

ADAPTING, HELPING, AND LEADING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

# ALBANY LAW

MAGAZINE Fall 2020



## REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP

A Conversation on Calm and Crisis  
with Gov. Andrew Cuomo '82

**PRESIDENT AND DEAN**

Alicia Ouellette '94

**VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL  
ADVANCEMENT AND CHIEF OF STAFF**

Jeffrey Schanz

**DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT AND  
INSTITUTIONAL EVENTS**

Geoffrey Seber

**EDITOR**

Chris Colton

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

Lauren Mineau

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**

Marcos Abad  
Ben Meyers

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Shannon Ballard Gorman  
John Caher  
Chris Colton  
Ben Meyers  
Lauren Mineau  
Kathleen Moore  
Lisa Suto

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Chris Colton  
Shannon DeCelle  
Ben Meyers  
Denis Nally  
NSP Studio  
Theresa Thibodeau

**DESIGNER**

Oberlander Group

**PRINTER**

Benchmark Printing, Inc.

**CONTACT US**

Albany Law Magazine  
Office of Communications and Marketing  
80 New Scotland Avenue  
Albany, New York 12208-3494

[news@albanylaw.edu](mailto:news@albanylaw.edu)

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**ALBANY LAW SCHOOL**

80 NEW SCOTLAND AVENUE  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12208-3494  
(518) 445-2311  
ALBANYLAW.EDU



# ALBANY LAW

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This is not the magazine that we had planned.  
Then again, this is not the year that we—any of us—had planned.

We hoped in this issue to bring you more standalone stories of independence, innovation, and impact—the pillars of *We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School*. Then came the novel coronavirus. The COVID-19 pandemic upended our lives. It brought disruption, loss, and heartbreak.

But as the year progressed, we began to see incredible things: people adapting in extraordinary ways; people, some in roles outside their comfort zones, helping one another; people leading—making perhaps the most significant decisions of their careers under extreme pressure.

Zooming in, many of these people are members of our community. They are Albany Law School graduates, students, faculty, and staff, stepping up and making us proud. Suddenly, this issue of *Albany Law Magazine* came into focus: we are telling one story through these experiences. It's the story of how this great community and its people confronted an extraordinary challenge and—in ways unique, personal, and inventive—used their tools to make an impact.

Included in these pages: **Gov. Andrew Cuomo '82**, who offers his thoughts on crisis leadership; Mayors **Patrick Madden '83** and **Kathy Sheehan '94**, who walk us through their cities' responses to COVID-19; **Vincent Lai '86**, whose generosity can be measured in miles (he mailed the law school hundreds of masks from Hong Kong); students, alumni, and friends at the Legal Aid Society, working tirelessly for those affected by the pandemic; Judges **Richard Rivera '91**, **Sherri Brooks-Morton '03**, and their colleagues at Albany Family Court, which despite public health regulations hasn't stopped carrying out the important work of justice; the unsung heroes of Albany Law School's transitions to remote learning and back again; and others who aren't named on this page, only for a lack of space.

Also, this year, our nation and its many institutions—including those of us in the law and higher education—reckoned with the realities of racism and racial justice. In this issue we explore some of the ways in which Albany Law School and its community members are working to raise awareness of these issues and bend the historical arc toward equity.

We all have a story to tell. And from the start, we've been in this together.

We adapt together. We help together. We lead together.

We heal together.

We Rise Together.

And in the end, we will get through this—together.

All my best,



ALICIA OUELLETTE '94  
President and Dean



ALICIA OUELLETTE '94



## Teammates make moot court history

**Shellee Daniel '21** and **Alicia Johnson '20** didn't know which way the judges were going to rule.

The pair had already won the Donna Jo Morse Client Counseling Moot Court Competition in late October 2019. Fast-forward to the Gabrielli Appellate Advocacy Moot Court Competition in mid-November: Daniel and Johnson sitting, hand-in-hand, in the Dean Alexander Moot Courtroom. They were confident in their arguments, but weren't sure if they had secured the victory.

And history was on the line. No team had ever swept both of Albany Law School's fall-semester moot court competitions.

The announcement came—they won! “We were completely in shock,” Johnson said. “Looking back at it reminds me how special it actually was. It didn't register until the

audience started cheering.”

The back-to-back victories were almost a year in the making.

Daniel and Johnson—both 2Ls at the time of their victories—started working together in 2018 while studying for first-semester finals. Johnson had experience with constitutional law debates during her high school days. Daniel became interested in moot court competitions after volunteering to help with the 2018 Senior Prize Trials. They decided to become a team after that year's Gabrielli competition.

“We became used to each other's work ethics early on,” Daniel said. “That familiarity translated well when it came time to work on the competitions because we were cognizant of each other's strengths and weaknesses. We are also very good with encouraging each other when we feel overwhelmed, and we do a

good job at balancing each other out.”

Originally, they planned on participating in only the Gabrielli competition and not the Morse. “We wanted to do only Gabrielli because it was a 2L-specific competition, but we were persuaded by the lovely [competition chair] **Meghna Srikanth '21** to do client counseling,” Daniel explained. “Wow, she was right!”

Johnson, who plans to graduate in December, and Daniel are considering competing in the Karen C. McGovern Senior Prize Trials next spring. They are also trying to create a Black Law Students Association travel team to compete in Northeast BLSA regional competitions. Both Daniel, president of Albany Law's BLSA chapter, and Johnson are hoping to be student-coaches for the team. **4**

## Rogerson back at helm of The Justice Center

Professor **Sarah Rogerson** is steering The Justice Center at a pivotal time.

Named director in July 2020, Rogerson plans to continue the center's longstanding reputation for giving law students real-world experience while also instilling professional and personal compassion. “There's no other place where you can practice law and teach law and immediately have it impact the world around you and your community,” she said.

Moving forward, she hopes to expand The Justice Center's



curriculum to include issues surrounding racial justice and public health—two areas of increased urgency. “There's a big push towards something called movement lawyering, and that's something that we're seeing pop up more and more.”

Rogerson served as director of The Justice Center—then the Law Clinic and Justice Center—from 2014 to 2017, and remains director of its Immigration Law Clinic. **4**

## IMPACT ON THE WORLD STAGE

Last fall, a global group of experts and scholars convened at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, to tackle some of humanity's most difficult questions. Among them: President and Dean **Alicia Ouellette '94**.

Sixteen panelists, invited by the special rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Catalina Devandas Aguilar, delved into issues of bioethics and disability over the course of two 16-hour days at the Office of the U.N. High Commission for Human Rights at the Palais Wilson.

"Bioethics frames discourse and policy around medical technology and clinical decision making—especially regarding difficult issues like physician aid in dying, genetic selection of embryos, ending treatment for terminally ill



infants, and body modification involving children with disabilities," said Dean Ouellette, author of the book *BIOETHICS AND DISABILITY: TOWARD A DISABILITY CONSCIOUS BIOETHICS*. "Yet bioethics often doesn't consider the disability perspective. Why do disability rights experts and bioethicists look at the same questions so differently?"

The group was brought together to inform a newly released report on how the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) should be applied in the medical arena. Since its adoption by the U.N. in 2006, the CRPD has been ratified by 168 countries and the European Union and has caused a sea change in how people with

disabilities are perceived and treated.

"The report could be very impactful—it could shape international law and customs," the dean said. "This process has been used to develop others reports that have been adopted, and every country that ratifies a convention is then bound to follow that law." **A**

## Treyz '77 leads Board forward

Albany Law School welcomes **Debra Treyz '77**—longtime executive at J.P. Morgan Private Bank—as the new chair of its Board of Trustees. Her three-year term began July 1.

As chair of the Board, Treyz plans to invest in and extend the initiatives—such as the rapid expansion of online graduate programs—that allow the law school to offer a broader, career-focused curriculum to legal and professional audiences around the globe.



"We are going to build on Albany Law's unique ability to anticipate, adapt, and innovate," Treyz said. "I look forward to working with President and Dean **Alicia Ouellette** and the entire community—the

Board, students, faculty, staff, and alumni—as we imagine new ways to educate extraordinary lawyers and leaders, empowering them to make a bigger impact in the workforce."

Treyz joined the Albany Law School Board of Trustees in 2013 and served as vice chair from 2017 to 2020. She succeeds **James Hacker '84**, who was appointed chair in 2017 and presided over a time of significant growth for Albany Law School.

Joining Treyz as officers of the Board are:

**Dan Grossman '78**, vice chair. Previously the secretary of the Board, Grossman is assistant chief legal and compliance officer at Bloomberg L.P. in New York City.

**Timothy O'Hara '96**, treasurer. O'Hara is president of the Global Family Office at Rockefeller Capital Management and a member of the firm's executive committee.

**Andrea Colby '80**, secretary. Colby retired in 2016 as associate patent counsel at Johnson & Johnson. She is the founding donor of the law school's Wellness Initiative. **A**

## Suited for success

The right outfit can put a pep in one's step ahead of a dream-job interview or first court appearance. But many law students don't have the means to purchase a high-quality professional ensemble, which can run a bill well into the hundreds.

The solution? The Law Suits Professional Closet at Albany Law School—started by **Olivia Cox '21** and **Kelly Vidur '19**—which provides free, pre-loved, interview-ready clothes for students. Cox and Vidur created and launched the closet after reaching out to the Career and Professional Development Center, the Office of Alumni Engagement, and the Albany County Bar Association. After an influx of donations, the student-led initiative was off and running.

"I'm blown away by how supportive our alumni, the local bar associations, and local practitioners have been,"



Cox said. It's a testament to the support within Albany Law's community, Vidur added.

The project is one of several law school programs focused on holistic wellness. The Wellness Initiative—made possible by gifts from Albany Law School trustee **Andrea Colby '80** and trustee emeritus **James Kelly '83**—supports two annual fellows, who focus on programming to support a shift in conversation on mental, physical, emotional, and financial health. The Law Suits Professional Closet, though separate

from the Initiative, buttresses the financial health pillar by easing some of the monetary burden for lawyers-to-be.

"We had a student come in and pick out three gorgeous suits that probably would have cost at least \$700," Cox said. "When she left, the smile on her face was worth a lot more than that. And that is just one example."

To donate to the Law Suits closet, contact Olivia Cox at [ocox@albanylaw.edu](mailto:ocox@albanylaw.edu). **A**

## We Rise Together campaign raises \$28 million to date

Supporters have given \$28 million in gifts and commitments—through June 30, 2020—toward *We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School*. The total includes \$1.6 million from more than 1,100 donors for annual expendable support in 2019-20, marking another extremely strong fundraising year.



*We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School* launched publicly in January 2019 with the announcement of a transformative \$15 million gift to support The Justice Center at Albany Law School. Notably, campaign donors have started nine endowed scholarship funds, a fund to support *Albany Law Review* students, an innovation fund for legal education, the Women's Leadership Initiative for students and alumnae, and an expanded Wellness Initiative to enhance the student experience.

The campaign continues through June 2021.

To learn more about *We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School*, visit [albanylaw.edu/RiseTogether](http://albanylaw.edu/RiseTogether). **A**

## MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION? CHECK.

In March 2020, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education granted full accreditation to Albany Law School, marking a successful end to a multi-year process and putting a stamp of approval on the school's nascent online graduate programs.

"Albany Law School is transforming itself into a graduate school for the study of law—this is a critical step in that evolution," said President and

Dean **Alicia Ouellette '94**.

Albany Law launched its first fully online graduate program and began pursuing regional accreditation in 2016. The law school now offers online master's and LL.M. degrees—as well as advanced certificates—for professionals in the cybersecurity, financial, and health care sectors. "This is a proof point that our online graduate programs stand up to those of our peers," said

**Antony Haynes**, associate dean for strategic initiatives and director of cybersecurity and privacy law.

In May, the law school welcomed **Will Trevor** as the new assistant dean and director of online programs. Trevor, formerly of Excelsior College, heads the development and expansion of Albany Law's online master's, LL.M., and certificate programs. **A**

## Normalizing female success through Women's Leadership Initiative

In establishing the new Women's Leadership Initiative, trustee **Kimberly (K.C.) Petillo-Décosard '05** aimed high.

"We're trying to normalize being a successful woman," she said. "The way we do that is we have a group of awesome women who go out into the world prepared."

Petillo-Décosard and her husband, Sakis Décosard, donated \$175,000 to start the initiative. She hopes it will have two outcomes: targeted networking, to ensure women have opportunities; and preparation, to become leaders and also to manage issues that are likely to come up for women in the workplace.

"You can never prepare someone for every situation. But you can plant the seed—



that these things can happen—and more importantly give women the courage and the confidence to respond in that moment," Petillo-Décosard said. "If we hope to meaningfully change our current societal norms, we have to hold everyone, including ourselves, accountable. Sometimes that means saying, 'That's not appropriate, what you just said.'" That involves "giving women the language" to respond professionally to sexism, complaints about maternity leave, and the like, she added. She hopes executives will offer anecdotes and

discuss them with students, and also provide ongoing mentorship.

She particularly wants to offer training on giving and receiving annual reviews, which influence how quickly women advance in their organizations. "What are the right ways to present yourself, your accomplishments, and your shortfalls? That's a skill that gets developed over time, but I think we can move the process along. No one ever told me how to do a review—how to receive a review or how to give a review. And I think training on both sides is important."

Among her advice: "It's OK to talk yourself up—to say, 'My writing really improved this year,' or, 'Give me your next challenge,'" she said.

Petillo-Décosard also encourages women not to accept criticism during a review if they genuinely feel it's wrong. They need to

practice to have the confidence to say, "I don't agree with that piece of feedback and here's why," and she believes the practical training sessions the program will offer will help women develop those muscles.

She's also hoping the initiative will improve women's opportunities.

"I want networking and mentoring in the program. In a meaningful way, not just 100 people in a room randomly chatting," Petillo-Décosard said. She wants to bring together smaller groups of women with common interests or focus areas so they can make deeper, lasting connections. "My goal for this program is to help prepare women to go out into the world and drive change." **A**



## 'Something special about New York'

Delegates from the Indian National Bar Association (INBA) visited Albany Law during their academic tour of the United States. At a reception Feb. 11, the group mingled with law school faculty and students, discussing the law as well as their experiences visiting New York State's Capitol and Court of Appeals.

## BY THE NUMBERS: BANNER YEAR FOR CAREER OUTCOMES

Albany Law School remains among the top law schools in the U.S. at preparing students for careers in government and public interest, and for jobs as public defenders and prosecutors, according to *preLaw* magazine's latest rankings.

In its Winter 2020 issue, *preLaw* named Albany Law one of the “Best Schools for Public Service” in three categories: Public Defenders/Prosecutors (No. 3), Government (No. 4), and Public Interest (No. 12). The top-five showings in Public Defenders/Prosecutors and Government mark an improvement of nine and four spots, respectively.

*preLaw* reporter Katie Thisdell noted, “[A] growing number of law students are gravitating toward these positions because of the personal rewards. Studies show that lawyers who do such work

are among the happiest.

“Currently, more than one-quarter of law school graduates land their first jobs in some form of public service.”



A study released in 2018 by Gallup and the Association of American Law Schools found that undergraduates consider-

ing a law degree are most interested in a pathway to a career in politics, government, or public service (44%).

Overall it was a terrific year for career placement, with 90% of the Class of 2019 employed professionally 10 months after graduation, according to the law school's report to the American Bar Association.

“This is a community effort,” said Assistant Dean **Mary Walsh Fitzpatrick**, head of the Career and Professional Development Center. “Albany Law School's students are dedicated to furthering their development and are supported by faculty and staff who care deeply about the law school's mission, alumni who give back in any way they can, and employers who are confident that our graduates are practice-ready.” **A**

## Podcast alert!

Have you heard? Albany Law School now has its own podcast series, hosted by assistant director of communications and marketing **Ben Meyers**.



The 22-episode first season and ongoing second season are available on all major distribution services, such as Google Podcasts and iTunes, as well as SoundCloud. The weekly podcast touches on current events and noteworthy law school topics, focusing on the work of alumni, students, and faculty.

Though the podcast series was expected to launch in the fall of 2020, development was accelerated this past spring as Albany Law expanded its digital presence in reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic. Guests have included **David Beier '73** (Beating COVID-19 and Optimism in Biotech), **Bob Bilotti '89** (Crisis Response and Advice), **Brenda Baddam '17** (*City & State* Rising Star), and several members of the student body, faculty, and staff. Guest and topic recommendations are welcome—contact Ben Meyers at [bmeyers@albanylaw.edu](mailto:bmeyers@albanylaw.edu). **A**

## United through literary connections

A group of Albany Law School students used the impact of the written word to bring the law school community together this summer.

The Albany Law Literary Circle—created by **Shabena Amzad**, **Julia Bertolino**, **Andrea Gagliardi**, and **Mina Mirzaie**, all Class of 2022—united more than 70 book lovers, including about 30 alumni, from all walks of life: incoming 1Ls to judges and senior attorneys; students and administration to faculty and staff.

Participants were grouped according to genre. Those groups then selected, read, and discussed a book; they met via Zoom to discuss their selections and apply themes to current events. Several reading circles shifted focus to Black authors, encouraging conversation on literature surrounding civil rights and racial inequality.

Discussions had a “diverse mix of generational and experiential perspective,” according to group leaders, who felt compelled to start the program to stay connected with the law school community as they finished their first year online.

Book selections included *YOU CAN'T TOUCH MY HAIR* by Phoebe Robinson, *THE BLUEST EYE* by Toni Morrison, *TUESDAYS WITH MORRIE* by Mitch Albom, *LITTLE FIRES EVERYWHERE* by Celeste Ng, and *THIRTEEN* by Steve Cavanagh.

The Literary Circle recently launched a new program, with a focus on shorter, lighter reading for the busy fall semester. **A**



## A chance to improve police oversight and community relations

Meaningful change could be coming for police oversight and community relations in the City of Albany.

With the help of the Government Law Center at Albany Law School, members of the Albany Community Police Review Board are submitting recommendations to improve policing. They're starting with "low-hanging fruit"—such as having the police publish their policies—according to Professor **Ava Ayers**, who directs the Government Law Center, which administers the board.

At present, the board is limited in its powers. "For a lot of people that makes it not worth it to file a complaint," Ayers said. "Right now the board can only voice its opinion, and not even do it in very clear language." The board does not have subpoena power.

Despite the pandemic, students at Albany Law School have been researching issues to help the board with its recommendations for change.

Usually only two students volunteer for a CPRB project. But this summer, amid mass protests for police reform in the wake of the killings of George Floyd and other men and women of color, five students joined the effort.

"Our team this summer is unusually large, but we've had a lot of interest," Ayers said. "These are students at the law school trying to meaningfully contribute to a better life for people in the community where the law school is situated."

It's been a learning experience for the students, too. Take the issue of police discipline. Should the board be able to decide or recommend discipline of an officer? On the surface, students have the initial urge to say yes. Ayers is helping them, and the board, think it through.

"Is that legal? Would the police union be able to sue, to

say that violates their collective bargaining agreement?" Ayers asked. And if the board could mete out discipline, she had more questions about the process. "Is it just a majority vote? There's going to be some sort of challenge. Would there be a hearing? What rights would the officer have at the hearing? What about evidence?" The board would probably also need legal staffers who could advise on personnel matters, she added.

There's also the fact that when the current board members were selected by the mayor and the Common Council, those decision-makers weren't thinking about what would be required for a board that would impose discipline. Would it be more fair to let the mayor and Common Council reappoint board members, or revisit their appointments, with the new powers in mind?

"Part of our job at the Government Law Center is to identify those questions," Ayers said. "Every time you change the powers of the board, you

"These are students at the law school trying to meaningfully contribute to a better life for people in the community."

want to think those things through."

Some people have advocated for defunding police, which brings its own set of questions. "What does that look like, who do they give [the funds] to, what have other [cities] done?" she asked. "This is where students come in. What are the possibilities and what are the pros and cons?"

She thinks that considering these questions will lead to comprehensive improvement in community relations and police oversight.

Ayers is also on a task force with two members of the board working on the city's police reform plan. The State of New York has said that each municipality must file its plan by April 1, 2021. "There are a lot of good ideas out there,"



“[Students] get to see how a movement for social change translates to action in local government.”

she said, adding that the Community Police Review Board might be “very different” in a year.

Ayers is pleased that students can watch—and participate—from within the Government Law Center.

“They get to see how a movement for social change translates to action in local government,” Ayers said. “It’s useful for students to see how protests and grassroots advocacy can open up a political space.”

Students are also learning about delivering research on deadline. “Everyone is aware there is a clock ticking. If research is going to be useful during these conversations about reform, you need to move fairly quickly.” Ayers added that she won’t be surprised if the moment leads to significant changes. “I do think

it’s typical for major change that nothing happens for 18 years and then it happens suddenly,” she said.

Others are stunned by the speed. Ivy Morris, chair of the Community Police Review Board, said she couldn’t foresee protests going on for weeks, much less elected officials supporting police reform bills that ban things such as chokeholds and tear gas.

“I never expected we would get to this point,” Morris said. Cell phone footage showing police violence against unarmed Black people and other people of color, and the tear gassing of nonviolent protesters, have changed the public’s perspective, she added. “Seeing it on video, we are all experiencing things we have never experienced before.”

The board continued to hold virtual meetings during the coronavirus shutdown. Since the rules state that board members can only view case details at the police depart-

“What have other [cities] done?... What are the possibilities and what are the pros and cons?”

ment, which was closed to them at the time, the board began taking community input for hours at a time. People responded so much that the board plans to continue holding some virtual meetings for public conversations.

“The community involvement is the upside,” Morris said.

Board member **Nairobi Vives** ’12 is eager to put this moment to use. “I think that the smaller incremental changes are easy to get, but we should take advantage of this moment in history and push,” she said.

Vives has been proposing ways, based on the appeals and work of community members, local and national advocates, and scholars, to get police back to basic policing, funding social services and other community-based programs with some

of the money now used by the police department. She doesn’t want to just “outlaw some sort of hold.”

“That does nothing to change the system. It doesn’t change the structure,” Vives said. “We want true change. A true reimagining of not just the board but the whole system.”

In the meantime, the Government Law Center—and its students—will be helping Morris, Vives, and their colleagues on the Community Police Review Board consider all of the angles.

