SMU LAW WELCOMES NEW DEAN

Jason P. Nance
Judge James Noel Dean and Professor of Law

INSIDE:
Thank You Dean Collins
Plus: the latest alumni news and much more!
Dear Alumni and Friends,

It is a great honor to be a member of such a well-respected law school community, comprised of a talented faculty, hardworking and committed staff, highly credentialed students, and an impressive, supportive alumni base. I am excited for the opportunity to serve SMU Dedman School of Law as its tenth dean. We hope to give you a sense in the following pages, and in our other communications throughout the year, about many of the exciting events taking place at the law school.

In September 2021, we kicked off the SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow campaign. Consistent with our tradition, our alumni are stepping up to support vital programs, such as student scholarship initiatives and our three new academic centers.

Our faculty continue to produce scholarship that influences important legal debates and be nationally recognized for their work. National and local media consistently seek their commentary on cutting-edge issues. They are invited to present their work at prestigious conferences and symposia. And, very importantly, they are expert instructors who care deeply about preparing our students to succeed in a demanding, complex, and rewarding profession.

One of the stories highlights a new initiative, the Jennifer M. Collins Women’s Leadership Initiative, named in honor of Immediate Past Dean Collins. The inaugural event featured a conversation with our own Professor Joanna Grossman and New York University School of Law Professor Melissa Murray. As part of the Women’s Leadership Initiative, our students were also fortunate to have alumnae Claire Babineaux-Fontenot ’92, the CEO of Feeding America, speak to them at a luncheon lecture.

We continue to be proud of our students, their accomplishments, and the various entities within the legal community that support them. This year we are honored to present our largest judicial clerkship class with 30 placements, almost all of which are clerkships with federal judges and Texas Supreme Court justices. In addition, we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Corporate Counsel Externship Program, where we have grown to more than 100 student placements in corporations this fall.

The incoming class is an exceptionally talented, academically gifted, and diverse group of students. They are eager to be part of the Dedman Law community.

We presented a Distinguished Alumni Award to five alumni for their outstanding achievements. Our alumni gathered for class reunions, conferences, student events, and receptions, including the “Texas Tour,” where five local Mustang Bar Chapters enjoyed connecting and networking. We look forward to celebrating with Shonn Brown ’95 ’98, who will receive a 2022 SMU Distinguished Alumni Award in October 2022.

Please look for our monthly email newsletter, the Mustang Minute, where you will find exciting law school news, student successes, and upcoming events.

Finally, I want to thank all of you. Our alumni are our greatest asset, and we are here to support, celebrate, and connect with you. I look forward to meeting you at upcoming events. We appreciate all that you do to support our law school.

With my deepest gratitude,
Jason P. Nance
Judge James Noel Dean and Professor of Law
For Jason P. Nance, becoming the Judge James Noel Dean of SMU Dedman School of Law was a Texas homecoming. Nance arrived at SMU Dedman School of Law from the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where he most recently served as associate dean for research and faculty development and a professor of law. But his first career was in education, in the greater Houston area. In the late 1990s, he taught math at a middle school in the Aldine Independent School District, and, on evenings and weekends, GED prep courses and English as a second language to adults at a local community college. In greater Houston area. In the late 1990s, he taught math at a middle school in the Aldine Independent School District, and, on evenings and weekends, GED prep courses and English as a second language to adults at a local community college.

After law school, Nance clerked for Judge Kent A. Jordan of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and the U.S. District Court of Delaware. From 2007 to 2011, he was a litigation associate at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom in Wilmington, Delaware, practicing corporate and securities law. Prior to joining the University of Florida law faculty in 2011, he was a visiting assistant professor at Villanova University’s Charles W. Description ellipsis

What attracted you to SMU?

Many things. It’s difficult to narrow them down. SMU Dedman School of Law is an amazing school. It has a terrific faculty and staff, enrolls highly-qualified students, has a talented and devoted alumni base, is connected to a world-class university, and is committed to furthering diversity, equity, and inclusion. I saw opportunities at SMU that I do not see at other law schools. It offers an impressive return on investment for students. SMU Dedman School of Law ranks 25th nationwide in this percentage of J.D. graduates hired as associates by the top 100 largest U.S. law firms. Through the Corporate Counsel Endowment Program, new in its 10th year, SMU Law is known for preparing students to flourish in business and corporate settings. It is located in a vibrant metropolis that provides incredible opportunities for its graduates. It also offers impressive clinical opportunities for students, has a student-centered approach to education, and is strongly committed to public service. We are going to build upon these core strengths.

How does this background in education influence your approach to law school administration?

I am committed to ensuring that every law student receives a top-flight legal education at SMU. My training in education has helped me better understand how to optimize the learning process. Most people do not learn well by just sitting in a classroom and listening. Learning must be participatory. I think legal educators generally can broaden their pedagogical approaches by relying on varied, evidence-based teaching techniques to better engage students, leading to more positive learning outcomes. For example, professors can facilitate more group work to problem-solve across disciplines to mirror what occurs in actual practice.

How did you choose a career in law?

One of the most interesting aspects of my graduate work was studying education law and policy. I knew I was just scratching the surface at the time, and to better understand these and other areas of the law, I decided to pursue law further. Graduating from law school led to clerking for a fabulous federal judge and to practicing corporate and securities law at Skadden Arps, which in turn led to teaching at the Levin College of Law, and, now, to the dean’s chair at SMU Dedman School of Law. Going to law school was one of the best decisions I have ever made, but my first career was in education, in the greater Houston area. In the late 1990s, he taught math at a middle school in the Aldine Independent School District, and, on evenings and weekends, GED prep courses and English as a second language to adults at a local community college. In

One position you held at UF Law was associate director of the Center for the Study of Race and Race Relations. How important is it to continue to expand the diversity of both the student body and faculty at Dedman?

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are among the top priorities. They must be foundational principles for our nation and, particularly, our educational institutions. The future success of legal education, the legal profession, and our society depends on a commitment to uphold these values. Respectfully, opportunities for success continue to be distributed in an unequal fashion in our country. We should do all we can to help others develop their talents, contribute positively to our society, and lead happy lives. It is in everyone’s best interest to be committed to these principles.

SMU Dedman School of Law has two academic centers focused on aspects of business law: the Robert B. Rowling Center for Business Law & Leadership, and the Tsai Center for Law, Science and Innovation. With so many corporations located in the Dallas area, and so many opportunities for alumni engagement, corporate donor support, student placement, internships and externships, and so forth, how important is it to you to make the school even more prominent in business law (including IP law)?

Extremely important. The DFW Metroplex is a top headquarters location in the world for Fortune 500 companies. Our corporate, business, and IP programs are strengths that we must build upon. There is also an opportunity for us to further distinguish ourselves in technology law, including artificial intelligence and the law, and to be on the forefront of economic change.
I am thrilled and honored to be named dean of SMU Dedman School of Law and am excited to begin!

With SMU Dedman School of Law’s centennial celebration approaching in 2025, this is an optimal opportunity for the SMU Law community to reflect on the strengths of our school and consider where we want to take it in the next century.

You’re a strong proponent of empirical, quantitative, data-driven approaches to legal research. How do you see that influencing future research endeavors at SMU Law and the education of tomorrow’s lawyers?

My graduate school training and current research have provided me with a strong background in quantitative analyses. I take a data-driven approach to decision-making. I don’t like operating on “hunches,” because they often mislead and can cost an organization enormous time and money. In our highly competitive environment, we do ourselves a disservice by not examining data. Data cannot tell us everything, but, if used correctly, they do help us make more informed and objective decisions.

My goal is that our graduates will have more opportunities to better understand data analytics and data science generally. The legal profession is changing, and I want our students to be at the forefront of these changes.

What are you looking forward to most about being dean of SMU Dedman School of Law?

That’s a difficult question, because there is so much to look forward to. My greatest source of satisfaction comes from doing what I can to help others become their best selves. The SMU Dedman School of Law family is filled with people who can and will do marvelous things to improve our communities.

Do you intend for SMU Dedman School of Law to rise in the U.S. News rankings?

Absolutely. While the U.S. News ranking system is problematic on a number of levels, I understand its utility. Currently, SMU Law is ranked 88th. If UJ Law, our leadership team under the guidance of Dean Laura Rossbusch worked together to significantly raise the Levin School’s ranking over the last several years. (It currently ranks 21st.) I understand this process well and will work to firmly entrench SMU Law as a top-50 law school — or higher. It takes time and resources. We’ll get there, but we need to be patient.

You’ve said development is a top goal of yours. How will you build on the law school’s deep tradition of support from its alumni and the Texas legal community at large? What is your top development goal?

My top development goal is to earn the trust of the talented alumni of SMU Dedman School of Law, so they will want to invest in our programs in various ways. We also need to continue to harness the vast capabilities of our alumni to teach, mentor, and prepare future SMU Law graduates.

Our incoming students are well-credentialed and full of potential, as will be our future incoming classes. There is a wonderful opportunity to shape the next generation of lawyers.

When The Texas Lawbook interviewed you in June, you were house-hunting in Dallas’s exorbitantly tight (and costly) market. Any luck?

Yes! With the help of marvelous real estate agents, we found a great house with a short commute to the law school, something that’s very important to us.

What do you like to do during your downtime?

I enjoy playing pickleball, tennis, and card games together. I’ve also run a few marathons over the last twenty years. These physical activities help keep me balanced. And I spend a lot of time with my family. We have few children, two of whom still live at home. We enjoy playing pickleball, tennis, and card games together.

What do you want to see in the Dallas-Fort Worth area that you haven’t had a chance to check out yet?

I am excited to check out the hiking and running trails, like the Katy Trail and the White Rock Lake Trail. Julie is a musician and music educator, and we are excited to engage in the various music opportunities that the Metroplex offers. I enjoy college sports, so I’m excited about attending my first SMU football and basketball games.

How many pairs of cowboy boots do you own?

None, but I’m working on it. Julie and I loved attending the rodeo in Houston years ago. By the time we attend another we want to be ready.

Is there anything I forgot to ask you that you want the readers to know?

I am committed to enhancing the educational experiences of our students and preparing them to succeed in a demanding but exciting profession. I am also committed to working collaboratively with the other schools at SMU and will do everything I can to help SMU reach its goal of becoming an R1 university according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. [An R1 designation signifies “very high research activity” and is the highest tier a doctoral research university can achieve in the Carnegie classification system.] I am thrilled and honored to be named dean of SMU Dedman School of Law and am excited to begin.
Jennifer Collins never thought she would be a law school dean when she started in academia. But the outgoing Judge James Noel Dean at SMU Dedman School of Law is a big believer in serendipity. One of her strongest encouragements to her students is to be willing to say yes to opportunities that are presented to them.

Collins concluded her deanship at the end of May, eight years after saying yes to moving to The Hilltop and becoming the law school’s first female dean. Under her leadership, SMU Dedman School of Law has increased the academic quality of its incoming classes, launched three new academic centers and three new legal clinics, seen improvements in diversity, grown alumni engagement, and continued to strengthen partnerships with the legal, governmental, and public service communities of Dallas. And for the last two years, she has steered the law school through a global pandemic. These accomplishments, and many more, could only have been envisioned when she joined the law school in July 2014.

