

THE MAGAZINE OF SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON



InRe

WINTER
2023



YEARS OF LEGAL EXCELLENCE

1923 *→* 2023

HONORING THE PAST
CELEBRATING THE PRESENT
BUILDING THE FUTURE

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JOANNE HUTCHESON SEALE WILSON
poses with a portrait of her grandfather,
the Hon. Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr. —
STCL Houston's founding dean.

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Cover

A centennial-themed collage made of 100 images taken from the STCL Houston archives, this cover art will be used in various ways throughout the year.

100

Selected Centennial Events

- Feb. 28** **Campus Centennial Celebrations**
- March 3** **Renewable Energy and Ethics
Centennial Symposium**
- March 28** **Women's History Month Centennial Lecture**
(date tentative)
- April 13** **Founder's Day Celebration** featuring State of the
Law School by President and Dean Michael F. Barry
- STCL Houston Give Day**
- May 1** **Law Day Celebration**
- May 12** **Alumni Crawfish Boil**
- May 13** **Centennial Spring Commencement**
- Aug. 24** **Centennial Class Celebration**
- Sept. 21-24** **Centennial Reunion Weekend**
Sept. 21: Annual Alumni Luncheon
Sept. 23: The Centennial Gala
Sept. 24: South Texas Family Picnic
- Dec. 9** **Centennial Fall Commencement**

**Dates set as of January 2023; subject to change*

If you have questions or thoughts regarding the Centennial Celebration year, feel free to email us at centennial@stcl.edu.

Centennial Co-chairs: Associate Dean and Professor Cathy Burnett, Associate Dean and Professor Derek Fincham, Vice President Darcy Douglas '07, Associate Vice President Michelle Morris.



CENTENNIAL

Building on the Past, Looking to the Future

In 2023, South Texas College of Law Houston turns 100 years old — and provides our law school community the opportunity to **honor the past, celebrate the present, and build the future.**

South Texas was established by influential Houstonians in 1923 to meet a pressing need for capable attorneys to serve a growing city. They could scarcely have imagined what would happen to their law school in the ensuing century!

Over succeeding generations, visionary leaders, committed faculty and staff, and dedicated students and alumni laid the foundation of our mission-driven law school — a law school uniquely dedicated to diversity, opportunity, excellence, and service.

We stand on their shoulders. And at this inflection point, we bear a great responsibility to carry their legacy into South Texas's second century. We do so by ensuring South Texas, for the next 100 years, continues its tradition of preparing attorneys ready to meet the ever-evolving needs of the legal profession.

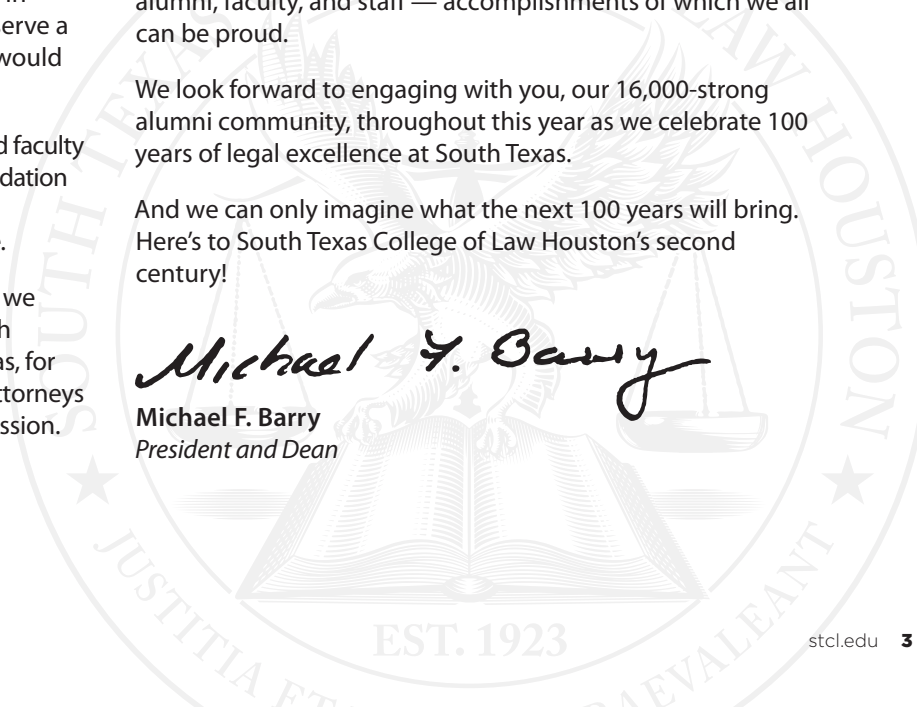
This issue of *InRe* magazine launches our anniversary year with a centennial feature about our founding. It also highlights our law school's mission and the current and future programs that will allow South Texas students to thrive in the years ahead. And it showcases distinctive accomplishments of our students, alumni, faculty, and staff — accomplishments of which we all can be proud.

We look forward to engaging with you, our 16,000-strong alumni community, throughout this year as we celebrate 100 years of legal excellence at South Texas.

And we can only imagine what the next 100 years will bring. Here's to South Texas College of Law Houston's second century!

Michael F. Barry

Michael F. Barry
President and Dean



100 Celebrating a Century

HOUSTON'S OLDEST LAW SCHOOL MARKS 100 YEARS OF LEGAL EXCELLENCE AND SERVICE

“We will promise nothing now as to what we will fulfill, for we believe we can do much more than we can now promise.”

— Founding Dean
Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr.



How prophetic these words seem today, more than 16,000 alumni and 100 years later. First spoken by the Honorable Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr. — a celebrated jurist and the first dean of South Texas College of Law Houston — they are still relevant and meaningful.

The law school was founded because the city's foremost business leaders and legal minds recognized a great need to train attorneys and sought to address it. Since that time, STCL Houston has become a vital institution in the region's legal landscape. Now 100 years old and thriving, the law school maintains the mission focus established a century ago while addressing the emerging needs of the 21st century.

Today's South Texas leaders are making strategic plans that lay the groundwork for the law school's sustained relevance and success far into its second century. Just like the vibrant city STCL Houston calls home, the law school models excellence, embraces diversity, encourages service, and creates opportunity in the legal profession.





YMCA Building, 1923



YMCA Building, 1941



Ann Marie Hollenberg '28, first female graduate



First-year class, 1923

While Judge Hutcheson understood the old adage to “under-promise and over-deliver,” he believed wonderful things were yet to come for the law school. For 10 decades now, South Texas has done much more than the venerable judge likely could have imagined in 1923 — back when Houston’s population was roughly 150,000, Second National Bank had become the city’s first air-conditioned building, and jazz was just beginning to flourish.

STCL Houston President and Dean Michael F. Barry envisions a great second century for the law school.

“We have a unique opportunity before us at this 100-year mark,” Dean Barry said. “We are anchored in the impressive legacy of the school’s past, and we are pursuing innovative strategies that will equip the next generation of South Texas law graduates to be ready for a future we cannot yet see clearly.”

HOW IT BEGAN

In the early 1920s, many of STCL Houston’s founders were part of the local leadership of one of the most respected social service organizations of the time —the YMCA. Now known mostly for its health and sports programs, the YMCA in the 1920s offered adult education, particularly vocational education.

The idea of teaching law at night so working professionals could attend classes was proposed by the YMCA in the early part of the twentieth century. The organization eventually created nearly two dozen law schools across the country. World War I delayed plans for a

YMCA law school in Houston, but by the early 1920s the idea had firmly taken root and was supported by both the bar and the bench.

At the same time, several developments were shaping Houston’s growth. The discovery of oil in nearby Beaumont led to the rapid expansion of the nascent energy industry. Heavy investment in transportation led to the explosive growth of railroads. Houston became a hub for them, in no small part because of the growing needs of the oil companies. The invention of air conditioning made office spaces more worker-friendly year-round, despite summer heat and humidity. Banking and financial institutions expanded and added to the growth of the economy.

A great confluence was happening. The city’s legal community and business leaders, as well as the management of the vertically integrated oil companies, clearly saw a need for well-trained legal staff to help them execute business. Bringing lawyers in from elsewhere would require them to learn Texas law. Why not create a local pool of Texas-trained lawyers?

The YMCA Board of Directors, some of whom were attorneys, felt confident that Houston needed a law school — and that the YMCA had the resources to create and sustain it. South Texas School of Law was established April 13, 1923. Many of the city’s finest legal minds agreed to serve on an advisory council. Some of their names still grace the doors of prestigious law firms that were in their infancy in 1923. The Advisory Council met May 8 and unanimously selected a prominent judge, Hon.

Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr., as the dean of the law school.

Five months later, on Sept. 24, 1923, the law school opened for evening classes with an enrollment of 34 students — five of whom were women. Classes were held on the third floor of the YMCA building at the corner of Fannin and McKinney streets. A downtown location was deemed crucial as it was near prospective students’ workplaces and the courthouses. The faculty was comprised of seven part-time instructors, described by the school’s advertising as some of the “most successful lawyers and ablest judges of the Houston Bar.”

THEN WHAT HAPPENED?

Several factors combined to create the long-term success of STCL Houston: acceptance by the legal community, respect from legal educators, students who became successful attorneys and judges, visionary leadership, caring, qualified instructors, and loyal alumni.

The Great Depression, World War II, and various other economic headwinds challenged the law school but did not prevent it from making progress. Eventually, the YMCA relationship was dissolved. On Jan. 1, 1967, the law school became its own entity — an independent nonprofit educational institution.

Throughout the past century, the law school grew steadily in size and stature. Strategic improvements made along the way include: elevating the requirements for admission; becoming the first law school in Texas to grant the J.D. degree;



First Board of Governors



STCL Building, 1964

hiring a robust full-time faculty while retaining adjuncts who are practicing attorneys; earning full accreditation from the ABA in 1969; and offering courses that address the demands of the legal profession and other industries.

STCL Houston continues to remain aware of the climate in which it operates, responding with agility to changes in the needs of students, the legal profession, and the community.

AND NOW...

STCL Houston has maintained its tradition of excellence, in the classroom and in the community. It has become home to the winningest trial and appellate advocacy teams (141 national championship titles as of January 2023), one of the first and best alternative dispute resolution programs in the U.S. (The Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolution), and the most comprehensive legal clinics program (The Randall O. Sorrells Legal Clinics) that delivers no-cost legal services to underserved populations in the Houston area while giving students hands-on experience working under the supervision of licensed staff attorneys.

Innovative and important developments continue, with STCL Houston pursuing accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, developing the Benny Agosto, Jr. Diversity Center to enhance diversity initiatives and education, and launching the innovative J.D. Part-time / Online schedule in fall 2023.

South Texas College of Law Houston is ready for the challenges and opportunities the next century brings — for we continue to believe we can do much more than we can now promise. 🟦



The Hon. Joseph Chappell Hutcheson, Jr.
1879-1973
Founding Dean, STCL Houston

According to his granddaughter and namesake, Joanne Hutcheson Seale Wilson, Judge Hutcheson had a beautiful singing voice, never drank alcohol, and loved golfing almost as much as he loved his family and the law.

For many summers, Joanne Wilson traveled by train with her grandparents to the judge's favorite vacation spot on Coronado Island, near San Diego.

"I loved him, and we truly enjoyed each other's company," she said. He taught her to play golf, and he frequently displayed a "wicked sense of humor."

Here are some interesting facts about STCL Houston's founding dean:

- Native Houstonian and son of a successful lawyer, Captain J.C. Hutcheson
- Earned Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Texas Law School (1900)
- In private practice (1900-1918)
- Served as legal advisor to City of Houston (1913-1917)
- Appointed Mayor of Houston (served 1917-1918)
- Appointed Judge of U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas (served 1918-1931)
- After World War II, served on Anglo-American Committee on Displaced Persons, which recommended in 1946 that Britain increase number of Jewish refugees admitted into Palestine
- Appointed to U.S. Court of Appeals for Fifth Circuit in 1931 (served until 1964); seat currently held by The Hon. Jennifer Elrod, STCL Houston's Jurist-in-Residence
- Became Senior Judge of U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit (served 1964 until his death in 1973)

Joanne Wilson continues to research her family history and has donated some of Judge Hutcheson's books to STCL Houston's Fred Parks Law Library, including a signed copy of "Law as Liberator," one of the books he authored.

She has published a two-volume history of her family titled "Think Like a Lawyer: A Texas Family Story in the Letters of Captain J.C. Hutcheson."



South Texas
COLLEGE OF LAW
— HOUSTON —

Benny Agosto, Jr. Diversity Center

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LEADING THE CONVERSATION

Inaugural Agosto Diversity Lecture Encourages Lawyers to Support Diversity, Protect Democracy

NAACP President and CEO **Derrick Johnson '97** presented the inaugural lecture for STCL Houston's Benny Agosto, Jr. Diversity Center in October, engaging a standing-room-only crowd in a conversation about the impact of social constructs, laws, and lawyers on issues related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice.

Benny Agosto, Jr. '95 introduced Johnson at the lecture, and President and Dean Michael F. Barry made brief remarks.

"We are excited to launch our Agosto Lecture Series with an alumnus who is a champion for civil rights and racial justice," Barry said. "I hope this lecture prompts additional conversations in the legal community. We still have a lot of work to do, and South Texas will be at the forefront of the conversation as we educate students who will provide legal services to our diverse community."



Benny Agosto, Jr. '95 displays program for event



Benny Agosto, Jr. '95, Vice President Shelby Moore, Board Chair Genora Boykins '85, Derrick Johnson '97, President and Dean Michael F. Barry



A standing-room-only crowd, including many community leaders, enjoys the engaging lecture and Q & A in Garrett Townes.

Johnson emphasized the important role lawyers play in protecting people who are marginalized or treated unjustly. “It is our job in the legal profession to erect guardrails to ensure people are held accountable for harm against others,” he said.

He also noted the importance of lawyers in protecting democracy, particularly in turbulent times. For context, Johnson referenced the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol, the intolerance and racial hatred displayed in Charlottesville, Virginia, and various shooting massacres targeting Latinos, African Americans, and Jewish people.

Local civic leaders and elected officials, alumni, faculty, students, and staff listened raptly as Johnson spoke about the NAACP’s history and the ways the law has impacted people of color in the United States. He discussed the political climate in which the NAACP was founded in 1909, adding that “othering” was the norm at the time.

Othering — attributing negative characteristics to individuals or groups to create an “us vs. them” way of thinking — can lead to prejudices and persecution against marginalized people and groups, to denial of rights based on group identities, and to acts of violence against others, Johnson noted.

In the early 20th century, Johnson said, othering efforts focused on separating those narrowly defined as “white” from others — resulting in serious legal, social, and personal consequences for individuals and groups who were excluded.

“It is our job in the legal profession to erect guardrails to ensure people are held accountable for harm against others.”

– Derrick Johnson ’97

“That differentiation created a division of who was allowed to have power and who was not,” Johnson continued. The social construct of race has long worked to maintain a culture of power and control, he said, and it continues to impact lives today.

