

FALL 2024

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AN HISTORIC MOMENT

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UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER



Losing to Win—Luis Rovira '50 and a Legal Historic Moment

The lives and accomplishments of our alumni fill me with profound inspiration. It is a feeling rivaled only by the hopefulness I experience interacting with our outstanding law students, faculty, and staff. Today I invite you to join me in being inspired by an exceptional member of the University of Colorado Law School Class of 1950.

Luis Dario Rovira was born on September 8, 1923, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. A graduate of the University of Colorado's undergraduate and law schools, he became the first Latino to serve on a state supreme court in the United States when he was appointed to the Colorado Supreme Court in 1979. He subsequently became the first Latino chief justice of a state supreme court. During his tenure on the Colorado Court, Justice Rovira participated in a number of noteworthy cases and is perhaps best known for authoring the Opinion of the Court in *Evans v. Romer*, finding that Colorado's Amendment 2, which prohibited the state and municipalities from passing legislation to protect gay people, infringed on plaintiffs' rights in violation of the Equal Protection Clause. October 2024 marks the 30th anniversary of the Colorado Supreme Court decision. The state court decision was subsequently appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and affirmed in *Romer v. Evans*, and thereby became the first case in which the U.S. Supreme Court declared that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation violated constitutionally protected rights.

Much of Justice Rovira's acclaim comes from his work in *Evans v. Romer*. However, this widely known legal historic victory was preceded by a much less known, yet highly impactful *legal historic moment*—a past legal occurrence, whether tragic or triumphant, that helps us to create broader social norms that can shape our legal present and our legal future—that occurred when Justice Rovira was a law student, decades before he rose to the Colorado Supreme Court.

In 1950, then-law student Rovira initiated legal proceedings against a barber shop in Boulder, Colorado, which had refused service to Edward Johnson, a Black graduate student. Although Rovira did not prevail in the lawsuit, the case had significant repercussions. Students from the University of Colorado, along with other members of the Boulder community, organized a boycott against the discriminatory barber shop. This collective action eventually compelled the barbers to amend their policies and serve all customers, irrespective of race. And arguably, Rovira's lawsuit was one of the first structural cracks in Boulder's then-pervasive practices of anti-Black racial exclusion.

Justice Rovira famously said, looking back at the Boulder barber shop case and its aftermath, that it was an example of “losing to win.” This short phrase captures the notion that immediate setbacks can lay the groundwork for more substantial, long-term progress by sparking change in public opinion, political landscapes, and ultimately, legal and social frameworks. Justice Rovira's efforts to combat inequity while still a law student with his own immediate concerns are a reminder that whether you are beginning your first year at Colorado Law, or are a graduate of many years, your work as legal advocates grows from your larger identity as *citizen advocates*—raising awareness of important issues, representing those whose voices are unheard, and helping communities to become more equitable, inclusive and responsive to the needs of all.

Together, we are shaping our legal present and our legal future every day, and I am proud to strive—side by side with you—in this noble endeavor.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lolita Buckner Inniss".

Lolita Buckner Inniss
Dean and Provost's Professor of Law

“Justice Rovira's efforts to combat inequity while still a law student with his own immediate concerns are a reminder that whether you are beginning your first year at Colorado Law, or are a graduate of many years, your work as legal advocates grows from your larger identity as citizen advocates.”

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ON THE COVER

American Indian Law Clinic students and
faculty. From left: Hannah Ahders '25,
Robert Draper '26, Elodie Dodge '26,
Celene Olguin '25, Clinical Professor
and Director of the American Indian Law
Clinic Christina Stanton '15, Jessica
Garcia '26, Malorie Stick '26, and
Grant Lammers '25.



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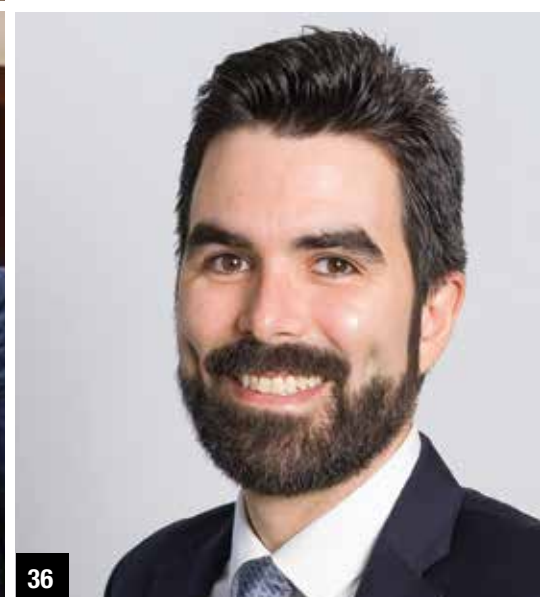
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Welcome to the Class of 2027!

On August 19, Colorado Law welcomed incoming JD, MSL, and LLM students for orientation, aimed at making the transition to law school a smooth one and providing opportunities for new students to form connections with their classmates.

Following a kickoff event at the Dark Horse, students heard from Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss** and Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice **Monica Márquez**.

Over two days, students were introduced to the various departments and services available across the law school, including financial aid, the law library, and the school's Community and Culture team. They also experienced a mock class taught by Professor **Helen Norton**.



Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Monica Márquez leading incoming students in a pledge.

2,894
APPLICANTS

43%
COLORADO RESIDENTS

3.79
CUMULATIVE GPA (MEDIAN)

164
LSAT SCORE (MEDIAN)

25
AVERAGE AGE

190
ENROLLED FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

111
UNDERGRADUATE SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

24%
STUDENTS OF COLOR (racially and ethnically diverse, self-identified)

36
STATES

25
INCOMING LLM AND MASTER OF STUDIES IN LAW STUDENTS

Information current as of August 26, 2024.

John Echohawk addresses the Class of 2024.



Commencement Speaker **John Echohawk** Urges Graduates to Find Their Passion

On Friday, May 10, 191 graduates gathered with faculty, family, and dear friends for the 129th commencement ceremony honoring Colorado Law's Class of 2024.

Professor **Blake E. Reid '10** recognized the top 15% of the class as members of the Order of the Coif and presented this year's recipient of the Honorary Order of the Coif, **David Stark '73**.

"We could not be prouder of each of you for overcoming the numerous challenges you have faced to be here today, and for the high level of resilient growth that you have shown over your time here at Colorado Law," Reid shared.

After expressing his gratitude for receiving the Honorary Order of the Coif and thanking his family, law firm, and the Law Alumni Board, Stark shared a brief story about his life-changing mentor in the legal profession. He advised students, "Find a mentor—one that you respect and trust, and one that respects and trusts you."

Class Vice President **Anita Klaezer** introduced keynote

speaker **John Echohawk** (Pawnee), executive director and founder of the Native American Rights Fund.

Echohawk shared his journey in the legal field, from growing up in New Mexico and being encouraged to attend law school to working in federal American Indian law and establishing the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) in 1970. Echohawk detailed the impact Colorado Law has had on tribal land management and other critical areas of American Indian law through its partnership with NARF and strong American Indian law program. He recognized former Dean **David Getches** and the late Professor **Charles Wilkinson** for their early leadership in the field and writing the first-ever casebook on federal Indian law as well as Professor **Rick Collins**, former Dean **James Anaya**, and Professor **Kristen Carpenter**.

Echohawk concluded, "When I started law school, I didn't know what I wanted to do with a law degree, I just wanted to be a lawyer. I developed that interest—that passion—pretty quickly, and I hope you all do as well. If you haven't found that passion yet, keep looking. Go change the world."



"When I started law school, I didn't know what I wanted to do with a law degree, I just wanted to be a lawyer. I developed that interest—that passion—pretty quickly, and I hope you all do as well. If you haven't found that passion yet, keep looking. Go change the world."

John Echohawk

Five New Faculty Join Colorado Law

JONATHON BOOTH



Jonathon Booth is a historian of democracy, race, law, and policing in the United States. He teaches courses including Criminal Law, American Legal History, and Law and History of Policing.

Booth's research reaches from the mid-nineteenth century to the present and focuses on the practical impact of law and its enforcement—in other words, how the law tangibly affects Americans. His most recent article, "The Cycle of Delegitimization: Lessons From Dred Scott on the Relationship Between the Supreme Court and the Nation", which appears in the *UC Law Constitutional Quarterly*, demonstrates that the Dred Scott decision met immediately with strong opposition from Northerners that delegitimized the Supreme Court and made the decision itself a dead letter.

Booth previously was the legal history fellow at the Harvard History Design Studio and clerked for the Hon. Barrington D. Parker on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and the Hon. Kevin McNulty on the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey. He received his PhD in history from Harvard University in 2021 and his JD, cum laude, from Harvard Law School in 2019. He received his BA in history and economics, joint honors, from McGill University.

LAURA DOLBOW



Laura Dolbow joined Colorado Law as associate professor of law from Penn Carey Law, where she served as a Sharswood Fellow. Dolbow researches the intersection of patent law, health law, and administrative law.

Her work has been published or is forthcoming in the *Michigan Law Review*, the *Vanderbilt Law Review*, and the *Administrative Law Review*. Her law school note won a 2018 Burton Award for Distinguished Legal Writing and was cited by the Patent Office in a final rule regarding claim construction standards in post-grant review proceedings. Her article, "Agency Adherence to Legislative History", won the 2017 Gellhorn-Sargentich Law Student Essay Competition and the Weldon B. White Prize.

Prior to Penn Carey Law, Dolbow practiced in the appellate and patent litigation groups at Covington & Burling LLP in Washington, D.C. She clerked for Judge Judith Rogers on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit and for Judge Timothy Dyk on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. She received her JD and BA from Vanderbilt University, where she won the Founder's Medal for her law school class and served as senior articles editor of the *Vanderbilt Law Review*. Before law school, she taught middle school math through Teach for America in Nashville, Tennessee.

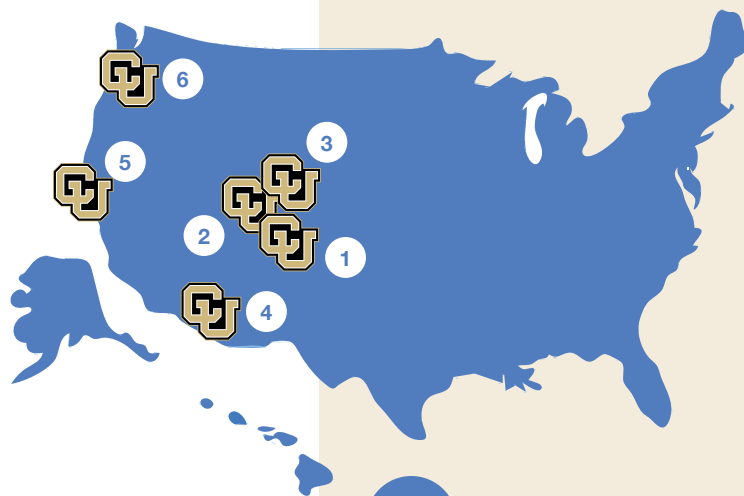
VANESSA RACEHORSE



Vanessa Racehorse joined the Colorado Law faculty as an associate professor of law and a core faculty member of the American Indian Law Program. Her teaching and scholarship focus on American Indian and Indigenous Peoples law, human rights, international law, and environmental justice. Racehorse is a member of the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes and is a descendant of the Cherokee Nation and Shoshone-Paiute Tribes.