Last year serendipity called again, and Collins is going to Memphis, Tennessee, for a new adventure as the president of Rhodes College beginning July 1. Collins reflected on her time at SMU, the unique challenges she faced during her tenure, and the advice she has for the law school’s next dean in this exclusive interview for The Quad.

What are you most proud of from your tenure as dean?

There are so many things. It is impossible to pick just one thing. I’m truly proud of our students, faculty, and staff. I think we have been wonderfully warm, supportive, and resilient community that has managed the challenges of the past few years absolutely magnificently. I’m incredibly proud of the ways that we have served the community, from launching new clinics like our First Amendment Clinic to the COVID-19 Helpline that we made available to the community and, on very short notice during the pandemic to serve hundreds of DFW residents facing various legal challenges. I’m so proud of the strides we’ve made on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. I’m really proud of our current placement. We’ve increased the academic quality (median LSAT and GPA) of incoming classes. We’ve also established three new academic centers that are doing wonderful work in enriching our community.

What inspired the launch of those three academic centers – the Robert B. Rowling Center for Business Law & Leadership, the Tsai Center for Law, Science and Innovation and the Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center?

In an increasingly competitive law school market, law schools need to think deeply about how they differentiate themselves and what their centers of excellence are going to be. It is clear SMU has this very long and deep tradition of developing outstanding leaders at the intersection of law and business. Dallas is a hub for technology and innovation and Texas is a state at the forefront of criminal justice reform. So we wanted to take advantage of those traditions of excellence and continue to expand and build upon them.

When you took over as dean in 2014, you couldn’t have imagined going through something like the COVID-19 pandemic. What did you learn about yourself as a leader during that time?

First, I want to be clear it was a team effort in response to COVID-19. It was really smart by early March that this was going to be a huge issue and, as a result, prior to spring break, our incredible library and academic technology team initiated trainings for our law school faculty to prepare them to teach online in the event we were not going to be able to return to campus after the break. The faculty, on very short notice, all came to those trainings and the staff worked through how we would maintain the continuity of operations of the law school. Then the students handled this major disruption as thoughtfully, maturely, and resiliently as we could have possibly hoped.

Second, you can never communicate enough. For many, many weeks I sent an end-of-the-day email update to the faculty and staff to let them know about any new developments and answer any questions. Third, you have to try and be very attentive to the needs of your entire community. Not only was this devastating for students, it was devastating to many faculty and staff who either had to deal with serious illnesses and death among their family members or the challenges of teaching while caring for very young children who were now at home instead of in school. We really tried to think about how we could help all of these different constituencies. For example, during this time, our students were losing jobs—that was part of the reason we launched the COVID-19 Helpline program so students who had lost summer internships would have an opportunity to develop meaningful legal skills like client counseling, researching, and interviewing. You need to approach any kind of crisis in a very holistic way and always be thoughtful about how you can support the people you are so privileged to work with every day.

What is the significance for you of being the first female dean at the law school?

It is a tremendous honor to be the first and it is very exciting to know I won’t be the last. There was a time when I was the only female law dean in Texas, but now there are a number of other female law deans of St. Mary’s, UNT, and Texas Southern. I’m so grateful for that camaraderie and support.

What will you miss the most?

I’m going to miss the people. SMU Dedman School of Law has an extraordinary community of faculty, staff, and students. I always say the single best way we convince students they should come to SMU is to spend a day on campus during an Admitted Students Day. And I’m really going to miss the City of Dallas. It has been a wonderful city in which to live and have a law school. The legal community is so supportive. There are now law firms and companies moving in all the time, so opportunities for our students keep expanding.

What are you most looking forward to at Rhodes?

I’m joining a community very much like SMU in that it is wonderfully warm and welcoming and shares a deep commitment to service. Like SMU, it is located in an amazing American city. In addition, I’ve always said the best part about my job is I get to help young people achieve their personal and professional dreams. What could be better than that?

What advice would you give the next dean of the law school?

Get engaged with the great City of Dallas. There are so many wonderful law firms, corporations, public service organizations, and government agencies. Get out and about in the community as much as possible.

Any final thoughts?

I just want to say thank you to this community. It has been the great joy of my life to be the dean. I have loved every minute of my time in Dallas, except for when my house was hit by the 2019 tornado and we were displaced for nine months. A global pandemic and a tornado in the span of five months was definitely one of the more unexpected challenges during my time at SMU. But it is a wonderful lesson in resilience, grit, and perseverance.
SMU DEDMAN SCHOOL OF LAW | THE QUAD | FALL 2022

SMU DEDMAN LAW’S INNOVATIVE CORPORATE COUNSEL EXTERNSHIP PROGRAM SHINES, THANKS TO LOYAL GC ALUMS

Mark Curriden
Senior Legal Affairs Writer and Founder of The Texas Lawbook

Another 105 law students have signed up to extern at about 100 companies this coming fall.

“SMU is in a unique situation with so many corporate headquarters in town,” said Stephen Yeager, who is assistant dean for student affairs at SMU Dedman Law and founder of the externship initiative. “The program puts students in real-life situations where they have educational opportunities unobtainable in the classroom.”

As a result of teaching the class, however, he realized that the in-house world was virtually unknown to law students. In addition to teaching them about legal and ethical issues facing inside counsel, he wanted to give them a glimpse of what in-house lawyers actually do. And he found a partner in his assistant—Marc Steinberg, the Rupert and Lillian Radford Chair in Law and Professor of Law. Together, they designed an academic program combining the corporate counsel externship with externships in corporate legal departments. They also authored a nationally-adapted textbook for the class, Inside Counsel - Practices, Strategies and Insights (West 2d ed. 2020) and are currently working on the third edition. Professor Steinberg serves as the Director of the Program and Dean Yeager is the Faculty Supervisor.

The Corporate Counsel Externship Program was born in fall 2013 with 30 companies hosting students. This fall marks the tenth year of the program, which has been a resounding success. It is the premier program of its kind in the nation and the largest, with over 100 different companies participating. The program now falls under the Robert B. Rowling Center for Business Law & Leadership. One of the secrets to the program’s success is that students may tailor their experiences. Students are placed with companies, industries, and practice areas in which they have an interest.

Yeager, who also teaches a course titled “SMU is in a unique situation with so many corporate headquarters in here,” said Stephen B. Yeager, is assistant dean for student affairs at SMU Dedman Law and founder of the externship initiative. “The program puts students in real-life situations where they have educational opportunities unobtainable in the classroom.”

“We realized that the in-house world was virtually unknown to law students,” he said. “The sweet spot for lawyers going in-house used to be in their fifth to seventh years of practice. Now it is two to three years.”

Yeager, who also teaches a course titled “The Role of the General Counsel,” said law students get some extraordinary firsthand experiences through the externship.

An extern with Keurig Dr Pepper witnessed how different flavored drinks were developed. Fluor Corporation let law students visit construction sites. Mary Kay allowed its Russian-born extern to attend a global legal conference where she used her knowledge of Russian language and culture to network and work on a project involving Russian data privacy laws.

“One of the keys to success is focusing on the interests of the students when placing them in their externships,” Yeager said. “We ask students to tell us the names of the companies where they want to extern, and we try to place them in those legal departments.”

Yeager compared the effort to match 100 law students with 100 companies to “putting together a huge jigsaw puzzle.”

The No. 1 student request: Mark Cuban Companies.

“I believe that law students interested in the practice of corporate law and seeking early mentoring by skilled corporate lawyers and the opportunity to spend a full-semester working in-house at some point in their careers,” Yeager said. After teaching the class for ten years, yeager said it has been an absolute joy to look back at the last ten years. Yeager created an upper-level class called “The Role of the General Counsel,” which proved very popular.

As Yeager says, “It has been an absolute joy to look back at the last ten years. Yeager created an upper-level class called “The Role of the General Counsel,” which proved very popular.
Summit Midstream Partners where she had a “strong desire to go in-house” even back in law school, was an extern in 2016 with TXU Energy, which itself was in transition following the bankruptcy of Energy Future Holdings and the creation of Vistra Energy.

“I assisted with re linearizing contracts, revising a contract playbook and shadowing various attorneys as they represented the company in corporate restructuring with Vistra Corp.,” Yen said. “This helped me significantly because it’s not every day that a company goes through significant restructuring, so I was able to see the behind the scenes in-house work that goes into a transaction like that.”

“Because I was an extern, I was brought into meetings that I probably wouldn’t have been brought into had I been an employee or even in-house counsel at TXU,” she said. Shanna Dean is another former SMU Dedman Law extern turned in-house counsel who now hosts new externs. Dean, who is a director of legal at Yum! Brands and externed with the retailer Fossil Inc. in 2016, said the program provides students with networking opportunities, which is important because the “corporate legal community in Dallas is actually small and close.”

“Law school is very theoretical, so this program provides hands-on experience and is a great resume builder in a competitive legal market,” Dean said.

Don Hinderliter may be the poster child for having a law school internship or externship result in a job offer. As an SMU Dedman Law student, Hinderliter did a five-month internship at LSG Sky Chefs in 2006. A year later, he was hired by the DFW-based company as corporate counsel. He was later promoted to deputy general counsel and is now LSG Sky Chefs’ head of legal, general counsel and corporate secretary.

“This is a great way to give back to the law school,” said Hinderliter, who has hosted nine externs. “It is a pipeline for the profession. There is no cost except the time to spend with the candidate to give them the experience they used.”

Brooke Neal wanted to do an externship with the George W. Bush Presidential Center as an SMU law student in 2016, but the center was not on SMU Dedman Law’s list of hosts. Yeager and his team approached Bush Center leaders, and they made Neal their first extern. The center is hosting its fourth extern this fall.

“It was so exciting to be around a group of really smart people who were willing to invest in a law student and take the time to teach and help me understand the application of the law,” Neal said.

“Not only did the externship program provide me with the connections that eventually turned into a permanent job, it taught me ‘soft skills’ like teamwork, communication and problem solving that you don’t learn in a classroom,” said Neal, who now works as a lawyer at the Bush Center.

“It was a unique way to gain valuable legal experience while getting a glimpse into the work of a former president of the United States,” Neal said. It is exciting for me to be able to host externs at the same place where I was an extern, and see the value they bring from this side of the program.

“We have a small legal team here at the Bush Center, so we get to handle a wide variety of things on a daily basis that our externs have the opportunity to jump in on,” Neal said. “We also have several attorneys on staff working on policy, development, etc. So, our externs also get exposure to a wide variety of things you can do with a law degree.”

Lauren Theford did her externship with Summit Midstream Partners where she said she received her “first exposure to public securities laws and the reporting obligations of a public company.”

“Thedford, who is now corporate counsel at the global investment firm Sixth Street Partners, said it was so exciting to be around a group of really smart people who were willing to invest in a law student and take the time to teach and help me understand the application of the law.”

“The externship program provided me with the context with which to apply the law, which can often be very abstract,” she said. “I also learned the importance of the partnership between internal counsel, who must be more generalist but know the company very well, and external counsel, who often carry expertise in a specific area of law.”

For the corporate GCs, the externship is also about “molding the next legal and business leaders,” according to Interstate Batteries General Counsel Kelvin Sellers.

“On their first day – if not before – I share with externs that they should feel like they are joining the Interstate legal team,” Sellers said. “Our externs are brought into most facets of the business. If it’s something that corporate counsel is involved in, our externs are brought in. That includes, employment matters, large scale upstream and downstream contractual drafting and reviews, and a litany of ad hoc requests for legal counsel.”