Johnson encouraged the attorneys and future attorneys listening to the lecture to be aware of modern-day efforts to “otherize or diminish others” — particularly in the context of laws and policies. For example, he expressed the importance of that awareness when debating the role of government and tax policies that can impact specific groups in negative ways.

During the question-and-answer session that followed his address, Johnson encouraged everyone not directly involved in Civil Rights litigation or causes to consider how they can embrace social justice and make an impact in their communities.

While on campus, Johnson spent time with STCL Houston students, sharing his experiences and answering their questions. He said the law school today is “a space where people feel welcome and included, and where diversity is celebrated.”

Since its founding in 1923, STCL Houston has sought to create a diverse community, and the law school has continued to enhance its diversity over time. Currently, 55% of the student body is comprised of women, and 49% of all students identify as an ethnic/ racial minority. Barry said the South Texas community strives to model intentional diversity.



President and Dean Michael F. Barry guides a follow-up discussion with Derrick Johnson '97.



Audience members participate in the Q&A session.

The Benny Agosto, Jr. Diversity Center was established in 2021 following a generous \$3 million contribution from Benny Agosto Jr. and his wife Nichole. The center hosts prominent scholars, thought leaders, and innovators who can foster important conversations — both inside the law school and in the larger legal community.

“Our differences make us stronger,” Agosto said at the lecture. He encouraged those present to “set remarkable goals.” Agosto has made it a goal of his career to develop more diverse talent in the legal profession. The American Bar Association has noted that, despite efforts to change the profession, minority populations remain woefully underrepresented.

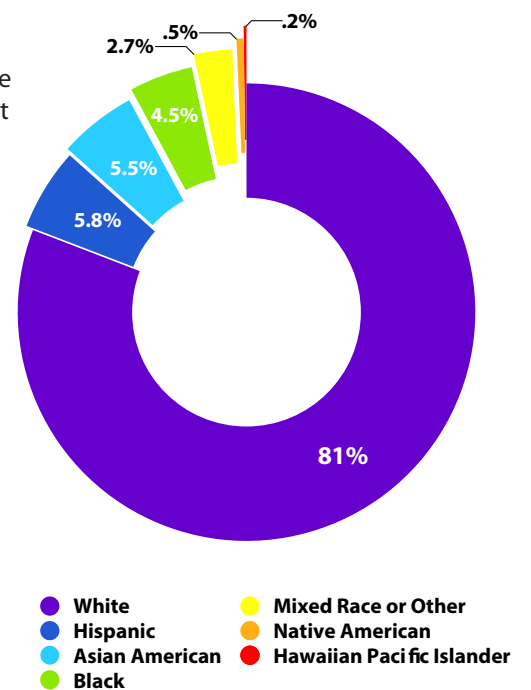
Shelby Moore, STCL Houston vice president of diversity, equity, and inclusion and professor of law, said at the lecture, “It’s important to exemplify our values inside this building, and events made possible by the generous Agosto gift will continue to advance our mission in this direction. But true success demands that we bring as many people as possible along for this journey. We are the guardians of justice, and all of us need to be the standard-bearers for diversity, equity, and inclusion.”

Urging members of the legal community to “force the Constitution to live up to its promise,” Johnson spoke passionately about the need to support diversity and strengthen democracy.

“Democracy is messy and none of us has all the answers,” he said. “But we all have a piece of the solution, which means we must work together. It’s our job to make possible what others think is impossible.”

Diversity in Legal Profession

U.S. Lawyers by Race and Ethnicity



Source: ABA Profile of the Legal Profession 2022

“Our differences make us stronger.”

– Benny Agosto, Jr. '95

Clerkships

Valuable Experiences Lead to Better Lawyering Skills

The first law clerk in the U.S. federal courts was hired by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Horace Gray in 1882. He felt that having a young, bright lawyer on hand to act as a sounding board and editor would enhance the quality of his legal reasoning and writing.

Justice Gray looked to his clerks for “inspiration and criticism,” using them to debate the merits of different arguments and assist with sharpening his prose. He so valued their contribution that he paid the clerks from his own salary. Other Supreme Court justices soon adopted Gray’s practice, with Congress eventually appropriating funding for clerks’ salaries that has grown to include the whole of the federal system (Oakley and Thomson, *Law Clerks and the Judicial Process*, 1980).



Many STCL Houston alumni have benefited from the prestigious career-advancement opportunities that come from a judicial clerkship. Clerks gain invaluable experience that otherwise could take years to accumulate, insights into the judicial and litigation processes, and a valuable legal mentor. They also help keep the courts moving forward as they perform their duties.

"I believe that law clerks are essential in my chambers," said the Hon. Jennifer Elrod, circuit judge for the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals and the 2022-23 jurist-in-residence at STCL Houston. "I have at least seven full sittings a year, and I issue more than 150 opinions, plus I concur in over 300 opinions, per year. Without the tremendous work my law clerks do, the wheels of justice would turn slowly indeed."

The relationship is not one-way for most judges. "I find working with the law clerks and mentoring them to be one of the highlights of my professional career," Elrod said. "Deciding each case according to the rule of law is my sworn duty. But mentoring the next generation of lawyers is my greatest privilege."

Sometimes the mentorship becomes a long-term relationship. Elrod said, "I clerked over 25 years ago, and the judge I clerked for, the Honorable Sim Lake, is still a mentor to me today."

Each new class of lawyers learns quickly that clerkships can help them become better lawyers, and a clerkship on their resume can open doors to excellent career prospects. STCL Houston encourages and assists students in obtaining high-quality clerkships, and each year many South Texas 3Ls are successful in doing so.



Grecia Sarda '22 is the first attorney in her family. Born in Nicaragua and raised in Orange, Texas, after immigrating to the United States with her family as a young child, Sarda describes herself as a nerdy and overprepared law student.

She focused on legal research and writing at STCL Houston, and after her first year, she interned for two federal judges – The Hon. Alfred Bennett of the U.S. District and Bankruptcy Court of the Southern District of Texas, and The Hon. Marcia Crone of the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of Texas.

"I can't believe how much I learned in 12 weeks," Sarda said. "I wanted more of that experience. I wondered how much I could learn in a year or two in that kind of environment."

She said something clicked for her in her third year. "I had always been strong in research and writing, and I have a longstanding personal interest in financial issues. I realized that a clerkship with a bankruptcy judge was the path I wanted to pursue."



"I can't believe how much I learned in 12 weeks. I wanted more of that experience."

Grecia Sarda '22

Sarda is currently clerking for Federal Bankruptcy Judge Rachel Mancl, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Eastern District of Tennessee. She is happy with her decision and enjoying the vast opportunities for learning new things that present themselves every day.

"Judge Mancl is very hands on, and she is a great mentor," Sarda said. "She asks for my input and opinions, which honestly amazes me. We meet before the hearings and debrief afterward. I'm writing bench opinions and briefing her on the legal issues involved in the cases."

Sarda is excited to be experiencing the specialized world of bankruptcy law and the range of practice areas involved within it. "Real estate, trusts, estates, taxation, property, contracts — all these things can be components. No two cases are the same. Each one is a different mix of underlying issues."

Her clerkship will help her better understand legal arguments from the judicial perspective and be able to become the best advocate for her clients, Sarda said. She has developed profound respect for the congressional intent inherent in the bankruptcy code.

"Bankruptcy is a legal proceeding that can provide a safety net or safeguard," she said. "It can provide second chances for people and for companies who are dealing with unforeseen circumstances. Individuals experience job loss, illness, or the death of a close relative, and they can't pay their bills."

Sarda is focused on a future in bankruptcy law and plans to serve a wide variety of clients as they seek to restructure their debts and find their way to financial stability.

Kevin Mrsny '22 served in the U.S. Army for seven years after graduating from high school, achieving the rank of staff sergeant. He then completed his undergraduate studies in construction management at the University of Houston. While working for a large construction firm, he decided he needed an MBA or a law degree to advance his career.

"On a whim I took the LSAT. I did well, so I applied to South Texas," Mrsny said.

An older-than-average law student, Mrsny began his legal studies in spring 2020. Then COVID-19 happened, bringing



"I am keeping myself open to all the possibilities."

Kevin Mrsny '22

a great deal of uncertainty with it. "Being a law clerk was not really part of my plan," he said. "I thought I should hurry and graduate from law school so I could start making money."

As a second-year student, Mrsny served as a judicial intern. While working with the storied Federal Judge David Hittner, U. S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas, he began to see a clerkship as an investment in his future, not a delay in his legal career. Although he applied and interviewed for various positions across the country, his first offer came from none other than Judge Hittner. Accepting the first offer made is proper etiquette. It also made Mrsny happy to say, "Yes."

"I am excited to continue my relationship with Judge Hittner," Mrsny said. "He has been great to work with as an intern. He would ask us for our thoughts on cases. I drafted orders, and working though his clerks, defended them to the judge. He actually used one of my orders – an order written by an intern. Also, staying in Houston is a huge bonus for me as I am from the area."

Mrsny knows his federal clerkship will not only be an excellent opportunity to learn lawyering skills at an elevated level, but also a gateway to different opportunities and various types of law firms. Currently, he plans to become a commercial litigator. "However, I am keeping myself open to all the possibilities."

Boston Mallory '23 comes from a family of lawyers. His grandfather, his uncle, and his sister are attorneys educated at Baylor Law School. He came to South Texas College of Law Houston understanding the value of a clerkship, and he knew the process would be highly competitive.

Even though Mallory was a member of the South Texas Law Review, managing editor of the Oil & Gas Journal, a participant in Moot Court, and a Langdell Scholar, he found the experience of applying and interviewing a bit intimidating.

Along with his accomplishments at STCL Houston, Mallory knew the experience he had gained during a summer internship in Fort Worth with Magistrate Judge Jeffrey Cureton, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, would be an asset.

"The right references and recommendations are really valuable," Mallory said. "Also, Professors Maxine Goodman and **Rob Galloway '91** encouraged me and provided recommendations, which were incredibly helpful."



“This will be an opportunity to acquire meaningful insights and perhaps a competitive edge when the time comes to apply for a position with a firm.”

Boston Mallory '23

After submitting applications that resulted in several interviews, Mallory was excited to accept his first offer, from Magistrate Judge Lee Ann Reno, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas in Amarillo. He will begin in August 2023.

Looking forward to further developing his research and writing skills as he assists with orders and opinions, he is also anticipating gaining valuable experience while in chambers and in the courtroom.

“This will be an opportunity to acquire meaningful insights and perhaps a competitive edge when the time comes to apply for a position with a firm,” he said. “It also will be a good thing to have a relationship with a federal judge.”

After completing his clerkship, Mallory plans to pursue a career as a commercial litigator specializing in oil and gas law. 🇺🇸



“ A good law clerk keeps his or her eyes on the big picture while simultaneously focusing intently on each and every detail of cite checking and blue booking. A good law clerk is not afraid to ask questions about what to do or why we are doing what we are doing. A good law clerk is well organized and helps the judge keep up with the heavy workload. Finally, a good law clerk writes clearly and accurately and proofreads what is written painstakingly (preferably with a ruler). ”

— The Hon. Jennifer Elrod, Circuit Judge,
U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals

STCL HOUSTON OFFERS ONLINE SCHEDULE TO EARN J.D. DEGREE

“Offering an online J.D. degree is a logical next step in the evolution of legal education and legal practice.”

—STCL Houston Associate Dean for Part-time and Online Education Derek Fincham

South Texas College of Law Houston will advance its century-long reputation for academic excellence, innovation, diversity, and opportunity in fall 2023 when it supplements its on-campus full-time and part-time programs with a new part-time online schedule for a select cohort of students.

Promotion of the J.D. Part-time / Online schedule began in late October. Nearly 500 people had already expressed interest by mid-December — for roughly 30 seats. Fifteen percent of those individuals were from outside Texas, representing 19 states. Of the total, almost 60% were from Texas, but outside the Houston metropolitan area.

“The program appears to be accomplishing exactly what we had hoped — to create an opportunity for individuals who live and work far from a law school to obtain a South Texas College of Law Houston J.D. degree,” said President and Dean Michael F. Barry.


Students entering law school at South Texas in fall 2023 will have three paths to obtain a J.D. degree: (1) a J.D. Full-time / Campus schedule (on campus, during the day); (2) a J.D. Part-time / Campus schedule (on campus, four evenings per week); and (3) the new J.D. Part-time / Online schedule.

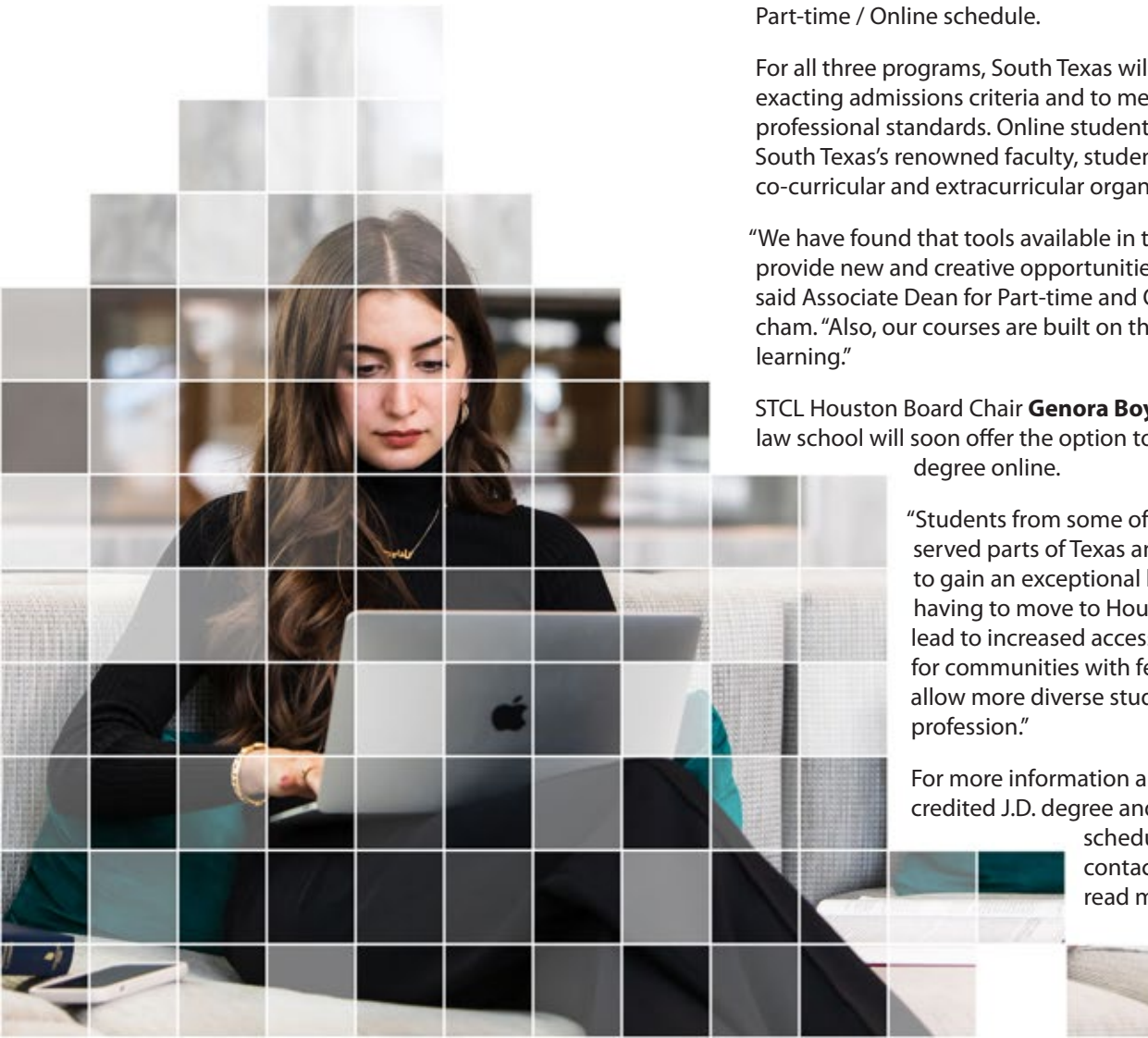
For all three programs, South Texas will require students to meet exacting admissions criteria and to meet rigorous academic and professional standards. Online students also will have access to South Texas’s renowned faculty, student support services, and co-curricular and extracurricular organizations and activities.

