oliver** presented his work on using AI in the law around the globe. He spoke on a panel titled "From Access Ramps to AI: Physical Access and Access to Justice" at Relativity Fest, a conference in Chicago co-sponsored by the e-discovery company Relativity and the Association of Women Judges. He was on a panel at the AI Unlocked conference in Arlington, Va., titled "Building a Trust Layer: The Power of Digital Provenance," along with the head of provenance technology at Microsoft and the recently retired head of digital evidence for the FBI. And he taught a week-long, intensive version of his Duquesne Kline School of Law Coding for Lawyers class at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. Closer to home, he presented on "How Quantum Computing Threatens RSA and Elliptical Curve Cryptography" at Howmet Aerospace in Pittsburgh.

Duquesne Kline School of Law professors have also continued the law school's long tradition of active engagement in the Pittsburgh legal community and with Pittsburgh media.

Dean **April Barton** published an op-ed in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* on the importance of civic participation in judicial retention elections.

Professor **Joe Mistick** is a mainstay in Pittsburgh media. Recently, his weekly Sunday columns in the *Tribune-Review* and Trib Total Media newspapers have touched on everything from the Ryder Cup and bike lanes in the Strip District to lessons from Jan. 6 and politics in Washington, D.C. He also appeared multiple times on the "Around the Table with Stacy Smith" podcast, as well as on KDKA Radio's "Rob Pratte Show" and "Michael Bartley Show."

Professor **Lauren Gailey** also made a guest appearance on the "Michael Bartley Show," as well as traveling farther afield. She presented a paper titled *What Is the Press?* at the Rocky Mountain Junior Scholars Forum at BYU. She spoke at the Widener Commonwealth Law Review's symposium "From 1776 to Today: The Evolution of Dissent in American Law" and the *Faulkner Law Review's* Fred Gray Civil Rights Symposium "Constitutional Crossroads: Democracy, Power and Civil Rights." And she published the 2026 supplement to the second edition of *The Pennsylvania Constitution: A Treatise on Rights and Liberties* along with Joy McNally, which was co-edited by Joy McNally and President (now Chancellor) Ken Gormley.

Duquesne Kline School of Law faculty continue to publish and present on an array of other topics furthering legal education and the legal profession as whole and making our justice system more accessible to all.

Professor **Steven Baicker-McKee** presented at Fordham Law School's spring symposium, where he spoke about the excited utterance hearsay exception.

Professor **Rona Kaufman** chaired this year's Law and Antisemitism Conference at Cardozo Law School. The conference brought together over 50 scholars from across the U.S. as well as scholars from the U.K., Poland, Israel, Australia, China, Canada, Germany, and Argentina, with a keynote address by former Columbia Law School Dean David Schizer.

Professor Emeritus **Bruce Ledewitz** published a book review in the *Journal of Church and State* of *Goodbye Religion: The Causes and Consequences of Secularization* by Ryan T. Cragun and Jesse M. Smith. And he published multiple pieces for OnlySky, including *David Brooks Wants to Rebuild Humanistic Culture*, *A Secular Life of Thanksgiving* and *The Lure of the Transcendent*.

Professor **Jan M. Levine** is publishing *Putting an End to Protective Privilege: Georgia Should Recognize the Psychotherapist's Duty to Warn* in the *Journal of Health Care Law & Policy*, where he argues that Georgia should update its anomalous duty-to-warn law as applied to psychotherapists. He also authored supplemental materials to be published with the casebook *Torts And Compensation: Personal Accountability And Social Responsibility For Injury* by Bublick, et al.

Professor **Gene Mazo** took his show on the road, delivering a paper called *Understanding Electoral Commissions in Comparative Perspective* at the conference "Strengthening Democratic Constitutional Governance: The Role of Fourth Branch Institutions in the Protection of Fundamental Rights," which was hosted by the Parliament of Mongolia and its Parliamentary Research and Development Institution, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. And then he stopped on the way home to present *Campaign Funding a Political Polarization in the United States* at the University of Osaka, Japan.

Professor Emeritus **Jane Moriarty** co-authored a chapter in the fourth edition of the Federal Judicial Center's *Reference Manual on Scientific Evidence*. The manual is published by the National Academies Press to provide guidance for the federal courts. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan wrote the foreword, and Martha Minow served as a co-chair of the Committee on Science, Technology and Law, which oversaw the manual's development. Moriarty co-authored the chapter on Forensic Feature Comparison Evidence with colleagues from UC Berkeley and Indiana University (Bloomington).

