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Before I share a sneak preview of the tremendous stories told within this issue of this year’s Albany Law magazine, I wanted to take a moment to formally introduce myself and share how grateful and elated I am to be your 19th President and Dean.

I come to Albany from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, most recently as Associate Dean for Faculty & Intellectual Life. My academic and professional journey has granted me countless opportunities and experiences. I’ve been fortunate enough to study and work alongside some incredible people throughout my career. It truly is the people that make the place, and I have learned over time that a strong community is the backbone to any successful institution.

In just a few months as President and Dean, I’ve seen the strength, passion, and power of the Albany Law School community. The commitment to this school’s excellence and growth is a true testament to the pride of our alumni and friends. I am so honored to be here and I look forward to learning many more stories, like the ones you’ll read in this magazine, in my travels to visit our alumni and I look forward to welcoming you back to campus on your next visit.

In this issue, you’ll meet more than a dozen graduates who have coupled military service with a legal career. Some are still juggling Army reserve schedules, courtroom appearances, and their kid’s schedules, like Mara Afzali ’17 and Javid Afzali ’12. Mara was also presented the Outstanding Young Alumni Award at this year’s Grand Honors Awards. Some have just started their military service, like Justin Reyes ’18, who felt a strong pull to serve the United States after a few years in private practice.

You’ll also learn more about our new Flex JD program. This new offering will allow students to earn a career-changing law degree while accommodating their schedule and personal and professional responsibilities. We look forward to welcoming our first cohort of Flex JD students in August 2024.

You’ll also hear about the great work our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team has done to make connections with community organizations. Incoming students connect with one another during volunteer activities during Orientation and our pre-Orientation program, Lean Into Success, designed to allow our first generation students and/or students from historically underrepresented groups to gain a greater understanding of the law school environment.

The stories of Justin Miller ’97 and Gretel Ness ’93 illustrate the power and potential of an Albany Law School education. Miller and his wife have revitalized an entertainment venue, Lark Hall, bringing music, culture, and community to a previously vacant space in one of Albany’s most vibrant neighborhoods. Ness has spent her entire career helping people navigate the immigration process.

The people make this place special. We are so proud to celebrate their success at any stage of their careers, from passing the bar exam to retiring after decades of making a difference. I am tremendously inspired and moved by this community and I can’t wait to see what’s to come for this great school.

I look forward to meeting many more alumni and friends. For now, I hope you’ll enjoy these great stories.

Thank you.

CINNAMON P. CARLARNE
President and Dean
Statewide Events Hosted at Albany Law School

TWO EVENTS WITH A STATEWIDE REACH were held at Albany Law School last fall. On September 22, 2022, the annual Fair Trial/Free Press Conference brought together legal professionals and news media leaders to discuss the topic Local Media, the Law, and the Next Pandemic. The hypothetical topic provided an opportunity to dive deep into the ethical issues surrounding media coverage of a public health crisis.

On September 30, 2022, The Upstate New York Health Care Fraud Symposium included panel discussions about identifying, reporting, and combatting health care fraud and prescription drug diversion. The panels included Assistant United States Attorneys from the Northern District of New York in both the Criminal and Civil divisions, representatives from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Inspector General, the Drug Enforcement Administration, private insurance plans, and leading lawyers who practice in these fields.

Alumni make great strides in employment

The Classes of 2021 and 2022 are making great strides in employment. According to the Career and Professional Development Center, the Classes of 2021 and 2022 both have 91 percent employment within 9 months of graduating. The breakdown of career placement is 50 percent law firms, 21 percent government, 10 percent public interest, 10 percent business and industry, 7 percent clerkships, and 2 percent education for the Class of 2021. For the Class of 2022, the breakdown is 56 percent law firms, 24 percent government, 7 percent public interest, 6 percent business and industry, and 7 percent clerkships.
A Lasting Legacy

THE LEGACY PROHIBITION ERA

JUDGE Hon. F. Walter Bliss, class of 1915 will live on through a scholarship in his name. In late 2021, his widow Margaret “Peggy” N. Bliss died. The couple’s estate contained a promise that establish a namesake scholarship through an estate gift.

Judge Bliss presided over a trial of Prohibition gangster and bootlegger Jack “Legs” Diamond—a notorious case in Capitol Region history. On Dec. 17, 1931, the jury returned a not guilty verdict in the brief case against Legs after three hours of deliberation.

Bliss remarked: “While justice may not have triumphed as yet, I doubt the man will enjoy either freedom or his life much longer.”

Late that night, three bullets were fired directly into Diamond’s small bedroom at his home at 67 Dove Street in Albany. His killer or killers were never found.

In 1929, Bliss successfully represented the Town of Gilboa, population 1,200, in a landmark lawsuit against New York City. The Gilboa dam and creek were constructed in the 1920s by impounding the Schoharie Creek with the assumption that New York City would pay local property taxes. The massive dam holds roughly 15 percent of New York City’s drinking water. The construction, essentially, forced all of Gilboa to rebuild. Bliss used some crafty techniques to hold the city accountable for the strain put on the small town. To this day, New York City pays Gilboa an annual sum to use its water.

Student Group Honored by NYSBA

ALBANY LAW SCHOOL’S OUTLaw student group was selected for a New York State Bar Association (NYSBA) President’s Pro Bono Service Award for their work educating the law school community—and greater legal community—on issues relating to the queer community as well as the group’s volunteerism alongside community partners.

Their cornerstone event is a collaboration with the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York (LASSNY). The groups assist transgender individuals with pro se name change paperwork and hope to “make a complicated process more accessible to the transgender individuals who need it.”

OUTLaw aims to provide a safe, welcoming community for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer individuals, as well as for their allies, both on campus and off. The group hosts a variety of events throughout the year including an event for National Coming Out Day, an annual luncheon with established queer legal professionals, and a bi-annual professional headshot event.

OUTLaw collaborated with the Albany Law School Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to help the Pride Center of the Capital Region clean up their outdoor space.

OUTLaw was honored at NYSBA’s Pro Bono Service Awards, held annually on May 1—Law Day.

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ALUMNI IN RESIDENCE

Hollywood Lawyer Returns to NY Roots

ENTERTAINMENT LAWYER Damien Granderson ’03 returned to his alma mater as the latest Alumni in Residence last fall. He spoke with students during a tour of campus and visits to the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and Career and Professional Development Center offices. He presented “How I Got Here” an engaging lecture on his career journey.

The Beverly Hills-based entertainment lawyer—who represents and handles transactions for some of music and entertainment’s biggest stars shared the sentiments during his two-day visit. Granderson is consistently recognized as one of the music and entertainment industry’s most prominent attorneys.

Born in New York City, and spending his formative years on Long Island, Granderson became the first attorney in his family and eventually a founding partner at Granderson Des Rochers, LLP in 2019. He took his first steps toward that Hollywood practice here in upstate New York with his start at Albany Law School.

Prior to launching the firm, Granderson was a partner at Davis Shapiro Lewit Grabel Leven Granderson & Blake, LLP. He began his career in Business & Legal Affairs at Entertainment One, LP (formerly, Koch Entertainment). He received his B.S. in Business Management from Stony Brook University and JD from Albany Law School. He is licensed in both New York and California.

During his visit he recalled formative experiences in Torts classes with former Dean Dale Moore, working with Professor Pamela Armstrong, working on law review, participating (and winning) in Moot Court negotiations competitions, turning to Career and Professional Development Director Joanne Casey for help, and the Socratic Method of teaching.

THE GOVERNMENT LAW CENTER (GLC) at Albany Law School has launched the Improving Interbranch Communication Project to bridge gaps between New York’s Courts and the state’s Executive and Legislative branches.

When courts issue interpretations of statutory and/or regulatory text the Government Law Center leverages its expertise to inform the governor’s office and legislators about the interpretations and explain them in a concise, non-partisan, plain-text, explainer-style memo.

“With this information from the GLC, lawmakers can decide if the language in the statute should be adjusted to ensure it’s being interpreted as it was originally intended,” said Patrick A. Woods ’12, Deputy Director of the Government Law Center.

The creation of the memos is initiated either by Albany Law School students working in the GLC, who review all Appellate Division and Court of Appeals decisions to identify relevant cases, or by reviewing decisions submitted to the GLC by the New York State courts.

Judges interested in submitting new decisions that involve novel issues of statutory or regulatory interpretation and questions about the project can be sent to interbranchcommunication@albanylaw.edu.”
Naturalization Ceremony

ALBANY LAW SCHOOL hosted a naturalization ceremony for approximately three dozen new American citizens.

On Friday, November 18, 2022, the Hon. Christian F. Hummel ’81, Magistrate Judge of the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York, presided over the naturalization ceremony in the Dean Alexander Moot Courtroom.

The program also included opening remarks by President and Dean Emeritus Alicia Ouellette ’94, performance of the national anthem by Alexia Wilson ’24 and remarks by Julia Berry Lopez ’23.
We Are Albany Law portrait installation

A new display in the Schaffer Law Library that honors alumni selected by student affinity groups was unveiled March 6 and features seven Albany Law School graduates. The unveiling kicked off the second annual Diversity Week at Albany Law School, hosted by the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

THE INSTALLATION FEATURES:

The Honorable Elizabeth A. Garry ’90
Honored by the students of OUTLaw

The Honorable Richard Rivera ’91
Honored by the students of the Latin American Law Students Association (LALSA)

The Honorable Zainab A. Chaudhry ’98
Honored by the students of the Muslim Law Students Association (MLSA)

The Honorable Lillian Wan ’00
Honored by the students of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association (APALSA)

Prof. Daniel C. Bollana ’16
Honored by the students of the Italian American Law Student Association (IALSA)

Alicia F. Johnson ’20
Honored by the students of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA)

Kristen A. Davis ’22
Honored by the students of The Women’s Law Caucus

The Albany Law School Board of Trustees spent time with the 3L Class when many were on campus for their quarterly meeting. Members of the Class of 2023 were able to mingle and network with the trustees during this event.

Clockwise from left: Trustee Jim Hacker ’84 chats with a student, Trustee Hon. Elizabeth Garry ’90 and Allison Magnarelli ’23, and Trustee Robert Capers ’96 and students.
De Barbieri Earns Two High Honors

ALBANY LAW SCHOOL Associate Professor Ted W. De Barbieri, director of the Community Economic Development Clinic within The Edward P. Swyer Justice Center, earned two high accolades from The Association of American Law Schools (AALS).

In February, he was named one of five 2023-24 Bellow Scholars. The AALS Section on Clinical Legal Education’s Committee on Lawyering in the Public Interest selects a new cohort of law professors every two years to recognize and support innovative research proposals designed to improve the quality of justice in communities, enhance the delivery of legal services, and promote economic and social justice.

De Barbieri was selected for his extensive scholarship on place-based capital raising. The Bellow Scholars program honors Professor Gary Bellow, a pioneering founder of modern clinical legal education. The program supports law professors who employ empirical analysis, connect research to advocacy, and involve substantial collaboration between law and other academic disciplines.

The Scholars will undertake research projects examining a range of legal topics in collaboration with community economic development, social science, legal education, and criminal justice researchers and practitioners.

In late 2022, he was named an inaugural member of Association of American Law Schools’ (AALS) Pro Bono Honor Roll.

“The AALS Pro Bono Honor Roll acknowledges and highlights the exceptional work of individuals engaging in, expanding, and/or supporting their law school community in providing pro bono legal services,” the organization wrote when it released the list.

Overall, 58 law schools from around the country submitted nearly 140 individuals for inclusion on the 2022 list.

In February, Professor Ava Ayers was confirmed by New York State Attorney General Letitia James to serve on the New York State Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government.

The Commission, comprised of 11 members, works to ensure compliance with the State’s ethics and lobbying laws and regulations. The Commission has jurisdiction over state agencies and departments including statewide elected officials, executive and legislative branch officers and employees, State public benefit corporations, and the SUNY and CUNY systems, among others.

Ayers has been a faculty member at Albany Law School since 2016, and spent five years as the Director of the Government Law Center. Ayers teaches courses in administrative law, government law and policy, civil procedure, and ethics and professional responsibility. She also serves as faculty advisor to the Government Law Review.

“I’m deeply honored to have been confirmed. I look forward to working to make government better and more trustworthy for the people of New York,” Ayers said.

In brief

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ALBANY LAW SCHOOL’S annual celebration of women in law, named for its first female graduate and the first woman to practice law in New York—brought energy and inspiration to the community.

Hon. Teneka E. Frost ’02—Schenectady’s first Black City Court judge—was the recipient of the prestigious Miriam M. Netter ’72 Kate Stoneman Award.

“Today I not only get to tell my story, but tell it through the lens of Kate Stoneman. I admire leaders, people who are bold enough to say, ‘I’m going to change the world’ and then pave their own path to do it. Kate Stoneman did that. She was a visionary. She didn’t waste an opportunity. She fulfilled her purpose to use her education to uplift her community,” Frost said.

Additionally, Hon. Patricia Marks ’74, the first female full-time Assistant District Attorney in the Monroe County District Attorney’s Office, and Secretary Alejandra N. Paulino ’02, the first Latina to serve as the Secretary of the New York Senate were honored with Kate Stoneman awards.

“As I’ve gone through Albany Law School today and seen the changes, the number of women here and the women who are just so talented and interested in the efforts to deal with the issues [such as] domestic violence. Some things haven’t changed, but I think this class of Albany Law School here, whom I’ve met today, is going to change some of that,” Marks said.

Paulino thanked her family and mentors who gave her a chance over the years, particularly members of the New York State Senate and James E. Long, who she worked for before joining the state government.

“They’ve always believed in me when I didn’t know even who I was. And that’s so powerful for someone who really, when they walked out of the capitol, didn’t see anybody else that looked like them. The New York State Senate for me, had always been the place that I went to. It is still home for me because there were people from all over...as you continue and you become trailblazers in your own right, I will say get that person and be that person to others who says “I see you.”
THE PLACE KNOWN for combining theory and practice and serving as an in-house public interest law firm, providing free legal services to eligible clients in the Capital Region is now named after a generous person who believes in the mission, work, and future of Albany Law School.

The Edward P. Swyer Justice Center at Albany Law School was officially renamed after Swyer, who has been an extraordinarily loyal donor and supporter.

The official renaming ceremony on May 2, 2023, preceded the unveiling of new signage on Albany Law School’s 2000 Building and an official proclamation by the law school’s Board of Trustees.

Swyer and his family and their gifts of time, philanthropy, and expertise—helped build and grow clinical programs within The Justice Center, specifically the Community and Economic Development Clinic. They generously created an endowment to support The Justice Center in perpetuity in 2019.

“I am so overwhelmed and humbled but so proud by this dedication today. I am especially thankful to be here today with my family,” Swyer said. Ed Swyer has effectively carried on the philanthropic mission of his father, Lewis A. Swyer. Both wanted to help Capital Region residents with business ideas and entrepreneurial dreams, but who might not have the financial means to do so.