“If you’d told me a year ago that we would be having a serious conversation about giving the board discipline power, subpoena power, I would have thought you were joking,” Ayers said. “I think that’s really because a lot of activists, through protests and other forms of advocacy, have opened up a space for discussion.” **A**

## Creating a more inclusive learning environment

A hallmark of clinical education is reflection, say Professors **Mary Lynch** and **Nancy Maurer**—reflection on the legal system; reflection on one’s own growth; reflection on how one has performed in the past and can do better in the future.

This summer, The Justice Center at Albany Law School faced one of the most significant reflection points in recent memory—one that turned into a moment of inflection. Hearing the concerns of students and recent alumni, Lynch and Maurer realized that they could, and should, do more to address racial justice within the clinic.

First, Maurer began developing new opportunities for students to work on racial justice projects through the Field Placement Program. She put out the call, and Albany County requested a student to work on its equity plans. Disability Rights New York wanted someone to explore the intersection of disability and racial justice. Overall, Maurer has placed three students through this initiative and plans to add to the list this spring.

“It was clear that students were eager to engage in this kind of work,” she said. “This is just the beginning.”

Second, Maurer partnered with Lynch to provide anti-bias training to field supervisors. More than 75 local practitioners, including four district attorneys,

registered for the first training, held over two days in August and September.

“We are expecting that we will have trained every supervisor that works with us within the next year or so,” Lynch said. “It is an expectation for ourselves and our program.”

The training began with anonymous testimonials from students about their experiences working in the Albany legal community. It also included sessions on implicit bias, a historical perspective of racial injustice in the U.S., and self-reflection. Among the stated goals of the training: to identify ways to support students from historically marginalized populations; to help students successfully navigate and improve our legal justice system; and to start a conversation about how The Justice Center and its field supervisors can ensure a more inclusive learning environment.

**“If we bond together and create a more inclusive learning environment, that’s what can help make a difference long term.”**

“The fact that we’ve had a good response to this training is indicative of the fact that our offices are interested in this partnership,” Maurer said. “They want to know what they can do to be more inclusive, more supportive, and more aware.”

Finally, Lynch began a self-audit of her own program: the Domestic Violence Prosecution Hybrid (DVPH) Clinic, which places students in special victims units of prosecutors’ offices across the Capital Region. Turning the lens inward meant confronting some harsh truths. She found that DVPH presently has no field supervisors of color.

“That was really startling to me,” Lynch said. “I am teaching currently in a program that is not diverse.”

But acknowledging an issue is the first step toward fixing it. “This is something that we struggle with as teachers: we are graduating our students into one of the least diverse professions,” Lynch said. “There are systemic, built-in historical reasons for this. ... But to the students who are here for only three years, they don’t get to wait until history catches up. It has accelerated our responsibility. And I think that there’s a real opportunity for us to [work with our field office partners] so that our students of color—and graduates of color—become our future supervisors of color.”

“If we bond together and create a more inclusive learning environment,” she added, “that’s what can help make a difference long term.” **A**





←  
**left to right**

Professors Ciji Dodds,  
Anthony Paul Farley, and  
Christian Sundquist

## Addressing racial justice through research and advocacy

With the conversation around racial justice at the forefront, three members of Albany Law School’s faculty are responding using the best tools at their disposal: research, knowledge, and education.

Professors **Ciji Dodds**, **Anthony Paul Farley**, and **Christian Sundquist** formed the independent Institute for Racial Justice Research and Advocacy in June 2020, in the days following a campus-community town hall on racial justice. That conversation was held in the wake of the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, and the demonstrations across the United States in response to mistreatment of and violence against Black and brown men and women.

“We felt the responsibility to ourselves, to our BLSA and allied students, and to the broader community as a whole to act,” Sundquist said.

They moved quickly to launch the institute. Within a week, it was recognized as part of a national network of centers for race studies, which opened the door for “projects of national importance,” Sundquist said. In July, the institute collaborated with NYU School of Law’s Center on Race, Inequality, and the Law and others to file an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in *Edwards v. Vannoy*. The institute also launched a repository of essential readings and scholarship on its website ([raceandlaw.org](http://raceandlaw.org)).

“This is actually a part of a bigger movement that is occurring in law schools,” said Dodds, noting that future law students are beginning to expect racial justice classes as part of the curriculum. “Now that we have a greater number of law students of color, of marginalized students, of LGBTQ students, we’re taking stock of, what does it mean to be a law student in America? And how can a law

student or a law professor effect change in America?”

Though the institute is currently independent of Albany Law School, it has brought on nine students as research assistants to work on “people’s manuals” examining racial disparities in education, health, and criminal justice. Several other research-based projects are also in the works.

“The idea behind [the NAACP magazine *The Crisis*] is the idea behind our institute: that those of us who are in a position to be able to study the crisis should share that knowledge with the people who are trying to do something to resolve it,” said Farley. “That knowledge shouldn’t be hidden under a bushel—it should be spread.”

And that knowledge itself is a form of advocacy, the founders said. In fact, research and advocacy are inexorably linked. Case in point: *Brown v. Board of Education*.

“A big part of the reason why that case succeeded was because there was a research-based argument,” Dodds said. “I think it’s important, when we’re talking about advocacy, that we give lawyers the tools necessary to make effective arguments.”

Dodds, Farley, and Sundquist said that they are exploring options for the institute: forming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or becoming part of Albany Law School through official channels.

Whatever form the institute takes, they plan to keep its work going—and for it to be part of the solution. “The future for everyone is incredibly difficult to project,” said Farley. “I think we’re in the process of making the future right now.”

*The Institute for Racial Justice Research and Advocacy encourages alumni involvement. To contact the institute, email [criticalraceinstitute@gmail.com](mailto:criticalraceinstitute@gmail.com). **A***



“Without a vigorous conversation about what we think as a group, the law is going to be ineffective at addressing issues of justice and injustice.”

## From the headlines to the discussion table

Students got a look at the real world of law during First Mondays, a new program in which experts discussed issues ripped from the headlines.

The goal of the series, started last year by Professors **Patricia Reyhan** and **Ted De Barbieri**, was to enrich the intellectual life of the law school and show students the legal overlay of any issue.

“Students come to law school with a passion. They come with a vision of why they want to be lawyers,” Reyhan said. “Then—first year—they just spend their days staring at case books. Sometimes that leads to them forgetting why they came here in the first place.”

It quickly proved popular, with about 35 regulars among the student body. “We started in the fall, talking about the border wall and eminent domain,” De Barbieri said. “The president wants to build a wall on the southern border. Can he even do that?” Then they delved into business law and whether a company could protect the environment or take on any other priority that did not maximize profits for the shareholders.

Students suggested topics, too, and the professors called in outside experts for their perspectives. One student-proposed session focused on Purdue Pharma declaring bankruptcy in the wake of huge lawsuits around opioid drugs. “I think the students were just outraged that Purdue did what it did,”

Reyhan said. “The owners of Purdue had raided the coffers, had transferred money overseas. Why do we allow companies to go into bankruptcy? Why do we allow companies to escape paying the consequences of very intentional behavior? It looks so egregious.”

This led them to run a session on bankruptcy law. “Why do we have it? What are the legal goals? What are the social goals?” Reyhan said. “What are the results if we say you cannot declare bankruptcy? We could have talked for six hours. The students were very engaged.” It was fortuitous, considering that the coronavirus crisis may lead to many people needing a lawyer to help them file for bankruptcy, Reyhan said.

De Barbieri also felt strongly that students needed an opportunity to wrestle with the legal background of current events. “The law is really about how we apply our shared sense of right and wrong in the context of business, politics, and other areas,” he said. “Without a vigorous conversation about what we think as a group, the law is going to be ineffective at addressing issues of justice and injustice.”

The program was an eye-opener for student **Caroline Rodriguez ’22**, who minored in art history as an undergrad. She didn’t realize the law could involve art—and that might lead to her focus as a lawyer, she said.

“You have a general idea that law exists, but it’s hard to appreciate how intrinsic it is,” Rodriguez said. “People often told me, with a law degree you could do anything. [With First Mondays] you really see that.” 

## Alumna delivers Katz Lecture

University of Toledo College of Law Professor **Jessica Knouse '04** returned to her alma mater to present “Reproductive Indeterminacy in Frozen Embryo Disputes” at the 5th Annual **Katheryn D. Katz '70** Memorial Lecture on October 28, 2019.

Knouse—who was the production editor of the *Albany Law Review* and valedictorian of her graduating class at Albany Law—teaches courses in constitutional law, family law, reproductive technology and law, and sexuality and law at Toledo.

The Katheryn D. Katz '70 Lecture Series was established in 2014 to focus on the family law topics that Professor Katz made central to her teaching, including domestic violence, gender and the law, children and the law, reproductive rights, and inequality. **A**



## Future-proofing our elections

The *Albany Law Journal of Science and Technology* held a timely symposium on the interaction between advances in voting technologies and election law during its annual symposium last November.

Marian Schneider, president of Verified Voting Foundation, focused her keynote remarks on securing elections with the responsible use of technology.

The symposium, titled “Elections Technology and the Law: Securing Our Democracy in the Digital Age,” also included a lively panel discussion with: Jeffrey Baez, chief information security officer, New York State Board of Elections; Brian Nussbaum, assistant professor, University at Albany, College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity; **Alejandra Paulino '02**, secretary of the Senate, New York State Senate; Hon. Stan L. Pritzker, New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department; and Ben Spear, director, Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center. Professor **Patricia Reyhan** moderated the discussion. **A**

ALBANY LAW JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



## Serving those who served

**Albany Law School's Pro Bono Program and the student-led Veterans' Rights Project** continue to serve those who have served our country. At its annual Veterans Law Day in 2019, the Albany Law School community assisted more than 60 local veterans who were seeking legal help related to employment, family law, and other issues. **A**



## Celebrating Black History Month

The Black Law Students Association (BLSA) and Albany Law School celebrated Black History Month with events throughout February. BLSA kicked off the month with Hip Hop in the Foyer, and continued with a movie and trivia night and a Living Wax Museum, during which its members took on the roles of influential Black men and women throughout history. Continuing a new tradition, BLSA capped off Black History Month with the second annual James Campbell Matthews Banquet.

“We celebrate Black History Month to recognize the contributions African Americans have made to counter the invisibility of Black people, challenge negative stereotypes, and confront bias and prejudice,” said then-BLSA president **Georgia Sackey ’20**. “Learning Black history provides an opportunity to hear the voices and experiences of historically marginalized people. It is important for all students to take the time to remember Black history, not only [in February], but always.” **A**

## Virtual programs allow alumni to give (and get) support

The Albany Law School alumni network has more than 10,000 members—many willing to lend a hand to a fellow graduate. The community’s strength has made an even bigger impact as the world weathers the COVID-19 pandemic.

This past spring, the Career and Professional Development Center introduced new programming under the title “Learning to Thrive in Uncertain Times.” Through various virtual offerings, alumni have connected in new, meaningful ways with their peers and current law students.

Participants, especially those in the Class of 2020, learned lessons in resilience from alumni who felt the reverberations of the global financial crisis a decade ago. Inspiration came through Zoom sessions and virtual one-on-one meetings.

**Andrea Shaw ’08**, head of compliance and anti-fraud at daVinci Payments, a global payments fintech firm in Chicago, Ill., found her place in the financial services world when her first job offer after law school was held in limbo due to the financial crisis. “Trust in yourself, trust in the education you got from Albany Law, and be resilient,” Shaw said during a Zoom session. “Go in with the mindset that this is only temporary. Whatever you’re doing right now, you’re learning

and are building your transferable skills.”

Under a similar umbrella, the Office of Alumni Engagement launched the Alumni Career Consultants Program, an effort that brings together a growing group of alumni with students and peers for career guidance. Alumni volunteers have contributed in several ways: through blog posts, one-on-one virtual meetings, or simply making themselves available for “on-call” outreach.

“Keep your eye on the goal—to be an attorney, one that people like and trust,” wrote **Rodney Salvati ’72**, who started his own firm in a tough economic environment by leveraging old-school volunteerism and networking opportunities. “You have enormous resources at your disposal—the internet, social media, phones that aren’t stuck to walls, computers—use them. ... [I]f someone like me, naive, from a working-class background, without professionals in the extended family (or even college graduates), can make it, so can you.”

*To get involved in the Alumni Career Consultants Program, visit [alumni.albanylaw.edu/CareerConsultants](http://alumni.albanylaw.edu/CareerConsultants).* **A**



## A toast to the Class of 2020

On what would have been their commencement day, Albany Law School's newest graduates gathered on Zoom to accept the community's congratulations. The May 15 celebration included a heartfelt video tribute from faculty and staff and remarks from Deans **Alicia Ouellette** and **Rosemary Queenan**, class president **Kieran Murphy '20**, and Professor **Patricia Reyhan**, who was voted "Friend of the Class." (At the outset of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Class of 2020 indicated that it would prefer a post-pandemic, in-person celebration rather than a virtual cap-and-gown ceremony.)

The following month, the law school held an end-of-year awards ceremony via Zoom. Recipients, many of whom were from the graduating class, accepted their awards virtually from special guests—all trustees—Hon. **Leslie Stein '81**, **James Hacker '84**, **Robert Capers '96**, and **James Sandman**, who was previously announced as the class's commencement speaker. **A**

STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION

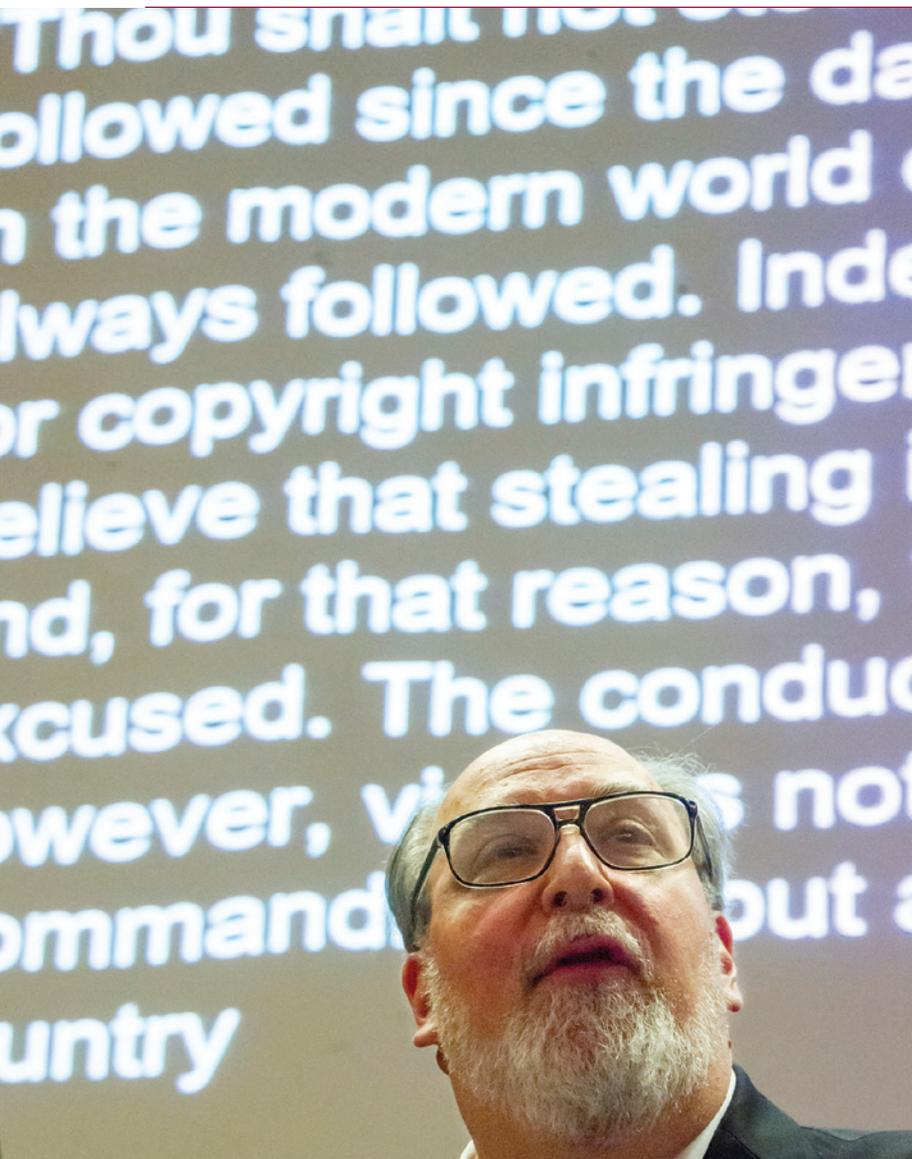


## Michael Zeldin visits Albany Law School

Michael Zeldin, CNN legal analyst and former fellow at the Institute of Politics (IOP) within Harvard University's Kennedy School, took center stage—or, center floor of the DAMC—for the 2019 Justice Robert H. Jackson Lecture Series event "The White House on Trial" last fall.

Professor **Christine Chung** moderated the chat with Zeldin as they talked through the history and structure of presidential impeachment; the Mueller Report; and the legal considerations and potential outcomes of the impeachment of President Donald Trump—proceedings which had yet to be initiated.

"A lot of the answers to the questions are going to be, 'We don't know,'" said Zeldin, who has covered some of the nation's biggest stories on CNN going back to the mid-1990s. "I don't think [the answers are] knowable—or known yet." **A**



ALBANY LAW REVIEW

## Music to our (lawyerly) ears

The *Albany Law Review's* annual symposium, "The Courts are Alive with the Sound of Music," took an in-depth look at legal issues facing the music industry, focusing on copyright infringement in the modern era.

Brian D. Caplan, partner at Reitler Kailas & Rosenblatt LLC, delivered keynote remarks at the October 21, 2019, event. Professor Robert Heverly '92 of Albany Law School also delivered a presentation before giving way to a panel discussion on cases involving some of the modern era's most successful musicians with entertainment attorney Robyn Guilliams of Goldstein & Guilliams PLLC; Adjunct Professor Howard Leib of Cornell Law School; and intellectual property attorney Laura Winston of Offit Kurman. **A**

GOVERNMENT LAW CENTER

## Anderson Series goes virtual



The Government Law Center's Warren M. Anderson Breakfast Seminar Series enjoyed a successful spring slate, with a boost in attendance after pivoting online.

The series is traditionally held in the Assembly Parlor, where experts address pending policy issues before the state Legislature. The first two events, held February 11 and 25 at the Capitol, focused on student debt and surveillance technology, respectively. Then came the shutdown. But the series pivoted to Zoom—and broke its all-time attendance record.

The third event explored voting in the 2020 elections, a topic with many implications in the COVID-19 era. "The speakers set forth the election changes that had already been made due to the coronavirus, and focused their presentations on what is possible or likely to take place going forward," GLC legal director Richard Rifkin said of the April 20 discussion. "In a period of great uncertainty, the speakers ... gave the audience a good sense of the issues that governments at all levels are going to be facing as they attempt to provide for meaningful elections to be held at the time of a national health emergency."

The series wrapped up May 28 with an exchange on the gig economy and the issues that surround a societal shift to short-term, contingent work arrangements.

*Learn about the panelists, read recaps, and watch each discussion in full at [albanylaw.edu/glcc](http://albanylaw.edu/glcc).* **A**

“I want to understand more—not just how many lawyers are struggling with drugs, alcohol, and depression, but why they’re struggling.”



## Brian Cuban opens up about losing it all—and getting it back

They are subjects that are tough for anyone to talk about, let alone lawyers and law students: addiction and depression.

Brian Cuban—younger brother of Mark Cuban, the Dallas Mavericks owner and “Shark Tank” star—confronted these issues Feb. 27 at Albany Law School, sharing his wellness journey with students, faculty, staff, and guests. Before his talk, Cuban signed copies of his book, *THE ADDICTED LAWYER: TALES OF THE BAR, BOOZE, BLOW, AND REDEMPTION*.

“Through much of my teen and adult life, I was clinically addicted to alcohol and cocaine, and I misused prescription pills ... and illegal anabolic steroids,” said Cuban in his book, reflecting on how addiction and mental health issues derailed a successful legal career. “I want to understand more—not just how many lawyers are struggling with drugs, alcohol, and depression, but why they’re struggling. I also want to explore a deeper question that has nagged me as well: Why are we, as a profession, so reluctant to seek help?”

His story is powerful. His questions are important. Though the larger issues remain, Cuban’s presence and message are part of a cultural shift, led on campus by Albany Law School’s Wellness Initiative.

“The event was an incredible success—so much of that is a tribute to Brian. He is open and honest. The conversation was so important to have at the law school. Talking about issues like

substance abuse and mental health is incredibly difficult, but students, faculty, and members of the community were able to have a safe space to start these conversations,” said **Carly Dziekan ’20**, who set up Cuban’s visit as a Colby Fellow working within the Wellness Initiative. “One of the biggest takeaways people got was the importance of community and checking in on people. He discussed the impact of simply saying, ‘How are you doing today?’ to classmates and colleagues.”

“My hope is that the takeaway will be what resonates based on the listeners’ individual lenses and stories,” Cuban said. “People have reached out about bullying, eating disorders, childhood trauma, and other nontraditional issues that I talk about, which is why I stress the importance of the whole story over the struggle in the moment.”

Cuban did take a few minutes to have some fun. Of course, that was on the law school’s basketball court. “I loved the campus and how the student body, faculty, and administration embraced my message as well as the work being done by groups to break the stigma of mental-health struggles,” Cuban said. “I will say that it was the first law school I’ve spoken at with its own basketball court. I’m embarrassed that I put up such a brick on my shot! I hope I get to come back and make amends.” **A**

COVID:  
ADAPTING

# It takes a village.



The inside  
story of  
Albany Law's  
transition  
online.

And back  
again.

BY LAUREN MINEAU

## In higher education, drastic changes don't happen overnight. But the COVID-19 pandemic forced institutions across the country to make quick decisions, moving operations to the virtual space while maintaining continuity, quality, and community.

THE CRISIS UPENDED DAILY LIFE FOR EVERYONE AT ALBANY LAW SCHOOL. Suddenly, student organizations started holding video meetings from their members' apartments. Admitted students visited campus virtually, through video tours and podcasts. Zoom became the default medium for students, faculty, and staff alike.