Professor **David Nows** published *Getting it Just Right: The Goldilocks Level of Securities Regulation* in the *Nevada Law Journal*, and he presented on *Equity Evaporated* at the Southeastern Academy of Legal Studies in Business annual conference in Asheville, NC.

And finally, Professor **Allison Ware**, by invitation from Rep. Emily Kinkead, gave testimony before the Pennsylvania Legislature House Judiciary Committee on how costs and fines in court proceedings are damaging to children. ■



# Duquesne Kline School of Law Team Crowned National Champions at ABA NAAC Nationals





**T**he Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University's Appellate Moot Court Board team of Elizabeth Stern, 3L, Joe Kelly, 3L, and Kaelyn Underwood, 3L, took home the title of National Champions at the prestigious ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition (NAAC) in Chicago during the weekend of April 12.

The Duquesne Kline School of Law team was one of only 24 teams out of 173 to advance to the national competition. At the competition, the team delivered strong performances in both brief writing and oral advocacy, advancing to the Sweet 16, then to the quarterfinals, and then to the semifinals, facing formidable opponents at each stage.

After their semifinal win, the trio advanced to the national finals for the first time in Duquesne Kline School of Law history. The team defeated an impressive Akron Law team in the final round to emerge as national champions. Following the final round, Stern received an additional honor, being named the #7 Best Advocate in the competition.

The final round was judged by a distinguished panel of five judges, including the Hon. Thomas M. Durkin, United States district judge for the Northern District of Illinois; the Hon. Mary L. Mikva and the Hon. Jesse G. Reyes, justices of the Illinois Appellate Court; and the Hon. Robert K. Villa and the Honorable Travis Richardson, judges of the Illinois Circuit Court.

"This is a historic achievement, and we are incredibly proud of these students and the way they represented Duquesne Kline on the national stage," said Dean April Barton.

Adjunct Professor Erin Karsman, director of the Appellate Moot Court Board program, added, "The students' well-deserved success is a result of months of diligent preparation. The team demonstrated a depth of knowledge that distinguished them among the top teams in the country."

Stern noted that the team's chemistry and shared goal contributed to their success. "We had a supportive, collaborative environment where everyone had the same goal, which was to bring the national title to Duquesne Kline," she said.

Karsman and Adjunct Professor Amy Kerlin, L'18, associate at K&L Gates, coached the team. A special thank you and shout out to Duquesne Kline School of Law's other AMCB NAAC team, Ciaran Lamb, 3L, Simon Jaronski, 3L, and Drew Gudenburr, 3L. After an impressive performance at the regional rounds, ending as semifinalists, Lamb, Jaronski, and Gudenburr generously donated their time to help Stern, Kelly, and Underwood continue preparing for the national competition. ■

**"This is a historic achievement, and we are incredibly proud of these students and the way they represented Duquesne Kline on the national stage."**

**- DEAN APRIL BARTON**

# Incredible Spring Semester for Trial Advocacy Program

By Peter Giglione, L'02

The Lady Dukes team of Stephanie Cairns, 2L, Melanie Geronian, 2L, Peyton Norton, 3L, and Sydney Sherman, 3L, won the entire region of the American Association for Justice Student Trial Advocacy Competition. After cruising through the preliminary rounds, they bested Florida International in the semifinals, and Akron in the finals, to win. They later traveled to New Orleans, La., to compete against the other national finalists. Duquesne Kline School of Law's other team, Joshua Esch, 3E, Anthony Sofran, 3L, Danielle Stewart, 2L, and Anna Zabriskie, 2L, were solid in the preliminary rounds, and narrowly missed advancing to the semifinals. Our AAJ teams were coached by alumni Shreya Desai, L'21, and Anthony Hassey, L'17.

The team of William Jelley, 3L, Angelina Levitsky, 3L, Emily Liesch, 3L, and Lewis Migliore, 3L, competed on behalf of Duquesne Kline School of Law at the South Texas College of Law Mock Trial Challenge. After facing Cumberland School of Law, UCLA, Campbell School of Law, and University of Georgia School of Law, our Dukes advanced to the octofinals of this national competition. Additionally, Jelley received one of the Outstanding Advocate Awards. This team was coached by alumni Bella Biancone, L'25, and Matthew Newman, L'17.

The team of Demetrius Baldwin, 3E, Eugenia Edwards, 3E, Sandra Mupende, 2L, and Rachel Myles, 2L, advanced to the semifinals at the

BLSA Mock Trial Competition in Philadelphia, Pa. The prosecution team of Mupende and Myles also won the Best Prosecution Argument award. These advocates were coached by Taylor Corn, L'18.