“His focus was to eliminate poverty by investing in individuals in poorer neighborhoods,” Swyer said of his father to dozens of friends, family, and local dignitaries who attended the ceremony. “He would provide a loan to individuals without credit, assets, or a banking history. But, they had the insatiable desire to create a better life for themselves and their family by starting a business.”

The renaming is the latest of many
connections between the Swyer family and Albany Law. Though not an attorney himself, Ed Swyer received an honorary degree from the law school in 2018 and in 2008 the law school honored him with the Trustees Gold Medal, the law school’s highest accolade. The medal is awarded annually to an individual with a record of exemplary support and dedication to the advancement of the school.

Then there is the work of Lewis A. Swyer’s construction company —The L.A. Swyer Co., Inc.— building the Schaffer Law Library in 1986. The “building within a building” design was ambitious and one of his father’s proudest projects, Ed Swyer said.

The elder Swyer also started a namesake scholarship which eventually expanded into the Lewis A. Swyer Academic Success Program. That program provides academic support workshops for first-year law students.

Finally, there are the strong connections with the Community Economic Development Clinic (CEDC) which started in 2016. Ed Swyer has been a crucial part of the clinic’s growth and the incredible regional impact it has on the Capitol Region.

“With the Community Economic Development Clinic, we identify individuals with the desire, ability, and idea for a business. Most of all, those individuals had a dream for a better life,” Swyer said.

The 8th Annual Katheryn D. Katz ’70 Memorial Lecture Series brought Rachel Rebouché, Dean of Temple University’s Beasley School of Law and the James E. Beasley Professor of Law to present “Remote Reproductive Rights.” This lecture maps the emergence of virtual abortion care and analyzes the potential trajectory of medication abortion access, given that the Supreme Court has overturned constitutional protections for abortion. It considers the limits of telehealth for abortion—who telehealth can reach and who it cannot. It also examines how portability of abortion pills, when mailed by prescribers or dispensed by certified pharmacies, will test how closely states officials (or anyone else) can police or impede access to medication abortion.

Cheers to our New Lawyers!

In January, faculty and staff joined graduates and their families to celebrate their admission to the New York Bar.
The graduates of the Class of 2023 began law school at a time of tremendous uncertainty. Many chose Albany Law School sight unseen and endured constant change. They took some of the final steps of their Albany Law journeys on May 19, 2023 at Saratoga Performing Arts Center during the school’s 172nd Commencement.

Overall, 202 graduates—172 JD, 17 M.S., and 13 LL.M.—crossed the stage with some traveling from Oregon, Florida, Puerto Rico, and Switzerland.

In her final Commencement speech, President and Dean Emeritus Alicia Ouellette ’94 shared wisdom from her tenure as Albany Law’s leader and as a law student just like the hundreds in front of her.

“The people who stand the most to lose from the battles raging us today do not have the privilege of being here in this ceremony today. They need your help now, more than ever.” — Roberta Kaplan
I started with ‘No, because,” Ouellette remembered about her time trying to get through law school while starting her family. She had two children while attending classes. “My mentor challenged me to change my frame, to start from ‘Yes, if’ instead.”

“You, the Class of 2023 are the ‘yes if’ class. Facing extraordinary challenges, you could have given the no because, and stopped. You had every reason to put off law school; but you made it work. You had every reason to compromise, but you refused. Finding a way to get to yes, and launch your professional career,” she said. “This perseverance, this willingness to consider possibilities will serve you well in your careers. When presented with an opportunity to grow as a professional, I hope you’ll start with yes if, making room for the possibility that you can grow and achieve, just as you have done during your time as an Albany Law student.”

The Commencement keynote speaker, Roberta ‘Robbie’ Kaplan, offered further guidance to the graduating class.

“When you wake up tomorrow and the next day, and the day after that, persist as members of the profession, you will be entrusted with the responsibility to protect the constitution of this great state of New York and the Constitution of the United States of America. The people who stand the most to lose from the battles raging today do not have the privilege of being here in this ceremony today. They need your help now, more than ever,” she said.

FACULTY AWARDS
Professor Ava Ayers received the Faculty Award for Excellence in Scholarship.
Professor Patricia Reyhan received the Faculty Award for Excellence in Service.
Professor Alex Seita received the Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching.
AN ON-CAMPUS CELEBRATION to honor the tremendous career of Albany Law School’s President and Dean Emeritus Alicia Ouellette ’94 was filled with memories, laughs, and a few fun surprises. Many faculty members, students, and Ouellette’s family spoke sharing memories of her leadership and her influence as an academic and friend. Ouellette concluded her time as President and Dean on June 30 and she plans to return as a faculty member after some time off.
EXPANDING ACCESS TO AN ALBANY LAW EDUCATION

New flexible program brings access to a JD to a new group of students—on their schedule

AN ALBANY LAW SCHOOL education and Juris Doctor degree are more accessible than ever before.

Starting in August 2024, the law school will welcome its first class in its new Flex Juris Doctor program. The program allows students to pursue a law degree—primarily online and on their schedule—without relocating or disrupting their current professional or personal responsibilities.

Delivered through online classes and one in-person intensive session per year, the program combines asynchronous and synchronous coursework taught by Albany Law School’s top-notch faculty through required and elective courses in the residential JD program, clinics, externships, and immersive experiential learning opportunities.

The degree springs from the law school’s new strategic plan, From Innovation to Opportunity.

“Our continuing goal is to make access to justice and legal education broader, attainable, and ubiquitous. This program embodies, exemplifies, and embraces that,” said Albany Law School President and Dean Cinnamon P. Carlarne. “Our new Flex JD program harnesses not only the latest technical innovation, but the deep breadth of legal scholarship and knowledge that our faculty bring to the education experience for all of our students.”

“An important part of an Albany Law School education is the community building, and we have come together to bring that into the Flex program. Something I’ve been particularly proud of is the collaboration. We’ve worked closely with the faculty, administration, staff and students. And there’s been support from across the law school for it,” said Rosenbloom. He is serving as the Director of the Flex JD program. “So many have contributed to ensure we have a fully thought out, developed, and strong program.”

The program came together through the collaboration of faculty from across the school, led by Queenan and Professor of Law Jonathan Rosenbloom, and has been approved by the American Bar Association.

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“Our new Flex JD program harnesses not only the latest technical innovation, but the deep breadth of legal scholarship and knowledge that our faculty bring to the education experience for all of our students.”

“Our goal is to expand access to legal education by providing this program for students who may not have a law school near where they live or have other obligations and responsibilities and can on participate in a program with flexibility,” said Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Rosemary Queenan. “It’s the same JD program, with the same requirements and the same experience. They will have an experiential requirement and we will work with them to find a placement that works with their schedule and their circumstances.”

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The Flex JD will offer specializations in areas where the law school already has robust offerings in Business Law, Environmental and Climate Law, Government Law and Public Service, and Social Justice and Public Interest.

“We’re fortunate that we’ve developed a number of programs already for our residential program that we could tap into. We’re also going to expand our course offerings, in developing some of the specialty tracks. Our new courses will also benefit to our residential students because they can take some online courses too,” Queenan said.

* On campus
** In-person or experiential learning
The journey for Albany Law School’s new President and Dean Cinnamon P. Carlarne began in Waco, TX where she grew up in a family driven by the power of education. She enrolled at Baylor University as a University Scholar. While at Baylor, Dean Carlarne developed a passion for law and public policy, particularly environmental law and policy. She further developed this focus at the UC Berkeley School of Law, where Dean Carlarne honed her belief in the rule of law as a tool for positive change and focused her legal research on International Environmental Law and Climate Change. Dean Carlarne has since produced an impressive array of publications, including dozens of law review articles and several books on the topic. Dean Carlarne continued her education as a prestigious Marshall Scholar at the University of Oxford, where she earned a Bachelor of Civil Law (BCL) and a master’s degree in environmental change and management. She later returned to Oxford as the Keeley Visiting Fellow at Wadham College. Prior to joining Albany Law School, Dean Carlarne served on the faculty at the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law between 2011-2023, where she ultimately rose to the position of Associate Dean for Faculty & Intellectual Life and was named as the Robert J. Lynn Chair in Law.

After a comprehensive and highly competitive search for the next leader of Albany Law School, the board of trustees, the faculty, and our community chose Dean Carlarne to carry the law school forward.

Dean Carlarne’s first official day as President and Dean was July 1, 2023. She jumped right in, getting to know staff, faculty, and community members immediately.

“I have been struck by the depth and breadth of the Albany Law community. Albany Law alumni can be found in leadership roles across the state and nation, from representation in the judiciary, the legislature, leading firms, state and local bar associations, and beyond. The Albany Law community is deeply rooted and very supportive of one another and our students,” she said.

In mid-August, she joined first-year students for orientation and a new program called Lean Into Success, organized by the office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for first generation and historically underrepresented groups.

“I loved the Lean Into Success event and what it said about who we are as a community. We are creating intentional space in for students who come from historically underrepresented backgrounds or haven’t had access to legal education,” she said. “The Lean Into Success students entered Orientation with a strong sense of self and a firm foundation for success in legal education. On top of this, our first-year orientation program is very intentionally designed to foster
More than half of Albany Law School students identify as women, but only 37 percent of American lawyers are female, according to the American Bar Association.

The road to equity is long, but Albany Law School trailblazers are paving that path for others to follow. Many of these alumnae are the first woman and/or woman of color to serve on a particular bench or hold an office and be the knowledgeable, accomplished, and courageous leaders we know they are.
both community-building and educational success. It is a strong, positive indication of Albany Law’s commitment to student success and well-being.”

**The new Strategic Plan**

Dean Carlarne arrived at Albany Law School at a transformative moment in the school’s nearly 175-year history. Invigorated by the successful We Rise Together capital campaign, the law school Board of Trustees approved a new strategic plan, “From Innovation to Opportunity,” to propel the school forward.

The plan rests on three core goals:

- transformational competencies
- innovation across the curriculum
- student-centered focus

Dean Carlarne has a vision for building upon Albany Law School’s existing successes and bringing in her own expertise and experience to help Albany Law School bring the plan to life.

“So much thought and energy has been put into the strategic plan. It is a rare moment when everyone comes together to think collectively about who we are and who we want to be,” she said. “As a community, we are focused on infusing the curriculum with transformational competencies and opportunities for experiential learning in ways that will position our students to be effective advocates and leaders in a rapidly changing legal environment.” Dean Carlarne has presented a framework for implementation that centers around an **Innovative Education, Institutional Resilience & Inclusive Community**.

As part of this process, Dean Carlarne has already identified major strengths of the law school, which include the embedded and institutional flexibility inherent in being an independent law school, strong community partnerships, a commonality of purpose, a commitment to experiential learning and a caring and nurturing community. These strengths have allowed Albany Law School to be responsive to changes in the legal environment, as well as the changing needs of our students.

“One of the strengths that drew me to Albany Law School is the nimbleness that institutional independence allows. It allows us to build community in intentional ways and respond to trends in legal education,” she said.

**A Unique Position**

“The duality of the President and Dean role ties in nicely to my academic work in many ways. When we think about climate change and making progress in the climate arena, we think about both deep theoretical and practical questions, including what professionalism and ethics means as lawyers meet real-world demands. An immense amount of thinking on the academic side is grounded by thinking about policy applications and how people’s needs require real change and real progress. I think about the Dean and President role in that way. The approach has many facets and demands, and it spans both the process and depth of student learning and the reality of making sure that Albany Law School is strong and steady as an institution,” she said.

“As President and Dean, one is involved in everything from student affairs, teaching, scholarship, the health and well-being of the institution, governance, and financial health,” she said. “A leadership approach that takes account of the holistic picture allows the law school to be more successful because it guards against fragmented decision making. That’s the advantage of combining these critical roles. Of course, it can be challenging, especially where different needs and demands may appear to require discrete thinking: questions about curriculum questions coverage or hiring needs might not draw from the same data or knowledge as a capital campaign. But, in my view, these questions should not be thought of as separate. They are all part of the overall health and the functioning of the law school.”

**Implementing the Plan**

Dean Carlarne will pursue six strategic priorities in the coming year. First, the school will to continue to strengthen the JD Program by infusing transformational competencies across the curriculum and emphasizing curricular innovation, experiential education, modernized assessment practices, and legal technology proficiency. This will include, for example, expanding capstone courses, reinvigorating a teaching innovation workshop, integrating legal technology into the existing curriculum and developing new curricular programming around legal technology and the changing nature of legal work.

“We are continuing to adapt to the changing legal landscape, which creates tremendous opportunities to rethink our curricular commitments, hiring decisions, and even institu-
tional building blocks such as the student honor code and exam administration. We can address big questions—not in a rushed manner, but in an intentional and responsive way that recognizes that the ongoing nature of the learning process,” she said.

Second, Dean Carlarne will work with the leadership team to further institutionalize Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion across and beyond the law school with an emphasis on systemic change, including through continuing efforts to improve the admissions process and enrollment management, a commitment to improved hiring processes, expanded institutional advancement focus on all of our alumni constituencies, a commitment to engaged faculty and staff training, and a deepening of institutional forms of accountability.

Third, Dean Carlarne will focus on strengthening and expanding Albany Law School’s already field-leading Graduate and Professional Legal Education Programs with an emphasis on intentional growth, maintaining the Albany Law School brand, increasing access to legal education, and expanding revenue opportunities.

Albany Law is already at the forefront of responding to emerging opportunities in legal education.

“This fall we announced a new Flex JD Program which will expand access to high quality legal education. We anticipate attracting new students, particularly ones unable to navigate the many hurdles that people often face when considering law school.”

This hybrid program will allow for online, flexible participation, but will include a residency requirement for courses that demand a residential learning context. The first class of Flex JD students will enroll for the Fall Semester of 2024.

Fourth, Albany Law School will continue to focus on bar success and career opportunities: Here, the focus will be on improving students’ bar success through continued development of bar support programs, and continued deepening of the school’s already excellent career placement programs. As part of these efforts, Dean Carlarne will work with the leadership team to focus on expanding pipelines to practice and maximizing career and professional placement, including through institutional-wide preparation for NextGen Bar, expanding alternative career opportunities, creating new experiential education opportunities (such as, perhaps, a criminal justice clinic), and thickening curricular and programmatic emphasis on personal identity formation.

“In the area of career opportunities, we have already seen great success. Albany Law School takes enormous pride in a 91% job placement rate, which puts us near the top of law schools nationwide,” said Dean Carlarne.

The Dean’s final two priorities focus on advancing institutional resiliency and excellence and improving the financial strength of the law school and the Albany Law brand and reputation. Through modernized data and IT systems, continued growth of a world class workforce, appropriate improvements to the physical plant, and continued thinking about creating functional and welcoming student spaces, the law school can make life on campus stronger. To that end, Dean Carlarne is reviewing the spaces that Albany students utilize from the law library to the cafeteria.

“We need to make our space more welcoming and useable for our students so that our physical spaces reflect our commitment to community,” said Dean Carlarne, “It may mean that it is time for a true student center in the core of the 1928 building”.

