

# DOCKET

FALL 2019

THE UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY SCHOOL OF LAW MAGAZINE



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Send your updated contact information to April Ellison, director of alumni relations, at [ellisoal@udmercy.edu](mailto:ellisoal@udmercy.edu) or 313-596-0202.



# DOCKET

THE UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY  
SCHOOL OF LAW MAGAZINE

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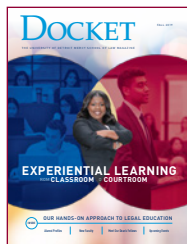
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## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We welcome press releases,  
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**On the Cover:**  
Detroit Mercy Law's  
experiential learning  
gives grads unique  
perspectives and  
experiences.



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Remember your first appearance in court?

It is a transformative moment—both terrifying and exhilarating. Our students get to experience that moment while they are still students. It goes to the heart of what we mean when we talk about “Educating the Complete Lawyer.”



## DETROIT MERCY LAW

EDUCATING THE COMPLETE LAWYER

### BECOMING A COMPLETE LAWYER

requires a law school curriculum that puts law students into real-life situations, much like the ones they will encounter when they enter the legal profession.

At Detroit Mercy Law, we incorporate hands-on learning experiences throughout our curriculum, ensuring that each of our students gains true exposure to the legal profession throughout their time in law school. In this issue of the *Docket*, we are excited to highlight the impact of our hands-on learning opportunities from the perspectives of students, alumni and faculty.

In the last five years, we have expanded these opportunities for students, including mini-clinics for our first-year students. In addition, we have expanded our program to include five new clinics to serve a wider range of student interests and client needs. I am proud to know that every one of our students is required to—not just has the opportunity to—take part in a clinic that gives them a chance to make a meaningful difference through service to others. Our students provided 22,000 hours of free legal assistance to the community this year alone!

Detroit Mercy Law graduates earn more than a J.D. They leave law school with the tools to enter the profession with conviction. That the thousands of Detroit Mercy Law graduates, like you, serve the rule of law in so many capacities and contribute to the well-being of our communities is a testament to our commitment to truly Educating the Complete Lawyer.

Our experiential learning programs are made possible by our dedicated alumni, friends and community partners. Your support, whether it be your time, talent or treasure, ensures that we will continue living our mission for years to come. Thank you. [D](#)



Phyllis L. Crocker

**Phyllis L. Crocker**  
Dean and Professor of Law







# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

FROM **CLASSROOM** TO **COURTROOM**

Since its inception, Detroit Mercy Law has pursued a mission that integrates theory, doctrine, ethics and service to others. For the Detroit Mercy Law community, that mission is enriched by a proactive approach to experiential learning. Through our robust law firm and clinical programs, our hands-on approach to legal education has guided our students from the classroom to the courtroom.

To that end, says Dean Phyllis L. Crocker, "We are committed to educating the complete lawyer, which means we incorporate hands-on lawyering, career and professionalism skills throughout the curriculum from day one."





Before they graduate, every one of our law students, whether in the U.S. J.D. or Canadian & American Dual J.D. Programs, will leave Detroit Mercy Law with experiences that do not just mimic legal practice but are steeped in real-world situations.

Alumnus Joe Vernon, a 2005 graduate of the school's Canadian & American Dual J.D. Program and a senior principal and resident director at Miller Canfield's Detroit office, applauds the School's hands-on approach when he talks about the Detroit Mercy Law graduates his firm has hired.

"The school gives students a real taste of what it's like to practice," Vernon said. "The clinical offerings, moot requirements and law firm programs all build practical skills and, along with the course load, force students to develop a strong work ethic and invaluable time management skills. Recent grads come in prepared and ready to work hard, and it's not surprising that they are landing and doing well at top law firms in big markets like New York, Detroit and Toronto."

The importance of hands-on learning is similarly emphasized by the American Bar Association's standards for law schools.

"The Council of the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar recognizes that hands-on learning is an important tool in legal education and training the next generation of lawyers," said Barry Currier, managing director of ABA accreditation and legal education. "Our standards require six credits of experiential learning, which may be in a clinic, externship


or simulation setting. That standard reflects the Council's agreement that experiential learning is an essential part of a rigorous J.D. program."

Unlike most law schools, Detroit Mercy Law requires students to participate in the Law Firm Program and in at least one of 12 clinics. And with more experiential learning opportunities on the drawing board, our law students will have additional opportunities to help the clients who seek better access to the justice system.

"The clinical experiences and Law Firm Program, together with ongoing individualized career counseling, add up to a considerable advantage for our students as they enter the legal profession. They know they're prepared. Potential employers appreciate that, and our employment numbers reflect our approach," said Tanya Lundberg, assistant dean of career services and outreach.

In addition, Detroit Mercy Law's legal research and writing expectations surpass those set by the ABA. Detroit Mercy Law requires students to complete eight credits of legal research and writing. Equally important is the requirement that students complete at least one upper-level legal writing class. Besides these classes, research and writing skills are a critical part of every clinic offering, where students are immersed in writing to government agencies or courts on behalf of their clients.

As our graduates go on to practice at top law firms, earn competitive judicial clerkships, and gain positions in government, business and public interest organizations across the United States and Canada, their achievements provide us with further proof that this core commitment to a hands-on education works, both in theory and in practice.



“Under our supervision, our students receive direction, but they also have the space to make mistakes.”

### Law Firm Program

In its 12 years at Detroit Mercy Law, the Law Firm Program has become one of the school’s core experiential courses, as well as a launching pad for new alumni who plan to go on to practice.

The decision to create the program was based on a determination by the Detroit Mercy Law faculty that, in addition to the School’s traditional curriculum and clinic opportunities, law students would benefit from further experiential learning. That idea turned into the Law Firm Program, a simulated experience that gives students the opportunity to put their lawyering skills to work in a law firm setting.

“Its value became apparent to everyone once we began to spin it off into different areas of the law, and it has proven so beneficial that students are now required to take the course,” said Professor Karen Henning, who teaches courses in the program.

One of only a handful of law schools to have similar programs, Detroit Mercy Law requires students in the Law Firm Program to learn skills by drafting and negotiating contracts, taking depositions, or writing motions or arbitration agreements.

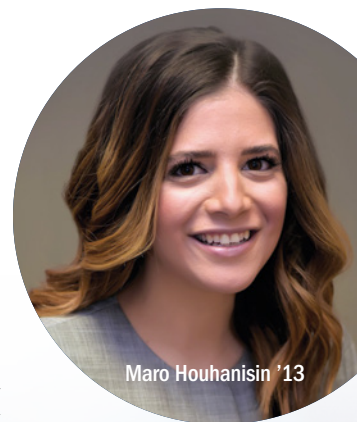
“Under our supervision, our students receive direction, but they also have the space to make mistakes. When that happens, we figure it out together,” Henning said. “Theoretical know-how is great, but knowledge is not the only thing that makes a great lawyer.

Learning how the facts and law intersect is invaluable.” It is not unusual for new alumni to come back to Detroit Mercy Law to let Henning know how constructive the Law Firm Program was when they began their legal careers.

“I hear, ‘Thank God I had that program.’ It made practice real for them,” Henning said. “Many of our students say that these courses, as well as the clinics, are the most valuable courses that they take in law school. They learn to appreciate how legal rules, like the Rules of Civil Procedure, actually work when they had to represent a client in these courses.”

Not only do some students return with feedback for Henning, but some also come back to teach as adjuncts. Such is the case with Maro Houhanisin ’13, a former Wayne County assistant prosecutor who currently practices in the area of insurance defense at the Oak Park, Michigan, law firm of Hewson and Van Hellemont.

“In pre-trial, students work two files for an entire semester. They have the chance to act as a defense attorney and a prosecutor. For me, being on both sides confirmed what I’d always thought—that I wanted to be a prosecutor. But even more than that, I was able gain confidence in my abilities and, at the same time, get a practical perspective. I think that’s what the students I teach are getting, too,” Houhanisin said. “So much of law school is hypothetical, but this is the only class that teaches them what it’s like to be a lawyer. It’s not just getting students through law school, but it’s getting them to a place where they can be successful lawyers after they pass the Bar.”



Maro Houhanisin '13

**“So much of law school is hypothetical, but this is the only class that teaches them what it’s like to be a lawyer.”**

Besides Pretrial Criminal Advocacy, which both Henning and Houhanisin have taught, the Law Firm Program offers semester-long courses in many different areas of law, like corporate, family, international arbitration, immigration and litigation, both criminal and civil, that graduates are likely to encounter upon graduation.



## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING | FROM CLASSROOM TO COURTROOM



### Clinical Program

Decades before experiential learning became a required part of a law student's education, Detroit Mercy Law was making inroads into what is now a mandatory part of the Law School's curriculum. In 1965, the Law School established the Urban Law Clinic. That initiative, the first of its kind in any Michigan law school, was the precursor to our current clinical programs and our ongoing commitment to hands-on learning.

Detroit family law attorney John Urso, the Urban Law Clinic's first supervising attorney, remembers the role the clinic played for students and Detroit's underserved population.

"The program emphasized serving indigent people who were living in the center city at the time. As a matter of fact, our Michigan landlord tenant laws that were passed in 1968 came from the Urban Law Program," said Urso.

**"We're helping the community by providing critical legal services, which, without our assistance, would be much harder for our clients to gain access to."**



Like today's Detroit Mercy Law faculty, Urso saw the importance of working outside of the constraints of a classroom.

"The ability to stand on your feet under the watchful eyes of a supervising attorney and perform from what you've learned in the classroom and apply it to a real-life situation is incredibly important," Urso said. "It gives students a better sense of how important representing another human being is."

"There has been a shift in legal education toward more practical and skills-based learning. Because it is mandatory for our law students to take a clinic and the Law Firm Program, that puts us ahead of the curve," said Professor Nick Schroeck, associated dean of experiential education. "And the experience of working with clients on real matters is central to our social justice mission."

Detroit Mercy Law students are contributing thousands of hours to the Detroit community, often to those who cannot afford to hire an attorney.

"We're helping the community by providing critical legal services, which, without our assistance, would be much harder for our clients to gain access to. Through our clinics, we've delivered over 22,000 hours annually in pro bono services to our clients," Schroeck noted.