At the regional round of the TYLA National Trial Competition, the team of Khloe Manuppelli, 3L, Jared Swansboro, 3L, and Sandra Mupende, 2L, swept the preliminary rounds (3-0), advancing to the semifinal round, where they barely lost to the Villanova School of Law team that went on to win the competition. The other team of Daniel DeMott, 2L, Caitlin Handerman, 2L, and AJ Griffith, 3L, who were all first-time competitors, performed well but narrowly missed advancing. These teams were coached by Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni and former competitors Maggie Cooney, L'18, Bob Daley, L'98, and Kristin Hoffman, L'18.

At the Academy of Trial Lawyers Competition, the team of Kat Gingolaski, 3L, Deanna Hall, 3L, Clay Myers, 4E, and Robert Zurawsky, 2L, tried an excellent case. Gingolaski won the 2nd Best Advocate award for the entire competition. This team was coached by Annette Dohanics, L'20, and Ryan Naumann, L'17.

The Trial Advocacy Program is overseen by Adjunct Professor Pete Giglione, L'02. ■





# AMCB Boasts Historic Competition Season

By Erin Karsman and Amy Kerlin, L'18

## First Place at Cleveland State's Inaugural Music Law Competition

Duquesne Kline School of Law's Appellate Moot Court Board (AMCB) team dominated Cleveland State University School of Law's inaugural Rock the Court Music Law Moot Court Competition, sweeping the top honors. 2Ls Emma Coiner, Liz Richman and Megan Goldstein went undefeated through five rounds of competition before claiming first place in the final round. The team also earned the Best Petitioner Brief award for their research and writing. Coiner delivered a standout individual performance, winning Best Petitioner Advocate in the preliminary rounds and the #1 Best Advocate Overall in the final round—a clean sweep of every major award at the competition. The team was coached by Dan Smolsky, L'23, an associate at Dinsmore & Shohl in Pittsburgh.

## Reaches National Final Four in ABA Negotiation Skills Competition

After an exceptional performance at the American Bar Association Negotiation Skills Regional Competition, 3Ls Kaelyn Underwood and Lewis Richardson advanced to the national round of the competition in Chicago, finishing in the top four out of 142 teams from law schools across the country. AMCB program director and executive director of the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education, Adjunct Professor Erin Karsman and Adjunct Professor Amy Kerlin, L'18, associate at K&L Gates, coached the team, with 2Ls Alyssa Volomino, Madison Eidemueller, Harry Hayden and Luke Lacher serving as mock negotiators.

## Final Four and Best Brief at Notre Dame Religious Freedom Competition

Two Duquesne Kline School of Law AMCB teams competed at the Tenth Annual Notre Dame National Appellate Advocacy Tournament for Religious Freedom in South Bend, Ind. After strong competition, both advanced to the quarterfinal rounds. The team of 2Ls Jackson Vento and Jordan Timmons advanced further, finishing in the final four and earning the #1 Best Brief award out of 22 teams from top law schools nationwide. 2Ls Madison Eidemueller and Jason Sweeney finished in the top eight. The teams were coached by Annabelle LaRosa, L'25, an associate at Eckert Seamans; Madison Lawrie, L'25, an associate at Pietragallo Gordon Alfano Bosick & Raspanti; and Reilly Wagner, L'25, an associate at Duane Morris.

## Sweet 16 at William & Mary's Spong Competition

At the 55th Annual William B. Spong, Jr. Moot Court Competition at William & Mary Law School in Williamsburg, Va., Duquesne Kline School of Law fielded two teams among the 42 participating from across the country. 3Ls Emily Veltri and Lewis Richardson advanced through the preliminary rounds before reaching the Round of 16, where they fell to the eventual competition champions. 2Ls Breanna Tomsey and Jack Forsythe also competed and were commended for their professionalism and legal knowledge. Both teams were coached by AMCB alums Maria Hanley, L'20, an associate at Dickie, McCamey & Chilcote, and Jacob Hanley, L'20, an associate at Eckert Seamans.

## 2L Wins #1 Best Oralist at National First Amendment Competition in D.C.

At the Seigenthaler-Sutherland Cup National First Amendment Moot Court Competition in Washington, D.C. (the oldest moot court competition in the nation), 2Ls Alyssa Volomino, Luke Lacher and Harry Hayden delivered two outstanding arguments before narrowly missing advancing to the quarterfinal round. Lacher earned the top individual honor, winning the #1 Best Oralist Award out of 90 advocates competing from 36 law schools nationwide. The team was coached by Sam Nolan, L'20, an associate at Epstein Becker Green.