In early March, Albany Law School's plans changed almost daily as guidelines shifted and coronavirus cases multiplied across the state and nation. Initially, large group events were postponed and travel was restricted; then the law school went fully remote for the remainder of the spring semester. Cases in New York State climbed, businesses closed, and the important work of providing—and receiving—a legal education went on from home.

By late spring, the months of self-isolation started to make a difference, and conversations on how to welcome the community back to campus blossomed. By August, the doors at 80 New Scotland Avenue were cautiously ready to open for the fall semester.

It has been a year unlike any other. These are just some examples of how Albany Law School—and its people—responded to the challenge.

### NEW WAYS OF LEARNING—AND TEACHING

Transferring Albany Law's 100-plus courses online took a tremendous amount of labor by faculty and ITS staff. Faculty worked long hours to upload their coursework—some having to use unfamiliar technology from their homes, according to Associate Dean **Antony Haynes**.

"We have faculty that have spent 30 or 40 years teaching in a face-to-face format who have never taught online

before," Haynes said.

Some faculty members, once they adjusted to online teaching, found room to use the technology for more than by-the-books learning. Professors **Christine Chung** and **Louis Jim** hosted weekly Netflix watch parties through a browser extension that allows students and other guests to watch the same show, banter, and chat.

"Our students are amazing. They're working so hard to deal with all of the challenges caused by the pandemic," Chung said. "There are all kinds of life consequences. I am so grateful for their patience and their persistence."

Then there was the return to campus in the fall. Some students and faculty opted for a fully remote semester, which presented a new challenge: bringing a seamless classroom experience to both in-person and online participants. Classrooms were outfitted with microphones, cameras, screens, and other updates. Throughout the summer, staff trained faculty on the new systems; for courses in which the professor chose to be remote, work-study students were hired to tend to the technology, so that in-person students could see and hear their professors "in the front of the room," via Zoom.

"It's an extra set of hands, eyes, and ears," said **Tom Rosenberger**, director of instructional design. "It's to help monitor the chat, or point out to the faculty member when someone is using the raise-hand feature."

Rosenberger said that, between the in-person component and the new technology, many feelings of isolation from the spring will be mitigated. "Logistically and mechanically, teaching this way can be quite the challenge, but I am amazed at the level of openness to change and adaptation that I see in our faculty."

## COVID: ADAPTING



Jenna DiBenedetto '22 (R) meets with Joanne Casey, director of the Career and Professional Development Center, for a career counseling session via Zoom in March 2020.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FROM A DISTANCE

Some students saw their summer job placements dematerialize or had their workloads reduced. The focus for the Career and Professional Development Center shifted to assisting those students in finding something new, while also encouraging them to make the best of the situation.

It also turned out that the virtual landscape of the spring helped expand the pool of alumni who could offer advice to students—they could give back without making significant time or travel commitments.

“Because we [conducted programming] via Zoom, I was able to get an alumnus from Florida, and one who is in New York City. It’s really a chance for us to engage alumni from locations that aren’t close by, who haven’t been engaged because of the distance,” said **Joanne Casey**, director of the Career and Professional Development Center. “This technology is a nice way to engage alumni.”

The Career and Professional Development Center also developed specialized programming to help bridge the gap for law students starting internships and

recent graduates entering an uncertain job market. As part of the Women’s Leadership Initiative (WLI), the center hosted a seven-part series on topics such as starting your own firm and taking an inside look at the in-house counsel role.

“Our guest presenters prepared and delivered exceptional content, and we are so fortunate for their generosity of time and expertise,” said **Mary Walsh Fitzpatrick**, assistant dean for career and professional development. “The [WLI] Summer Series was one of the most well-attended programs we have ever created, with over 200 attendees over the course of the series. Many students and alumni reached out to tell us how helpful they found these programs and were deeply appreciative of the opportunity to gain knowledge.”

### IMPACT, UNINTERRUPTED

For students within The Justice Center, interacting in-person with clients, and dealing with sensitive and confidential matters, is a huge piece of the law school experience. They progressed on their cases with “a little bit of improvisation and a lot of anticipation,” said Professor **Sarah Rogerson**, director of The Justice Center and its Immigration Law Clinic.

Many of the in-house clinics set up students with access to case materials so they could work with clients remotely. Secure phone lines and case management software were made accessible from home. Video calls replaced in-person client meetings, with precautions to avoid any lapse in privacy or a Zoom bombing—where uninvited attendees access a virtual meeting. The students made it work.

“We can do a lot to move a case forward [remotely] without revealing our client’s sensitive information,”

Rogerson said.

### TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY

Working and learning from home looked different for everyone. For some, the experience brought about feelings of isolation. For others, it was a chaotic balance of occupying children without a structured school day, while sharing a workspace and doing their jobs.

President and Dean **Alicia Ouellette '94** hosted daily, then twice-weekly, virtual town hall meetings to share the latest news with students, faculty, and staff. The town halls also brought some special guests, including Albany Mayor **Kathy Sheehan '94** and former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture **Tom Vilsack '75**.

“The deans [went] out of their way to make themselves accessible. I think that made this transition a lot smoother. Knowing that the entire law school community is on one page makes this entire thing more digestible,” said then-3L class president **Kieran Murphy '20**.

Day-to-day, Albany Law School community members—students, faculty, and staff—showed their tenacity, coming together to ensure the law school continued to be a great place to learn and work. In an

## COVID: ADAPTING

effort to keep people connected, the Office of Human Resources organized frequent, virtual coffee breaks during which attendees played trivia, shared collective quarantine stories, and introduced their pets.

As the academic year concluded, the department organized an online graduation ceremony for the family members of faculty and staff. Those honored ranged from kindergarteners to graduate-degree recipients, and there was plenty of pomp—despite the circumstance.

### UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

While many students, faculty, staff, and guests missed out on milestones and tentpole events, there were noticeable pockets of positivity.

The Government Law Center converted many of its in-person CLE events to a webinar format. The turnout—and efficiency—in the virtual space was a pleasant surprise.

“Being online lets us meet people where they are. It lets people tune in without spending time to travel. The in-person component is not as important,” said Professor **Ava Ayers**, director of the Government Law Center. “There’s some loss, but there’s also a big gain which is being able to reach many more people in a way that’s very convenient for them.”

For Haynes, this unexpected format brought an opportunity to reflect and expand the law school’s impact going forward.

“My expectation is that every institution of higher learning—including Albany Law School—will take a hard look at the curriculum and try to determine which modes of delivery make the most sense,” he said.

There were also some special moments. On April 29, during a session with students, former Citigroup chair **Richard Parsons ’71** shared advice drawn from his work at the highest levels of law, government, and business. Earlier that month, former NFL quarterback Boomer Esiason joined a Lawyers as Leaders class to share his perspective on leadership and his tips on public speaking. “It took up about an hour of my time, and it’s something that I really enjoyed,” Esiason told listeners the next morning on his New York City radio show. “These [students] are high achievers, and they’re paying attention to what’s going on in their world. ... Heck, it’s a great thing to be a part of.”

### PEOPLE FIRST

Students—past, current, and future—are essential to Albany Law School.

The Class of 2020 has been unable to gather for an in-person celebration—at least for now. On the afternoon of what would have been Commencement Day, May 15, the community gathered on Zoom and toasted to a semester unlike any other. A month later, responding to the needs of the class, the law school reopened the library for graduates studying for the bar exam.

The spring semester also serves as a time for Albany Law School’s future students to begin making connections within the school. This year, the two Accepted Students Days had to be hosted virtually—a first for Albany Law School. The events followed a similar format as any other year’s—with opportunities to hear from deans, students, and alumni—and the turnout was notable.

Then there was another first: Orientation with pandemic safety guidelines.

The fall 2020 semester began with the majority of the incoming class on campus for orientation, and others attending remotely. The hybrid week had all the expected elements—swearing in, a sample class, meeting peers—with physical distancing and other precautions in place. Though the start of its law school experience was nontraditional, the new class brought energy and eagerness to learn the law and weave themselves into the Albany Law School community.

When it was all said and done, Albany Law School welcomed 211 new students, 189 of whom are pursuing a J.D.

And yet another first: coming off a successful virtual Spirit Day on May 1, the Office of Alumni Engagement organized a weeklong virtual Reunion in September, complete with the Grand Honors Awards, class meetups, and classroom visits.

“We’ve made some big decisions,” Dean Ouellette said. “I think through the isolation we [found] moments of incredible community growth.” **A**



### TEACHING COVID LAW IN REAL TIME

President and Dean **Alicia Ouellette** typically spends summers traveling and sharing the good news about Albany Law School. This year she found a different way to make an impact—by returning to the classroom. She tapped into her bioethics and health law expertise to launch the course COVID-19: Law in a Time of Pandemic, through which students explored the vast legal issues that surround a public health crisis as one unfolded in real time. For the dean, teaching the course let her reconnect to her roots as a law professor, and apply some of the issues of her scholarly focus to current events. “The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered so many areas of law,” she said. “This course [presented] an opportunity for all of us to dig a little deeper into the nuances of what we’re hearing about in the news.”



rivera

Judge Richard Rivera '91 has noticed a number of potential trends that may be related to the pandemic, including a spike in domestic violence cases and a drop in juvenile delinquent cases.

## Adapting on the fly: A view from the Family Court bench

TWO MILES FROM 80 NEW SCOTLAND AVE., FOUR ALBANY LAW GRADUATES SERVE AS JUDICIAL FIRST RESPONDERS in a court that, even in the best of times, is the legal equivalent of a trauma center: Albany County Family Court.

Albany County's four Family Court judges—Hon. **Richard Rivera '91**, Hon. **Susan Kushner '85**, Hon. **Sherri J. Brooks-Morton '03**, and Hon. **Amy Joyce '97**—have worked around the pandemic to ensure that orders of protection did not fall between the cracks, that abused and neglected children were protected, and that juvenile delinquent cases were addressed.

Sometimes that meant working from their dining room tables, conferring with counsel via Skype for Business while the client was on the telephone. Sometimes it meant a courtroom appearance, with face coverings and social distancing. Sometimes it meant a combination, with some participants in the courthouse and some on a monitor.

The figure-it-out-as-we-go approach required adaptability and ingenuity.

Judges Brooks-Morton and Joyce just took office in

January and had little time to get acclimated before COVID-19 changed everything. Judge Kushner had seven years behind her. Judge Rivera has been on the Family Court bench since 2015 and wears multiple hats—acting Supreme Court justice, supervising judge of the domestic violence and mentoring courts, and presiding judge of the domestic violence and youth parts.

All were trained at Albany Law to adapt on the fly. But of course, none had experience handling Family Court during the shifting and potentially deadly winds of a worldwide pandemic.

"I certainly didn't take any courses on law during a global shutdown," Brooks-Morton said. "I'm not sure anything could have prepared us for this."

Rivera agreed, but said he learned to think on his feet in law school, both in the classroom and through his participation in moot court competition. "We were taught to think outside the box to be a better attorney, and I think that made me a better judge."

Initially, all county court matters were moved to a central, sanitized location: the Albany County Judicial Center. A few weeks later, facilities were either closed or



**“When litigants are on the phone, you can’t see body language or expressions and those things certainly help with determining credibility.”**

greatly restricted while the judges worked from home. As of mid-summer, the court was open for in-person appearances, but much of the work was still being done remotely, which was less than ideal.

“When litigants are on the phone, you can’t see body language or expressions and those things certainly help with determining credibility,” Brooks-Morton said.

Rivera has noticed a number of potential trends that may be related to the pandemic, including a spike in domestic violence cases and a drop in juvenile delinquent cases.

Meanwhile, a couple miles south, Professor **Jaya Connors** runs the Family Violence Litigation Clinic within The Justice Center at Albany Law School. Connors said the clinic remained open and will continue to provide services to those in need, and the need is great: New York State reports that calls to the domestic violence hotline are up by a third and shelter occupancy rates have risen.

“I have heard from domestic violence legal service providers who are also working in the trenches that the pandemic has resulted in an influx of clients; that there are too many cases to handle; that they have had to turn away clients because they do not have sufficient staffing; that batterers are breaking victims’ cell phones,” Connors said. “Victims are more isolated now because they can’t just run to a neighbor’s house or have a neighbor drive them to court because of social distancing and fear of infection.”

Connors said the school and students are stepping up to the challenge of helping clients in a virtual setting. “All of our clinical courses at our Justice Center are filled to capacity for the fall, with law students eager to learn and serve.” **A**

**“Victims are more isolated now because they can’t just run to a neighbor’s house or have a neighbor drive them to court because of social distancing and fear of infection.”**



## Donors step up for students in need

BEFORE MANY CURRENT STUDENTS WERE BORN, THE CLASS OF 1978 set up a student assistance fund in honor of Helen Wilkinson, the school’s longtime registrar. Now, that fund is aiding students who have financial hardships due to the coronavirus crisis.

“She would find ways to get the students money when they needed it,” said Vice President for Institutional Advancement **Jeffrey Schanz**. “We have decided to use this fund as a way to cover COVID issues. All of the money goes directly to student support: helping students get groceries, helping students because they lost their jobs.”

For March and April, the school put a “pause” on other fundraising and encouraged gifts to the Helen Wilkinson Fund. The response was “massive,” Schanz said. “We’re getting a lot of contributions not because people exactly knew Helen Wilkinson, but because they know the students have a great deal of need right now. In some cases this is keeping the students literally enrolled here.”

Most student requests are for help with rent, groceries, or utilities—mainly high-speed internet to allow them to participate in online classes and other expenses related to COVID-19, said Associate Dean for Student Affairs

**Rosemary Queenan**.

Some students wrote that they were supported by a spouse, but the spouse had been laid off because of the shutdown. One student asked for help with child care. “Her sister typically watched the child and wasn’t able to because she was immunocompromised. So, she then needed to secure alternative child care,” Queenan said.

Other students had to unexpectedly adapt when the bar exam was rescheduled from the end of July to September and then October. “They thought they were going to sit for the exam at the end of July and probably planned for expenses through that time period,” she said.

The fund was able to help those students with rent and other expenses. Donors have given so much to the fund—\$56,000 as of August 1—that the committee in charge of disbursements was able to grant most eligible requests. The fund doesn’t cover credit card payments or car loans—only emergency needs.

“The support from our alumni is unbelievable,” Queenan said. And it may lead to the next generation of donors. One student wrote in a thank-you letter, “I hope to one day pay this forward to a future Albany Law School student.” **A**



“We need to assure passengers that these technologies are not intrusive in any way, do not violate their constitutional rights, and will protect their health and safety.”

## Airport CEO navigates uncharted territory

WHEN **Philip Calderone** ’81 WAS APPOINTED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER of Albany International Airport in November 2019, he began working on a forward-looking master plan for the airport—its first in nearly 30 years. But the process was interrupted by the emergence of a once-in-a-century pandemic.

Calderone has family in Milan, Italy, which was hit early and hard by COVID-19; he heard firsthand how the city shut down operations and commerce, and isolated itself from the rest of the country. Anticipating a similar situation in the U.S., he convened in February a task force that included, among others, local and federal officials in the government, health, safety, and transportation sectors.

They reviewed the airport’s pandemic response plan and emergency response plan to develop a strategic plan that

included a contingency for operating the control tower from a remote location. Community outreach was critical, especially letting people know about the precautions that were being taken to protect travelers’ safety. Still, when the virus escalated in March, air travel declined by nearly 95% and revenues plummeted dramatically.

But essential airport services had to continue. In addition to air travel, the airport handles millions of tons of essential cargo. “We are very much a part of the critical infrastructure of the region,” Calderone said. They had to be able to receive planes carrying equipment for hospitals and other integral institutions, and COVID-19 patients being transported to receive treatment at Albany Medical Center.

To avoid layoffs or furloughs, some employees were temporarily repurposed for other needs, such as

additional cleaning and sanitizing of the terminal. Work also continued on large-scale renovation projects essential to the airport’s mission.

“The airport is in many ways a microcosm of society,” Calderone said. “We are subject to federal rules and restrictions; we must comply with state and local guidelines; and we need to balance the importance of risk mitigation and protecting the public with the requirement of remaining operational.”

When Albany’s signatory airlines, financially devastated by the sharp decline in air travel, requested abatements or deferrals of rent, Calderone granted temporary relief as permitted by the FAA. “We made sure we worked with the airlines as good partners; their success is key to our success.”

As New York State began its phased reopening in late May, airport traffic began to increase to about 40%.

## The Online Learner: Returning to Class in the Time of COVID

BY WILL TREVOR

Data from the Department of Labor (DOL) suggest that people change careers three to seven times during their lives. This precise number has been disputed, with some commentators believing it may be overstated. What is not disputed, however, is that in today's world individuals need to be prepared to re-skill, up-skill, and gain new knowledge and competencies during their working lives. Not just once, but maybe multiple times before reaching retirement!

Committing to lifelong learning, and making the decision to return to learn, can be a daunting task. When there is already so much that commands your attention during the working day, whether that is your home life, family life, or work life, trying to set valuable time aside to acquire new skills and knowledge can be a big ask. But with careful planning and preparation, it doesn't have to be something to put aside.

Some studies put the number of Americans pursuing an online education at more than six million. And that figure is rising. Online learning provides a flexible and affordable way to return to learn, and with COVID-19 still present within our communities, it also provides a safe option for students concerned about exposure to the virus. But the successful online learner needs to follow a few basic rules to gain the most from the experience:

**Don't set unrealistic expectations** of yourself that you know you will be unable to keep, such as pledging to "spend all day Sunday studying." Instead, set aside time slots when you know you can study without distraction. Get to know your limits, so if you realize that your attention starts to wander after 30 minutes, then get up and walk about, or read a book, until you feel you can concentrate again. Often the best approach is one of "little and often" rather than setting a blockbuster schedule.

**Plan your time carefully.** When you receive your course schedule, try to put the important deadlines into your calendar straight away, so that you can plan for the important assessed work. Be sure that you are completing regular tasks, such as the weekly discussion forums, but don't lose sight of the bigger objectives, such as the final project, for which you can start planning ahead of time.

### Use the Eisenhower Decision

**Principle** to differentiate between tasks that are important/unimportant and urgent/non-urgent. So, if you have a task that is important and urgent, such as an impending assignment deadline, you should do it now! If you have something that is important but non-urgent, plan a time when you will do it, but be sure to complete the more important tasks first. If the task is neither important nor urgent—such as the procrastinator's favorite activity of desk-tidying—consider whether you should even be doing it.

Finally, enjoy yourself! As the adage goes, "If you enjoy what you're doing, you'll never work a day in your life." You have a unique opportunity to spend time immersing yourself in a topic that you are interested in, so be sure to savor the chance to take a deeper dive in the company of like-minded individuals, with the support and guidance of your instructor. While you have important deadlines to meet, don't forget to take the time for some of the things that you find most interesting and take a more leisurely approach when the pressure is off.

Online learning presents many opportunities for individuals to return to learn in a more flexible and convenient way. While it does require careful planning in terms of the multiple demands upon your time, it can provide an important pathway to gain the skills and knowledge to advance your career, particularly during the current time and the unique challenges presented by COVID-19.

In June, however, when New York imposed quarantine restrictions on over 30 states, air travel dropped again to 25%. Despite the decline, Calderone believes the quarantine restrictions have been necessary to protect New York's success in reducing the infection rate and preventing any flare-up.

Calderone noted as a challenge the lack of clear national guidelines for passenger travel. "Airlines and airports need to work together on consistent standards that will reassure passengers that it is safe to travel." While Albany International was one of the first airports to make mask-wearing mandatory, enforcement of the rule has raised important legal issues. And some airports are considering mandatory screening before people enter the terminal. "But if a risk is determined, what can [airport personnel] do at that point, given constitutional concerns?" Calderone asked.

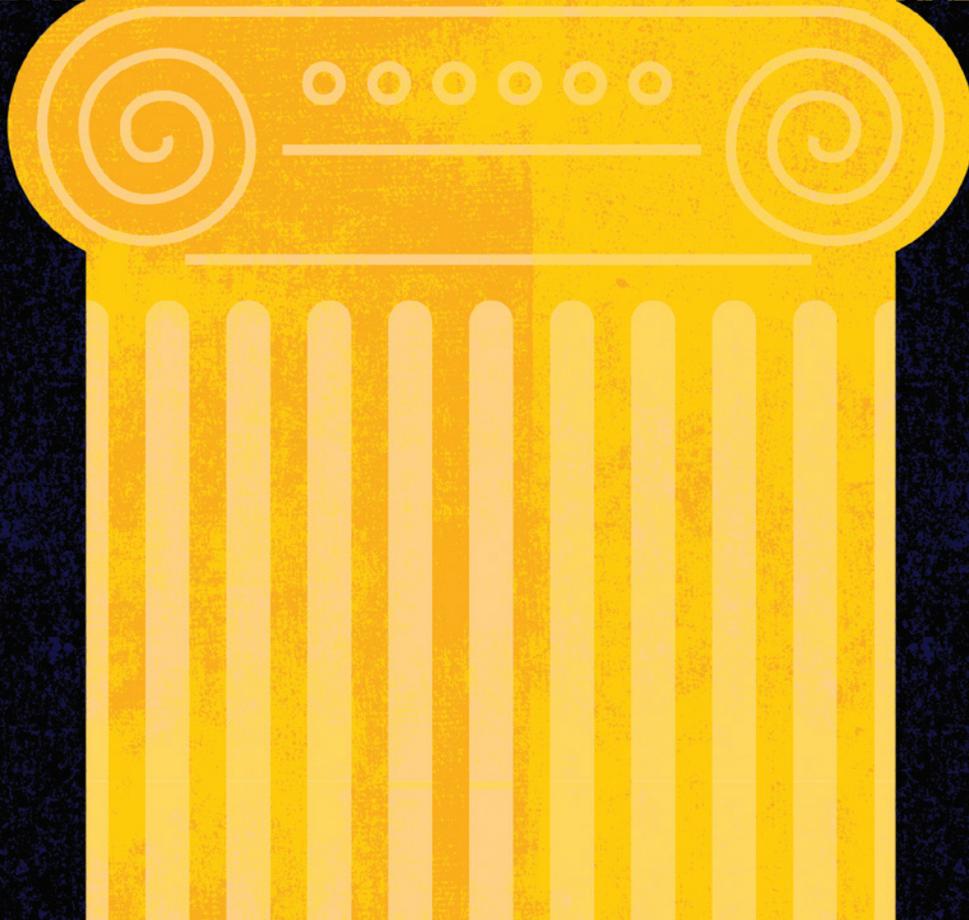
Strategies for handling situations like a pandemic lie in becoming even more "smart" from a technology perspective, Calderone said. Albany International has partnered with GE Research and Aviation divisions to explore new technologies to help airports deal with these challenges. But biometric technologies such as facial recognition, remote temperature screening, and passenger tracking—for contact tracing—also raise legal issues.

