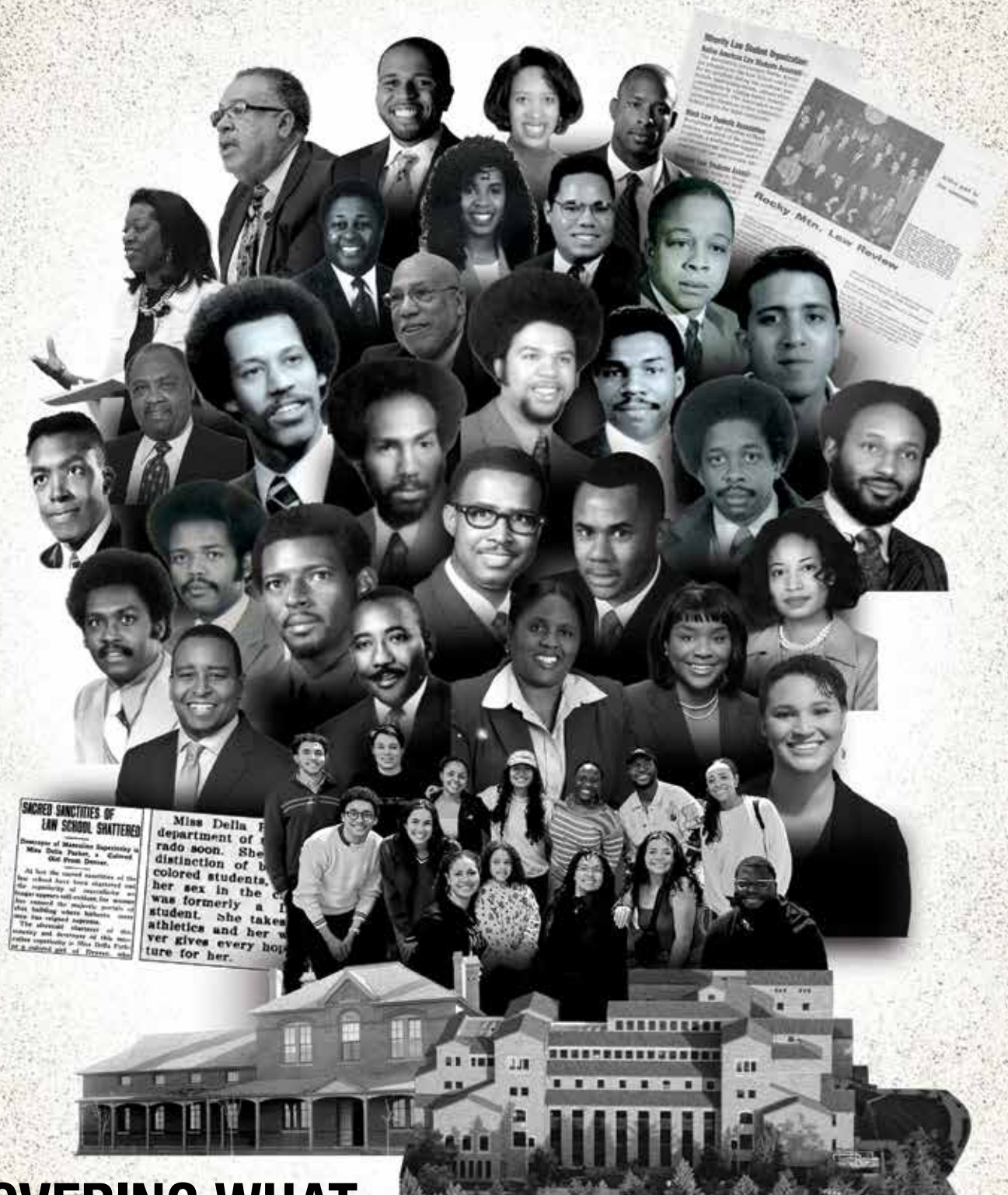


FALL 2025

AMICUS

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO LAW SCHOOL



**UNCOVERING WHAT
WAS ALWAYS THERE**

An exploration of Black history at Colorado Law



Colorado Law

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

AMICUS

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ON THE COVER

Esteemed Black Colorado Law alumni and faculty.