Prepared to Face Challenges

Challenges are inevitable. Indeed, legal education has navigated a variety of difficulties. Dean Carlarne intends to lead through listening and harnessing the collective wisdom of the Albany Law School community.

“Serving in this leadership role is an honor and a privilege. In my view, as a leader the focus has to be on harnessing the strengths and collective energy of the community. I think of leadership as the convergence of a commitment to inclusivity, listening, and of course being willing to make tough decisions,” she said. “My priority has been on getting to know the community and identifying core areas where we have strengths that we can elevate and opportunities we can grasp. Albany Law School is a center of excellence underpinned by a community the strength of which is unrivaled. Our future is very bright.”
INCREASING VOLUNTEERISM at Albany Law School has fostered a new sense of community and created connections off campus. Community service is part of new student Orientation and the pre-Orientation Lean Into Success program for first generation and students from historically excluded communities focused on developing a sense of belonging and confidence by engaging with alumni, current students, faculty, and staff while getting acclimated to the rigors of the law school classroom.

Owen Collier, Coordinator of Student Programs, hopes collaborations and connections like these become a regular part of the student experience at Albany Law School.

“We are looking forward to expanding collaboration, continuing to find new groups to introduce our students, and making connections within the community. It’s something that we’re always looking at. It’s been wonderful to see students connect with leaders in these spaces,” he said.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion also regularly collaborates with student groups and community causes to bring aid opportunities to campus. These efforts include a collaboration with Muslim Law Student Association and the Student Bar Association to collect clothing and supplies for earthquake victims in Turkey and Syria; a collection of hygiene and personal care products for Equinox Inc.; a food drive for Thanksgiving to New Hope Church and Oakwood Community Center. There have also been opportunities like Tasty Tuesdays, a collaborative bake sale with proceeds supporting a community partner.

Another staff member who pioneers this work at Albany Law School is Bria Barnes-Coleman, the Assistant Director for Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives. Before beginning her work here at the law school, Barnes-Coleman already started building a network with the community here in the Capital Region.

Ashli Fragomeni, Executive Director at Girls Inc. of the Greater Capital Region, was discussing a need for more volunteers and representation on a television news story that Barnes-Coleman saw during her early days at Albany Law School. Barnes-Coleman promised herself to reach out when she was more settled in Albany and get involved.

A year later Barnes is on the Girls Inc. board and regularly organizes group volunteer sessions with students, faculty, and staff. One program that the law school supports is the Girls Inc. Eureka!, a program that provides middle and high school girls with an introduction to STEM, personal development, sports, and mentorship.

“It’s focused on job readiness, internships, and exposure to different career choices. We host girls on campus in conjunction with a number of student organizations. I love being able to pull those things together. It puts the work that we’re doing into action,” Barnes-Coleman said. “We’re helping the students connect with the community while also helping the community to connect with Albany Law School. For the girls to come in, meet people, ask questions, and get a campus tour, they realize they are welcome here.”

Outside of the DEI office, students, faculty, and staff also regularly volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House, Capital City Rescue Mission, New Hope Church, and The Boys and Girls Club.

“We are spreading our network and showing students what’s available in the Albany community. It’s designed to work for them, it’s flexible, and we are always welcome to new places and connections too,” Barnes-Coleman said.
A new Albany Law School staff benefit gives each employee 14 hours of volunteer time off each year, and the Department of Human Resources organizes several opportunities for employees to use the benefit. Groups have worked for Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus (RISSE), sorted and packaged donations at The Regional Food Bank, and sorted bottles and cans for the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society.

Getting Everyone Involved

Lean Into Success students bring donations to Albany’s In Our Own Voices.

Lean Into Success students with In Our Own Voices CEO Phillip A. Burse.

Girls Inc. students during a campus visit.
Twice the Citizen

Law school graduates can follow a range of career paths. Some go into Big Law. Some go to small firms. Some to government. Some to entertainment. Some to public service.

But some Albany Law School alumni have paired their legal education with serving their country in the U.S. military—many within the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps.

Some of them have decades of rewarding experiences. Some are just getting started.

Some entered law school aiming for JAG. Some were drawn in during law school. Some wrapped up all three years on campus, passed the bar, started their career and then decided to enlist.

“There’s no hard timeline, which is a good thing because I think a lot of folks, certainly young practitioners, may be a few years into their careers and they are looking for more fulfillment,” Major General Joseph B. Berger III and the 22nd Deputy Judge Advocate General of the Army, said.

There are three components of the Army JAG Corps—active duty, reserves, and guard—and many other branches follow a similar model. Active duty is all in, working full time as a military lawyer. The reserves strictly augment active units. The guard serves individual states with orders coming from governors.

A career as a military lawyer is professionally challenging, personally gratifying, financially secure, and has three components of its own according to Maj. Gen. Berger.

“As I talk to lawyers, we talk generally about three components of work satisfaction. One, do you work with good people? Do you like your client? And then does your work have purpose? [Most of us] would be hard-pressed to think of a day, let alone a week, where we didn’t check all three. And I think that is one of the incredible powers of this organization is it’s a group who wants to be here,” he said.

While some of the alumni gathered here walked different paths to their service, all of them are proud of their country, the legal profession, and their decision to join up to help their fellow countrymen and women.
Lt. Col. Theologos Voudouris ’03

Lt. Col. Theologos Voudouris ’03 has 23 years of active and reserve U.S. Army duty. He’s seen 49 countries, 12 duty stations, three infantry divisions, and been responsible for hundreds of soldiers at a time.

He is proudest of being the operations officer at the U.S. Army’s Advocacy Center in Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Opened in 2022, the $7 million, nearly 9,300 square-feet facility will be the Army’s newest legal training institution with modern classrooms supporting military legal professional training. One of the newest offerings is an electronic evidence course.

“That was a tremendous opportunity. It will serve the country for years to come. It’s the only advocacy center in the defense department and truly a major development for the Army,” he said.

As retirement approaches, Voudouris is excited to spend time with family, singing, and fostering collegiality and teamwork in civilian life. He encourages joining the JAG Corps, with its opportunities for legal and personal growth.

“If they have the opportunity to join the JAG Corps, be it Army, Navy, the Marines, Air Force, I will tell them to jump at that opportunity. It has been truly a blessing to be able to have traveled the world and to assist soldiers when they needed my help the most,” he said. “But it wasn’t just me. It was always a team of judge advocates and paralegals that mobilized to help out our soldiers and their families. Take that opportunity because you will learn so much, not only about the law, but about yourself.”

Paul Barden ’92

Barden joined the JAG Corps after completing his undergraduate studies through ROTC. While many of his classmates focused on first jobs, he sharpened his litigation skills. He retired in 2013 as a Lieutenant Colonel.

After the bar exam, he entered active duty. Initially, he worked in a legal assistance office on a range of legal issues: creditor, landlord-tenant, and separation/divorce. He went on to advise the 82nd Airborne Division commander.

“I was responsible for advising the command on legal issues pertaining to things like targeting if we were going to go fight someplace. When I was in that role, I spent the better part of the year in a secure facility planning the airborne invasion of Haiti,” he said. “I was involved in all the legal issues surrounding that, which was fascinating work. And you’re talking about a young 20-something captain in a room full of colonels and generals.”

Barden then became a trial counsel and prosecutor, tapping into litigation skills...
I WAS INVOLVED IN ALL THE LEGAL ISSUES, WHICH WAS FASCINATING WORK. AND YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT A YOUNG 20-SOMETHING CAPTAIN IN A ROOM FULL OF COLONELS AND GENERALS.”

from law school. He tackled drug offenses, sex crimes, and even a capital murder case.

He was also a special assistant U.S. attorney, prosecuting federal crimes committed by civilians on military bases. His final assignment on active duty was with the Army Claims Service, overseeing tort claims against the army. This role involved handling personal injury and medical malpractice cases, which shaped his current civilian practice.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Barden started his own practice, focusing on personal injury and medical malpractice. He had independence and worked remotely, leveraging the increased acceptance of virtual meetings with clients.

“I think for me, the largest takeaway from law school was the ability to critically think. That really drives everything we do as lawyers—to be able to understand a problem and formulate a plan. That cuts across all disciplines of law,” he said.

Cpt. Lauren Owens ’11

Lauren Owens ’11, a U.S. Army captain and lawyer, pursued a parallel career in military justice joining the U.S. Army Reserves in 2017 at the behest of a senior partner and mentor at Dreyer Boyajian LLP.

“It was never initially on my radar. I didn’t realize it could be done on a reserve basis or, how interesting it was going to be,” she said.

Since then, Owens has counseled survivors of sexual assault, guided servicemembers on wills and estates before deployment, and confronted general consumer issues.

In turn she has become a better civilian lawyer. At Dreyer Boyajian, she specializes in criminal defense and personal injury.

“I went to law school to help people, and that’s what I feel like I’m doing now. With defense work, people are coming to you because they’re at a very, very difficult point in their lives and they don’t know what else to do. They’re coming to an attorney for help. Sometimes the subject matter isn’t easy. Sometimes the cases are very difficult, but they’re coming to you for advice and direction on something that could very well be one of the most significant things in their lives,” she said. “They’re trusting you to help them and give them advice and guidance. Even if I’m doing something straightforward, like drafting a will for someone. I’m doing a will for someone because they’re about to deploy and they’re trying to get things organized for their family in case they don’t come back.”
Maj. Natalia Helmsing ’14

Natalia Helmsing ’14 finished college during the Great Recession and was unsure about the shaky employment landscape.

After trying to find work in this economically challenging environment and after hearing about an opportunity from a friend, she applied to work as an Education Counselor in Afghanistan. She was accepted and ended up at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Bagram Airfield, and Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan as a civilian worker helping service members pursue secondary education while deployed.

As an immigrant who moved to the United States with her mom at the age of 7, this experience exposed Helmsing to the possibility of a career path in the military that allowed for job security and a safety net that she didn’t otherwise have, all while giving back to the country she grew up in and considered her home.

“"I was doing my best to get a bite of the American Dream after graduating,” she said. “That job was my first introduction to the military, particularly the lifestyle and structure. I left thinking, ‘I really think this would be good for me’ especially if I wanted to keep progressing professionally and even personally.”

She decided to attend law school first to combine the structure of a military career with the academic rigor of a legal professional.

While at Albany Law she helped the Veterans Rights Pro Bono Project where she worked with volunteer attorneys providing legal assistance to veterans. Overall, the project allows students to interact with attorneys, gain career opportunities, and network with professionals in the field and continues today. Beyond that, she was active in the Student Bar Association and was President of her class in her graduating year.

“SBA was the most formative thing I did. It was a really great way to get to know my class, get to start learning about leadership and what that looks like to me,” she said. “SBA was great about teaching me what kind of leader I wanted to be.”

But, she always wanted to be a military lawyer. After graduation, Helmsing commissioned directly into the U.S. Army at the Direct Commission Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, followed by the Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course in Charlottesville, Virginia, where she studied military law. She started her military career stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, learning, and adapting to her responsibilities.

“You're coming in, and you're immediately a leader. Just by virtue of your rank—it doesn't matter what career field you're in, your uniform says “Captain.” You have to start to learn how to be that because everybody is going to perceive you that way,” she said.

Now, she is a Senior Defense Counsel within the Army Reserve JAG Corps after transitioning from active duty last year following a seven-year career that included prosecuting felons, advising on national security law and COVID response, handling investigations and advising sexual assault victims.
Cpt. Justin Reyes ’18

Intrigued by intense teamwork, being part of something bigger, and working with like-minded individuals, Justin Reyes ’18 decided to join the Army JAG Corps while working in private practice. He enjoyed his job, but felt a strong pull to public service, though not necessarily litigation or courtroom work.

After catching up with a family member at West Point, Reyes thought “maybe that’s it.” Before he knew it, he was in a preliminary interview with a captain. He realized the JAG Corps was the right fit.

“It was a similar mindset. I walked out of that interview inspired. I was energized and really excited,” he said.

He went to Hawaii in December 2020 as an administrative law attorney. He conducted line-of-duty investigations about benefit eligibility in cases of service member injuries or deaths. He also conducted financial liability investigations to assess accountability for lost equipment and property.

After six months he transitioned to military justice—the army’s version of criminal law. He provided legal advice to law enforcement agencies during investigations and ensured the proper collection of evidence. He worked closely with commanders to determine if cases should proceed to court-martial or be resolved alternatively. He also advised on the appropriate disciplinary actions, including non-judicial punishment or separation from the army.

Beyond that work he also completed courses in national security law and fiscal law.

“The army has a range of exciting professional development courses, in the legal field and outside. It’s one of the most exciting parts,” he said. “I did get to do some pretty cool soldier stuff as well. I completed air assault school. It’s physically rigorous, getting up at 4 in the morning, going through all sorts of intense workouts, and then you’re in a hangar classroom for about 10 hours. You learn how to inspect helicopters under time constraints, repel out of helicopters, stuff you can’t just learn from a book. You have to get out there and do it.”

Retired U.S. Army Colonel Richard Pregent ’79—now a national security legal advisor—has remained a longtime friend to his alma mater throughout his storied career.

In 2017, he was invited back as an Alumnus in Residence and delivered the public lecture “Reflexive Service: Life and Times of a Career in the Military.” He also met with students during a luncheon at the Career and Professional Development Center and in former Professor Donna Young’s Criminal Law class.

In 2022, he arranged for President and Dean Emeritus Alicia Ouellette ’94 to take an exclusive visit of the Pentagon during a visit to Washington D.C.

Colonel Pregent served as a Judge Advocate for nearly 30 years. He was posted to a variety of operational billets in Central America, Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asia. These tours included Rwanda in 1994; NATO LEGAD for Kosovo Forces, 2001-2002; NATO LEGAD for Allied Forces South, 2002-2004; Deputy General Counsel for the Coalition Provisional Authority during the occupation of Iraq; and a second tour in Iraq as the Director of the Law and Order Task Force as well as the Interagency Rule of Law Coordinating Center, 2008-2009. His last active duty position was as the Chief of the International and Operational Law Division at the U.S. Army Office of The Judge Advocate General. From 2011 to 2016 he served as the legal advisor to NATO’s Allied Command Counter-intelligence. He is now serving in a Defense Senior Intelligence Leader post as the National Security Legal Advisor at the Army’s Office of The Judge Advocate General.

He received his Bachelor of Arts from Williams College (1976), his JD from Albany Law School (1979), and his Master of Laws from the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s School (1990).
Cpt. Harrison Fu ’18

Born in China, Harrison Fu ’18 came to the United States when he was 17. He earned an accounting degree from the State University of New York at Binghamton but always wanted to do something service minded. Law school helped him find the career; his military service helped him find the community to serve.

During a brief on-campus interview during his 3L year with the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps he decided to join.

“I had a mindset for public interest work, and I remembered the advice from an Albany Law alum: ‘Never self-select out without trying first. Let them reject you.’ With that in mind, I thought, ‘why not apply?’ Ultimately, the decision to join the JAG Corps was influenced by my desire to serve the public and my respect for law enforcement,” he said.