Sellers said corporate legal departments not participating in SMU’s externship program should consider it.

“And as we are called to do more with less and as we find our budgets under ever-increasing scrutiny, it makes a ton of sense to invest time in the future counsel and corporate secretary,” Sellers said. “Help them understand the pressures of business. Help them better appreciate the expectations in house counsel has of outside counsel. No, the impact may not be immediate but there is return on this investment for you and your current and future leaders.”

Corporate Counsel Externship Program

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SMU Launches $1.5 Billion Campaign to Ignite the Future of the University

On September 17, 2021, SMU launched SMU Ignited: Boldly Shaping Tomorrow – our multiyear, $1.5 billion campaign – to fuel the bold, the curious, and the creative by empowering outstanding students, enriching teaching and research, and enhancing campus and community. To encourage SMU’s grand vision for students, faculty, the campus, and the greater community, many donors have stepped up to provide early support for SMU Ignited – including landmark commitments at record-breaking levels. SMU’s Dedman School of Law will be a critical part of SMU Ignited, with funds benefitting students, faculty, and staff and driving programs and projects.

To learn more about the progress of the campaign, visit www.smu.edu/ignited.

SMU Dedman School of Law Centers and Clinics Fueled by SMU Ignited Gifts

SMU Dedman School of Law alumni know the integral role the school’s centers and clinics play in honing skills vital for a successful career in the field of law. Spurred by gifts to SMU Ignited, Dedman Law’s centers and clinics are stronger than ever, continuing to provide an interdisciplinary platform for educational programming, to facilitate academic research, and to provide educational opportunities that engage students and the academic and business/legal communities. Generous supporters of Dedman Law have recently made significant gifts to shape the future of Dedman Law for generations to come.

Creating a More Just System

Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center receives $5 million from local and national philanthropies for public defense research and advocacy

Championing the Sixth Amendment’s promises, challenging unconstitutional detention, and ensuring justice in rural communities, the Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center may be the busiest research and advocacy center that SMU alumni have never heard of.

In 2016, the Deason Foundation and the Charles Koch Foundation contributed the funding to create the Deason Center at SMU Dedman School of Law. Since then, the center has become a sought-after resource for studying and improving public defense services. Organizations across the country have used the center’s research and expertise to improve their understanding of indigent defense, the right to counsel, trial or criminal legal systems, and prosecutorial discretion. From across the state of Texas to others like New York, North Dakota, and Oregon, the Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center has already made an impact on criminal legal systems nationwide.

New, the Deason Foundation is donating an additional $2.5 million to further support the center’s mission and success. This five-year gift bolsters the center’s innovative research and data-driven advocacy for nonpartisan reform of the criminal legal system.

“We are excited to continue our partnership with the Deason Center at SMU,” said Doug Deason, director of the Deason Foundation. “The center works hard to find innovative solutions to the most pressing criminal justice reform issues, including changing the paradigm around the right to counsel. We look forward to the work the Deason Center will continue to do to break the barriers that prevent individuals from leading fulfilling lives.”

Another founding donor, the Charles Koch Foundation, is pledging $1,050,000 to support the Center in 2023. This commitment is the largest the Deason Center has ever received in a single year.

We are excited to continue our partnership with the Deason Center at SMU,” said Ryan Stowers, Executive Director of the Charles Koch Foundation. “The center works hard to find innovative solutions to the most pressing criminal justice reform issues, including changing the paradigm around the right to counsel. We look forward to the work the Deason Center will continue to do to break the barriers that prevent individuals from leading fulfilling lives.”

Arnold Ventures is also joining the list of national philanthropies investing in the Deason Center’s mission by supporting research grants of more than $1.2 million to back research focused on...

### SMU Rowling Center for Business Law & Leadership

The Cain Foundation will endow and name the Cain Denius Business Law Boot Camp, which is part of the Robert B. Rowling Center for Business Law & Leadership at SMU Dedman School of Law. The endowment from the Cain Foundation will provide permanent funding for the Cain Denius Business Law Boot Camp, an innovative and intensive business and law course offered to second- and third-year law students interested in gaining business insight and proficiency. The course is designed to equip Dedman Law students with real-world business and law skills.

“The Cain Foundation appreciates SMU Dedman School of Law’s long-standing reputation for excellence in preparing graduates who successfully apply what they learn to their careers,” said Wolford Denius ’77 and John Cain, Directors of the Cain Foundation. “We are thrilled that this endowment for the Cain Denius Business Law Boot Camp will enable SMU to provide students excellent educational opportunities in business and law for many years to come.”

### EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS LAW

A talented and diverse student body is a defining feature of a great law school. Increasing the ability to award scholarships is crucial to helping SMU Dedman School of Law attract top students. SMU Denius donors create life-changing opportunities for our world-changing students by supporting scholarship opportunities, giving students experiencing financial hardship the opportunity to come study on the Hilltop. Recently, a group of Dedman Law alumni contributed a total of $1 million to the Dedman Law Impact Scholarship for first-generation students. The Cain Denius Business Law Boot Camp is taught by Dedman Law and SMU Cox School of Business faculty, as well as experts from law firms and industry. The interdisciplinary courses reinforce the Rowling Center’s mission to become nationally recognized for developing leaders at the intersection of business and law. Started in 2019, the boot camp has grown in size and popularity with Dedman Law students. The Cain Foundation endowment enables the boot camp to increase in frequency to twice annually, as well as enhance its course offerings and expand the high-quality instruction offered.

### POWERING WORLD CHANGE

Generous alumni contribute $1 million to Impact Scholarship for first-generation students.

Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center receives $5 million from local and national philanthropies for public defense research and advocacy

In addition to the support from national organizations, local donors are also investing in the Deason Center’s mission. The Chrest Foundation, a Dallas-based organization that supports criminal justice reform initiatives across the country, is supporting the center’s research partnership with the Dallas County District Attorney’s Office. The District Attorney (DA) Leadership through Application of Science (DALLAS) initiative investigates the impact of pretrial reforms on racial equity and due process. It also studies screening and charging workflows in the DA’s office, empowering Dallas County District Attorney John Creuzot to make well-informed, data-driven decisions that reduce prosecutorial bottlenecks and increase pretrial release.

“The Deason Center’s work advocating for criminal justice reform across the nation is incredibly important,” says Jason Nance, Judge James Noel Dean and Professor of Law at SMU Dedman School of Law. “I’m excited that our students can be a part of this innovative research, and look forward to championing the center’s success as its work expands.”

In the coming months, the Deason Center will release new reports and policy briefs on pre-trial due process, including initial appearance and charging time delays. The center will also launch a national advocacy campaign aimed at reforming policies that keep people in jail unnecessarily, often without a lawyer to help them. More information about these issues and the center’s other work can be found at DeasonCenter.org.
DEDMAN LAW IS THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE SEVERAL NEW ENDED SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS. THE QUAD SPOKE TO RECENT DONORS WHO ESTABLISHED NEW SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES VIA SMU IGNITED TO LEARN WHAT MOTIVATED THEIR GIFTS.

ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

PAYING IT FORWARD
Patricia and Alan Ratliff ’90 give $250,000 to establish the Patricia and Alan Ratliff Endowed Scholarship Fund

“Tricia and I have given donations to Dedman Law since I graduated from there over 30 years ago, and our focus has always been scholarships. I could not have gone to SMU Dedman School of Law without significant financial assistance, which I received. As one of the University Scholars, SMU provided me with a scholarship that covered full tuition and fees for all three years. I personally know the challenges many current and prospective students in this generation face with rising costs and increased debt levels after law school. We hope, as the scholarship’s title reflects, that this donation will help build a bridge for some highly qualified student prospects, or existing successful students, who want to attend, or continue attending Dedman Law.”

ATTRACTING THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST
Susan ’87 and James Baldwin ’86 give $250,000 to establish the Susan and James Baldwin Endowed Scholarship Fund

“Susan and I wanted to invest in Dedman Law School’s future and to ensure that it will continue to attract the best law students. Competition for the brightest students is increasingly fierce, so establishing and endowing a scholarship at Dedman Law will help SMU to remain competitive in the market. Dallas/Fort Worth now has three law schools and while SMU is the best of the three, it is also more expensive, so scholarships are the most effective way to level the playing field for students. Scholarships will support SMU’s mission in attracting the most compelling candidates and keeping SMU at the top of the list in applicants’ minds. We hope that by endowing the Susan and Jim Baldwin Scholarship, SMU will continue to see the broadest applicant pool into the future.”

HONORING A LEGACY
B.K. and Mark Sloan ’90 contribute $125,000 to create the Sloan Endowed Law Scholarship

“B.K. and I both graduated from SMU. B.K. earned her B.A. in business, and I earned my Juris Doctorate from Dedman Law. We wanted to honor a place that has given us so much and helped us not only establish our careers but also create life-long friendships. What better way to honor our past than to help future lawyers attend SMU’s Dedman School of Law? We hope the recipients of this scholarship will find the same outstanding teaching, camaraderie and excitement that marked our time on the Hilltop.”

INVESTING IN THE FUTURE
Tracey and Van Beckwith ’90 give $125,000 to create the Tracey and Van Beckwith Endowed Law Scholarship

“SMU impacted us for a lifetime through not only the outstanding education and opportunities SMU fostered, but the deep friendships and memories made during these three years at SMU Law School. We hope our gift spurs others on to give generously to ease the expense of a law school education and, in so doing, to free up students to pursue a long and rewarding career in law. Texas businesses and economy depend on skilled business leaders who are ready to contribute to a thriving economy built on the rule of law and fundamental justice. SMU sits at the perfect intersection of business and law in a thriving Texas, and Dedman Law has the opportunity to be the leader in developing the next generation of business and legal leaders needed in Texas and throughout the world. We are proud to contribute to that effort.”

ENHANCING TEXAS’ BUSINESS COMMUNITY
Mark K. Ratliff ’81 gives $125,000 to establish the Mark K. Ratliff Endowed Law Scholarship

“We all know that Texas has an incredibly fast-growing economy with industry leaders looking to our state as an ideal place to establish businesses, both new and established. Texas needs smart and knowledgeable lawyers to serve the business community. Having earned my J.D. at SMU, I know the value of an education at Dedman Law, and I wanted to ensure that future lawyers had the opportunity to succeed in business law. I am excited about the Mark K. Ratliff Endowed Law Scholarship and about the capable students that it enables to attend Dedman Law and make a mark in their communities.”

GIFTS TO THE LAW SCHOOL

A FAMILY MATTER
Karen and Bobbitt Noel ’76 include a $1M gift for Dedman Law in their estate plans

Dedman Law alum Bobbitt Noel and his wife Karen Noel recently pledged a $1M estate gift, supporting Dedman School of Law. For the Noels, supporting SMU is a family affair. “Karen and I, we have two fathers, an uncle, seven cousins, a niece, a nephew and a daughter-in-law who went to SMU,” said Bobbitt Noel. “We both grew up in the shadow of the campus. How could we not give to SMU?” Indeed, Bobbitt and Karen’s generous gift builds on a legacy of Noel giving: Will Noel and family generously endowed the Dedman Law Judge James Noel Dean during SMU’s previous campaign, SMU Unbridled.