Top row, left to right: Hon. Gary Jackson '70,
Jonathan Geneus '17, Janea Scott '00,
Tyrone Glover '09

Row 2: Dayna Bowen Matthew, David Hill, Yvette
Lewis-Molock '97, Vance Knapp '94, Clarence Blair '56

Row 3: Hon. Larry Naves '74, Charles Casteel '75, W.
Harold "Sonny" Flowers '71, Hon. Gary Jackson '70,
William Robbins '87, Henry Cooper '87

Row 4: Patrick Butler '61, W. Harold "Sonny" Flowers
'71, James Cotton '70, Ryan Haygood '01, Wallace
Worham '74, Clayton Adams '71

Row 5: Hon. Larry Naves '74, Robert Patterson '74,
Alfred Tate '71, Penfield Wallace Tate II '68, Jackline
Nyaga '12, Hon. Nikea Bland '05, Lisa Calderón '01

Bottom row: Hon. Joe Neguse '09, members of the
Black Law Students Association, Ariel Amaru '20.

New contemplative space honors former dean / In August, Colorado Law unveiled its new east-side garden space. Generously funded by the late Betsy Levin, first female dean of the law school, this contemplative garden space was envisioned by Betsy as a way to support law students working on ways to solve environmental problems and inequities. Pictured at podium: Betsy's sister Sally Levin speaking at the garden dedication on August 21.







Dear Colorado Law community,

In this issue, the feature essay, “Uncovering What Was Always There: Black History at Colorado Law,” calls us to a reckoning of some of the Black students, faculty, and staff who have attended, taught, or worked at Colorado Law. Exploring these histories is not, however, merely an exercise in nostalgia or archival retrieval. Such projects expose long-overlooked truths—stories frequently buried in institutional memory, not because they lacked importance, but because they lacked interest to the wider society. These are not ancillary tales. They are foundational narratives, hiding in the shadows that have long covered them.

We cannot credibly chart a path toward justice without first acknowledging the distortions and omissions that shape our understanding of merit, belonging, and excellence. This is especially true when we consider the history of Black people in institutions of higher learning more generally. As I argued in *The Princeton Fugitive Slave* (Fordham University Press, 2020), the narratives we omit are often those most capable of reorienting our moral and intellectual compass. They reveal not only who was kept at the threshold, but how that exclusion structured the very criteria by which we have long measured worth and success.

The essay casts new light on the enduring contributions of Black students and faculty at Colorado Law—from highlighting the perseverance of early student pioneers like **Franklin Henry Bryant (1907)**, the law school’s first known Black graduate, to exploring the brilliance of more contemporary graduates like **Penfield Wallace Tate II '68**, the first and only Black mayor of Boulder, and the Hon. **Gary Jackson '70**, a retired Denver County Court Judge who continues to play a vital role in the life of Colorado Law. Similarly, professors like **David Hill**, who became the first permanent Black faculty member in 1977, and **Dayna Bowen Matthew**, who became the first permanent Black woman law professor at

Colorado Law in 2003, and who continues to shape legal education as the dean of George Washington University Law School, have expanded our vision of law schools. **The stories of our Black students and faculty—occasionally celebrated, frequently overlooked—invite us to ask: if these walls could speak plainly, what would they tell us of excellence, aspiration, resistance, and belonging?** These inquiries are central to Colorado Law’s intellectual and ethical project.

Yet our task is not merely to tell stories of the past. We are, each of us, co-authors of what comes next. Members of the Colorado Law community—our alumni—are stewards of the law school’s legacy. Collectively we possess the power to shape future chapters via ongoing engagement with students, generous support of scholarships, clinics, and other initiatives that advance equity and justice. Such philanthropy transcends transaction. It is an investment in a future of sustained excellence that is also more inclusive and more courageous.

Members of the Colorado Law community also wield power through the questions we ask, and the challenges we embrace. **Whether grappling with the moral implications of artificial intelligence, or confronting the global terrain of human rights, Colorado Law’s faculty and students deploy legal thought not as a shield of privilege, but as a conduit for transformation.** Most enduringly, we shape our future through the values we enact—daily, deliberately, and with care. Justice is not merely a subject to be taught; it is a mode of living. It is found in whose voices we elevate, whose stories we remember and share, and whose humanity we center. In this way, we become both archaeologist and architect: uncovering what was always there and daring to build what has not yet been.