As experiential learning continues to play a big role at Detroit Mercy Law, reaching underserved communities and tackling emergent legal issues remain priorities for our clinical programs.



Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Wanda A. Evans '93 administers the Lawyer's Oath to students at the clinic swearing-in ceremony on January 16, 2019.



## 22,000+ HOURS

of pro bono legal services provided by Detroit Mercy Law's clinicians in the 2018-19 academic year



Dual J.D. students – Jamie Oleksiew '21; Stephanie Brown '21; and Artimes Ghahremani '21 – serve the Detroit community in the mini-clinic at The Greening of Detroit.

### Detroit Mercy Law Clinics

- Appellate Veterans Law
- Criminal Trial Clinic
- Environmental Law Clinic
- Family Law Clinic
- Federal Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic
- Housing Law Clinic
- Immigration Law Clinic
- International Patent Law Clinic
- Juvenile Appellate Clinic
- State Appellate Defenders Office (SADO) Criminal Advocacy Clinic
- Trademark and Entrepreneur Clinic
- Veterans Law Clinic

### Clinic Stories: Hands-On Lawyering from Day One

“With new mini clinics that include 1Ls and new clinics geared toward second- and third-year students, we are going forward with fresh ideas to tackle the issues that require us to constantly examine how we approach evolving legal issues in our local and global communities,” said Rebecca Simkins Nowak, director of clinical operations and outreach.

Under Schroeck’s and Nowak’s direction, first-year law students are given an opportunity to contribute to a community project or a mini-clinic, an experiential endeavor not ordinarily available until the second year of law school.

“Each January, after Wayne County has sent out notices to homeowners that their homes are in tax foreclosure, a tax foreclosure hearing is held. Thousands of people attend, and our first-year students are there to help them through the process and to shadow attorneys,” Simkins Nowak said. “It’s critical for first-year law students to quickly understand how people from all walks of life are affected by the quality of legal representation they receive.”

Another project that engages first-year law students involves working with The Greening of Detroit, a non-profit organization that serves the city by planting trees and other landscaping. The organization also trains people to work as tree trimmers or landscapers. In many cases, graduates of the program have prior civil or criminal issues that prevent them from getting a job.

**“At the last Greening of Detroit clinic, a man walked up to me and said, ‘Do you remember me? I did everything you told me to do and I just got a full-time job with the city of Detroit.’”**

“We help people interested in the program to get the information they need to clear up pending misdemeanors so they can move forward and get the best opportunity,” Simkins Nowak says. “Our first-year law students are trained in advance to review records and call courts to get information to help our clients expunge their records.”

Apart from the number of people served and hours spent working in one of the Law School’s clinics, the collective satisfaction that comes with making a difference in a person’s life is priceless, says Simkins Nowak.

“Our 1Ls have a chance to see how important our help is to our clients,” she added. “In most cases, the people who come to us have had a tough life. At the last Greening of Detroit clinic, a man walked up to me and said, ‘Do you remember me? I did everything you told me to do and I just got a full-time job with the city of Detroit.’ That meant so much to us. It’s the essence of what we’re doing and at the same time we’re providing students with a realistic educational opportunity.”



Professor Nick Schroeck

## Clinic Stories: New Environmental Law Clinic Stands Up for Detroit

On long hikes through the woods with his father, a teenage Nick Schroeck developed an ecological awareness that eventually led him to teach and practice environmental law. It is an awareness Schroeck shares today with students enrolled in the Law School's Environmental Law Clinic, which was launched in January 2019.

"We have a great cohort of students who are very passionate about the environment. They've launched the Environmental Law Society, worked with our partners at the Great Lakes Environmental Law Center (GLELC), and were part of a successful outcome in an issue that had the potential to have a detrimental impact on the community," Schroeck said.

Along with the University of Windsor Law School's Transnational Environmental Law and Policy Clinic, Detroit Mercy Law's Environmental Law Clinic contributed a comment letter in opposition to a variance request made by Marathon Petroleum Corp. to the city of Detroit. If approved, the variance would have allowed the company to permit open-air storage of petcoke, a by-product of its petroleum refining operations.

"In August 2018, Marathon sought a variance from the city of Detroit that, if granted, meant they wouldn't have to comply with a city ordinance that required them to build an enclosed facility to store petcoke before it's moved off site. Marathon said it was too expensive to comply," Schroeck said, adding, "I asked one of my students to draft a comment letter in opposition to Marathon's request, which was ultimately denied."

That student, Nathan Wilson '20, says the clinic's work on environmental justice gave him a basis from which to tackle the questions raised by Marathon's application.

"The comment letter was focused on environmental justice issues and how the neighborhood surrounding the facility has about a 90% minority population, and how these disadvantaged populations are disproportionately forced to deal with the consequences of environmental pollution. It was very cool for us when the city denied it," Wilson said.

With only a week to have the letter ready to submit, Wilson looked at how Marathon framed its corporate standards, arguing that the variance was inconsistent with the company's stated values.

"I looked at Marathon's corporate standards and what they said was their commitment to being good corporate citizens," he said. "My argument was that they should uphold their own values and cover the petroleum coke facility."

Schroeck is guiding students like Wilson to examine the principles of environmental justice in the context of community and how the lack of it marginalizes Detroit's low-income and minority communities.

"So much of environmental law is administrative that we don't get a lot of Marathon-type victories, so that was really exciting for us. We know that too many communities with low-income or minority populations remain marginalized because they didn't have a voice when administrative decisions that impacted them were made."

The potential to advocate for environmental justice beyond the city limits is something that Schroeck hopes to expand upon as the clinic moves forward.

"We have to ask, 'What does environmental law mean in a social justice context?' That's where I think this clinic has an important role to play in Detroit and in the region. That's the niche we're trying to carve out for ourselves," Schroeck said. "Whether law students in the Environmental Law Clinic are working on current issues, like the one that stemmed from Marathon's request, or they are mapping out an environmental justice strategy, what they learned will stay with them as they enter the legal profession. Regardless of the area of practice they eventually choose, I hope the Environmental Law Clinic has given our students a real sense of empathy for the people who will ultimately benefit from their efforts."



From left, members of the newly formed Environmental Law Society - Jonathan Wylie '20, Shaun Austin '20 and Nathan Wilson '20 - clean up Cass Park.



## Clinic Stories: Veterans Clinic Serves and Protects Those Who Serve and Protect

In 2007, troubled by reports of veterans receiving poor medical care, the Law School created the Veterans Law Clinic. By 2008, Margaret Costello, then the pro bono coordinator at Dykema Gossett, joined the clinic as its full-time director.

"The impetus for the clinic stemmed from reports of substandard medical care for veterans who were being treated at Walter Reed Hospital," Costello said. "At the onset, we did a lot of outreach, not only in Michigan, but also across the country, as there were very few veterans law clinics at that time and a huge need."

Often traveling in a mobile law office, the clinic served hundreds of veterans who had existing claims. Initially, they found the clinic by old-fashioned word of mouth, and later through local and national media coverage.

It is reported that 250,000 members of the armed services leave the military every year, many with serious medical problems and no idea of what benefits they are eligible for or how to maneuver their way through the Veterans Administration bureaucracy to find help.

"Eighty percent or more of the veterans who come to the clinic have mental health problems that go along with their service-connected claims, or are their service-connected claims," Costello said. "We deal almost exclusively with the VA to get our veterans the benefits they deserve. That sounds like it should be easy, but it's not. It's a very arduous, complicated process. It takes good advocacy to figure out the best way to get the veterans what we believe they are entitled to."

Since it opened, the Veterans Law Clinic has made more than 2,000 veteran contacts, handled 500 active cases, and recovered over \$2 million in back benefits for their clients, Costello noted.

While veterans are the primary beneficiaries of the clinic's work, some current and former students have been so significantly impacted by their work in the Veterans Law Clinic that they plan to practice or are practicing veterans law.

Detroit Mercy Law alumna and veterans law attorney Mandy Kelly knew she wanted to continue to help veterans after she worked with them while she was a student in the Veterans Law Clinic.

"The people who came to us were in one of the worst periods of their lives," Kelly said. "Most of our clients had medical conditions that prevented them



Professor Margaret (Peggy) Costello working with students in the Veterans Law Clinic.

from holding down a job. They were reaching out to us to get some sort of assistance. Working with Peggy (Costello), I began to understand this area of law and how to work our way through the process in order to get our veterans' claims heard."

Almost a decade after she graduated, the insights Kelly gained as a student in the Veterans Law Clinic remain fresh in her mind.

"Before I took the clinic, I had no idea how many homeless veterans we had. Basically, that meant they had no resources, so anything they needed depended on our ability to provide what was necessary to move their case through the system," Kelly said.

The satisfaction Kelly found from working with veterans is something second-year law student Aaron Toth readily understands. A former Marine, Toth's military experience gave him an opportunity to fulfill his goal to give back to the military community.

"Before I even started law school, Dean Heath [Charisse L. Heath, assistant dean for academic success and bar preparation] called to talk with me about the Veterans Law Clinic. I was really excited," Toth said. "I have friends in every branch of the military. When I listened to some of their stories, I thought, 'I need to do something.' I've always wanted to give back to fellow veterans, and the clinic got me started."

With six years in the Marines behind him, Toth's special perspective translates into an immediate connection with the veterans whose cases he reviews.

"Having them know I am a brother in arms opens the door a little wider and makes them more comfortable. To be able to say, 'I get it,' and for them to understand that I am on their side establishes trust. It's important for them to know that I'm behind them, no matter what," Toth said. "To have that trust is critical because getting through all of the paperwork with the VA can be such a long wait process. I want to do everything I can for them because of what they've done for our country."

Few veterans law students have a backstory like Aaron Toth's, but regardless of what brought them to the Veterans Law Clinic, Costello's expectations apply equally to everyone who enrolls in her clinic.

"Even though the majority of my students will not practice veterans law, the skills they've learned here apply to virtually any aspect of practice, especially in litigation," Costello said. "We're doing real things for real people. This isn't an academic exercise. Everything we're doing matters."