Racehorse previously taught at the University of New Mexico School of Law and the University of San Diego School of Law. Prior to entering academia, she served as a deputy attorney general for the Colorado River Indian Tribes, an attorney for the California Native American Heritage Commission, and an associate attorney at Sonosky, Chambers, Sachse, Endreson & Perry, LLP, a top-ranked national law firm dedicated to representing Native American interests.

Racehorse has a BA from the University of Denver, an LLM in international criminal law from the University of Amsterdam, and a JD from Columbia Law School, where she was a recipient of the Parker School Recognition of Achievement in International and Comparative Law, president of the Columbia Native American Law Students Association, and Bluebook Editor for the *Columbia Law Review*.



SAMANTHA FUNK



After serving as a visiting legal writing assistant professor at Colorado Law, **Samantha (Sam) Funk** has joined Colorado Law's permanent legal writing faculty.

Prior to teaching, Funk practiced commercial litigation for seven years, where she represented clients at the trial and appellate levels in state and federal court. Her practice involved a broad range of civil matters, including class actions and franchise or contract disputes. After working as a civil litigator, Funk conducted civil rights and Title IX investigations at the University of Washington. She has been committed to pro bono work throughout her legal career, representing clients seeking asylum, arguing for protective orders in criminal cases, and researching state statutes for a reproductive justice organization.

Funk graduated from the University of Michigan Law School, where she was an articles editor for the *Michigan Journal of Gender and Law* and externed at the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior to law school, she worked for a reproductive rights organization in Guatemala before returning home and teaching English classes to Spanish speakers.

CARA SHAFFER



Cara Shaffer joined Colorado Law's permanent legal writing faculty from the South Texas College of Law Houston, where she served as director of the Legal Writing Center. She earned her JD from the University of Texas School of Law and previously worked as a litigation associate at Bowman and Brooke LLP. Her experience includes internships and clerkships at the Third Court of Appeals, the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas, and the Harris County Attorney's Office. Shaffer has diverse experience teaching writing and oral advocacy, including three years coaching the University of Texas Undergraduate Mock Trial team.



Stay Connected to Alumni in Your Region!

Join one of our regional Facebook groups and connect with Colorado Law alumni in your area, stay informed about upcoming law school activities, and celebrate the accomplishments of fellow alumni.

1 Colorado Springs



2 Durango



**3 Northern Colorado
Greeley/Fort Collins/Windsor**



4 Phoenix



5 San Francisco



6 Seattle



Members of the Class of 2008 celebrating their 15th reunion.

Shaping the Future: Ethical Representation and Deep Community Ties

Professor Colene Robinson—with her innovative approach to legal education and her dedication to public service—has been a transformative force at the University of Colorado Law School and in the greater community.

She wears many hats, teaching and writing about child welfare and juvenile delinquency and co-directing the Juvenile and Family Law Program. She also serves as director of the school's Clinical Education Program, overseeing Colorado Law's nine vital legal clinics. In this Faculty Focus, Professor Robinson speaks with the law school's

Robyn Munn, sharing insights into her recent projects and the inspiration behind them.

Last year, you led a lunchtime seminar for students funded by the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative. What was the inspiration and the goal for the program?

The new public service project, "Representing Youth Ethically," invited law students to earn public service pledge hours by analyzing case studies of ethical issues that arise in representing children in dependency/neglect and delinquency cases. The project was created to shed light on the new role for attorneys called Counsel for Youth, which replaced the guardian ad litem (GAL) role for youth over 12. This new role raises many ethical questions, including conflicts of interest between siblings, how to represent clients with diminished capacity, and the boundaries of confidentiality when dealing with child victims of abuse or neglect.

That sounds like a major change for those working in the juvenile and family law arena.

The transition to Counsel for Youth has caused some consternation among attorneys and stakeholders across Colorado. Some attorneys wish to remain in the GAL role, despite its significant shortcomings, believing that attorneys should do what is best for the child rather than what the child wants. This belief leads to a lack of accountability to the child client, a lack of transparency, and a failure to create just and equitable relationships. In contrast, the Counsel for Youth model pushes attorneys to adopt a new way of lawyering for children, embracing the principles of the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative.

Many child advocates worked hard for years to make this change happen, and I am inspired by their dedication. It has been particularly moving to watch young people with lived experience advocate for this change and what it means to them to have an attorney fighting for what they want to happen in their lives.



Clinical Professor and Director of Clinical Programs Colene Robinson



The clinics have started a new initiative to connect with our alumni in the community, also focused on ethics issues. What will the program look like and who can participate?

Tentatively titled “Connect with Us: CU Clinical Faculty and Alums Learning Together,” clinical faculty are presenting free CLE programs on cutting-edge topics in our practice areas, open to all our clinic alumni and friends. Faculty are very enthusiastic about reconnecting with former students and appreciate the chance to visit with them. Spreading the word about the excellent work our clinics do helps us network and establish mutually beneficial ties with our broader legal community.

I am grateful that **Sarah Matsumoto**, our talented newest clinical professor, kicked off the series in June. She discussed working with and supervising new attorneys, particularly in the environmental context, at Wheeler Trigg O’Donnell, which generously hosted this event. Associate Dean for Community and Culture **Violeta Chapin** will lead our next alumni/clinic discussion this fall—please be on the lookout for more information!

It’s inspiring to learn about your work building community among clinic alumni. Can you tell us more about your vision for bringing the community together?

Our students are what make the law school so special, and that only gets better when they graduate and move on in their careers. The chance to learn from alumni as they grow and develop their careers is inspiring. Faculty frequently mention

how much they enjoy visiting with alumni in various contexts. When you focus deeply on teaching, you can lose sight of what’s happening in practice – the real challenges, opportunities for change, and making a difference—and alumni have that expertise. I hope to find ways for alumni to share that with our faculty, our students, and our larger legal community. Whether through teaching, mentoring, or networking events, I envision a vibrant community where past and present students support and inspire each other.

Speaking of inspiring, you recently received a 2024 Boulder Faculty Excellence Award for “Excellence in Teaching” which recognizes the vital importance of teaching and mentoring students as significant components of faculty duties that are central to the university’s mission. How does it feel?

Winning this award has made me so happy because it has given me a chance to hear from former students. Many have reached out with kind words, sharing updates on their lives and careers, and it has been wonderful to reconnect. I hope to hear from even more alumni, especially those whose careers aren’t exactly where they want them to be – because I have been there too and want to provide encouragement. Being a lawyer can be challenging, and the highs and lows are better when you can share them. This award is a testament to the strong community we’ve built at CU Law, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue fostering these connections.



Clinical Education Program faculty and staff. Back row: Violeta Chapin, Sarah Matsumoto, Colene Robinson, Zach Mountin '10. Front row: Jennipher Dallas-Jobe, Vivek Krishnamurthy, Ann England, Christina Stanton '15, Deborah Cantrell.

“Whether through teaching, mentoring, or networking events, I envision a vibrant community where past and present students support and inspire each other.”

The Power of Service: Empowering Communities in Colorado and Beyond

BY REYA ROUSSEL '25





As our nation navigates a rapidly changing legal landscape and highly consequential presidential election this fall, the Clinical Education Program at Colorado Law works tirelessly to provide knowledge and resources for students, voters, and community organizations to make steps toward a positive future. Since its founding in 1948, the Clinical Education Program has trained student attorneys as they provide free access to legal services for a wide range of clients. As students defend the environment, represent children, advocate for technology access, and more, they create ripple effects that will continue to empower individuals and communities for years to come.

American Indian Law Clinic

Established in 1992, the American Indian Law Clinic (AIRC) was one of the first programs of its kind to represent individuals, tribes, and tribal entities in matters related to federal Indian law. The clinic also advocates at the United Nations to promote and protect Indigenous freedoms on an international level. Clinical Professor and Director of the American Indian Law Clinic **Christina Stanton '15** guides student attorneys through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on work on legal cases and projects centered around Indian law issues. Their projects cover a broad spectrum of legal work from advocacy and litigation to nonprofit support and transactional practice.

As a student attorney in the AIRC, **Oliver Skelly '25** helped represent a federally recognized tribe across a host of natural resource issues, including nuclear waste regulations and water rights. "The opportunity to work on projects with a direct nexus to the environment, climate change, and American Indian law was an invaluable experience that I will forever cherish," he said.

Ryann Rael '25 felt grounded by the opportunity to finally be put into the "driver's seat" as a young attorney while directly improving people's lives. Rael and other AIRC students teamed up with the Juvenile and Family Law Clinic to secure permanent adoptions for a brother and sister to reunite with their

aunt and grandmother in an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) case. "That family is whole, happy, and together because of the work the clinics did. That is the most valuable takeaway which will impact the rest of my career," Rael shared.

In addition to representing clients, the AIRC supports voting rights during election years. To address a long history of Native voter discrimination in the United States, clinical students not only share their understanding of a complex array of voting laws and requirements with the public but also serve as an onsite presence to watch polls and intervene if elections are improperly run.

Since 2018, the AIRC has collaborated with Indigenous-led organizations to ensure every Native individual has access to the ballot. That year, a change in North Dakota's voter ID requirements



posed a potential threat to the voting rights of tribal members. In response, the American Indian Law Clinic, First Peoples Worldwide, IllumiNative, and Native Organizers Alliance came together to collaboratively launch the Natives Vote team. Together they endeavor to address the unique challenges faced by Native communities in exercising their right to vote.

Pictured, opposite page, from left: Clinical Professor Christina Stanton '15, Malorie Stick '26, and Robert Draper '26. **Top:** Clinical Professor Christina Stanton '15 (second from right) with American Indian Law Clinic students Robert Draper '26, Malorie Stick '26, and Elodie Dodge '26. **Bottom Right:** Colorado Law students volunteer at a voting location at the Turtle Mountain Reservation during the fall 2022 midterm election.