Lolita Buckner Inniss
Dean and Provost’s Professor of Law

FALL 2025

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CONNECT WITH US



Welcome to the **Class of 2028!**



Colorado Supreme Court Justice **Brian Boatright**

Colorado Law recently welcomed its newest JD, MSL, and LLM students with orientation designed to ease their transition into law school and help them build connections with one another.

Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss** and Colorado Supreme Court Justice **Brian Boatright** delivered welcome remarks to the incoming class, setting the tone for the days ahead.

Over four days, students were introduced to the many resources available to support their success—including financial aid, the law library, and student affairs programming—and participated in a mock class led by Professor **Andrew Schwartz**.

3,495

APPLICANTS

57%

WOMEN

3.81

CUMULATIVE GPA
(MEDIAN)

164

LSAT SCORE
(MEDIAN)

25

AVERAGE AGE

199

ENROLLED FIRST-YEAR
STUDENTS

115

UNDERGRADUATE
SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

28%

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

39

STATES

32

INCOMING LLM AND MASTER
OF STUDIES IN LAW STUDENTS

Information current as of August 26, 2025

Korey Wise Innocence Project Welcomes James "Cass" Garner Home

In April, the District Court vacated the conviction of Korey Wise Innocence Project client James "Cass" Garner and ordered his immediate release. Remarkably, the same judge who presided over Garner's original trial issued the order.

After 15 long years, Garner is now free—released from Sterling Correctional Facility. He is no longer imprisoned for a crime he did not commit.

Garner was wrongfully convicted in connection with a 2009 nonfatal shooting at a local bar—the same night he was there celebrating his birthday. He has always maintained his innocence. This life-changing outcome was made possible through the work of KWIP attorneys **Kathleen Lord** and

Jeanne Segil with the assistance of Colorado Law students and alumni, including **Ileana Jiménez '21**, **Chrysten Pacheco '27**, and **Jefferson Caldwell '27**. Their case focused on discrediting the unreliable eyewitness identifications that had played a central role in Garner's conviction.

In the initial months after the shooting, none of the three victims (all brothers) identified Garner in photo lineups. But nearly three years later at trial, all three pointed to him in court—a setting that was highly suggestive, especially with Garner being the only man

seated at the defense table alongside two female attorneys. To strengthen their case, Lord and Segil brought in nationally recognized experts on human memory and eyewitness identification, both of whom concluded that the trial identifications were unreliable.

"This is why we do this work," Segil said. "Today validates that what we do makes a difference for people."



James "Cass" Garner, Garner with his KWIP attorney Kathleen Lord, Garner (left) hugging his dad, Walter, the day of his release.



35+ Years of On-the-Ground Learning/ Last spring, the Advanced Field Seminar on the Colorado Plateau introduced students to the unique natural and cultural resources of the American southwest. After 10 weeks of intensive classroom study on the laws and policies that have shaped this fragile landscape, the students experienced the region firsthand during a 9-day road trip. They learned from Tribal leaders, federal land managers, nonprofit leaders, and the land itself. Pictured are students and instructors **Mark Squillace** and **Chris Winter** at Newspaper Rock in Bears Ears National Monument.

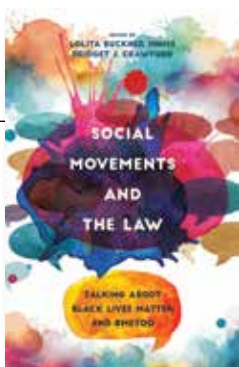


Decades of Dedication: Celebrating the Retirement of Four Colorado Law Icons



Left to right: Chris Mueller, Dean Lolita Buckner Inniss, Pierre Schlag, Ann England, Mark Loewenstein.

On April 25, the Colorado Law community came together to celebrate the careers of four esteemed faculty who retired at the end of the spring semester: Professors **Ann England, Mark Loewenstein, Chris Mueller,** and **Pierre Schlag.** These faculty each leave an enduring legacy, having mentored and trained generations of lawyers. We wish them all the best in the chapters to come.