“We have found that tools available in the online environment provide new and creative opportunities for student engagement,” said Associate Dean for Part-time and Online Education Derek Fincham. “Also, our courses are built on the best practices in distance learning.”

STCL Houston Board Chair **Genora Boykins ’85** is delighted the law school will soon offer the option to earn an ABA-accredited J.D. degree online.

“Students from some of the most legally underserved parts of Texas and other states will be able to gain an exceptional legal education without having to move to Houston,” Boykins said. “This will lead to increased access to excellent legal services for communities with few or no attorneys, and will allow more diverse students access into the legal profession.”

For more information about the law school’s accredited J.D. degree and the full-time and part-time schedules available to students, contact admissions@stcl.edu or read more at stcl.edu/explore. 





Serving with Distinction

President and Dean Michael F. Barry and Associate Dean for Experiential Education Catherine Greene Burnett

A PROUD SOUTH TEXAS TRADITION CONTINUES

STCL Houston's mission statement calls for students and alumni to "serve their community and the profession with distinction."

As a result of this important mission emphasis — and a longstanding tradition of providing legal services to underserved communities — "service" and "justice" are words heard frequently at the law school.

This past year, South Texas students, staff, faculty, and alumni worked together to provide free legal services on various fronts. Thousands of people were able to avoid wrongful eviction, a neighborhood's historic character was preserved, and criminal records were expunged. Complex immigration issues were investigated and navigated

successfully, and a fight for justice continued on behalf of U.S. Army soldiers wrongly convicted without due process in 1917.

These were just some of the ways members of the STCL Houston community engaged with the community-at-large, providing free legal services to underserved populations through an array of 23 direct-service legal clinics and a robust externship program.

Statewide Service Award Once Again Presented to STCL Houston

In 2022, the Texas Access to Justice Commission (TAJC) described STCL Houston's commitment to providing legal services to the poor as "truly

exceptional," awarding the law school its Access to Justice Law School Commitment to Service Award for the fourth time in 11 years.

"Service is at the heart of our mission and the education we provide our law students," said STCL Houston President and Dean Michael F. Barry. "Our students, faculty, staff, and alumni make a significant impact, particularly for low-income Texans."

The South Texas tradition of providing legal aid services harkens back to 1974, when the Student Bar Association assisted the community and subsequently received a \$500 grant in support of their work from the American Bar Association.

The first legal aid clinic opened in 1990 with one professor, six students, and one paralegal. The focus was on Social Security Disability cases. It operated from in a small office near campus. Through the decades the program has expanded to a 15,000-square-foot facility offering free legal services in more than 23 subject areas with a faculty and staff of 17, and several hundred students each year.

Serving Real People with Real Legal Issues

Today, thousands of hours of free legal services are offered by STCL Houston faculty and staff attorneys working in the Randall O. Sorrels Legal Clinics, often with students working closely with them as part of their experiential education. Students earn credit hours and use the legal skills they are learning to help real clients with real-world problems — with the supervision and guidance of licensed attorneys.

Currently, STCL Houston offers direct-service legal clinics in areas including family law, estate planning, probate and guardianship, immigration, veterans, domestic violence, wrongful convictions, tax, and asylum and human trafficking.

The comprehensive, successful clinical education program is a vital component of the law school's public service emphasis. Housed in the Randall O. Sorrels Legal Clinics at STCL Houston, the program delivers much needed civil legal services to the poor, while training future lawyers and emphasizing the importance of access to justice for all.

The academic clinical program is led by Associate Dean for Experiential Education Catherine Greene Burnett. The law school maintains the equivalent of an entire law firm, overseen by Senior Director for Legal Services Vinh Ho, which provides legal services to the public at no charge.

The Civil Practice Clinics have doubled in size, including the addition of veterans, expunction/nondisclosure, and landlord/

tenant clinics. The work of the STCL Houston Randall O. Sorrels Legal Clinics is vitally important to the law students and the community.

"First-year and other doctrinal courses help students think like lawyers," Ho said. "Clinics help students become lawyers, applying their knowledge to real issues, clients, and cases."

Both full- and part-time students are encouraged to participate in public service through the clinics. In the 2021-22 academic year, 244 South Texas law students served in the legal clinics.

Through the clinics alone, dedicated faculty and staff provide hundreds of hours of free legal services each year, often representing clients in court. The value of that work, if paid by clients, would equate to more than \$2 million. The assistance provided by students adds hundreds of additional hours to the total hours contributed to the community.

"Our faculty, clinic staff, and students have dedicated themselves to families and to the community, giving of their time and expertise with great passion," Dean Burnett said.

Three Named to Inaugural AALS Pro Bono Honor Roll; Recognition Includes Student, Faculty, Staff

In addition to the overall award presented to the law school by the TAJC, three STCL Houston individuals dedicated to serving the community were named to the inaugural 2022 Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Pro Bono Honor Roll.

Taylor Williams '22, who graduated December, was named as the student representative for the AALS Honor Roll. Earlier in the semester, she also was commended by the TAJC for "her outstanding contributions to the provision of legal services to the poor."

Williams worked as a scientist and regulatory affairs manager at Lonza Biologics before beginning law school. As a student



Taylor Williams '22



Dr. Mark E. Steiner



Aimee Maldonado '04

at South Texas, Williams was actively involved in the Actual Innocence Clinic. She examined alternative ways science could be used to prevent wrongful incarceration.

Williams will continue her career at Lonza Biologics, but now as the head of regulatory affairs. As an alumna, she plans to continue working with the Actual Innocence Clinic because it is “very dear” to her heart. “To me, pro bono means being a servant to the most vulnerable people in society,” she said.


Longtime STCL Houston Professor of Law **Dr. Mark E. Steiner** was selected to represent the faculty on the honor roll. For more than 15 years, Dr. Steiner has volunteered at citizenship and immigration events, and his longstanding commitment to pro bono service has qualified him for membership in the Pro Bono College of the State Bar of Texas every year since 2014.

Since January 2020, Dr. Steiner has participated in 75 discrete pro bono activities, donating over 200 hours. During this time, he has volunteered primarily at Houston Volunteer Lawyer Virtual Legal Advice Clinics, where he advises individuals on legal issues, and at naturalization workshops, where he screens applicants for citizenship eligibility and reviews completed applications.

Dr. Steiner also was honored for his extensive pro bono service during the 2022 Houston Bar Association (HBA) Harris County Bench Bar Pro Bono Awards ceremony. The awards recognize outstanding pro bono service and encourage direct legal services to low-income Harris County residents.

Aimee Maldonado '04, was nominated as the staff representative for the honor roll. A public interest attorney and adjunct professor at South Texas since 2015, she co-teaches in the Immigration Clinic and the Civil Trial Advocacy Class. Previously, Maldonado was the Supervising Attorney of the Unaccompanied Minors Program at Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston after maintaining her own practice for five years.

Maldonado uses her expertise in the service of others. “I like helping people who would not otherwise have access to legal representation,” she said. She is an active member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, serving on the Family Law Section’s Steering Committee. She presents at Continuing Legal Education courses, professional meetings, and community outreach events.

Last year, Maldonado gave a presentation on advanced topics relating to asylum cases. Her volunteer work also includes serving as pro bono faculty for Advocacy in Immigration Matters trainings presented by the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., and the National Institute of Trial Advocacy. Additionally, she serves on the Advisory Board of the Children’s Immigration Law Academy and the Executive Committee of the Houston Immigration Legal Services Collaborative. When case volumes warrant it, Maldonado travels to immigrant detention facilities in the Rio Grande Valley. 

MORE STORIES OF SERVICE...

STCL Houston’s Landlord/Tenant practice helped more than 5,000 people facing housing instability through a combination of community outreach and courtroom advocacy. One public service attorney personally represented more than 370 households in court.

In January 2022, South Texas hosted and trained more than 120 legal-service providers from across the state in an online program focused on lawyering skills needed in eviction defense.

In April 2022, the Texas Gulf Coast Area Labor Federation presented STCL Houston with a “Fighting for Our Neighbors” award during their Working Family Awards celebration.

STCL Houston Assistant Professor Dru Brenner-Beck and Associate Dean for Experiential Education Catherine Greene Burnett are involved in ongoing efforts to gain clemency for the Camp Logan soldiers — 110 African-American soldiers convicted in three courts-martial in 1917-18 — nineteen of whom were executed with no opportunity for an appeal. They have worked tirelessly on this project, including supervising students researching and writing a posthumous presidential pardon and clemency application for the soldiers, and investigating the courts-martial and clemency records, legislative and investigative records, and 1917-era military law and regulations.

STCL Houston public interest attorneys Elliott Tucker and **Jerry Loza '15** — who have been extremely active with the Landlord/Tenant Clinic — presented in August at the annual Poverty Law Conference in Austin on the topic of “Eviction Defense in Texas.”

Assistant Professor Ryan Nelson provided roughly 100 hours of pro bono representation this year, with the majority of that time representing a nonprofit organization that fights against systemic racism and sexism in the restaurant industry.

Professor of Law Jim Musselman volunteers at a monthly clinic in Montgomery County offering general civil legal aid, and he is leading an initiative to make this a pro bono placement for students.

In coordination with the law school’s Expunction Clinic, the STCL Houston Benny Agosto, Jr. Diversity Center, and Porter | Hedges law firm, a number of students from the Black Law Students Association and the Hispanic Law Students Association at South Texas provided free legal services for an Expunction Clinic in March 2022.

Big Wins

Alumni Legal
Victories Impact
Worker Safety,
Fair Use, Truth
in Media

Alumnus Wins Record-Setting \$352.7 Million Jury Verdict for Client

Randall “Randy” Sorrels ‘87, founding partner of Sorrels Law, won his client — United Airlines employee Ulysses Cruz — the largest actual-damages jury verdict for an injured worker in a contested trial in U.S. history. In addition, the verdict has already made a positive impact on the safety of airport workers.

A Houston jury awarded Cruz \$352.7 million for injuries he suffered in 2019 on the tarmac while working as a “wing walker” at George Bush Intercontinental Airport. He was using orange wands to direct the movement of aircraft, and wearing a required yellow safety vest. While guiding a plane away from a gate, an Allied Aviation Fueling Co. van struck Cruz, knocking him 15 feet in the air. He was immediately paralyzed from the chest down.

“It was 7:30 in the morning,” Sorrels said, “and the van driver said that he was blinded by the sun and didn’t see Mr. Cruz, who was walking back near the roadway. The roadway is just lines; on an airport tarmac, they don’t have curbs. So Mr. Cruz was walking toward the roadway when the van driver ran off the road and hit him.”

In addition to impact injuries, Cruz suffered a stroke that further debilitated him, leaving him with no use of his right arm. “He’s unable to carry on a full conversation, yet knows what’s going on,” Sorrels said. “If you talk about

something sad or about his situation, he will cry. He’s trapped in his body. Mr. Cruz is simply the worst-hurt person I’ve ever seen in my life.”

Although at trial the driver denied running off the road and claimed Cruz stepped in front of him, the company’s safety supervisor — on the stand — gave the driver an “F” and said he was acting recklessly. Sorrels used video during the trial to make key points — which also allowed him to receive feedback from friends in the legal community who were watching because the trial judge allowed a livestream broadcast of the trial.

Some of the most moving moments in the trial occurred when Sorrels put several of Cruz’s health care providers on the stand — by video — to explain his situation.

“The video showed what a typical day would be like for Mr. Cruz, and that video was narrated by his morning nurse, his physical therapist, his occupational therapist, and his wife, who is also a nurse,” Sorrels said. “She really did a great job of separating out her clinical view of her husband and her emotional view of the husband and father they lost.”

Sorrels’ wife and partner in Sorrels Law, attorney Alex Farias-Sorrels, handled significant behind-the-scenes work on

the Cruz case, including determining a figure for the damages, and presented witnesses for the trial as well.

Prior to the trial, Sorrels worked with fellow STCL Houston alumnus **Brad Leigh ‘00**, founding and managing attorney for the Leigh Law Firm in The Woodlands, to conduct a mock trial. “Brad brought the client to us, and he was very instrumental in the case,” Sorrels said.

Although the case is being appealed by the van company, some positive outcomes have already occurred from the case. Sorrels was contacted after the verdict by another another airline’s attorney who said they were recommending the installation of collision avoidance technology in all its vehicles operating inside the fence at airports worldwide.

Allied, the defendant in this case, has begun providing significantly more training to employees and adding large lights on top of their vans. And United Airlines is reviewing its policies and procedures to see how to make employees safer. “The tort system is designed to help improve society so the same mistakes are not made over and over,” Sorrels said. “We hold companies accountable so they — and others — change their conduct. In this case, the system worked.”



Four STCL Alumni Team Up to Defend Sandy Hook Parents Against InfoWars' Alex Jones

Reactions ranged from death threats to handwritten thank-you cards and gifts of gratitude after STCL alumni **Mark Bankston '08** and **Bill Ogden '13** sued conspiracy theorist and media personality Alex Jones and his InfoWars website for defamation.

Bankston and Ogden, attorneys with Farrar & Ball LLP, represented Sandy Hook parents Neil Heslin and Scarlett Lewis in the case. They sued Jones after he told his listeners that the nation's second deadliest school shooting — in which 20 children and six adults were killed — was faked by the government to take away Americans' guns. Because of Jones' five years of repeated lies about the shooting and the grieving Sandy Hook parents, his listeners harassed and made death threats against the families for years.

In 2018, Bankston had filed a defamation suit against Jones on behalf of Marcel Fontaine, an innocent man from Massachusetts that Jones had falsely identified as the gunman in a massacre at a Florida high school. Fontaine tragically died in an apartment fire in 2022 before his case could be resolved. "Marcel Fontaine was very brave to stand up to Alex Jones, knowing the harassment he would face," he said. "We are continuing to fight for him on behalf of his sister."