Clinic students maintained the Natives Vote website, which offered registration assistance and mail-in ballot information and clarified the proper identification to bring to the polls. This year, the clinic visited campus and community events to provide in-person voting assistance for the local Native community.

This fall, the American Indian Law Clinic partnered with Professor **Vanessa Racehorse's** Tribal Law course to support election protection efforts in South Dakota on Election Day, thanks to support from the Center for Native American and Indigenous Studies and the Office for Public and Community Engaged Scholarship. They will work alongside Four Directions, a Native-led national voting rights organization dedicated to advancing equality at the ballot box across Indian Country.

“In light of the persistent challenges of voter discrimination and the ongoing struggle to uphold the right to vote for all citizens, our curriculum delves into some of the cases that have shaped the landscape of voting rights,” Stanton explained. “These cases explore issues such as voter suppression tactics, discriminatory voting laws, and the protection of minority voting rights. Our curriculum is crafted to foster critical thinking and encourage students to form their own perspectives on whether the Supreme Court and lower courts have effectively safeguarded the right to vote through its interpretations of the Constitution.”

Stanton also coordinates Colorado Law's outreach for Constitution Day. Every fall, the Byron R. White Center for the Study of American Constitutional Law recruits student and attorney volunteers to visit high school classrooms across Colorado to teach lessons on constitutional law. This year, volunteers will engage students in a lesson plan that highlights the Constitution and current events, including recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, through an exploration of the past and current realities of barriers to the right to vote. Curious and outspoken high school students are encouraged to express their ideas and ask bold questions about their legal interests. For many of these students, this will be their first opportunity to vote in an election. With the help of Stanton and Colorado Law volunteers, young people can head to the ballots with more knowledge about the impact of their individual votes.

Newest Clinic Makes Waves

Colorado Law also positively serves the community through its newest clinic, the Community Collaboration Law Lab (CCLL). Founded in 2016 as the Sustainable Community Development Clinic, the CCLL provides pro bono legal services to nonprofit organizations and businesses with a focus on social justice and sustainable development. Student attorneys explore regulatory compliance, real estate



Emiliano Salazar '23, Spencer Garcia '24, and Kelsea Suarez '23 volunteer at voting location at the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota in fall 2022.

development, and agricultural law to promote the missions of community-centered organizations. Professor **Deborah Cantrell**, who oversees the clinic, has tailored the program to maximize experiential learning opportunities for student attorneys, equipping them with practical skills and knowledge they can bring to their future legal practice. In addition to working with actual clients, students are exposed to new ways of engaging with the community through the missions of social justice organizations.

Adam Hunt '25 described his work with the clinic as an opportunity to learn ways to navigate a complex regulatory system and tailor compliance plans to the needs of the nonprofit client. His biggest lesson: at times, an attorney's job is to work within the fields of ambiguity and uncertainty. **Aidan (Addy) Sterns '25** enjoyed researching federal health insurance regulations and developing real estate leases for two organizations with missions to educate the broader community.

“It was impactful and rewarding to provide legal support to organizations with such meaningful missions and provide a direct, positive impact to the communities around them,” Sterns said. She also collaborated on a project for a closer community—her own law school—by creating a food pantry for students. This work continues into the 2024-25 academic

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“You Can't Punish People Out of Being Unhoused”: Chris Reynolds '10 Pioneers Unique Approach to Supporting Boulder's Unhoused Community



Chris Reynolds '10 assists an unhoused community member in Boulder.

Every day when **Chris Reynolds '10** goes into work, he asks himself: “How can I help somebody today?” As deputy city attorney for the city of Boulder, Reynolds is uniquely positioned to impact the lives of people living in Boulder, particularly the unhoused community. Reynolds has played an integral role in establishing Boulder's Community Court, which uses an individual- and trauma-informed approach to resolve court cases instead of cycling people between the streets and jail.

“It didn't take long for me to see [when I began working in Boulder] that 99.9 % of people coming out of the jail were unhoused and being arrested on really low-level tickets, then failing to come to court for things like camping, trespassing, or having an open container of alcohol,” Reynolds explained. “Sending people to jail even for a short amount of time can have a significant impact on somebody's life. It can have all sorts of repercussions.”

Reynolds and former Municipal Judge **Linda Cooke '85** quickly realized that sending unhoused individuals to jail, having them do community service, or fining them was not fixing any problems, nor was it deterring them from committing low-level offenses.

“Judge Cooke started this idea of taking a different approach to violations, and in 2020, established a community court focused on homelessness and cases involving unhoused defendants,” Reynolds said. “Instead of penalizing or punishing people when they get low-level tickets, we help them, and that has been the focus now for years.”

Community courts use a combined strategy of holding participants accountable while connecting them to social services to help address the root causes of crime. A unique aspect of Community Court is that it meets people where they are in the community, such as parks and churches. It then uses technology to connect back to the courtroom, so the defendant never has to come to the Boulder County Justice Center. The city attorney's office has identified charges automatically eligible for the program, such as camping, trespassing, and littering—crimes typically associated with homelessness that do not have a victim.

The low-level citations that bring individuals to court serve as an opportunity to help resolve a person's unhoused status and are tailored to specifically meet each individual's needs. This could be as simple as replacing

a state identification card, or as complex as getting a person ready for housing.

“We try to resolve things in a way that gets cases dismissed and helps move people further along towards housing because that is such a fundamental need, and is really the overall focus of the program,” Reynolds explained.

Reynolds also noted that many people who are experiencing homelessness may have cases in both the municipal and state court. These differences in jurisdiction often leave defendants confused, which is why another critical part of community court entails making court processes easier for those who have committed low level offenses.

“You can't punish people out of being unhoused, or out of mental illness or addiction. You can only do things to help people experiencing those struggles, and that is really what this court is focused on.”

“Punishing people for committing offenses that are linked to their status of being unhoused does not make them any less likely to be unhoused,” Reynolds noted. “You can't punish people out of being unhoused, or out of mental illness or addiction. You can only do things to help people experiencing those struggles, and that is really what this court is focused on.”

So far, the court's empathetic approach has proven to be successful. From January 2021 to April 2024, 429 people with 1,097 cases were seen in Community Court. Over 1,217 tasks or sanctions were ordered, and 1,083 of those were completed—a completion rate of 89%. Furthermore, Community Court helped to house 31 individuals in 2023. Previously, sanctions such as

traditional community service were completed less than 10% of the time, often landing individuals in jail and failing to address the root cause of the original crime.

In addition to implementing the program and ensuring it meets the community's needs, Reynolds and his team have worked diligently to address concerns around the court. This ensures that Boulder residents understand the program and the many ways it benefits both the city and those experiencing homelessness.

“We often go to meetings where people have concerns, and we address those head on,” Reynolds explained. “By and large, when people understand Community Court, they become more supportive.”

Another key component of ensuring the court's success is hiring and training progressive prosecutors— including alumni **Deshawna Zazueta '19** and **Mia Keller '22**— a process Reynolds sees as one of the most critical parts of his job.

“I try to develop the new attorneys we hire so that they can be independent, problem-solving prosecutors who are committed to social justice to their core,” Reynolds said. “Traditionally, prosecution offices have measured success by how many convictions they have or how long they put people in prison. We measure it by how many people we can help.”

Reynolds' previous experience as a Marine Corps Judge Advocate played a pivotal role in developing his skills as an attorney. Throughout his military service, he worked both as a prosecutor and defender for felony-level cases, allowing him to see both sides of the criminal justice system.

“What became really clear to me in the Marines was that typically the people who get in trouble with the law have had some sort of traumatic experience,” Reynolds said. “Marines and sailors who got into trouble often had previous combat deployments or diagnosed PTSD or had developed substance use issues.”



This experience helped Reynolds more fully recognize that trauma cannot be ignored in criminal law, and this knowledge has had a profound impact in shaping his work— and approach— as a city attorney.

Reynolds' work in the community court demonstrates that it is possible to take a more compassionate, human-centered approach to the criminal justice system— one that prevents recidivism while still holding people accountable and giving them a chance to gain stability.

His time at Colorado Law played a pivotal role in shaping his work. In fact, Reynolds says he initially became hooked on criminal law as a student in the Criminal Defense Clinic with professors **Ann England** and **Violeta**

Chapin, an experience that he shared “really taught me the value of experiential learning.”

“It was interesting [work], and I loved the idea of helping people who have no money figure out their situation,” Reynolds said. “[During my time in clinics] I was lucky enough to do a jury trial in Jefferson County on a DUI [case].... and since then, I've only ever practiced criminal law.”

From his days as a student attorney in the Criminal Defense Clinic to his work designing and establishing the Boulder Community Court, Reynolds personifies the best of the University of Colorado Law School's values. We are proud to count him among our alumni.

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year and will provide support for future law students for years to come.

Natalie Tiggelman '25 gained confidence in her legal competencies through her work in the CCLL. She was especially fulfilled by a project assisting a local LGBT group with becoming a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Tiggelman expressed, “Witnessing the excitement of each member as their dream came to life was incredibly rewarding, especially as a member of the LGBT community myself. These experiences underscored the importance of equitable development and reinforced my commitment to pursuing a more just and inclusive future through legal advocacy. This experience gives me a leg up in my future career, deepening my understanding of diverse legal areas and solidifying my passion for using the law to drive social change.”

Criminal/Immigration Defense Clinic

Another clinic making a positive impact on the future is the Criminal/Immigration Defense Clinic. Led by Professor and Associate Dean for Community and Culture **Violeta Chapin**, the clinic recently helped secure a future for a member of the CU community. Students supported a CU employee in the custodial department as they pursued lawful permanent status through an employment-based visa. Over the years, the Criminal/Immigration Defense Clinic has worked on many similar cases to provide CU employees more permanent residency in the U.S. so that they can live, travel, and work freely without fear of losing their status or facing deportation.

Emma Berry '23 recalls helping two clients who had been navigating the immigration system since they were young children. One client was a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient from Ghana whose status was threatened by a criminal charge after running a red light. Berry represented them in court and cross-examined the charging officer. Another client was from South Korea but had been in the U.S. since they were a baby. To prevent the client's deportation due to aging out of their visa, Berry helped successfully request that the removal proceedings be dismissed.

These clients still face issues in the immigration system today, but with the help of Colorado Law student attorneys and faculty, they are not forced to face the complex system alone.

A Force for Good

Taking a clinic is often a favorite experience for Colorado Law alumni who continue to use their skills to promote important values like sustainability, public service, and access to justice. This year, the Criminal Defense Clinic will target wrongful convictions with the Korey Wise Innocence Project. As climate concerns and technology advances abruptly change our world, the Getches-Green Natural Resources, Energy, and Environmental Law Clinic and the Samuelson-Glushko Technology Law and Policy Clinic pursue federal protections for the public interest. Other clinics serving a diverse clientele at no charge include the Civil Practice Clinic, the Juvenile and Family Law Clinic, and the Entrepreneurial Law Clinic.