Dean Lolita Buckner Inniss
(co-authored with
Bridget J. Crawford)

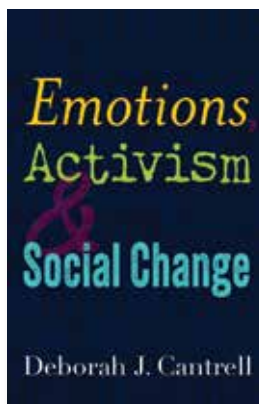
Social Movements and the Law: Talking About Black Lives Matter and #MeToo

Black Lives Matter and #MeToo are two of the most prominent twenty-first-century social movements in the United States. On the ground and on social media, more people have taken an active stance in support of either or both movements than almost any others in the country's history. *Social Movements and the Law* brings together the voices of 12 scholars and public intellectuals to explore how Black Lives Matter and #MeToo unfolded—separately and together—and how they enrich, inform, and complicate each other.

Deborah Cantrell

Emotions, Activism, and Social Change

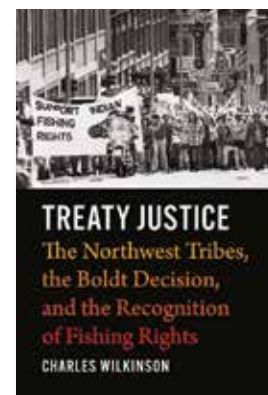
Emotions, Activism, and Social Change explores the role of anger in social activism, drawing from sociology, psychology, philosophy, and law. The book contrasts activists' view of anger as a signal of commitment and justice with critics who see it as irrational and dangerous. The book suggests that perceptions of anger reflect societal power dynamics and rules on emotional labor, particularly around race and gender. It proposes shifting focus from individual emotions to relational contexts, offering new practices for using anger effectively in driving social change, including examples of legal reforms.



Charles Wilkinson

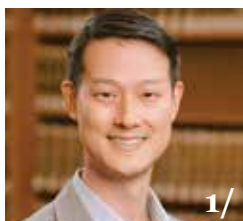
Treaty Justice: The Northwest Tribes, the Boldt Decision, and the Recognition of Fishing Rights

In 1974, Judge George Boldt issued a ruling that affirmed the fishing rights and tribal sovereignty of Native nations in Washington State. The Boldt Decision transformed Indigenous law and resource management across the U.S. and beyond. Eminent legal historian and tribal advocate Charles Wilkinson tells the dramatic story of the Boldt Decision against the backdrop of salmon's central place in the cultures and economies of the Pacific Northwest.



Eight New Faculty Join Colorado Law

Colorado Law welcomes eight exceptional new faculty members with wide-ranging expertise spanning artificial intelligence and the law, state law, environmental law, health law and policy, and more.



1/ Bryan Choi

Bryan Choi's scholarship brings an interdisciplinary focus to software and AI safety. He is especially well-known for his work on software liability, which has been influential in policymaking discussions on national cybersecurity strategy. Prior to joining Colorado Law, Choi was jointly appointed at the Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and Department of Computer Science and Engineering. Choi received his JD and AB in Computer Science from Harvard University. He clerked for Judge Leonard I. Garth of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and Judge William C. Bryson of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

2/ Tony Derron

Tony Derron joins the Colorado Law faculty from the University of Chicago School of Law, where he was a Bigelow Fellow. He is an environmental law scholar who examines how administration, government structure, and property rules affect environmental outcomes. Before joining the academy, Derron served in the Natural



Resources and Environment Section of the Colorado Attorney General's office and clerked on both the Colorado Supreme Court and U.S. District Court for the District of Colorado.

3/ Ann Lipton

Joining the Colorado Law faculty from Tulane Law, Ann M. Lipton studies corporate governance, the relationships between corporations and investors, and the role of corporations in society. Her articles have appeared in the *Yale Journal on Regulation*, *Journal of Corporation Law*, and *The Georgetown Law Journal*, among other publications. Prior to entering academia, she practiced law in New York City for over a decade, specializing in corporate and securities litigation. She also clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter and Chief Judge Edward Becker of the Third Circuit Court of Appeals.