His legal military service strengthened his identity as an American which he is extremely proud of.

“The United States is very different than any other country in the world, the legal system dates back to the country’s early days and is now the most robust. In China, it’s a very different environment. There is true judicial independence here in the United States,” he said. “Everyone can have their day in court, because the system is designed for that. Generally speaking, everyone can have the same opportunity to have their case argued.”

Fu completed his Officer Basic Course in May 2019, and then became a certified Judge Advocate as a First Lieutenant. He worked in the Nassau County District Attorney’s Office, until he was activated from the U.S. Army Reserve in September 2019. Fu was stationed at Fort Hood in Texas for a year and initially worked as a legal assistance attorney, helping soldiers, families, and retirees.

“My days were busy, starting with physical training followed by seeing clients in the office. I practiced different areas of law, including family law, consumer law, military law, and estate planning. It was a fulfilling experience, knowing that I was making a difference in the lives of service members and their families,” he said.

In May 2020, he was promoted to Captain and appointed as a Special Victims’ Counsel, where he represented victims of sexual assault in criminal cases under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. His subsequent active duty assignments include an overseas tour in South Korea as a Defense Counsel, followed by an Administrative Law Attorney position at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

“I’ve had the opportunity to explore different areas of law and serve both as an attorney in the civilian sector and as a Judge Advocate in the U.S. Army. It’s been a rewarding experience, and I’m grateful for the opportunities that have come my way,” he said.

“It was a fulfilling experience knowing that I was making a difference in the lives of service members and their families.”
Cpt. Mara Afzali ’17

For Mara Afzali, commissioning into the military made perfect sense for her family. Her husband, Javid, completed the Judge Advocate Officer Basic Course and was assigned to the Army reserve unit in Schenectady.

She naturally started to connect with some of the other service-members through family events. Eventually, she spoke with the unit’s commander about the importance of a strong JAG Corps and decided to put in her own application.

“Once I better understood the important role that Reserve Judge Advocates play in supporting the Army as a whole, my decision was easy. We make up about half of the Army’s JAG officers. The Army relies on this group of attorneys to backfill positions or step into mobilizations to support active duty components,” she said.

Now she’s balancing two careers, a Captain in the JAG Corps and a litigation associate at Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC.

“Both require a certain level of understanding. Other attorneys in the JAG Corps get it because they’re facing the same challenges. You’ve got this whole group of people trying to balance two career paths. There is a mindset of, ‘How can we work together? How can we get things done and support one another to accomplish the mission while also succeeding in our civilian careers?’” she said.

But it is worth it, she says, especially after taking a calculated risk to pursue a legal career later in life. Afzali earned her bachelor’s degree from Siena and her JD from Albany Law School through the 4+3 Program after more than a decade working in alternative elementary education. After the birth of their fourth child, she and Javid discussed new career paths to support their family and both decided to pursue careers in law. Javid returned to school that fall and Mara enrolled at Siena once their youngest child started kindergarten.

Beyond her military service and private practice, Afzali serves on Albany Law’s Dean’s Leadership Council and returns to 80 New Scotland Avenue to judge competitions in the Anthony V. Cardona ’70 Moot Court Program.

“I love working with the students through Moot Court to build their confidence. Maybe they think an argument isn’t a great one or are unsure about their position, but we talk it through, and in doing so they gain a little bit more confidence in their ability to identify and articulate legal issues,” she said. “My hope is that they walk away from those interactions feeling inspired and more confident in their ability to navigate legal problems. It’s a special part of the community here.”

Cpt. Javid Afzali ’12

After considering military service earlier in life, but putting it off for family reasons, Javid Afzali learned how his law degree could provide him another opportunity to serve in the military later in life and decided to pursue a career in the JAG Corps.

“It’s some of the most fulfilling work I have done,” he said. “As an Army JAG Corp Officer, I am able to use my legal education to help our nation’s soldiers’ and support our armed forces in its mission to protect and defend the country,” he said.

After he and his wife, Mara, moved to Albany in the early 2000s he finished his bachelor’s degree at Siena College in 2009 and enrolled in law school. Now, Afzali is a partner at Harris Beach practicing in the area of Environmental, Energy, and Land Use Litigation, as well as Business and Commercial Litigation, assisting companies, property owners, municipalities, and others around New York with permitting and litigation as they build, develop, and improve properties.

He also makes time to give back to his alma mater by attending alumni events, mentoring students through the Career and Professional Development Center, and volunteering as a judge for moot court competitions. In 2018, he was presented with the Outstanding Young Alumni Award from Albany Law School.

“When I was in law school, I definitely remember how valuable it was to learn from all the alumni who came in to meet with students. After directly benefiting from the advice of alumni who participated in events and made time to connect with students, it just makes sense for me to pay that forward,” he said.
Maj. Robert G. Conway, Jr. ’76

Robert Conway ’76 served his country as a Marine Corps judge advocate from 1976 to 1996 and then as the civilian general counsel for the NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) from 1996 to 2021. As a Marine lawyer he spent the early years prosecuting or defending Marines at courts-martial.

As a special assistant to the US attorney for Eastern North Carolina, a concurrent appointment, he also prosecuted in federal court civilians charged with committing crimes on Marine Corps installations.

Later in his Marine Corps service, he was responsible for Marine Corps regulatory compliance in the eastern US regarding airspace and land use including real estate acquisition for new training areas.

“We dealt with exceptionally large and complex property acquisitions, environmental mitigation challenges, endangered species protection, and resolution of jurisdictional issues. I traveled regularly for meetings and hearings in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. I learned a lot along the way,” he said.

A former Marine colonel encouraged him as he neared retirement to work with the state executive agency responsible for the 16,000-member New York Army and Air National Guard.

“My state service, well, being DMNA counsel, was great work. For an attorney looking to still help and make a difference, it was really an excellent place to be,” he said.

The COVID pandemic hit just before his retirement. The state agency had to mobilize quickly to set up test sites and later, vaccination centers.

“It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience to oversee. I’m proud of the work we did and though challenging, it was a very satisfying way to complete a legal career in government service,” he said.

Richard Henry ’23 always knew he wanted to serve in the military. Inspired by his grandfather’s service during the Vietnam War, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps and served as a motor transport operator stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, from 2012 to 2016.

But after several years, he decided he wanted to pursue higher education, knowing he could always go back to the Marines if he wanted. He attended SUNY Brockport for his undergraduate studies. While there, he worked as a case manager with the Veterans Defense Program (VDP), which trains attorneys defending veterans and service members in the family and criminal court systems with a treatment-oriented mitigation approach leading to family restoration and reintegration into society.

As he saw the continued need for lawyers with knowledge of the issues many service members face, he decided to become one of those lawyers and enrolled at Albany Law School.

“I didn’t really have any initial desire to go to law
Victoria Gilner ‘81

Victoria Gilner ‘81 dedicated her career to public service. She started her naval training in 1982, first stationed in Philadelphia, then Naval Air Station Miramar in San Diego, California. After about six years, she moved to the Pentagon.

She was up for a promotion, but the prior discriminatory practices against gay service members was a concern for Gilner. She feared her orientation would be used against her and though she had support, that was a haunting risk. At the time, being involved in a same-sex relationship could result in being court-martialed.

“When I was promoted to Lieutenant Commander, I really had a choice to make. I had been in for six years, but the policy toward gay people was up in the air. The Navy didn’t want to get rid of hard-working people, I think that saved a lot of us. But you were really at the whim of your commanding officer. I was lucky,” she said. “I actually did have someone make a complaint about me. My Marine Corps Colonel said he was not going to let someone derail my career, and said ‘just remember you’re a naval officer 24/7. I knew having a good commanding officer wouldn’t always be the case. There was a lot of risk. A felony conviction and a court martial could have cost me my law license.”

After leaving the Navy, Gilner found a job with the San Diego Police Department as a Special Advisor to the Chief of Police in San Diego. She later worked as Director of Legal Services to the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Safety, which includes the Georgia State Patrol.

“Law enforcement agencies and the military industrial complex are really like large corporations. In each role you sort of have this legal advisor role—no matter who you’re advising—it’s same mindset for each one,” she said.

After 13 years in law enforcement, she returned to Washington, D.C. in 2004. She initially worked as a civilian attorney for the Coast Guard then transferred to the Department of Defense where she worked with the Air Force, Navy, and Missile Defense Agency. Ultimately, she returned to the Air Force Office of General Counsel in 2018.

A career in public service, she said, was always part of her plan. Internships with the New York State Assembly during her 2L and 3L years helped her get a behind-the-scenes look at the hardworking people that keep the State government running.

“Working around people that enjoyed their public service was definitely a big push. I was a political science major and I considered many aspects of government service. But Albany Law really sets you up to be a public servant anywhere you go. It really helped me a lot during my time with the Georgia State Patrol and in my time with the San Diego Police Department. I had dealings with the city council, had to work with unions, had to deal with different political atmospheres. I had a very varied career, but a great one,” she said.
James Ferguson '13

James Ferguson '13 was working for a private law practice when he acknowledged his longing for something more out of his career.

His law school mentors, Hon. Richard E. Sise ’82 and Lt. Col. Jeff A. Nagel ’91 helped guide and support him until he was finally able to find a purpose that his personal and professional values aligned with.

The answer was with the United States Coast Guard. He currently defends the Coast Guard in federal civil litigation across all Coast Guard missions areas, and alongside the Department of Justice, prosecuting oil pollution and water discharge cases. Additionally, he assists members in disability matters and defends members facing separation.

“I think the advantage the Coast Guard has, a uniqueness compared to our other branches is our mission, is this mentality of being the shield...we're defending the United States. That's something that I sincerely love.”

While he never expected to pursue this path, he’s found it to be a fulfilling career and with a clear track for advancement.

“The Coast Guard offers an opportunity to keep chasing, to never settle, and I am enjoying every moment of it. I would say that if you want that kind of experience, there is an opportunity for it with the Coast Guard, and of course, you’re doing it in a way that serves our country,” he said.

Peter Glennon ’04

Peter Glennon '04 joined the U.S. Air Force at 17 and served full-time for about 10 years before law school. Initially, he was enlisted, working on electronics for aircraft navigation and weapons systems.

Later he graduated officer school, and was selected to pilot the C-5 Galaxy aircraft. However, influenced by his educator parents and with experiences volunteering in a city court as a community mediator, he decided to put further pilot training on hold and continue pursuing his JD.

He wasn't sure what to expect as a slightly older student, but felt at home right away. “I thoroughly enjoyed law school, every class. The professors, staff, and my classmates were all so great and supportive; and they still are. Being a non-traditional student, I truly appreciated that,” he said. “We’re more than 20 years out from our first day of law school and I am happy that I remain close with many of my classmates; and the best part of law school is that I met my wife, Kimberly Glennon (Nichols) ’04.”

After law school, he turned down a clerkship at the Second Circuit in Manhattan and instead clerked at the Fourth Department in Rochester. Having remained in the traditional Air National Guard throughout law school, he eventually transferred to the Niagara Falls Air Guard Base, where he served as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate (JAG). He advised commanders, reviewed policies and rules, discharged military members, and provided legal advice to military members. Peter retired in 2015 at the rank of Major, with more than 24 years of service.

In his civilian career, following the Fourth Department, he joined Nixon Peabody LLP where he litigated business and employment matters, prior to starting his own statewide firm, The Glennon Law Firm, P.C., almost 10 years ago.

Beyond the law, in 2008, he cofounded Honor Flight Rochester, Inc., an affiliate of the national non-profit Honor Flight Network that transports military veterans to see the memorials in Washington, D.C., at no cost. He is now the Board Chair.

“We have now flown 77 missions and over 3,800 veterans,” he said. “Of the veterans in New York, more than 50% live upstate. We have so many upstate that after we flew nearly all World War II veterans; we continued flying veterans from subsequent eras. Korean veterans were never forgotten; not here. We continued with Cold War and Vietnam veterans. Our very supportive community shows up with over 1,500 people at our Rochester airport when we return. We’re still doing it and will keep going for as long as the community supports us.”
Maj. Gen. Arthur E. Jackman, Jr. ’86 had a number of roles throughout his years serving as a member of the Air Force JAG Corps.

In 2015, he was nominated by President Barack Obama, and then confirmed by the U.S. Senate, to serve as a Brigadier General, and in 2017, he was nominated by President Donald Trump, and then confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as a Major General.

With these roles he became the Mobilization Assistant to the Deputy Judge Advocate General and then The Judge Advocate General, and as such he assisted in the supervision of more than 2,200 judge advocates, 350 civilian attorneys, 1,400 enlisted paralegals and 500 civilians assigned to the Air Force JAG Corps.

“It was an honor to help lead such a talented group of attorneys, paralegals, and civilians who contributed to the tactical, operational, and strategic success of the Air Force. Taking care of our people was the most important responsibility I had as we pushed to organize, train, and equip the very best forces to meet our national security objectives,” he said.

Jackman’s very first assignment after law school was at the George Air Force Base in Victorville, California. In the middle of the Mojave Desert, the assignment was a dramatic shift from his civilian life in New York and Indiana.

He learned a lot in that first assignment—including dealing with desert wildlife—and he moved on to the Lowry Base in Colorado. As a Circuit Defense Counsel, he continuously travelled a 12-state region that included the Dakotas, Wyoming, Montana, and Alaska. He then separated from active duty to earn his LL.M., but remained in the A.F. Reserve.

“The people, travel, and opportunities were extraordinary. I have had the privilege of crossing paths with truly exceptional men and women who serve with great wisdom, honor, kindness, and generosity of spirit and heart. I have been blessed to share friendships many of which will last a lifetime,” he said.

After 9/11, he was recalled to active duty for more than seven years, and he had a number of assignments including MacDill, Fla., Robins, GA, and then the Pentagon. Upon his release from active duty, Jackman remained in the A.F. Reserve, and returned to his civilian career as a prosecutor and his position as a Felony Division Chief for the State Attorney’s Office in Florida, where he has been for 27 years. He’s prosecuted some of the state’s most serious criminal cases. Many of his prosecution skills, he said, were developed during his Air Force service.

His discipline and focus to balance two demanding career paths. He credits the military for that too, but also his time at Albany Law School.

“I learned to be very disciplined and focused and to be thoroughly prepared which proved to be invaluable on my future path in life as a lawyer and leader,” he said. “I developed my skills through experience, discipline, and training. I learned how to prioritize my responsibilities and communicate effectively. I had to engage with senior leaders at the highest levels in the military and government. Those interactions have shaped me in so many ways as I continue to train prosecutors in the office, interact with defense counsel and the Courts, and serve my community,” he said.
Ambassador Bonnie Denise Jenkins ’88

While at Albany Law, Ambassador Bonnie Denise Jenkins ’88 enlisted in the Air Force Reserves. She served as a paralegal at bases in Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. until 1992 when she received a direct officer commission into the U.S. Naval Reserve. She rose to the rank of lieutenant commander and received numerous commendations before retiring in 2008.