"We need to give thoughtful consideration to data privacy issues and balance legal concerns with the challenges of the pandemic," he said. "We need to assure passengers that these technologies are not intrusive in any way, do not violate their constitutional rights, and will protect their health and safety." **A**

*Will Trevor is an assistant dean and the director of online programs at Albany Law School.*

# Meeting the need.

Working with Legal Aid,  
students and alumni are  
providing support during  
the pandemic.



BY SHANNON BALLARD GORMAN

## When the novel coronavirus became a pandemic, Professor Ray Brescia anticipated a major rise in people needing free legal help. He had worked with the Urban Justice Center in New York City, helped people who were affected and economically displaced by 9/11, and predicted that COVID-19 would have a similar impact.

UPSTATE, THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY OF NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK provides civil legal services to those who cannot afford them. Expecting that Legal Aid was going to be inundated with cases, Brescia reached out to executive director **Lillian Moy** about increasing Albany Law School's support.

Typically, up to five Albany Law students work with Legal Aid over the summer as interns or law clerks. This summer, Legal Aid took on 20 full-time interns from Albany Law to serve as law clerks and added a cadre of part-time positions to help with COVID-19-related research. They called the 36 students the COVID Response Corps.

The fact that the virus necessitated all work to be done virtually also presented opportunities, said Moy, such as utilizing more students as clerks working remotely. "This was an organized way to respond to the unprecedented challenges posed by the pandemic."

When Brescia sent an email to the student body seeking applicants, the response was strong. "Students were eager for ways to get involved since COVID hit," he said.

"I was looking for a way to use the legal skills I've learned at Albany Law to help those most affected by the pandemic," said intern **Raymond Leggett**. "The email from Professor Brescia was serendipitous."

Other students were scrambling to replace summer legal

jobs and internships canceled because of the pandemic. The COVID Response Corps was one solution for displaced students "while putting them to good work," said Moy.

Even students who still had summer employment could help with COVID-19 legal efforts by contributing about 10 hours a week of research.

"We have the ability to provide interesting work at different levels of commitment," said Moy. And students benefited greatly from working directly with Legal Aid attorneys—many of whom are Albany Law alumni.

Leggett assisted several Legal Aid attorneys from his home outside Detroit. He helped clients whose employment situations were hurt by COVID-19 file for unemployment insurance benefits and prepare for their hearings.

"We did our best to make sure these individuals received their benefits."

He added, "The attorneys at Legal Aid are some of the most dedicated and compassionate individuals I've met. They are helping those most marginalized in society, and in my opinion, that is the best application of legal skills."

Individuals with disabilities suddenly found their financial futures uncertain when New York State hit the "pause" button. Legal Aid attorney **Michael Telfer '11**, who works on the Disability Advocacy Project (DAP), described the

first couple of weeks of the shutdown as chaos as they navigated working remotely, obtaining medical records during quarantine, and transitioning to phone hearings. Their clients, who are unable to work due to physical or mental conditions, are applying for or appealing Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or both. Decisions to determine these benefits were delayed, and hearings were adjourned or conducted by phone.

Intern **Michele Di Franco** did legal research for hearings and appeals, called and drafted letters to clients, gathered all necessary information to calculate benefits, drafted requests for records, and followed up with providers—all from his home in Ontario, Canada. Normally, Di Franco would have attended hearings; instead, Telfer had him sit in on the phone calls preparing clients for their hearings. “Michele provided me with questions he thought of as he listened, which were valuable to me in preparing for the hearings,” Telfer said.

Intern **Ashley Hong** also worked on DAP cases for Telfer and attorney **Allison Zaloba** ’15. “In the beginning [of the shutdown] it was difficult to get medical records from doctors’ offices and

hospitals, but Ashley was persistent,” Zaloba said.

“I spoke with providers who didn’t understand why their clients’ disability benefits were denied or terminated; they were clearly unable to work,” said Hong, from Westchester, N.Y. “Within a few weeks of working with these clients and learning from Allison, I realized the importance of this work. These benefits

**“The attorneys at Legal Aid are some of the most dedicated and compassionate individuals I’ve met. They are helping those most marginalized in society, and in my opinion, that is the best application of legal skills.”**

mean money that these clients need to maintain their livelihood.”

Zaloba also had returning intern **Eileen Tchao** researching specific issues, including the fate of benefits claims when a client passes away during the appeals process. While Zaloba does not know if her clients’ deaths have been COVID-19 related, most of their clients are immunocompromised or have comorbidities. “There are substitute parties that can take over SSDI claims, but SSI is a lot more restrictive,” she said. “It gets complicated, so her research has been very helpful.”

COVID-19 economic-impact payments, which were very important to Legal Aid’s clients, were also complicated in many cases. “Early on, we had the interns help us with other tasks while we figured out how to handle notifying our clients about stimulus payments,” Zaloba said. Because many DAP clients do not file taxes every year, payments were not automatic; an extra step was required, for which they had to get on a computer—usually with someone’s assistance.

Internet access—or lack thereof—was among the many issues the stimulus checks posed, and not just for DAP clients. Intern

**Ruchi Patel** worked with Legal Aid’s Low Income Taxpayer Clinic, and although the IRS suspended most audits and collections due to COVID-19, they instead had stimulus check issues to deal with. Some people filed late tax returns so they could get their stimulus payment—but with the IRS backed up with unprocessed returns, “[clients] are going to be out of luck for a very long time,” Patel said.

Also out of luck: people married to noncitizens—they were not eligible for the payment. “The immigration cases have been sad,” said Patel, as have cases involving domestic violence or domestic relations in which one spouse would not release the other’s money—“a really tricky situation,” she said.

“Students are really learning from these issues and how complex they are,” Brescia said.

When New York State passed the Emergency Rent Relief Act of 2020, intern **Teagan Dolan** wrote a summary of the lengthy and complex state legislation, which her supervising attorney, **David**

**Crossman** ’17, said gave him a head start on reaching out to clients who could benefit.

“It was sometimes challenging because many of our clients don’t have income, so they’re lacking a ‘documented change in income’ related to COVID that would make them eligible,” explained

**“I spoke with providers who didn’t understand why their clients’ disability benefits were denied or terminated; they were clearly unable to work.”**

Dolan. She worked exclusively on housing cases, which exploded due to COVID-19’s painful effects on the economy.

Much of her work involved supporting tenants facing wrongful eviction. Despite the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act providing a moratorium on evictions, Dolan spoke with two to three clients a week whose landlords were trying to illegally evict them. She reviewed their rights and reassured them that they did not, in fact, have to be out in seven days—even if the landlord claimed a code violation warranted an immediate eviction.

“I keep comparing the law right now to the Wild West: nobody really knows what’s going on,” Dolan said. “It’s fun to be a law student during this time and see it all evolve.”

Originally from Kentucky but living in Albany to attend law school, Dolan took a summer class online taught by President and Dean **Alicia Ouellette** on “Law in a Time of Pandemic,” which examined in depth COVID-19’s impacts on the law. “It helped inform a lot of the work I did this summer,” she said.

One case in particular—of a tenant who was unable to move out by the agreed-upon date because of COVID-19 complications—required a lot of research to form a potential breach of contract defense.

“[Dolan] was especially helpful with this client and did a lot of writing as far as what her options were,” Crossman said. “She helped work out the details so that the client could recover her

## COVID: HELPING

belongings and potentially avoid any money judgment.”

Before COVID-19, Dolan would have been able to go to court and see these cases play out, so instead Crossman had her review case notes and write the summaries to help close as many cases as possible.

Not only did this add to her learning, it helped set Crossman up for the flood of eviction cases they are expecting when the

moratorium expires. The National Housing Law Project is estimating 20,000 evictions in New York State and 20 to 28 million nationwide. Fortunately, New York State’s Tenant Safe Harbor Act was extended until January 1, 2021.

When Legal Aid asked Dolan to stay on for the fall semester, she accepted. “It will be good to see how a lot of this plays out and offer as much support as I can.” **A**

**“It was sometimes challenging because many of our clients don’t have income, so they’re lacking a ‘documented change in income’ related to COVID that would make them eligible [for rent relief].”**

## Helping hospital workers at the epicenter

**Beth Cooper ’05** FOUND HERSELF AT THE EPICENTER OF THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK in New York City this spring.

She is the director of employee and labor relations at NYU Langone Health. The medical center had almost all COVID-19 patients in the hospital at the height of the outbreak. “Every day was a new day. We’d have certain expectations and then new data or information would come in,” she said.

One of Cooper’s main jobs was to provide advice and support to the staff during this difficult time. Due to the increasing influx of patients, one of the most frequently discussed topics concerned the best way to move staff to new shifts and assignments in the newly created COVID-19 units. Nurses and other staff who worked in non-ICU areas, for example, were asked to work in a different building, doing things they’d never done before, with new colleagues and managers, which required training.

But what Cooper remembers most is managing countless schedule changes. Instead of giving workers 30 days’ notice about their shift changes, the employees were given a few days’ notice. As a result, these employees had to make changes in their personal lives during an already stressful time. For example, many employees had to find new child care arrangements, which became even more difficult when schools closed.

“We had some resources for staff to take advantage of, because they were essential workers. There were resources in Manhattan, but a lot of our employees live elsewhere,” Cooper said. So she helped her colleagues find child care locations that were still open where they lived.

Schedules were also changed to “minimize travel and exposure” to the virus in the community. Some people worked three long days a week to manage child care responsibilities and reduce their commute time on public transportation.

Much of the job required Cooper to stay calm and communicate clearly. “People were working with new supervisors or on new



**“Every day was a new day. We’d have certain expectations and then new data or information would come in.”**

shifts or in new buildings. We tried to keep communication flowing.”

Sometimes people called her because they were upset, having just supported patients in need who were not able to have their family members by their side.

“People dealt with very trying situations every day. Sometimes people just needed to vent—just hearing what their day was like—especially when the [patient’s] family couldn’t be there and they are the last person to be with someone before they passed.” She knew which resources to recommend in those cases.

But she also had to stay mentally healthy, making time for 30 minutes of yoga most nights.

Now she’s working on handling travel and vacation questions and other ensuing issues. Also, she makes sure essential workers are aware of the latest New York State travel restrictions regarding their return to work, such as the need to undergo a COVID-19 test before returning to the hospital.

She is also shifting some of her focus to a possible second wave. “We’re all aware of how fast the situation may change. We’re developing plans in case this happens again. At least now, we have a better understanding of what works.” **A**



## Business-minded alumnae help move ‘N.Y. Forward’

**Heather Briccetti '89**, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE BUSINESS COUNCIL OF NEW YORK STATE, and **Sonya del Peral '91**, co-owner and manager of Nine Pin Ciderworks in Albany, were invited in April to participate in the New York Forward Reopening Advisory Board.

Convened to help guide the state’s reopening strategy amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the board is chaired by two former secretaries to New York Governor **Andrew Cuomo '82**, Steven Cohen and Bill Mulrow, and includes more than 100 business, community, and civic leaders from across the state.

Del Peral was honored to be invited—and a bit surprised, because she represents a single business. But she is being modest: she is closely tied to the craft beverage industry and particularly the New York Cider Association, which she helped form in 2015.

She participated in two video conference calls in the spring, and although it was interesting learning about other industries, she admitted it was challenging waiting for her sector’s questions and concerns to be addressed. However, she understood that the administration was doing the best it could with a “mind-boggling” challenge and credited her lawyer training for

making her sensitive to the statutory restrictions and administrative hurdles involved.

Still, the ever-changing landscape due to the pandemic made business planning difficult, del Peral shared. “When one set of rules was about to expire but new ones had not been issued, we could not purchase supplies, secure staff, or schedule production.” The advisory board provided a way for businesses to make their needs heard. Del Peral advocated for an extension of the delivery and shipping privileges granted after the shutdown and for continued allowance for outdoor-area expansion, and both were granted.

When Briccetti got the call asking her to participate in N.Y. Forward, she had already been in near-daily contact with the Governor’s Office since COVID-19 measures began to roll out in March, affecting the 2,300 Business Council members across the state. The advisory board was a natural extension of her work. “We were trying to guide the state in moving forward in a way that was both safe and enabled businesses to function and reopen,” Briccetti said.

“I apply that same lens in my job every day.”

Through the advisory board calls, she was able to share plans that were developed by Business Council members to help the administration

develop guidelines and best practices. “Much of the guidance issued has been very reflective of comments made by members and shared with the board.”

One drawback was the size of the group and the wide variety of situations and concerns; even within one sector, every individual workplace is unique, Briccetti said. The Business Council took the initiative to host smaller group calls for specific sectors such as hospitality and manufacturing. “These calls allowed a representative sample of our members to provide feedback to the people writing the rules.”

Briccetti said the key legal skill for this work is advocacy—understanding the perspective of the client and the audience and steering them to a solution that works—and drew parallels to her moot court experience at Albany Law. “This work is the same as framing an opening or closing argument: conveying your client’s viewpoint in a way that your audience will understand or respond to. Figuring out what are the facts, how to frame them, and how to suggest a solution is what law school is all about.” **A**

**“We were trying to guide the state in moving forward in a way that was both safe and enabled businesses to function and reopen. I apply that same lens in my job every day.”**

—Heather Briccetti ’89



## Surprise care package from Hong Kong

AN ALBANY LAW SCHOOL GRADUATE WHO LIVES IN HONG KONG has been supplying the law school with protective gear—and vows to continue as long as necessary.

When the novel coronavirus struck New York State, **Vincent Lai ’86**, completely unprompted, sent the school six boxes of disposable masks and two boxes of gloves. Due to delays in international shipping, the surprise care package arrived at Albany Law School long after the school transitioned to remote learning for the spring and summer.

Now students, faculty, and staff are back on campus—and Lai is sending more masks.

In late June he mailed another 400 individually wrapped, disposable face coverings. “I saw Albany Law sent out their new protocol, ‘If you don’t have a mask we will provide one.’ And these are individually wrapped so they are very sanitary,” he said.

He has been checking in with the school. If disposable face coverings become in short supply—as was the case in the spring—he plans to keep sending them.

Lai noted that Hong Kong is about the same size as New York City, but had far fewer positive cases and deaths. He thinks Hong Kong’s “face mask-wearing culture” made the difference. “We get colds and we put on masks,” said Lai, who moved to Hong Kong more than two decades ago and is now chief administrative officer and company secretary at Sunwah Kingsway Capital Holdings Limited. “Each family already has a box of masks at home.”

Hong Kong’s experience with SARS in the early 2000s, which had a double-digit case fatality rate, also was a factor. As soon as COVID-19 arrived, Lai said that people began placing a pad at their front doors with a mixture of alcohol and water on a towel to disinfect shoes. They also went back to putting replaceable plastic sheets on elevator buttons, among other safety precautions.

But the main focus was on masks. Lai quickly ran out in January when the virus hit. His family in the United States began mailing him masks. “So after you [in the U.S.] started getting it, I started sending them to you,” he said.

By then, Hong Kong had a tremendous supply. Every drugstore had piles of boxes of masks. “The government gave incentives to set up factories to make masks,” he said. Hong Kong also gave every resident a reusable cloth mask and 10 disposable masks with the phrase, “Together, We Fight the Virus.”

“It’s about protecting people,” he said. “And this is my way of helping protect my friends at Albany Law School.” **A**

At the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak in March, with New York suddenly the epicenter of coronavirus response, the state's—and the nation's—attention turned to Governor Andrew Cuomo '82. We spoke with the governor about leading in times of calm and crisis: his approach, his takeaways, and his advice for the next generation.

BY CHRIS COLTON

# Reflections on Leadership



COVID:  
LEADING



## COVID: LEADING

**Thank you for talking with us today about leadership. How would you describe your leadership style? Who inspired it?**

A governor has to set an agenda, identify priorities, allocate resources. That's an intellectual function, something that any number of people can do in the quiet of their offices. Being a leader in a modern democracy has a dynamic dimension as well. You have to actively present your ideas to the people, to interest groups, to advocates, to legislators, and build support. The third dimension is that you have to be a disruptor. In private enterprises, the profit motive tends to keep the business driving forward, innovating, creating efficiencies, expanding. There is no profit motive in government, so leaders have to be responsible for encouraging people, fighting complacency, and

inviting fresh thinking. Added together, being a leader means being active, engaged, demanding. My inspiration, as a governor and as a person, comes from my father. He and I have different styles and personalities, but everything I believe about the responsibility of government to help improve people's lives I learned from him.

**Let's get into crisis response—there are so many lessons to take from the COVID-19 pandemic. First, how important is being visible in a crisis?**

COVID-19 is mysterious, fast-moving, and lethal. It affects everyone, and every dimension of our lives. That's frightening and disturbing. During times of danger, fear, crisis, people need to be able to see and hear their leaders. Ultimately, this is why they hired us. They depend on us



Gov. Cuomo participates in the disinfection process of a No. 7 Subway car in Queens, N.Y.

## COVID: LEADING

to coordinate a response. They want to hear the facts as we know them, the science as we understand it, and our plans, as best as we can formulate them. When people can see you and hear you sharing the information you have, you build a bond of trust. As a result, they almost always accept the responsibility to do their part to solve the problem. So visibility helps accomplish that much. But visibility doesn't help if you don't know what you're talking about, or if you don't tell the truth. Winston Churchill's greatest act of courage during World War II wasn't facing the German army; it was facing the British people, and telling them the hard truth about their predicament. Visibility is irrelevant if you lie to people.

**From the first days of the outbreak you started giving real-time updates, speaking directly to New Yorkers. But many of your briefings were also carried by cable news networks, giving you a much broader reach. Did having a national audience change your approach at all?**

Nature abhors a vacuum. In the absence of steady, reliable leadership from Washington, people saw our briefings on the situation in New York—which for a time, was the epicenter of the pandemic—and they began to trust what we were saying. But no, it did not change my approach: follow the facts, follow the science, focus on fighting the disease.

**You held press briefings for 111 consecutive days at one point. What was that experience like? How do you manage your team—and your own health—to perform at a high level, in the public eye, over a sustained period of time?**

I don't think I ever thought about those questions. How many times in our lives do we face challenges and say, "Relax, it's not life or death." Not this time; this *was* life or death. We did what we needed to do, and I couldn't be more proud of the way my team rose to the occasion. I have often said I have some of the smartest, most dedicated people in government working in my administration. They proved that over and over during this crisis.

**We've seen you take a COVID-19 test on camera. We've seen you "mask up" in public. What are your thoughts on showing vs. telling when it comes to leadership?**

If you are not in front, are you really leading? It makes a difference when a leader shows the people that he is *of* them, not *above* them. When I talked about my fears for my mother, my worries about my brother and his family, my concerns for my children, people who had been responding to me on an intellectual level began to respond on a deeper, more emotional level. By doing that, they strengthened their commitment to doing their part to fight the virus.

**Anyone who has given a big presentation can relate to your use of PowerPoint slides. I'd love to know more about your thoughts on visual aids and specifically, as one website put it, how you "draw on the persuasive authority of PowerPoint."**

I get kidded about how much I use PowerPoint. I don't know why. It works for me. Jacob deGrom doesn't get kidded about using a four-seam fastball. PowerPoints combine the best of a speech with the added benefit of visuals that help us explain complex ideas. I understand, just as members of the media understand, the power of visuals to help communicate messages by engaging the public.

**On collaboration: What are the keys to working with other leaders or stakeholders—some of whom may disagree with you—to get things done?**

The key is to remember that there is a difference between politics and government. Politics is full of passion and disagreement. Emotions can run very high. Government should avoid that. I have been chosen by the voters to work within a system with a lot of other people who have also been chosen by voters. Once we are elected, our parties are secondary; we all have the responsibility to serve the people. President Johnson liked to say, "Come, let us reason together." Politics is the place for emotion; government is the place for reason. Of course, it doesn't always work that way. When possible, we've tried to find common ground that we can build on. That includes Republicans and Democrats. It includes other governors and even the president. I have said throughout the COVID-19 crisis that when President Trump does something positive, something that helps us, I will praise him. When he does something that hurts New Yorkers, I will not hesitate to call him out for it. I try to put the interests of the people ahead of politics. When we do that, we can work together to get things done.

**When should a leader ask for help? When should one give help?**

The answer is the same in both cases: whenever it's needed. We have been successful in New York, it happened because 19 million people helped make it happen. They washed their hands, they wore masks, they practiced social distancing. They stood up to the fear, and the anxiety. Our essential workers came to work every day even when it was risky to do so. Democracy is based on the need for help. E Pluribus Unum—out of many, one. We are stronger together than we are alone.



## COVID: LEADING

### How did your legal education—your training as a lawyer—prepare you to meet this moment?

There is a logic to the law. It's grounded in precedent and in fact. The law is driven by a search for the truth. Fighting this pandemic involves a search for the truth as well. Every day I faced a jury of 19 million people. Every day I presented the best evidence I could assemble. We were looking for a verdict of cooperation. So far, we have won the decision we sought.

### What advice on leadership would you give law students or up-and-coming public servants?

Don't aspire to leadership. Aspire to excellence—moral and intellectual excellence. If you attain that, leadership will find you.

### Can those in the private sector apply that advice, too?

I don't know why not. If leadership is truly looking for long-term gains that benefit their enterprises and their customers, they have to aspire to excellence. Unfortunately, we all too often see people in the private sector who rely on something less to enrich themselves.