4/ Jacob Nunnally

In March 2025, Jacob Nunnally joined Colorado Law's Wise Law Library as associate director for resource access and discovery. His research interests include institutional



repositories, archives, and 18th and 19th-century American history. Nunnally began working in academic law libraries in New York in 2018 when he became the assistant director of access and collections services at the Hofstra University Law Library.

5/ Govind Persad

Govind Persad's research applies methods from bioethics and social philosophy to law to address longstanding and new problems at the interface of health law and policy. His recent writing appears in law reviews, such as the *Michigan Law Review*, *Iowa Law Review*, and *Emory Law Journal*, as well as high-profile peer reviewed medical and scientific journals, including *Science*, *JAMA*, and *The Lancet*. Persad comes to Colorado Law from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. He clerked for Judge Carlos Lucero on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

6/ Adam Sopko

Adam Sopko is a state public law scholar who studies how institutions structure and participate in state-level governance and policymaking.



Before joining Colorado Law, he served as a staff attorney with the State Democracy Research Initiative at the University of Wisconsin Law School, which studies the role state institutions play in protecting and enhancing our democracy. At SDRI, Sopko's work included scholarly research, drafting amicus briefs, and advising policymakers. Before SDRI, he clerked for Chief Justice Stuart J. Rabner on the New Jersey Supreme Court.

7/ Delaram Takyar

Delaram Takyar's research focuses on social inequality and the law, considering how the law contributes to the marginalization of disadvantaged groups. Her most recent article, "The Hidden Price of Government Immunity," argues in favor of reforming government immunity laws, which, the article argues, disproportionately affect poor communities and communities of color. Prior to joining the Colorado Law faculty, Takyar was a visiting scholar at Vanderbilt Law School and medical-legal partnership attorney at the Tennessee Justice Center, where she started as a Skadden Fellow.





8/ Paige Wilson

Paige Wilson joins Colorado Law as director of the Entrepreneurial Law Clinic. Prior to joining CU, Wilson directed the Entrepreneurial Business Law Clinic at The Ohio State University Moritz College of

Law, where her students represented a mix of startups, small businesses, nonprofits, and student-athletes with Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) contracts. She also practiced law at Gunderson Dettmer in New York City, where she represented high-growth

technology companies and venture capital funds. Wilson's research on venture capital and clinical pedagogy has been published in the *Berkeley Business Law Journal* and the *Tennessee Journal of Business Law*, respectively.



Celebrating the Class of 2025

On Friday, May 9, the Colorado Law community gathered for the 130th commencement ceremony honoring the Class of 2025.

Keynote speaker Professor **Fred Bloom** spoke about the bittersweet nature of graduation, pondering, "What is a moment?" and reflecting on this question as it relates to the legal profession. Bloom shared, "In the end, your time, your moments, are the most valuable thing you as lawyers will have to give."

He also implored graduates to, "think please about what good lawyers can do—they can give of their moments in ways that make other people's lives better, and there is nothing more sacred than that."

"In the end, your time, your moments, are the most valuable thing you as lawyers will have to give."



Watch a
recording



Innovating for Impact: Colorado Law at the Forefront of AI and Law

BY / DRU NORTON '27

As the future of artificial intelligence (AI) takes shape across the nation and world, Colorado Law faculty and students are helping to shape the future of AI's application on the law.

Colorado is leading the way. In May 2024, it became the first state to pass comprehensive legislation regulating AI with the Colorado Artificial Intelligence Act. Gov. Jared Polis appointed Professor **Margot Kaminski** and Associate Professor **Vivek Krishnamurthy** to the state's AI Impact Task Force, recognizing their influential scholarship at the intersection of law, policy, and AI. The task force evaluates the law's application across

sectors like education, healthcare, and employment.

Kaminski and Krishnamurthy complement each other's work in scholarship and practice, pushing the boundaries of how lawyers should approach algorithmic accountability, free speech, and privacy in a digital world.

"People often worry AI will replace lawyers. But the real opportunity is in improving access to justice."

/ PROFESSOR **HARRY SURDEN**

"It's a bit of a myth that the law can't keep up," Kaminski said. "From narrow AI systems deployed in specific contexts to foundation models, the law is quickly adapting to identify and govern AI harms."