Now, she is the current Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, a position she assumed in July 2021. She is the first African American to serve as an Under Secretary of State at the U.S. Department of State. Previously, she served in the Obama Administration from 2009-2017 as Special Envoy and Coordinator for Threat Reduction Programs in the Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation. In that role, she coordinated American efforts on threat reduction globally and U.S. government programs in chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) security and was the State Department lead for the 2010 and 2016 Nuclear Security Summits. She was the U.S. Representative to the G7 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

“In my years as a student to the department of state’s first African American undersecretary, I have always wanted to work in public service,” Ambassador Jenkins told the Class of 2022 during her Commencement address. “What led me to my decision for law school? Well, quite simply, I wanted to learn how to think like a lawyer and to analyze problems with a legal mind. I also wanted to be sure to learn how I could protect the rights of my family and my friends.”
Col. Christine L.
Fernandez ’92

Col. Christine L. Fernandez ’92’s storied military career began at Albany Law School. During her second year, the Navy and Air Force were recruiting at the law school. With a family tree branching back to the American Revolution, she thought it would be a good fit.

While Washington and Fernandez’s relatives didn’t have air support in the late-1770s, Fernandez was drawn to the Air Force.

She was commissioned as a first lieutenant in the Air Force Judge Advocate General’s Corps the same year she graduated from law school. She served on active duty in Mississippi and California.

“I learned a ton there. You hit the ground running in the military. You go right into it. You are a prosecutor. You are supporting commanders who need to keep good order and discipline. You are immediately into general counsel mode. So, you’re answering ethics questions. You’re answering employment questions. You are processing people for discharge,” she said. “You’re immediately talking with commanders and managers and providing them the counsel that they need.”

With a growing family at home, she went into the reserves in 1997 and served as a judge advocate at the 374th Airlift Wing and Headquarters in Japan. She transferred to Air Force Legal Services in Arlington, Virginia working on major torts cases. In 2000, she and her family moved back to New York as she transferred to the Air National Guard at the 109th Airlift Wing Force Support Squadron at Stratton Air National Guard Base in Scotia, where service members train to fly air support missions to some of the world’s most desolate locations. She stayed there until her retirement in 2020.

Reflecting on her career, Fernandez said encouragement to learn and gain practical skills is one aspect of military service—especially in the JAG Corps—that stuck with her.

As an attorney adviser for the National Guard Bureau’s Office of Chief Counsel in the Special Victims Counsel Branch, she worked with survivors of sexual assault. Neurobiology of trauma was just beginning to be recognized. Research from experts like Dr. Rebecca Campbell are now commonplace in advocacy work, but then, it was in its early stages.

“It was cutting edge, and it was changing our perspectives and the way we understood how victims of trauma, how their brains actually functioned, and as a consequence, we were also training our investigators on trauma-informed investigation techniques. Now, it’s a standard,” she said. “I learned so much about how to have a different perspective.”

Fernandez now works with the New York State Police on strategic planning. She still taps into skills she gained serving the country and at Albany Law School.

“I really was looking for an adventure to be part of something way bigger than myself. I wanted to be surrounded with a group that was all for a [shared] purpose. I just loved [my time with] the military,” she said.
Mark Jordan '22 is guided by a strong compass. Definitely a moral one and previously, a gyrocompass on a submarine. Working in the New York State Inspector General’s office, his team investigates fraud and corruption.

“I love it, because we conduct investigations into government agencies specifically, things like bribery, people not following the rules,” he said.

Jordan pursued a law degree after more than a dozen years serving in the U.S. Navy and was ready to dive into a new career path, rather than pursue higher military ranks. The Navy’s encouragement of continuing education and ability to work under pressure made the transition back to student life fairly smooth, he said.

“On a submarine, there’s not always enough people to hand off responsibilities. You’re under pressure and have to think on your feet sometimes,” he said. “You really learn from the people around you, especially when you have 150 people down there under the ocean for a few months. You learn about everyone else, and their faults and their problems, and what they’re good at. And they learn the same about you. There’s a lot of clarity in that and it prepares you to take on new challenges.”

“The difference was that you know, in the military, you’re studying an engine room, and it’s either really hot or it’s really cold, so studying in the law library was a nice change,” he said.

The Navy’s emphasis on integrity spoke to him. His role with the Inspector General speaks to him the same way, he said.

“Most of the [people we are investigating] work for the State already. So, they already have a job, then they are taking money away from the taxpayers. So even though they are making money and have a career, they still decide to steal? It’s a population not always talked about but it has implications on all of us,” he said.

During the COVID pandemic, when unemployment benefits were in high demand—but also easier to obtain—fraud increased. The IG’s office is looking into many of those cases now, he said.

“What we’re seeing right now is—and not just in New York but around the country—millions of dollars have been stolen. So, you have you have a ton of the money that’s supposed to be going to the taxpayers and supposed to be helping out those minority communities and possibly helping people keep their housing etc.,” he said.

Judge Matthew Doran ’93 has served the people of Onondaga County and the United States of America for his entire career.

Currently a county court and a military judge in the U.S. Navy, Doran joined the Navy right out of law school and has made his way to Captain. He served on active duty for six years, mainly in San Diego, California, as a claims attorney in the JAG Corps.

“My two careers have intertwined, in a good way, and my time with the JAG Corps is where I learned I enjoy criminal law,” he said.

In 1998, he left active duty for the reserves and the Onondaga County District Attorney’s Office. He served as chief assistant district attorney and oversaw the DWI and Vehicular Crimes Bureau, Special Crimes Bureau, and Homicide Bureau. He prosecuted tough cases including domestic violence, child abuse, and sex crimes.

In addition, he helped launch the Combat Veterans Diversion Program. The program helps veterans struggling with PTSD and traumatic brain injuries that are entangled in the criminal justice system.

In the early 2000s, he noticed a case where a vet—dealing with trauma from a tour in Iraq—had several serious traffic offenses. Driving was triggering a trauma response and this veteran sometimes drove the same way he did while at war. Doran knew there must be other vets like this one, which led to the start of the program. Many veterans are not open about struggles during court proceedings.

Overall, the program follows a similar model to youth diversion programs or drug diversion programs by connecting people with resources to deal with the root cause and allows prosecutors, defenders, and judges to collaborate on logical solutions to cases.

“At the time the criminal justice system was not really equipped to deal with being more analytical,” he said. “Now, we can get more detail about someone who might be going through the system and what their charges are and what might have led them there. We trained our local defense bar about how to recognize some of the red flags. We also did a lot of training with local judges, and the judges were very perceptive. It is a good program because so often veterans do not self-identify.”
Online Grad student’s interest in field began during Navy service

Cari Daniels ’22 MS/CSDP became interested in information technology while serving in the Navy, and after leaving active duty, she majored in computer information technology at East Carolina University.

Now, she’s using the skills she gained in Albany Law School’s Online Graduate Program in Cybersecurity and Data Privacy to advance her career.

In her role as Information Security Analyst at UNC Health, she works to protect patient and institutional data. Much of this work includes risk analysis, information security expertise, and troubleshooting.

Her Albany Law School degree has helped her feel more confident in her career, especially with writing about the complex topics that are involved in her particular role. The most exciting part of the cybersecurity field, Daniels said, is the constant evolution and change.

“There are so many areas that you could go to. It’s a lot of fun. It’s never boring and you can never get stagnant,” she said.

VETERAN PRO BONO EFFORTS NOW HONOR LATE STUDENT

Joseph Gentile III ’23H, a Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Army, in the 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment (Rakkasans), a regiment of the 101st Airborne Division, passed away September 6, 2020. Just a few weeks into his 1L year at Albany Law School.

His wife, Jillian Gentile ’24, is honoring him by completing the couple’s dream of earning law degrees. They had planned to stagger their start dates and once they were licensed attorneys, practice together to help people—particularly veterans and their families—navigate the law.

Joe is remembered as a kind, stoic, and sometimes blunt guy. He was disciplined and passionate about his studies, she said.

He had severe scarring and tissue damage from burn pit exposure during his time in Iraq. That was difficult enough, but surviving stage four lymphoma on top of that caused him to have a very weak immune system, Jillian said. The Friday before Labor Day 2020, he was exceptionally tired and struggling to stay awake through his Zoom class, she said. He finally agreed to see a doctor but an infection had spread to his organs and became septic. He fought his hardest until the very end, Jillian said.

“He was so kind and patient from the moment I met him. The things he said were just so thoughtful,” she said. “He was such a genuine person. He did have a ‘matter-of-fact’ type way, probably from his military training. But even in his time as a deputy sheriff right after the army, he was the guy that would be stopping to change people’s tires.”

Later in 2020, The Veterans Pro Bono Project was officially dedicated to honor Joe. Now, the effort hosts an annual on-campus day for veterans and their families and offers resources year-round.

At the 2023 Commencement ceremony, Joe was posthumously welcomed as a member of the National Alumni Association along with his classmates.

After graduation, Jillian hopes to do some form of advocacy. She is really enjoying her internship in the criminal litigation department at the Ulster County District Attorney’s Office. Navigating spousal benefits and processes following Joe’s death also inspired her to possibly help other people through the process.

“Joe would want me to challenge myself and push myself,” she said. “He saw when I was comfortable doing something and encouraged me to strive for more.”
JUSTIN MILLER ’97

IF WE BUY IT THEY WILL COME

Justin Miller ’97 turned a historic building on Lark Street into a unique music venue.

Visit larkhallalbany.com to watch a video tour or check out upcoming events.
Justin Miller ’97 has stayed close to Albany Law School since attending 25 years ago: He lives with his wife and kids on New Scotland Avenue, just down the street from the law school; and each year he helps administer a grant to a law student going into public service. Miller co-founded the Joseph C. Foiadelli Public Service Fellowship in memory of his friend and classmate, Joe Foiadelli ’97, who became a public defender after graduation and was tragically killed in a car accident in 1998.

Miller and Foiadelli became close friends as part of a group of live music enthusiasts—“the Grateful Dead and Phish fans,” Miller explained. “We were the ones playing hacky sack in the courtyard and planning where to go out that night or what shows to see.”

When Foiadelli passed away, they wanted to create a fellowship in his name. Together with Joe’s family and friends, philanthropist Marty Silverman provided seed money to supplement their fundraising efforts, and every year since, Miller has gotten together with Joe’s mom and classmates including Michael Papa ’97, Anthony Neddo ’97, John B. Thacher III ’98, and Matthew Powers ’98 to award a stipend to a 1L or 2L going into public service.

The group continues to build the fellowship with an annual golf tournament in May—and now a concert afterward at Lark Hall, to enjoy the kind of live music that once brought them together.

Creating a fellowship in memory of a dear friend and classmate

Lark Hall has hosted more than 200 events welcoming musicians such as Norah Jones and Donna the Buffalo.

Built in 1916, the cavernous building needed a lot of work, but their real estate partner convinced them it was a good investment. It had space for a tenant on the street level, a yoga studio on the main level, and could accommodate 300 guests standing or 200 seated for concerts, performances or parties.

The online auction wound to a close and the Millers’ bid prevailed. Miller remembers thinking, “Oh my God, we actually bought it!” But that was just the beginning of their extra-vocational enterprise: it took a full year to close on the property. Miller, whose full-time job is a partner with Harris Beach PLLC, had extensive experience in commercial real estate, tax and finance law, and economic development. But this time, it was personal.

“Even after 20 years of working with people on their deals, it was a lot different doing it for ourselves,” he said. “It was a deep dive into real estate, title and tax work, financing, and construction contracts.”

The renovation process was a “fascinating exercise in learning about the historic preservation side of real estate,” Miller said. They preserved the original floors and woodwork, stamped tin ceilings, proscenium stage, and mezzanine with its wrought-iron railings, and they used reclaimed materials to construct new features such as the elaborate bar in the main hall.

Jennifer’s yoga studio started off strong, hosting 15-20 independent yoga instructors in the space, and they also had a florist as a tenant on the street level. But before work could be completed on the main hall, the COVID pandemic hit. “We had half an elevator and a lot of fear, like the rest of the world,” Miller said.

A year later, initial renovations were done and Lark Hall opened for music in April 2021. The venue’s first shows were small; only 25 people could attend due
LEADING THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Gloria Shepherd ‘92 is the new Executive Director of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) within the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). Shepherd is 11th person overall and the first Black woman to hold the position.

She oversees the implementation of more than $350 billion in improvements as part of President Joe Biden’s Infrastructure Law. That includes grant programs with new funding and programs available to a range of recipients, including state departments of transportation, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, tribes, territories, and federal land management agencies.

“I am humbled by the opportunity to serve as the next Executive Director of FHWA. It does not fall short on me the enormous responsibility that comes with the position. I am grateful that history has allowed me to fulfill the dreams of my parents and relatives who have gone on and bent their shoulders low, so I could stand on them in this position of public service. I am confident with the help of all the talented people in FHWA, we will not only fulfill our mission but reach new horizons,” Shepherd said in a news release.

Shepherd earned a Master of Law degree from Georgetown University, a Juris Doctor degree from Albany Law School, and her Doctor of Arts from the University at Albany (SUNY).

She has also championed agency workforce development, awards and recognition programs, and work-life balance, the agency said in a news release.

Prior to becoming an Associate Administrator, Shepherd served for eight years as the Director, Office of Planning where she was the principal advocate for metropolitan and statewide planning and programs. Before joining FHWA, she was in executive level positions with the Maryland State Highway Administration and the New York Department of Transportation.

GLEOIA SHPHERD '92

to COVID restrictions. “We were fortunate to have a lot of connections and friendships in the music community,” Miller said. Jennifer, who manages most of the venue operations and staff, books local and regional acts directly, and through relationships with larger promoters, sometimes lands familiar names that would usually not play a venue their size.

Since the grand building’s second act opened, Lark Hall has hosted more than 200 ticketed and private events and welcomed musical acts spanning all genres such as Grammy award winner Norah Jones, Satsang, Patrick Dronen, Hayes Carll, Patterson Hood, Keller Williams, Donna the Buffalo, Sydney Worthley, Victory Soul Orchestra and many more. This June, Lark Hall hosted a multi-week production of the Broadway musical Rent, which was presented “in the round” with audience members seated and fully immersed within the play—all 10 evening shows and matinees sold out quickly and future productions are already being planned.

“There were nights during COVID when we’d sell out a show but 100 people wouldn’t show up—and then there are nights when no tickets are sold in advance, but everyone just walks up and we fill the room!” Miller said.

The Millers are continuing renovations on the Hall. Recently, they opened a street level coffee house, restaurant and bar, called The Eleven. The space had a grand opening on the incredibly fitting date of November 11.
A career in immigration law came naturally to Gretel Ness ’93. “It’s such a positive area of the law. You are challenged and you make a difference in people’s lives. It’s very fulfilling.”