“The intimate size, the relationships that grow through teamwork, and all of the emotions, sweat, and tears that go into defending and advocating for real people are what make the clinical experience so unique and powerful.”

According to Professor Chapin, “The intimate size, the relationships that grow through teamwork, and all of the emotions, sweat, and tears that go into defending and advocating for real people are what make the clinical experience so unique and powerful.”

WYSS SCHOLARS PROGRAM HELPS ALUMNI PURSUE CAREERS IN PUBLIC LANDS LAW

BY EMILY BATTAGLIA

A legal career in land conservation may often feel unattainable for recent law school graduates. The pressure to pay off student loan debt, coupled with the often-lower paying salaries in public interest jobs, could prompt them to look elsewhere. However, thanks to the Wyss Scholars Program, funded by the Wyss Foundation, one Colorado Law student each year receives generous financial assistance to cover the cost of one-third of law school tuition and expenses, as well as funds for internship opportunities and professional development support.

The program's impact will soon grow; starting in fall 2025, the Wyss Foundation will fund two Wyss Scholars at Colorado Law each year. “The Wyss Scholars Program is a strategic and impactful partnership between Colorado Law and the Wyss Foundation,” said **Chris Winter**, executive director of the Getches-Wilkinson Center, who oversees the Wyss Scholars Program. “Through the program, scholars get exactly the right kind of support that can make a difference in the trajectory of their careers. We’re very grateful for the support of the Wyss Foundation, and we are thrilled that the students at Colorado Law have this opportunity.”



Eric Dude '19, Colorado Law's 2018-19 Wyss Scholar

Wyss Scholarships are awarded to promising leaders in United States land conservation. Scholars learn the latest in conservation law and policy and apply that knowledge in careers at land management agencies and nonprofit conservation groups often with a focus on the protection of public lands. Lawyers in this field provide legal and political counsel on a broad range of land and water use issues—work that is critical to ensuring the protection of public lands now and into the future.

Colorado Law is one of only six public institutions in the U.S to host the Wyss Foundation Wyss Scholars Program.

The program has had a profound impact on scholarship recipients' lives since the first Wyss Scholar was selected in 2018. For these students, this funding has been instrumental in the path they have taken both during their final year of law school and in the two years following.

“Being selected as a Wyss Scholar was huge for a number of reasons,” explained **Eric Dude '19**. “Public interest and environmental law work is not very lucrative for law students, so the scholarship allowed me to search for more interesting internship opportunities while I was still in law school.”

The summer after being selected as a Wyss Scholar, Dude interned for the Access Fund, a national climbing advocacy organization, where his work centered around protection of national monuments and sustainable recreational access. Dude shared that without the financial support of the Wyss Scholars Program, he would not have been able to take advantage of such an opportunity.

The case was similar for Colorado Law's 2020-21 Wyss Scholar **Alex Hamilton '21**, who was able to work an unpaid externship during his 3L year for a Wyoming nonprofit focused on state and federal public lands policy.

“The stipend allowed me to work at Wyoming Outdoor Council and do more coursework instead of taking a paid job,” Hamilton explained. “I was able

to do something a little more in my wheelhouse, despite not being paid for it.”

After graduation, Dude and Hamilton accepted jobs in their desired fields. While the funding played a huge role in the direction of their early careers, Dude emphasized the overall value of being affiliated with the Wyss Scholars Program.

“Lots of people have resumes in law school that say they are interested in environmental law,” Dude shared. “But, to say ‘I’m part of the Wyss program’ is to say public lands is my focus, I know and understand public lands law, and I want to do something specifically in that area.”

Dude believes that he was able to get his dream job as an attorney-advisor at the U.S. Department of the Interior Solicitor’s Office because of his Wyss Scholarship.

“As far as setting up your career, the Wyss program is huge in ways I don’t think you appreciate when you first get named a Wyss Scholar,” Dude said. “There is a whole network of scholars, and to say that you have dedicated your life to public lands work helps people know you are serious about it and not just seeking a job.”

Dude has remained at the Solicitor’s Office since he was first hired after graduation. He currently works for the Solicitor’s Office Rocky Mountain Region in Denver, where he counsels the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service on various public lands issues.



Current Wyss Scholar Mariah Bowman '25

Counsel as an attorney-advisor. He shared that the scholarship provided a strong impetus to stay in public lands work, in part because the payment disburses over the first two years of the recipient’s practice.

“The longer you are in this field, the more expertise you get and the easier it is to stay,” Hamilton said. “I can’t really imagine leaving a career in federal lands management at this point. It is so interesting, so rewarding, and having the knowledge that I was going to have that support the first couple of years from the Wyss Scholarship program was great.”

The success of past Wyss Scholars not only demonstrates the prestige and impact of the

“I can’t really imagine leaving a career in federal lands management at this point. It is so interesting, so rewarding, and having the knowledge that I was going to have that support the first couple of years from the Wyss Scholarship program was great.”

Alex Hamilton '21

Hamilton also experienced the significant positive impact of the scholarship program upon graduation. He worked for the U.S. Forest Service through the Presidential Management Fellowship—the federal government’s premier leadership development program for advanced degree holders—as a forest planner for the Cibola National Forest in New Mexico.

“It was nice to have the Wyss Scholarship because I was hired at a much lower salary than if I had taken an attorney position,” Hamilton explained. “It filled that gap for me, which was critical.”

Hamilton eventually transitioned from his role at the U.S. Forest Service to working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Office of General

program itself, but also the depth and breadth of Colorado Law’s natural resources and environmental law program.

For more than half a century, environmental and natural resources law have been a key part of the Colorado Law curriculum. The program has ranked consistently among the very best in the nation, most recently being named a top 10 program in environmental law by *U.S. News and World Report*.

Both Dude and Hamilton shared that they were drawn to Colorado Law because of the strength of its environmental law program. The world-class faculty, engaging curriculum, and experiential learning opportunities provide students with the support and expertise they need to have successful

careers at law firms, corporations, nonprofit organizations, and governmental agencies.

"I was not someone who always thought law school was the path," Dude shared. "When I made that decision, I specifically wanted to make a career in public lands and researched schools that were strong in that area—and Colorado Law was at the top of the list."

Last spring, **Mariah Bowman '25** was named Colorado Law's 2024-25 Wyss Scholar. She is eager to combine her love for the land with her overwhelming certainty that climate action is the best thing we can do for it.

"I was thrilled to be selected for the Wyss Scholars Program this year," Bowman shared. "The program will help me pursue my interests at the intersection of public lands and climate policy. I am really looking forward to meeting other Wyss Scholars, past and present, and continuing to learn about public lands law and policy."

Last summer, she interned with the U.S. Department of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Division. She hopes to dedicate her career to conservation work and believes the Wyss Scholarship will be instrumental in this pursuit.

The Wyss Scholars Program continues to bolster Colorado Law as a top-ranked institution for environmental law. We are thrilled to see the success of our past Wyss Scholars and look forward to seeing what future scholarship recipients will accomplish as they embark on their careers.

Meet the Colorado Law Wyss Scholars

Eric Dude '19, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of the Interior

Leah Fugere '20, WilmerHale

Alex Hamilton '21, Office of the General Counsel, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Johnsie Wilkinson '22, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of Interior

Jacob Jose '23, Wildlife and Marine Resources Section, U.S. Department of Justice

Adam Fisher '24, Colorado Supreme Court, Chambers of Chief Justice Brian D. Boatright

Mariah Bowman '25, (current 3L student)



Amazing Adjuncts

Celebrating Colorado Law's dedicated adjunct faculty

Every year, around 45 adjunct faculty teach a wide range of upper-level courses. With a mix of theoretical and practice-minded perspectives, adjuncts are an essential part of the Colorado Law community. Below, meet a few adjuncts who are also Colorado Law alumni and read about what they enjoy most about training the next generation of lawyers.

ROGER FLYNN '91



Founding Director and Managing Attorney, *Western Mining Action Project*
Adjunct for 22 years
Courses taught: Mining and Mineral Development Law, Foundations of Natural Resources Law

JOSHUA WIDOFF '95



Partner and Co-General Counsel (Real Assets Group), *Ares Management Corporation*
Adjunct for 9 years
Courses taught: Real Estate Transactions

JONATHAN FERRO '04



Partner, *Semple, Farrington, & Everall, P.C.*
Adjunct for 7 years
Courses taught: Legal Ethics and Professionalism

AMY KRAMER '09



Shareholder, *Greenberg Traurig, LLP*
Adjunct for 3 years
Courses taught: Technical & Engineering Knowledge in Litigation (at Colorado Law) and Business Law (at the College of Engineering)

SHANDEA SERGENT '12



Training Director, *Colorado State Public Defender's Office*
Adjunct for 3 years
Courses taught: Trial Advocacy

LAUREL WITT '17



Assistant City Attorney, *City of Boulder*
Adjunct for 2 years
Courses taught: Local Government

The Colorado Law community is grateful for the generosity these talented lawyers have demonstrated by sharing their time, expertise, and experience. We look forward to sharing more about our incredible adjuncts in future issues of *Amicus!*

What do you enjoy most about being an adjunct at Colorado Law?

Jon Fero: I love sharing my passion for law and practice with new generations of lawyers. Most workdays, I interact with seasoned clients and other experienced practitioners. Concepts and rules we learned in law school have

the profession and permeate all aspects of practice.

Laurel Witt: The most enjoyable part of teaching for me is interacting with the students. Colorado Law students are exceptionally bright and deeply engaged with the material; their questions consistently demonstrate excellent critical thinking skills and a strong dedication to the practice of law. Teaching and learning from them makes every moment and effort invested in teaching profoundly worthwhile.

Shandea Sergent: When I was a law student, I loved trial advocacy, clinics, and mock trial. Now I can work with future litigators on their trial skills. Whether it's a shy, introverted law student looking to improve their confidence while public speaking or the speech and debate veteran who went to law school with the goal of being a trial attorney, I get to work with students who want to dive in to what it's like to actually practice law—not just talking about the hypothetical intent of the law.

Joshua Widoff: I love being in the classroom interacting with students and sharing with them what I've learned through my nearly 30-year career since graduating from Colorado Law. I also really enjoy helping students with questions about career paths and strategizing about how to achieve their long-term goals.

What is a favorite classroom memory during your time as an adjunct?