## Historic Jessup Run: Top 6% Worldwide Finish—and Nation's #1 Best Advocate Produced

Duquesne Kline School of Law AMCB team made history this year at the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, the world's largest and most prestigious international law competition, drawing teams from over 700 law schools in 100 countries.

At the King & Spaulding United States National Round in Atlanta, Ga., the team of Darren McKenzie, 3L, Olivia Brophy, 2L, and Collin Ishimaru, 2L, became the first Duquesne Kline School of Law team ever to advance to the international rounds, qualifying as one of only 15 U.S. teams out of 91 to do so. The team also earned 5th Best Brief, finished in 12th place out of all 91 teams, and McKenzie finished as the 25th Best Advocate in the country.

Brophy achieved an individual distinction that had never before existed: she was named the first-ever single #1 Best Advocate in the United States out



of 360 advocates. In prior years, the competition had recognized two co-best advocates; this year marked the first time a single top advocate was named, and Brophy claimed that honor.

At the international rounds in Washington, D.C., competing against 163 teams from more than 100 countries, the

team posted a 3-1 preliminary record, defeating teams from Ghana, Indonesia and Spain. Their only preliminary loss came to the team that went on to win the world championship. Duquesne Kline School of Law was one of only 55 teams, and just seven from the United States, to advance to the elimination rounds. Out

of 806 total teams competing across all jurisdictions worldwide, Duquesne Kline School of Law finished approximately in the top 6%! The team was coached by Adjunct Professor Amy Kerlin, L'18, an associate at K&L Gates, and Brian Davis, L'25, an associate at Burns White. ■

## The AMCB Would Like to Thank Our Alumni Coaches and Guest Judges:

**Brian Davis, L'25**  
**David Frantz, L'15**  
**Maria Hanley, L'20**  
**Jacob Hanley, L'20**  
**Amy Kerlin, L'18**

**Annabelle LaRosa, L'25**  
**Madison Lawrie, L'25**  
**Devin Misour, L'11**  
**Sam Nolan, L'20**  
**Megan Penn, L'25**

**Emma Romig, L'25**  
**Jon Sion, L'23**  
**Dan Smolsky, L'23**  
**Reilly Wagner, L'25**  
**Jason Whiting, L'25**

## STUDENT BRIEFS

## Agent of Change

By Amanda S. Drumm



Duquesne Kline School of Law evening students are seeking a new path, and many have obligations other than law school. Whether it be work or family commitments, their lives are busy outside of their law classrooms. Alparslan Asan, 4E, is not an exception, with demands including both a job and a young family. He works during the day as a patent agent and began his family—now consisting of his wife and infant son—while in law school. Asan is set to graduate this May, professionally and personally fulfilling his desire for a transformation.

Asan received his undergraduate degree in biochemistry from the University of Washington and originally made the trek from the west coast to Pittsburgh to pursue his PhD in molecular pharmacology.

“My plan was always to be a scientist. I wanted to work in a lab, then have my own lab. I wanted to research and publish papers,” Asan said.

With a specialty in cancer research, Asan’s dissertation was about developing new drugs to treat triple negative breast cancer. He graduated with his doctorate degree in 2019, but then his previous goal of becoming a scientist took a different direction.

“A year or two into it, I learned more about the realities of life, what comes next. I realized that I did not want to work in private industry as a scientist. I also did not want to work with animals; I did not enjoy doing that,” he said.

Asan still wanted to use his technical background. He received consultant offers but ultimately took a position as a patent agent at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). He was hired during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing him to work remotely and stay in Pittsburgh. Enjoying his job reviewing patents, Asan quickly recognized a large part of the patent process was the law.

“I worked there [USPTO] for five years. At the end of the fifth year I wanted a change, I wanted to be a patent attorney. I realized legal training is

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“We have had many classes together and we formed an accord among the evening student group. We exchange ideas and help each other with anything that comes up.”

- ALPARSLAN ASAN, 4E

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important. I thought it was second nature to me even more so than being a scientist. Before that, I never thought about a getting legal education,” he said.

Looking for a flexible path to a legal degree, he found one around the corner from his home. “I was in walking distance to Duquesne. I heard about Duquesne Kline from a lot of my friends, but I had never been to campus. In my mind, I could see it everywhere from the city. It is the only viable option for any person who has a full-time job within the city of Pittsburgh, and it was the only option for me if I wanted to live in Pittsburgh, work and go to my classes consistently at night. I am really glad I made that choice,” Asan said.