Ness’s grandparents, doctors who immigrated to the U.S. in the 1970s, sponsored her father when he was in college in the Philippines, but because of quotas, there was such a long wait that he was married and had a family before he could immigrate. Ness vividly remembers her family going to the U.S. Embassy in Manila and being interviewed by the consular officer. Her first time on an airplane was to New York to begin a new life. She was 15.

After high school, Ness attended Rutgers University for Political Science, and then set her sights on law school. “I always knew I wanted to be a lawyer,” she said (at least since age 13 when she saw a show starring a female attorney and was impressed) and her personal experience led to an interest in immigration law. She chose Albany Law School because of its immigration law classes and smaller, supportive environment.

In law school, she successfully navigated the process to earn U.S. citizenship. An internship with the Government Law Center prompted her to consider working for the government. Before graduation, she applied to the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) and was hired by the Newark office of the INS as an Asylum Officer.

On one assignment, she went to Guam to interview Kurdish refugees from Iraq seeking asylum in the U.S. While there, she met her future husband, a Deportation and Detention Officer from Oregon.

Despite their polar opposite jobs (“We don’t bring work home,”) they have been married for 26 years.

“It was one of those whirlwind romances,” Ness laughed, and since her husband would not move to New Jersey, she “quit her cushy federal job to follow him to Oregon.”

In Portland, she joined a small firm as an associate attorney, doing immigration law work. After two years, she followed her paralegal to a larger firm, Parker Butte & Lane, P.C., entirely dedicated to immigration. Immigration is a paralegal-driven field, she said, and after 23 years she is still there and with the same paralegal.

The majority of her practice deals with employment immigration matters such as arranging temporary and skilled worker visas and helping clients with proactive immigration planning, whether for future personnel needs or for compliance with employment verification requirements. She also handles cases involving family immigration and citizenship issues.

Many of her clients are aviation companies that hire specialized pilots from Canada to fly the airplanes used in fighting forest fires for the U.S. Forest Service.

“Canada has so many forest fires, they have developed the infrastructure necessary to fight them—including the pilots and mechanics to operate the planes,” Ness explained. She helps arrange their necessary visas to work in the U.S.

Ness also advises corporations looking for talent overseas on work visas or, if none matching their needs are available, pursuing green card sponsorship. Her firm also helps arrange a temporary work visa. Sometimes her client is the employee, whom she helps by initiating or coordinating their employer’s sponsorship.

“No matter which party starts the process, you have to represent both,” Ness said.

Sharing her experiences with new attorneys was the focus of her recent speaking engagements including the Regional Northwest conference of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Ness belongs to the association’s Asian Pacific Chapter and traveled to its annual conference in Japan in May. She hopes to attend the Latin American chapter’s annual conference in Uruguay this November and explore neighboring Argentina. Ness loves to travel, and plans trips around conferences.

“It’s nice to have been to the places where my clients are coming from,” she said. “It helps me relate to them and gives me a better understanding of the challenges and hurdles they have overcome.”
Christopher A.H. Steadman, Esq. ‘99
became a lawyer later in life and he is
hoping his namesake scholarship can
help others do the same.
Through a tremendously generous $1
million gift, the new Christopher A. H.
Steadman ’99 Scholarship will provide full
tuition to an Albany Law School student
who has given back to the community.
The renewable scholarship will be awarded
annually to, primarily, student(s) with a
record of service as a volunteer or on-call
firefighter, volunteer or on-call emergency
medical services provider, or a non-tra-
ditional student with preference to those
currently or formerly in the building trades
and wishing to pursue a second career.
“When you are 23 years old and you’re
taking out student loans and the only one
you have to answer to is you, that’s one
thing. But when you are an older student
and you’ve got a family, responsibilities,
debts and you want to take this on, it’s
daunting,” he said. “I hope this may pro-
vide an opportunity to someone who is in
the same place I was, thinking they would
like to be a lawyer, and, now they have an
opportunity.”
Steadman credits a few moments in his
life with the inspiration for a legal career.
In high school, he did well in a legal basics
course, but never thought about it as a
career at the time. At 32, he ran for town
justice against a longtime incumbent with
three decades of experience as justice of the
peace but no other formal legal training.
Steadman didn’t win the race, but he did
better than expected.
But what finally made him take the step
came while building a handicap access
ramp at the Rensselaer County Court-
house. As he worked, he recalled court
staff, lawyers, and, at least one judge com-
plimenting his work and some said, they’d
rather be doing what Steadman was doing.
As he labored away outside, he thought
the opposite—a job like theirs would
be ideal.

“YOU AGE OUT OF
ANY PROFESSION
EVENTUALLY.
THE QUESTION IS
WHAT WILL YOU
LEAVE BEHIND.”
Carpentry and construction work take
a physical toll which, though only in his
mid-30’s, Steadman was starting to feel.
This in turn made him wonder how he
was going to provide for his family at 50.
He decided it was time to pursue the
idea dormant in his mind. He went home
to tell his wife he wanted to be a lawyer.
First, though, there was the hurdle of an
unfinished undergraduate degree and
about three semesters of credits. With the
ultimate desire to go to law school he en-
rolled at SUNY Empire State College and
completed his undergraduate course work
three days before starting at Albany Law.
With an established life in New Leba-
non, in Columbia County, Albany Law
was the natural choice. Albany Law was
welcoming right away he said, especially
as a non-traditional student.
The academic rigor of law school was
difficult, he said, and considerably harder
than the work he had just recently been
doing to get his Bachelor’s degree,
particularly the first semester as a 1L,
But his mentors, friends, and family
helped him through.
“I want other people to know that you’re
not alone. It’s really tough, and I would say
take some solace in that. I would also
say to keep your eye on the prize. I realized
at some point that I had been looking for
some academic validation to prove that I
could achieve and I could get good grades.
But the purpose of going to law school was
to become a lawyer and to get out there
and practice,” he said. “In my third year, I
kept thinking OK, you’re going to do this,
you’re going to be a lawyer.”
Upon graduation in 1999 and passing
the bar in 2000, Steadman worked at the
Albany firm of Stockton, Barker & Mead
where he had begun clerking in his 3L
year; then moved to Buckley, Mendleson,
and Crisone, until going out on his own
for a brief while. Other, non-legal business
interests took him to New Hampshire
where he currently resides. Although he
checked the “retired box” on his last bien-
nial reporting cycle, he continues to find
his Albany Law education and practice
experience invaluable. Sitting on four not-
for- profit boards and being a member of
two fire departments, there is always a legal
question. “The only difference between
being retired or not is the ability to collect

SUPPORTING NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS IN A MILLION WAYS
a fee, and I haven’t asked for one in some time,” he said.

Over the years, Steadman picked up another service-minded role, but with a bit more urgency—firefighting.

A year after moving to New Lebanon, he joined the Lebanon Valley Protective Association (LVPA) and found a second home in the volunteer fire service. Not only is it central to the town, it is a great way to meet neighbors and provide a crucial service to his community. The LVPA at the time of his joining and for many years operated an ambulance and in addition to firefighting he rode on the ambulance crew until his wife, who was eight months pregnant, requested a curtailment of civic involvement.

Upon moving to New Hampshire, he joined the Winchester Fire Department, and now has nearly 40 years of firefighting service. He has remained a member of the LVPA as they keep a second home in New Lebanon, responding when he can.

“I found I really loved the fire service. In fact, had I known how much it may very well have been the career path I took out of high school. However, being a volunteer or on call firefighter allows you the ability to have another career, but still serve. Unfortunately, just like that ramp in Troy 30 years ago, nothing lasts forever and the day is coming where physically I will have to slow down even more than I have. You age out of any profession eventually. The question is what will you leave behind.”

Whether helping a client or helping someone during an emergency, Steadman says helping people is rewarding in its own right. Now, he hopes that he can pay it forward.

“It is hoped this scholarship will help the next generation, that someone working in the emergency services or trades aspiring to be a lawyer will get that opportunity. You don’t know where a law degree is going to take you. It can put you in a position to help a lot of people in a meaningful way; or, maybe just one person in a very meaningful way,” he said. “One of my law school professors was fond of the saying, ‘To whom much is given much is expected.’ I am very fortunate and have been given much. I hope this scholarship helps to balance the scales.”
Welcome from National Alumni Association President Mark Chieco ’02

IN MY SECOND YEAR AS PRESIDENT of the National Alumni Association, I continue to be proud of the organization that represents Albany Law School alumni. I am proud to say the alumni association remains strong. In the past year, together with the Office of Alumni Engagement Team, we have seen much growth in alumni participation. Since returning to more in-person events, we have engaged nearly 2,000 alumni. Of those alumni, over 600 of them were young alumni who have started to connect with our association to build their network. Nearly 200 alumni came out for a program or event for their very first time. It is a show of how we continue to be a strong association.

Since being in this role, it has become clear to me that we have the honor as an alumni association to showcase the great volunteerism from our alumni population. In addition to all the events, over 400 alumni have volunteered their time to give back to Albany Law School. From serving on various boards and committees, returning to the classroom to guest speak, mentor students in internships and field placements, or guide future litigators through moot court, there are so many opportunities for alumni to give back. This support cannot be quantified.

As the National Alumni Association continues to showcase our alumni volunteers, I have the privilege in this position to present some of our greatest alumni ambassadors with awards at the Albany Law School Grand Honors Awards, presented by the National Alumni Association. Over the past two years, we have honored eight very deserving alumni in the categories of: Humanitarian Achievement Award; Outstanding Young Alumni Award, the Donald D. DeAngelis ’60 Excellence in Alumni Service Award; and our highest award bestowed, the Distinguished Alumni Award. I am incredibly impressed by the alumni who choose to dedicate their time and expertise in so many ways.

The National Alumni Association is committed to providing and honoring this work. All of us on the board are incredibly proud to help support the school and keep our alumni base thriving.

The National Alumni Association would be nowhere without the work of the board members and the executive committee. Over the past decade we have grown by leaps and bounds and have created many new programs. We’ve connected alumni in various parts of the country including throughout New York State and in other cities like Hartford, Connecticut and even as far south as Florida. Our Reunion program continues to bring alumni back to campus to reconnect with the school and with colleagues and friends.

Our possibilities, much like those awarded to us with our Albany Law education, are endless. There’s no better time to get involved, no matter how much time you have, we have something for everyone. No act of mentorship goes unappreciated.

Sincerely,

Mark O. Chieco

Mark O. Chieco ’02
President, NAA
CLASS OF 1958

William R. Holzapfel received the 2023 General Litigation Award at the Spring Union County Bar Association Awards Dinner.

CLASS OF 1969

Harvey Randall continues his periodic postings of summaries of public personnel law judicial, quasi-judicial, and administrate decisions on his LawBlog, New York Public Personnel Law.

CLASS OF 1972

Bartley J. Costello III was awarded the Shining Star Award at the LaSalle School. The Shining Star award is bestowed upon an outstanding member of the community for their continuous commitment to the work of LaSalle School, which provides therapeutic, educational, and support services designed to accomplish positive, personal growth and lasting change in the lives of disadvantaged youth and families.

CLASS OF 1977

Jeffrey W. King joined Jones Walker LLP’s Miami office as special counsel.

CLASS OF 1979

James J. Canfield has been recognized by Chambers USA as a notable practitioner.

CLASS OF 1980

Larry P. Schiffer has been named the Executive Director of ARIA • U.S. The AIDA Reinsurance and Insurance Arbitration Society, ARIA • U.S., is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to improving the insurance and reinsurance arbitration process for the international and domestic markets.

CLASS OF 1981

Janet D. Callahan (Defrancisco) has been selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America for 2024 and voted the 2024 Lawyer of the Year for Product Liability Litigation in the Syracuse, N.Y. metropolitan area.

CLASS OF 1982

Charles E. Kutner has been honored by the International Association of Who’s Who with the John Jay Legal Award for his impressive achievements within the field of Law.

CLASS OF 1983

M. Cornelia Cahill has been elected managing partner of Barclay Damon, LLP, becoming the first woman to lead the organization in its 165-plus-year history.

CLASS OF 1984

Evan H. Krnick was named to the Long Island Press Power List, which honors Long Island’s most influential leaders.

CLASS OF 1985

Patricia A. Poglinco has been elected to Seward & Kissel’s Management Committee.

CLASS OF 1986

Hon. L. Michael Mackey has been appointed to the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department.

CLASS OF 1987

Colonel Holly Cook (O’Grady) was featured in an ABA Journal article titled, “Meet Holly Cook, director of the ABA Governmental Affairs Office.” Read the article here: https://www.abajournal.com/web/article/meet-holly-cook.

CLASS OF 1988

Daniel J. Hurteau has been named Managing Partner of Nixon Peabody’s Albany office.

CLASS OF 1989

Grace S. Tolbert has been appointed to the New York Board of Parole.

CLASS OF 1990

Mary E. Burgess was hired as Chief Legal Officer for Lynkwell.

CLASS OF 1991

J. Timothy Kenney has joined LiquidText as Director of Business Development.

CLASS OF 1992

Stephen P. Younger has joined the Complex Disputes practice of Nixon Peabody’s New York City office.

CLASS OF 1993

Norah M. Murphy has joined Monaco Cooper Lamme & Carr, PLLC as Senior Counsel. Norah will be representing the Firm’s individual, business, and professional clients in business and corporate matters, and will litigate construction and labor law, municipal and public sector law, environmental law, personal and premises liability, hospitality and retail liability, insurance defense, and estate matters.

CLASS OF 1994

Denise J. Kerrigan has been appointed as Delaware County assistant district attorney.

CLASS OF 1995

M. Aileen Shinaman was named senior vice president, general counsel, and assistant secretary for the Medical College of Wisconsin.

CLASS OF 1996

Mary H. F. O’Grady has been honored by the President’s Council of Women of America for her influential role in public service.

CLASS OF 1997

Peter M. Hoffman has joined Harris Beach’s healthcare team as partner.
Jodi S. Hoffman was named one of Long Island’s Who’s Who Women in Professional Services presented by the Long Island Business News.

Gloria Shepherd was appointed by the U.S. Department of Transportation to Executive Director of the Federal Highway Administration.

John J. Toy was honored with a Distinguished Practitioner Award as a faculty member of the Online Graduate Programs at Albany Law School.

Heather K. McDevitt has been elected chair of White & Case.

Kay-Ann D. Porter was named inspector general of the state court system.

Catherine A. Spicer (Welsh) has joined The Lycra Co. as Chief Legal Officer.

Mark D. Harris has been elected vice president of Coca-Cola and will serve as general tax counsel.

Karen M. Griffin has been appointed Chief of the Law Department’s Ethics & Compliance Division for the City of New York.

Keith D. Silverstein has joined Armstrong Teasdale’s Miami office as partner. He focuses his practice on commercial litigation, personal injury and product liability, securities fraud, and insurance-related matters.

Robert L. Capers received the Distinguished Alumni Award at Albany Law School’s 2023 Grand Honors Awards Ceremony.

Marc A. Began has been appointed as Executive Vice President and General Counsel at Axogen, Inc.

Erika Duthiers was appointed as Director of the Canandaigua National Corporation.