Fontaine's courage in suing Jones inspired several Sandy Hook parents to take legal action against Jones, Bankston said. "When those parents approached our law firm to bring similar suits against Jones, Bill and I jumped on it, and our firm was completely supportive." Ogden's personal response was enthusiastic: "Hell yeah! If we can sue Alex Jones, yes!"

Their enthusiasm quickly turned to serious reflection when they began talking with the parents. "Now it's real-real," Bankston thought at the time. "This is going to use every skill and bit of

knowledge from every class we ever took in law school."

Ogden and Bankston said they relied on many STCL Houston students interning at their firm for research, and they visited South Texas Professor Rocky Rhodes early on to get advice.

Jones, as anticipated, "fought tooth and nail": nine separate appeals, three different bankruptcy courts, stopping trials, and disrupting proceedings as often as he could. Also, because Jones started immediately moving money, Bankston and Ogden called in reinforcements: STCL alumni: **Avi Moshenberg '12**, senior attorney with McDowell Hetherington LLP, who specializes in business litigation and fraudulent transfers, and **Cordt Akers '12**

a white-collar criminal attorney with The Akers Firm PLLC. Moshenberg and Akers successfully filed a separate lawsuit against Jones to stop him from moving his money out of reach of clients.

During the defamation trial, a powerful courtroom moment became a viral sensation when Bankston confronted Jones with text messages accidentally released to Bankston and Ogden by Jones's own attorney (who then did nothing to prevent their use in court). Bankston said, "When I showed Jones the text messages, and told him where I got them, he actually said on the stand, 'This is your Perry Mason moment.'" Ogden added, "That whole situation was wild — just unbelievable."

Because of all the disruptions by Jones throughout the multi-year case, the judge eventually entered a default judgment against Jones in 2021, then let the jury decide the damages. The jury found punitive damages of \$45.2 million and compensatory damages of



\$4.1 million. After the trial, Bankston and Ogden were successful in defeating Texas' punitive damage cap, with Travis County Judge Maya Guerra Gamble entering a final judgment of \$50 million.

Jurors decided the amount of damages after listening to evidence and testimony from a range of witnesses for seven days. The parents, Heslin and Lewis, said during their testimony that Jones needed to be held accountable for the lies he told about the tragedy.

"Scarlett told me, 'I feel like I'm seeing light, that I'm coming out of a tunnel,'" Bankston said. "The families are so thrilled; they have been waiting 10 years. More than anything, they feel relief and a little closure. They feel like they stopped an awful man." Bankston and Ogden still have two more cases set for trial against Jones, on behalf of Marcel Fontaine's estate and on behalf of the parents of Sandy Hook victim Noah Pozner. 🇺🇸

Alumna Fights 3M on Behalf of Veterans Who Suffered Auditory Injuries

STCL Houston alumna **Shelley Hutson '93** is plaintiff's co-lead counsel of the largest-ever multidistrict litigation (MDL) in the United States — the 3M MDL that alleges 3M's dual-ended Combat Arms earplugs were defective and caused thousands of military veterans and others to develop hearing loss and/or tinnitus (constant ringing in the ears).

"A woman has never been named co-lead counsel in a mass tort of this size," said Hutson, a partner at Clark, Love and Hutson, PLLC. "Presiding Judge Casey Rodgers interviewed dozens of lawyers for this prestigious position, and I am honored to have been selected to help lead the charge. We began the litigation in April 2019 and have worked tirelessly to bring this litigation to an efficient and fair outcome."

Mass torts are often confused with class actions; they are not the same. In mass torts, the cases are consolidated in front of a single judge to handle all pretrial matters, but each case must stand or fall on its own merits and each plaintiff has an individual case. The MDL court may

try test cases, referred to as bellwethers, to aid the parties in negotiations.

The 3M products liability mass tort litigation, MDL No. 2885, involves more than 270,000 plaintiffs who are current and/or former members of the U.S. armed forces. All the veterans dutifully served, and many served in active combat abroad. Judge Rodgers used the bellwether process to attempt to find plaintiffs who were representative of all the plaintiffs involved in the MDL. Since that process began, 13 plaintiffs have prevailed in their bellwether jury trials. These occurred between April 2021 and May 2022, resulting in approximately \$300 million in jury verdicts on behalf of servicemembers.

Hutson, both as co-lead of the MDL and as trial counsel, participated in three bellwether trials. Most recently, she was lead trial counsel for Ron Sloan. He served in both Iraq and Afghanistan between 1994 and 2015. In January 2022, a Pensacola federal jury awarded him \$15 million in compensatory damages and \$40 million in punitive damages against 3M. Sloan's case was

consolidated with the case of another veteran, William Wayman, represented by Dave Buchanan and Chris Seeger. The combined verdict for the two plaintiffs was \$110 million.


"The verdicts in the bellwether cases, like Mr. Sloan's and Mr. Wayman's, speak volumes as to how juries feel about the liability facts against 3M," Hutson said. "The juries consistently find 3M responsible for manufacturing a defective earplug and worse, hiding information they had in their possession as early as 2000 that the earplugs did not work. As a result, servicemembers like Mr. Sloan, who is only 47 years old, suffer from hearing deficits that impact their everyday lives and the lives of their families."

After becoming dissatisfied with the many federal court juries that found 3M acted inappropriately, and in an attempt to deflect responsibility for their actions, 3M recently put several wholly owned subsidiaries into bankruptcy "in the hope that a bankruptcy court in Indiana would halt the litigation against 3M and prevent further fact finding by the American public," Hutson explained.

One of the subsidiaries put into bankruptcy by 3M is Aearo Technologies, which originally manufactured the Combat Arms earplugs. 3M later acquired the company and its liabilities and upstreamed the companies into 3M itself.

"Many large companies like Johnson & Johnson and 3M have recently tried to use the bankruptcy courts to delay pending mass tort litigations," Hutson said. "Regardless, the battle goes on."

The remaining MDL cases will proceed after the 11th Circuit Courts of Appeal make the call on a critical liability decision.

Hutson said, "We will continue to fight for what's right on behalf of these wonderful servicemembers who I am humbled and honored to represent." 



Summary Judgment Regarding Use of Art Works Benefits Art Instructors



Roland Garcia '86, shareholder with Greenberg Traurig, LLP, won a summary judgment in December for his client, Mix Creative Learning Center, LLC, in an important copyright and trademark infringement case with positive results for artists and art teachers.

Garcia, lead attorney in the case, argued both fair use and no willful infringement on behalf of his client Jacqueline Kenneally, who owns and operates the Mix Creative art school for children. He cited several authorities for the contention that the use of the source material — accompanied by biographical information or other scholarship or lessons — transforms art into an educational tool.

"I am so grateful to Greenberg Traurig Shareholders Roland Garcia and Mark Chretien for their help, knowledge,

and kindness," Kenneally said. "This result is an enormous relief for me, as well as other art teachers and artists everywhere. Thanks to their good work, I can resume teaching my students about artists from around the world, continuing to give them full credit for their inspiration."

In November 2020, Kenneally was selling art kits featuring Keck's Dog Art series, hoping to inspire her students to create their own masterpieces. The art kits included pictures of Keck's art, biographical slides of the artist, paint, paint brushes, and collage-style puzzle pieces to inspire new art creations by the students. The images of the art works were retrieved from publicly available internet pages.

Keck learned about the art kits and sued the art school in February 2021. The

artist had copyrighted her art works, including the Dog Art series. Keck's lawsuit argued for statutory damages for willful infringement in an amount up to \$150,000 for each of the six copyrighted works at issue under the Copyright Act, as well as injunctive relief and other claims.

As soon as the suit was filed, the art school immediately pulled down the art kit from the website and ceased sales of it, Garcia said. Only six kits had sold, including two bought by Kenneally herself. As a potential settlement on behalf of their client, the attorneys offered to return all gross revenue to Keck and pay more than that amount. They provided evidence of their client's "innocent infringement and good faith," and showed that no copyright notice appeared on the images Kenneally downloaded through Google.

The attorneys also provided evidence of several artists who had thanked Kenneally for featuring their art, increasing visibility of their work.

In *Michel Keck v. Mix Creative Learning Center, LLC, et al.* — argued before U.S. District Judge Keith Ellison — the court found that, as a matter of law, there was no willful infringement and the doctrine of "fair use" protected Mix Creative's conduct.

"Mark and I are grateful for the court's attention on this complex and important matter," Garcia said. "The case presented unique issues of fair use in a commercial art school setting and gives guidance for future artists and art instructors. Our position is that there is no way to effectively teach art history and art styles without showing historical art pieces to the students. Our client hung in there when faced with an unreasonable settlement, and we hung in there with her." 🍀

STCL Houston Celebrates Five Retiring Faculty

South Texas College of Law Houston honored five dedicated, respected professors who retired in 2022. They will each be remembered for their career accomplishments and their lasting contributions to the lives of their students and colleagues.

Professor John Bauman came to STCL Houston in 1986 after eight years of civil litigation practice in Los Angeles, California. A graduate of Stanford Law School, his teaching and scholarship focused on the areas of Torts, including Constitutional Torts and Products Liability, Remedies, and Consumer Transactions. During the 1997-98 academic year, Professor Bauman was a visiting Professor of Law at Pepperdine University.

His dry sense of humor always had the class smiling in Torts. My favorite class at STCL Houston and my highest grade in law school! His class laid the foundation for thinking in a legal logical manner. Thanks Professor.

— Armando Gonzalez '95

Professor and Assistant Dean Elizabeth "Liz" Dennis '84 joined STCL Houston in 1987 after a clerkship at Fulbright & Jaworski (now Norton Rose Fulbright LLC) and serving as a briefing attorney for the Court of Appeals, First Supreme Judicial District of Texas.

Dean Dennis was the Director of the Legal Research and Writing Program from 1987-89. She then became the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs and the Founding Director of the Academic Assistance Program and Langdell Scholars. In 1997, Dean Dennis was named



Professor John Bauman, Professor and Executive Vice President Emerita Helen Jenkins, Professor David East, Assistant Dean and Professor Elizabeth "Liz" Dennis '84, and Professor Gary Rosin.

Assistant Dean and Director of Academic Internships and Associate Professor of Clinical Studies. She also served as the faculty advisor to the South Texas Law Review and the International Trade Law Journal.

Dean Dennis, thank you for all your help and effort to the STCL Houston community! You have prepared so many of us to enter the legal field as professional, work ready, and determined associates. I wish you all the best on this new chapter!

— Viktorija Fuhrman '22

W. David East became a professor at STCL Houston in 1981. He taught and wrote about various aspects of commercial law, including Bankruptcy, Commercial Law and Human Rights, Consumer Transactions, Property, and Transaction Skills. During 1987-90 Professor East was Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, returning to full-time teaching in 1990.

In 1999 he became the Director of the Transactional Practice Center at South Texas College of Law Houston.

He is a co-author of *Anderson, Bartlett & East's Texas Uniform Commercial Code Annotated*

(Thomson/West, current ed. 2008-09).

Congratulations on the conclusion of one adventure and the beginning of a new one! I am sincerely thankful for your teaching style... But most of all I appreciate that you are a gentleman who treated his students with respect. The practice of law is better because of professors like you. Best wishes and God bless.

— Jordan Benningfield '09

Professor and Executive Vice President Emerita Helen Jenkins joined STCL Houston as an assistant professor of law in 1987, after practicing in the areas of wills, trusts, estate administration and guardianship law. An alumna of the UH Law Center, she taught Wills, Trusts and Estates, Administration of Estates, Trusts and Fiduciary Responsibility, Property I & II, and Mediation. She authored a textbook and various articles concerning topics in estate law.

Serving as Vice President and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs from 2005-10, and as Executive Vice-President from 2010-16, Professor Jenkins received the Robeson I. King Excellence in Education Award from the Houston Lawyers Association twice

— in 2005 and 2013. Her accomplishments are not limited to legal education and scholarship. A graduate of the Peabody Conservatory of Music and Howard University's master's in music education program, she frequently sang the National Anthem at STCL Houston graduations and other events. She performed annually in "Night Court," an all-lawyer revue benefiting various charities supported by the Houston Bar Association.

Dean Jenkins! We are all so blessed to have you!!! Thank you for setting a standard and being an amazing example of what is possible. You are such a force that moves with immense power and grace. Thank you for being who you are.

— Morgan Latin '20

Professor Gary Rosin joined STCL Houston in 1984 as an Assistant Professor. By 1986 he was an associate professor, earning a tenured professorship in 1989. A graduate of the University of Texas School of Law, he taught courses in Agency and Partnership, Corporations, Corporate Finance, and Securities Regulation.

Prior to starting his teaching career, Professor Rosin was a corporate attorney handling acquisitions and mergers, commercial real estate, cases involving state and federal securities regulations, as well as insurance and insurance company regulations.

Best wishes Prof. Rosin! I had you for all my "corporate" classes and well... ended up clerking until last year with the SEC in Washington DC (with very good reviews, thanks to very good professors like you). Enjoy your retirement and the plans ahead.

— Maria V. Bradley '12

FACULTY NOTES

JAMES J. ALFINI

Professor of Law and Dean Emeritus



Professor Alfini was elected to a three-year term on the American Bar Association's House of Delegates as a delegate from the ABA Section of Dispute Resolution.

DEBRA BERMAN

Professor of Law and Director of the Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolution



Professor Berman published *The Use of Mediator Proposals in Practice: What the Data Tell Us*, DISP. RESOL. MAG., Sept. 2022, at 24. Describing the article, Professor Berman said,

"The increasing popularity of mediator proposals suggests that the time has come to develop a set of research-based best practices. To facilitate development of best practices, this article offers empirical data from a survey of 167 mediators in the United States. The survey data shows that a significant majority of mediators use mediator proposals in their practices. The data also provides insight into the general trends of how mediators employ these proposals."

She also co-authored *A Hybrid Approach to Teaching Settlement Skills*, to be published in the WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF LAW AND POLICY (with Catherine Burnett). This article proposes a hybrid enhancement for the 21st-century law student — an enhancement to current learning platforms that combines attributes of the traditional simulation course with those of the traditional in-house clinic. The result is a model built on four pillars that provides authentic, real-world cases in a delivery format that mirrors contemporary practice.

The authors recommend professors in simulation classes require students to negotiate using multiple modes of communication outside the classroom over a period of time, negotiate real cases using actual court documents, negotiate with people outside of their class, and engage in thoughtful self-reflection.

JOSH BLACKMAN

Professor of Law and Centennial Chair of Constitutional Law



Professor Blackman's recently published articles include *The Irrepressible Myth of Jacobson v. Massachusetts*, 70 BUFF. L. REV. 131 (2022), *Judicial Courage*, 26

TEX. REV. L. & POL. 355 (2021-22), and *The Unresolved Threshold Issues in the Emoluments Clauses Litigation: The President Has Three Bodies and There Is No Cause of Action for Ultra Vires Conduct*, 20 GEO. J. L. & PUB. POL'Y 163 (2022) (with Seth Barrett Tillman).

Professor Blackman also published the following books: *An Introduction to Constitutional Law: 100+ Supreme Court Cases Everyone Should Know* (Illustrated Edition), *Constitutional Rights: Cases in Context* (4th Edition), and Senior Editor, *The Heritage Guide to the Constitution* (3d Edition).