Mandy Kelly '10



Aaron Toth '21





Joyce Reasonover

## Clinic Stories: Criminal Trial Clinic Prepares Students to Fight for Clients

Criminal defense attorneys and prosecutors who appear in the 32A District Court in Harper Woods or the 36th District Court in Detroit are likely to encounter a Detroit Mercy Law student working in the Criminal Trial Clinic, a semester-long experiential endeavor that puts law students front and center with clients who, due to misdemeanors or felonies, need representation.

"I have an average of 10 students every day who spend 105 hours in the clinic, in addition to their regular coursework," said Joyce Reasonover, a criminal defense attorney and the clinic's adjunct professor. "On most days, they are there Monday through Friday, from eight in the morning until noon."

In the 36th District Court, law students are working out of an on-site office, where, after the first two or three weeks of the semester spent honing their interview skills and learning how to present themselves, they move into the courtroom.

"Our law students are quick to learn that it's critical for them to dispel any preconceived notions they might have of a client's guilt or innocence," Reasonover said. "After the first few weeks of the semester, our students' time is spent interviewing and representing indigent clients while they are also learning to review discovery, prepare motions, participate in plea negotiations, and appear on the record with their clients."

A former schoolteacher, Reasonover has practiced criminal defense law for 15 years. For the past three years, she also has been the clinic's adjunct instructor, an experience that not only gives her a chance to draw on her background in education, but also gives her an opportunity to learn with her students.

"I discover a new perspective every semester from our students," Reasonover said. "They are so savvy when it comes to research, and they keep me abreast of new technologies. It's just refreshing to work with them. I am teaching them and they're teaching me."

But it's more than just her students' research skills that impress Reasonover. It is their ability to confront the challenges presented by the criminal justice system, on behalf of their clients.

"Before our students get into court, they are equipped with a good understanding of what is expected of them. Still, we work through a gamut of possible scenarios. Then, they apply what they've learned to the five to eight cases a day they'll have in the clinic," Reasonover said. "They are very perceptive and do so well fighting for their clients. Many of our students come to us with prior professional experiences, so they frequently identify other mitigating factors that affect their client's demeanor or attitude."

**"Before our students get into court, they are equipped with a good understanding of what is expected of them."**

Echoing what others who teach in Detroit Mercy Law's clinical programs have said, Reasonover emphasized that what law students learn in the Criminal Trial Clinic cannot be replicated in the classroom.

"The clinic teaches them not to back down, and they aren't intimidated because they're quick on their feet and they know their stuff," Reasonover said. "They bring preparation, knowledge and ethics to the profession. Our students are aggressive fighters who are going to be great advocates for their clients, regardless of what field they choose to go into."







Hon. Michelle Rick '91

### Clinic Stories: Alumna Spearheads Six-County Traveling Expungement Clinic

When she is not hearing cases, Clinton County Circuit Court Judge and Detroit Mercy Law alumna Michelle Rick '91 is working with law students who are looking to gain more experiential opportunities through outreach to people who are often unaware of how to access the legal justice system.

"After I received my appointment from former Governor Jennifer Granholm in 2007, she asked me to promise that I would not only be a judge, but I would also be engaged outside of my work in the judiciary," Rick said. "I really took that to heart, just as I have Detroit Mercy Law's commitment to service for others. That was a very big part of my law school education."

Rick, who also teaches the Access to Justice course at Detroit Mercy Law, has built on that promise in her work as a member of the judiciary and with Detroit Mercy Law's Director of Clinical Operations and Outreach Rebecca Simkins Nowak.

This past July, Rick and Simkins Nowak spearheaded Project Access, a traveling expungement clinic funded by a \$20,000 grant from the Michigan State Bar Foundation. With eight Detroit Mercy Law students and local judges from six rural northern Michigan counties participating, the clinic attracted people who, for a number of reasons, were trying to clear their records of past criminal convictions but fell into what a 2017 report calls "the justice gap."

Rick said the report, issued by the Legal Services Corporation, "talks about the civil justice gap, how seniors, veterans and others in rural communities fall into a gap where they may even not recognize they have a legal problem or that they have solutions available for legal relief. Maybe they make too much money for legal aid but not enough to hire an attorney. These are the people we want to reach."



Community partners and Detroit Mercy Law students and faculty at the Project Access kick-off at the Michigan Supreme Court on July 25, 2019. From left, Rebecca Zarras '21, Sommer Deverglilio '21, Courtney Wood '21, Katherine Ganick '21, Professor Nick Schroeck, Hon. Michelle Rick '91, Detroit Mercy Law Dean Phyllis L. Crocker, Crawford County Circuit Court Judge Colin Hunter, Director of Clinical Operations and Outreach Rebecca Simkins Nowak, Kaycee Berente '21, Anjanee Naidu '21, Bridget Underhill '20, and Andrew Sitto '20.

To assist people with the expungement process, student volunteers in Project Access approached the issues that brought their clients to the clinic with professionalism and empathy, Rick said.

"In the clinic, our law students worked directly with clients to determine expungement eligibility. In some cases, they were fortunate to share positive news, when a client appeared eligible to file an expungement application. Other times they had to communicate a disappointing outcome," Rick said. "Additionally, they worked side by side with pro bono lawyers, court staff, judges and clerks. They observed the potential inequities of the current expungement law, and the law's restorative power when a person presents with what appears to be the best circumstances. They had to be prepared to be empathetic, respectful and sensitive, all the while remaining objective and pragmatic."

Rick's dedication to helping those who are eligible to expunge their records, in the hope they will have better access to employment and housing, is never far from her mind.

"Expungement is one of my favorite things to do as a judge because it focuses on the restorative nature of the court system, and it also speaks to the caliber of the person before me who made a mistake and has demonstrated over an appreciable period of time that they are worthy of having that mistake removed from their permanent record," Rick said.

"As a society we have a vested interest in being part of a community where people can achieve their full potential. When they seek that restoration and it's genuine, it's appropriate to give that." **D**



Michigan Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist visited students and organizers during the Project Access clinic serving Wexford and Missaukee Counties on July 29, 2019.

# Aramis Ayala '01



From the time she was in elementary school, Florida State Attorney Aramis Ayala knew she wanted to be a prosecutor. It was a dream that became a reality as she built a career focused on criminal justice reform.

"When I was younger, I was taught that a prosecutor's job was to seek justice. I never embraced the dehumanizing of human beings. So, I built on that idea when I dreamed of pursuing justice in a prosecutorial role," Ayala said. "I don't think I'm doing anything that is contrary to what prosecution means. It's just that so many others have perverted it

to mean conviction is the only outcome synonymous with justice, when the reality is that truth is the only thing that is synonymous with justice."

A native of Saginaw, Michigan, Ayala graduated from the University of Michigan then enrolled at Detroit Mercy Law, where she was challenged to go beyond the four corners of the law and develop a philosophy that would help guide her during each phase of her professional life.

"Law school at Detroit Mercy was an amazing experience. It helped me understand what accountability was, lessons that came back to me in full light when I got ready to take the Bar," Ayala said. "My professors understood the balance between the law and a commitment to going a little bit deeper. That gave me the freedom to be philosophical and to embrace diverse thinking with a different perspective."

Ayala was elected Florida's first African-American state attorney in 2016, representing Orange and Osceola Counties. It was a victory that invited controversy when she refused to pursue the death penalty, a decision that was later overturned by Florida's Supreme Court. But Ayala's work, in particular her stand against the death penalty, earned her the NAACP Civil Rights Champion of Justice award, a recognition she said spoke as much about the NAACP as it did about her.

**"Law school at Detroit Mercy was an amazing experience. It helped me understand what accountability was, lessons that came back to me in full light when I got ready to take the Bar."**

"From its inception, the NAACP has understood racial disparities and the inequalities in our criminal justice system. Even though it may have not been popular, they stood behind a decision that I still believe was just, and they weren't afraid of the pushback," Ayala said. "For me, it was an honor to receive this. At the same time, it made me even prouder of what the NAACP is because it represents exactly what their mission says it represents. They have my highest respect."

Even though she is not seeking reelection, Ayala is excited about her future and plans to continue her work toward reforming a criminal justice system she believes is sorely in need of change.

"My term doesn't expire until January of 2021, so there is still time for me to effect change, to have an impact and to set a trajectory for what I believe could be a change in genuine justice for this country, especially here in Florida," Ayala said.

The mother of two young daughters, Ayala wants them to understand what it means to be responsible people who know how to treat others and take into account each person's humanity.

"For my daughters, I want to set an example of high intelligence, of integrity and humanity and having a fingerprint of wanting justice and fairness for themselves and everyone around them. If I can do that then I have set the tone of justice," Ayala said.



# Alec Ghezzi '11



The last American troops were pulled out of Vietnam in 1973, but for many veterans of that conflict, service-related benefit claims remain unresolved, according to Alec Ghezzi, deputy director of benefits for the Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) and a 2011 alumnus of Detroit Mercy Law and its Veterans Law Clinic.

The Vietnam Veterans of America represents more than

77,000 veterans and their family members. Though the organization represents veterans from all areas, the majority of its clients are Vietnam veterans.

"The biggest reason we still have such a large number of Vietnam veterans applying for their benefits is that the level of education people had about their rights was virtually nonexistent when they got out of the military," Ghezzi said. "Or if they did file a claim, the quality of representation was not that great."

Before the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims was established in the 1980s, veterans had difficulties finding counsel because there were restrictions on attorney fees.

"Attorneys could not charge more than \$10, in total, to represent a veteran's claims. And initially, there was a lot of opposition among the veterans' non-profits to attorneys being involved in the process," Ghezzi said. "After the appeals court came into existence, the quality of legal protection that veterans were afforded increased dramatically.

Now, we have all kinds of case law that helps our veterans get the benefits they deserve. None of that existed when the Vietnam veterans were first filing their claims. Before that, the agency could do whatever it wanted in terms of granting benefits."

Ghezzi's work with the VVA follows years in private practice, where he specialized in veterans law, an area he first came into contact with as a student in Detroit Mercy Law's Veterans Clinic.

"Looking back, to have had the chance, as a law student, to help clients who were counting on us and really learn how to work their cases was an invaluable experience. I learned early on how important it was to understand and recognize that many of our clients were suffering from mental health problems. Our veterans are an underserved population. They come home expecting protection and it's not always there," Ghezzi said.