He has connected with other evening students, sharing with them a special bond of collectively going through the evening program.

“We have had many classes together and we formed an accord among the evening student group. We exchange

ideas and help each other with anything that comes up,” Asan said.

That includes bonds formed through personal milestones as well. “I have another classmate who got married, too, in the second year of law school. We were sitting in the lounge one night talking about how we make this all work,” he said.

Duquesne Kline School of Law professors have been encouraging as well. They understand the unique life challenges many evening students encounter and help them adapt.

“Professors obviously have expectations that we as law students are doing the work we are supposed to do. Aside from that, I cannot remember a personal instance or witnessed another student with something going on when a professor was not receptive or as helpful as possible. When I had my son, I missed a class and Professor Ashley London and I chatted for close to an hour. She made me feel better and even gave me parenting advice,” Asan said.

Closing in on an expected spring graduation and steps closer to becoming a patent attorney, Asan is grateful he made the decision to pursue his legal degree. He encourages other working adults who may be considering legal education to follow their dreams.

He said, “I would say absolutely go for it, no matter how busy you are. I think it is something you will be able to achieve with sufficient determination. It is never too late; I was 31 years old when I applied and I already had an advanced degree. There is a lot of support from both faculty and the students once you come to Duquesne Kline. It is great to have that option, because without Duquesne Kline a lot of people in the city would not be able to do it. Duquesne Kline has a very essential role in helping people who are already employed and need the flexibility that only Duquesne Kline offers to get a legal education.” ■

# Conservation Crusader

By Amanda S. Drumm



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Growing up in Utah, Thane Zeeh, 3L, was surrounded by mountains, salt flats, and sand dunes. National parks were short drives away, and Zeeh regularly visited them, taking in their majestic beauty. Growing up surrounded by the wonders of nature gave Zeeh a deep appreciation and care for the environment.

He journeyed to the east coast to study at Duquesne Kline School of Law with an interest in environmental law, and he has continued to cultivate that passion while forging his future path.

Those familiar picturesque backdrops surrounded Zeeh in college as he received his undergraduate degree from his home state at the University of Utah. While studying humanities and mass communications there, he was on the debate team, with one of his topics including renewable energy policy. After he graduated, he thought law school might be a natural extension of that interest for him.

“I really enjoyed the debate team, truth finding, and competition. Law school seemed like a logical, adult choice for me,” Zeeh said.

He had never traveled to Pennsylvania but applied and was accepted to Duquesne Kline School of Law. “I thought it would be my best opportunity to pursue a legal education. It seemed like the right move, even though before that I did not even know where Pittsburgh was on a map,” Zeeh said.

While Pittsburgh’s surroundings are starkly different than Utah’s, he immediately found charm in the city’s towering backdrop, and he enjoys its accessibility.

“I really like Pittsburgh, especially the cityscape in the summer. I love the walkability here and living downtown. I can walk to the courthouse, and the Environmental Hearing Board is within walking distance. Duquesne Kline is just around the corner from me,” he said.

Zeeh acclimated himself to city life and immersed himself in learning the law. As his studies progressed, he gained a deeper understanding of something he always cherished—the environment—and its relation to the law. His desire to safeguard it increased.

“It is good to protect the environment, and that has always been important to me. I knew I wanted to be an advocate for it. There is a constitutional right to protect it, though, and I did not really know about that aspect of it before law school, but that made it even more important to me,” Zeeh said.

Renewing his longstanding passion for the environment, he channeled that energy into acquiring practical environmental law experience while earning his degree.

He spent his rising 2L summer in 2024 interning with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). After that internship concluded, Zeeh continued to increase his environmental law knowledge, interning during the fall of 2024 and the summer of 2025 with Fair Shake Environmental Legal Services, a nonprofit organization that believes all people and communities should be able to access the tools of change and that everyone should be able to make decisions about the natural resources—air, water, and land—where they live, work, and play.

Zeeh is interning this semester at the Environmental Hearing Board. “I went from the enforcer at the Department of Environmental Protection, the advocate at Fair Shake, to the decision-makers at the Environmental Hearing Board,” he said.

Likewise active in sustainability at Duquesne Kline School of Law, Zeeh joined the Environmental Law Society and is currently the executive editor of the *Duquesne Kline Energy & Environmental Law Journal (Joule)*.

Zeeh has found his niche at Duquesne Kline School of Law, matching his environmental activism with a legal education that emphasizes ethics.

“The public interest side of the law is important and the effects spill over to the day-to-day class. You get a good education, walking a fine line advocating for community understanding. The community and the culture are supportive,” he said.