Roger Flynn: Each year, I start the coal mining section of my class with music to give the students an understanding of the history and culture of coal mining. I play a bunch

of classic coal mining songs such as "Dark as a Dungeon," "Sixteen Tons," Loretta Lynn's "Coal Miner's Daughter," and (my favorite) John Prine's "Paradise." Over the years, many students have said that it was one of their favorite classes in law school, including one student who was from coal mining country back East, and those songs brought back such wonderful memories and really made a connection to the history, culture, and legal issues they were learning. Another year, after I played Pete Seeger's "Which Side Are You On?" (the famous labor organizing song) and discussed the history of mining labor battles such as the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado, the student was inspired to work for the United Mine Workers Union. Making a positive contribution to a student's career path is very humbling.

Jon Fero: I use movie and TV show clips to highlight the personal and societal values underlying the rules as much as possible. Hollywood has often portrayed lawyers at ethical extremes. I have used the now-classic movie "The Verdict" (1982) as an example, with an in-class mock disciplinary hearing. It's always a blast to see the students' inner advocate come to life and watch them use ethics and professionalism values when arguing for or against the main character's disbarment.

Laurel Witt: Each year, during one of the class sessions, students conduct research on the current election cycle in Colorado and come together to discuss a chosen ballot question. They explore how the ballot question's implementation, if passed, would impact the government and citizens of the state. The discussions are engaging, and many students

THANK YOU To Our 2023-24 Adjuncts for Longstanding Service!*

10+ YEARS

Judge J. Eric Elliff '87

Roger Flynn '91

Patrick O'Rourke

5-9 YEARS

Jonathan Fero '04

Markus Funk

Judge Bruce Jones

Bruce Plotnik

Thomas R. Raynes

Joshua Widoff '95

** This list includes adjuncts who taught in the 2023-24 academic year only. We are grateful to the many others who didn't teach last year who have also been very generous with their time.*

become foundational and are rarely discussed. In the classroom, I get to guide a group of students who are at the beginning of their journey in law, as they explore the ethical and professionalism principles that underlie



Joshua Widoff '95 teaching Real Estate Transactions.

follow up to examine the real-world implementation of passed ballot items, allowing us to review the results and post-election implementation together. Last fall, we had a particularly lively debate on the effects of citizen initiatives on complex issues like homelessness. These enriching discussions and growth opportunities make my role as an adjunct incredibly rewarding.

Amy Kramer: The Technical & Engineering Knowledge in Litigation class is very unique because law students take the class with engineering graduate students. The class provides practical experience to law students who depose, take direct testimony from, and cross examine the engineering students who serve as expert witnesses. Watching the students gain confidence in their litigation skills (and some of the funny exchanges) is always a highlight.

What is the most rewarding aspect of being an adjunct at Colorado Law?

Joshua Widoff: I have the advantage of teaching a subject matter in which there is a lot of inherent interest. What is most rewarding is translating that interest into a deeper understanding of the business of real estate (why people invest in commercial real estate) and the important role lawyers can play in explaining complex issues in a way clients can understand, and which facilitates resolution through negotiation.

Shandea Sergent: Watching law students become full-fledged attorneys. My first trial advocacy class was in 2022. Some of those students are now public defenders and district attorneys across Colorado. They grow up so fast. *cue sentimental music*

Roger Flynn: I cherish the ability to give back to the community that set me on my path way back when. I owe a lot to Colorado Law and the mentoring I received there, especially from giants in the field such as Charles Wilkinson and David Getches. Being able to pay back some of that debt, by guiding today's students on their career journey, is truly gratifying. Some of my former students have become leaders in the field and litigation co-counsel (and good friends), which is especially rewarding.

How has your work as an adjunct impacted your own practice of law?

Jon Fero: Teaching regularly helps me feel like a younger lawyer again. Each student brings a diverse perspective and unique life experience, which collectively pushes me to reevaluate my views and understanding of the profession, along with the decisions I make every day in practice. Teaching ethics and professionalism also has helped me better appreciate why community trust in the legal system and lawyers is so low and understand how each of us can rebuild that.

Joshua Widoff: I feel like I learn something new every year I teach the course – either refreshing on topics or through the perspective that students bring to the classroom. Seeing issues through the eyes of my students helps to refine my own approach as I apply them to my practice as a general counsel.

Roger Flynn: It definitely has made me a more effective litigator and advocate. Much of our litigation involves making complex legal and historical issues understandable to federal judges who likely have never

before dealt with these mining, public lands, and environmental issues. That's also what I do for the students – boiling down complex issues so they can better grasp the materials. Questions and input from students over the years has also definitely helped me hone my arguments and anticipate questions from the judges.

Shandea Sergent: It's hard to find time to review the basics while carrying a public defender felony caseload. Teaching the basics of trial advocacy means I have to review the basic principles of practicing law – from jury selection to verdict and everything in between. You never stop learning. There's always something new and different that can help me become a better lawyer for my clients and a better professor for my students.

Amy Kramer: Teaching at Colorado Law 15 years after graduating provided an opportunity for me to reflect on my career. Mentors are critical, particularly in the legal profession, and I'm so appreciative of the opportunity to give back. I've kept in touch with many students after graduation, and it's rewarding to see them succeed.

Responses have been edited for length and clarity. Read the full Q&A at colorado.edu/law/amicus-fall-2024.

Interested in shaping the next generation of lawyers as a Colorado Law adjunct? Contact lawadjunctsupport@colorado.edu.



Honoring Excellence: Colorado Law's 43rd Annual Alumni Awards Banquet

A late spring storm couldn't stop several hundred alumni, students, faculty, and friends from celebrating their esteemed peers at the 43rd annual Alumni Awards Banquet on March 21, 2024. This memorable event highlighted the extraordinary achievements of six distinguished alumni who have significantly contributed to the legal profession and their communities. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the evening raised over \$140,000 for student scholarships, programs, and initiatives. **Thank you!**



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The 2024 Colorado Law Alumni Award honorees and Law Alumni Board members (clockwise from left):

Ashley K. Boothby '13 (Dean Edward C. King Making a Difference Award, posthumous), Law Alumni Board Immediate Past Chair **Caitlin McHugh '12**, Senior Director of Alumni Engagement and Donor Relations **Georgette Vigil**, **Zach Miller '80** (William Lee Knous Award), **Lucy Stark '98** (Distinguished Achievement – Private Practice), Law Alumni Board Chair **Tim Galluzzi '14**, Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss**, and **Kimberly Pryor '10** (Distinguished Achievement – Corporate Counsel).

Not pictured:

Kenneth Kupfner '98 (Distinguished Achievement – Public Service)
Patricia M. Corrales '89 (Sonny Flowers Award)

Save the Date! 44th Annual Alumni Awards Banquet: March 2025

Representation Matters

Alumni Spearhead Fund in Honor of Dean Inniss

Lisa Neal-Graves '06, a dedicated and engaged Colorado Law alumna, never envisioned herself as a fundraiser. However, after meeting Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss** during her interview with the Law Alumni Board and witnessing the transformative impact of her work, Neal-Graves discovered a newfound passion for supporting the school in a meaningful way.

“What I loved about Dean Inniss is her commitment to what she talked about during her interview, creating a focus on greater inclusivity in the technology law and policy area. As a technologist, she was speaking directly to my soul,” she said.

Since assuming her role as dean in July 2021, Inniss has hired more than 30 full-time faculty members and led numerous cross-disciplinary initiatives, including a recent conference on AI and the Constitution. As Colorado Law’s second female dean and first Black dean in its 130-year history, her appointment is historic. Inspired by this milestone, Neal-Graves felt compelled to help create a lasting legacy in honor of Inniss.

“It’s historic that Dean Inniss is here at CU Law. There should be something we do that is a legacy reminder of her work,” Neal-Graves explained.

She reached out to her classmates, **Rita Sanzgiri '06, PhD**, patent attorney and assistant general patent counsel at Eli Lilly and Co., and **Laurie Rust '06,**

shareholder at Littler Mendelson P.C., to discuss setting up a fund. The idea quickly gained traction, and soon, a coalition of female lawyers united to support Inniss’ vision and ensure her legacy endures.

The fund, dedicated to supporting faculty whose scholarship centers the legal history of Black entrepreneurship and technology in the American West, reflects Neal-Graves’ passion for the field. “It needs to be normalized that we look for talent regardless of how and where it’s embodied. Tech law is a very male-centric area. The more inclusivity we can have both in the law and in tech, the better we will be in terms of creating a world where all the right people are at the table to find solutions we wouldn’t have had otherwise,” she said.

To date, more than a dozen alumni have committed to supporting the fund, including Judge **Claudia Jordan '80**, Colorado’s first Black female judge, and **Velveta Golightly-Howell '81**, Colorado’s first Black female prosecutor.



“I’d love to see this fund associated with Dean Inniss’ name live on in the law school as a reminder of the great things that happen when you have inclusivity and leadership from all walks of life”

Lisa Neal-Graves '06

"I'd love to see this fund associated with Dean Inniss' name live on in the law school as a reminder of the great things that happen when you have inclusivity and leadership from all walks of life," Neal-Graves added.

Dr. Rita Sanzgiri, a longtime supporter of Colorado Law, was also inspired by Inniss' vision, background, and commitment to inclusivity in the legal profession and wanted to get involved.

"Dean Inniss has brought fresh ideas to the school. She has hired a diverse group of faculty with global, modern views on the law, covering areas like immigration law, the rights of noncitizens, American Indian law, race and law, law and gender, and, not to forget, patent law. She has a bold vision for the law school, which we support," Sanzgiri noted.

While Neal-Graves and Sanzgiri never sought to become fundraisers, they now embrace their roles with enthusiasm, driven by a mission they deeply believe in. "You can only fundraise effectively when you truly believe in the cause. This is something

special and unique that will benefit the school. Dean Inniss is a unique individual leading the school in a unique time in our history," Sanzgiri said.

Neal-Graves and Sanzgiri hope the fund has long-term, far-reaching impacts, enabling Colorado Law to attract even more talented faculty with diverse perspectives and expertise.

"When you're the first—or one of the only—you need a support network you can feel comfortable reaching out to. This fund will allow the dean to do something more substantive than what she could do without it," Neal-Graves concluded.

To learn more and contribute to this fund, please contact Jeremy Jones at jeremy.jones-1@colorado.edu or 303-735-8463.



From left: Colorado Law's Jeremy Jones, Laurie Rust '06, Dean Lolita Buckner Inniss, Lisa Neal-Graves '06, Rita Sanzgiri '06, and Hon. Claudia Jordan '80

The Path from Law Buff to CSU President: **Amy Parsons '99**

BY ANDREA SHIPTON '26

In February 2023, **Amy (Monger) Parsons '99** became the 16th president of Colorado State University (CSU). Her career began as a commercial litigation attorney for Brownstein Hyatt Farber (now Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck) before serving in senior executive leadership roles at CSU for 17 years. She served as associate legal counsel, deputy general counsel, vice president for university operations and vice chancellor for the CSU System before stepping into the role of president last year.