The Noels were proud to give to such a historically strong institution. “Given the quality of people that run Dedman Law,” Bobbitt said, “we trust them to put our gift to work where it will do the most good for the Law School and, by extension, the community.”

A PERFECTLY TIMED GIFT
Judith Johnson Flatt ’75 contributes $100,000 to Dedman Law

Longtime supporter and alum, Judith Johnson Flatt recently gifted $100,000 to Dedman Law. Flatt graduated from the Hilltop in 1975 and has served as a volunteer to SMU and on Dedman Law’s Executive Board. An annual donor to SMU, Flatt decided the time was right to make a larger gift. “Two changes fell into place to encourage my decision,” Flatt said. “First, a few years ago, a provision in the Internal Revenue Code, which allows for a tax-favored transfer of up to $100,000 from an Individual Retirement Account to an institution such as the Law School. This provision, along with certain personal changes, encouraged my making the gift this year.”

Flatt understands the unique value of a Dedman Law education, which promotes critical thought and compassionate outreach to the community. Looking toward the future, she hopes Dedman continues doing what it does best—teaching young lawyers to look beyond dividends rhetoric to do what is best.

“I think that many of us have been concerned, especially over the past few years, with protecting the higher values of an orderly, compassionate society based on the rule of law,” Flatt said. “I hope that the Law School continues to produce outstanding graduates with the skills, gifts, and moral compass to do that.”
The dramatic increase in the number of women law students over the last 50 years, where women today account for a little more than half of law students compared to 3 percent in the late 1960s, tells a story of tremendous progress.

Women law students in ways that will make them ready to take on these leadership roles?

Murray drew on her experiences working at a corporate law firm and serving as interim dean of UC Berkeley School of Law, when she became the first black woman to lead a top-15 law school, to address the mounting persistence of those questions and offer ways law students and their peers in the profession can make real progress.

While interim dean of UC Berkeley, Murray was repeatedly referred to as the “girl dean” by one of the other law school deans in the state. She also recruited a conversation with an older alumnus who, when she introduced herself to him as the dean, thought she said she cleaned the law school.

These are examples of a “gap of imagination,” Murray says. It helps explain implicit bias research that Grossman shared where respondents said they pictured a man when prompted with the word “leader” but at the same time reported women as more likely than average to possess various leadership skills.

“So the skills you want, you think women are more likely to have, but the person you picture is a man,” Grossman said.

In short, representation matters. One way to advocate for more institutional change is to become the person in charge and, as Murray said, become a gadfly. But she also encouraged law students to not underestimate the influence they have with law firms.

“They want nothing more than to recruit you. There’s a lot of power and authority even right now when you don’t think you have that much because you are the commodity they want,” Murray said. “There are these moments when you have more leverage. Those are the moments when you really need to seize those opportunities.”

Murray pointed to family leave policies and the need to seize those opportunities. “Those are the moments where you really need to seize those opportunities.”

Murray then turned her attention to her female colleagues and peers: “We have to do a better job of being a supportive sorority for all of the women coming behind us. Make your network other women. Introduce them to your in-house friends. Make the road by walking.”

Which is exactly how the Women’s Leadership Initiative – “a truly remarkable initiative that will set SMU apart from other law schools,” according to Murray – came to fruition.

SMU Dedman School of Law alumnus Angela Braly ’85 was invited by Dean Jennifer Collins to a Dallas Bar Association event for experienced women lawyers to encourage them to take their efforts to the next level.

“It inspired me to think about why we aren’t talking about these issues in law school,” said Braly, a former CEO of a Fortune 500 company and law firm partner who now serves on several corporate boards of directors. “It then turned her attention to her female colleagues and peers: “We have to do a better job of being a supportive sorority for all of the women coming behind us. Make your network other women. Introduce them to your in-house friends. Make the road by walking.”

Yet the law remains the least diverse profession in the nation. While 50 percent of law firm associates are women, fewer than one in five make equity partner. The numbers diminish further each rung up the ladder you climb. Three percent of women are top earners.

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Murray pointed to family leave policies and time off as examples where law students have wielded influence and effected change at law firms. She thinks students could have a similar impact in pushing for more women in leadership roles.

Grossman concluded the conversation by asking Murray to share practical tips for what law students are going to face.

“My thing is that you believe in yourself,” she said. “There are things you can’t change, I can’t change being the ‘girl dean.’ I can’t change being black and at a law firm and a woman when he’s expecting a 60-year-old white man. But I can change the way I talk to him about what I’m doing.”

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LOUISE B. RAGGIO ’52
ENDOWED LECTURE SERIES

SMU Dedman School of Law Honors Distinguished Alumni and Honorary Alumni at Awards Ceremony

Five impressive individuals were recognized on March 31, 2022 at the Arts District Mansion for their outstanding achievements, leadership, and service. These awards are the highest honor the law school bestows upon its alumni and friends.

Above left to right: Chief Justice Nathan L. Hecht, David S. Huntley, Kit Richardson Sawers, Yulise Reaves Waters, Timothy E. Powers

Congratulations

CHIEF JUSTICE NATHAN L. HECHT ’74
27TH CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS
Robert G. Storey Award for Distinguished Achievement

DAVID S. HUNTLEY
SENIOR EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF COMPLIANCE OFFICER | AT&T INC.
Honorary Alumni Award

TIMOTHY E. POWERS ’80
SENIOR COUNSEL AND IMMEDIATE-PAST MANAGING PARTNER | HAYNES AND BoONE, LLP
Distinguished Alumni Award for Private Practice

KIT RICHARDSON SAWERS ’93
PRESIDENT | KLYDE WARREN PARK
Distinguished Alumni Award for Public Service

YULISE REAVES WATERS ’08
CHIEF INNOVATIONS OFFICER | LONE STAR JUSTICE ALLIANCE
Emerging Leader Award

With much anticipation, SMU Dedman School of Law hosted the Louise B. Raggio Endowed Lecture Series on October 14, 2021. The Raggio Lecture Series consistently hosts trailblazing women in their fields, and the fall 2021 lineup proved no exception.

Senators Kelly Ayotte (2011-2017, New Hampshire) and Claire McCaskill (2007-2018, Missouri), both attorneys, reflected upon their respective backgrounds, family values, and entry into public service.

Ayotte, born in Nashua, New Hampshire, credits her motivation to transition from private practice into political office to the overall “passion behind public service.” The first campaign she ever worked on, Ayotte remarked, was her own.

McCaskill, born in Rolla, Missouri, grew up in a household focused on steady discussion of current events - this shaped her path to community service.

While in the Senator’s office, having served in numerous political positions, McCaskill says she “immediately recognized that the ability to work on these huge public policy topics - approachable issues, difficult to the ‘un-informed’ person - but also the United States Senator.

SMU Law students were invited to a midday, exclusive discussion between the Senators, followed by an evening session open to law alumni and members of the DFW community. Dean Jennifer Collins served as moderator.
SMU Dedman School of Law held its first Rising Scholars Program in the summer of 2021. Disturbed by the continued lack of diversity in the legal profession and the murder of George Floyd, the law school felt that it needed to respond by having an impact in the community. One of the manifestations of the response was the development of the Rising Scholars Program for rising high school seniors who were interested in pursuing a career in law. The students came to the law school each day to take a mini-course, meet with attorneys, and participate in professional development seminars. AT&T, Inc. sponsored this event and their attorneys were an integral part of the programming, the culmination of which was a moot court judged by AT&T lawyers. This year Sidley Austin LLP, and Apple, Inc. joined AT&T as sponsors of the Rising Scholars Program held on the SMU campus June 6-10, 2022. Because of their financial support, we were able to offer a free residential program to 21 students from high schools in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. We were fortunate to have another exceptional group of students.

With the expansion of the program came increased programming opportunities, such as mock interviews, a networking session, and more professional development workshops. As in the inaugural Rising Scholars Program, the students had the opportunity to develop and present oral arguments in a moot court competition.

At the end of a successful program, the students’ families were invited to campus to enjoy a recognition lunch, where smiles and excitement filled the room, as the students shared the accomplishments of a memorable week.
When Mallory Glover ’22 applied to SMU Dedman School of Law, she began her personal statement with a very personal story. “My father deserved to be in prison,” she wrote, “however, he did not deserve to die. Not according to the law and not in the eyes of the six-year-old he left behind.”

As a child, Mallory followed her father, David, everywhere. David was an artist and Mallory was his shadow. When David fixed the car, Mallory handed him the wrench. When morning came, Mallory shook David awake, challenging him to draw an item she was holding. At her young age, Mallory couldn’t comprehend her father’s battle with addiction.

Mallory was six years old and watching TV when her mother told her that David was “not on Earth anymore.” She did not elaborate, and Mallory came to her own exciting conclusion: her dad was now an astronaut.

For years, Mallory believed that David was on the moon or in orbit far away. But as she got older, the pieces began to fall into place. In middle school, Mallory finally learned the truth – David had died in jail, and his death had been ruled a suicide.

At the University of North Texas, Mallory majored in criminal justice. As Mallory says, “I didn’t learn a lot of positive things about the criminal system, but it helped me find my calling.” By the time she came to SMU Law, Mallory knew that she wanted to “help keep people out of the criminal system – I wanted to be a public defender.”

As a rising 2L, Mallory joined the Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center as a Deason Scholar, assisting with criminal law research. The Deason Center, which was founded five years ago at SMU Law, is primarily focused on public defense research and advocacy, making it a perfect fit for Mallory. In addition to deepening her commitment to becoming a public defender, Mallory also learned more about the Deason Center’s commitment to criminal legal reform in small, tribal, and rural (STAR) communities.

In 2021, the Deason Center launched a rural criminal justice externship program to combat the criminal lawyer shortage facing many Texas communities, where there are not enough criminal lawyers to provide necessary legal services. The externship gives students hands-on lawyering experience in these underserved communities, allowing law students to work in a rural prosecutor’s or public defender’s office over the summer. Mallory eagerly joined the program.

“We know from research in the medical field that rural roots and positive professional rural training can encourage professionals to practice in a rural area,” says Professor Pamela Metzger, Director of
Working in a magistrate court, especially as a new attorney, often involves working the night shift at a jail and being one of the first people a defendant sees after they’re booked into jail. Oftentimes, this is the worst moment of a person’s life. Yet, Mallory has spent years preparing for the mental toll a job like this can exert.

“You have to be open to being empathetic with them while still kind of shutting it off,” she explains.

There was one time during her externship when Mallory couldn’t shut off her emotions. One of her clients was a man with young children. She says every time she spoke with him, he did not care whether he was sentenced to probation, inpatient treatment, or jail time, he just wanted whatever sentence would get him back to his family the fastest.

“That made me emotional, because my dad was in jail when I was young,” she explains.

“It made me think, ‘I wonder what my dad asked his lawyer for?’”

Outside of court, Mallory and her team would meet almost every day with their clients, even if they did not have any case to discuss. Outside of court, Mallory and her team would meet almost every day with their clients, even if they did not have any case to discuss. It was their way of checking in, seeing how they were doing, and keeping them out of the system. And public defenders can help get them.

Mallory will soon be able to put her beliefs into practice. About six months after her externship, she was offered a job in the Atascosa Regional Public Defender Office of Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA). It’s a job offer she says she wouldn’t have without having participated in the Deason Center’s Rural Externship Program.