Widely recognized as a top expert on AI regulation and privacy, Kaminski received a Fulbright in 2024 to conduct research on comparative AI law in the EU. This year, she received Colorado Law's Sandgrund Award for best consumer rights work for her article "Regulating the Risks of AI." Her co-authored piece on the clash between AI and free speech, "From Gods to Google," appeared in the *Yale Law Journal*. Her scholarship has shaped real-world decisions, with past work cited in the Ninth Circuit's 2025 *Project Veritas v. Schmidt* ruling and the EU Advocate General Opinion in *Dun & Bradstreet* in 2024.

Kaminski brings her substantial expertise into the classroom. Last fall, she pioneered the course Artificial Intelligence and the Law, one of the first

offered in the country. The course examines the challenges of regulating AI and machine learning in law. Kaminski is currently drafting a first-of-its-kind casebook, *Artificial Intelligence Law*, along with Professor Paul Ohm of Georgetown Law and Professor Andrew Selbst of UCLA Law.

"I'm so grateful to my students for helping us work through the early draft materials," she said.

While Kaminski cultivates innovation in her scholarship and the classroom, Krishnamurthy creates opportunities for students to engage directly with AI-related legal issues as director of the Samuelson-Glushko Technology Law and Policy Clinic (TLPC).

Last spring, TLPC students submitted an amicus brief to a Florida district court on behalf of three youth organizations in *Garcia v. Character Technologies*, the first case to consider whether First Amendment protections extend to the outputs of generative AI.

"The brief was a unique opportunity to engage in an urgent legal question with real consequences as an advocate," said **Fynn Fehrenbach '26**, who led the drafting of the brief. "It was the first time I was able to use my understanding of technology, specifically large language models, to work together with the team and help guide the judges to a legal conclusion."

Silicon Flatirons, the school's flagship center for law, policy, and entrepreneurship, has long been at the forefront of legal innovation. Founded in 1999 by **Phil Weiser**, who currently serves as Colorado's attorney general, the center has hosted more than 400 events exploring emerging technologies and their legal implications.

Recognizing a growing need for legal innovation in generative AI, Professor **Harry Surden** established the Silicon Flatirons AI Initiative in 2021. A former software engineer and nationally recognized expert in AI and the law, Surden has studied AI and large language models for more than two decades.

"From 2022 to 2023, AI progressed more in one year than it had in the previous five to 10 years," Surden noted. "That kind of acceleration demands legal innovation."

Colorado Law and Silicon Flatirons have led national conversations about that innovation. As early as 2019, the center hosted an event on





Top left: Professor Harry Surden kicked off Silicon Flatirons AI, Autonomous Systems, and the Law conference with his keynote address on March 7.

Top right: Associate Professor Vivek Krishnamurthy engaged discussions among experts at the Silicon Flatirons Feminist Cyberlaw Symposium: Participatory Access and Governance on Nov. 8, 2024.

Bottom: Professor Margot Kaminski joined fellow privacy scholars and professionals to discuss technology policy at the Silicon Flatirons Privacy at the State Level: An Attorney General's Perspective on Sept. 17, 2024.



Explainable AI, discussing how to hold machines accountable. It has regularly hosted tutorials on data privacy law, including the Colorado Privacy Act.

For students like Fehrenbach, the rise of AI is an opportunity to shape the future of law. Last year, he led the AI Initiative for Silicon Flatirons student group, organizing events with experts to discuss the legal and ethical implications of generative AI.

"What makes Colorado Law so great is that the professors are helping shape policy in real time and bringing students along with them," Fehrenbach said. "Students are at the center of every Silicon Flatirons event. They provide so many opportunities to meet and learn from the top experts in tech and law at a truly state-of-the-art level."

That momentum continues with the addition of Associate Professor **Bryan Choi** to the Colorado Law faculty this fall. With a background in computer science and law, Choi brings deep expertise on how legal systems should respond to the rising risks posed by AI technologies.

While much conversation about AI centers on job displacement and other uncertainties, Colorado Law faculty emphasize its potential to address one of the legal system's challenges: access to justice.

"People often worry AI will replace lawyers," Surden explained. "But the real opportunity

is in improving access to justice. We have an enormous gap in legal services, and AI, if used wisely, could help bridge that."