From a young age, two things were crystal clear for Parsons: she knew she wanted to live in Colorado, and she knew she wanted to be a lawyer. Parsons earned a Bachelor of Arts in political science from CSU before making the move to Boulder to earn her JD at Colorado Law.

"I just set my sights on staying close and going to CU," she said. Her deep love for Colorado and desire to practice law in the state meant CU was the perfect place to dive into her legal studies.

At Colorado Law, Parsons served as an associate editor on the *Colorado Law Review*, Vol. 70, and took courses in all

sorts of practice areas—from litigation and constitutional law to legislation and natural resource law. "I really enjoyed **Charles Wilkinson's** classes," she noted of the late distinguished natural resources law professor and partial namesake of the Getches-Wilkinson Center. "He was just so entertaining and enthusiastic and real fun to work with."

Parsons also found love at Colorado Law! She is married to fellow Law





Buff **Jeff Parsons '98**, whom she met while they were both law students. Building on his 25 years at the Western Mining Action Project, Jeff also recently started his own firm, Parsons Law Office, focusing on litigation, policy and business development. Parsons noted that her husband writes a lot of appellate briefs and is “really great at what he does.”

Parsons never imagined her career would lead her to the role of CSU president. “I always saw myself as being a litigation attorney,” she said. “I loved working for Brownstein.”

When CSU offered her a legal counsel position, she jumped at the opportunity to return to her alma mater while also balancing work and family life as a new mother. Parsons quickly found herself loving her new role, noting the diversity of interesting specialty areas and legal issues that arise at public universities—everything from human resources, athletics, legislation, research, compliance, First Amendment rights and other constitutional issues, and more.

“What I’ve learned over the years is that the higher education system is a fascinating place to work as an attorney,” she said. “No matter what type of law you’re interested in, you can find it in higher education.” Parsons combination of experiences in CSU leadership, along with her time as a CSU student and having two daughters attending CSU this fall, certainly grants Parsons one-of-a-kind insight into the institution.

Parsons loves working in higher education, noting the fast-paced, innovative environment full of young people bringing new ideas to campus every semester. She takes great joy in highlighting the school on social media, which she sees as “a tool we can use to shine a light on the amazing students and the faculty.”



Parsons also holds a huge passion for college athletics and the role they play in our country.

“Society tends to be very polarized politically and socially, but the fandom of collegiate sports is one of the best ways to bring people together by cutting across social divides and politics,” she explained. Especially amidst such a powerful era for women’s sports, Parsons noted, “If I, as a female president, can shine a light on what our women are accomplishing, it’s a privilege to be able to do that in my role.”

Throughout her years at CSU, Parsons has remained grateful for her time at Colorado Law. Along with meeting her husband, she found a great group of friends with whom she had “such a fun time when we weren’t studying and being law students.” She is grateful for the lasting bonds from Colorado Law that exist today in her personal and work life, noting that Colorado’s tight-knit legal community means she and her husband still work with several lawyers with whom they went to law school.

“Strong connections still exist today with people we met and knew in law school,” she said.

Q&A

What do you know now that you wish you had known in law school?

I wish I knew how incredibly versatile my law degree would be and all the career pathways that would open up in the future.

Who has been an important mentor to you throughout your career?

Stan Garnett '82, also a CU alum, was one of my first bosses at my first law firm, Brownstein, Hyatt & Farber. He not only trained me in litigation, but he modeled excellence, service, and integrity and continued to be a friend and mentor throughout my career.

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

I’m especially proud to be the president of Colorado State University this year as both of our daughters will be attending CSU—one freshman and one junior. I attended CSU for my undergraduate degree, so to be in this position now—with my own kids at CSU—is pretty amazing.

Top: Amy Parsons with her family at her investiture as CSU's 16th president.
Left: Amy Parsons and her brothers at her graduation from Colorado Law.

A Family Tradition: One Alum's Journey with Colorado Law and Beyond

BY ERIC NICHOLSON '26

Commercial litigation attorney **Andrew Garnett '12** has been surrounded by the legal world—and the University of Colorado Law School—his whole life. Garnett grew up in the Boulder community and was given a window into the legal world by his father, fellow Law Buff **Stan Garnett '82**, who often praised Colorado Law for its welcoming atmosphere and brilliant faculty. After watching his father use his law degree every day as a prosecutor and commercial litigator Garnett was inspired to pursue a legal career of his own. Garnett set his sights on a legal education that he hoped would eventually land him in the Denver District Attorney's Office.

As a student at Colorado Law, Garnett immersed himself in as much trial work as he could. He took classes in motions practice and trial advocacy to prepare for the work he hoped to conduct regularly after graduation. In addition to trial coursework, he also sought to experience the real thing while still a student. “You can't fake trial experience,” he said. “If you want to do trial work out of law school, you should take advantage of the Student Practice Act.” The Student Practice Act allowed Garnett to act as an attorney on real cases while still in law school, receiving guidance from licensed attorneys along the way. He spent every semester he could externing with the Denver District Attorney's Office and found the work he did there to be the most rewarding of his law school career.

After graduation, Garnett worked for the Denver District Attorney's Office full-time as a prosecutor and, using all he had learned from his time at Colorado Law, excelled. He described the skills he honed there as “irreplaceable” and a great help at transforming him into a strong litigator. As he made new friends and forged connections with talented attorneys, Garnett began to consider a shift toward civil litigation, rather than criminal.

“I find civil litigation to be very interesting. I find myself growing as an attorney with every new case, and I like having a career that constantly challenges me every day,” he said.

Garnett wanted to give back to the Colorado Law community for the skills and support the school had given him throughout his legal career. In summer 2012, Garnett and his friend and classmate, **Matt Henderson '12**, organized a golf tournament with some of the law school faculty to “act as a distraction from studying for the Bar.” The tournament was a hit, and Garnett was determined to make it a tradition rather than a one-off event. “The tournament was perfect for us to reconnect with alumni and create a community after we graduated,” he said.

Garnett became interested in using the tournament to raise money for Colorado Law, and in 2014 partnered with the Sarah L. Rector Memorial Scholarship Fund, so that funds raised

from the tournament would benefit law students. What began as an escape from studying blossomed into an opportunity to expand the law school network while supporting the community.

After spending several years working for other private firms, in 2023 Garnett embarked on a new venture: he co-founded Garnett Powell Maximon Barlow & Farbes, where he works with “great attorneys that are even better people.” Garnett reflected, “They all care about doing the right thing above all else.” While Garnett specializes in commercial litigation, the other attorneys at his firm operate in practice areas that complement each other, he explained.

One of those attorneys is his father, Stan, who continues to use his criminal law expertise to help others. “It was a dream of mine growing up to build a firm with my dad. Actually getting to do it has been very special,” he said.

Garnett works with large and small clients headquartered around the world, from Fortune 100 companies to mom-and-pop shops.



Despite his successes, Garnett never loses sight of the privileges he's been afforded: being able to work with clients and solve their problems. "It is a great honor to earn a client's trust," he said. "I am proud they trust our firm to solve their most complicated problems."

Garnett's humility can also be seen in his commitment to learning and improving his craft, using his own experience from prior cases or internalizing lessons from partners and associates at his firm.

"It's called the 'practice of law' because you're always improving," he said. Garnett believes that even if a case is completely new, an attorney who reflects on their past experiences will have the tools to make a strong argument and forge a path forward.

Q&A

Were there any professors who had a strong impact on you during law school, leading you to your current career path?

I really enjoyed taking motions practice with retired Colorado Supreme Court Justice **Nancy Rice** and Trial Advocacy with **Eric Eliff '87**, who is now a judge. And I took White Collar Criminal Law with **Cliff Strickland**. Justice Rice taught me how to ask questions of witnesses, to get answers that explained things in a way judges and juries could understand—arguably the most important skill I have for my trial practice.

What sort of advice would you give law students interested in pursuing a career in litigation?

First, try to observe as much in-court stuff as you can. You will learn so much from watching other people who have done these things over and over before. Second, get up in court as much as possible. Try to learn what your authentic in-court style is, and then apply that style as much as possible.

What's your favorite way to stay engaged with Colorado Law?

Organizing the Colorado Law Classic every year, reconnecting with old friends, meeting as many new friends as possible, and making as much money as we can to give back to the law school through scholarships. To date we have donated over \$160,000 to the law school through the event.

How did you come to meet your wife [Megan Garnett '14] through Colorado Law?

I met Megan through our mutual friend and my roommate **Nate Jewell '12**. Megan was a 1L and I was a 3L. She knew Nate from mutual friends in undergrad and Nate and I went to high school together. My first memory of meeting Megan was at the beginning of the school year softball tournament at Stazio Fields. I doubt she remembers me from that day, but we met a few weeks later on a Saturday during the Boulder City Amateur Golf Tournament where I beat Matt Henderson by 6 strokes!

Left: Garnett (second from right) at the 2016 Colorado Law Classic with (from left) Matt Henderson, retired Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Nancy Rice, and Megan Garnett. **Center:** Andrew (right) and his father, Stan Garnett. **Right:** Garnett with his family.





LETTER FROM THE

Law Alumni Board Chair Tim Galluzzi '14

Dear Colorado Law alumni,

The communities we belong to are a defining feature of our lives. When we graduated from Colorado Law, we joined a community that has enormous meaning for all of us. Even if you're not a particularly active alumnus, earning your Colorado Law degree was an important experience in your life that binds you to a community you can be proud of.

As Colorado Law alumni, we share not only a connection among ourselves, but a connection to all Colorado alums who have gone before us. Consider some of these notable alums: Justice **Wiley Rutledge (1922)** of the U.S. Supreme Court; Judges **Alfred Arraj (1928)** and **Fred Winner (1936)** of the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado; Justices **Alex Martinez '76** and **Luis Rovira '50** of the Colorado Supreme Court; Governors **Ralph Carr (1912)**, **William Lee Knous (1911)**, and **Roy Romer '52**; and **Brooke Wunnicke '45**, celebrated trial lawyer, educator, and mentor. They helped clients and citizens, participated in the legal and political causes of their time, and in their capacity as lawyers tried to advance justice as they understood it.

In our time as the active cohort of Colorado Law alumni, we've taken up that mantle. We should be proud of the efforts of our alma mater and alumni to improve our communities and citizens' access to justice. In our cover story, we learn about the Natives Vote Initiative and Clinical Professor **Christina Stanton's '15** work to address the unique challenges faced by Native communities in exercising their right to vote.