**"Looking back, to have had the chance, as a law student, to help clients who were counting on us and really learn how to work their cases was an invaluable experience."**

Not only did the Veterans Law Clinic give Ghezzi the opportunity to help clients recover benefits, but it also challenged him to make his time in law school an experience that went beyond the classroom.

"When you're in the clinic actually working with real cases, you know the things you are going to do will actually impact another person's life. That makes you want to work a lot harder. Working in the Veterans Law Clinic is challenging, but it gives you the motivation to go the extra mile." **D**

# Welcome New Faculty & Administrators

## New Faculty



### Jelani Jefferson Exum

**Philip J. McElroy Professor of Law**

*B.A., Harvard College; J.D., Harvard Law School*

Jelani Jefferson Exum is a nationally recognized expert in sentencing law and procedure. She is a member of the Editorial Board of the Federal Sentencing Reporter, and her work has been featured on prominent sentencing blogs, such as Sentencing Law and Policy. Prior to joining Detroit Mercy Law, she was a professor and associate dean for diversity and inclusion at the University of Toledo College of Law, an associate professor at the University of Kansas School of Law and a visiting associate professor at the University of Michigan Law School. Exum teaches constitutional law, criminal law, criminal procedure, sentencing, and race and American law. She writes mainly in the area of federal sentencing, and her research interests include comparative criminal law and procedure as well as the impact of race on criminal justice.



### Leslie E. Scott

**Assistant Professor of Law**

*B.A., University of Michigan; J.D., American University, Washington College of Law*

Leslie Scott joins Detroit Mercy Law after nearly seven years as a criminal defense attorney with the Federal Public Defender's Office for the Western District of New York. In this role, she gained extensive litigation experience at the federal pretrial, trial, sentencing and appellate stages, and won countless victories for her clients. Prior to that, she completed judicial clerkships for the Honorable Victoria A. Roberts of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan and the Honorable Senior Judges of the D.C. Court of Appeals. Scott's expertise and research interests lie at the intersection of race, mental illness and criminal justice, including the mass incarceration of communities of color and federal prosecutorial overreach.



### Stephen Wilks

**Associate Professor of Law**

*B.A., J.D., Queen's University; M.S.W., University of Toronto; LL.M., Ph.D., York University Osgoode Hall Law School*

Stephen Wilks joins Detroit Mercy Law following a two-year visiting professorship at Case Western Reserve University and tenure-track appointments at Lincoln Memorial University School of Law and Valparaiso University Law School. His cross-disciplinary research interests explore themes of governance and regulation within transactional spaces. His scholarship appeared in the Supreme Court of Canada Law Review, the Harvard Journal of Racial and Ethnic Justice, the Cornell International Law Journal and other flagship journals. Wilks's teaching areas include business associations, secured transactions, payment systems, sales and contracts.

## Faculty Promotions



### J. Richard Broughton

**Professor of Law and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs**

*B.A. Hampden-Sydney College; J.D., Widener University; LL.M., Georgetown University*

Broughton joined the faculty in 2009, and he was recently promoted to professor of law. He teaches criminal law, criminal procedure, constitutional law and federal criminal law.



### Nick Schroeck

**Associate Professor of Law and Associate Dean of Experiential Education**

*B.A., Elmhurst College; J.D., Wayne State University*

Schroeck joined the faculty in 2018 and was recently appointed associate dean of experiential education. He teaches environmental law, oversees the clinical program, and serves as director of the Environmental Law Clinic.

## New Positions



### Shamaila Khan

was promoted to assistant dean and registrar. She joined Detroit Mercy Law in 2009 as an admissions counselor and became director of student affairs in 2017.



### Rebecca Simkins-Nowak

was promoted to director of clinical operations and outreach. She joined Detroit Mercy Law in 2016 as clinical coordinator after practicing at the Detroit law firm of Barris, Scott, Denn & Driker.



### Christina Loebach '15

was promoted from associate director to director of the Canadian and American Dual J.D. Program. A Dual J.D. graduate herself, she divides her time between Detroit Mercy Law and Windsor Law to ensure successful administration of the program.



## New Administrators



### Veronica Beltran '20

#### Clinical Program Receptionist

*B.A., Grand Valley State University; J.D. Candidate, University of Detroit Mercy School of Law*

Beltran is a third-year evening student. She also works in the clinic program as full-time support staff, primarily supporting Detroit Mercy Law's Immigration, Trademark and Family Law clinics.



### Emily Cardwell

#### Assistant Director of Career Services & Outreach

*B.A., Ashland University; M.Ed., Kent State University*

Cardwell joined Detroit Mercy Law after serving as a graduate assistant for academic and career advising at Kent State University.



### April Ellison

#### Director of Alumni Relations

*B.A., Wayne State University*

Ellison comes to Detroit Mercy Law with over 20 years of experience in non-profit and higher education management, alumni relations and event planning. Previously, Ellison served as the associate director of development for Wayne State University Mike Ilitch School of Business.



### Jordan Hall

#### Director of Student Affairs, Campus Equity & Inclusion

*B.A., Morehouse College; J.D., M.Ed., Loyola University Chicago*

Hall joined Detroit Mercy Law after serving as a Clyde Murphy Fellow for the Chicago Committee for Human Rights.



### Kate Harrison '12

#### Director of Career Services & Outreach

*B.A., Albion College; J.D., University of Detroit Mercy School of Law*

Harrison joined Detroit Mercy Law's Career Services Office in January. She was previously a senior associate attorney at Dalton & Tomich, PLC in Detroit.



### Benjamin Houston

*Reference & Serials Librarian, Kresge Law Library  
B.A., Kalamazoo College; LL.M., Lewis & Clark Law School; M.S.I., J.D., University of Michigan*

Houston joined Detroit Mercy's Law Library after a number of years in private corporate practice. He now heads the Law Library's reference and serials department.



### Sunny Kerschenheiter

#### Events Coordinator

*B.A., Oakland University*

Kerschenheiter joined Detroit Mercy Law's Office of Alumni Relations in September 2018 after serving as the marketing and development specialist at Forever Families.



### Jessica Rouser

#### Assistant Director of Law Financial Aid

*B.A. with Honors, Saint Mary's College of Notre Dame; Ed.M., Boston University*

Rouser joined Detroit Mercy Law after working for nine years at Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development as the manager of graduate financial aid and assistant director of student services.



### Alex Meyers '18

#### Assistant Director of Admissions & Diversity

*B.A., Central Michigan University; J.D., University of Detroit Mercy School of Law*

Meyers joined the Detroit Mercy Law Admissions Office in April. As a student at Detroit Mercy Law, Meyers served as Student Bar Association president and as a student representative on the Law School faculty's Diversity Committee.

## Not Pictured

### Haley Behr

*Circulation Assistant, Kresge Law Library*

### Stephanie McCoy

*Night Manager & Research Specialist, Kresge Law Library*

# Recent Faculty Publications



Catherine Archibald

**Catherine Archibald****Associate Professor of Law**

*Rewritten Opinion of Etsitty v. Utah Transit Authority*, 502 F.3d 1215 (10th Cir. 2007), in *FEMINIST JUDGMENTS: EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION OPINIONS REWRITTEN* (ANN MCGINLEY & NICOLE PORTER EDS., CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS) (FORTHCOMING 2019).



Julia Belian

**Julia Belian****Associate Professor of Law**

*ESTATES & TRUSTS: A CONTEXT AND PRACTICE CASEBOOK* (CAROLINA ACADEMIC PRESS) (FORTHCOMING 2019).



J. Richard Broughton

**J. Richard Broughton****Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Law**

*The Opioid Crisis and the Federal Death Penalty*, 70 SOUTH CAROLINA LAW REVIEW 611 (2019).



Margaret Costello

**Margaret Costello****Associate Professor of Law**

*Citizen Lawyers: Michael Pitt and Peggy Goldberg Pitt*, 98 MICHIGAN BAR JOURNAL 52 (FEB. 2019).



Jelani Jefferson Exum

**Jelani Jefferson Exum****Philip J. McElroy Professor of Law**

*From Warfare to Welfare: Reconceptualizing Drug Sentencing During the Opioid Crisis*, 67 KANSAS LAW REVIEW 941 (2019).



Sarah Garrison

**Sarah Garrison****Director of Bar Preparation**

*How to Apply for the Michigan Bar Exam*, in J.D. ADVISING, HOW TO PASS THE MICHIGAN BAR EXAM (3D ED. 2019).



Troy Harris

**Troy Harris****Associate Professor of Law**

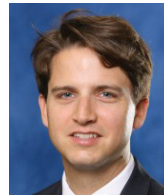
*Construction Disputes Under U.S. Law: A Guide for Non-U.S. Lawyers*, in *INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION IN THE UNITED STATES* (KLUWER LAW INT'L 2018).



Karen McDonald Henning

**Karen McDonald Henning****Associate Professor of Law**

*CRIMINAL PRETRIAL ADVOCACY* (3D ED. WEST 2019) (WITH PETER J. HENNING AND LEONID FELLER).



Kyle Langvardt

**Kyle Langvardt****Associate Professor of Law**

*Regulating Habit-Forming Technology*, 88 FORDHAM LAW REVIEW (FORTHCOMING 2019/2020).



Andrew F. Moore

**Andrew F. Moore****Professor of Law**

*Introduction to the Symposium on Sanctuary Cities: A Brief Review of the Legal Landscape*, 96 UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY LAW REVIEW 1 (2018).



Cara Cunningham Warren

**Cara Cunningham Warren****Associate Professor of Law**

*Prosecuting the Crime of Aggression as a Complement: A Framework to Promote ICC's Legitimacy in the Context of Head-of-State Prosecutions*, 51 GEORGE WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL LAW REVIEW (FORTHCOMING 2019).



Stephen Wilks

**Stephen Wilks****Associate Professor of Law**

*Private Interests, Public Law, and Reconfigured Inequality in Modern Payment Card Networks*, 123 DICKINSON LAW REVIEW 307 (2019).



Pamela Wilkins

**Pamela Wilkins****Associate Professor of Law**

*Law School in a Different Voice: Legal Education as a Work of Mercy*, 63 SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY LAW JOURNAL (FORTHCOMING 2019).

*Commentary on Etsitty v. Utah Transit Authority*, 502 F.3d 1215 (10th Cir. 2007), in *FEMINIST JUDGMENTS: EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION OPINIONS REWRITTEN* (ANN MCGINLEY & NICOLE PORTER EDS., CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS) (FORTHCOMING 2019).