CATHERINE GREENE BURNETT

Vice President, Associate Dean for Experiential Education, Professor of Law



Dean Burnett co-authored *A Hybrid Approach to Teaching Settlement Skills*, to be published in the WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY JOURNAL OF LAW AND POLICY (with Debra Berman).

ELAINE A. CARLSON

Stanley J. Krist Distinguished Professor of Law



Professor Carlson published two textbooks: *Texas Civil Procedure: Pretrial Litigation* (2022-23 ed.) and *Texas Civil Procedure: Trial & Appellate Practice* (Carolina Academic Press

2022) (with Professors William Dorsaneo, David Crump, and Elizabeth Thornburg). She continues to serve as an appointee on the Texas Supreme Court Advisory Committee as well as the American Law Institute.

RICHARD R. CARLSON

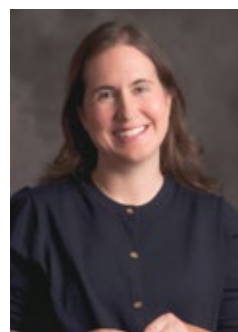
Professor of Law



Professor Carlson published a book titled *Carlson's Federal Employment Laws Annotated* (Thomson Reuters 2022).

AMANDA HARMON COOLEY

Professor of Law and Vinson & Elkins Research Professor



Professor Cooley published *The Persistence of Lemon*, 47 U. DAYTON L. REV. 411 (2022). This article was based on her invited keynote speech at the University of Dayton School

of Law's Education Law Symposium: *Lemon v. Kurtzman at 50: Has the Supreme Court Soured on Its Bitter Fruits?*

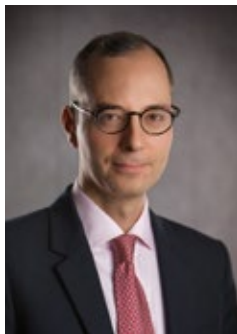
Professor Cooley was awarded the South Texas College of Law Houston Excellence in Teaching Award for 2021-22.

Additionally, in 2022, she served as a screener for the National Scribes Best Brief and Law Review Award Competitions. She also served as a judge for the National Black Law Students Association Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Competition and the Adam A. Milani Disability Law Writing Competition.

Finally, she continues to serve on the Houston Bar Association's Lawyers for Literacy Committee. In this capacity, she coordinated the donation of more than 200 books to help support the continued development of the library at Elrod Elementary School.

FRANK FAGAN

Associate Professor of Law



Professor Fagan's article, *SPACs, PIPEs, and Common Investors* (with Saul Levmore), is to be published by the UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF BUSINESS LAW.

TED L. FIELD

Vice President, Associate Dean for Faculty, Professor of Law



Dean Field authored *Foreword: The Supreme Court's Changing Approach to Patent Law*, 22 UIC REV. INTELL. PROP. L. 1 (2022). As a law student, Dean Field was

a co-founder and the first managing editor of the JOHN MARSHALL REVIEW OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW (known today as the UIC REVIEW OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW). When this journal recently celebrated its 20th anniversary, Dean Field was invited to write this foreword to the 20th-anniversary issue. In this piece, Dean Field tracks how the U.S. Supreme Court

has changed its approach to patent-law jurisprudence over the 20 years since the founding of the journal.

This piece was chosen as one of the best IP articles of 2022 and reprinted in INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW REVIEW (Thomson Reuters 2022).

DR. DEREK FINCHAM

Professor of Law, Associate Dean for Part-time and Online Education



Dr. Fincham published *The Personal Rights of Artists*, 59 HOUS. L. REV. 1013 (2022).

His article, *Art, Antiquities and Money Laundering*, will

be published in the KENTUCKY LAW JOURNAL. Dr. Fincham hosted a Polish scholar, Dr. Alicja Jagielska-Burduk, UNESCO Chair in Cultural Property Law at the Faculty of Law and Administration, University of Opole. She visited several classes during her visit to Houston.

Also, he was quoted in a September *New York Times* article criticizing the Metropolitan Museum of Art after 27 looted art works were seized.

SHARON FINEGAN

Professor of Law



Professor Finegan published a book entitled *Criminal Law: Cases and Comments* (11th ed.) (West Academic, 2022) (with Adam Gershowitz, Gerald Ashdown, and Ronald Bacigal).

ROB GALLOWAY '91

Vice President, Advocacy and W. James Kronzer Jr. Distinguished Professor of Advocacy, Professor of Law



Professor Galloway recently completed a two-year term as the inaugural president of National Association of Legal Advocacy Educators and is now serving as the organization's immediate past president.

R. RANDALL KELSO

Spurgeon E. Bell Distinguished Professor of Law



Professor Kelso published *Clarifying the Four Kinds of "Exacting Scrutiny" Used in Supreme Court Opinions*, 127 PENN. STATE L. REV. (2023) (forthcoming). This article

discusses a number of cases where the Supreme Court has used the phrase "exacting scrutiny" to mean different kinds of review. The article suggests the Supreme Court should be more precise in terms of what level of scrutiny is required in individual cases and should drop the term "exacting scrutiny" since it has been used to mean different things in different cases.

He also authored *A Proposed Constitutional Amendment to Impose 24-Year Term Limits on Supreme Court Justices*, 62 S. TEX. L. REV. (2023) (forthcoming). As the title suggests, the article discusses reasons why imposing 24-year term limits on Supreme Court Justices, rather than the current system of life-time appointment, would be a good idea.

FACULTY NOTES

JOSEPH K. LEAHY

Professor of Law



Professor Leahy has recently authored two articles: *Zombies Attack Inadvertent Partnerships!—How Undead Precedents Killed by Uniform Statutes Still Roam the Reporters*, 57

U. RICHMOND L. REV. (forthcoming 2023), and *Undead Dicta or Holdings? A Closer Look at Partnership Cases Stating that Subjective Intent Governs Inter Se*, 21 U.N.H. L. REV. 1 (2023).

In *Zombies Attack*, Professor Leahy unearths a line of cases that state that the parties' intent to be "partners" (or not) controls partnership formation as between them. This contradicts the longstanding black-letter law in most states (except Texas, which rejected it in a controversial 2020 opinion), under which the parties' intent to co-own a for-profit business, not the parties' intent to attain the legal status of "partners," is dispositive as to partnership formation. In *Zombies Attack*, Professor Leahy reviews cases stating that the parties' intent controls and concludes that each such case is a "zombie precedent" — i.e., a case that relies upon old cases that were overthrown by the Uniform Partnership Act. Zombie decisions are bad law, and legal research databases should deem them abrogated.

In *Undead Dicta*, Professor Leahy takes a closer look at the zombie decisions that he describes in *Zombies Attack*. After a careful review, Professor Leahy concludes that these cases' statements of undead law are almost entirely dicta. That is to say, in almost every zombie case described in *Zombies Attack* where a court stated that the parties' intent to be partners (or not) controls as between them, the court did not give effect to that intent. Rather, if the case held that the parties were not partners, it almost always did so based on the application of the statutory test for

partnership—i.e., whether, as a factual matter, the parties associated to co-own a for-profit business.

BRUCE A. MCGOVERN

Professor of Law



Professor McGovern published *Recent Developments in Federal Income Taxation: The Year 2021*, 75 TAX LAW. 681 (2022) (with Cassady V. ("Cass")

Brewer and James M. Delaney). *The Tax Lawyer* is a premier, peer-reviewed tax law journal that is published quarterly by the American Bar Association Section of Taxation. This article summarizes and provides context to understand the most important developments in federal income taxation for the year 2021.

He also published *Federal Income Taxation of Individuals* (Thomson Reuters 3d ed. 2002 and Supp. 2022) (with Martin J. McMahon, Lawrence A. Zelenak, and the late Boris I. Bittker). This is a comprehensive, 51-chapter treatise that discusses the way the federal income tax applies to individuals.

Professor McGovern presented on recent developments in federal income taxation at the Montana Tax Institute, Missoula, Montana (Oct. 2022); the Southern Federal Tax Institute, Atlanta Georgia (Oct. 2022) (with Cassady V. Brewer); the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Tax Summit, Chapel Hill, North Carolina (Oct. 2022); and at the Tulane Tax Institute, New Orleans, Louisiana (November 2022)

SHELBY A. D. MOORE

Vice President, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Professor of Law



Professor Moore published *An Act of Resistance: Reconceptualizing Andrea Yates's Killing of Her Children*, 61 S. TEX. L. REV. 431 (2021).

JAMES L. MUSSELMAN

Professor of Law



Professor Musselman published *Shattered Expectations: Avoidance in Bankruptcy of Property Divisions in Divorce*, 30 AM. BANKR. INST. L.

REV. 255 (2022). This article discusses the avoidability of both fraudulent and non-fraudulent transfers that occur in a divorce completed prior to the bankruptcy filing, including a trustee's ability to usurp the rights of creditors in community property jurisdictions to enforce obligations of one spouse against the non-liable spouse and attach nonexempt property received in a divorce by the non-filing spouse.

RYAN H. NELSON

Assistant Professor of Law



Professor Nelson published *Substantive Pay Equality: Tips, Commissions, and How to Remedy the Pay Disparities They Inflict*, 40 YALE L. & POL'Y REV. 149 (2021). He also

published a piece exposing how leave laws like the Family and Medical Leave Act foment "ability apartheid"—that is, prejudice against workers with mental impairments compared to workers with physical impairments.

It was published in the MICHIGAN LAW REVIEW, one of the most highly respected law reviews in the country. *Ability Apartheid and Paid Leave*, 120 MICH. L. REV. 1247 (2022) (reviewing Paul David Harpur, ABLEISM AT WORK: DISABLEMENT AND HIERARCHIES OF IMPAIRMENT (2020)) (with Michael Ashley Stein).

Professor Nelson also advocated for reproductive freedoms and LGBTQ+

rights in national and local media outlets alike, including in *Slate*, *Law360*, the *Houston Chronicle*, and on *Houston's Morning Show* on Fox 26 Houston.

FRAN ORTIZ

Professor of Law



Professor Ortiz published *Recent Developments in Animal Tort and Insurance Law*, 57 TORT TRIAL & INS. PRAC. J. 231 (2022) (with Margrit Lent Parker).

JAMES PAULSEN

Professor of Law



Professor Paulsen published *Texas Account Documentation Guide* (2022 ed.) (Texas Bankers Association 2022) (with Robin Russell)

AMANDA J. PETERS

Professor of Law and Godwin Lewis PC Research Professor



Professor Peters published *Ethical Issues Related to Mass Arrests*, 61 S. TEX. L. REV. 499 (2021).

She also published *When Coaching Becomes*

Criminal, 20 U.N.H. L. REV. 1 (2022). In 2018, Professor Peters joined an amicus brief for elite Taekwondo athletes—plaintiffs who alleged that their coaches required sex from them in order to compete. The group sought to hold the coaches, the U.S. Olympic Committee, USA Taekwondo, and SafeSport civilly accountable for human trafficking and

for turning a blind eye because the coaches were responsible for several gold medal successes. That experience led to this article, in which Professor Peters examines the prevalence of all types of abuse in sports and the novel civil and criminal legal claims lawyers are raising to hold coaches and the organizations overseeing sports liable for athlete abuse. Civil litigators and prosecutors have pursued federal human trafficking, racketeering, obstruction of justice, and tampering with evidence claims to hold these entities and top officials liable. A number of states have recently created a grace period for statutes of limitation so plaintiffs, many of them former athletes, can pursue older sexual abuse claims. Recently, the California Supreme Court held that governing bodies owe a duty of care to vulnerable athletes who depend on them for protection within their sport. Courts and judges are beginning to recognize the sports organization bears the responsibility to protect the athlete because it is in the better position to guard against abuse.

Professor Peters also has authored *What Torres v. Madrid Reveals About Fact Bias in Civil Rights Cases*, 50 FLA. ST. L. REV. (2023) (forthcoming). In 2020, she joined the Fourth Amendment Scholars amicus brief for *Torres v. Madrid*, 141 S. Ct. 989 (2021). While the decision for *Torres* was viewed as a win by the scholars, Peters was surprised at the level of bias in the dissent's factual narrative. While academics have long believed and proven that federal courts hold biases against civil rights plaintiffs, this article is the first to examine party and fact bias in civil rights cases.

Using *Torres v. Madrid* as an example, Professor Peters explores the factual pleading hurdles civil rights plaintiffs face and the reasons for judicial bias in these cases. She examines the narratives in the *Torres* case and traces the judicial fact statements to their origins and reveals the biases in the Tenth Circuit opinion and the Supreme Court's dissent, along with biases in two other Supreme Court cases, *Kisela v. Hughes*

and *Tolan v. Cotton*. She suggests steps federal courts could take to remedy fact biases in civil rights cases moving forward.

JEFFREY RENSBERGER

Professor of Law and Charles Weigel II Research Professor of Conflict of Laws



Professor Rensberger published *Choice of Law and Time*, 89 TENN. L. REV. 419 (2022). He also authored *Choice of Law and Time Part II: Choice of Law Clauses and*

Changing Law, which is to be published by the GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW.

CHARLES W. "ROCKY" RHODES

Professor of Law and Charles Weigel II Research Professor of State and Federal Constitutional Law



Professor Rhodes published *Ford Motor Co.: The Murky Doctrine of Personal Jurisdiction*, 5 AM. CONST. SOC'Y SUP. CT. REV. 191 (2021) (with Linda Sandstrom Simard

& Cassandra Burke Robertson); *Jurisdictional Roadblocks*, 97 THE ADVOC. (TEXAS) 16 (2021); *The Roberts Court's Jurisdictional Revolution within Ford's Frame*, 51 STETSON L. REV. 157 (2022).

Additionally, he co-authored a trilogy of articles in 2022 with Professor Howard Wasserman on *Solving the Procedural Puzzles of the Texas Heartbeat Act and Its Imitators*. These three articles detailed how laws that rely on exclusive private bounty hunters or legal vigilantes for enforcement, such as the Texas Heartbeat Act and now copycat gun regulations in California, create procedural and jurisdictional hurdles to obtaining judicial review.

FACULTY NOTES

Solving the Procedural Puzzles of The Texas Heartbeat Act and its Imitators: The Limits and Opportunities for Offensive Litigation, 71 Am. U. L. Rev. 1029 (2022) focused on offensive litigation, in which a rights holder sues government officials, usually in federal court, seeking to enjoin enforcement of the law. The article demonstrated that exclusive private enforcement schemes stymie the typical approach of suing the responsible executive officer because no executive officer is responsible for enforcing the law. It then explained other paths into federal court, notably by suing the bounty hunters or vigilantes who act under color of state law.

Solving the Procedural Puzzles of Texas' Fetal-Heartbeat Law and its Imitators: The Potential for Defensive Litigation, 75 SMU L. Rev. 187 (2022) focused on defensive litigation, examining the processes through which constitutional challenges to these laws can be litigated defensively in state court and then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Solving the Procedural Puzzles of the Texas Heartbeat Act and its Imitators: New York Times v. Sullivan as Historical Analogue, 60 HOUS. L. REV. 93 (2022) compared the situation confronting defendants under these exclusive private enforcement schemes to the Supreme Court's most important First Amendment case, *New York Times v. Sullivan*. The series of articles received national attention, with invitations to present the pieces at several academic conferences, requests to author columns and op-eds, and international and national media interviews.