Professor **Deborah Cantrell** and the Community Collaboration Law Lab are helping sustainable development reflect commitments to social justice and to reducing poverty. Alum **Chris Reynolds '10**, in his role as Boulder's chief deputy city attorney, helped establish Boulder's Community Court, which uses an individual and trauma-informed approach to address underlying causes of homelessness instead of cycling people in between the streets and jail. And those are only three examples of the things our students, faculty, and alumni are doing to help advance justice and equity in society.

I encourage all of us to stay involved with the alumni community—it's a useful and important investment of our time and resources. If it's been a while since you participated, consider taking a step towards reengagement. There are lectures and events at the law school, opportunities to speak with and mentor students, happy hours to connect with alums who share your practice area, and ways you can help financially. If you're not able to spare your time, consider donating to the Dean's Fund, scholarships, and/or clinics. A couple of years ago, my law partner and I worked with the school to start a scholarship awarded to an outstanding mock trial student because mock trial was a law school experience that shaped our careers as lawyers, and it was important to us to help students interested in doing trial work. You might consider whether there's a similar experience you had in law school and cater your involvement to those things that have made a difference in your life.

And, of course, there are always Homecoming and Reunion events. Homecoming this year was held September 20-21, and we held class reunions for folks who graduated in years ending in 4 or 9. It was a terrific weekend! If you couldn't make it, stay tuned for Homecoming announcements in 2025. It's an exciting time to be a Law Buff, and I hope to see you at an upcoming event!

Sincerely,

Tim Galluzzi

Law Alumni Board

The members of the Law Alumni Board act as representatives of Colorado Law alumni and promote the best interests of the law school by stimulating interest in, building loyalty for, and increasing support for the law school in the community and among its alumni and students. **The 2023–24 board chair is Tim Galluzzi, and the chair-elect is Sonny Cave.**

Desta Asfaw '11, Holland & Hart LLP

Christopher Brock '14, Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition

Kristin Bronson '97, Colorado Lawyers Committee

Michael Carrigan '94, Holland & Hart LLP

Sonny Cave '85 (Chair-Elect), Retired

Marco Chayet '97, Chayet & Danzo, LLC

Margaret Cordova '02, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of General Counsel

Amy DeVan '01, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit

Mechelle Faulk '02, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Alinka Flaminia '90, Retired

Hon. Thomas R. French '77, retired, Judicial Arbiter Group

Tim Galluzzi '14 (Chair), Cheney Galluzzi & Howard, LLC

Stanley Garnett '82, Garnett Powell Maximon Barlow

Velveta Golightly-Howell '81, Sister-to-Sister: International Network of Professional African American Women

D. Jeffery Grimes '89, Astex Pharmaceuticals

Greg Hearing '12, Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP

Linda S. Kato '85, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8

Aditi Kulkarni-Knight '15, Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP

Caitlin McHugh '12 (Immediate Past Chair),
Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie LLP

Kevin Miller '20, Scott Law

Hon. Kristen Mix '85, Judicial Arbiter Group

Kristin Moseley '97, Somach, Simmons & Dunn

Kathleen B. Nalty '85, Kathleen Nalty Consulting

Dru Nielsen '97, Nielsen Weisz

Heather Carson Perkins '98, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Beale Tejada '12, Recht Kornfeld, P.C.

Keith Tooley '86, Welborn Sullivan Meck & Tooley, P.C.

Hon. Sarah Wallace '99, Colorado's 2nd Judicial District Court

CLASS ACTIONS



Hon. Morris Hoffman '77

1974

After 40 years working in private practice, **Randall Nelson '74** retired with his wife, Chris, to Underwood, Washington.

1977

Judge **Morris Hoffman '77** published his novel *Pinch Hitting*. Set in the period after World War II, the book is about a baseball phenom and explores themes of friendship, love, and loyalty. Hoffman served as a judge in the Denver District Court for 30 years. He previously taught Jury Selection and History and Law and the Biology of Human Nature as an adjunct at Colorado Law. A well-known scholar and respected legal practitioner, Hoffman received the Colorado Law Alumni Award for Distinguished Achievement in Judicial Practice in 2004.



Mark Boos '92

1982

Judge **Randall Arp '82** joined the distinguished arbiters at Judicial Arbitrator Group. Arp was a district court judge in the First Judicial District from 2006 until 2023, where he handled a mixed docket, and then became a presiding domestic court judge for Jefferson County.



Dru Nielsen '97

1992

Mark Boos '92 joined Dinsmore and Shohl LLP as a partner. Boos works in commercial real estate and mergers and acquisitions.



Peter J. Morgan '98

Gregory J. Ramos '92 was named managing attorney of Armstrong Teasdale's Denver office. Ramos was also recently elected to serve a two-year term on the firm's Executive Committee.

1997

In November 2023, **Dru Nielsen '97** launched her two-attorney firm, Nielson Weisz, LLC. The firm provides the highest level of criminal defense representation throughout Colorado and in federal courts.

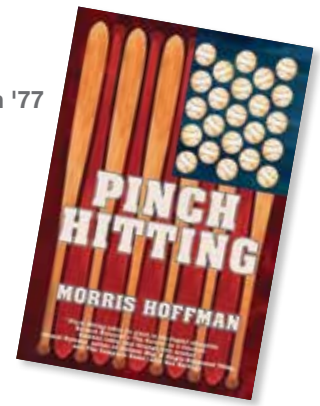
1998

Peter J. Morgan '98 joined Otteson Shapiro as a partner. Morgan represents policyholders in insurance coverage disputes and bad faith litigation.



Tracy Y. Williams '02

Hon. Morris Hoffman '77 published his novel *Pinch Hitting*.



2001

Matt Hobbs '01 joined Cain & Skarnulis PLLC as a partner. Hobbs' work focuses on real estate, transactional work, civil litigation, business law matters, and providing estate planning and probate services.

2002

Hilary Graham '02 was promoted to director at Hoffman Parker Wilson & Carberry P.C. on January 1. Graham specializes in representing municipalities, special districts, urban renewal authorities, and downtown development authorities and advising them on various general counsel matters.

Tracy Y. Williams '02 joined Clark Hill's Environmental and Natural Resources practice. Williams advises clients on compliance and issues related to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund) and state equivalents.

2003

Michael Roseberry '03 joined Lyons Gaddis as an attorney in the Government Practice Group. Roseberry supports the firm's school and special districts clients, as well as other local government entities.

2004

The Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative Collegiate Program at the University of Colorado Denver Business School awarded **Meshach Rhoades '04** the 2024 Bill Daniels Ethical Leader of the Year. Rhoades is managing partner at Crowell & Moring LLP and co-founder of the Latinas First Foundation. The award recognizes leaders whose work and accomplishments mirror cable television pioneer Bill Daniels' strong commitment to ethics.

2008

In October 2023, **Michael Lazar '08** joined Robinson, Waters, and O'Dorisio as a shareholder. Lazar works in commercial litigation

Grant Sullivan '08 was appointed to the Colorado Court of Appeals by Gov. Jared Polis on November 9, 2023. Sullivan previously served as an assistant solicitor general with the Colorado Attorney General's Office for more than 12 years.



Shannon Fritts-Penniman '10

2009

Kyaw Tin '09 worked with Burmese American communities, activists, and stakeholders to marshal support for the establishment of the first-ever bipartisan congressional Burma Caucus in February 2024. Important contributions were also made by Ryan Shuman, Congressman **Joe Neguse '09**, **Amy Kramer '09**, and **Mike Fredregill '09**.

2010

In July 2023, **Shannon Fritts-Penniman '10** started a new role with the 32BJ Legal Services Fund as immigration attorney. The Legal Fund provides free or low-cost services to union members who are part of the SEIU local 32BJ. Fritts-Penniman previously served as an immigration attorney at the Emerald Isle Immigration Center in Queens, New York, where he supervised a citizenship education and application assistance program funded by the Department of Homeland Security.



Megan Nishikawa '10

In September 2023, **Megan Nishikawa '10** stepped into a new role as managing partner of Hogan Lovells in its new San Francisco office. Nishikawa is an energy, environmental, and life sciences litigator.



Beth Ann Lennon '12

Norma Plache '10 joined Hutchinson Black & Cook LLC. Plache works in Estate Planning, Marital and Premarital Agreements, Philanthropic Planning, Trust Administration, Probate and Estate Administration, and Business Formation.

2011

Anna-Liisa Mullis '11 joined Greenberg Traurig as a shareholder. Mullis works in the Health Care & FDA Practice in Denver.



Shandea Sergent '12

2012

John D. Buchanan '12 joined Hayes Poznanovic Korver LLC. Buchanan's law practice will emphasize water rights and related land use, real estate, and environmental law.

Beth Ann Lennon '12 joined Venable LLP, where she will continue assisting employers with their labor and employment law needs while helping Venable establish its Colorado office.



Courtney Shephard '14

Lindsay Murl '12 joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as an attorney-adviser. Her work focuses on environmental law, and includes tribal and administrative issues in the Pacific Northwest. Prior to joining EPA, Murl served as the lead regulator for Rocky Flats, a former nuclear weapons complex facility in Colorado. She worked for the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. She has also previously worked as an environmental consultant for Worley.



Nicholas Clabbers '15

Shandea Sergent '12 was promoted to training director at the Colorado State Public Defender's Office. Sergent has tried more than 85 cases ranging from DUI to first-degree murder. She currently assists with interns, mentors attorneys who are new to district court, and carries a felony caseload.

2013

Matthew Skeen '13 was hired as managing attorney of the Colorado Bar Association Federal Pro Se Clinic. The clinic offers limited scope legal counsel and advice to unrepresented individuals with cases in the U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado.

2014

In October 2023, **David Meschke '14**, a shareholder in Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck LLP's Litigation Department, was appointed to the executive committee of the Colorado Lawyers Committee (CLC). Meschke, who has served on the board of directors of the CLC for four years, also co-chairs the committee's Education Task Force.

Courtney Shephard '14 became a shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP. A member of the Natural Resources Department, Shephard counsels energy, mining, and recreation companies on compliance with federal environmental laws and regulations.

2015

Nicholas Clabbers '15 joined Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell LLP on January 1, 2024. His practice is focused on the representation of owners and operators of airports across the US in a wide variety of legal matters.

Kathleen Snow Sutton '15 was elected to shareholder at Polsinelli. Snow Sutton focuses their practice on health care, reimbursement, telehealth; and licensure, enrollment, and certification.

2016

Erika Brotzman '16 joined The Harris Law Firm, P.C. as associate attorney.