### What lessons in leadership have you learned from this experience?

I learned, once again, that leadership is about preparation—looking ahead to what's coming, and preparing for it. Generally speaking, we were not prepared for this pandemic. Nobody was, and the people in Washington who had the most responsibility for being prepared contributed the least. In New York, we found ourselves constantly reacting to events. But there were times when we were able to look ahead and see what was coming, and that helped us. For example, even before we had one confirmed patient, we recognized that the testing protocol set up by Washington was failing. So we developed our own test, got the FDA to approve it, and immediately recruited private and hospital laboratories in the state to process the tests. New York has done as a result more testing per capita than most countries. And that has saved lives.

**Governor Cuomo, we appreciate your time. [A](#)**



New Yorkers Chris Rock and Rosie Perez join the governor to promote COVID-19 testing and PPE wearing at the Madison Square Boys and Girls Club in Brooklyn, N.Y.

## N.Y.’s budget leader confronts— and communicates—new challenges

AT THE START OF 2020, things were looking up for **Robert Mujica '05**, director of the New York State Division of the Budget.

“The state was arguably in the best condition it had ever been in,” he said, with the financial freedom to consider exciting new policies. “And within four months you’re dealing with the pandemic of the century.”

His job changed in a heartbeat—and took on even more significance—as cases of COVID-19 grew exponentially, leading to a statewide pause in March.

“From a budgeting perspective, my first priority is making sure the government is functioning,” Mujica said. “At a time like this is when people need government the most. People are losing their jobs. Hospitals need money to operate. We need to get the PPE [personal protective equipment].”

“The first priority is making sure that we’re saving lives. You’re fighting something you don’t really understand and you’re making choices that will impact a lot of people,” he added.

The state posted steep revenue shortfalls, with unemployment higher than any time other than the Great Depression. Mujica began to worry about people “falling through the cracks.” And he didn’t have time for the slow, deliberative review that



Robert Mujica '05, director of the New York State Division of the Budget

he would normally use to reach the right decisions.

“You can take six months to make a decision and make sure you’ve crossed every ‘t’ and dotted every ‘i,’ but in that time you have lost the ship,” he said. “Now you have to make decisions very fast. Time and delay actually can cost lives.”

So his team began working nearly daily to get the needed research done. “The same amount of analysis has to occur, just faster,” he said.

Mujica also brought his communication style to address

the state’s sudden financial problems, delivering bad news without trying to sugarcoat it. “Early on we did our own analysis,” he said. It showed the state would probably be \$10 billion in the red. By the end of April, that figure grew to more than \$13 billion.

He warned that cuts would be coming if the state doesn’t receive substantial federal aid. Mujica said that being upfront was better than waiting months until he knew exactly what would happen.

“The key is to let people know what’s going on so it’s not a surprise,” he said. “People want to know what’s going on. I think it’s better

to give people an answer.” Even though it’s not the answer they want, he added.

Mujica sees the budget as a way to take care of people, making sure there are safety nets.

“The governor has entrusted me with this responsibility,” he said. “It’s something I don’t take lightly.”

He is now focusing on making the financial choices that can build up the economy again, while preparing for a possible second wave of COVID-19 cases.

“That’s what we’re focused on, so that if something happens, we are better positioned,” he said. [4](#)

## Confronting COVID from City Hall

Albany Law School alumni at the helm of two Capital Region cities found themselves providing leadership through a once-in-a-century pandemic. This is the story of how the mayors of Albany and Troy handled the emergence of COVID-19.



### THE EMERGENCE

“The situation leading up to declaring a state of emergency on March 15 was a rapid evolution,” recalls Albany Mayor **Kathy Sheehan '94**, the first woman mayor in the city’s more than 300-year history. She and her team were closely watching the developments downstate, but as of March 11, they were still planning to hold the St. Patrick’s Day parade. “There were no cases in the area, and CDC guidance at the time indicated that if vulnerable populations stayed home and people maintained social distance, we could proceed.” Then the county health commissioner called. Albany had its

first COVID-19 case, and it was “community spread”—meaning not someone who had traveled to a high-risk area or been in contact with someone who had traveled. The parade was off.

“What I remember most about that time is how dynamic the situation was,” recounts Troy Mayor **Patrick Madden '83**. When he met with his department heads on March 12, they had no inkling that schools and workplaces would be shut down. They were focused on posting notices about washing hands and making contingency plans for continuing operations if 25% of workers became sick. By that weekend, the state called

ALBANY ●



“COVID-19 isn’t like a natural or manmade disaster where there is a beginning, a middle, and an end. ... It’s a continuous challenge to which we are responding.”

for municipalities to send 50% of staff home to work, so the mayor’s team adjusted their draft plan and put it into action.

#### EARLY RESPONSE

In the days that followed, more executive orders were issued and more changes were required; Madden likened it to “jogging through an avalanche.” Cities were asked to further reduce on-site municipal staff by 25%, excluding essential workers. “It was challenging because most of what we do is essential: police, fire, water, and garbage,” Madden said.

He and his team agreed on two primary goals early on: to continue services to the city’s approximately 49,000 residents to the greatest extent possible; and to protect the health of city staff. “Every decision had to be looked at through those two lenses.”

Declaring a state of emergency allowed the cities to access FEMA funds, Sheehan explained, which they first used to get personal protective equipment (PPE) for their workforce—particularly essential workers. But they also had to figure out the logistics of transitioning the majority of city staff to remote work.

Sheehan’s next priority was keeping the community informed. The county was giving daily updates, mostly focused on infection rates and testing. The mayor decided to hold weekly COVID-19 updates geared toward the city’s approximately 97,000 residents, communicating news about the work they were doing to feed people, when parking rules were suspended, and when restaurants started offering drive-up service.

#### VALUABLE RESOURCES

Sheehan and Madden are both in their second terms, but nothing could have prepared them for dealing with a full-blown pandemic. Fortunately, there was help available. Sheehan had participated in the Bloomberg Harvard City

Leadership Initiative, a yearlong leadership development program for mayors. With COVID-19 spreading, the initiative’s organizers held weekly briefings for program participants, then formed the Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Coronavirus Local Response Initiative and opened it to all municipal leaders. The program’s real-time advice from world-renowned experts proved to be an invaluable resource, Sheehan said. “Those Thursday sessions helped me frame the messaging in my Friday updates to residents and provided some uniformity among mayors across the country.”

As far as continuity in New York’s Capital District, the mayors of Albany, Schenectady, and Troy were on the phone regularly, Madden said. At the state level, Sheehan said that Governor Andrew Cuomo’s daily reports on what was happening and how he was preparing for a surge in cases were very helpful. “They communicated clearly to everyone in the state just how serious the situation was.”

#### SUCCESS UNDER DURESS

Madden kept in close contact with his Capital Region colleagues throughout the crisis, but largely credits his staff for Troy’s successful response. “It is the quality of a team that determines the outcome,” he said. “Our team was prescient and nimble, often anticipating what was going to come and acting quickly. I’m pretty proud of what we did.” They got the city’s technology staff arranging work-from-home scenarios early on and exceeded the state’s goal for employees working from home, split staff into pods to limit exposure risk, and continued to provide city services—“not at 100% but at a good, solid level.”

Sheehan was proud that the City of Albany was able to work with community organizations to get residents the resources they needed—like getting devices into kids’ hands, wireless internet

TROY



“It is the quality of a team that determines the outcome. Our team was prescient and nimble, often anticipating what was going to come and acting quickly.”



hot spots to help them access online learning, and meals to children who normally would be fed at school as well as other vulnerable residents.

#### CONTINUOUS CHALLENGE

However, K-12 education was—and remains—a concern. “The inability to have students in the classroom, interacting with teachers and friends, and the lack of access to the benefits we see when children are in school, was hard to see,” Sheehan said. “The city does not run the school district and they did the best they could under extremely difficult circumstances, but our kids are going to be impacted by the loss of school time.”

Madden was concerned about autumn and the typical cold and flu season. People would likely be even more tired of taking precautions and adhering to restrictions and, he predicted, resistant to closing businesses again. “While it’s unknown how the virus will be affected by fall and winter weather, it’s important we continue to monitor conditions locally to stay prepared as possible,” he said.

Sheehan summarized, “COVID-19 isn’t like a natural or manmade disaster where there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to the response. It’s a virus that we don’t know how to treat, or stop from spreading—other than with these drastic measures that literally shut down the economy and disrupted our ability to gather, go to school, get

counseling. ... It’s a continuous challenge to which we are responding, and we don’t know when it’s going to end.”

#### LEADING WITH A LEGAL EDUCATION

The complex challenges that come with leading a city require unique mindsets and talents. Madden said that his legal education plays a role in every decision he makes and has helped prepare him for these challenges. “It gave me a greater ability to step out of myself, examine what is driving my thinking, and question myself and others. No one is possessed of all the tools to make all the right decisions all the time. Being receptive to other ways of thinking puts you in a better position to make difficult decisions.” He added, “I was trained to think that others have a rational basis for their position, and I need to understand their position if I am to move forward. That helps me see and appreciate the perspective of others and improves my chance of making the right decision in the end.”

Sheehan learned in law school that you must argue your opponent’s case in order to be effective. “It made me more empathetic, a more critical thinker, and a better communicator,” she said. “These difficult situations have helped make me a better mayor and ours a better community as we have moved forward together through these challenging times.” [A](#)

# Alumni trifecta keeps City of Albany ticking

THREE KEY MEMBERS of the Albany Mayor's Office are Albany Law School alumni: Mayor **Kathy Sheehan '94**; the mayor's chief of staff, **David Galin '14**; and city treasurer **Darius Shahinfar '97**.

Galin has served with Sheehan for four years, first as a policy analyst and then as deputy chief of staff. Before the novel coronavirus pandemic, he was using analytics to find ways to be more innovative and efficient in delivering city services, and focusing on improving communication between the City of Albany and its residents. Since COVID-19 arrived, his job has involved more emergency management and crisis communication.

First there were the logistics of quickly closing city offices and limiting services, while still connecting city residents to basic resources. "We were getting a lot of inquiries about resources people needed immediately," Galin said, so he and the team from the Mayor's Office developed a COVID Resource Guide with ways to access food, medical services, day care, school resources, and more.

Galin worked closely with the city's business improvement districts and Common Council to help restaurants open outdoor cafes and expand onto sidewalks. "The problem-solving skills you learn in law school really help you look at rules from different angles and be creative about solutions," he

said. "Many of my experiences at [Albany Law], especially as a member of the moot court board, helped prepare me for the chief of staff position and how it has evolved."

When the killing of George Floyd stirred calls for change, Galin joined Mayor Sheehan during talks with council members and citizens about policing in communities and was part of the team that helped the mayor and police chief draft plans for police reforms. He and other staffers also coordinated "Create Change Together" conversations with the mayor and police chief. Galin said, "Mayor Sheehan's commitment to listening helps shape the decisions she makes—decisions that are always made through a lens of equity."

The city's chief financial officer, Shahinfar, has served with Sheehan since 2014. His office is responsible for city payroll, vouchers, and claims; investment and debt management; and the collection of property taxes, waste collection fees, and fines such as parking tickets. "Why they made the tax collector and parking ticket collector an elected position, I don't know!" he joked.

Since COVID-19 upended business as usual, his main concern has been whether the city will realize the revenue upon which the budget is based. With sales tax down and state aid expected to be cut significantly, much hinges on



**left to right**

Albany city treasurer Darius Shahinfar '97; the mayor's chief of staff, David Galin '14; and Mayor Kathy Sheehan '94.

a proposed federal bill that would make municipalities whole for lost revenues. "So many uncertainties are going to make putting together a budget for next year very difficult," he said.

Prior to being elected, Shahinfar served in several public service capacities, including as the regional representative for then-Congresswoman Kirsten Gillibrand and deputy Albany County attorney. He credits his legal

education with helping him adapt to the CFO role. "The analytical skills enable you to understand and problem solve things quickly," he said. "And in government, everything has a legal component. Being able to understand the legalities makes you better able to execute what you need to do." **A**

## There's no time like today

Welcome from National Alumni Association President Hon. Peter G. Crummev '81

**When you were the one who had  
made it so clear, all those years ago.**

—George Harrison, 1981



I CAME TO ALBANY LAW SCHOOL all those years ago to, among other things, obtain a law degree that I hoped would further nurture my passion for public service. While a student at Albany Law School, like many of us, I pursued internships in public service and in private practice, gaining the confidence and knowledge ideally suited to help others.

With Albany Law School as a foundation, I set out on my journey and I remain fortified by many of the time-honored principles infused by our school. I learned that reasonable minds may differ and civility is vital to the meaningful exchange of ideas. I also learned when to stand up when told to sit down.

As an Alumni Association, we are actively involved in the sharing of ideas with our current students. Our highly successful Alumni Initiative in Mentoring (AIM) program continues to provide practical experience in a mentoring environment. If you would like to serve in the AIM program, let us know. Our students will be the beneficiaries and, I believe, you will be, too. Harvey Mackay, nationally syndicated business columnist, recently referenced the principle, "Our happiness lies in the happiness of other people. Give them their happiness and you will get your own happiness."

I believe that every flower blooms at a different time. I suppose alumni engagement could be much like that. If you have not had a chance to engage with our school as much as you want, or serve in a capacity you would like, there's no time like now. You can be the one to make it so clear for our students today, which will, undoubtedly, enhance the value of being a graduate of Albany Law School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter G. Crummev". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "C".

HON. PETER G. CRUMMEV '81  
President, NAA  
petercrummevlaw@gmail.com

### CLASS OF 1948

**Hon. Leonard A. Weiss** was named of counsel at O'Connell and Aronowitz in the newly expanded business law and commercial litigation department.

### CLASS OF 1958

**William R. Holzapfel** was selected by the N.J. Commission on Professionalism in the Law as the 2019 recipient of the Lighthouse Award for professionalism and integrity.



**Matthew H. Mataraso** joined classmates **William Holzapfel, Ian G. MacDonald, Robert J. Coan,** and their respective spouses for an Albany Law reunion dinner at the Desmond in Albany, N.Y.

### CLASS OF 1963

**Donald J. Snyder** received Herkimer County Community College's 2019 Torchbearer Award.

### CLASS OF 1968

**Hon. Barry Dennis Kramer** was awarded the New York State Senate Liberty Medal upon his retirement as Schenectady County Supreme Court justice.

### CLASS OF 1970

#### 50th REUNION

**Erik E. Joh** was presented with the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award by *Marquis Who's Who*.

**Michael Joseph Tommaney** retired in June 2020.

### CLASS OF 1972

**Hon. Bernard J. Malone** received the Trustees Gold Medal at Albany Law School's 2019 Grand Honors Awards.

**Hon. Joseph B. Meagher** announced his candidacy for re-election as Vestal town justice.

### CLASS OF 1974

**Marilyn A. Kaltenborn** was the featured speaker at the Historical Society of the Town of Middletown's annual meeting. She discussed her years attending Fleischmanns High School in the 1950s and 60s.

**Karen Joy Lewis** retired from the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, after a distinguished 45-year career in public service.

### CLASS OF 1976

**Robert H. Freehill** announced his candidacy for the Ninth Judicial District of the New York State Supreme Court.

**Glenn E. Pezzulo** joined Barclay Damon LLP as partner at the firm's Rochester office.

### CLASS OF 1978

**Hon. Michael V. Cocomma** announced his retirement as New York Supreme Court justice after more than 25 years in the state judiciary.

**Deborah A. Sabin** published a memoir about her late husband, Mitchell L. Hallow '78, titled *32 DAYS: A MEMOIR OF LOVE AND DEATH*.

**Hon. Marsha Solomon Weiss** was elected to a fifth term as town justice for Ulster, N.Y.

**Hon. Donald A. Williams** retired as Ulster County judge.

### CLASS OF 1979

**Gary M. Carlton** announced his candidacy for Nassau County District Court, Second Judicial District.

**Paul J. Herrmann** retired from private practice and is teaching business law at the Federal Correctional Institution, Ray Brook.

**Richard P. Rosso** is serving as chair of the Town of Tonawanda Board of Assessment Review.

**Claudia Ryan** joined Monaco Cooper Lamme & Carr, PLLC, as senior counsel.

**Larry P. Schiffer** received the 2019 Dick Kennedy Award from ARIAS-U.S. He was also appointed chair of the Cybersecurity and Data Privacy Committee of the ABA's Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section for the 2020-21 bar year.

**Mark B. Wheeler** retired from Harris Beach, PLLC, in January 2019.

### CLASS OF 1980

#### 40th REUNION

**Martin J. Barrington** was appointed board chair of Anheuser-Busch InBev.

**Susan M. Didonato (McGettrick)** joined Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP as of counsel.



**Prof. Jill E. Martin** of Quinnipiac University received the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Association for Paralegal Education.

**Peter A. Pastore** was named partner at O'Connell and Aronowitz.

**Francis J. Smith** was named partner at O'Connell and Aronowitz.

**James W. Spink**, after a career as a civil litigator, has been a full time mediator in Vermont with over 3,000 meditations completed.

### CLASS OF 1981

**Andrew R. Baron** was appointed special assistant to the deputy director of the workforce services branch at California's Employment Development Department.

**Philip Francis Calderone** was named CEO of the Albany County Airport Authority.

**Charles E. Kutner** was recognized by *Continental Who's Who* in the field of law.

**Hon. James Boyd McGowan** announced his re-election campaign as justice for the Town of Hanover.

**Hon. Leslie Ellen Stein (Brown)** received the Distinguished Alumni Award at Albany Law School's 2019 Grand Honors Awards.

**Andrew J. Turro** was honored at the Long Island Herald's 2019 Top Lawyers of Long Island Awards Gala.

### CLASS OF 1982

**Michael Joseph Murphy** joined Barclay Damon LLP as partner.

**Hon. J. David Sampson** was appointed to the New York State Bar Association's Task Force on Autonomous Cars and the Legal Profession.

**Robert A. Stacy** was unanimously elected by the Stamford Board of Education as the district's executive director of human resources and talent development.

### CLASS OF 1983

**Alison M. Andrews** retired after 30 years with the United States District Court—first in the Northern District of

New York with Hon. Ralph W. Smith Jr. '66 and then in the District of Colorado.

**Gail M. Norris (Klein)** joined Bond, Schoeneck & King in the firm's Rochester Office.

**Hon. Thomas A. Reynolds** was appointed part-time city court judge for the City of Oswego.

#### CLASS OF 1984



**Michael J. Danaher** was appointed by New York Attorney General Letitia James as the assistant attorney

general-in-charge of the Binghamton Regional Office.

#### CLASS OF 1985

##### 35th REUNION

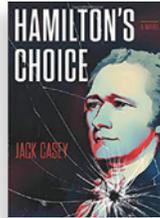
**Stephen D. Kesner** was named bureau chief of the Suffolk County Legal Aid Society's Pre-Indictment Felony Bureau.

**Kevin Laurilliard** was named partner at O'Connell and Aronowitz to work in the newly expanded Business Law and Commercial Litigation Department.

**Paul McCurdy** joined Katten Muchin Rosenman as a partner in the firm's financial markets and funds group in New York.

**Matthew E. Winter** was appointed to the Hartford's board of directors. He serves on the board's finance, investment, and risk management committee and its compensation and management development committee.

#### CLASS OF 1987



**John Thomas Casey** addressed the NDNY-Federal Court Bar Association in Albany in December 2019 about his

upcoming novel, *HAMILTON'S CHOICE*. Casey portrays the last three years of Alexander Hamilton's life, including his 1804 trip to Albany to argue for freedom of the press before the state Supreme Court (*People v. Croswell*), and offers a new reason for why Hamilton accepted Aaron Burr's challenge to the fatal duel.

**Hon. Veronica Kolbert (Hummel)** was appointed to the New York State Court of Claims.

**Paul T. Van Cott** joined Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP as of counsel.

#### CLASS OF 1988

**Dianne R. Phillips** was selected by the Federation for Children with Special Needs to receive its 2020 Founders Award, honoring Phillips for her career-long commitment to providing pro bono representation benefiting children with special needs and others.

**Maurice K. Segall** was recognized in an article in the *Wilton Bulletin* detailing his career and his work establishing a local high school mock trial competition.

#### CLASS OF 1989

**Anthony E. Koester** is the new president of the Hunterdon County Bar Association.

#### CLASS OF 1990

##### 30th REUNION

**Hon. Paul Edwin Davenport** joined Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP as of counsel.

**Hon. Elizabeth A. Garry** received the Humanitarian Achievement Award at Albany Law School's 2019 Grand Honors Awards.

#### CLASS OF 1991

**Denise Verfenstein Gonick** joined the Fenimore Asset Management (FAM) Funds board of independent trustees.

**Clinton G. Johnson** was named Ulster County attorney.

**Daniel D. Reynolds** accepted a position as the Broome County Board of Election's Democratic election commissioner.

#### CLASS OF 1992

**Suzanne S. Blundi (Ducey)** announced her candidacy for a seat on the Lower Makefield Township board of supervisors.

**Julie Marini Cianca** was the subject of an article titled "The Public Defender's Burden" for the *Rochester Beacon*. The article detailed her life as a special assistant public defender for Monroe County.



**María D. Meléndez** was named chief diversity officer of Sidley Austin LLP.

**John F. Muller** retired as an investigator with the Rochester Police Department in December 2019 after 30 years in law enforcement.

#### CLASS OF 1993

**Jacqueline Phipps Polito** was appointed office managing shareholder at Littler Mendelson, P.C., in the Rochester office.

**Hon. Louise Kauffman Sira** retired as Fulton County Surrogate Court judge.

#### CLASS OF 1994

**Robert Andrew Rausch** received the Donald D. DeAngelis '60 Excellence in Alumni Service Award at Albany Law School's 2019 Grand Honors Awards.

**Hon. Bryan Earl Rounds** was sworn in as Ulster County judge in January 2020.

#### CLASS OF 1995

##### 25th REUNION



**LaVerne McQuiller Williams** was named interim dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Rochester Institute of Technology.

**David Eric Siegfeld**, partner at Lippes Mathias Wexler Friedman LLP, was installed as chair of Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York's board of directors.

**Lee Matthew Van Houten** announced his candidacy for re-election as Tompkins County District Attorney.

**Regina A. Walker (Reitz)** was appointed by the Office of the United States Trustee to serve on the Chapter 7 panel of trustees for the Western District of New York.

#### CLASS OF 1996

**Jennifer J. Corcoran Conway** was named chair of the Capital Region board of directors of the American Heart Association.