Professor Rhodes also was co-counsel and a primary author of an amicus brief of Scholars on Corporate Registration and Jurisdiction submitted to the Supreme Court in *Mallory v. Norfolk Southern Railway*.

This amicus brief drew the attention of the parties and several Justices during oral argument in November 2022. It was prepared on behalf of

a group of academics across the country, including his colleague Professor Jeff Rensberger, all of whom had authored scholarly works on the jurisdictional impact of a corporation registering to do business in a state and independently determined that jurisdiction could be appropriate only when that state has a sufficient sovereign interest in the dispute.

His other recent scholarly activities include completing the fourth edition, with Professor Paul McGreal, of their popular student workbook *Questions & Answers: Constitutional Law*. He is currently working on his contracted two-volume treatise for Matthew Bender entitled *Rhodes & Usman on State Constitutional Law*, which will be published next year.

Additionally, Professor Rhodes has made several recent presentations to fellow academics, including presenting papers on personal jurisdiction and private exclusive enforcement schemes.

Finally, he has continued his frequent public presentations and commentary, presenting his annual recap to federal judges and practitioners in the Southern District of Texas regarding the Supreme Court's recently completed term, participating in the U.S. Attorney District-Wide Training Conference for the Southern District of Texas, discussing state constitutionalism and federal constitutionalism with civic groups, and providing commentary to national, statewide, and local print and broadcast media on numerous constitutional and procedural issues.

VAL D. RICKS

Professor of Law



Professor Val Ricks published *Misreading Menetti: The Case Does Not Help You Avoid Liability for Your Own Fraud*, 53 ST. MARY'S L.J. 205 (2021).

Another article titled *Post Section 90: Promissory Estoppel in the Courts That Use It Most* is forthcoming in the TEXAS TECH LAW REVIEW. "Older lawyers might have learned promissory estoppel as a substitute for consideration; that is the way Section 90 of the *Restatement (Second) of Contracts* has it. Over the last 30 years, however, promissory estoppel has become a cause of action in its own right, and its elements differ from the *Restatement's* formulation," Professor Ricks explained.

The change appears to be a genuine common-law development driven by litigation needs. That is the conclusion Professor Ricks reached in a lengthy study of promissory estoppel as it is used in Texas and the most populous of the United States, where the most cases occur. His study restates the Texas doctrine of promissory estoppel and finds that most people in the United States are governed by that same rule (rather than Section 90).

This article is available from Professor Ricks by sending an email to vricks@stcl.edu. He'd love to hear what's good in your life of late.

NJERI MATHIS RUTLEDGE

Professor of Law



Professor Rutledge published *Walking the Tightrope: Reflections of a Black Female Law Professor*, 43 CAMPBELL L. REV. 233 (2021); *Thoughts on*

Diversity Within the Criminal Justice System, 61 S. TEX. L. REV. 489 (2021); and *Real Justice for Breonna: Re-Envisioning Knock-and-Announce*, 50 S.W. L. REV. 419 (2022).

While Professor Rutledge is grateful for her recent law review publications, she is most proud of her October op-ed in *USA Today* on former Georgia candidate for Senator, Herschel Walker, titled

Herschel Walker Embodies Every Negative Stereotype Black Americans Have Fought for Decades.

The piece was published online and in print by *USA Today*, republished online by MSN, Yahoo, and Apple News as well as three regional newspapers.

Two separate critics of her piece quoted it extensively in other opinion pieces as well. Another reader posted a TikTok referring to the article, which garnered over 100,000 likes.

She was most excited and surprised when she heard commentator Alex Wagner read portions of her article on the air with Joy Reid on MSNBC. Professor Rutledge said, "It is always an honor when my ideas and arguments can reach an audience beyond the legal academy." She serves as a columnist for *USA Today* through its Board of Contributors.

D'ANDRA MILLSAP SHU

Assistant Professor of Law



Professor Shu published *The Coming Causation Revolution in Employment Discrimination Litigation*, 43 *CARDOZO L. REV.* 1807 (2022). Her article *Remote Work Disability*

Accommodations in the Post-Pandemic Workplace will be published in the *TEMPLE LAW REVIEW*.

ANDREW T. SOLOMON

Professor of Law



Professor Solomon published *The Cancellation of Non-Conference College Football Games During the Pandemic: Force Majeure or Greed?* 23 *TEX. REV. ENT. & SPORTS L.* 129 (2022).

MARK E. STEINER

Professor of Law



Dr. Steiner published *Texas Civil Procedure Update* in the Fall 2022 issue of *JOURNAL OF CONSUMER AND COMMERCIAL LAW*.

He also received the Houston Bar

Association's Harris County Bench Bar Pro Bono Award for 2022. Steiner also qualified for membership in the Pro Bono College of the State Bar of Texas for the eighth consecutive year. The Pro Bono College recognizes attorneys who have far exceeded the State Bar's aspirational pro bono goal.

Steiner received an Award of Superior Achievement from the Illinois State Historical Society for his book *Lincoln and Citizenship*; was named to the advisory board of BakerRipley's Ripley House campus; and presented on Texas class actions at the State Bar of Texas Advanced Consumer and Commercial Law course.

DRU STEVENSON

Professor of Law and Wayne Fisher Research Professor



Professor Stevenson published *Revisiting Gun Control and Tort Liability*, 54 *IND. L. REV.* 365 (2021) (with Jenna Shorter) and *In Defense of the Felon-in-*

Possession Laws, 43 *CARDOZO L. REV.* 1573 (2022).

KATHERINE VUKADIN

Professor of Law and Charles Weigel II Research Professor



Professor Vukadin published *Why Won't Private Health Insurance Pay Its Share of the Opioid Crisis?* 71 *SYRACUSE L. REV.* 1383 (2021); and *Delayed & Denied: Recalibrating the ERISA Attorney's*

Fee Factors For Healthcare Claims, 67 *VILL. L. REV.* 339 (2022). Her article "ERISA's Fiduciary Fantasy and the Problem of Mass Health Claim Denials" will be published in the *RICHMOND LAW REVIEW*.

KENNETH WILLIAMS

Professor of Law



Professor Williams published *The Death Penalty and Race and How the Ultimate Punishment Highlights the Flaws in Our Criminal Justice System*, 50 *SW. L. REV.* 407 (2022).

KEVIN YAMAMOTO

Professor of Law



Professor Yamamoto published a book entitled *FEDERAL WEALTH TRANSFER TAXES* (6th ed., West Academic Publishing 2021) (with Samuel A. Donaldson).

IN BRIEF



President and Dean Michael F. Barry and students engage with members of the U.S. Army Court of Appeals.

U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals Holds Live Hearing on Campus

The STCL Houston community had a rare opportunity to see the military appellate court at work last September when the law school hosted a live hearing of a case pending before the U.S. Army Court of Criminal Appeals.

Students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community guests packed Garrett Townes Auditorium for the hearing and the question-and-answer session afterward with members of the Court. A reception followed.

The Army Court of Criminal Appeals has appellate jurisdiction over criminal cases tried in the U.S. Army. Its judges are career judge advocate officers, normally at the rank of lieutenant colonel or colonel, and its chief judge is a brigadier general.

The law school was chosen to host the event because of its long tradition of support for military law and providing excellent new attorneys who accept commissions and become uniformed lawyers in the U.S. military.

Holiday Generosity

Each gift request on this tree was fulfilled by a member of the South Texas community. Participating in the Salvation Army's Angel Tree Project is an opportunity for students, faculty, and staff to make the holidays brighter by purchasing gifts for children in need. This year more than 50 gift requests were fulfilled.



STCL Houston Keeps Up Giving Tradition, Donating to Houston Food Bank

Alex Zaibaq, third-year law student and vice president of the Student Bar Association, presented a check for \$15,334.38 collected through the law school food drive.

He was interviewed on live TV during ABC13's Share Your Holidays food drive benefiting the Houston Food Bank.

Additional gifts continued to come in, bringing the final total to nearly \$16,300 from



214 donors — which funded 48,812 meals.

STCL Houston has made the largest donation from an educational institution for more than a decade. Generous donors from the South Texas community helped the SBA continue that giving tradition.

South Texas Community Volunteers with Salvation Army to Pack Up Gifts Donated for the Holidays

Several STCL Houston students, staff, and faculty volunteered in December at the Salvation Army's Angel Tree Toy Shop, where they helped prepare the bundles of gifts for the children who had submitted Christmas gift requests. The volunteers spent hours filling large red and green bags with the requested gifts.



Alumnus Named General Counsel for RodeoHouston

Jeffrey Downing '05 recently became general counsel for the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo — the largest livestock exhibition and rodeo in the world.

RodeoHouston president and CEO, Dr. Chris Boleman, praised Downing's proven track record of resolving a wide range of complex legal issues and his deep expertise in permitting, licensing, contract negotiations, business transactions, and legal matters.

Downing is responsible for the nonprofit's legal affairs, risk management, and corporate governance. He will provide advice and counsel on critical strategic, legal, and public policy issues. Since its beginning in 1932, the rodeo has committed more than \$550 million to the youth of Texas and education.



Prior to joining HLSR's management team, Downing served as executive vice president and general counsel at W-Industries LLC. The Houston native earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Texas A&M University, a J.D. from STCL Houston, and an executive MBA from the University of Houston. His wife, Taneka Johnson Downing '05, also graduated from STCL Houston.



Commencement Ceremonies in May, December Celebrate Student Success, Persistence to Earn J.D. Degree

STCL Houston celebrated a total of more than 300 graduates at the May and December Commencement ceremonies in 2022. Eric B. Williams II was recognized as STCL Houston's first Black valedictorian during the May ceremony. The top academic achiever in the December graduating class was Tyler Williams.

STCL Houston, which began its 100th academic year last fall, honored the graduates for their outstanding academic achievement and their perseverance.



Professor Spurgeon Bell's Great-Grandson Henry Smith Graduates from STCL Houston in Fall 2022

The Hon. Holland E. Bell began teaching law at STCL Houston in 1930. His son, the Hon. Spurgeon Bell, took over teaching his class in 1933. He was made an adjunct and went on to become one of the most beloved professors in the history of the law school, teaching for more than 50 years. **Henry Smith '22**, his great-grandson, was a fall graduate — featured in the photo above with his family and President and Dean Michael F. Barry. Henry Smith's grandmother, Alice Bell Smith (holding red handbag), is Spurgeon Bell's daughter.

IN BRIEF

Alumnus to Be Played by Well-known Actor in Six-part TV Series About Branch Davidian Trials



Cogdell



Ribisi

Dan L. Cogdell '82, STCL Houston's 2017 alumnus of the year, is the real-life attorney being played by actor Giovani Ribisi in an upcoming, six-part series, "American Tragedies: Waco — The Trials," based on the Branch Davidian trials.

Cogdell represented some of the surviving Branch Davidian members at their trials after their lengthy and deadly standoff with the FBI ended in a tragic fire. The TV series, produced by MTV Entertainment Studios and 101 Studios, will build on the success of Paramount Network's Emmy-nominated series "Waco" that went to No. 1 on Netflix during the Pandemic.

"Ribisi looks nothing like me, but he's a helluva actor," Cogdell said. His character is a lead in the series, which is scheduled to air in spring 2023.

Cogdell is a partner in the litigation practice group Jones Walker LLP and a member of the corporate compliance and white-collar defense team. He has nearly 40 years of experience representing individuals and corporations in a broad range of high-profile, white collar and criminal defense matters.

He is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, an invitation-only organization for attorneys who have demonstrated the highest levels of trial advocacy, ethical conduct, integrity, professionalism, and collegiality. This spring, he will lecture during the Trial Advocacy II course at STCL Houston.

Alumna Celebrates 50 Years of Legal Practice; Receives State Bar of Texas Recognition

Gladys Goffney '71, who was celebrated by the State Bar of Texas in 2022 for becoming a 50-year lawyer, attended STCL Houston's Alumni Association Luncheon (seen here with Dean Barry) and the fall gala.

For the State Bar honor, Goffney was one of 906 attorneys with five decades of practice — but one of only 48 women. This number reflects how few women attended law school and received a J.D. in the early 1970s.

Goffney began law school in 1966, as the civil rights movement was unfolding. She attended evening classes at STCL Houston and continued to work full-time as a medical technologist at Houston's Veterans Affairs hospital. When she finished her degree in 1971, Goffney was the third Black individual to graduate from STCL Houston.

Always a solo practitioner, Goffney, who is now 90, began practicing family, juvenile, and criminal law after passing the bar exam. She served as attorney ad litem in hundreds of cases and as associate judge in the 246th Family District Court in Houston.



After practicing in many areas over the course of her career, she now only handles non-litigious probate matters.

"My family and I were honored by the attention focused on celebrating me and the other lawyers who have attained 50 years of practice," Goffney said. "I am thrilled and thankful that good mental and physical health have been blessings for me...helping me to celebrate this moment."

Rising Stars Network with Presidential Fellows at Reception

More than 50 alumni who were recognized as Rising Stars by *Super Lawyers* magazine connected with Presidential Fellows — STCL Houston's top academic students — during a special reception at The Grove. President and Dean Michael F. Barry recognized and celebrated the guests' accomplishments.



Judge Frank G. Evans' Papers Enhance Fred Parks Law Library Special Collections



The Fred Parks Law Library recently acquired the papers of Judge Frank G. Evans, known as the "father of alternate dispute resolution."

The Judge Frank G. Evans Papers, now part of the law library's Special Collections, include

his documentation on the development of ADR practices in Texas and his work on establishing ADR programs in Latin America.

During his career, Evans accomplished groundbreaking work developing conflict resolution processes and programs outside the usual legal system. Evans was the principal draftsman of the 1978 ADR Procedures Act that established a new policy in Texas courts encouraging voluntary, peaceable resolution of civil disputes.

A native Texan, Evans practiced law following his discharge from the U.S. Marine Corps at the end of the Korean Conflict.

In 1973, he was appointed to serve as a justice on the First Court of Appeals in Houston. Later, he became the Chief Justice of the court. Following his retirement in 1990, Evans entered private practice as the Judicial Officer of Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services.

At South Texas, Evans served as an adjunct professor beginning in 1977. In 1994, he was named visiting professor and founding director of the Center for Legal Responsibility at STCL Houston, where he taught courses related to alternative dispute resolution. The center was later renamed the Frank Evans Center for Conflict Resolution.

"I think it is fitting that his collection is coming to STCL Houston during our centennial year, given how many important events and milestones that Judge Evans was here for and took part in," said Heather Kushnerick, special collections librarian and college archivist. "It feels very much like a homecoming."



Two Alumni Chosen as Davoudi Emerging Leaders by Rice's Baker Institute

Two recent alumni, **Eric Williams '22** and **Brittney Mandarin Curry '20**, were selected as Davoudi Emerging Leaders by Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy.