*Ignatian Reflection in an Externship Course*, 97 MICHIGAN BAR JOURNAL 46 (JULY 2018).



# Class of 2018 Employment Outcomes

The Career Services Office (CSO) collects and reports graduate employment outcomes to the American Bar Association (ABA) and the National Association for Law Placement (NALP). These organizations receive employment data from all law schools and track national trends. The entry-level legal employment market and the employment rate remain strong, and are approaching pre-recession rates.

## Overall Employment – Early Outcomes\*

	National		Detroit Mercy Law	
	Employed	Unemployed-Seeking	Employed	Unemployed-Seeking
Class of 2018	89%	7%	91%	9%
Class of 2017	89%	8%	91%	6%
Class of 2016	88%	9%	88%	9%

\*Employment statistics for each class reported as of March 15 following graduation.

## Employment in Bar Passage Required and J.D. Advantage Positions

	National	Detroit Mercy Law
Class of 2018	82%	87%
Class of 2017	81%	86%
Class of 2016	79%	80%

Individuals pursue legal education for diverse reasons, and the best employment outcome for each graduate varies. Generally, however, it is assumed that Bar Passage Required and J.D. Advantage\* outcomes are the best outcomes for law school graduates.

\*J.D. Advantage is a position for which a J.D. provides a demonstrable advantage in obtaining or performing the job, but which does not itself require Bar passage or an active law license, or involve practicing law.

## Spotlight: Public Interest/Government

Several alumni from the Classes of 2018 and 2019 secured public interest and government roles, including:



**Jennifer Smith '18**  
Staff Attorney  
Lakeshore Legal Aid



**Nicole Garmo '18**  
Assistant Prosecutor  
Oakland County Prosecutor's Office

## Class of 2018: Types of Employment

Law Firm (2-50)	48%	Judicial Clerkship	3%
Law Firm (50+)	23%	Public Interest	3%
Government	8%	Education	1%
Business & Industry	13%		



**WANT TO HIRE A  
2019 GRADUATE OR A  
STUDENT CLERK?**

Direct opportunities to the  
CSO at 313-596-0223 or  
[cso@udmercy.edu](mailto:cso@udmercy.edu).

# Meet the Dean's Fellows

This fall, we welcomed 15 Dean's Fellows to Detroit Mercy Law. Fellows are incoming students selected for our most prestigious admissions scholarships based on their excellence prior to law school. We expect our fellows to excel in law school, contribute to our Detroit Mercy Law community, and become leaders in the profession and in their communities.

## Andrew AbdulNour

IP Law Fellow; J.D. Candidate; B.S., Wayne State University

AbdulNour is a published mechanical engineer who plans to combine his interests in engineering, technology and law by pursuing a career in patent law.

## Fatmeh Cheaib

J.D. Candidate; B.A., Wayne State University

Cheaib is an active volunteer in her community with an interest in immigration law. She plans to use her legal education to strengthen communities and empower marginalized individuals.

## Todd James Craven II

J.D. Candidate; B.B.A., Wayne State University

Craven is a professional musician who is pursuing a legal education to serve people in need. He volunteers extensively at his church in a multitude of roles and is interested in exploring careers in disability law and family law.

## Hana'a Farha

Transnational Law Fellow; Dual J.D. Candidate; B.S., Eastern Michigan University

Farha is the youngest of seven children, which helped her develop conflict resolution skills and an interest in family law. She became interested in legal education at a young age and plans to use her law degrees to advance human rights.

## Yasmine Haidar

Transnational Law Fellow; Dual J.D. Candidate; B.A., Adrian College

Haidar is interested in immigration law and foreign policy. She comes from an immigrant family and plans to use her law degrees to defend victims of discrimination and help immigrant families.

## Kristianna Hettenbach

J.D. Candidate; B.A., Michigan State University

Hettenbach relocated back to Michigan after working professionally in North Carolina. She is inspired to make a difference in the lives of the Michiganders who need it most and plans to pursue a career in public interest law.

## Dorian Hooker

J.D./M.B.A. Candidate; B.S., Eastern Michigan University

Hooker, raised by entrepreneurs in metro Detroit, developed an interest in the legal and business fields at an early age. He is interested in corporate law and aims to make an impact by further diversifying the legal and C-suite executive roles while being a champion for social justice.

## Yohana Iyob

J.D. Candidate; B.A., Kalamazoo College

Iyob, born and raised in Seattle, Washington, is passionate about social justice. Through her work with Amnesty International and the Ferguson, Missouri, protests, she has witnessed injustices in the justice system. She plans to use her law degree to continue her work in pursuit of social justice.

## Kraig McAllister

J.D. Candidate; B.B.A., Western Michigan University

McAllister is an advertising and marketing professional and disc golf enthusiast. He is transitioning to the legal profession to help promote growth in his community as well as within himself. He looks forward to exploring various areas of law and legal career paths.



### Nicholas North

J.D. Candidate; B.A., Michigan State University

North, born and raised in Detroit, is the grandson of Charley North of the Detroit Mercy Titans Hall of Fame. He chose to pursue a career in law because the legal field is intellectually challenging and provides the opportunity to rise to challenges while enhancing the lives of others. He is interested in criminal law and plans to advocate for the wrongfully convicted.

### Aaron Roberson

J.D. Candidate; B.A., The College of Wooster

Roberson is committed to service and solving problems that impact communities. For the past year, he taught special education at Detroit's Thurgood Marshall Elementary while coaching its afterschool sports program. He is also a co-founder of the L.A.B., a mentorship group for young men, focused on leadership, attitude and brotherhood

### Rita Samir Soka

J.D. Candidate; B.S., Wayne State University

Soka is a native of Baghdad, Iraq, who learned the English language in college while also raising her three children. For the past 10 years, she worked as a clinical lab scientist in the largest hospitals in metro Detroit. She now plans to use her law degree in conjunction with her science background to pursue careers in health law and patent law.

### Aidan Traynor

J.D. Candidate; B.A., University of Michigan

Traynor was adopted from China as a toddler and resided in multiple cities throughout the United States. She contributed to a university history lab that focused on Detroit in the 1960-70s. She is interested in environmental justice and civil rights issues.

### Joseph Williams

J.D. Candidate; B.A., Hope College

Williams recently returned from Denmark, where he played team handball semi-professionally. During college, he played lacrosse and represented the U.S. as a member of the U-21 National Team Handball team. His prior professional experience includes working at Global Health Services Network, an international healthcare development, consulting and management firm.

### Briann Wilson

J.D. Candidate; B.S., Michigan State University

Wilson is passionate about family law and wants to use her legal career to advocate for victims of domestic violence. In college, she conducted research on domestic violence with a primary focus on economic abuse. She has supported advocacy efforts directed at helping victims of domestic violence and has experience assisting individuals with disabilities. **D**



Andrew AbdunNour



Kristianna Hettenbach



Aaron Roberson



Fatmeh Cheaib



Dorian Hooker



Rita Samir Soka



Todd James Craven II



Yohana Iyob



Aidan Traynor



Hana'a Farha



Kraig McAllister



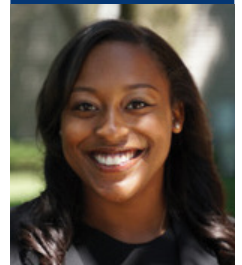
Joseph Williams



Yasmine Haidar



Nicholas North



Briann Wilson

# Supporting the Complete Lawyer

Our communities need more lawyers who, like you, are driven to serve. Scholarship support from alumni donors empowers our students as they pursue their goals and seek to make a difference in their communities. To all donors, we thank you for helping students thrive in law school and beyond.

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT



In March, the **Detroit Mercy Law Alumni Association** launched its inaugural endowed scholarship fund to provide more scholarships to law students. All 25 members of the Detroit Mercy Law Alumni Association Board of Directors made

a gift to the new fund, reaching their initial fundraising goal of \$100,000 within the first few weeks of the launch. *"One of the priorities of the alumni association is to find ways to ease the financial burden of Detroit Mercy Law students as they pursue their legal education, and this new fund is making strides toward that goal. I am grateful for the dedicated efforts of my fellow alumni to make an impact in such a meaningful way."* – Gregory Thiess '79, Chair of the Alumni Association Fundraising Committee



In honor of his father **Anthony A. Asher '65**, Michael J. Asher '86 created the **Anthony A. Asher Fighting Spirit Scholarship Fund** to support children of building tradesmen who choose to attend Detroit Mercy Law.



**A. Vince Colella '93**, founding partner of Moss & Collella P.C., created the **A. Vince Colella Civil Rights Scholarship Fund** to support students who show serious interest in the area of civil rights or personal injury law.

*"As a former student of Detroit Mercy Law, it is an honor and privilege to support those students who wish to promote and protect social change. Through my scholarship, I hope to encourage and reward students who pursue a path toward creating equality and civil justice for all."* – A. Vince Collella '93



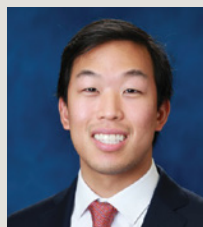
**Eugene '67 and Mary Anne Gargaro** launched The **Eugene and Mary Anne Gargaro Scholarship Fund Challenge** to encourage friends and fellow alumni to invest in tomorrow's leaders and create a legacy by supporting endowed scholarships for Detroit Mercy Law

students. The fund will add an additional \$5,000 to the contributions of the first five donors who establish a new endowed scholarship of \$25,000 or more. **D**

## Interested in giving back?

Visit [udmercy.edu/donate/law](http://udmercy.edu/donate/law) or connect with April Ellison, Director of Alumni Relations, at [ellisoal@udmercy.edu](mailto:ellisoal@udmercy.edu) or 313-596-0202.