As for his plans after graduation, Zeeh wants to remain in environmental law in a place he has surprisingly discovered to be home.

“I want to be an environmental advocate. The mission work I have done has scratched the itch for me, and I want to stick with it. I really like it here, too, and want to try to stay in Pennsylvania after graduation,” he said. ■

# The Code for Success

By Amanda S. Drumm

Law school challenges the ways legal students think. When Preet Patel, 2L, entered the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, she expected to develop her reasoning skills while learning the law. She also discovered her aptitude in technology, and its unexpected legal connection. Patel is thriving at the intersection of law and coding, entering and advancing in competitions throughout the academic year that showcase her command of this field.

When she began her classes at Duquesne Kline School of Law, finding a Coding for Lawyers course was a welcome surprise.

“I was excited when I saw Coding for Lawyers on the schedule. Coding has always felt like a hobby of mine, and I loved seeing it fit into a single class. I honestly thought I’d be doing less of it after undergrad, but this class showed me how well tech and law actually pair up, especially when it comes to things like AI safety laws,” Patel said.

Patel, who holds a master’s degree in international public policy from the University of Southern California, dabbled in coding while earning her bachelor of science degree in political science from Penn State but was not confident in her mastery of it.

“When I started in undergrad, I really struggled and thought I’d never ‘get’ it, but I think it’s just one of those things that takes practice,” Patel said.

Her classes with Duquesne Kline School of Law Professor Wesley Oliver infused skill and confidence to help her feel comfortable with and enjoy the technical skillset.

“I’ve enjoyed the individual projects in Professor Oliver’s class. It’s gone from something I found difficult to one of my favorite parts of the week,” Patel said.

Oliver told her about the third annual Data for Difference Making Challenge (DDMC) competition Duquesne University hosted. The five-day event provides graduate students with the opportunity to develop data-driven solutions that address societal challenges.

Patel was the only law student who entered. As part of the competition, she was placed in a random group and had four days to prepare their presentation, a focus on the Strategic Framework for Modern Bank Fraud Defense.

“Our project had three strategies: The Behavioral Biometric Shield, the Human Firewall, and Digital Twin AI. My idea was the Human Firewall. Traditional firewalls use technology to block malicious digital

traffic; the human firewall uses the vigilance of staff to prevent attacks that target people directly (social engineering). Given that most of the breaches involve a human element, it’s important that employees can recognize and respond to cyber threats. The goal of this was to reduce employee susceptibility to social engineering, leading to fewer successful breaches and lower recovery costs,” Patel said.

The group went through four rounds of presentations, with a team getting cut each time. Every round had new judges, and between the rounds, the team met with the judges for feedback. Patel’s team won first place in that competition.

She went on to compete in the Hofstra Law Fifth Annual National Legal Innovation Tournament and in Hacking4Humanity against Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh. In that competition, Patel and Andrew Babich joined to form the Labelmakers. Their team presented their proposed policy, “PA Artificial Intelligence Nutrition Label Act,” earning them a prestigious second place.

Patel sees her future focused on this novel subject area of law and technology. She said, “I am leaning toward data privacy, IP (copyright and trademark) or tech law. I’m still exploring my options, but I definitely want to be in a space where law and technology meet.”

Oliver knows whatever Patel decides, her future will be bright.

“She brings an understanding of another way of thinking about information with her to the law school. AI is obviously built on statistical principles, and every aspect of the world, including law, is changing as a result of AI. So she has a great background to be a part of this new world. She’s also just a joy to work with. She’s both very accomplished and very humble. She brings a lot of knowledge with her and is willing to acquire more,” he said. ■

“I was excited when I saw Coding for Lawyers on the schedule. Coding has always felt like a hobby of mine, and I loved seeing it fit into a single class. I honestly thought I’d be doing less of it after undergrad, but this class showed me how well tech and law actually pair up, especially when it comes to things like AI safety laws.”





## High School Students Visit for 5th Annual “Future Voices of The People” Event

The Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University welcomed 65 students from 13 Pittsburgh area high schools for its “Future Voices of the People” event on April 16. The high school students learned why lawyers are essential to a just and equitable society. They gained a greater understanding of what lawyers do, their roles and societal function, and possible careers in the legal field.

The interactive one-day program included sessions on forensics and pre-law, a mock class, and a mock trial. The Hon. Dwayne Woodruff, L’88, the Hon. Simquita Bridges, L’96, and the Hon. Elliot Howsie, L’98, all Duquesne Kline School of Law alumni, were guest presenters.