They received a one-year membership in the Roundtable Young Professionals (RYP) group, a program dedicated to the Baker Institute's mission of bridging the world of ideas to the world of action.

The selection process is highly competitive. Recipients are nominated by community members and Baker Institute experts, and selected based on personal recommendations, as well as educational, professional, and philanthropic involvement and achievement.

STCL Houston Hosts Receptions in Austin and Houston Connecting Admitted Students with Alumni

Last spring, students admitted to STCL Houston were invited to meet alumni and hear about their first-hand experiences as students. Special thanks to **Randy Howry '85** and **Sean Breen '92** and their firm Howry, Breen, and Herman LLP for hosting the Austin reception. Every admitted student who attended the reception chose to attend South Texas.



Host an Admitted Student Reception in Your City

Any firm wishing to sponsor and host a reception for admitted students may contact Alicia Cramer at acramer@stcl.edu

IN BRIEF

ALUMNA HONORS MOTHER WITH INAUGURAL GIFT TO LEGAL WRITING CENTER

G. Michelle Herrera D.D.S., J.D. '17 donated \$100,000 to STCL Houston to support the law school's innovative Legal Writing Center. She made the generous gift in honor of her mother, a class of '89 STCL Houston graduate, who encouraged her to attend law school.

Herrera — a dentist who describes herself as a woman of science — said she was not a strong writer when she began law school. She credits her legal writing professor, Tobin Sparling (retired), with helping her succeed. Her first gift to South Texas was made in his honor.

"This generous gift from Dr. Herrera is the first of its kind," said Professor Maxine Goodman, associate dean of academic success and bar readiness and professor of law. "It will be used to fund the hiring of a second writing specialist who has the talent, experience, and expertise to provide an invaluable resource to our students."

Goodman said Herrera's gift will expand the capacity of the center, increasing legal writing assistance for all first-year students as well as upper-class students.

"Dr. Herrera has been a devoted friend to the law school since she was a student here," Goodman said. "We hope her incredibly meaningful and generous gift will inspire others to donate to the Legal Writing Center so it can continue to grow and serve our students."

A Winning Tradition



Madelyn Chidester, Luke Sherley, and Samuel Landingham brought home South Texas Advocacy's 140th national championship last fall at the Leroy Hassell Moot Court Competition.

The advocacy program at STCL Houston has built a winning tradition over many decades, adding to the law school's reputation for educating exceptional, well-qualified, and well-prepared attorneys. Trial Advocacy was ranked No. 3 in the nation last year by U.S. News & World Report, and it consistently ranks in the top 10 programs.

Conversations with the Dean Hosted in Five Cities Across Texas

Alumni from Houston, Dallas, Tyler, Lufkin, and San Antonio joined President and Dean Michael F. Barry last spring and summer for gatherings about the future of South Texas College of Law Houston.

Dean Barry and his wife Lee hosted the reception in Houston. Special thanks to our hosts in other cities: **Michael Hurst '90** and **Jen Falk '06** in Dallas, **Andy Bergfeld '96** in Tyler, **Hilary Haglund Walker '06** in Lufkin, and **Mike Milich '97** in San Antonio.



Christine Herron '10; Tiffany Harrod '07; Hon. Erika Ramirez '15; Mauro Ramirez

Guests Enjoy Annual Alumni Crawfish Boil

Nearly 60 alumni and their families were welcomed at the Annual Crawfish Boil. Guests dined on crawfish while enjoying music provided by **Steven Higginbotham '21** and the Wheel Workers.



Eric D'Olive '11; Susan Ochi '06; Aaron Reimer '07; Christine Herron '10



David Cruthirds '91; Melanie Cruthirds '21; Rosemary Cruthirds; Carla Lassabe '21



More than 140 first-year students attended the Fall First Look | Meet the Employers event co-hosted by the STCL Houston's Career Resource Center and the Alumni Engagement Office.

This gathering connected students with representatives of 18 law firms in the Greater Houston area.

Law firms and businesses wishing to connect with excellent STCL Houston students should contact Career Resources at CSO@stcl.edu.

STCL Houston Alumni Office Hosts Holiday Parties in Houston, Tampa

The Houston holiday party at Lott Hall (right) was a fun, festive evening for local alumni and friends. **Jennifer Stogner '06**, the new president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, addressed the group and said she is looking forward to a great centennial year.

Alumni and friends from the Tampa, Fla., area reconnected and welcomed new alumni at Jackson's Bistro (far right) during a holiday party, as well.



Hon. Kristen Hawkins '99; Hon. Bob Schaffer '84; Jennifer Stogner '06



Bill Jennings '74; Styles Wilson '79; Hon. E.J. Salcines '63; Elsa Salcines; Carlos Pazos '13; Joe Lopez '78; Nick Pazos '13

STCL HOUSTON

REUNION WEEK 2022



ALUMNI LUNCHEON

1. Suzanne Shaw; Debbie Boniuk '89
2. Alumni Association Board of Directors President Jennifer Stogner '06
3. Genora Boykins '85; Aaron Reimer '07; Dean Emeritus Helen Jenkins
4. Anthony Osso '18; Nancy Ta '15; Bridget Holloway '99; John Crump '12
5. Lonnie Deggins; VP Mandi Gibson; Joe Willie '91; Ron Haggerty '96; Tony Taft '98



A capacity crowd attended the STCL Houston Alumni Association's Annual Luncheon this past fall. Part of the law school's Reunion Week activities, the luncheon was a celebration of alumni accomplishments, serving as a platform for the presentation of the 2022 Alumni Awards. Each honoree gave a heartfelt acceptance speech that reflected feelings of gratitude and pride.

Rick Morris Named STCL Houston Alumni Association's 2022 Distinguished Alumnus

Rick Morris '91, Special Counsel with Rogers, Morris & Grover, received the STCL Houston Alumni Association's 2022 Distinguished Alumni Award for his significant civic contributions to the community and the legal profession.

Calling the law school's highest award "a humbling recognition," Morris expressed his thanks to STCL Houston during the Reunion Week luncheon and shared an insider's perspective on his once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to argue before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Morris, who works with a small Houston law firm, was not a typical choice to argue before the nation's highest court. In fact, as he explained, most attorneys who have that opportunity are part of an elite group who regularly present cases before that court.

But Morris's Houston client wanted him to take the case all the way to its conclusion. When he learned the case would definitely be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court he turned to STCL Houston to prepare, recalling the exceptional advocacy training he received at the law school through moot court competitions.

Because Morris has always prepared for court in the same way he prepared for competitions while a law student, he thought, "Where else would I go to prepare for the Supreme Court?" Morris' former competition partner, **Rob Galloway '91**, is now the law school's vice president of advocacy, a professor of law, and the W. James Kronzer, Jr. Distinguished Professor of Advocacy.

As part of the preparation process, Prof. Galloway guided 20 students in an Appellate Litigation Clinic to research the justices, study past court decisions, and practice the arguments for both sides – with active involvement by Morris and several STCL Houston First Amendment scholars.

The preparation was extremely helpful. "When I was standing before the justices, there was not one question asked that I had not already heard and prepared to answer," Morris said.

He successfully argued the case and won a unanimous ruling in his client's favor. The U.S. Supreme Court held 9-0 in the case of *Houston Community College System v. Wilson* that the



board of trustees for a public entity does not violate a board member's First Amendment right to free speech by censuring that member.

"I am a product of STCL Houston, so this important moment was not too big for me," Morris said at the awards luncheon and also as the December 2022 Commencement speaker. "My South Texas experience prepared me for a rich and challenging legal career. This law school prepares people with the knowledge and skills to succeed at every level."

Morris, who describes himself as an average student in high school and college, became a high-achieving student of the law and graduated summa cum laude from STCL Houston in 1991 — first in his class.

He was a Langdell Scholar and a recipient of the Alumni Association's Honor Scholar Award and the Houston Hispanic Bar Association's De Anda Scholarship.

He competed with several national moot court teams, including the winning team of the American Bar Association's National Moot Court Championship in 1990.

Beginning his professional career as an associate of Vinson & Elkins, L.L.P., Morris was a member of a defense team that successfully overturned the death row conviction of a Mexican national on grounds of actual innocence and prosecutorial

misconduct. He also served as an adjunct professor of appellate advocacy for the law school from 1991 to 1997.

In 1993, he was recruited to join the predecessor firm of Rogers, Morris, & Grover, LLP, where he began his career representing governmental entities, including serving as legal counsel to governing boards of educational institutions.

Over the course of his career, Morris has received numerous recognitions from state and national publications for his achievements in law and has been peer reviewed by Martindale-Hubbell, receiving an AV rating — the highest rating in legal ability and ethical standards. 🟢

Carl Shaw '90 2022 Public Service Award



What do a police officer, a trial lawyer, an adjunct professor, and a mock trial coach have in common? The answer: **Carl Shaw '90**, who served in all four capacities, and has been giving back to STCL Houston and the community in immeasurable ways for more than 30 years.

"Multiple generations of my family have set an example of service, of giving back," Shaw said, when being honored with the Public Service Award at the fall 2022 Alumni Association Annual Luncheon.

After graduating from the Harris County Sheriff's Academy in 1986, Shaw attended STCL Houston while working in law enforcement. He then spent 20 years as a trial lawyer working on major torts cases for a nationally recognized firm. Shaw also maintained his peace officer certification as a reservist, earning a Master Peace Officer Certification and working as special counsel and child advocate for the Precinct Six Constable's Office.

During his time as a student at South Texas, Shaw participated in the advocacy program and served as president of the Board of Advocates. He led the formation of the Summer Trial Academy and received the Order of the Barristers Award, the Dean's Student Advocacy Service Award, and the Outstanding Male Graduate Award at Commencement.

For 15 years, Shaw served as a coach at STCL Houston, working with mock trial teams and in the advocacy program with advanced civil litigation classes.

"I can think of no other nominee for the Public Service Award more deserving than Carl," said David Towery '79, who was among several alumni to nominate Shaw for the honor. "His service to STCL Houston and the community are without equal."

Shaw said this award means a great deal to him. "Getting the call from Dean Barry was the honor of a lifetime," Shaw said. "Then I had the special opportunity to receive the award at

the luncheon and be acknowledged by my peers, with my family there to share in the experience and understand what the school means to me. I'm a South Texas guy through and through to my heart."

Shaw currently serves as assistant chief deputy for Harris County Constable Precinct One.

"A lot of my success has to do with the legal knowledge and insights I gained from Dean Treece and my other South Texas professors," Shaw said. "They understood that being able to apply what you learn to serve others and to make a difference is like magic. It changes the world." 🍀

Alex Gonzalez '12

2022 Young Alumni Award

Alex Gonzalez '12, a partner at Pacheco Couceiro & Gonzalez, has been recognized multiple times for his significant leadership and service contributions to the STCL Houston community and the wider legal profession.

Gonzales has worked to improve opportunities for Hispanic attorneys and law students, serving as a board member and past president of the Mexican American Bar Association of Houston. He serves on STCL Houston's Alumni Association Board of Directors and he often returns to speak to students and give them advice on how to approach their legal careers.

Last fall, South Texas honored Gonzalez with the 2022 Young Alumni of the Year Award. He serves as a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors at STCL Houston and is the co-vice president of the Career Resources Committee. In this role, he brings attorneys to campus to share their first-hand knowledge with students interested in practicing law in various specialties.

Gonzalez explained why he continues to serve as a volunteer for the law school. "I always like to leave things better than when I found them," he said. "I want to make South Texas better, and part of it is mirroring the people at South Texas who have done that for me."

He is connected to the law school's tight-knit community, and he is honored to be able to contribute to South Texas's future growth and success.

During his time at South Texas, Gonzalez participated as a varsity team member in the school's nationally ranked advocacy program. He received the Heart of South Texas Advocacy Award and later served as a coach for the STCL Houston advocacy program, leading his teams to three national championships.



In the decade since graduating, Gonzalez has dedicated himself to helping people who have been hurt due to the negligence of others as a personal injury attorney, recovering millions for his clients.

"The law school's reputation is growing nationally, and I love being a part of it," Gonzalez said. "It's a privilege to be in a position where I can influence what the school might be for the next 10, 20, or 30 years." 🍀

Submit a nomination for the 2023 Alumni Awards by emailing alumni@stcl.edu.



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2022 GALA

1. Paul Easterwood; Prof. Pamela George; Nikki and Benny Agosto '95
2. Ricardo Ruiz; John Nechman '95; Mitchell Katine '85; Walter Katine
3. Brenda Lanza; Nick Lanza '89
4. Corey Kronzer '15; Rachel Kronzer; Wally Kronzer '87; Kathy Kronzer; Lee Barry; Dean Michael Barry; Sari Kronzer '07; Chris Kronzer '07
5. Mike Martin '85; Walton-Gray Martin; Randy Howry '85; Baker Howry '22; Daniel Howry; Julia Howry; Ivan De Leon; Katelyn De Leon



5



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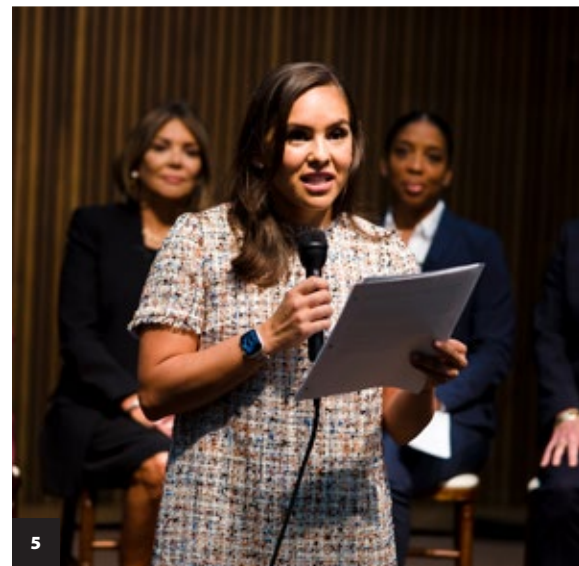
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FAMILY DAY AT HOUSTON ZOO

1. Kristin Hoover '10; Geoff Hoover '10; Katherine Hoover; Madeline Hoover
2. Bianca Edwards '10; Elizabeth Edwards
3. Aparna Dave '02; Dean Michael Barry
4. Dr. Mahtab Purewal '01; Daya Purewal

WOMEN IN THE LAW PANEL

5. Samantha Torres '13
6. Regina Bynote Jones '88, Chief Legal Officer, Baker Hughes ; Jackie Alvarenga Gerber '12, Partner, Mayer LLP; Kim Ogg '86, District Attorney, Harris County District Attorney's Office; Brittny Mandarino Curry '20, Public Defender, Harris County Public Defender's Office; Prof. Elaine Carlson '79, The Stanley J. Krist Distinguished Professor; The Hon. Eva Guzman '89, Partner, Wright Close & Barger, LLP; The Hon. Theresa Chang '96, Fmr. Presiding Judge, Harris County Civil Court at Law #2



6

CLASS NOTES

1970 - 1979



J. Alexander Johnson '75, an accomplished trial lawyer, is an active member of the Massachusetts, Michigan, and Texas bars. He recently published in the *Michigan Bar Journal*: "The Theory of the

Case, Persuasive Legal Writing, Cyber Security & Insurance, Deontology and Deontology Part II." Johnson also published in the *New York State Bar Association Journal*: "Title IX-Deliberate Indifference Hurdle, A Primer on Covid-19 and Insurance and Equine Law and Insurance."