**Ilissa B. Churgin Hook** was appointed by the Office of the United States Trustee as a Chapter 7 panel trustee for the District of New Jersey.

**Molly Ann Wilkinson** was appointed an advisory member of the board of directors for Draganfly Inc.

### CLASS OF 1997

**Hon. Eric Michael Galarneau** was appointed Cohoes City Court judge.

### CLASS OF 1998

**Mahsa Khanbabai** began writing as a contributing author on immigration matters for *Ms. Magazine*. She has published two pieces related to COVID-19 and immigration law as of August 2020.

### CLASS OF 1999

**Michael Jay Altieri** joined Hunton Andrews Kurth LLP as a senior attorney in the firm's Boston office.

**Julie A. Garcia** announced her candidacy for the New York State Supreme Court, Fourth Judicial District.

### CLASS OF 2000

#### 20th REUNION

**Catherine M. Hedgeman** is expanding the Hedgeman Law Firm to Washington, D.C.



**Robert Modica** joined Tyson & Mendes LLP as the managing partner of its New York office.

### CLASS OF 2001

**Hon. John R. Higgitt** was appointed an associate justice of the Appellate Term of the New York State Supreme Court, First Judicial Department.

### CLASS OF 2002

**Daniel C. Lynch** was appointed the deputy county executive for Albany County.

**Sandra D. Rivera** contributed to a discussion regarding the experiences of women overcoming adversity and progressing in the legal industry for the *Albany Business Review*.

### CLASS OF 2003

**Kevin T. Bezio** accepted a position as partner at Barclay Damon LLP.

**Carrie A. Bleakley** was appointed as Ontario County's conflict defender.

**Kristopher B. Jones** delivered the 2019 Labor Day lecture titled "Redefining Northeastern Pennsylvania through Social Entrepreneurship: An Entrepreneur's Vision" at McGowan School of Business.

### CLASS OF 2004

**Adam H. Cooper** opened and became a member of the law firm Monaco, Cooper, Lamme & Carr, PLLC.

**Elizabeth F. Garvey (Colombo)** was appointed special counsel and senior advisor to Governor Andrew Cuomo '82, working on the governor's budget, legislative, and policy priorities.

**Peter J. Glennon**, principal of the Glennon Law Firm, P.C., was sworn in as a certified federal court mediator. He was also elected president of the Rochester Rotary for 2020-2021.

**Lani E. Houston (Sheehan)** founded the Suffolk County Legal Aid Attorneys' Association and was named its president.

**MacKenzie C. Monaco (Curtin)** opened and became a member of the law firm Monaco, Cooper, Lamme & Carr, PLLC. She also contributed to a discussion regarding the experiences of women overcoming adversity and progressing in the legal industry for the *Albany Business Review*.

**Kelly M. Monroe** joined the Albany law firm of Maynard, O'Connor, Smith & Catalinotto, LLP, as a partner.

**G. Nagesh Rao** was selected by the federal government, the U.S. Small Business Administration, and the White House to receive a Gears of Government Award for his leadership, work, and results over the past six years in public service.

### CLASS OF 2005

#### 15th REUNION

**Carey A. Denefrio** was installed as the 37th president of the Greater Rochester Association for Women Attorneys. She also accepted a position as corporate counsel at Paychex.



**Meghan R. Keenholts** was elected to the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

**Leyla A. Kiosse** opened the Yard Hatchet House and Bar in November 2019.

**Jacob F. Lamme** opened and became a member of the law firm Monaco, Cooper, Lamme & Carr, PLLC.

**Kimberly C. Petillo-Décossard** was named to *Mergers & Acquisitions*' 2020 Most Influential Women in Mid-Market M&A.

**Kyle C. Van De Water** announced his candidacy in New York's 19th Congressional District.

**Matthew A. Young** was named deputy managing member of Bond, Schoeneck & King's Albany office.

### CLASS OF 2006

**Brian Delaney Carr** opened and became a member of the law firm Monaco Cooper Lamme & Carr, PLLC.

**Giovanna Assunta D'Orazio** joined the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation board of directors.

**William James McCarthy** joined the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation board of directors.

**Courtney M. Merriman** was selected co-chair of the Barclay Damon Women's Forum.

**Shalini Natesan** was appointed to the board of the Albany County Bar Foundation. She also joined Barclay Damon LLP as an associate practicing in the financial institutions and lending, public finance, and real estate practice areas.

**Andrew Lawrence Poplinger** was promoted to partner at Chaffetz Lindsey, LLP.

### CLASS OF 2007

**Corey Auerbach** was named co-chair of Barclay Damon LLP's land use and zoning practice area.

**Melissa A. Cherubino (Ashline-Heil)** was named director of community development for the Town of Glenville.

**Luke Collins Davignon** was promoted to bureau chief of the Oneida County special victims unit.

**Curtis Alan Johnson** was elected as partner of Bond, Schoeneck & King.

**Lauren Wainwright Sheeley** was appointed public defender in Ulster County.

## Celebrations

**Christiana M. Hadzoglou '09** and her husband, Cory McWhinne, welcomed daughter Isabella Maria to their family in April 2020.



**John J. Carson '13** and family welcomed daughter, Ellen "Ellie" June, in December 2019.

**Emily C. Chapman (Drazan) '13** and family celebrated the birth of daughter Lillian Edith Chapman in June 2020.

**Andrea A. Wanner (Long) '13** and family welcomed son Calvin Bradley Wanner in December 2019.



**Timothy D. Feenan '16** and **Meaghan T. Feenan (Lambert) '17** married in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., in September 2019.



**Kimberly M. Felton (Hansen-Felton) '18** and husband Devin Felton welcomed their second child, Gavin Charles Felton, in November 2018.

### CLASS OF 2008

**Kenneth J. Dow** was appointed as the Columbia County Democratic election commissioner.

**Robert Lauri Lindholm** was elected to the partnership at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough.

**Hon. Adam W. Silverman** was appointed to the Court of Claims following his nomination by Gov. Andrew Cuomo '82 and confirmation by the state Senate. He was then appointed acting justice of the state Supreme Court and is sitting in the Third Judicial District with chambers in Troy, N.Y.

### CLASS OF 2009

**Michael Cinquanti** was recognized by *City & State* in its "2020 Labor 40 Under 40" list.

**John Arthur Degasperis** was named partner at the Law Offices of Basch & Keegan, LLP.

**Kathleen C. DiPaola (Coppis)** opened the New York Surrogacy Center, a surrogacy matching program that works with surrogates in N.Y., N.J., and Vt., and intended parents throughout the U.S.



**Ashley R. Kilstein** was named associate athletic director at Wentworth Institute of Technology.

**William Quigley Lowe** co-launched Bolaños Lowe, PLLC, a labor and employment and corporate law firm.

**Michael Wilson Macomber** was named CEO of Tully Rinckey as the firm continues its focus on global expansion.

**Thomas Kevin O'Gara** was promoted to vice president at LeChase Construction Services LLC.

### CLASS OF 2010

#### 10th REUNION

**Jeremy Akbar Cooney** is seeking the 56th District Senate seat in New York in 2020.

**Paul Edward Denbaum** joined Jacobowitz & Gubits, LLP, as an associate.

**Samantha Gabriel Howell** joined the Southern Legal Counsel in Gainesville, Fla., as its pro bono director and was admitted to the Florida bar in July 2020. She also received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award at Albany Law School's 2019 Grand Honors Awards.

**Michael Alfred Mainetti** and brother **Alexander Mainetti '13** were honored as "champions of justice" by Legal Services of the Hudson Valley at its 3rd Annual Ulster Partners in Justice Reception.

**Caitlin J. Morgan (Shaheen)** was elected as a shareholder for Polsinelli, P.C.



**Mohammad Ali Naquvi** is serving as vice president of the American Muslim Bar Association.

**David A. Rozen** joined the New York City Commission on Human Rights as deputy general counsel.

**Scott R. Swayze** earned a state certification as a social networking investigator.

### CLASS OF 2011

**Emily Durki Crowley** was elected partner at Harris Beach, PLLC.

**Alicia Marie Dodge** was named partner at Thorn, Gershon, Tymann and Bonanni, LLP.

**Fatin F. Haddad** was named to *City & State's* "40 Under 40" class of 2020.

**Eric Michael Leander** was named to the *Albany Business Review's* "40 under 40" in 2020.

**Nathan B. Perry** started a new position as an English language arts teacher at International School Dhaka.



**Genevieve Marie Trigg** joined Barclay Damon LLP as special counsel.

### CLASS OF 2012

**Dario G. Arezzo** started as a senior tax consultant and regional financial services leader at Farm Credit East, ACA.

**Jessica N. Clemente** was promoted to senior associate within Harter Secrest & Emery LLP's litigation practice group. She also served as chair of the Monroe County Bar Association young lawyers section for the 2019-2020 bar year.

**Stephanie Goutos (Fox)** was named manager of innovation and knowledge management at Jackson Lewis P.C.

**Stefan C. Elts** was named head of legal and commercial at KeolisAmey Docklands.



**Nicholas J. Faso** was promoted to partner at Cullen and Dykman LLP.

**Gizem Basbug Petrosino** joined Kane Russell Coleman Logan as an associate in the energy practice group.

**Kendra Jenkins Rubin** joined SEFCU's executive team as chief legal officer.

**Michelle A. Storm** joined Monaco, Cooper, Lamme & Carr, PLLC. She was also appointed the attorney for the Town of Knox, N.Y.

#### CLASS OF 2013

**Katharine A. Fina** was named a partner at Florio Perrucci Steinhardt Cappelli Tipton & Taylor, LLC.

**Stephanie P. Giancristofaro-Partyka** was elected as the first secretary for the newly formed Suffolk County Legal Aid Attorneys' Association.



**Jeffrey M. Murphy** joined Rivkin Radler LLP as an associate.

**Stefen R. Short** is now supervising attorney, Prisoners' Rights Project at the Legal Aid Society of the City of New York.

#### CLASS OF 2014

**Kathleen M. Brown (Evers)** joined Garfunkel Wild, P.C., as an associate.

**Trevor Casperon** is the co-founder and director of Lawpal.

**Patrick K. Kennedy** was named to *City & State's* "40 Under 40" class of 2020.

**Stephen D. Rosemarino** joined Hinckley Allen as a construction associate in its Albany office.

**Gina T. Wisniewski (Angrisano)** joined Monaco, Cooper, Lamme & Carr, PLLC.

#### CLASS OF 2015

##### 5th REUNION

**Brienna L. Christiano** joined Barclay Damon LLP as an associate.

**William C. Deveneau** accepted a position on the Bennington Regional Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

**Brian P. Henchy** joined the Albany-based firm Thorn, Gershon, Tymann, and Bonanni, LLP, as an associate.

**Joseph R. Williams** opened the New York Surrogacy Center, a surrogacy matching program that works with surrogates in N.Y., N.J., and Vt., and intended parents throughout the U.S.

#### CLASS OF 2016

**Robert M. Caserta** started a new position as visiting assistant clinical professor of law at Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University.

**Abigail A. Dean** joined Maguire Cardona, P.C., an Albany-based civil litigation general practice firm.

**Eric W. Dyer** joined Boston law firm Casner & Edwards, LLP, in the nonprofit organizations group as an associate.

**Adam P. Grogan** joined Tully Rinckey, PLLC, focusing on state and federal labor and employment law.

**Trevor J. Johnson** recently joined Hodgson Russ to practice federal and international tax law as an associate.

**Christina A. Mazzarella** joined Mackey Butts & Wise, LLP, as an associate in the firm's Poughkeepsie, N.Y., office.

**Kellan B. Potts** joined Cordell & Cordell's office in Chattanooga, Tenn.

#### CLASS OF 2017



**Brenda T. Baddam** joined Barclay Damon LLP as an associate. She was also named to *City & State's* "40 Under 40" class of 2020.

**Eric J. Brenner** joined Barclay Damon LLP as an associate.

#### CLASS OF 2018

**Patrick E. Antonikowski** joined Rivkin Radler as an associate in the insurance fraud practice group.

**Allison E. Bartlett**, an associate at Harter Secrest & Emery LLP, was appointed to the board of directors for Beyond the Sanctuary. She also served as community service co-chair of the Monroe County Bar Association young lawyers section for the 2019-2020 bar year.

**Dena Marie DeFazio** was appointed to the New York State Bar Association's committee on diversity and inclusion.

**Andreana M. Sarkis** joined Legal Assistance Of Western New York, Inc., as an associate attorney.

**Kadeem O. Wolliaaston** joined Barclay Damon LLP as an associate practicing in the commercial litigation and torts and products liability defense practice areas, as well as the health care controversies team.

#### CLASS OF 2019

**Marina W. Chu** started as an associate attorney at O'Connell and Aronowitz.

**Gabrielle K. Coonrod** was hired as an associate attorney at Cordell & Cordell's Albany office.

**Allison R. Cullens** joined Ramos & Ramos as an associate attorney.

**Catherine Duggan Kemp** accepted a position as an associate with Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP.

**Molly B. Magnis** joined Nolan Heller Kauffman as an associate focusing on commercial litigation and arbitration, creditor rights, and banking and financial transactions.



**Wale F. Salis** joined Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP as an associate.

**Nikolas S. Tamburello** joined the law office of Rusk, Wadlin, Heppner & Martuscello, LLP.

#### CLASS OF 2020

**Daniel J. Christian** joined the Law Offices of Pullano & Farrow as a law clerk.

**Joshua M. Pearlman** started a new position as an intellectual property law co-op at AngioDynamics.

*Share your news!  
To submit a class note,  
visit [alumni.albanylaw.edu](http://alumni.albanylaw.edu).*

# ALUMNI EVENTS



**"Because of You..."  
Donor Recognition  
Reception**  
Albany, N.Y.  
Fort Orange Club  
*October 24, 2019*



**Boston Networking  
and Celebration  
Dinner**  
Boston, Mass.  
Alcove  
*October 29, 2019*



**Rochester Campaign  
Celebration**  
Rochester, N.Y.  
George Eastman  
Museum  
*November 13, 2019*





**Atlanta Alumni Luncheon**  
Atlanta, Ga.  
Miller & Martin, PLLC  
*November 21, 2019*



**U.S. Supreme Court Bar Admission**  
Washington, D.C.  
Supreme Court of the United States  
*December 10, 2019*



**Dallas Alumni Luncheon**  
Dallas, Tx.  
Sachet  
*January 22, 2020*



**Bar Passers' Reception**  
Albany, N.Y.  
Empire State Plaza  
*January 23, 2020*



**Networking Luncheon at the NYSBA Annual Meeting**  
New York, N.Y.  
New York Hilton Midtown  
*January 31, 2020*



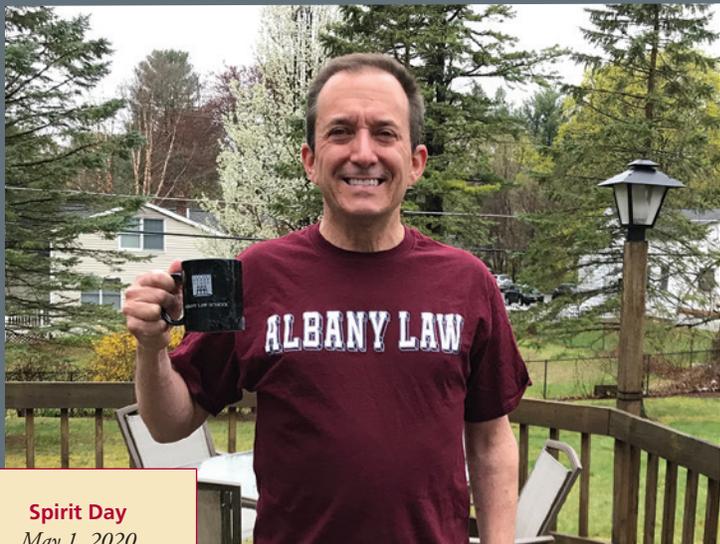
**Red Sox-Tigers  
Spring Training  
Gathering**

Fort Myers, Fla.  
JetBlue Park at  
Fenway South  
*March 4, 2020*



**Alumni Night at  
Panthers-Bruins**

Sunrise, Fla.  
BB&T Center  
*March 5, 2020*



**Spirit Day**  
*May 1, 2020*



# ALUMNI REUNION '20

Instead of hosting an in-person Reunion this year, Albany Law School invited alumni to join in virtually. The response was impressive! More than 300 people attended nearly 20 different events offered throughout the week of September 21–25.

Among the highlights: Hon. **Joanne Winslow '86**, Ambassador **Bonnie Jenkins '88**, and **María Meléndez '92** opened up about their experiences in the panel discussion “Alumni Trailblazers: Forging a Path for Women in Law,” presented by the Women’s Leadership Initiative and moderated by President and Dean **Alicia Ouellette '94**. Professor **Ray Brescia** and **David Beier '73** held an intriguing discussion on how technology is moving forward “social innovation movements.” Albany Law School hosted its third annual Grand Honors Awards program to recognize excellence in the alumni network; this year’s honorees were Hon. **Randolph Treece '76**, **Dale Thuillez '72**, **Thania Fernandez '85**, **Emily Chapman '13**, and **M. Sherry Gold** and the **Gold Family**. (See sidebar.)

Various student groups put on events for alumni to reconnect. Student ambassadors took graduates on virtual tours through campus to see what has changed and what has remained the same over the years, as alumni shared stories from their time at New Scotland Avenue. And beloved professors opened up the virtual doors of their hybrid classrooms to alumni. For many grads, it was a chance to see not only how the material has changed, but how learning has evolved with technology.

Dean Ouellette delivered her annual State of the School address on Friday, going in depth on the law school’s response to the pandemic, the community’s support of *We Rise Together: The Campaign for Albany Law School*, and more. Immediately afterward, alumni and members of this year’s milestone classes got together for TGIF—a tradition that continued via Zoom, closing out the traditional slate of events in a very nontraditional way. Thanks to all who participated from near and far!



A year like no other meant a reunion like no other.



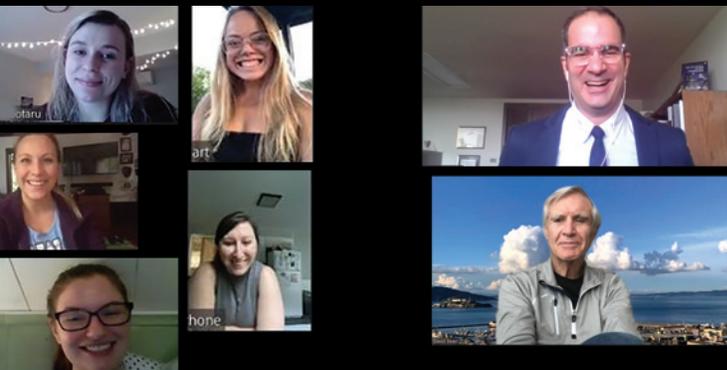
CLASS OF  
**1975**



CLASS OF  
**1995**



**Trailblazers  
Panel**



**Technology  
Forward  
Discussion**

### Class Giving Awards

HIGHEST TOTAL DOLLAR  
AMOUNT RAISED  
Class of 2005

HIGHEST PERCENT  
OF PARTICIPATION  
Class of 1965

HIGHEST NUMBER  
OF NEW DONORS  
Classes of 1985, 1990,  
1995, 2015, and 2020

### 3rd Annual Grand Honors Awards



**Trustees Gold Medal**  
Hon. Randolph F.  
Treece '76



**Distinguished  
Alumni Award**  
Dale M. Thuillez '72



**Humanitarian  
Achievement Award**  
M. Sherry Gold and the  
Gold Family



**Outstanding Young  
Alumni Award**  
Emily C. Chapman '13



**Donald D. DeAngelis  
'60 Excellence in  
Alumni Service Award**  
Thania F. Fernandez '85

# FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

## Selected Faculty Scholarship

*Academic Articles, Books, and Book Chapters*

### Prof. Ava Ayers

“Discriminatory Cooperative Federalism,” 65 *Villanova Law Review* 1 (2020).

“Missing Immigrants in the Rhetoric of Sanctuary,” \_\_\_ *Wisconsin Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming).

### Prof. Melissa Breger

“Corporal Punishment, Social Norms and Norm Cascades: Examining Cross-National Laws and Trends in Homes Across the Globe,” 26 *William & Mary Journal of Race, Gender, and Social Justice* 483 (2020) (with Lucy Sorensen, Victor Asal, and Charmaine N. Willis).

EXPLORING NORMS AND FAMILY LAWS ACROSS THE GLOBE (Lexington Books forthcoming 2021).

### Prof. Raymond Brescia

THE FUTURE OF CHANGE: HOW TECHNOLOGY SHAPES SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS (Cornell University Press 2020).

CRISIS LAWYERING: EFFECTIVE LEGAL ADVOCACY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS (NYU Press forthcoming 2021) (with Eric K. Stern, ed.).

“The Shifting Frontiers of Standing: How Ongoing Litigation over Border Wall Funding Is Exposing Standing’s Current Doctrinal Fault Lines,” 68 *UCLA Law Review Discourse* 80 (2020).

“On Tipping Points and Nudges: Review of Cass Sunstein’s *How Change Happens*,” 34 *Notre Dame Journal of Law, Ethics and Public Policy* 55 (2020).

“The Legal Needs of Nonprofits: An Empirical Study of Tax-Exempt Organizations and Their Access to Legal Services,” 17 *Hastings Race and Poverty Law Journal* 451 (2020) (with Bahareh Ansari and Hannah Hage).

“Zoning Cyberspace: Protecting Privacy in the Digital Upside Down,” 2020 *Utah Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020).

“Private Largesse in the Digital Age: Privacy in Reich’s *The New Property*,” 36 *Touro Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020).

“Privacy’s ‘Three Mile Island’ and the Need to Protect Political Privacy in Private-Law Contexts,” 48 *Florida State University Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2021).

### Prof. Joe Buffington

“Conditional Answers to Multiple Choice Questions: Three Linguistic Problems (and Solutions) for ‘if,’” \_\_\_ *Journal of Legal Education* \_\_\_ (forthcoming).

### Prof. Christine Sgarlata Chung

BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS LAW IN FOCUS (Wolters Kluwer 2nd ed. 2020) (with Deborah Bouchoux).