Students ate lunch in the Duquesne University Student Union Africa Room and concluded the day with a panel consisting of current Duquesne Kline School of Law students.

Duquesne Kline School of Law current students joined the students in the Student Union Africa Room to speak about their law school experiences and to answer questions from students.



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“Each year we are impressed by the students who attend this event, their engagement, and the questions they ask. We are equally proud of our Duquesne Kline students who served in various roles throughout the day.”

– DEAN APRIL BARTON

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Students attended the event from Brentwood High School, Moon Area High School, West Mifflin High School, Avonworth High School, South Fayette High School, Baldwin High School, Lincoln Park Performing Arts High School, McKeesport High School, Westinghouse High School, Saint Joseph High School, Oakland Catholic High School, and Central Catholic High School.

The annual program has continued to grow, increasing in size from the 60 students who attended the inaugural event. This is the fifth time this event has been hosted at Duquesne Kline School of Law.

“Each year we are impressed by the students who attend this event, their engagement, and the questions they ask. We are equally proud of our Duquesne Kline students who served in various roles throughout the day. Lawyers touch many facets of everyday life, and it was a joy educating others on how the legal field impacts society,” said Dean April Barton. ■



## A Night of Talent at Legge con Brio

Duquesne Kline School of Law students and alumni sang, danced, strummed guitars, and showcased many talents to a large crowd at the annual Legge con Brio event hosted by the Duquesne Italian-American Law Society on Feb. 9. They participated and performed for Panucci's Promise, raising \$3,500 for the charity that supports chemotherapy patients at UPMC Magee-Women's Hospital with comfort items.

Also on deck at the event were Italian coffee and bake sales, and the wit and wisdom of the beloved emcees: Duquesne Kline School of Law professors Joseph Sabino Mistick, L'79, and John Rago, L'87.

The club connects students over a shared love of Italian American culture, heritage, food and its ties with the legal community. ■

# JURIS Magazine

## Spring 2026 Preview

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### ■ **Cooking Up a Lawsuit: How PAM Cost One Man His Lungs**

By: *Bianca Ortalano, Editor-in-Chief*

As trends and information about food develop people tend to turn to healthier alternatives in order to save calories, reduce sugar, and better fuel their bodies. But what do you do when your low-cal convenience comes with a high-risk consequence? One man, Roland Esparza, had to find out the hard way that cutting out butter and using cooking spray instead can expose you to hazardous flavoring components. Esparza developed a debilitating lung disease after using PAM multiple times a day, which exposed him to diacetyl. Although diacetyl is a naturally occurring organic compound, it was found to become volatile when aerosolized and even more volatile if it becomes heated—such as being sprayed into a hot pan. Esparza’s health issues prompted him to file a strict liability suit against Vons Cos. Inc., Conagra Brands and other companies whom he believed to be responsible. On Feb. 6, 2026, nearly six years after Esparza’s initial filing, came the verdict awarding Esparza compensatory damages of \$25 million.

This article will dive into the case’s timeline detailing Esparza’s exact claims, the jury’s findings on credibility and the defense’s arguments. It will also discuss the presence of diacetyl and other components in “healthy alternatives” and how they can contribute to or exacerbate health issues. Finally, this article will explore how consumers can better protect themselves in their pursuit of a healthy lifestyle.

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### ■ **Medical, Inc.: Corporate Control of Physicians and Pennsylvania’s CPOM Doctrine**

By: *Chase Boss, Senior Editor*

Pennsylvania’s Corporate Practice of Medicine (CPOM) doctrine has existed for nearly a century. At its core, the doctrine prohibits non-physicians and non-medical businesses from owning physician practices or controlling the professional judgment of licensed physicians. For decades, management services organizations (MSOs)—entities structured to manage non-clinical administration while preserving the physician’s independent clinical judgment—have successfully operated in accordance with the CPOM doctrine. This article, however, will focus on the rise of a new generation of corporate actors that work around the MSO model. Although entities such as UnitedHealth Group’s Optum and Amazon’s One Medical suggest that there is no one way to move beyond an MSO, these and similar corporate actors focus on platform-oriented structures to reshape physician practices without formal ownership. Through long-term management agreements, corporate influence has been increasingly exercised in ways that would test the Pennsylvania CPOM doctrine’s traditional distinction between permissible and impermissible management. With the modern health care economy evolving so quickly, does Pennsylvania’s CPOM doctrine still serve its original purpose, or should exceptions be made to allow greater non-medical business control? This disconnect between CPOM’s focus on early 20th-century physician services ownership and the reality of modern corporate control underscores these challenges that the doctrine will face now and in years to come.