## THANK-YOU NOTES



**Alexander Choi '20**  
**Recipient of the Eugene and Mary Anne Gargaro Scholarship**  
*"I would like to thank Eugene and Mary Ann Gargaro for their generous contribution that has made my goal of becoming a business attorney possible.*

*Your continuous generosity and support help students have more time to focus on their studies."*



**Jailah Emerson '20**  
**Recipient of the Dennis L. Dabney Scholarship**  
*"I am so thankful to Dennis Dabney for the endowed scholarship. As a first-generation law student and a minority woman, this scholarship has contributed to diversifying the legal community and the presence*

*of minority women in the legal field. I am truly thankful for this contribution to my education."*





**JOSEPH G. VERNON**, Dual J.D. '05, principal and resident director of Miller Canfield's Detroit office, delivered the keynote address. He said to 2019 graduates, "As a lawyer, you are helping people every day, and given the interest at stake, you are often their last and best hope. It is and will be an honor every time someone introduces you and says, 'This is my lawyer.'" **D**



**KRISTOFFER BUTLER** '19 learns he is the recipient of the 2019 Vivere ex Missione Award, an honor announced as a surprise during commencement to graduates who exemplify the mission of Detroit Mercy. **D**



**EVON PERVAN-KELLER** '19 is hooded by his mother and attorney, Anne Marie Pervan '91, right, and Professor Karen Henning, left. **D**



## Alumni Achievement Spirit Award

Husband and wife team Ralph McDowell '86 and Nancy Glen '86, center, received 2019 Alumni Achievement Spirit Awards in recognition of their leadership in their fields and in their community. McDowell is a bankruptcy lawyer at Bodman PLC, and Glen is director of customer happiness at ardentCause L3C. Dr. Antoine M. Garibaldi, president, Dean Phyllis L. Crocker, second from left, and Pamela Zarkowski, provost and vice president of academic affairs, are pictured with them.



## Homecoming Honorees

Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Michael J. Riordan '90 received Detroit Mercy Law's Time and Talent Award and Rosa Weaver '13 received the Rising Star Award during the 2018 Homecoming Golf Outing & Awards Dinner on Sept. 28, 2018.





## Portrait Unveiling of Hon. Denise K. Langford Morris '82

On March 8, 2019, Detroit Mercy Law student leaders hosted a portrait unveiling ceremony honoring University Board of Trustees member and Oakland County Circuit Judge Denise Langford Morris '82 for her many contributions to the community as a public servant, leader and mentor. Painted by Detroit artist Henry Heading, the portrait, which is on permanent display in the atrium, is a gift from four student organizations—Law Review, Black Law Students Association (BLSA), Women's Law Caucus and the Student Bar Association. **D**

Pictured are, from left, Jewel Haji '19, 18-19 Law Review editor-in-chief; Michelle Shember '19, 18-19 Law Review editor of outside articles; Kelsey Sill '19, 18-19 Women's Law Caucus president; Eric B. Vaughn, framer; Henry Heading, artist; Hon. Denise K. Langford Morris; Keshava Kirkland '19, 18-19 BLSA president; Milaka Spann '19, 18-19 BLSA treasurer; and Bridget Underhill '20, 18-19 Women's Law Caucus secretary.



## Federal Pro Se Clinic Soiree

On June 18, over 100 attorneys, judges, Detroit Mercy Law students, faculty, staff and other supporters gathered for the Pro Se Clinic Soiree, a fundraising event celebrating the first anniversary of the Federal Pro Se Legal Assistance Clinic. The reception was presented by the Oakland County Bar Association and held at Miller Canfield's Detroit office. Since opening in January 2018, 34 students have provided over 5,000 hours of free legal services to more than 350 litigants in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. **D**

At the event were, from left, Nick Schroeck, associate dean of experiential education; DaiChanai A. Jones '19; Jewel Haji '19; John Oziem '19; Shantinique Brooks '19; Paulina Kennedy '20; Anne Yantus, professor of practice and director of externships; Detroit Mercy Law Dean Phyllis L. Crocker; Pro Se Clinic Director Kevin Carlson; Aaron Pattison '20; Christopher Putrycus '20; America Guzman '20; Cheryl Mitchell '20; Lauren Nemazi; Adel Nucho '19



## Book Awards 2019

*"When you help other people, you help yourselves."*

The Honorable Marilyn E. Atkins '80 addressed students during the 2019 Book Awards Ceremony, which recognizes students for outstanding academic achievements and service to the community. Each student honoree received a copy of Atkins' memoir, "The Triumph of Rosemary." **D**



# ERIN GO LAW

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

members hosted more than 120 area attorneys, judges and students at the Board's Erin Go Law Networking Reception on March 14, 2019. From left are Kyle R. Dufrane '98, Mark A. Wisniewski '90 and Gregory G. Thies '79. **D**



## Detroit's Abolitionist Moment: 160 Years of Fighting for Justice

On March 12, 1859, abolitionists Frederick Douglass and John Brown met in Detroit at the home of William Webb. In honor of the 160th anniversary of this historic meeting, Detroit Mercy Law Professor Nick Schroeck worked with community partners to organize a symposium titled "Detroit's Abolitionist Moment: 160 Years of Fighting for Justice" on March 12, 2019 at the Detroit Public Library. Speakers, including historians, scholars and descendants of the 1859 meeting participants, discussed the context of the Douglass-Brown meeting in terms of antislavery, black activism, the Underground Railroad in Detroit and the experience of freedom seekers who made it to Canada. The symposium was supported by the Dewitt C. Holbrook Memorial Trust. **D**

From left are Deana Johnson, regional manager, Network to Freedom, National Park Service; Nick Schroeck, Detroit Mercy Law associate professor and associated dean of experiential education; David S. Reynolds, author and distinguished professor of English and U.S. History at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; Darryl Hogan, descendant of one of the 11 freedom seekers who arrived with John Brown in Detroit in 1859; Kimberly Simmons, president and executive director of Detroit River Project; and Leslie Williams, of the Fred Hart Williams Genealogical Society

## McElroy Lecture on Law and Religion 2019

On March 13, 2019, Professor Rebecca French of the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Law delivered the 2019 McElroy Lecture titled "Why Buddhism and Law Has Been Excluded from the Canon" to a standing-room-only crowd of alumni, faculty, students and Detroit community members.



## Inaugural Dewitt C. Holbrook Lecture on Social Justice

Georgetown Law Professor Paul Butler, center, delivered the inaugural Dewitt C. Holbrook Lecture on Social Justice. Butler discussed his research and the criminal justice reform ideas outlined in his book titled "Chokehold: Policing Black Men" with a crowd of Detroit community leaders, alumni, faculty and students. He is pictured with Richard Broughton, professor and associate dean of academic affairs, and Detroit Mercy Law Dean Phyllis L. Crocker.



## Dual J.D. Alumni Awards Reception in Toronto

On May 23, Detroit Mercy Law and Windsor Law hosted the Dual J.D. Alumni Awards Reception in Toronto, Ontario. Meaghan Russell '05 of Dentons Canada received the Dual J.D. Distinguished Alumni Award, and Michael Alvaro '14 of the Toronto Blue Jays received the Dual J.D. Emerging Leader Award. From left are Windsor Law Dean Christopher Waters, Alvaro, Detroit Mercy Law Dean Phyllis L. Crocker and Russell.



## Frederick Lauck, B.A. '65, J.D. '69



If golden jubilee graduate Fred Lauck had believed his family's circumstances were a barometer for his future, it is unlikely that he would have gone on to become a successful Detroit trial lawyer, the author of three books and a number of publications, and a recipient of several awards from his peers at Detroit Mercy Law and the State Bar of Michigan.

"This has been an unbelievable journey that I would not have anticipated in my fondest imagination. Looking back to 1969, never could I have imagined that I would have been able to do all of the things I was able to do with a law degree in the practice of law. It's still a shock that I've been able to live such a charmed life," Lauck said, as he went on to explain that he grew up in a "tough area" of northwest Detroit, with parents who lacked any formal education but found a way to support their family.

"I was fortunate that I had a hard-nosed disciplinarian for a mother and I had a father who was very idealistic and supportive of me. He told me, 'You can do anything you want to do. You want to be the president of the United States? You've got that kind of character. You can do it.' I was only nine years old, but his words left me with a

glimmer of hope that I never forgot," Lauck said. "Still in my wildest dreams, I never thought I could be a lawyer, because in my mind lawyers didn't come from the kind of family I had."

A sole practitioner for much of his legal career, Lauck's first years in practice were spent honing his craft through positions with the Wayne County prosecutor's office and the Detroit law firm of Plunkett Cooney.

"In Wayne County, I spent 15 months prosecuting criminal cases and learning the craft of what a trial lawyer is. Then, I went to Plunkett Cooney to try personal injury cases defending insurance companies," Lauck said.

Now retired from his law practice, Lauck urges law students to apply what they have learned in their experiential courses to helping families whose socioeconomic status prevents them from finding legal assistance.

"Get in touch with the humanity of your clients and realize how little ability they have to fight the system. Because social justice and human rights—that's what it's all about," Lauck said.



1969 Golden Jubilee graduate and guest of honor at the 2019 Commencement ceremony Fred Lauck, second from right, with from left, Detroit Mercy Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Pamela Zarkowski; Detroit Mercy Law Dean Phyllis L. Crocker; Joseph G. Vernon '05, University President Antoine M. Garibaldi, PhD, and former Detroit Mercy Law Alumni Association President Ed Lennon '88.

## 1970s

**Hon. Maura D. Corrigan '73**, counsel to Butzel Long and former Michigan Supreme Court Justice, was named to the Michigan Lawyers Weekly inaugural Hall of Fame Class of 2019. She concentrates her practice in litigation and appeals.

**Richard L. Hurford '79**, of Hurford Dispute Resolution Services, PC, was named to the Michigan Lawyers Weekly inaugural Hall of Fame class of 2019. He specializes in alternative dispute resolution with decades of experience serving as a neutral in various dispute resolution proceedings.

**Jerome P. Pesick '78**, managing shareholder of Steinhart, Pesick & Cohen, PC, was named to the Leaders in the Law Class of 2019 by the Michigan Lawyers Weekly. His practice areas include eminent domain, condemnation, land use and property taxation.



Hon. Maura D. Corrigan '73



Jerome P. Pesick '78



Hon. Michael J. Talbot '71



Sharon Almonrode '81

**Hon. Michael J. Talbot '71**, of counsel at Bodman PLC and former chief judge of the Michigan Court of Appeals, received the 2019 State Bar of Michigan's Frank J. Kelley Distinguished Public Service Award.