Deason Center provided prepared Mallory for working in a rural community. She knew there weren’t many lawyers in Lavaca County, but she didn’t realize just how few attorneys there were until her team faced the same prosecutors at every trial.

“Even if they made us mad during a trial, we still had to be nice to them,” she says. “It’s people’s lives. It’s not just a job.”

Second annual Black Lawyers Matter Conference held in partnership with University of Houston Law Center and LSAC explores path forward toward a more inclusive legal profession

Law school deans, professors, and other leaders from legal academe convened on October 25th for the 2021 Black Lawyers Matter Conference, “Building Inclusive Excellence in Legal Education and Employment.”

Building on the dialogue started at the inaugural Black Lawyers Matter Conference in 2020, the virtual conference examined and expanded on how law schools needed to do in diversifying our faculties, staff, and student bodies. About six months after her externship, she was offered a job in the Atascosa Regional Public Defender Office of Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid (TRLA). It’s a job offer she says she wouldn’t have without having participated in the Deason Center’s Rural Externship Program.

The conference encouraged and supported law schools and legal employers to focus on reforms that will help minoritized students thrive during law school and in their careers.

“We and the other law schools have much more work to do in diversifying our faculties, staff, and student bodies,” said Dean Leonard M. Baynes. “Without a critical mass, how do we ensure that students of color are not isolated, marginalized, or tokenized?”

“I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work in partnership with the University of Houston Law Center and LSAC to continue these critically important conversations,” said Dean Jennifer Collins. “In addition to discussing the essential work that law schools needed to do, we also discussed the steps legal employers must take to recruit, support, and retain diverse lawyers in the workplace.”

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Additional sponsors for the conference included the American Bar Association, the Association of American Law Schools, and the National Association for Law Placement.
Thank You!

WE ARE DEEPLY GRATFUL FOR THIS EXTRAORDINARY ALUMNI COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS THE LAW SCHOOL IN SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS.

Christine P. Leatherberry ’06

Change is good the expression goes. This fall, we are thrilled to welcome Dean Jason Nance, who brings with him impressive academic credentials, renowned scholarship about inequities in the education system, and a genuine love of teaching and the law. To boot, he’s a nice guy. Dean Nance is truly a ray of positivity after the law school rose up from the throes of the pandemic, stronger, but in need of optimism. We look forward to his leadership and this new chapter for SMU Dedman School of Law full of hope and purpose.

This past year, SMU Law pressed the proverbial control-alt-delete button to reboot its alumni connections. We planned a “Texas Tour” where we reconnect with alumni in Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, Austin, and, of course, Dallas. The alumni we saw were ecstatic to connect with us again in person and were eager to hear more about Dean Nance and the fact that we welcomed our most academically-talented class ever last year. We also welcomed alumni at the first Jennifer M. Collins Women’s Leadership Initiative event earlier this year, which addresses issues such as retaining women in the legal profession, elevating women in leadership positions, and enhancing rainmaking and networking skills.

This fall, we have planned “Meet the Dean” events at Park House in Dallas, the Renaissance Dallas at Plano Legacy West Hotel, two tailgates, Reunion for classes who graduated in years ending in 2 or 7, followed by visits to Washington, DC, and New York City for our east coast alumni. If you missed our Texas Tour this summer, you can count on us returning in early 2023 to provide more opportunities for you to meet Dean Nance.

In addition to appreciating the ability to reconnect with our alumni in person, we also appreciate their generosity this past year. Thanks to gifts from alumni, we were able to endow the Impact Scholarship—a new full-tuition, three-year scholarship for an incoming law student from an economically or educationally underserved community, with a preference for a first-generation college student. Three outstanding attorney mentors will meet with the scholarship recipient regularly to provide them with advice and guidance throughout their law school years and help them navigate the job search process. Mentorship is extremely important throughout one’s education and it should not stop at law school.

If you’re looking for an easy way to give back and make a positive change, SMU Law can benefit from more alumni mentors for all our law students. The Mustang Exchange Flash Mentoring Program is not a long-term commitment with one mentee, but instead gives students the opportunity to search our alumni’s profiles and connect with them for a one-time coffee, lunch, or office meeting (or on Zoom/phone if they’re outside the DFW area) to discuss the alum’s career path and provide advice about law school. In other words, students will not ask you for a job! It’s low maintenance. But, most importantly, it is very meaningful to our students. You can sign up to mentor today at: http://www.smu.edu/lawmentor

We look forward to welcoming you as a mentor and at one of the many social, networking, and professional events where you can meet Dean Nance and welcome him as an honorary member of the Mustang Bar.

*Quotation attributable to John F. Kennedy
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
2022 SMU DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD HONOREE

A. Shonn Evans Brown ’95, ’98
Vice President and Deputy General Counsel, Kimberly-Clark

Legal pacesetter and corporate executive A. Shonn Evans Brown ’95, ’98 leads the charge for social justice and equity. Since 1999, Brown has served as chief global litigation counsel for Kimberly-Clark Corp., advising the Fortune 500 company on matters of public policy. She is a guiding force in her profession, and her advocacy focuses on building inclusive communities and workplaces.

At SMU, the lifelong Dallasite was active in Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Student Foundation, Student Senate, Program Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, and Association of Black Students. She won the "M" Award as a senior, and one of her proudest achievements that year was being part of the effort that established the first minority affiliate of SMU Alumni.

After receiving her bachelor’s degree in sociology in 1995, Brown went on to earn a Juris Doctor from SMU in 1998.

Brown began her law practice at the global firm Locke Lord LLP. She was a partner in Lynn Pinker Hurst and Schwegmann LLP, a top-tier boutique trial law firm, before joining Kimberly-Clark.

She has extensive service on the Dallas Bar Association Board of Directors, and has been appreciated by her peers in Texas Lawyer as an Extraordinary Minority Lawyer and in Texas Monthly as a Super Lawyer and one of the Top 50 Women Lawyers in Texas.

In recognition of her accomplishments, Brown received a Dedman School of Law Distinguished Alumni Award in 2016.

She also has been named among the Top 250 Business Leaders in Dallas by D CEO magazine and has won Top Women in Business and Top Minorities in Business awards from the Dallas Business Journal. As a civic leader, she advances nonprofit impact with an emphasis on gender and racial equality. She has served on numerous boards and is immediate past board chair of the Texas Women’s Foundation and co-founder of its The Village Giving Circle. Her current roles include board chair-elect of The Hockaday School and a trustee of the Dallas Museum of Art.

Brown enjoys spending time with her children Evan, Ryan, and Lily. A spinning and running enthusiast, she is a New York City Marathon veteran.

Brown will be honored at the 2022 SMU Distinguished Alumni Awards ceremony hosted by President R. Gerald Turner on October 20, 2022.
TEXAS MUSTANG BAR TOUR

November 18, 2021
Dallas SMU Law Alumni Happy Hour

April 7, 2022
Diverse Alumni Cocktail Reception in Dallas

May 19, 2022
Fort Worth SMU Law Alumni Cocktail Reception

June 9, 2022
Houston SMU Law Alumni Cocktail Reception / SBOT Annual Meeting

June 20, 2022
San Antonio SMU Law Alumni Cocktail Reception

July 28, 2022
Austin SMU Law Alumni Cocktail Reception
FALL 2021

SEPTEMBER 11, 2021
Family Weekend Tailgate, SMU vs. UNT

OCTOBER 1, 2021
SMU Law Reunion, Os vs. Fs

OCTOBER 2, 2021
Homecoming Tailgate, SMU vs. South Florida

OCTOBER 5, 2021
Black Law Students Association (BALSA) Alumni Happy Hour

OCTOBER 14, 2021
Louise B. Reggin Endowed Lecture, Senators Claire McCaskill and Kelly Ayotte

OCTOBER 15, 2021
2nd Annual Black Lawyers Matter Conference: Building Inclusive Excellence in Legal Education and Employment

OCTOBER 22, 2021
29th Annual Corporate Counsel Symposium

NOVEMBER 29, 2021
Celebration of Lights and SMU Law Pre-party

SPRING 2022

FEBRUARY 15, 2022
The Value of Public Service in the Legal Profession, featuring Erin Nealy Cox ’95, Harriet Miers ’70, and John Creuzot ’82, presented by APIL

FEBRUARY 18, 2022
Bridging the Gap: Prioritizing Mental Health for Black Attorneys, presented by The Black Law Students Association (BLSA)

FEBRUARY 24, 2022
Roy B. Rappaport Endowed Lecture, William Nelson Cromwell Professor of Jurisprudence & Political Science, Associate Provost & Associate Dean, Amherst College

MARCH 9, 2022
Jennifer M. Collins Women’s Leadership Initiative inaugural event: Making Strides: Why Gender Inequality in the Legal Profession Still Exists and How We Can Make Real Progress, featuring Melissa Murray, Frederick I. and Grace Stokes Professor of Law, NYU School of Law, and Joanna L. Grossman, Ellen K. Solender Endowed Chair in Women and the Law, SMU Dedman School of Law

MARCH 22, 2022
Law Firm Challenge/SMU Giving Day

MARCH 30-31, 2022
56th Annual Air Law Symposium

MARCH 31, 2022
SMU Dedman School of Law Distinguished Alumni Awards

SMU Dedman School of Law Distinguished Alumni Awards

MAY 13, 2022
SMU Law Graduation Ceremony
New Faculty

Monika Ehrman
Charles J. and Inez Wright Murray Distinguished Visiting Professor

Professor Ehrman earned a B.Sc. in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Alberta, a J.D. from SMU Law, and a Master’s in Law from Yale Law School.

Ehrman is visiting from UNT Dallas, where she joined as Associate Professor of Law in Fall 2021. She was previously a Professor of Law at the University of Oklahoma, where she led the energy and natural resources program and served as the Faculty Director of the Oil & Gas, Natural Resources, and Energy Center. Prior to teaching, she served as general counsel of an energy company, performed pro bono with Pioneer Natural Resources, and associate attorney at Locke Lord LLP. Before law school, Ehrman worked as a petroleum engineer in the energy industry.

Her scholarly interests are in the areas of property, natural resources, energy, and environmental law and policy. She is principal investigator of a multi-year, $300,000 grant awarded in November 2021 from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to study the impact of the clean energy transition on Native American communities. She is also researching the mischaracterization of natural resources in American communities. She is also researching the mischaracterization of natural resources in American communities. She is also researching the mischaracterization of natural resources in American communities. She is also researching the mischaracterization of natural resources in American communities.

Prior to joining SMU, Ehrman was an Assistant Professor at Texas Tech University School of Law, where she twice earned the Dean’s Fellow title and award for outstanding scholarship. Upon graduation from law school, she practiced transactional law and compliance at two firms in Chicago. Ehrman’s research centers around health care equity, the intersection of biocenes and the law, assisted reproduction and surrogacy, reproductive justice, and public health law. Her research during the COVID-19 pandemic has focused on how public health laws and policies impact marginalized populations, particularly people of color. She is an international authority on assisted reproduction and surrogacy, and she has ongoing collaborations related to those areas with scholars around the world. Mohapatra’s work has been published in various top law reviews, including the Emory Law Journal, University of Colorado Law Review, Harvard Law Policy and Review, and Yale Journal of Health Policy, Law, and Ethics, and numerous peer reviewed journals, such as Hastings Center Report.