“Rising Tides and Rearranging Deckchairs: How Climate Change is Reshaping Infrastructure Finance and Threatening to Sink Municipal Budgets,” 32 *Georgetown Environmental Law Review* 165 (2020).

### Prof. Patrick Connors

Practice Commentary to “CPLR Article 22: Stay, Motions, Orders and Mandates” in MCKINNEY’S CONSOLIDATED LAWS OF NEW YORK (Thomson West 2020).

### Prof. Danshera Cords

“How Can Green Tax Laws Spur Green Behavior? An Analysis of Chinese Tax Policy on Green Consumption,” 17 *Pittsburgh Tax Review* 165 (2019) (with Zhigang Hong).

“An Inflection Point for Disaster Relief: Superstorm Sandy,” 35 *Touro Law Review* 925 (2019).

### Prof. Edward De Barbieri

“Opportunism Zones,” 39 *Yale Law and Policy Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020).

“State and Local Economic Development and Urban Anticipatory Governance,” 43 *Planning and Zoning Law Report* 1 (2020).

“Lawmakers as Job Buyers,” 88 *Fordham Law Review* 15 (2019).

“Connecting Community Control of Infrastructure and Economic Development with Race and Privilege,” 28 *Journal of Affordable Housing and Community Development Law* 213 (2019).

### Prof. Anthony Paul Farley

“Race, Nation, and Patrimony, or, the Stakes of Diversity in *Hamilton*,” in HAMILTON AND THE LAW: READING TODAY’S MOST CONTENTIOUS LEGAL ISSUES THROUGH THE HIT MUSICAL (Cornell University Press 2020) (Lisa Tucker, ed.).

### Dean Mary Walsh Fitzpatrick

“Professional Identity Formation, Leadership and Exploration of Self,” \_\_\_ *UMKC Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020) (with Rosemary Queenan).

### Prof. Keith Hirokawa

“An Ecosystem Services Approach to Cultural Resource Protection,” \_\_\_ *Environmental Law* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020) (with Linnea Riegel).

“The Costs of Climate Disruption in the Trade-Offs of Community Resilience,” 41 *Western New England Law Review* 455 (2019) (with David Dickinson).

### Prof. Robert Heverly ’92

“More is Different: Liability of Compromised Systems in Denial of Service Attacks,” 47 *Florida State University Law Review* 531 (2020).

### Prof. Michael Hutter

“Evidence,” 70 *Syracuse Law Review* 1000 (2020).

### Prof. Mary Lynch

“Institutional Service, Student Care-work and Misogyny: Naming the Problem and Mitigating the Harm,” 65 *Villanova Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020) (with Andrea Curcio).

### Prof. David Pratt

“Too Big to Fail? The U.S. Retirement System in 2019,” 27 *Elder Law Journal* 327 (2019).

“A Comparative Analysis of the Information Duties in Belgian and American Occupational Pensions,” 22 *European Journal of Social Security* 39 (2020) (with Marjolein Denys and Yves Stevens).

### Dean Rosemary Queenan

“Professional Identity Formation, Leadership and Exploration of Self,” \_\_\_ *UMKC Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020) (with Mary Walsh Fitzpatrick).

“Delay and Irreparable Harm: A Study of Exhaustion Through the Lens of the IDEA,” \_\_\_ *North Carolina Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming).

### Prof. James Redwood

“Back from the Brink: The Supreme Court Saves the SEC’s Rule 10b-5 from the Grim Reaper,” \_\_\_ *UMKC Law Review* \_\_\_ (forthcoming 2020).

*continued on page 58*



BY JOHN CAHER

## Social movements supercharged by social media

PROFESSOR **Ray Brescia** COULD HARDLY HAVE PICKED A MORE RELEVANT TIME to release his new book, *THE FUTURE OF CHANGE: HOW TECHNOLOGY SHAPES SOCIAL REVOLUTIONS* (Cornell University Press 2020), which traces the connection between communication advances and the rise of social movements.

Although much of what fueled the recent Black Lives Matter demonstrations—namely, the killing of George Floyd under the knee of a police officer in Minneapolis—occurred after the book was published, Brescia’s work provides an explanation for the way that incident, and the communication surrounding it, became a catalyst for social change. The haunting video of a white officer kneeling on the neck of a defenseless Black man, and the protests that resulted, went viral with relatively new social media technologies.



**With social media, activists no longer have to “wait for media gatekeepers to amplify their stories.”**

“Mobile technologies are literally helping many in some communities see things they hadn’t personally witnessed before, like the abuse of African-American men and women at the hands of police,” said Brescia, a public interest lawyer and community organizer who joined the Albany Law School faculty in 2007. “The Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements seem to be strengthened by social media and other contemporary technologies because they allow people to see what is happening, raise awareness, galvanize support, and let people know they are not alone.”

Brescia examines past social movements dating back to the American Revolution and notes that the most successful emerged simultaneously with advances in communications technology. For instance, the invention of the printing press is linked to the success of the Revolution, the steam press supercharged the abolitionist movement, the telegraph helped spread the word about the Seneca Falls Convention that launched the women’s movement of the 19th century, and the civil rights movement harnessed television.

“What this says to me is that there is some significant interplay between advances in the ability to communicate and the success of social movements that embrace the latest technology available to them,” Brescia said. “We can learn lessons from successful social movements in the past that have also had new technologies at their disposal. We are in such a moment today, so these lessons

from past movements can help inform what we do with these new technologies.”

Brescia said it is not simply a matter of flooding the media with a message and points to the same-sex marriage movement a decade ago. In 2008, Californians approved a voter referendum banning same-sex marriage, so proponents repackaged their strategy. The goal—ensuring the right to same-sex marriage—remained exactly the same. But the pitch, and the means of delivering it, changed.

Instead of using terms such as “gay marriage,” activists started using phrases like “marriage equality;” instead of advancing a legalistic argument that stressed insurance benefits and inheritance rights, they shifted to a humanistic argument focusing on human dignity, fairness, and equality. They also changed the delivery of the message, using door-to-door conversations, phone calls, and other means to not only raise awareness, but to engage people. Within one national election cycle, opinions shifted—dramatically.

“I think we’re seeing a great deal of effective organizing being done today on and over social media that is helping organizers raise awareness, share information, coordinate actions, and change hearts and minds,” Brescia said. “It is really remarkable to see and gives hope that these sorts of tools can be harnessed to create real and lasting change.”

Brescia said that with social media, activists no longer have to “wait for media gatekeepers to amplify their stories.”

“I think that is why we’re seeing a lot more information out there about progressive issues and why such information is really starting to impact the public policy debate,” Brescia said. “It’s also allowing information that otherwise would not typically get publicized to enter the discourse.” ■



BY JOHN CAHER

## Challenging discriminatory cooperative federalism

COOPERATIVE OR “MARBLE CAKE” FEDERALISM ENABLES FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO COLLECTIVELY INTERACT to address common problems. It also enables politicians and policy makers to end-run the Constitution, according to Professor **Ava Ayers**, director of the Government Law Center (GLC).

In an article recently published in the *Villanova Law Review*, Ayers argues that cooperative federalism is often used to achieve discriminatory goals that would otherwise be barred.

Example: States are generally prohibited under the Equal Protection Clause from discriminating against noncitizens, but Congress isn't. So, with measures like the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, which was intended to deny public benefits to noncitizens, Congress latched onto cooperative federalism to allow the states to do what they couldn't otherwise.

“Discriminatory Cooperative Federalism” (*Villanova Law Review*, Volume 65, Number 1, 2020) is a tutorial or roadmap on how to challenge discriminatory cooperative federalism, addressing the pluses and minuses of various strategies. Ayers said she was compelled to write about the issue through “frustration with how unclear the law is in this area, and a fascination with how strange it is.” It's also right up the alley of the Government Law Center.

“The GLC has been studying state and local governments' involvement with immigration and working with policy-makers at the state and local level to help ensure that policy decisions are made on the basis of adequate information,” Ayers said. “Those state and local policymakers are sometimes caught between the rock of the federal government, which pushes them to treat noncitizens differently, and the hard place of the Constitution, which says they can't. The GLC aims to help them navigate situations like that.”

Ayers' article largely focuses on benefit programs, such as Medicaid, food assistance, and unemployment, on which people will likely rely during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery. Nearly a quarter of the people in America are immigrants or children of immigrants.

**“State and local policymakers are sometimes caught between the rock of the federal government, which pushes them to treat noncitizens differently, and the hard place of the Constitution, which says they can't.”**

“When state governments discriminate against immigrants, the Supreme Court treats it like racial discrimination, which is to say with enormous skepticism and willingness to overturn the state law—except when it doesn't,” Ayers said. “Generally speaking, states can't discriminate against immigrants, but the federal government can. So in cases of ‘cooperative federalism,’ which means, roughly, federal programs in which states play a role, both actors are involved, and the doctrine sort of falls apart. I'm fascinated by places where the doctrine falls apart.”

She is quick to note that cooperative federalism is not always used for discriminatory purposes, and points to environmental statutes based on a cooperative federalism framework. Regardless, Ayers said the interplay between federal, state, and local governments opens myriad routes to challenge since each layer of government is subject to its own legal and often overlapping constraints.

“I think it's useful to analyze laws by thinking about what challenges might be brought, and how they might come out,” Ayers said.

Ayers, who has run the GLC and taught at Albany Law since 2016, is a graduate of Vassar College and Georgetown University Law Center. She clerked for the Hon. Sonia Sotomayor, now a U.S. Supreme Court justice, during her term on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. Ayers also served as senior assistant solicitor general in the New York State Department of Law. She said her teaching informs her scholarship, and her scholarship informs her teaching.

“I think my scholarship is what qualifies me to teach,” Ayers said. “I'm living in these legal materials, not just passively reading them, because I'm trying to make sense of them for my scholarship. The students' questions take me deeper into the material than I could ever go on my own, and their observations and challenges make me a better legal thinker every semester.” 



BY JOHN CAHER

## Studying financial fallout of COVID and climate change

THE FINANCIAL FALLOUT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC is almost certainly a preview of what municipalities can expect in the future, absent a coherent, coordinated national response to climate change and other threats to public health and welfare, Professor **Christine Sgarlata Chung**, an expert in municipal markets, ominously predicts.

In her recent article “Rising Tides and Rearranging Deckchairs: How Climate Change is Reshaping Infrastructure Finance and Threatening to Sink Municipal Budgets” in the *Georgetown Environmental Law Review*, Chung argues that climate change poses an existential threat to infrastructure, and thus to state and local government budgets, across the nation, largely because state and local governments are responsible for the bulk of spending on public infrastructure in the United States and routinely turn to municipal securities to raise the capital.

**“I suspect we will see budgetary gaps and shortfalls at the state and local level across the country as the pandemic continues to spread.”**

As costs associated with climate change and impacts such as storms, wildfires, and floods continue to mount, and Wall Street begins to take climate risk into account in credit-rating determinations and municipal-bond pricing, some state and local governments are finding it harder or more expensive to raise capital to meet infrastructure needs. The COVID-19 pandemic is more of the same, according to Chung.

“As is true of climate change, there is a lack of leadership at the federal level with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic,” Chung said. “The lack of a national strategy for addressing the pandemic means—once again—that the burden of responding to the pandemic is falling to the state and local level. I suspect we will see budgetary gaps and shortfalls at the state and local level across the country as the pandemic continues to spread.”

Chung said that as the first wave lingers, and if we see a second wave pop up after the return to school this fall, we could see state and local governments struggling once again to find the resources needed both to respond to the pandemic and to pay for other essential services and infrastructure.

“If/when this happens, will state and local governments seek to access public markets to raise capital to meet public health and welfare needs, or even operating expenses?” she asked. “Will they be able to access markets on reasonable terms? We will have to see.” The municipal market has already experienced unprecedented volatility this year in response to the pandemic, Chung noted, and the continued spread of COVID-19 in communities across the country suggests that municipal issuers are not out of the woods.

Chung has been carefully tracking the impact of the pandemic on the municipal bond market.

She said the muni market “nearly came to standstill in mid-March,” especially for issuers in tourism, travel, entertainment, hospitality, and other sectors vulnerable to COVID-19 economic disruption. Chung said that although intervention by the Federal Reserve stabilized markets during the April–June timeframe, experts predict it will take at least 18 months for state and local government revenues to catch up, assuming the pandemic is under control sooner rather than later.

In Chung’s view, however, the situation at the federal level remains concerning.

“There is no national testing strategy; there is no leadership around public health best practices [e.g., mask-wearing]; experts are being ignored, sidelined, and even smeared; and officials are downplaying both the severity of the pandemic and public health advice in the name of reopening the economy as soon as possible. I suspect we will see continued financial strain at the state and local level going forward,” she said.

Chung, director of the Institute for Financial Market Regulation, said the remedy is a recognition that both COVID-19 and climate change are national and international problems, rather than largely state and local problems. **A**

SELECTED FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP  
*continued from page 54*

**Prof. Patricia Reyhan**

“Unlimited Vindication: Choosing Statutes of Limitations in the Era of Constrained Personal Jurisdiction,” 50 *New Mexico Law Review* \_\_ (forthcoming 2020).

**Prof. Sarah Rogerson**

“Cruelty is the Point: Theories of Recovery for Family Separation and Detention Abuses,” 21 *Nevada Law Journal* \_\_ (forthcoming 2021).

“Preparation, Crisis, Struggle, Ideas: The Birth of the Detention Outreach Project” in CRISIS LAWYERING: EFFECTIVE LEGAL ADVOCACY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS (NYU Press forthcoming 2020) (Raymond Brescia and Eric K. Stern, eds.).

“Innovations in Access to Counsel for Immigrants: Lessons from New York and Canada” in IS AMERICA FULFILLING ITS PROMISE? SAFEGUARDING LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR IMMIGRANTS (New York State Bar Association 2019) (with Camille Mackler) (Scott Fein and Rose Mary Bailey, eds.).

**Prof. Christian Sundquist**

“Perfecting Bias: Artificial Intelligence, Healthcare and Race,” \_\_ *Seton Hall Law Review* \_\_ (forthcoming 2021).

“Artificial Intelligence, Algorithmic Knowledge and the Reconstruction of Law,” \_\_ *Journal of Legal Education* \_\_ (forthcoming 2021).

“The Future of Law Schools: COVID-19, Technology and Social Justice,” \_\_ *Connecticut Law Review* (Online) \_\_ (forthcoming 2020).

**Prof. Evelyn Tenenbaum**

CURRENT ISSUES IN CONSTITUTIONAL LITIGATION (Carolina Academic Press 3rd ed. 2020) (with Sarah E. Ricks).

“Assessing Consent to Intimate Sexual Relations Among Nursing Home Residents with Dementia” in LIVING WITH DEMENTIA IN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES (Springer Publishing forthcoming 2020).

**Prof. Jacob Victor**

“Reconceptualizing Compulsory Copyright Licenses,” 72 *Stanford Law Review* 915 (2020).

“Utility-Expanding Fair Use,” 105 *Minnesota Law Review* \_\_ (forthcoming).

## Faculty Awards

**Prof. Melissa Breger**

Howard A. Levine Award for Excellence in Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare, New York State Bar Association Committee on Children and the Law, June 2020.

**Prof. Christine Sgarlata Chung**

Excellence in Scholarship, Albany Law School, August 2020.

**Dean Antony Haynes**

Excellence in Service, Albany Law School, August 2020.

**Prof. Louis Jim**

Justina Cintron Perino Award, Albany Law School Moot Court Board, June 2020.

**Prof. James Redwood**

Excellence in Teaching, Albany Law School, August 2020.

**Prof. Sarah Rogerson**

Immigrant Advocate Award, Solidarity Committee of the Capital District, September 2019.

## Faculty Achievements

**President and Dean Alicia Ouellette '94**

Serving as chair of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Law School Deans through January 2021.

Taught the new summer course COVID-19: Law in a Time of Pandemic, which explored the novel coronavirus' impacts on the practice of law. (See page 21.)

Partnered with deans of Columbia Law School, University of Colorado Law School, University of Georgia School of Law, University of Oregon School of Law, and USC Gould School of Law to launch “Open Access: Inside Legal Education with Law School Deans,” a six-part digital discussion series that engages prospective students and encourages conversation about legal education. The first event was held in August 2020 and continues through January 2021.

**Prof. Pamela Armstrong**

Served as a member of the steering committee for the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS).

Presented “Creating Short Exercises that Engage Students in Learning Substantive Law Using Lawyer Roles” at the virtual SEALS Conference in August 2020.

Contributed “Developing Skepticism as a Skill: Some Quick Thoughts on Why Academic Support Should Be Thought of as Separate from Bar Preparation/Bar Support” to the Best Practices in Legal Education Blog in July 2020.

**Prof. Ava Ayers**

Presented at the virtual CLE and training “Immigration 101” in April 2020.

Appointed to the New York State Bar Association task force of legal scholars who will advise attorneys, journalists, and members of the public on issues related to the 2020 presidential race.

Serving on Albany's Policing Reform and Reinvention Collaborative, which is tasked with working on the city's police reform plan. (See page 8.)

**Prof. Ira Bloom**

Prepared 2020 supplements to FEDERAL TAXATION OF ESTATES, TRUSTS, AND GIFTS (LexisNexis 4th ed. 2014) and FUNDAMENTALS OF TRUSTS AND ESTATES (Carolina Academic Press 5th ed. 2017).



### Prof. Vincent Bonventre

Appeared as a featured guest, discussing the U.S. Supreme Court and various issues of constitutional law, in numerous venues, including the New York State Bar Association podcast *Miranda Warnings*, WMHT-TV's "New York NOW," and KJZZ radio (NPR-Phoenix).

Gave expert analysis in print and broadcast media on a range of topics to journalists from the *New York Law Journal*, *Newsday*, the Associated Press (syndicated to the *Washington Post*), "The Capitol Pressroom," "Capital Tonight," WAMC radio, Spectrum News, and elsewhere.

Delivered CLEs and other presentations on the U.S. Supreme Court and the New York Court of Appeals to bar and academic groups, including NYSBA, Oneida County Bar Association, the Government Law Center's Saratoga series, Marist College, and the Green Mountain Academy for Lifelong Learning.

### Prof. Melissa Breger

Awarded a book contract with Rowman & Littlefield's Lexington Books for *EXPLORING NORMS AND FAMILY LAWS ACROSS THE GLOBE*, which will feature chapters from 20 of the nation's top family law scholars. The book is expected to be published in 2021.

Research on corporal punishment in schools (with colleagues from the University at Albany) was featured in the column "School Spankings are Banned Just about Everywhere in the World Except in U.S.," published by *The Conversation*. The column was read more than 8,900 times, shared extensively on social media, and picked up by other news outlets; ThinkCERCA requested permission to use the article as a teaching tool.

Presented her work-in-progress "Stemming the Tide: Social Norms and Child Sex Trafficking" as part of the Feminist Legal Theory panel "The State and Violence: New Proposals for Stopping the Cycle," and chaired a scholarship panel on "State Power and the Lives of Children" at the Law and Society Association meeting in May 2020.

### Prof. Raymond Brescia

Made several appearances on radio, podcasts, and in print related to the release of his book, *THE FUTURE OF CHANGE*, and presented at a book-launch event that drew more than 150 members of the law school community. (See page 55.)

Published several op-eds on racial justice issues and the COVID-19 crisis and its lasting impacts, including a piece published by *The Hill*, co-authored with U.S. Senator Chris Coons of Delaware, that discussed the threat of evictions looming over the country.

Collaborated with colleagues at the University at Albany on: the forthcoming book *CRISIS LAWYERING: EFFECTIVE LEGAL ADVOCACY IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS*; and the Nonprofit Guide, a free online resource ([nonprofitguide.net](http://nonprofitguide.net)) for information on 501(c)(3) advocacy and lobbying, created by students at both institutions.

### Prof. Joe Buffington

Elected treasurer of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Academic Support at the AALS Annual Meeting in January 2020. He will serve as the section's secretary in 2021, chair-elect in 2022, and chair in 2023.

### Prof. Christine Sgarlata Chung

Contributed "Climate Change, Infrastructure, and Municipal Finance" to *The FinReg Blog*, published by Duke University School of Law's Global Financial Markets Center in August 2020. The post was part of the blog's special issue, *Climate Change and Financial Markets—Risk, Regulation, and Innovation*.

Moderated Albany Law School's Justice Robert H. Jackson Lecture, "The White House on Trial," which featured CNN legal analyst Michael Zeldin, in November 2019. (See page 15.)

Interviewed on Spectrum News' "Capital Tonight" about structural deficits and other municipal-finance issues facing in Upstate New York cities in August 2020.

### Prof. Stephen Clark

Spoke with several media outlets on constitutional law issues, including to NEWS10 ABC for the segment "Local Facebook post draws questions on hate speech" in August 2019.

### Prof. Jaya Connors

Featured in the *Saratoga Living* article "What It's Like Being A Domestic Violence Lawyer in The Capital Region During the COVID-19 Crisis" in April 2020.

Delivered a CLE presentation on "Immigration Issues in Family Court" at Albany Law School in February 2020.

### Prof. Joe Connors '88

Supervised law interns who represented dozens of clients with chronic health impairments. Through the Health Law Clinic, the students worked on a range of legal matters, including appeals of denials of health insurance coverage, eligibility challenges, and denials of crucial public benefits.

### Prof. Patrick Connors

Contributed several *New York Law Journal* columns, including "The COVID-19 Toll: Time Periods and the Courts During Pandemic" (July 2020) and "Court of Appeals Addresses Several Statute of Limitations Questions and Other Important Procedural Issues" (August 2020), the lead article to the journal's special section on the Court of Appeals and appellate practice.

Scholarship cited in more than 125 reported decisions in 2019-2020, including from the New York Court of Appeals and the Appellate Division.

Served on the New York State Bar Association's Task Force on the New York Bar Examination and participated in the authorship of two task-force reports in March 2020; presented to judges and lawyers on COVID-19, including "Interpreting the COVID-19 Toll and Related Administrative Orders" to justices of the New York State Court System, and a five-part series "Coronavirus and the Courts" sponsored by American LegalNet.

### Prof. Edward De Barbieri

Quoted in the *Legaltech News/Law.com* article "As Courts Go Remote, Law Schools' Tech Development Looks to Fill the Gaps" in April 2020.