**Norman D. Tucker '71**, an attorney at Sommers Schwartz, PC in Southfield, Michigan, was named to the Michigan Lawyers Weekly inaugural Hall of Fame Class of 2019. He specializes in medical malpractice and personal injury law.

## 1980s

**Sharon Almonrode '81**, senior litigation attorney and partner at Rochester, Michigan-based Miller Law PC, was named to the Michigan Lawyers Weekly inaugural Hall of Fame Class of 2019.

**Henry B. Cooney '80**, a partner in Plunkett Cooney's



## 1990s

**A. Vince Colella '93**, civil rights and personal injury attorney and managing partner of Southfield-based Moss & Colella, PC, was named to the Leaders in the Law Class of 2019 by the Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

**Bob Heimbuch '92**, chief of the juvenile division in the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, received the State Bar of Michigan's 2018 Champion of Justice Award.

**Soraya Kim, Dual J.D. '91** recently became the strategic external partnerships and STEAM specialist at Ford Motor Co. She previously served as the chief innovation officer at the American Center for Mobility.

**Hon. Kenneth J. King '95**, of Detroit's 36th District Court, was named to the Michigan Chronicle's 2018 "Men of Excellence" list, which recognizes local African-American men who "break the mold and effect change in their professions and community."

**Dennis W. Loughlin '97** was named partner at Warner Norcross + Judd's Southfield, Michigan office. His practice focuses on creditors' rights, restructuring and insolvency.

**Matthew J. Lund '93**, a partner with Pepper Hamilton LLP, was appointed president of the Eastern District of Michigan Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

**Marla R. McCowan '97**, director of training, outreach and support at the Michigan Indigent Defense Commission, was named the 2019 recipient of the State Bar of Michigan's Champion of Justice Award.

**Jacqueline Rice '97** became general counsel at Herman Miller. Previously, Rice served as the chief risk and compliance officer at Target Corp. and spent nearly two decades serving in a variety of legal roles at General Motors.

**Stephen C. Ruschak '92** was appointed chief executive officer of The Guarantee Company of North America and The Guarantee Company of North America USA. He joined the company as president in 2009.

**Hon. Kathleen Ryan '96**, of the Oakland County Probate Court, received the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan's 2019 Mary S. Coleman Award.

**Mark A. Wisniewski '90**, chairman and chief executive officer of Kitch, Drutchas, Wagner, Valitutti & Sherbrook in Detroit, was named to the Leaders in the Law Class of 2019 by the Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

litigation department and the firm's former president and chief executive officer, was named to the Leaders in the Law Class of 2019 by the Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

**John A. Forrest '81** joined Fahey, Schultz, Burzych, & Rhodes PLC as of counsel. For over 35 years, Forrest has concentrated his practice in the areas of franchise and distribution, commercial contracts, business planning and corporate law.

**William D. Gilbride '84**, of Abbott Nicholson, PC, was elected to the board of directors for Meritas, a global alliance of independent law firms that serves the legal needs of companies doing business across international markets.

**Beth S. Gotthelf '85**, an attorney and shareholder at Butzel Long, received an honorary doctorate in Humanities from her undergraduate alma mater, Oakland University. She was also named to the Leaders in the Law class of 2019 by the Michigan Lawyers Weekly.

**Saad J. Nadhir '80** was appointed to the University of Detroit Mercy Board of Trustees. He is the chief executive officer of Urban Plates Holding LLC and majority owner of PCS Mobile Solutions, LLC, a top 10 dealer for Sprint Corp.

**Hon. Denise K. Langford Morris '82**, of the Oakland County Circuit Court, received the 2019 Judicial Excellence Award from the Michigan Defense Trial Counsel (MDTC).

**Matthew J. Stanczyk '86** was recently elected to Detroit-based Plunket Cooney's board of directors. His practice includes complex litigation involving toxic torts, construction issues and commercial warranty matters. Stanczyk was also named to the 2019 DBusiness list of Top Lawyers.

**Hon. Wanda M. Stokes '86** was appointed a 30th Circuit Court judge serving Ingham County, Michigan. Prior to her appointment to the bench, Stokes served as director of the Michigan Talent Investment Agency (TIA) and as a member of former Gov. Rick Snyder's cabinet.

**Michael J. Sullivan '83**, an attorney and former president of Collins Einhorn Farrell PC, is the 2019 recipient of the State Bar of Michigan's Kimberly M. Cahill Bar Leadership Award.



Beth S. Gotthelf '85



Saad J. Nadhir '80

Hon. Denise K.  
Langford Morris '82

Matthew J. Stanczyk '86

Hon. Wanda M.  
Stokes '86

Michael J. Sullivan '83



A. Vince Colella '93



Bob Heimbuch '92

Hon. Kenneth J.  
King '95

Dennis W. Loughlin '97



Marla R. McCowan '97



Stephen C. Ruschak '92



Hon. Kathleen Ryan '96



Mark A. Wisniewski '90

## 2000s

**Josephine A. DeLorenzo '08**, a partner at Plunkett Cooney's Detroit office, was appointed commissioner-at-large of the State Bar of Michigan Board of Commissioners. She specializes in appellate and insurance law.

**Bernard J. Fuhs, B.S. '03; J.D. '06** was elected to serve on the Butzel Long Board of Directors. He is a nationally recognized expert on non-compete and trade secret matters, and he serves as a vice president and an equity shareholder in the firm's Detroit office.

**Zenna F. Elhasan '04** became lead attorney at The Kresge Foundation. Previously, she served as corporation counsel for Wayne County.

**Keisha Glenn '03** was recently appointed head of the Auto Insurance Fraud Unit in the Department of Attorney General. Prior to her appointment, Glenn spent six years fighting against auto insurance fraud in metro Detroit at Hackney Grover, PLLC and Scarfone & Green, PC.

**David Sprague '03** was recently promoted to Michigan regional trust manager and counsel at Old National Wealth Management in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He also serves as chair of the Old National Estate and Trust Settlement Committee.

## 2010s

**Michael Alvaro, Dual J.D. '14** was recently appointed director of legal and government affairs and legal counsel of the Toronto Blue Jays and Rogers Centre. Previously, he practiced corporate law at a national law firm in Toronto, Ontario.

**Kyra Harris Bolden '14** was elected state representative in January 2019, serving Michigan's 35th House District. Bolden also serves as assistant leader for the House Democrats. Prior to taking office, Bolden worked as a civil litigation attorney.

**Nicola Hawatmeh '11** has been named to the 40 Under 40 list by Maverick PAC (MavPAC), a political action committee aimed at supporting Republican candidates for federal office. He serves as counsel to U.S. Sen. John Kennedy on the Senate Judiciary Committee.



Josephine A.  
DeLorenzo '08



Bernard J. Fuhs, B.S.  
'03; J.D. '06



Zenna F. Elhasan '04



Keisha Glenn '03



Michael Alvaro '14



Kyra Harris Bolden '14



Nicola Hawatmeh '11

**Mandy L. Kelly '10**, along with her partners, launched Kelly, Riggs & Mansour, PLC in January 2019. The firm specializes in helping people with disabilities—from children to adults who are no longer able to work.

**Evan Kubes, Dual J.D. '16**, along with his business partner, launched Marcus Kubes Management Group (MKM), Canada's first full-service law firm and management agency dedicated to esports and content creators.

**Chase M. Kubica '10** was named a shareholder of Plunkett Cooney. He is a member of the firm's Bloomfield Hills, Michigan office who focuses his litigation practice in the areas of motor vehicle liability, no-fault law and premises liability.

**Tiffany G. Newbern-Johnson '12** was appointed deputy chief of staff for legislative affairs in Illinois Gov. J.B. Pritzker's office. She previously led Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel's state legislative agenda and worked on Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan's staff.

**John Price '12** joined the Marsh & McLennan Agency LLC's Enterprise Group as director of practice development. He started at MMA in 2015 as a senior account manager.

**Elizabeth R. Reno '11** was elected partner at Gallagher Sharp LLP's Detroit office. Her practice involves defending no-fault auto negligence claims, businesses, insurance carriers and insureds.

**Hon. Kristina L. Robinson '10** was appointed a judge in the 36th District Court in Detroit by Governor Gretchen Whitmer. Prior to taking the bench, Robinson served as general counsel to the Wayne County Sheriff's Office.

**Alan Shamoun '12**, an associate attorney at Plunkett Cooney, has been appointed to Michigan's Adult-Use Marijuana Stakeholder Workgroup. Shamoun's practice includes a focus on representing cannabis businesses in the medical and recreational use sectors.

**Aisha J. Thomas '13**, of The Thomas Agency of Georgia, LLC, was recently appointed to the city of Atlanta, Georgia's, In Rem Review Board by Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms.



Mandy L. Kelly '10



Evan Kubes '16



Chase M. Kubica '10



John Price '12



Elizabeth R. Reno '11



Hon. Kristina L.  
Robinson '10



Alan Shamoun '12



Aisha J. Thomas '13



## David Williams II '79, '82 and Gail Williams '83



University Board of Trustees member David Williams II, MBA '79, J.D. '82 passed away on Feb. 8, 2019. He was 71. His wife of 31 years and fellow alumna Gail Williams '83 recalls how their years together as law students sparked more than their careers.

Their first official meeting was in David's study group. "Although we had two different stories on how it happened," said Gail. "David's story was that I snuck into the study group, while the real story was that I was assigned to the study group."

They remained close friends throughout law school but pursued individual careers in the years following graduation. David became a law professor at Ohio State University, while Gail worked in Michigan as a solo practitioner specializing in domestic relations, criminal defense and civil cases. After a few years apart, Gail visited David in Columbus, Ohio, and their friendship evolved into love.

The attorneys married in 1988 and continued to pursue their careers while growing their family.

In 2000, the Williamses moved to Nashville, Tennessee. David joined the law faculty at Vanderbilt University and became involved in student affairs and athletics. In 2012, he was named vice chancellor for athletics and university affairs and athletics director, the first African-American vice chancellor at Vanderbilt. During his tenure, he brought significant attention

to sports' impact on society and was instrumental in leading efforts for recognition of and reconciliation of former Vanderbilt student-athletes of color. For his work, he received the inaugural Legacy Award from the Association of Vanderbilt University Black Alumni. Since 2001, Gail has been associate director of community relations at Vanderbilt, where she is responsible for building partnerships and collaborations on behalf of the university. In 2014, she became an instructor in the Peabody College of Education and Human Development's Independent School Leadership M.ED program. She has also been the executive assistant of outreach and engagement for The Ohio State University, and a community leader for many years. She serves on the boards of Metropolitan Nashville Transit Authority Board and The Healing Trust.