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### ■ **Hooked: The Impact of Social Media on Young Minds**

By: *Delaney Szekely, Senior Editor*

In our digital world, the constant interconnection and speed with which users access endless content can be unfathomable. The widespread availability of social media platforms fosters a sense of community among users. However, as social media platforms continue to grow, questions are raised as to the potential harm to users. Despite the positive attributes of connectivity and entertainment, social media can detrimentally impact users. Users of social media can be at risk for social media addiction, which can develop for a number of reasons, including underlying mental health issues. Addiction to social media can exacerbate

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preexisting mental health conditions. One group particularly at risk of harm are users under the age of 18. Many users of social media have commenced lawsuits against companies like Google, TikTok, Meta, and Snap for their role in facilitating social media addiction and harm to minors, but one case in particular is set to impact all pending cases. One woman seeks to hold social media giants accountable for the harm done to young users in a lawsuit against Meta Platforms.

In a case currently before the Los Angeles County Superior Court, the plaintiff alleged that social media companies designed their products with the explicit intention to hook young users on their platforms without warning of the potential dangers. Thus, she intends to prove that these companies are responsible for the detrimental impacts resulting from social media addiction.

This article will begin by exploring the impact of social media on young users socially and mentally, as well as how the use of social media can develop into an addiction. Then, the article will consider the claims before the Los Angeles County Superior Court in the trial commencing between a former teen user of social media and Meta Platforms.

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### ■ **Efforts to Legalize Recreational Marijuana Continue**

*By: Zoe Morse, Junior Editor*

The legalization of recreational marijuana in Pennsylvania continues to face obstacles. In 2025, the Cannabis Health and Safety Act (HB 1200) was approved by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives by a vote of 102-101. If approved, the bill would have legalized the use of cannabis for adults age 21 and older. Additionally, the bill would have legalized sales of recreational marijuana through state-run cannabis dispensaries. However, the bill did not pass a vote in the state Senate. Advocates for legalization say that criminalization does not work in that it neither promotes safety nor deters usage. Legalization would allow the state to regulate potency, labeling, and advertising. Gov. Josh Shapiro has said that Pennsylvania is losing out on revenue that could result from legalization and regulation. Other Pennsylvania lawmakers are concerned about the public safety and health impacts that may result from legalization. Shapiro's 2026-2027 budget includes a cannabis regulation plan despite the political deadlock.

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### ■ **Paid in Home: Pung v. Isabella Countys**

*By: David Quinn, Junior Editor*

This year, a Michigan dispute over property taxes and a forced housing auction made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court. After the death of the original owner, a local tax exemption attached to the Pung family property was retroactively denied for several years. The Pungs appealed the decision and refused to pay the readded tax. The Pungs' challenge was successful in the Michigan Tax Tribunal, but further disputes over the extent of their victory led to an unpaid tax bill of \$2,241.93. The Pungs' property was foreclosed and the property, worth \$194,400, was sold for \$76,008. The Supreme Court has granted certiorari to resolve two issues: first, whether it was a violation of the Fifth Amendment's Takings Clause to seize and sell a home to satisfy a debt to the government when the auction made the sale price artificially lower than the property's fair market value; and second, whether it was a violation of the Eighth Amendment's prohibition on excessive fines to foreclose real property that was worth far more than the amount needed to satisfy a tax debt, especially if the party never truly owed their supposed debt.

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### ■ **Should Encampments Be Protected? Homelessness and The Law in Pittsburgh**

*By: Lauren Shovlin, Staff Writer*

This article explores the national homeless crisis and the effects we are seeing in Pittsburgh specifically. To start, I address the recent Supreme Court case holding that cities may ban public camping as long as the penalties address the conduct of camping or sleeping in public rather than the status of being homeless. This case is extremely relevant to the homeless crisis because encampments are increasingly common and are rapidly developing into a subculture within the homeless population. I then examine the dynamics of homeless encampments in Pittsburgh and why many prefer these tented communities to shelters. To expand on this, I interviewed the director of the Red Door in downtown Pittsburgh, a soup kitchen and homeless day center, who provides more specifics on the dynamics among the homeless and the dangers encampments pose, especially to women. I then push back against the tendency for some to romanticize encampments and legitimize them as simply a chosen lifestyle by shedding light on the layers of abuse found in these unregulated groups. I discuss Pittsburgh's efforts to address this issue and propose that the real solution lies in providing a more authentic version of what encampments try to recreate—strong family units, community, and access to work and education.

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