Professor Mohapatra is a frequent national speaker and is often consulted by the media about a wide variety of health law and biotechnological topics.

Jennifer Rangel Stagen
Clinical Professor of Legal Research, Writing and Advocacy

Professor Stagen earned a B.A. with high honors from the University of Texas at Austin and a J.D. from The University of Texas School of Law. Before joining the law faculty at SMU, Stagen was a partner with a noted Dallas appellate firm. While there, she worked side-by-side with distinguished former Texas Supreme Court and Dallas Court of Appeals justices, prevailing in some of the most significant and high-profile appeals in the State of Texas. In addition, Stagen was a partner at a litigation firm in Dallas, where she specialized in securities litigation. Stagen previously taught legal research, writing and advocacy as an adjunct lecturer at SMU Dedman School of Law.

Read more: smu.edu/law/faculty/profiles
Professor John Walls, Clinical Professor of Legal Research, Writing & Advocacy, after 38 years of service, recently said, “I spent it doing the two things that I love—teaching and writing about ways to make the law accessible.” She added, “If the two, it’s always teaching that’s my highest joy.” Over the course of three decades, Professor Thornburg’s students have been lucky enough to experience her passion for teaching and justice firsthand, an enthusiasm that has produced numerous books and articles, led to impactful speaking engagements, and garnered her ample awards and honors from the community.

Thornburg began her career after she earned her J.D. from SMU in 1979, where she was a member of the Order of the Coif, among other honors. A passionate advocate for civil rights, Thornburg began her career after she spent it doing the two things that I love—teaching and writing, and who are both accomplished scholars and tremendous human beings. The same is true of the senior staff and professional librarians—“I feel like we have all grown up together, and they have made life at the law school both efficient and fun.”

Legal academia involves institutional services as well as teaching and scholarship. In addition to being on countless law school and university committees, Thornburg says she was honored to serve as the director of SMU’s Center for Teaching Excellence, a job that gave her new insights into innovative teaching, and she founded that back to the law school when she became Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. She notes, “One of the most rewarding parts of that job was working with the law school’s many fabulous adjunct faculty members— the time and effort they put into teaching our students is really inspiring.” Though she will miss working on the Hilltop, she looks forward to traveling during her retirement, with a trip to London planned for this winter. She is also excited to spend more time with her daughter, son-in-law, and grandchildren. However, retirement won’t stop her from pursuing justice; she hopes to spend time on pro bono and community service activities once she steps away from Dedman Law. Jennifer Collins, Dean of Dedman School of Law, notes how much the law school will miss Professor Thornburg, remarking, “We are so grateful for all that she has brought to the Law School and wish her the best in her new adventures.”

Thornburg says she feels fond memories at Dedman Law the students and colleagues who shared her journey. The students’ enthusiasm, curiosity, and intelligence made teaching fun, she says. Her dedication to her students was reciprocated by the Mustangs in her classes. She fondly recalls “the support I got from my students the year I was teaching while having chemotherapy” and also “the students who formed research teams to help work on projects like my book, Law Task, and the online courts project.” She continues proudly to follow the careers of her former students. She said, “I love watching as they go on to be wonderful lawyers, serving their clients and their communities, Teaching 1L Civil Procedure really gave me a vantage point to watch [students] grow from confused beginners to confident practitioners.”

The law school faculty and staff are another source of food memories. Thornburg says she feels lucky to have spent a “professional lifetime working with colleagues who also care deeply about their teaching and writing, and who are both accomplished scholars and tremendous human beings. The same is true of the senior staff and professional librarians—‘I feel like we have all grown up together, and they have made life at the law school both efficient and fun.’

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Though Walls will miss teaching Dedman Law students, she says, “I am completely retiring just yet. ‘I plan to do a little of everything with my law firm, a bit of traveling, a lot of biking, and spend as much time as possible with my seven grandchildren’” she says, adding, “I will always remember my years at SMU—first as a student, then as adjunct faculty, then as a clinical professor—as a wonderful chapter in my life.”

I was privileged to have a lot of wonderful students and a lot of treasured professional associations. Thanks for everything!”
FACULTY IN THE MEDIA

SMU Law Faculty are considered the “Go-to” experts on many current topics and headlines. The following is only a partial list of selected media interviews.

**FACULTY IN THE MEDIA**

**Jennifer Collins**
Judge James Reel Dean and Professor of Law

**Chris Jengs**
Director of the Criminal Clinic and Professor of Law
- June 22, 2022, “Texas can choose public health emergency to get around Roe v. Wade decision, says professor”

**Seema Mohapatra**
MD Anderson Foundation endowed Professor in Health Law
- June 26, 2022, “Women could elect public health emergency to get around Roe v. Wade decision, says professor”

**Eric Ruben**
Assistant Professor of Law
- July 3, 2022, Op-Ed “A smarter path to firearms safety through property rights”

**James Coleman**
Robert G. Storey Distinguished Faculty Fellow and Professor of Law
- March 4, 2022, “Police can be prosecuted for crimes of aggression — but likely not any time soon”
- January 27, 2022, “Could the Supreme Court reverse other rules?”

**Christopher Hanna**
Mark E. Florida Endowed Professor of Law and Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor
- June 22, 2022, “FDII Controversies Likely To Bubble Up This Year”

**Anthony Colangelo**
Robert G. Storey Distinguished Faculty Fellow and Professor of Law
- March 27, 2022, “Supreme Court confirmation process”

**Joanna L. Grossman**
E llen K. S adelworth Endowed Chair in Women and the Law and Professor of Law
- April 12, 2022, “Texas Murder Charge for Self-induced Abortion Officially Dropped”

**Jeffrey Kahn**
University Distinguished Professor, Robert G. Storey Distinguished Faculty Fellow, Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor, and Professor of Law
- March 23, 2022, Opinion: “Russia’s withdrawal from the Court in Europe is a loss of hope for human rights”
- March 23, 2022, “Brittney Griner Case”

**Nathan Cortez**
Director of the Criminal Center for Law, Science & Innovation, Aldo J. Betello College of Law Professor of Law in Leadership and Latinx Studies
- July 16, 2022, “Can HIPAA protect you from anti-vaccine persecutions?”
- October 3, 2022, “Texas abortion laws”

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Judge James Reel Dean and Professor of Law

**Nathan Cortez**
Director of the Criminal Center for Law, Science & Innovation, Aldo J. Betello College of Law Professor of Law in Leadership and Latinx Studies
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- June 22, 2022, “FDII Controversies Likely To Bubble Up This Year”
The White House and the U.S. Department of Justice recognized the pro-bono legal services SMU’s Dedman School of Law offered through its free COVID-19 Helpline to North Texans dealing with consumer, employment and immigration legal issues.

The effort was honored for the responses of Attorney General Merrick Garland’s call to action to the legal profession to ease the pandemic-related housing and eviction crisis.

Eviction moratoriums were expiring around the country when Garland called for help in August 2021, and SMU Dedman Law’s clinic faculty and students were already in place to respond.

Dedman Law launched the COVID-19 Helpline in June 2020 to assist North Texas residents and small business owners through a free legal helpline with matters related to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as housing, immigration, and consumer protection.

Working under the supervision of SMU Law Clinic faculty, 75 students staffed the phone lines which received approximately 2,400 calls and helped 300 families facing eviction through individual representation and representation for eviction prevention. The Clinic recently collaborated with a local nonprofit conducting research designed to provide better outcomes for families facing eviction through individual representation as well as advocacy at the local and state levels.

“We are truly honored that the White House and the Department of Justice are recognizing the COVID-19 Legal Helpline - a wonderful project that shows how deeply committed SMU is to helping our students and to serving our community,” said Jennifer Cohn, Judge James Reed Dean and professor of law in SMU Dedman School of Law. “I am so incredibly proud of our SMU Law School community and our committed partners for earning this very well-deserved recognition.”

In 2021 the State Bar of Texas honored SMU Dedman School of Law with the W. Frank Newton Award for its exceptional dedication to legal services for low-income North Texans through the Helpline.

“The Helpline has become an important resource for the DFWM community. I am proud of our law school’s response and our students’ eagerness to step up to the legal challenges the pandemic presents,” said Mary Specter, associate dean for clinics at SMU Dedman School of Law.
**Professor Beverly May Carl**

Professor Beverly May Carl passed away on January 22, 2022 in Arizona. Professor Carl served SMU Dedman School of Law with great distinction for 20 years as Professor of Law.

Professor Carl was born in Richmond, Virginia and spent her early years in the Eastern U.S. and Portland, Oregon. She then moved with her family to San Gabriel, California.

Professor Carl attended University of Southern California, graduated cum laude from USC Law School, and received her LL.M. from Yale Law School, focusing on international law. After law school, Professor Carl devoted ten years of her life to government service. She worked in the U.S. Department of Commerce and as an attorney in the Office of International Finance & Foreign Assets Control at the U.S. Treasury Department. Throughout her extensive career, Professor Carl traveled around the world dealing with International Law issues, as well as helping many third world countries write or revise their constitutions.

In September 1970, Professor Carl joined the faculty of SMU School of Law as the school’s first woman tenured full professor. She focused on international and comparative law, but also taught first-year contracts for many years to first-year students. “Beverly was a true international and comparative law scholar, with fluency in both Spanish and Portuguese,” said C. Paul Rogers III, Marilyn Jeannes Johnson Distinguished Faculty Fellow and Professor of Law and Former Dean. “She was instrumental in expanding the law school’s reputation in international and comparative law, particularly in South America, where she often traveled. Beverly was also a warm and supportive mentor and colleague with a commitment to the rights of women within the academy.”

During her career, Professor Carl was honored with a Presidential appointment to the Board of Foreign Scholarships (the Fulbright Program) in 1986, the Meritorious Honor Award for her work on the Nigeria-Biafra Relief program in 1979, three Fulbright Awards, awards from Yale, University of Southern California, Del Amo (Spain), and The Ebell of Los Angeles. In addition, Professor Carl authored or contributed to seven books and over 50 articles. Her passion for teaching and the law was responsible for her close relationships and admiration from her students from literally around the world. It was said of Professor Carl that the esteem her former students held for her was such that she could travel around the world and never have to pay for a night’s lodging.

She retired in May 1990 as Professor Emerita of Law, and moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico where she continued to travel extensively and enjoyed spending time as a volunteer, especially as a docent at the New Mexico History Museum.

Beverly spent her final years in Arizona close to her family. She is survived by her brother John Carl, and sister Mary Baines, and brother-in-law, Jack, as well two nieces and four nephews.

**Professor Jack Mylan**

Professor John “Jack” Mylan passed away on April 18, 2022. Professor Mylan served SMU as a teacher and scholar for 27 years.

Mylan is a native New Yorker and graduate of Fordham University with a degree in mathematics. Upon graduation, he enrolled at Stanford Law School, where also he met his wife, Irene, and they married. He graduated from Stanford in 1964 and returned to New York for a year to earn a graduate degree in taxation from New York University. After graduation from NYU, he moved to California and joined Rutan & Tucker, where he specialized in tax and business planning, estate planning and other tax matters. During his five years of tax practice, he also taught professional groups in the evenings and on weekends in the University of California system. Realizing these teaching experiences were the high points of his work life, he decided to try full-time teaching.