Johnson also is a significant contributor to the Texas Bar publications, *Washington Lawyer* (District of Columbia Bar), and Maryland Bar journals.



Steve McGuire '76, retired Chief Judge, Federal Trade Commission, is now the author of two political thrillers: *Prior Restraint* and *Fractured Power*.

1980 - 1989

Steve Laird '80 of the Law Offices of Steven C. Laird, P.C. was included in *Fort Worth Magazine's* 2021 Top Attorney list and recognized for his representation of individuals in personal injury disputes.



Michael Clark '82 recently joined Womble Bond Dickinson, a business litigation practice group and white-collar defense, investigations, and regulatory enforcement team, as senior counsel.



Judith Ramsey '84 has joined the law firm Clark Hill in its litigation practice as senior counsel in Houston, where she will focus on representing government entities, among other matters.



Roland Garcia '86 served as co-chair for the Sept. 29, 2022, grand unveiling of the Latino cARTographies, the first portable, bilingual, and interactive digital platform in

the nation that maps Latino artwork and culture. He also chaired and emceed the Houston Hispanic Heritage Awards ceremony Oct. 19, 2022, and has been named to the list of Best Lawyers in America.

Mike Hancock '87 and **Claire Hancock '91** are well-respected attorneys at Hancock Injury Lawyers, based in the Tampa, Fla., area, who handle personal injury cases. The law firm is currently up for a "Best of the Bay" nomination for "Best Law Firm" in the area.



Randy Sorrels '87 received the 2022 Trial Lawyer of the Year Award from the Texas Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates. This prestigious award is given to the lawyer who has shown excellence

in advocacy, a distinguished career, a superb reputation of high ethics and fair play, recent outstanding results, service to ABOTA, and exemplification of its ideals.

"This is one of the highlights of my career, and I am thankful to TEX-ABOTA, my partner and

wife Alex, as well as the other attorneys and team members at Sorrels Law," said Randy Sorrels. Randy Sorrels is board certified in personal injury trial law and civil trial law by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.

1990 - 1999



James Alpert '93 is now a shareholder in Posz Law Group, PLC., a patent preparation and prosecution boutique in the Washington D.C. suburbs. The firm recently was recognized by www.

patentbots.com, a well-known patent statistics enterprise, as being one of the top firms nationally for patent quality.



Benny Agosto, Jr. '95 received the 2022 Reynaldo G. Garza Lifetime Achievement Award from the Hispanic Issues Section of the State Bar of Texas. The award is given each year to an attorney or judge

who has demonstrated a long commitment to and made great achievement in addressing concerns and issues affecting the Hispanic community and the Hispanic Bar in Texas. The recipient must be a member in good standing who has worked toward advancing diversity and access to justice in the practice of law.



Michael Lyons '99, co-founder of Lyons & Simmons, LLP, has earned recognition on the Lawdragon 500 list of Leading Plaintiff Consumer Lawyers for 2022. The Lawdragon legal guide makes its selections based

on peer review and careful research. He and several Lyons & Simmons colleagues also

have also awarded the Dallas Trial Lawyers Association's prestigious 2021 John Howie Award, which is presented annually to attorneys and their clients in recognition of "the courageous pursuit of justice in the face of adversity." The honor is based on the trial team's work representing an Alabama mother who lost three children in a tragic West Texas highway accident.

2000 - 2009



Marianne Robak '04 joined the firm Shackelford, Bowen, McKinley & Norton as partner.

Michael John Gutheinz '06 and **James O'Leary Gutheinz '10**, partners at Gutheinz Law Firm, LLP, both received a promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. Mike served in Afghanistan after graduating from law school, and Jim is a past company commander at Ellington Field. The Gutheinz brothers are both third-generation attorneys and third-generation military officers.

Tiffany A. Harrod '07 and **Adam J. Richie '07**, shareholders with Munch Hardt, were both recently ranked by *Chambers USA* – Up and Coming, Construction – Texas 2022.

2010 - 2019

Alina Morros '10 was promoted to partner at the Fiol Law Group, prompting a name change for the firm to Fiol & Morros Law Group. The Fiol & Morros Law Group is a client-focused personal injury practice serving the Tampa Bay area.

Susan Soto '10 was appointed as Commissioner of the City of Missouri City (Texas) Ethics Commission in July 2022.



Joseph Colvin Jr. '11 joined Shackelford, Bowen, McKinley & Norton, LLP Houston's office as litigation associate. Colvin's practice focuses on fiduciary duty issues, commercial disputes, non-competition

agreements, fraud, trade secrets, contract disputes, and bankruptcy litigation.



Lindsey Moorhead '11 and Chris Beard welcomed Andi Jordan Beard, 7 lbs. 2 oz., July 12, 2022.



Eleina and **Paul Wyatt '13** welcomed their first child, Alice Anne Wyatt, Aug. 8, 2022.

Andrea Roth '14 joined Sorrels Law in summer 2022. Andrea also is the president-elect of the Houston Trial Lawyers Association.

Kendall Speer '14 was named partner at Crady Jewett McCulley & Houren LLP in January 2022.

Michael Cohodes '16 was named partner at Stephenson Fournier, PLLC in January 2022.

Jonathan Taylor Pace '17 was promoted to the position of associate at Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner.

Will Farmer '18 was promoted to the position of associate at Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner.

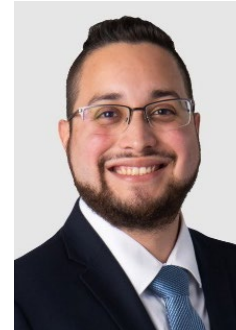


David Z. Gutierrez '19 is a lawyer with the Gutierrez Law Firm.



Soroush Montazari '19 joined Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner as an associate.

2020 - 2019



Wady Rahbani-Chavez '20 was promoted to the position of associate at Abraham, Watkins, Nichols, Agosto, Aziz & Stogner.



Ethan Q. Szumanski '22 is the official law fellow for the Special Litigation Division of the Texas Attorney General's office.

The Class Notes section relies on submissions from alumni. Please share your career and personal updates at my.stcl.edu for inclusion in the next issue of InRe.

IN MEMORIAM

1940-1969

Helen Willis '41
Joseph G. Ginn '55
Joseph P. McGowan Jr '56
The Honorable Danny R. Edwards '58
The Honorable Carl J. Schwartz '59
Joseph E. Naron Jr '62
Elton S. Lipnick '62
Edwin S. Mabry '63
L. Giles Rusk '66
Theodore F. Trigg '68
Armando P. Martinez '68
Clayton J. Bushman '69

1970-1979

Ronald N. Hayes '70
John H. Polk '71
H. Michael Gross '71
Karl Dorr '72
Roy N. Hearne '73
Philip D. Dixon III '73
Robert R. Gregory '73
Lester H. Slobin '73
Randall J. Shafer '74
Connie F. Steele '74
The Honorable Robert A. Foster Jr '75
Edward D. Urquhart '76
Nicholas M. Matassini '76
Byron K. Lovelace '78

1980-1989

Lilla G. Sullivan '80
The Honorable Sara A. Hartin '80
Lawrence M. Cohen '80
Joseph D. Butters '82
Marvin E. Chernosky Jr '83
Kathleen E. Matheu '83
Mary V. Cartner '83
Lenda R. Bush '85
Mark E. Price '85
Mary A. Bellatti '87
Susan A. Coleman '89

1990-1999

Patricia D. Mobley '91
Kellye L. Heasley '92
Virginia L. Lootens '95
Barry R. Geisler '96
Maurice A. Parker Sr '98
The Honorable Debra Ibarra Mayfield '99
Jeffrey J. Conway '99

2000-2022

David M. Freeman '00
Amanda L. Shaw-Castro '09
Katherine A. Gorry '13
Lance D. Sharp Jr '22

*Honoring
those we
lost in 2022*

As of print deadline; if we've missed someone,
please notify alumni@stcl.edu.

Bruce W. Burton



Bruce W. Burton, 83, died June 11, 2022. He joined the STCL Houston faculty in 1987 as a visiting professor of law, was promoted to professor in fall 1988, and taught at South Texas until 1999. Prior to coming to South Texas, he was dean of William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul, Minn., and a partner at Dorsey & Whitney in Minneapolis.

Professor Burton was a recognized authority in real estate transactions. He served as a special consultant to the State Bar of Minnesota and to the U.S. Marshals Service, and he was elected to the American College of Real Estate Lawyers.

Professor Burton was the beloved husband to Marlyse, father to six children, grandfather to eight grandchildren, and great-grandfather to one great grand-daughter. 🍀

H. Michael Gross '71



Harris Michael Gross – a proud South Texas alumnus, donor, and friend – died in Tyler, Texas, on December 11, 2022, at age 79. Gross earned degrees from Bradley University, the Thunderbird School of Global Management, and South Texas College of Law Houston. He practiced law in Houston before returning to Tyler in 1985 to become the U.S. Chapter 13 Bankruptcy

Trustee. In 2004 Mike retired from the practice of law and concentrated on his lifelong involvement with markets, trading, and investing.

Gross served as president of Congregation Beth El. He established the Sam & Ruth Gross Memorial Scholarship in 2005, and he was actively involved with meeting the recipients of the scholarship and monitoring their progress. The award provides financial support to minority students attending South Texas. 🍀

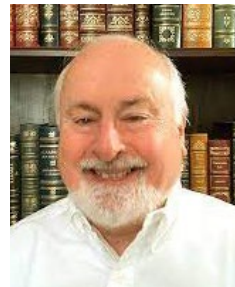
The Hon. Debra Ibarra Mayfield '99



The Hon. Debra Ibarra Mayfield, STCL Houston graduate and board member, passed away March 11 at age 47 after a two-year battle with cancer. She proudly served as the first Latina judge in Harris County civil courts.

In a 2016 endorsement, the Houston Chronicle's Editorial Board said Judge Mayfield brought "a refreshing openness to the bench." Described as "a person of deep faith" by Roland Garcia '86, a lawyer who met her when she was a law student, she gave back to her community in meaningful ways as a judge and president of the Mexican American Bar Association of Houston. 🍀

The Hon. Peter Murphy



Former South Texas Law faculty member the Hon. Peter Murphy died July 29 at age 76. He was a faculty member from 1984 to 2007 and for 10 years led the South Texas trial advocacy competition teams. He wrote *Murphy on Evidence*, and his legal work included years in The Hague as defense counsel at the Yugoslavian War Crimes Tribunal and as a Crown Court Judge in England. Judge Murphy also taught in Paris and Bordeaux, working with French judges and prosecutors on the basic principles of common law and improving their English. He was also a polyglot, a keen chess player, and a novelist. 🍀

Michael E. "Mike" Wheeler



Retired STCL Houston Professor and Associate Dean Michael E. "Mike" Wheeler, 72, died May 28. A 1972 graduate of Arkansas Tech, he served four years as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Afterward, he attended the University of Arkansas Little Rock School of Law, graduating in 1979. During his legal career, he served as a deputy prosecuting attorney in Sebastian County, an assistant attorney general for the State of Arkansas, and for more than 30 years as a law professor at STCL Houston. 🍀

To make a gift in tribute of someone, please visit my.stcl.edu/tribute.

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South Texas COLLEGE OF LAW — HOUSTON — 1923 - 2023

SHARE YOUR STORY WITH US

As we look to our centennial anniversary, we know our alumni community represents the fulfillment of the mission of South Texas — using their excellent legal education to serve the community and profession with distinction.

To help celebrate this incredible milestone anniversary, we want to tell the stories of our alumni and highlight the successes our graduates have enjoyed.

To participate, please visit my.stcl.edu and click on the “Alumni Spotlight Survey” bar. Remember to include your headshot!

We plan to share these Q&A responses on our social media platforms, in alumni newsletters, and in alumni publications throughout the Centennial.

Thank you for helping us honor the legacy of STCL Houston.

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE OF LAW HOUSTON

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President and Dean

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*Vice President and Associate Dean for
Experiential Education*

Darcy Douglas '07
*Vice President, Advancement and Alumni
Engagement*

Ted L. Field
*Vice President and Associate Dean for
Faculty*

Robert L. Galloway '91
*Vice President, Advocacy,
W. James Kronzer Jr.
Distinguished Professor of Advocacy*

Mandi Gibson
*Vice President, Student Services and
Support*

Bridgett N. Johnson
Chief Administrative Officer

Randy Marak
Vice President, Information Technology

Shelby A.D. Moore
*Vice President, Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion*

Cherie O. Taylor
*Vice President and Associate Dean for
Academics*

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Carl Shaw '90
René Sigman '02
Hon. D'Lisa Simmons '90
Bradley Tegeler '02
Paul Wyatt '13

Making a Planned Gift, Creating a Legacy

The **Honorable Jay Karahan '83** didn't expect to move to Texas for law school, much less spend his decades-long career in Houston. When Tampa-born Karahan graduated from Florida State University with his bachelor's degree, he assumed his home state of Florida was where he would stay.

On the advice of Florida-based alumnus and former South Texas College of Law Houston board member E.J. Salcines '63, Karahan visited South Texas and decided to pursue his dream of becoming a trial lawyer.

His career path would lead him from ADA to federal prosecutor to corporate lawyer and, ultimately, to elected official, as judge of Harris County Criminal Court-at-Law No. 8. After more than 15 years and three re-elections, Karahan retired from active judicial service in 2018.

Karahan made a planned gift to STCL Houston because he sees it as a way of paying forward the opportunities law school gave him. He hopes other alumni will do the same.

"Legacy giving is a great idea, and I'd encourage all alumni to do something — large or small," Karahan said. "If more alumni choose to create a legacy at the law school, STCL Houston will be in very good shape far into the future. It's a great law school, and I'm so proud to support it."

Become a Member of the Fred Parks Legacy Society

The Fred Parks Legacy Society, a tribute to our late 1937 alumnus and Texas legal legend Fred Parks, was established in 2007. Through his estate plan, Parks left a bequest to South Texas, making it the largest planned gift in the almost 100-year history of the law school. This society serves as a way to honor donors who have made a planned gift and continue Mr. Parks' tradition of investing in South Texas.



Membership Benefits

- *Invitation to annual appreciation reception*
- *Recognition in donor report*
- *Membership gift*
- *Lapel pin*
- *Access to exclusive content and events*

For more information on how to leave your legacy at South Texas, please visit stcl.planmylegacy.org.



"I couldn't have done all this without South Texas College of Law Houston," he said. "It opened a door for me I never expected. It's given me a satisfying professional life, and I'll always be grateful."

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Contact cso@stcl.edu
to connect with our students and graduates.

stcl.edu/employers



South Texas College of Law Houston provides a diverse body of students with the opportunity to obtain an exceptional legal education, preparing graduates to serve their community and the profession with distinction.