Peter R. Keane has joined Barclay Damon’s Regulatory and Project Development Practice Areas and Energy and Renewable Energy Teams.

Cynthia P. Camacho has joined Cullen & Dykman’s New York office.

Julianne A. Oehlbeck has joined MRB Group as Chief Legal Officer & General Counsel.

Melissa M. Zambri was honored with a Distinguished Teaching Award as a faculty member of the Online Graduate Programs at Albany Law School.

Kevin B. Hart has joined Jones Day in Washington, D.C. as a partner in the antitrust and competition law practice.

Michelle L. Fivel has formed Hatch Henderson Fivel, a boutique legal search firm with a presence in both Southern California and New York.

Hon. Brian R. Haak was nominated by Governor Kathy Hochul and confirmed as the Ulster County public defender.

Leonard J. D’Arrigo has been appointed as a member of the Appellate Division of the Third Judicial Department of the New York State Supreme Court’s Attorney Grievance Committee, which hears complaints of professional misconduct made against attorneys licensed in New York, including those practicing in other states. The committee consists of 21 volunteer members, including 18 attorneys, all of whom are appointed by Third Department justices.

Sarah K. Delaney Vero has been named Skidmore College’s General Counsel and VP for Human Resources.

Robyn B. Eisen (Nicoll) has joined Dinsmore & Shohl LLP’s real estate practice in Pittsburgh. Eisen’s real estate practice represents clients in litigation involving matters such as property and construction disputes, landlord-tenant matters, ownership disputes, tax assessments and title insurance-related matters. She also counsels clients on real estate transactional matters such as acquisitions and sales, leasing, construction, property management, landlord-tenant matters and title claims.

Peter J. Glennon received the Humanitarian Achievement Award at Albany Law School’s 2023 Grand Honors Awards Ceremony.

Elizabeth M. Corrado was confirmed as the Ulster County public defender.

Leonard J. D’Arrigo has been appointed as a member of the Appellate Division of the Third Judicial Department of the New York State Supreme Court’s Attorney Grievance Committee, which hears complaints of professional misconduct made against attorneys licensed in New York, including those practicing in other states. The committee consists of 21 volunteer members, including 18 attorneys, all of whom are appointed by Third Department justices.
Kimberly C. Petillo-Déossard has joined White & Case as Partner in their Global Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A) Practice. She also was awarded New York Law Journal’s NY Legal Award in the Diversity Initiative category for her work with the Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI) at Albany Law School.

CLASS OF 2006

Shalini Natesan was a panelist on the topic of women in law held by the Albany Business Review.

Stacy L. Newman has joined Cole Schotz PC’s Delaware office as a member in the bankruptcy and corporate restructuring practice.

CLASS OF 2007

Scott W. Clark has joined Stagg Wabnik Law Group as an Associate.

Leah W. Straley, JD, M.B.A. (Williamson) has been hired as the new Dean of Graduate Admissions at Willamette University.

CLASS OF 2008

15th REUNION

Cory K. Kestner has been promoted to the position of Division Counsel & Chief Hearing Officer at New Jersey’s Division of Purchase & Property, the centralized procurement agency for the State of New Jersey.

Christopher P. Kimball has been named director of Florida’s Office of Medical Marijuana Use by the Florida Department of Health.

Robert F. Manfredo was named deputy managing member of Bond, Schoenbeck & King’s Albany office.

Tehra A. Coles has been named Executive Director of the Center for Family Representation (CFR).

CLASS OF 2009

Hon. Mark L. Powers has been appointed to the New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department.

CLASS OF 2010

Matthew J. Laroche was elevated to Partner in Milbank’s Litigation & Arbitration Group.

Caitlin J. Morgan (Shaheen) has joined DLA Piper as a Dallas-based partner.

CLASS OF 2011

Michael L. Antonacci formed Rialto Wealth Management in Syracuse, N.Y.

Robert S. Barrows was appointed as the NYPD’s Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Initiatives. In this capacity he serves as the Police Department’s chief strategy officer and as the primary advisor to the Police Commissioner regarding the Department’s short and long term strategic goals, and also examines new technologies and innovative solutions to help the Department fulfill its primary mission of keeping New York City safe.

Patricia E. Malley has been elected to Burns & Levinson’s partnership as a member of the firm’s Private Client Group.

CLASS OF 2012

Hon. Marc R. Pallozzi was elected as Troy City Court Judge.

Erica N. Rangel was selected as the new Executive Director of the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York.

Michelle N. Tanney has been elevated to partner at Baker Hostetler.

CLASS OF 2009

Bridget A. O’Toole is excited to announce the opening of Heath & O’Toole PLLC, located in the historic village of Holley, Orleans County, N.Y. She will continue to aid people, business, and communities across New York State in the areas of energy, municipal, environmental, and land use law.

Danielle J. Ryterband has been promoted to Director, Legal & Privacy Office at Softchoice Corporation.

CLASS OF 2013

10th REUNION

Kevin M. Cassidy has been promoted to counsel at Seward & Kissel LLP.

Mary L. D’Agostino has been elevated to partner at Hancock Estabrook, LLP.

Natalie S. French has been selected for inclusion in Upstate New York Super Lawyers—Rising Star for 2022. Ms. French is an associate in Hancock Estabrook, LLP’s corporate, municipal, real estate and trusts & estates practices. She focuses on assisting clients with matters related to residential and commercial real estate, estate and trust planning, probate/estate administration and municipal law.

Katerina M. Kramarchyk was named Outstanding Young Lawyer in New York State by the NYS Bar Association. The distinction recognizes attorneys for professional achievements as well as community service.

Megan E. Mutolo has been appointed Deputy Director of Lobbying for New York’s Commission on Ethics and Lobbying in Government.


CLASS OF 2014

Serena M. Compitello has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Trust Counsel at Tompkins Financial Advisors.

Deirdre R. Quain (Barthel) has been appointed the Director of Policy and Administration for the City of Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown.

CLASS OF 2015

Nicole E. Karam was elected to the partnership of Spencer Fane’s Dallas office.

Anais M. Vasquez has joined the NYS Department of State as the FOIL and Ethics Counsel.

CLASS OF 2016

John E. Ahearn III has been promoted to partner at Couch White, LLP.

Alex J. Manocchi has joined Devine Millimet Attorneys at Law, working on their Mergers and Acquisitions Team and Corporate Practice.

Ralph T. Scunziano was appointed Executive Director of the Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund.

CLASS OF 2017

Mara D. Afzali received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award at Albany Law School’s 2023 Grand Honors Awards Ceremony.

Christopher J. Babiarz has joined Barclay Damon’s Real Estate and Financial Institutions & Lending Practice Areas in Syracuse.

CLASS OF 2019

Lukas M. Horowitz has joined Conway, Donovan & Manley, PLLC as an associate attorney.

Catherine D. Kemp has joined Barclay Damon’s Real Estate and Project Development Practice Areas as an Associate.

Ryan J. McCall has been promoted to Senior Associate at Tully Rinckey PLLC.

CLASS OF 2020

Alex-Marie Baez has joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck as a diversity and inclusion specialist, based in its Denver office. She also joined the board of directors of the Colorado Women’s Chamber of Commerce, the leading nonprofit organization in Colorado that advances women’s leadership and one of the largest women’s chambers of commerce in the United States.

CLASS OF 2021

Bridget A. Cook has started at Heath & O’Toole PLLC in the spring and has been selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch for 2024.

Hayden J. Fahrenkopf has joined Barclay Damon’s Torts & Products Liability Defense and Professional Liability Practice Areas in Albany, N.Y.

Kieran T. Murphy has joined Hinckley Allen & Snyder LLP’s Litigation Practice Group in their Albany office.

Meghan P. Tuma has joined Barclay Damon’s Torts & Products Liability Defense, Professional Liability, Insurance Coverage & Regulation, and Commercial Litigation Practice Areas. Her primary office location is New York City.

CLASS OF 2022

Daniel Lange joined Wilson Elser, LLP as an associate attorney in Albany, N.Y.

Jeffrey Shapiro has joined Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C. as an associate attorney.

CLASS OF 2023

Jack Nicholas has joined the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office as an Assistant District Attorney (ADA).

Professor Patricia Y. Reyhan received the Trustees Gold Medal at Albany Law School’s 2023 Grand Honors Awards Ceremony.

CORRECTION: In the Fall 2022 Albany Law School Magazine, an entry about Robert J. Conway ’76 was inadvertently combined with news about Robert G. Conway Jr. ’76. In 2022, Robert J. Conway retired from Marshall, Conway, Bradley, Gollub & Weissman P.C. after 45 years of full-time practice, but will stay on in a part-time role. In 2021, Robert G. Conway Jr. retired after 25 years as general counsel at the N.Y. State Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

Both Conways remain great friends to this day.
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ALBANY LAW SCHOOL
ONLINE GRADUATE PROGRAMS
27th Annual ALS & ACBA Golf Outing
Schuyler Meadows Club
Loudonville, N.Y.
June 13, 2023
Day at the Races
Saratoga Race Course
Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
July 29, 2023
On Wednesday, September 27, The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Office of Alumni Engagement, connected with the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ alumni community, as well as allies and friends, for a networking reception at Albany Center Gallery.

A traditional Albany Law School TGIF celebration was held Friday evening.

Reunion 2023
Albany, N.Y.
September 27 - October 1, 2023

State of the School Address
Albany Law School President and Dean Cinnamon Carlarne presented her first State of the School address.
A unexpected surprise. Robert Capers ’96 was surprised by his son Malcolm, who flew in from his college in North Carolina, to attend the ceremony with him.

Grand Honors Awards

Rugby Club Alumni presented Professor Michael Hutter with tokens of gratitude—and an official Albany Law School captain’s chair—for his impact on the club’s alumni both in the classroom and on the rugby field. Pictured from left to right: Dwight Eagan ’23, Professor Hutter, and William W. Pulos ’80.

Grand Honor Awards: From left to right: Humanitarian Achievement Award honoree Peter J. Glennon ’04, Outstanding Young Alumni Award honoree Mara D. Afzali ’17, President and Dean Cinnamon Carlarne, Distinguished Alumni Award honoree Robert L. Capers ’96, Trustees’ Gold Medal honoree Prof. Patricia Reyhan, Donald D. DeAngelis ’66 Excellence in Alumni Service Award honoree William W. Pulos ’80, National Alumni Association President Mark O. Chieco ’02, and Chair of the Board of Trustees, Dan S. Grossman ’78.
Women’s Leadership Initiative

Albany Law School’s Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI) Fellows had an opportunity to meet with alumni and friends at various stages of their careers.

Rugby Games and Picnic

Of course, the traditional Women’s and Men’s Alumnae vs. Students matches were played, even in the rain! Though the original outdoor picnic festivities were moved indoors due to heavy rain showers, a great time was had by all.
“Because of You” Donor Event

Donors and their families enjoyed a beautiful autumn day at Indian Ladder Farms.

Reunion Class Dinner

Dean Carlarne and members of the Class of 1973
Selected Faculty Scholarship

**Academic Articles, Books, and Book Chapters**

**Professor Ava Ayers**
The Impossibility of Local Police Reform, 50 Fordham Urb. L.J. 609 (2023).

**Professor Melissa Breger**

**Dean Ray Brescia**


**President and Dean Cinnamon Carlarne**

**Climate Law Leaps, 108 Iowa L. Rev. Online 102 (2023) with Professor Keith H. Hirokawa**

**Climate Change, Disasters, & the Rule of Law, in THE CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOK OF DISASTER LAW: RISK, RECOVERY, AND REDEVELOPMENT** (Susan Kuo, John Marshall, & Ryan Rowberry eds., Forthcoming with ELI, 2023).


**Professor Edward W. DeBarbieri**


**Professor Ciji Dodds**

**Professor Nina Farnia**
Imperialism and Black Dissent, 75 Stan. L. Rev. 397 (2023).

**The Iranian-American Intelligentsia in U.S. Foreign Affairs: Ahistoricism, Anti-Structuralism, and the Production of Idealism, Middle East Critique 32 Middle East Critique 243 (2023).**

**Imperialism in the Making of U.S. Law, 96 St. John's L. Rev. 131 (2022).**

**Professor Keith Hirokawa**


**Keith H. Hirokawa, Cinnamon P. Carlarne Karrigan S. Börk, & Sonya Ziaja, Mapping Ecosystem Benefit Flows to Normalize Equity, 54 Arizona State Law Journal 819 (2023).**


**Keith H. Hirokawa & Cinnamon P. Carlarne, Climate Dominance (forthcoming Georgetown Environmental Law Review, 2023).**

**Cinnamon P. Carlarne & Keith H. Hirokawa, Disrupting Dominance (forthcoming Connecticut Law Review 2023).**

**Professor Jennifer S. Martin**
Carol L. Chomsky, Christina L. Kunz, Jennifer S. Martin, & Elizabeth R. Schlitz, LEARNING SALES LAW (2nd ed., West Academic 2022).


**Contributor, Contracts Remedies and the Indifference Principle, Online Symposium on the work of Professor Mel Eisenberg (Mar. 2023).**
Faculty Achievements

Professor Ava Ayers


Professor Melissa Breger
Authored the Ms. Magazine article, “’Matilda’ Spotlights an Unsettling Truth: Spanking in Schools Is Still Pervasive in the U.S.” on December 12, 2022.

Authored the USA Today op-ed, “From Balenciaga to Disney, companies profit by sexualizing kids—at a horrific price,” on January 18, 2023.

Professor Vin Bonventre
Bloomberg Law


“N.Y. Top Judge Pick Went from Cravath to Leading Court Liberal,” April 18, 2023.

City and State
"Is a state judge willing to intervene on Hector LaSalle's nomination?" February 13, 2023.


“Is a state judge willing to intervene on Hector LaSalle’s nomination?” February 13, 2023.

“‘There’s total paralysis.’ With NY’s chief judge vacancy, courts are stagnant,” March 20, 2023.

Law.com/ New York Law Journal
“Progressives Definitely Did Not Want Him, Mixed Reactions to LaSalle as Chief Judge,” December 23, 2022.


“Criminal Defendants Despite Grossly Unfair Reports to the Contrary are Finding a More Receptive Court of Appeals Under Cannataro,” February 23, 2023.


“Controversial opinion in rape case was the rough patch in Wilson confirmation but will the row echo,” April 21, 2023.


Times Union
“U.S. Supreme Court could overturn Kaloyeros wire fraud conviction,” November 25, 2022.

“Buffalo Billions’ defendants go before U.S. Supreme Court — here’s what you need to know” November 28, 2022.

“Saratoga County DA lets gag order lapse, plans suit to stop talk of police shooting,” December 23, 2022.


“Potential lawsuit could pause second Court of Appeals nomination,” April 17, 2023.
“Senate panel supports Wilson’s confirmation as chief judge,” April 17, 2023.

**Spectrum News**
“What a Republican victory in this Supreme Court case could mean for New York state,” December 2, 2022.