Despite moving away from their native Detroit, the Williamses never forgot their alma mater. David was an active member of the Detroit Mercy Board of Trustees, served as an adjunct professor at Detroit Mercy Law, and mentored countless Detroit Mercy Law students and graduates.

"We both loved the Law School, and David was very proud to be a Detroit Mercy trustee," said Gail. "Since he passed, I've received numerous calls from fellow Detroit Mercy Law graduates who he helped throughout their careers."

Together, Gail and David raised a family of four children, six grandchildren and one great-grandson. "Family and friends were always so important to David. He loved so many people, but most importantly he loved me and our children endlessly," said Gail.

## REMEMBRANCE

With deepest sympathy to the family and friends of alumni who passed away between August 23, 2018 and July 25, 2019.

Joseph M. Bernert '76  
Hon. Thomas E. Brennan '52  
Rodney M. Brown '92  
Sheila A. Bucci '95  
Johannes A. Buiteweg '56  
Larry L. Burgess '75  
Gerald T. Celeskey '54  
Conrad D. Chapman '57  
Salvatore A. Ciaramitaro, Jr. '52  
William D. Cohan '53  
Joseph K. Cox '76

DJ Culkar '95  
Hon. John G. Cummings '63  
Raymond A. Doumar '51  
Hon. E. Thomas Fitzgerald '67  
Thomas L. Frank '71  
Kathryn D. Gallagher '87  
Philip A. Gillis '49  
Hon. Barbara K. Hackett '50  
William Halloran '77  
James A. Handloser '55  
James S. Hanson '75

James A. Harkness '79  
Edward A. Khoury '51  
Robert W. Larin '64  
Henry P. Lynch '54  
William F. Martz '50  
Jeanne L. McJoynt '81  
Clarence M. Mikolajczak '51  
Hon. Donald G. Miller '82  
Leonard N. Naumenko '96  
Craig A. Newman '84  
James M. Pidgeon '76

Frank Pincelli '74  
Hon. Maureen P. Reilly '58  
John B. Robertson '61  
Francis D. Ryan '43  
Hon. Kenneth N. Sanborn '49  
Robert G. Sands '67  
Michael Segesta '94  
Frank Stanczak '75  
David Williams II '82  
John W. Wolf, Jr. '64



**LIFE IS A SERIES OF DISCERNMENTS AND DECISIONS.** St. Ignatius of Loyola called these moments “motions of the soul,” which lead us in one direction or another during our time on Earth. For many, these motions of the soul are influenced by our faith life, family life and educational background.

For me, the major catalysts in my life were my parents, who had little in terms of formal education and material goods when they emigrated from Ireland to Detroit in the 1950s. However, they had a tremendous belief in themselves, in their faith and in the value of hard, ceaseless work. Thankfully, they passed down these beliefs and values to me and my siblings. I owe them all I have today because if it were not for their encouragement and their confidence in me, I never would have enrolled at the University of Detroit School of Law in the fall of 1987.

Like most of my law school classmates, I was a first-generation college graduate and the first in my family to attend law school. I knew nothing about the practice of law or how to approach the study of law. Looking back on those intimidating days, I had the extremely good fortune, as did many of you, to meet professors who shaped and nurtured me in the ways of legal scholarship, ethics and civility. It is because of them and the many Detroit Mercy Law alumni who have been friends, advisers and mentors during my time in law school and throughout my legal career, that I am incredibly honored to be taking the helm as president of the Detroit Mercy Law School Alumni Association for the 2019–20 term.

This is a dynamic time to become engaged at Detroit Mercy Law. The Law School has expanded its range of experiential courses to give our students additional opportunities to go beyond the text and classroom to work, in real time, with those in the community who most need, but can least afford, legal assistance. As an alum, I am proud of these efforts and those of Detroit Mercy Law graduates like The Hon. Michelle Rick, '91, who, this past August, led our students on a highly successful traveling expungement clinic throughout Michigan.

In addition, in 2019, the Alumni Board launched the inaugural Alumni Association Endowed Scholarship Fund, raising \$100,000 in the first few weeks of the campaign with more outreach and exciting initiatives planned for the upcoming school year.

As president of the alumni association, I ask each of you to spend more time with us, or if you have been disengaged for a while, to come back and be part of the life of the law school. Meet with our students. Offer mentorship. Reconnect with classmates at Homecoming or at the many alumni events throughout the year. Support today's students who will be your colleagues tomorrow. Most importantly, come back because your commitment will touch our students, the practice of law and our entire community.

We have more than 8,000 members in our Detroit Mercy Law alumni network. But our power is not just in numbers. It is within each of us who offers support and encouragement to those who are following us through the doors of Dowling Hall. Every day we have a chance to make a difference collectively and individually in our law school, to its students and to its graduates. Make the decision to offer encouragement, insight and aid to those who may be struggling on the path that we all successfully have walked in years gone by. Through this, we thank those who did the same for us when we decided to pursue our legal educations.

Please reach out to me or any other members of our board of directors. I am looking forward to the year ahead. It is humbling and it is a privilege to be your president. **D**

**The Honorable Michael J. Riordan '90**  
President

University of Detroit Mercy Law Alumni Association  
Judge, Michigan Court of Appeals

#### 2018–19 Detroit Mercy Law Alumni Association Board of Directors

Hon. Michael J. Riordan '90, <i>President</i>	Kenneth H. Hemler, J.D./MBA '07
Edward G. Lennon '88, <i>President Emeritus</i>	Mylika L. Johnson, J.D./MBA '13
Kyle R. Dufrane '98, <i>Vice President</i>	Hon. Terrance A. Keith '84
Kelly Houk '13, <i>Vice President</i>	Patrick C. Lannen '09
Sarah Simmons '11, <i>Secretary</i>	Scott K. Lites '85
Gregory G. Thiess '79, <i>Member-at-Large</i>	Christina Nassar '10
Mikyia Aaron '15	James E. Tamm '85
Kristoffer Butler '19	Macie D. Tuiasosopo-Gaines '13
Camilla Barkovic '13	Matthew L. Vicari '90
Hon. Michael J. Beale '90	Mark A. Wisniewski '90
Poncé Clay '15	Justin Zatkoff '14
Dennis L. Dabney '00	Lori Mireles-Smith '18
Bernard J. Fuhs '06	Rebecca El Badaoui '20, <i>Student Representative</i>



# Get Involved, Stay Involved, Make a Difference



**As a member of Detroit Mercy Law's alumni community, you can provide essential support to students by sharing your time, your talent or your treasure. Consider a few of the many ways you can get involved and give back:**



- **Employ a student:** Connect with the Career Services Office (CSO) ([cso@udmercy.edu](mailto:cso@udmercy.edu) | 313-596-0223) to learn about hiring students, participating in our On-Campus Interviews (OCI) or Externship program, and more.
- **Work with our clinics:** Interested in pro bono work? One of our 12 clinics may offer the right opportunity for you. To learn more, connect with Rebecca Simkins Nowak, director of clinical operations and outreach, at 313-596-9409 or [simkinrg@udmercy.edu](mailto:simkinrg@udmercy.edu).
- **Be a mentor:** Share advice formally or informally with current Detroit Mercy Law students and recent graduates as they navigate the legal profession.
- **Judge or sponsor a moot court team:** Whether judging internal competitions, such as the Patrick A. Keenan Appellate Advocacy Competition, or sponsoring teams traveling for national competitions, guidance and feedback from alumni experts helps refine students' skills.
- **Sponsor a community event:** Homecoming activities, fundraising events and thought-provoking academic lectures, such as the McElroy Lecture on Law & Religion, are made possible thanks to the generosity of our alumni. Support an existing community event or share an idea for a new event.
- **Speak to current students:** Our Lunch with a Lawyer program hosts attorneys, judges and business leaders who discuss their careers and give advice to students over lunch.
- **Establish an award or scholarship:** Your financial support benefits tomorrow's leaders and ensures that we continue our commitment to educating complete lawyers who will make a positive impact in their communities for generations to come.

**No matter how you give back, your support makes a difference. For more information, please contact April Ellison, director of alumni relations, at [ellisoal@udmercy.edu](mailto:ellisoal@udmercy.edu) or 313-596-0202.**



# DETROIT MERCY LAW

University of Detroit Mercy School of Law

**Alumni Relations**

651 East Jefferson Avenue

Detroit, MI 48226-4349

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**OCT**  
**28**  
**2019**

**Dewitt C. Holbrook Lecture on Social Justice**

Jocelyn Benson, Michigan Secretary of State  
5 p.m., Detroit Mercy Law, Room 226

*A forum for leaders in the legal profession to address issues on law and policy related to social justice.*

**MAR**  
**31**  
**2020**

**McElroy Lecture on Law and Religion**

Professor Cathleen Kaveny, Boston College Law School  
Detroit Mercy Law, Room 226

*A forum for prominent thinkers and leaders to address fundamental issues of law and religion.*

**MAR**  
**6**  
**2020**

**104th Annual Law Review Symposium**

Detroit Mercy Law, Room 226

*Join the Detroit Mercy Law Review for a day of thought-provoking discussions with scholars and legal professionals from across the country.*

**APR**  
**3**  
**2020**

**Jesuit Day of Service**

*Join students, faculty and fellow alumni in giving back to the Detroit community.*

**MAR**  
**12**  
**2020**

**Erin Go Law Networking Reception**

5 – 7p.m., Detroit Mercy Law Atrium

*The Detroit Mercy Law Alumni Association's annual networking reception for attorneys, judges and law students.*

**MAY**  
**21**  
**2020**

**Dual J.D. Alumni & Awards Reception in Toronto**

*Detroit Mercy Law Dean Phyllis L. Crocker and Windsor Law Dean Christopher Waters welcome Dual J.D. alumni for an evening of networking and reconnecting.*

For more information about these and other community events, visit [law.udmercy.edu/alumni-giving/events](http://law.udmercy.edu/alumni-giving/events).