Mylan began his teaching career at Willamette Law School in Oregon, where he taught for 11 years. While he was there, he was a visiting associate professor in the NYU Graduate Tax program and a visiting professor on the University of Florida graduate tax faculty. In 1981, he came to Dallas for a year as a visiting professor to teach in SMU’s J.D. and L.L.M. tax programs, which were built by Charles O. Galvin in his years as Dean at the SMU School of Law. Fortunately, he decided to accept an offer to join the full-time faculty in September 1982. During his time at SMU, he served as chair of SMU’s Annual Federal Tax Planning Symposium and chair of the Graduate Legal Studies Committee, as well as serving on various committees of Dedman School of Law.

“During my entire time at SMU, Jack has been the de facto director of the Graduate Tax Program. It has been, in large part, through his leadership that the Graduate Tax Program has flourished over the years,” said Christopher Hanna, Alan D. Feld endowed Professor of Law and Alshuler distinguished Teaching Professor.

While at SMU Professor Mylan was invited numerous times to serve as a lecturer for the Academy of International Taxation, which is part of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of China (Taiwan). He also taught as a guest professor at the University of Konstanz in Germany. Professor Mylan published numerous tax articles and treatise including a multi-volume treatise, Federal Taxation of Close Corporations, he co-authored in 1990 with his good friend Ed Hood of the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

All those who knew Professor Mylan, knew he treasured his time with his family. His insightful and logical mind continued to guide his wife with her 37-year independent business in Preston Center, Dallas, and he was an extraordinary fan and deeply valued sounding board for his daughter Megan’s documentary film work.

Professor Mylan retired in July 2008 from SMU Law as Professor Emeritus of Law and returned to Oregon, where the family spent their summers. Professor Mylan said at his retirement, “In my 37 years of law teaching, there has rarely been a day that I have not looked forward to being in the classroom. I feel fortunate to have come upon the perfect career for me.” In the years since retiring, Mylan focused his attention on his family, especially his prized and deep relationships with his grandchildren. Mylan is survived by his wife of 56 years, Irene; two daughters, Julie and Megan; and three grandchildren, Luke, Camille, and Jack.
C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S !

Retiring Staff

We will miss you!

Michele Oswald
Faculty Administrative Assistant
20 years

Carolyn Yates
Faculty Administrative Assistant
30 years

WELCOME TO SMU LAW!

New Staff Hires

Alicia Ponce
Law Review Administrative Assistant

Peter Steffensen
Law Fellow
First Amendment Clinic

Jiacheng Yu
Policy Attorney
Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center

Mackenzie Salenger
Career Advisor, LLM & SJD Career Services

Shem Vinton
Policy Attorney
Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center

Blane Skiles
Communications Director
Deason Criminal Justice Reform Center

Jennifer Staggs
Circulation Desk Attendant
Underwood Law Library

Michele Oswald
Faculty Administrative Assistant
20 years

Carolyn Yates
Faculty Administrative Assistant
30 years

Welcome to the team!
The John E. Kennedy Memorial Scholarships are given in honor of Professor John Kennedy, who served on the faculty with distinction for 20 years until his untimely death in 1989. Professor Kennedy was a beloved teacher who had a strong commitment to the law as a service profession. It is most fitting that the awards given in his memory are presented to the J.D. graduates who are deemed by their classmates to exemplify the spirit of service by working tirelessly to benefit the law school community.

The Sarah Tran Award honors beloved faculty member Sarah Tran, whose selfless service and unyielding commitment to her students and her school community.

**Graduation Awards**

**Valedictorian**

Benjamin Rice

Benjamin is from Thibodaux, Louisiana. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Louisiana Tech University in 2018 and spent a year teaching English in Spain before attending law school. At SMU, he was a Summers Scholar, and he served as both an AIP Mentor and the Managing Editor for the SMU Law Review. After graduation, he is clerking with the Honorable Judge Jeremy Kennedy on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, and then with the Honorable Judge Jennifer Elrod on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

**John E. Kennedy Memorial Scholarship**

Diyaa Advani

Diyaa served as the President and Staff Editor of the International Law Review Association, and the President of the South Asian Law Student Association. She also served as the President of the North American South Asian Law Student Association (NASALSA) which is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a strong network and community among South Asian law students and legal professionals throughout the U.S. and Canada. She was a member of the Dean’s Diversity Council and served as a Student Liaison to the Dallas Asian American Bar Association. She was the 1L representative for the Board of Advocates and a champion of the 2020 Negotiation Competition. She is quadrilingual in English, Hindi, Punjabi, and American Sign Language. She is interested in immigration and commercial litigation.

**Madison Hauser**

Madison was the President of the Association for Public Interest Law (APIL), the Vice President and Mentor Director for the Student Bar Association, and a Student Associate in the Judge Eline B. Hunter Legal Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women. She is a recipient of the Clinical Legal Education Association’s SMU Outstanding Clinic Team Award. Madison served on the Dean’s Diversity Council for the Hispanic Law Student Association and was a member of the Dallas Women Lawyers Association 2020 Leadership Class. After graduation, she will be practicing environmental law at Lloyd Gosselink in Austin, TX, in their water law group.

**Sarah McQuillen Tran Award**

Skyler Arbuckle

Skyler served as the Black Law Students Association President for the last two years. She was inducted into the Order of the Barristers in 2021 and served as the Notes Editor of the SMU Science & Technology Law Review her 3L year. Skyler co-authored an article entitled “Slavery and the Postbellum University: The Case of SMU” in the SMU Law Review with former SMU Dedman Law Senior Associate Dean, Lola Bucker Ermis, and has a forthcoming publication in the SMU Science & Technology Law Review on the topic of Black maternal mortality rates. Skyler served as a student representative on the Dedman School of Law Dean Search Committee, the SMU Black Unity Forum, and as a 3L representative with the Student Bar Association. She sat on the Dean’s Diversity Council representing Women in Law. Skyler worked as a student in the Judge Elrod B. Hunter Legal Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women and as a racial Justice Fellow with the Lone Star Justice Alliance. She is interested in litigation, particularly in the fields of employment law, healthcare law, administrative law, and white-collar criminal defense.

**Brent Miles**

Brent was involved with the Student Bar Association throughout his career at SMU Dedman Law, beginning as a 2L representative and then as Treasurer during his 3L year and as the President in his 3L year. He is a member of the Black Law Students Association, a member of SMU’s American Bar Association Client Counseling team, and an On-Campus Director with the Board of Advocates. As a 2L Brent advanced to the semi-final round of the SMU Dedman School of Law Board of Advocates Intramural Mock Trial Competition, as a 3L, he won the 3rd annual SMU Dedman School of Law Board of Advocates Arbitration Intramural Competition. Brent was honored for his excellence in advocacy by being inducted into the 2022 National Order of Barristers. After graduation Brent will be going to Forth Worth, Fortley, Shipman & Salinas, LLP to work in litigation.

C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S  J udicial Clerkship Class of 2022

**Raney Addelghani ’22**

THE HONORABLE JENNIFER NEWMAN
Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of California

**Tammie Bassie Banko ’19**

THE HONORABLE CATHERINA HAYNES
Judge, United States District Court for the Fifth Circuit

**THE HONORABLE KURT D. ENGELHARDT**

Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

**Douglas G. Brown ’22**

THE HONORABLE REBECCA RUTHERFORD
Magistrate Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**Sean Robert Burns ’22**

THE HONORABLE MICHELLE V. LARSON
Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**Jacob Burns ’22**

THE HONORABLE JAMES WESLEY HENDRIX
Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**Dylan Wade Freeman ’22**

THE HONORABLE RODNEY GILSTRAP
Chief Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas

**Tyler Freeman ’22**

THE HONORABLE TERRY K. MEANS
Senior Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**Madison George ’21**

THE HONORABLE DAVID S. MORALES
Judge, United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas

**Greta A. Gieseke ’22**

THE HONORABLE MICHAEL J. TRUNCAL
Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**THE HONORABLE KURT D. ENGELHARDT**

Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

**Allicia M. Ivema ’22**

THE HONORABLE THOMAS BARBER
Judge, United States District Court for the Middle District of Florida

**The Honorable Cory T. Wilson**

Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

**Courtney Jones ’22**

THE HONORABLE BRANTLEY STARR
Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**Samantha Stevenson ’22**

Court of Appeals for the Eleventh District of Texas

**Jacqueline Tran ’21**

THE HONORABLE ROBERT D. DRAIN
Judge, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York

**Marisa C. Thompson ’22**

THE HONORABLE AMOS L. MAZZANT, III
Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas

**Aaron Waters ’22**

United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit

**Haq Jinmy Wu ‘17**

THE HONORABLE RAYMOND T. CHEN
Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Texas

**Robert Leese ’22**

THE HONORABLE AMOS L. MAZZANT, III
Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas

**Hannah Luke ’22**

THE HONORABLE REBECCA RUTHERFORD
Magistrate Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**William Milam ’21**

THE HONORABLE GREY BLACKWELL
Judge, Oklahoma Court of Civil Appeals

**Elizabeth I. Nielsen ’22**

THE HONORABLE JOLI T. MAKKER
Chief Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of Utah

**Bach Hogwood ’22**

THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER MOTT
Judge, United States Bankruptcy Court for the Western District of Texas

**Alexandria McFarlane Oberman ’22**

THE HONORABLE DEBRA LEHRMANN
Justice, The Supreme Court of Texas

**Benjamin A. Rizz ’22**

THE HONORABLE JESSE D. KENOOLE
Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas

**The Honorable Jennifer Walker Elrod**

Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit

**Courtney E. Rimann ’22**

THE HONORABLE BRANTLEY STARR
Judge, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas

**TreeNode Rimann ’22**

THE HONORABLE JON D. RIMANN
Judge, United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas

**Samatha Stevenson ’22**

Court of Appeals for the Eleventh District of Texas

**JACQUELINE TRAN ’21**

THE HONORABLE ROBERT D. DRAIN
Judge, U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of New York

**Marisa C. Thompson ’22**

THE HONORABLE AMOS L. MAZZANT, III
Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas

**Aaron Waters ’22**

United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit

**Haq Jinmy Wu ‘17**

THE HONORABLE RAYMOND T. CHEN
Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Texas

**SMU Law’s Highest Number of Clerkship Placements Ever!**

**SMU Dedman School of Law | The Quad | Fall 2022**

**Student News**
CONGRATULATIONS!

275 J.D. candidates | 9 J.D./M.B.A. candidates | 2 S.J.D. candidates | 50 LL.M. candidates

Performed a total of 19,780 hours of public service for an average of 74 hours per student.