Reid Galbraith '16 became a shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP. Galbraith is a member of the firm's Real Estate Department, and represents clients in connection with acquisition, disposition, finance, management, franchising and development

Chris Laughlin '16 was promoted to deputy division chief in the Competition Policy Division of the Wireline Competition Bureau at the Federal Communications Commission. In this role, Laughlin will supervise attorneys in developing regulations that promote competition among communications service providers and enhance the quality and choice of those services for consumers.

2017

Michael Zehner '17 joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP as shareholder in the firm's Denver office. Zehner is a member of the firm's construction practice.

2018

Isuri Lawson '18 joined Collins Cole Flynn Winn Ulmer's special district, municipal, and local government practice.

2020

After working as an associate at Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP, **Nate Bartell '20** accepted a position with Lumen Technologies as associate general counsel. In this role, Bartell focuses on corporate transactions and other mergers and acquisitions-related matters.

Bobby Dishell '20 joined Cloudbreak Energy Partners, LLC as general counsel in November 2023.

Aretha Frazier '20 joined The Harris Law Firm, P.C. as an associate attorney.

Adrian Untermeyer '20 was elected as a trustee of the Historical Society of the New York Courts. Untermeyer currently hosts the society's podcast series entitled "Wrecking Ball," and looks forward to continuing to build on his contributions as a trustee.

2021

Matthew Stewart '21 joined Wood, Smith, Henning and Berman as an associate in the firm's Denver office in September 2023. Stewart handles complex civil litigation throughout the state of Colorado.



Reid Galbraith '16



Isuri Lawson '18



Nate Bartell '20



Aretha Frazier '20

The Class of 2013 celebrated its 10th reunion in fall 2023.



Catch Up on Class Actions Year-Round!

Visit our new digital Class Actions library at colorado.edu/law/classnotes to see what your classmates are up to and submit your updates any time of the year.

Please send your submissions via the link above or to lawalumni@colorado.edu by June 30, 2025, for possible inclusion in the next issue of *Amicus*. If your contact information or communication preferences have changed, update them at: colorado.edu/law/reconnect.

In Memoriam

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Robert Anderson '48 | James Stitt '59 | Stanley Mann '67 | Marshall Brodsky '78 |
| John Drendel '49 | James Fattor '60 | Arthur Weed '67 | Danny Burton '78 |
| George Schneider '51 | Robert Sonheim '60 | Frank Buhler III '68 | David Goens '79 |
| Laurence DeMuth Jr. '53 | Bob Turner '60 | Hon. Larry Hicks '68 | Robert Eaton '85 |
| Kenneth Sutterlin '55 | Marriner Cardon '62 | Robert Marshall Jr. '68 | Dan Daly '92 |
| Wayne Fowler '56 | John Overholser '62 | Leonard McKinster '68 | William Hugenberg Jr. '93 |
| Merrill Talpers '56 | Thomas Brightwell '63 | Gary Silverman '70 | John Halepaska '97 |
| Ronald Brodsky '57 | Lawrence Landwehr '64 | Scott Balcomb '72 | Patrick Bible '99 |
| Marvin Woolf '57 | John Hamil '66 | John Banman '72 | David Hill, former faculty |
| James Johnson '59 | Richard Holme '66 | Jill Sisson '74 | Bob Knous |
| Greg Martin '59 | Hon. James Erickson '67 | Hon. Gilbert Martinez '77 | Betsy Levin, <i>former dean</i> |

Deaths reported July 1, 2023-July 1, 2024

In Memoriam: **Former Dean Betsy Levin**



Betsy Levin, a trailblazer and cherished member of the Colorado Law community, died July 4, 2024, at age 88.

Levin made history as the first woman to serve as dean at Colorado Law, a position she held with distinction from 1981 to 1987. Her tenure was marked by her intellectual rigor and heartfelt commitment to fostering an inclusive and dynamic learning environment.

Born and raised in Baltimore, Levin's early years were characterized by a strong passion for learning. After graduating with honors in geology from Bryn Mawr College in 1956, she worked at the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington. Driven by a commitment to furthering civil rights, she pursued a law degree, first at George Washington University and then Yale University, where she earned her LLB in 1966.

Levin had an illustrious career spanning over three decades as a legal expert and law professor. She clerked for Judge Simon Sobeloff on the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals and served as a White House Fellow. While working at the Urban Institute as director of education studies, she became a

tenured professor at Duke University School of Law, where she taught constitution law and urban problems. During the Carter administration, Levin served as general counsel at the U.S. Department of Education, further solidifying her commitment to public service.

Her impact extended well beyond her administrative roles. Her greatest joy was found in teaching and mentoring students, shaping the next generation of legal minds with her wisdom and empathy. Her students and colleagues remember her not only for her brilliant legal mind but also for her genuine kindness and belief in the transformative power of education. She leaves behind a legacy of dedication and a deep commitment to justice and education.

Heritage Center,
University of Colorado Boulder



In Memoriam: **David Hill**



Colorado Law mourns the death of **David Hill**, professor of law emeritus, who died on June 30, 2024, in Lincoln, Nebraska, at the age of 84.

Hill graduated from the University of Nebraska College of Law in 1970 and went on to private practice in Minneapolis from 1970-1974. He began his teaching career as a professor of law at Gonzaga University College of Law and, later, Boston College Law

School. Hill began teaching at the University of Colorado Law School in 1977 as the first professor of color in the school's 132-year history. He retired as Professor of Law Emeritus in 2007. Throughout his career, Hill was actively involved with the Council on Legal Educational Opportunity, the Law School Admissions Counsel, the Sam Cary Bar Association, and the Boulder Housing Authority.

Prior to joining the Colorado Law faculty in 1977, Hill was in private practice and served as chief of operations of the

Minneapolis Housing and Urban Renewal Authority. These experiences led him to focus, as a scholar and professor, in the areas of property and corporate law. He published five editions of *Landlord and Tenant Law in a Nutshell* and two editions of a casebook entitled *Cases and Materials on Basic Mortgage Law*. He was instrumental in carrying out the first, and only, national longitudinal bar passage study, which examined student attitudes and performance, and bar passage for more than 23,000 students who entered law school in the fall of 1991. Hill also played a major role in the development of a Model Academic Assistance Program used in many law schools.

"David was a devoted teacher with an unwavering commitment to academic standards in the classroom, and he played a crucial role in advancing the principles of fairness and equity in the hiring of faculty and staff and the recruitment of students. He was also a very dear friend who will be sorely missed," said Professor **Ahmed White**.

Chris Laughlin '16



Hometown: Denver, Colorado

Professional title: Deputy Division Chief, Competition Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau, Federal Communications Commission

Community involvement: Co-Chair, Diversity Pipeline Program Committee, Federal Communications Bar Association

Lives in: Silver Spring, Maryland

What is your favorite aspect of your job at the FCC?

I love many aspects of my job, including the smart, fun, and kind people I work with, the nature of the work, and the work-life balance. But my favorite part is my role crafting regulations concerning policy issues that have a broad impact on the public. Since joining the FCC, I've had the opportunity to work on proceedings that advance Internet neutrality, provide phone service protections for domestic violence survivors, deter fraudulent account takeovers for cell phone customers, and promote competition among communications service providers. My work is framed by the authority granted to the FCC by Congress, the policy goals of the agency's leadership, and the input we receive from stakeholders and the public, but I have a direct role in developing agency policies, and I get to see my contributions in decisions adopted by the Commission and codified in the Code of Federal Regulations.



You serve on the Federal Communications Bar Association's Diversity Pipeline Program Committee. Why is this work important to you?

The technology, media, and telecommunications (TMT) industries permeate every aspect of

our lives, from education, employment, and healthcare, to commerce, entertainment, and civic engagement. As such, the legal and policy issues that arise in the TMT sectors—including algorithmic bias, disinformation, content moderation and free expression, Internet access and affordability, online privacy, and artificial intelligence—broadly affect society. To ensure that legal and policy outcomes reflect the diverse viewpoints and experiences of our populace, I think it's important that the practitioners who work in the TMT space represent that diversity. This particularly resonates for me when I consider how these issues affect those on the Puerto Rican side of my family.

But as with many areas of the law, diverse individuals are underrepresented in the TMT legal field. The Diversity Pipeline Program was created to address that shortcoming, and it does so by fostering an interest in TMT law and policy and breaking down barriers that may deter diverse law students from pursuing careers in that space. In particular, it provides a foundational education on key TMT law and policy issues, arranges summer internship

opportunities with leading organizations and law firms working on those issues, and offers ongoing support through a mentorship program. I'm proud to be a part of that effort.

When I am not working, you can find me . . .

Going to concerts, meeting up with friends at D.C.-area restaurants, traveling with my partner, pursuing my music hobby, and enjoying the various other activities the region has to offer.



What advice would you give to current law students and recent graduates?

Take chances in your legal career. There are many paths to happiness and success that don't require landing the most sought-after jobs right out of law school. Sometimes your circumstances, whether finances, family, health, age, or academics, may make you feel like there's only one practical and responsible choice. And sometimes you'll take a risk but struggle and wonder if the decision you made will pay off. But when faced with a choice between an opportunity you're passionate about (that has an uncertain future) and an opportunity that will give you a predictable, stable future (that you're less passionate about), if your circumstances permit it, take the one that you're passionate about and trust that your passion will create a path to future opportunities that will give you the kind of career you want.

What is your favorite way to stay engaged with Colorado Law?

The foundation for my legal career was established through my involvement with Silicon Flatirons and the wide-ranging opportunities it provided me as a law student, including the Tech Law & Policy Clinic, the Colorado Technology Law Journal, courses, internships, conferences, and occasions to interact with practitioners and leaders in the TMT space. I continue to be engaged with Silicon Flatirons by attending conferences and D.C.-based events, mentoring students who are involved with the center, and contributing to other initiatives and activities. I enjoy being a part of and giving back to the Silicon Flatirons community.



Would you like to be featured as the Last Word?
Email: law-communications@colorado.edu.

SCHOLARSHIPS EMPOWER THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

"It is because of your kindness that I am able to study law and become a member of the Colorado legal community. Colorado Law alumni's commitment to serving students is something I admire and aspire to emulate. Thanks to your generosity, I will be the first in my family to study law in a rigorous and well-respected program. Thank you for supporting students like me!"

Allie Bachman '25

Recipient, Law Alumni Scholarship
President, Asian Pacific American Law Student Association
Co-executive, Women of Color Collective
Faculty liaison, Council for Racial Justice and Equity

GIVE NOW



Gift questions? Please contact Jeremy Jones at 303-735-8463 or jeremy.jones-1@colorado.edu. For legacy gift questions please contact Robert Garelick at 303-735-5845 or robert.garelick@colorado.edu.



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