Appointed secretary of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Community Economic Development, and a member of the executive committee of the AALS Section on Real Estate Transactions.

## Welcome to Albany!



**Jacob Victor**—an intellectual property and technology law expert with publications in two of the United States’ top three flagship law reviews—joined Albany Law’s faculty as an assistant professor in July.

As a tenure-track faculty member, Victor is teaching intellectual property-related courses and first-year property; developing a program for students interested in innovation- and technology-focused careers; serving as faculty advisor to the Innovation Intensive apprenticeship clinic, an experiential opportunity offered in partnership with the Research Foundation for SUNY and SUNY Polytechnic Institute; and continuing his research on how intellectual property law is adapting to the digital age.

Victor’s scholarship has been published in the *Yale Law Journal*, the *Cornell International Law Journal*, and, most recently, the *Stanford Law Review*.

He was previously an acting assistant professor of lawyering at New York University School of Law and a fellow at its Engelberg Center on Innovation Law and Policy. Prior to joining NYU, Victor was an associate at Kirkland & Ellis LLP and a law clerk for Judge Pierre N. Leval on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. He is a graduate of Yale Law School and Harvard College.

Presented “Opportunism Zones” at the Seton Hall Law Faculty Colloquium in February 2020; the ABA Tax Section Midyear Meeting in Boca Raton, Fla., in January 2020; the AALS Property Section Junior Faculty Works-in-Progress Session in January 2020; the Clinical Writers’ Workshop at NYU School of Law in September 2019; the 8th Annual State and Local Government Works-in-Progress Conference at University of Virginia School of Law in September 2019; and on episode 497 of “Ipse Dixit,” a legal-scholarship podcast, in March 2020.

### **Prof. Ciji Dodds**

Co-founded the independent Institute for Racial Justice Research and Advocacy in June 2020. (See page 11.)

Appeared as a regular panelist on WAMC public radio’s award-winning program “The Roundtable.”

Presented on the panel “From Panopticism to Optimism” during the ClassCrits annual conference at Western New England University School of Law in Springfield, Mass., in November 2019.

### **Prof. Anthony Paul Farley**

Co-founded the independent Institute for Racial Justice Research and Advocacy in June 2020. (See page 11.)

Taught as the Peter Rodino Distinguished Visiting Professor at Rutgers Law School in Newark, N.J., during the spring 2020 semester.

Presented “The Sickness Unto Death: The American Psyche Since 2016” at the virtual lecture series Systemic Racism in U.S. Law and Politics, presented by the Rutgers Center for Security, Race and Rights in June 2020.

### **Prof. Alexandra Harrington ’05**

Gave eight presentations during a nine-day span at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid, Spain, in December 2019.

Co-hosted and participated on several panels at the international legal symposium Human Rights, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Law. The event, presented by the McGill Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism and the Centre International Sustainable Development Law, drew more than 1,200 attendees made up of U.N. officials, scholars, practitioners, and other experts from around the globe.



### **Dean Antony Haynes**

Consulted on Airbnb’s anti-discrimination initiative, Project Lighthouse; served as a reviewer for the initiative-led paper, “Measuring Discrepancies in Airbnb Guest Acceptance Rates Using Anonymized Demographic Data.”

Presented “Algorithmic Injustice: How Artificial Intelligence Embeds Human Bias and Distorts Our Decision-Making” as part of Harvard Kennedy School’s seminar series in February 2020.

Presented on “Facial Recognition Bias and Implications Within Higher Education and Beyond” at Towson University as part of the President’s Inclusive Leadership Institute in March 2020.

### **Prof. Robert Heverly ’92**

Finished serving as reporter on the Uniform Law Commission’s “Tort Law Relating to Drones Act.”

Presented “Cyborg Lives: The Law and Policy of Human Augmentation” at Heinrich Heine University Faculty of Law in Düsseldorf, Germany, in January 2020.

Moderated and presented at the *Albany Law Review* Symposium, The Courts are Alive with the Sound of Music, in October 2019. (See page 16.)

### **Prof. Keith Hirokawa**

Participated in “Reimagining Environmental Law: Implementation and 2020 Planning” at the Airlie House in Warrenton, Va., in November 2019.

### **Prof. Michael Hutter**

Contributed several *New York Law Journal* columns, including “Attorney-Client Privilege and the Corporate Client; Can a Former Employee Speak for the Client?” (June 2020) and “Excited Utterances and the Quest for Reliability, Redux” (February 2020).

Authored an amicus curiae brief in *Hewitt v. Palmer Vet. Clinic*, an appeal in the New York Court of Appeals, arguing that the court should modify N.Y. common law and allow a person attacked by a dog while on commercial premises to sue the premises owner for negligence.

Presented lectures on evidence and New York practice-related topics to the Academy of Trial Lawyers, Office of the N.Y. Attorney General, Defense Research Institute, and the Albany County and Dutchess County Bar Associations; lectured at the New York State Judicial Institute's program for newly elected state court judges, annual summer sessions, and lunch-and-learn programs on evidence-related topics.

**Prof. Louis Jim**

Contributed two posts to the Best Practices for Legal Education blog: "Building A Solid Foundation Before Week 1" (September 2019) and "Preparing 1Ls for Persuasive Communication by Integrating Procedural Rules and Substantive Law" (February 2020).

**Prof. Mary Lynch**

Served as a planning committee member for the joint AALS/CLEA Virtual Clinical Conference in July 2020.

Co-presented (with Andrea Curcio) at the annual *Villanova Law Review* Norman J. Shachoy Symposium, Gender Equity in Law Schools, at Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law in October 2019.

Participated as a panelist at the virtual symposium Power, Privilege, and Transformation: Lessons from the Pandemic for Online Legal Education, hosted by the University of Miami School of Law in partnership with the AALS *Journal of Legal Education* in August 2020.



**Prof. Nancy Maurer**

Facilitated discussions at the Association of American Law Schools and Clinical Legal Education Association's New Clinician Virtual Conference in June 2020; participated in planning the October 2020 national externship conference "X10: 20/20 Vision for the Future" and prepared a workshop for new externship clinicians.

Led the field placement and pro bono scholar programs' response to the COVID-19 pandemic: provided resources, updates, and tips for remote work for field placement students and supervisors; facilitated alternate

remote assignments and supervision; created optional remote assignments to fill in gaps in hours; and arranged for other accommodations. All students satisfactorily completed their field placement and pro bono scholar program courses.

Provided training opportunities addressing remote learning, ethical issues in remote supervision, diversity, inclusion, and bias, including a two-part CLE with supervising attorneys on creating an inclusive learning environment for Albany Law School's students in August and September 2020. (See page 10.)

**Dean Connie Mayer**

Spoke with WAMC radio about the impact of The Justice Center at Albany Law School after the unveiling of its new sign in September 2019.

**Prof. David Pratt**

Served as editor of the 2020 *New York University Review of Employee Benefits and Executive Compensation*.

Served as chair of the Life Insurance and Employee Benefits Committee of the New York State Bar Association Trusts and Estates Law Section.

**Dean Rosemary Queenan**

Named chair of the Law Education Working Group of the New York State Bar Association's Attorney Well-Being Task Force.

**Prof. Patricia Reyhan**

Co-launched and -hosted Albany Law School's First Mondays series, which explores the legal overlays of topics in the news. (See page 12.)

**Prof. Sarah Rogerson**

Elected to the Niskayuna Central School District Board of Education for a three-year term beginning in 2020.

Appeared as a regular panelist on WAMC public radio's award-winning program "The Roundtable."

Appointed by the president and dean to direct The Justice Center at Albany Law School. (See page 3.)

**Prof. Christian Sundquist**

Co-founded the independent Institute for Racial Justice Research and Advocacy in June 2020. (See page 11.)

Law review article "Uncovering Juror Racial Bias" (96 *Denver Law Review* 309 [2019]); see Fall 2019 issue of *Albany Law Magazine* was selected by the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers as a must-read article on criminal justice this year. The article was also highlighted in NACDL's *The Champion* magazine.

Served as chair of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Minority Groups and Section on Evidence; co-organized several preliminary programs for the AALS Annual Meeting in January 2021.

**Prof. Evelyn Tenenbaum**

Presented "Half a Chance: Legal and Ethical Challenges Related to Splitting Donated Livers" at the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities (ASBH) Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa., in October 2019.

Presented "Assessing Consent to Intimate Sexual Relations Among Nursing Home Residents with Dementia" and co-presented "Facilitating Greater Use of Split Liver Transplants" at the World Congress of Bioethics Conference at Penn Medicine, held virtually in Philadelphia, Pa., in June 2020.

Named faculty director of Albany Law School's Health Law and Healthcare Compliance online graduate programs.

**Prof. David Walker**

Presented "Citators in the Era of Originalism" at the Association of Law Libraries of Upstate New York's annual meeting in Albany, N.Y., in October 2020.

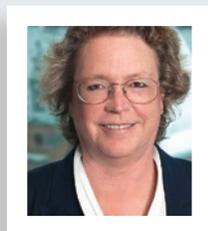
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# IN MEMORIAM



**André R. Donikian '69**

André Donikian, of Indianapolis, Ind., passed away on December 3, 2019. Born in Beirut, Lebanon, André founded Pentera, Inc., one of the nation's first planned giving consulting and marketing firms, in 1975. As the firm grew, so did his standing as a pioneer in the charitable sector, a leading interpreter of tax law changes, and a public speaker on planned giving. He was also a founding member of National Council on Planned Giving—now the National Association of Charitable Gift Planners (CGP)—and was inducted to its Hall of Fame in 2018.



**Ruth E. Leistensnider '88**

Ruth Leistensnider, of Slingerlands, N.Y., passed away on December 23, 2019. She was a partner and founding member of Nixon Peabody's Albany office and a member of the board of New York Solar Energy Industries Association, for which she served as treasurer for seven years. At Nixon Peabody, she was part of the energy and environment practice and built a reputation as the go-to lawyer for State Environmental Quality Review Act issues. Ruth was a past president of Albany Law's National Alumni Association. In 2008, she received the NAA's Donald D. DeAngelis '60 Excellence in Alumni Service Award.



**Edward M. Bartholomew Jr. '74**

Edward McIntyre Bartholomew Jr. of Glens Falls, N.Y., passed away on July 21, 2020. A graduate of Glens Falls High School, Ed went on to serve his beloved hometown as mayor for two terms—beginning in 1978, when he was not yet 30 years old—and most recently as president and as CEO of the Warren County Economic Development Corporation (EDC). In between, he spent several years in state government as a senior advisor. At the time of his passing, Ed was leading EDC's effort to help businesses and industries recover from the COVID-19 shutdown.

## **CLASS OF 1948**

**Marvin I. Crystal**  
January 7, 2020  
Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

**James C. Tomasi**  
March 3, 2020  
Salem, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1955**

**Donald O. Meserve**  
August 4, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1949**

**Nancy C. (Caplan) Roth**  
October 30, 2019  
Albany, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1957**

**Benjamin P. Roosa**  
August 28, 2019  
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1949**

**Oreste Vincent**  
July 24, 2019  
Catskill, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1951**

**Howard Alpert**  
June 28, 2019  
Delray Beach, Fla.

**Robert K. Ruslander**  
September 6, 2019  
Delmar, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1958**

**Robert James Armstrong**  
October 17, 2019  
Troy, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1958**

**John B. Kinum**  
May 10, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1952**

**Ernest G. Peltz**  
January 1, 2020  
Glens Falls, N.Y.

**Charles H. Umbrecht**  
October 8, 2019  
Syracuse, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1952**

**Hon. Joseph M. O'Donnell**  
August 13, 2019  
Burnsville, Minn.

## **CLASS OF 1959**

**Theodore G. Caldes**  
April 28, 2020  
Nassau, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1953**

**James C. Steenberg**  
May 16, 2020  
Athens, N.Y.

**Hon. Duncan S. MacAffer**  
March 1, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1953**

**Edward Joseph Grogan**  
February 5, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

**William F. McHugh**  
December 22, 2019  
Tallahassee, Fla.

## **CLASS OF 1954**

**Joseph R. Donovan**  
July 24, 2020  
New Hartford, N.Y.

## **CLASS OF 1960**

**Robert V. Renzi**  
February 29, 2020  
Watertown, N.Y.

**John Carter Rice**  
August 5, 2019  
Menands, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1961**

**Phillip G. Billings**  
June 22, 2020  
Westlake Village, Calif.

**Joyce M. Wrenn**  
September 18, 2019  
Albany, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1962**

**Joseph F. Duffy**  
January 10, 2020  
Saranac Lake, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1963**

**William D. Smith**  
October 2, 2019  
San Jose, Calif.

**CLASS OF 1964**

**Louis Henry Quinlan**  
August 5, 2019  
Troy, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1965**

**Carlton Nathaniel Pott**  
November 13, 2019  
Ballston Spa, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1966**

**Thomas J. Forrest**  
June 4, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

**Kenneth J. Toomey**  
September 7, 2019  
Albany, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1967**

**Leon Nigohosian**  
March 9, 2020  
Bethlehem Township, Pa.

**Hon. Vincent Reilly Jr.**  
September 22, 2019  
Schenectady, N.Y.

**Rex S. Ruthman**  
August 12, 2020  
Guilderland, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1968**

**Joseph David Burke**  
November 10, 2019  
Schenectady, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1969**

**André R. Donikian**  
December 3, 2019  
Indianapolis, Ind.

**CLASS OF 1970**

**Victor G. Dragone**  
January 25, 2020  
Everett, Mass.

**Paul L. Weafer**  
April 3, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1971**

**John W. Cebula**  
May 13, 2020  
Castile, N.Y.

**Barry D. Roy**  
August 9, 2019  
Boston, Mass.

**CLASS OF 1972**

**James Earl Morgan**  
February 12, 2020  
Glenmont, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1973**

**Stephen Whitney Easton**  
November 27, 2019  
Delmar, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1974**

**Edward M. Bartholomew Jr.**  
July 21, 2020  
Glens Falls, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1977**

**Tracy E. Hoff**  
December 2, 2019  
Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1978**

**Elizabeth J. McDonald**  
August 2, 2019  
Pittsford, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1979**

**Mark J. Fisher**  
September 3, 2019  
Teaneck, N.J.

**CLASS OF 1981**

**Thomas E. Sise**  
February 13, 2020  
Mocksville, N.C.

**CLASS OF 1982**

**Hon. Richard W. McVinney**  
March 28, 2020  
Oneonta, N.Y.

**Steven Barry Weingarten**  
April 28, 2020  
Albany, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1988**

**Ruth E. Leistensnider**  
December 23, 2019  
Slingerlands, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1989**

**D. Scott Bassinson**  
April 5, 2020  
Delmar, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1990**

**Theresa J. Puleo-Lewandowski**  
February 9, 2020  
Clifton Park, N.Y.

**Robert M. Steenbergh**  
May 16, 2020  
Windermere, Fla.

**CLASS OF 1994**

**David A. Justus**  
March 26, 2020  
New York, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 1996**

**Yolanda Rivero**  
May 10, 2020  
Bronx, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 2000**

**Christian J. Kennedy**  
January 18, 2020  
Rochester, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 2001**

**Michael J. Keenan**  
May 6, 2020  
Hudson Falls, N.Y.

**CLASS OF 2023**

**Joseph M. Gentile III**  
Pleasant Valley, N.Y.  
September 6, 2020

**FRIENDS**

**Arnold R. Barnett**  
July 10, 2020  
Cincinnati, Ohio

**James W. Bliss**  
July 8, 2020  
Troy, N.Y.



## Reflecting on the 19th Amendment

BY LISA SUTO

THIS YEAR, WE CELEBRATE the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. In marking this important historical moment, it is appropriate that we look back at our history here in Albany—both the city and the law school.

It's fitting to begin with the first woman to graduate from Albany Law School, **Kate Stoneman 1898**. Many of us know Stoneman's struggle to be admitted to the New York State Bar, but did you know of her fight for a woman's right to vote?

Historically, we do not know as much about Stoneman's personal life, but we do know that she was a fighter for what she believed was right, never backed down, and persevered. Stoneman was one of the founding members of the Women's Suffrage Society of Albany and served as its secretary. The society was unique in that it kept its independence from the state's suffrage organization.

In a 1919 interview about her life, Stoneman told the *Albany Knickerbocker Press* that, though the society wanted to regulate its own policies, it supported the

state organization sending delegates to its convention and backing its platforms.

According to Stoneman, the first milestone for women's suffrage came in 1880, when the state Legislature passed a bill allowing women to participate in school elections. Stoneman cast her first vote in a school board election that year.

Many of Stoneman's accomplishments and activities are documented in the *Woman's Journal*, founded in Boston, Mass., in 1870 by Lucy Stone and her husband, Henry Browne Blackwell. In 1894, Stoneman and other activists attended the opening of the 1894 Constitutional Convention in hopes of attaining suffrage for women. However, women in New York would have to wait until 1917 to be granted suffrage. Stoneman, serving as a poll watcher, later witnessed the state's women exercising their widespread voting rights for the first time.

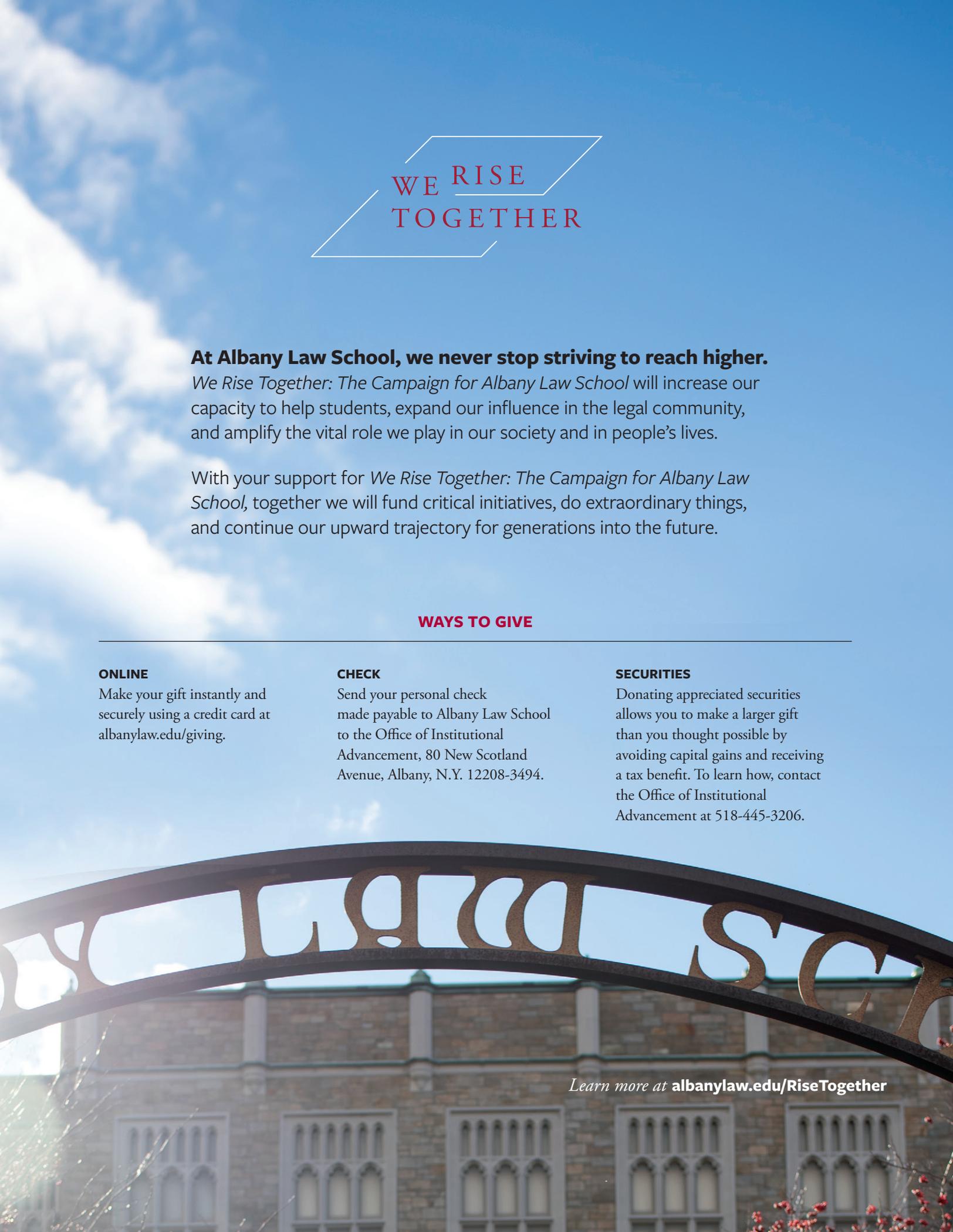
One interesting piece of Albany Law history on women's suffrage involves a former dean and his wife. **James Newton Fiero** was the first dean in favor of women attending the law school; during his tenure, Stoneman became the first woman to graduate. Despite this, the dean's wife, Jeanette, was not a suffragist, as one might expect, but instead was on the advisory committee for the Women's Anti-Suffrage Association of the Third Judicial District. One can only

imagine what the conversations between the dean and his wife on women's suffrage were, especially after admitting Stoneman, a prominent suffragist in Albany, to the law school.

In 1920, the year the 19th Amendment was ratified, 22 women attended the law school under Dean Fiero. **Ruth Miner**, a member of the Class of 1920, would become one of the law school's most prominent graduates. She was described as a "civic minded attorney" and became the first counsel to the Albany Legal Aid Society. She later served as executive deputy secretary of state for New York State, and she was a trustee of the law school. In 2014, Miner posthumously received Albany Law School's Kate Stoneman Award.

The ABA Standing Committee on the Law Library of Congress created a traveling exhibit, "100 Years After the 19th Amendment: Their Legacy, and Our Future." During a virtual presentation in March 2020, Schaffer Law Library director Professor **David Walker** and librarian **Leslie Cunningham** read the banners on display at Albany Law. A speech by Professor **Mary Lynch**, the Kate Stoneman Chair in Law and Democracy, followed.

Reflecting on the 19th Amendment, one cannot stress enough the importance of voting rights to a true democracy. Albany Law School is proud to have ties to the local suffrage movement, and to mark this important centennial. **A**



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