CLASS OF 2022

MOODY COLISEUM, FRIDAY, MAY 13, 2022
1 Flash Class: The Supreme Court’s ‘Shadow Docket’: What it Is, and Why It’s Become Controversial, September 15, 2021
2 Deason Center Doing the Work Series: Critical Race Theory in Classrooms: An American Dilemma, September 28, 2021
3 Tsai Talk: Let them Play (and get Paid): Name, Image, and Likeness Deals and NCAA Compliance, October 6, 2021
4 Wellness Week, October 11-15, 2021
5 Faculty Forum: Francesca Bignami, Leroy Sorenson Merrifield Research Professor of Law, George Washington University, October 13, 2021
6 National Pro Bono Week, October 22-29, 2021
8 Deason Center: The Appearance of Unfairness: Litigating Race in Criminal Trial (virtual), March 10, 2022
9 Faculty Forum: Heather Field, Stephen A. Lind Professor of Law and Co-Director of Center on Tax Law, UC Hastings Law (Zoom), January 26, 2022
10 Diversity Week: February 28 - March 4, 2022
11 Rowling Center: Reconstructing the Corporation: Workplace Democracy and the Future of Corporate Governance, March 9, 2022
13 Deason Center Doing the Work Series: Fighting Time; Trauma, Justice, and Healing - A Book Talk (virtual), November 4, 2021
14 Flash Class: The Rittenhouse Verdict, November 22, 2021
15 SMU Giving Day, March 22, 2022
16 Tsai Talk: What’s so NiFTy about NFTs?, March 22, 2022
17 Book Talk co-sponsored with the Center for Presidential History: On Juneteenth with Professor Annette Gordon-Reed, March 24, 2022
18 Tsai Talk: Successful Innovation: Startups and Venture with Kevin Vela, April 7, 2022
19 Flash Class: The Supreme Court Reversed - Roe v. Wade: What’s Next?, June 29, 2022
CLASS NOTES

Harriet Miers ’70 was appointed by the Supreme Court of Texas to lead the Texas Access to Justice Commission.

Clara Aldous ’85, Brent Walker ’04, and Tiffany Standley ’18 were honored with the John Howie Award presented by the Dallas Trial Lawyers Association for “the courageous pursuit of justice in the face of adversity” as the trial team in the County Judge Clay Jenkins Mask Case.

Dana Patrick ’97 was elected to membership in the Fellows of the Texas Bar Foundation.

Catherine S. Bowers ’89 joined Dykema Gosset PLLC as senior counsel.

Brett Johnson ’92 was named head of the litigation practice for the Dallas office of Winston & Strawn LLP.

Christopher Jackson ’95 welcomed twins, Clyde Carson “Chip” Jackson and Hannah Claire Jackson, on November 18, 2021.

Wendi Campbell Rogaliner ’95 was elected a Fellow of the American Bar Association.

Christopher Gilbert ’96 was elected as the 57th Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates.

Damon Rowe ’96, the former executive director of the Internal Revenue Service’s Office of Fraud Enforcement, joined Meadows, Collier, Reed, Cousins, Crouch & Ungerman LLP in Dallas.

A. Shonn Brown ’98 was named an SMU Distinguished Alumnus for 2022.

Gabe Reed ’99 joined Robinius, Esponso & Weissel, LLP as a senior litigation consultant.

Liz Cedillo-Pereira ’99 was elected to secretary/treasurer of the Dallas Bar Association.

Aimes Williams-Ramey ’99 joined Six Flags as their chief legal officer.

Michael Kotwal ’00 was promoted to captain in the U.S. Army JAG Corps Reserve. He also serves as special victim counselor to military victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Sarah Rogers ’04 joined Thompson Coe Cousins & Irons LLP as a partner.

Jessica Ehrlach ’05 joined Reviron Social Ventures, a division of Reviron Sciences, as Chief Operating Officer.

Rachel Leshnau ’05 was elected to partner at Conner & Winters, LLP.

Jamie Carter ’06 was promoted to partner at Bell Nunnally & Martin LLP.

Evan Singer ’09 joined the Dallas Children’s Theatre Board of Trustees.

Elis Burrett ’03 joined Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP as a partner.

Justin Whittenburg ’03 was elected to membership in the Fellows of the Texas Bar Foundation.

Wes Butler ’04 was named managing partner of Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP’s Dallas office.

Bryan Bremer ’01 was promoted to partner in the Keen Miller LLP’s Baton Rouge office.

John Tucker ’01 joined FisherBroyles, LLP as a partner in their Dallas office.

Mark A. Shoffner ’02 was named hiring partner at Bell Nunnally & Martin LLP.

Courtney A. Kuykendall ’06 was elected to partner at Eggleston King Davis, LLP.

Lloyd Lim ’06 joined Keen Miller LLP as a partner in their Houston office.

Cyrus Maneeshkari ’06 was promoted to an underwriting director at AXA XL.

Nicholas Peters ’06 was promoted to partner at Foley & Larinder LLP.

Carl Pankrats ’06 was appointed by Governor Abbott to the Joint Interim Committee to Study Land Banks.

Mark A. Melton ’08 received the Pro Bono Publico Award from the American Bar Association (ABA) Pro Bono Committee for his work keeping people in the Dallas metropolitan area in their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Michelle Vincent Parker ’06 joined Jackson Walker LLP as a partner in their Dallas office.

Ernest Richards ’08 was appointed by Governor Abbott to the Joint Interim Committee to Study Land Banks.

Cedric Powell ’09 was promoted to partner at Shipyard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP’s Washington D.C. office.

Rachel Haas Reinsu ’09 joined Haynes & Boone, LLP as a partner in their Orange County, CA office.

J. Macha Stull ’09 was promoted to partner at Jackson Walker LLP.

Courtney Sauer Collins ’08 was promoted to shareholder at Munich Hardt Kopf & Hart, P.C.

Andrew Cookingham ’08 joined Bracewell LLP as a partner.

Julian Vasek ’09 was promoted to shareholder at Munich Hardt Kopf & Hart, P.C.

Austin Wyler ’09 joined Greenberg Traurig, LLP as a shareholder.

Molly Carson ’10 was promoted to partner at McCaffery, Puckett & Horton LLP.

Thomas Hinsberger ’10 was elected to partner at Dentons.

Douglas Hill ’10 was elected to member in the Kansas City office of Baker Sterchi Cowden & Rice, LLC.

Drew Mosier ’10 was promoted to partner at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP.

Jonathan Michael Thomas ’10 was promoted to partner at Foley & Larinder LLP.

Vince Ward ’10 was promoted to managing partner at McDaniell, Wolff & Benca, PLLC.

Grant Cohen ’11 was promoted to partner at Greenberg Traurig, LLP in their Houston office.

Sara Imman ’11 was promoted to partner in the Dallas office of Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP.

Ashley Lewis ’11 was promoted to counsel at Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP.

Lisa Thomas ’11 became a named partner at the Houston-based boutique firm, Cadwell Counts Reeder & Thomas.

Cedric Powell ’09 was promoted to partner at Shipyard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP’s Washington D.C. office.

Rosalyn Tang ’06 became the first Asian American and youngest woman to be appointed to the Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

Amy L. Lott ’07 joined Barnes & Thornburg as a partner in their Dallas office.

Courtney Sauer Collins ’08 was promoted to shareholder at Munich Hardt Kopf & Hart, P.C.

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Although citizens of the United States have the right to a fair and impartial trial, instances of the imposition of the death penalty on individuals have been shown to be prejudiced due to racial discrimination. Thus, the death penalty should be abolished in the United States. The United States should abandon the death penalty to avoid the potential for wrongful convictions arising from racial bias in司法裁判．
Jennifer Kreck ’12 was promoted to partner at Haynes and Boone, LLP.
Sarah Landiak ’13 was promoted to partner at Winsted PC.
Taryn McDonald ’13 was promoted to partner at Haynes and Boone, LLP.
James Miers ’13 was promoted to partner at Jackson Walker LLP.
Cole Robinson ’13 was elected to partner at Gray Reed.
Kristin Santamaria ’13 was promoted to counsel at Haynes and Boone, LLP in the Dallas office.
Lauren Smyth ’13 was elected to partner at Jackson Walker LLP.
Lauren Lee ’13 was elected to partner at Munck, O’Hara, et al. PC.
Jordan Brownlow ’20 joined Fox Rothschild LLP as an associate.
Sam Fishman ’20 joined Haynes & Farris, PC, as an associate.
Laura Allbright Yost ’18 joined Carrington Coleman as an associate.
Justin Dehmer ’16 was elected president of the Dallas County Bar Association.
Micahel Roos ’16 was elected to senior counsel in the Dallas office of Wood Smith Henning & Berman LLP.
Valencia Campbell ’18 joined Armstrong, Divorce & Family Law, PLLC as an associate.
Zachary Faulkner ’18 joined Fox Rothschild LLP as a litigation associate.
Michael Fechner ’18 joined Lyons & Simmons, LLP as an associate.
Nicole Feragen ’19 joined Fox Rothschild LLP as a litigation associate.
Nicholas Lee ’19 joined Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP as an associate.
Jordan Browlowe ’20 joined Carrington Coleman as an associate.
Avery Bishop ’22 was crowned Miss Texas 2022. She is the first Asian American woman to earn the title in the 85-year history of Miss Texas.

I N M E M O R I A M

With Deepest Sympathy

REMEMBERING OUR ALUMNI

Fawaz Blahm ’11 was elected to the partnership at Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP and he was selected as the chair of the pro bono committee of the Dallas office. He was named the 2022 Young Lawyers Pro Bono Service Award recipient by the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers (DAYL) for his leadership and committing over 525 hours to pro bono matters in the last two years alone. He was awarded the prestigious and nationally recognized Rick Palmore Alumnus Award from the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity for his influence and impact on the legal profession through his leadership, action, and results.

Lindsey Marsh Brown ’13 was promoted to partner at Jackson Walker LLP.
Lamar Dowling ’13 was promoted to partner at Jackson Walker LLP.
Parker Graham ’13 was promoted to partner at Carrington Coleman.

Jennifer Kreck ’12 was promoted to partner at Haynes and Boone, LLP.
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Jordan Brownlow ’20 joined Fox Rothschild LLP as an associate.
Sam Fishman ’20 joined Haynes & Farris, PC, as an associate.
SAVE THE DATE

FRI DAY, OCTOBER 21, 2022
Reunion Class Party
Cocktails, Hors D’oeuvres & Mingling!
7:00 - 10:00 p.m.
The Room on Main
2030 Main Street, 6th Floor
Dallas, Texas 75201

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2022 (all activity times are TBD)
Homecoming Parade on Bishop Blvd.
SMU V. CINCINNATI FOOTBALL GAME
At Gerald J. Ford Stadium
Discounted Football Tickets are available to purchase at smu.edu/law/footballtickets for law alumni to sit together.

THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2023
AT THE ARTS DISTRICT MANSION
Distinguished Alumni Awards
The Distinguished Alumni Award is the highest and most prestigious award the law school can bestow upon its alumni. Please join us as we honor our Distinguished Alumni!

For up-to-date Reunion information: smu.edu/Law/Alumni/Class-Reunions
mustangbar@smu.edu

MAKE SMU LAW A PART OF YOUR LEGACY.
The plans that you make today can help and inspire SMU Law students for generations to come. There are many smart ways to give through proper planning that will ensure a premier legal education continues to be available to those who will follow in your footsteps.

SMU DEDMAN SCHOOL OF LAW ALUMNI HAVE A HISTORY OF GENEROSITY THAT CONTINUES TO INSPIRE.

“...I received from SMU made my attendance possible, and that opportunity made a tremendous difference in my professional career and life’s path. I have been ever mindful of the generosity and kindness bestowed upon me and am grateful to now be in a position to give back.”
Hon. Leonard J. Padilla ’88 – Sarah T. Hughes Scholarship recipient

Will you consider connecting your story, your memories and your legacy with the Dedman School of Law?

To learn more about how your plans can impact future generations, please contact:
Tim Aronson, Executive Director
Office of Gift Planning
214-768-3410
taronson@smu.edu

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