**Newsday**
“Experts: Brian Benjamin case shows corruption is harder to prove,” December 9, 2022.

“Experts: Brian Benjamin case shows corruption is harder to prove,” December 20, 2022.


“Case deadlocks appear to rise as hunt for NY chief judge pushes into spring,” March 5, 2023.


“Analysts: Unprecedented indictment could veer into unusual territory,” April 1, 2023.

“Shifting gears, Gov. Hochul taps Rowan Wilson, a liberal, for NY chief judge,” April 11, 2023.

“State Senate leader wants to eliminate judicial nomination panel,” April 11, 2023.

“State Senate confirms Caitlin Halligan for Court of Appeals,” April 20, 2023.

“As Supreme Court tosses political corruption convictions, debate rages over who’s at fault,” May 19, 2023.

**NY Post**
“Hochul claims NYS Senate committee cannot block court pick Hector LaSalle,” January 12, 2023.

“Judges blast NY Democrats blocking Kathy Hochul top pick Hector LaSalle,” January 5, 2023.


“NYC Bar Association refuses to approve several Queens judicial candidates in primary election,” June 16, 2023.

**WMHT**
“State Budget Deal Nears as Talks Continue; New York Has a New Chief Judge,” April 21, 2023.


**WTEN**
“Chief Judge pick receives pushback from Dems,” December 23, 2022


“Chief Judge applications are due, what’s next?” March 10, 2023.


**Other**
WAMC radio story, “The Best of 2022”: December 29, 2022


Buffalo News: “Left’s attacks may sink Hochul’s court pick, but are they true?” January 10, 2023.


Politico: “Progressives may tank Hochul’s pick to lead New York’s top court. She’s fighting back,” January 15, 2023.


WXXI: “State Senate to hold high-stakes hearing on Hochul’s choice for chief judge,” on January 17, 2023.


Brooklyn Eagle: “Judge Rowan Wilson to address NYS bar association pro bono honorees on law day,” May 1, 2023.


**Professor Ray Brescia**

“With Warnock’s Win, Senate Dems Could Establish a Jan. 6 Committee of Their Own,” December 8, 2022.


Quoted in the Above the Law story, “Small Firms, Small Towns: Bringing Legal Services To Rural Communities,” on June 20, 2023


Hon. Harold R. Tyler Chair in Law and Technology; Professor Ray Brescia was quoted in the Law 360 story, “Law Prof Makes Case For ‘Teaching To The Tech’ Amid AI Risk,” on February 23, 2023.

**Professor Al Chapleau ’78**


**Professor Christine Chung**


Quoted in the Cryptosaurus story, “Sam Bankman-Fried pleads not guilty to fraud and other charges linked to FTX collapse,” on January 3, 2023.

Quoted in the KUOW story, “Sam Bankman-Fried pleads not guilty to fraud and other charges tied to FTX’s collapse,” on January 3, 2023.

Quoted in the NPR story, “Sam Bankman-Fried pleads not guilty to fraud and other charges tied to FTX’s collapse,” on January 3, 2023.

Quoted in the WABE story, “Sam Bankman-Fried pleads not guilty to fraud and other charges tied to FTX’s collapse,” on January 3, 2023.

**Professor Patrick Connors**


Associate Professor of Law Robert Heverly ’92 was featured in the Law360 story, “Critics Say Kids Online Safety Bill Violates 1st Amendment,” on May 31, 2023.

Professor Michael Hutter

Professor of Law Michael Hutter authored the Law.com article, “Admissibility and Discovery of an Experts Compensation History,” on December 12, 2022.


**Professor Sarah Rogerson**

Featured on the WAMC show, “The Capitol Connection #2321,” on June 1, 2023.


Rogerson has been a regular guest on the WAMC Roundtable.

**President and Dean Emeritus Alicia Ouellette ’94**


**Visiting Assistant Professor of Law Michael Wetmore ’14**

Quoted in the Schenectady Gazette story, “Waite: Despite standing on solid legal footing, Sheriff Giardino’s expressed discretion is a slippery slope,” on March 10, 2023.
ALBANY LAW SCHOOL’S clinical, lawyering, and field placement programs are stronger thanks to Professor Nancy Maurer. Almost 40 years after helping start these programs, Maurer is reflecting on those decades as she heads into retirement after the Spring 2023 semester.

Maurer’s influence is infused into the Albany Law School experience. She co-led the creation of the landmark Introduction to Lawyering program, which is designed to expose first-year law students to essential research, writing, and lawyering skills in context, and teach them to think like professionals.

“We did it as a pilot program. We wanted students to put themselves in a lawyer’s role make some connections between the things that they were researching and writing about. I feel like the law school was really at the forefront. It was a good way to connect the first-year students with the clinics. It added more preparation so students could start thinking about their professional responsibility to a client or to an issue and to, at least, be a bit more professional attitude before they came to the clinic and started representing people in real life.”

She also helped grow the Field Placement Program to give students an opportunity to build on classroom skills and apply them at external organizations.

“I’m proud of how the law school has made our field placement program an integral part of our clinic and experiential program. The fact that it’s integrated, taught by a faculty member, I think that puts Albany in a good place. And it started from sort of a small program to one where I think that there’s now recognition that teaching students to learn from experience in a different way than just direct supervision is important.”

Clinical education at Albany Law School was in its early stages when Maurer joined the faculty and she saw a growing need to provide legal help to people with disabilities. Prior to Albany Law, she practiced with Legal Services in Charleston, S.C. and was staff attorney for New York State Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for People with Disabilities.

In 1983, she founded and directed the Civil Rights and Disabilities Law Clinic where law students, working under faculty supervision, represented clients in discrimination, public entitlements, education or other disability rights matters.

In the years that followed, more clinics began and grew into a present-day lifeline for many in the Capital Region. Watching the clinical and field placement offerings grow, Maurer said, has been one of the most satisfying parts of her career.

“It has been fun to see some of our grads that we’ve nurtured through their experience assume leadership positions in state government and other offices where we then place students. To have field placement students who are now supervised by alumni who’ve gone through the program has been a nice way to see it all come around,” she said.

Maurer is a member and former co-chair of the New York State Bar Association Committee on Disability Rights and former member and chair of the Board of Directors of Disability Rights New York, Inc. She also serves on the Boards of Bethlehem Youth Court and the Legal Equity Advocacy Firm, Inc. She is an editor of the 3rd edition of LEARNING FROM PRACTICE: A TEXT FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEGAL EDUCATION. She is also co-editor of the New York State Bar Association three book series DISABILITY LAW AND PRACTICE.

Maurer received the AALS Clinic Section William Pincus Award for Outstanding Contributions to Clinical Legal Education in January 2021 and the 2015 Albany Law Faculty Excellence in Service Award.

As for retirement? Maurer is looking forward to having more time to visit her three children in their respective cities, Atlanta, Salt Lake City, and Jerusalem.
Tenenbaum Examines Legal, Ethical Challenges Behind Complex Human Organ

AS THE ONLY ORGAN IN THE BODY that can grow cells and regenerate itself, the liver is a splittable resource for transplantation, creating the potential for one donor liver to save two lives. But that potential, with its Solomonic medical, legal and ethical challenges, is largely unrealized.

Albany Law School Professor Evelyn M. Tenenbaum proposes a mechanism and model that she and her co-author, Jed Adam Gross of the Department of Clinical and Organizational Ethics at the University Health Network in Toronto, believe balances the medical and legal issues in an ethical, life-saving way.

“My co-author and I hope to change U.S. policy related to split liver transplants,” Tenenbaum said. “Implementing mandatory liver splitting for those livers that are suitable for splitting—about 12%—could save hundreds of additional lives each year.”

Their article, “Splitting Deceased Donor Livers to Double the Transplant Benefits: Addressing the Legal, Ethical and Practical Challenges,” was published in May in Health Matrix: The Journal of Law-Medicine at Case Western Reserve School of Law. It is a virtual tutorial or template on how to implement a successful and morally sound policy of mandatory splitting (something already generally required in Italy, the United Kingdom, and South Korea) in appropriate cases: adopt more flexible criteria for allocation of split livers; establish a separate waiting list for those receptive to a split liver graft; evaluate transplant centers specifically on their success with split liver transplants; and require informed consent at three separate intervals.

The authors begin simply: the supply of human livers available for transplant is not meeting the needs of patients undergoing liver failure. About 1,200 people in the U.S. die annually while waiting for a liver and another 1,200 are removed from the waitlist when they become too sick.

“The high demand for donor livers compared with the low supply has resulted in thousands of patients dying while on the transplant waiting list and others enduring long illnesses prior to receiving a suitable liver,” the authors wrote with the assistance of Tenenbaum’s research assistant, Rachel Meyer ’22, who is now clerking at the Appellate Division, Third Department.

Split liver transplantation has been available since the 1980s and proved a game-changer for children. Juvenile donors are rare and adult organs are usually too big. But that resource is underutilized for adult recipients because transplant teams feel compelled to provide a patient with a whole organ if one is available, according to the authors.

“Mandatory splitting would take the choice of whether to split out of the physicians’ hands so the physician’s only role would be to advise his/her individual patient on whether or not to accept a hemi-liver graft,” Tenenbaum and Gross argue.

They acknowledge that not everyone is a good candidate for a split liver and note that relatively few surgical teams are experienced in the procedure. “Because patients risk additional complications if they receive a split liver graft, physicians rarely choose hemi-liver transplantation for their patients except when the whole donor liver is too large for the transplant recipient,” Tenenbaum and Gross wrote.

The authors devote considerable attention to the issue of consent, quoting Benjamin Cardozo’s famous comment in Schloendoff v. Society of New York Hospitals: “[E]very human being of adult years and sound mind has the right to determine what shall be done with his own body; and a person who performs an operation without his patient’s consent commits an assault for which he is liable in damages.” They would require the first consent at the outset, when a person goes on the waitlist, the second when the person is high on the list and the procedure seems imminent and a third just prior to the operation.

Tenenbaum, who is also a Professor of Bioethics at Albany Medical College, had written several articles on kidney transplants and in researching those papers stumbled on split liver transplants. She was fascinated and “the more I researched, the more I realized, the more the paper grew.” She met Gross, a transplant bioethicist, at a Health Law Professors Conference. They decided to combine his practical experience and her academic experience and co-author the article.

A graduate of Northwestern University and Cornell Law School, Tenenbaum was a Section Chief and an Assistant Solicitor General in the Attorney General’s Office and also served as a consultant to the New York State Department of Health. She teaches and studies bioethics, civil rights, health law, health policy and torts at Albany Law School. She has also taught business law at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration, Hunter College and Sage Evening College.
The Reverend Kenneth J. Doyle, Class of 1978, a Roman Catholic priest for over half a century, he enrolled at Albany Law School in 1975. A loyal friend to Albany Law School and a member of the Albany Law School Men’s Rugby Team. Reverend Doyle oversaw thousands of Capital Region weddings, baptisms, and funeral services and is recalled by many as a humble, funny, and kind community fixture.

The Honorable John J. Yanas, Class of 1953, a former Chair and Trustee Emeritus of the Albany Law School Board of Trustees, as well as serving on the Albany Law School National Alumni Association. Judge Yanas served as the Albany City Court Judge from 1973 to 1977 and is former counsel to the Albany County Public Welfare District. He is a Past President of the New York State Bar Association and Albany County Bar Association. Yanas has served in many capacities throughout the legal community.

Professor John “Jack” C. Welsh, Class of 1955, a Faculty Emeritus, Prof. Welsh taught at Albany Law School for 44 years. Along with teaching, he served as interim dean three times, the longest a two-year stretch. As a professor, he was known best for challenging academic rigor, a prodigious memory, precise speech, and a dry understated wit he brought to teaching his Property, Trust and Estates, and Estate Planning classes.

The Honorable Erik E. Joh, Class of 1970, who served as a member of the Albany Law School Board of Trustees for 14 years as well as the National Alumni Association. Judge Joh not only served as a distinguished and accomplished attorney and elected official, but was a leadership volunteer for the American Red Cross for 25 years, of which he served on the National Board of Governors. Joh was recognized with the Harriman Award, the highest award given by the American Red Cross at any level. (ED NOTE: Erik was not a judge, but was an elected official.)

Ronald M. Berman, Class of 1965, a great supporter of Albany Law School.

Nancy Ann Abatto, an Albany Law School Librarian, serving for 19 years, she helped our students to prepare and to pass the bar.

Charles B. Buchanan, the late husband of Board of Trustees member Charlotte Buchanan ’80.
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(Spouse of William E. Redmond ’55)
July 24, 2023
Albany, N.Y.
When America has gone to war, Albany Law School has answered the call.

Impact Felt on Campus
The primary effect of World War II was the shrinking of the student body. According to Albany Law School: A Tradition of Change, the graduating class of 1943 was 23 students—the same number that attended the law school’s very first lecture in 1851. However, Union University Chancellor Dixon Ryan Fox praised the law school, “Albany Law School will not be a casualty of the war. It must be kept in operation because it is a sign of the liberties we are defending.”

After the war, the G.I. Bill helped double enrollment. The G.I. Bill was coauthored by Bernard W. Kearney, Class of 1914, who was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. One veteran that took advantage of the bill was Francis Anderson ’47. During World War II he earned a Purple Heart and a Bronze Star. He returned to the school in 1958 as a faculty member. He retired in 1980, but continued to teach part-time and pro bono.

Beyond the student body, the effects of the conflict manifested in no Verdict yearbooks being published from 1943-1951.

Making Do
Hon. Merle N. Fogg ’45 discussed his war experience in, “Fifty Years ago at Albany Law School” published in a prior issue of the Albany Law School magazine. There were only 14 students when Fogg started his first semester. Classes were held 12 months a year with no break according to Fogg.

Fogg recounted how he ran a taxi service transporting two law students and two Saint Rose students to qualify to get a C-ration for gas so he could commute every week from Schenectady to Albany. He charged the students $5 per week.

Justice Jackson
On June 5, 1941, U.S. Attorney General Robert H. Jackson, Class of 1912, gave the Commencement speech. Jackson sensed that America would be drawn into the war as he spoke about freedom, democracy, and justice. Six months later, the United States did, of course, enter the war.

In Jackson’s speech two ideas stand out; “The fact that the reconstruction of a peace-time society, both within our country and the world, will be the test and the opportunity of the legal profession.” And his final words that summer afternoon, “May you never falter in the faith that a better world order can be established and the philosophy of the law can lead the way.”

Jackson was appointed to the United States Supreme Court by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and confirmed on July 11, 1941. After the war, President Harry S. Truman appointed Jackson as the U.S. Chief Counsel for the Prosecution of Nazi criminals—The Nuremburg Trials.

Opportunity for Women
World War II provided unexpected opportunities for women at Albany Law. During the war, they were admitted after being excluded in 1929.


Unfortunately, women were excluded once again after the G.I. Bill. But women were hired at the law school for the first time. Katharine Jones Strough was hired as a secretary and promoted to registrar in 1945 by Dean Andrew Clements. Mary Elizabeth Cox ’46 was the first librarian and female faculty member.