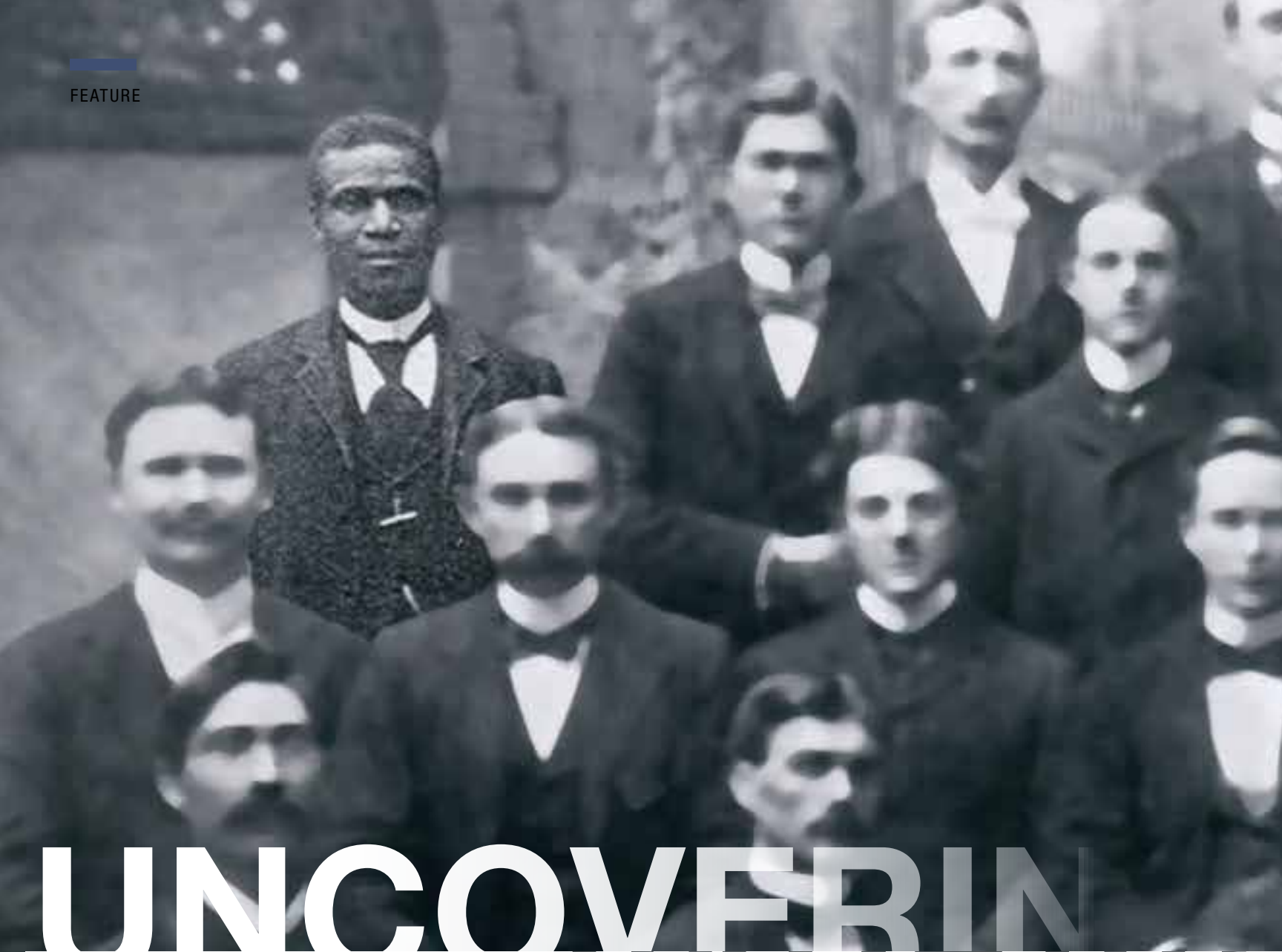
As AI becomes more integrated into legal practice, Colorado Law is uniquely positioned to lead. Krishnamurthy noted that while technical literacy is helpful, core lawyering skills remain the most valuable.

"You don't have to be a technologist to be an effective tech lawyer," Krishnamurthy said. "Skills like logic, reasoning, analysis, and argumentation are more important. You have to know how to think critically and remain conscious of our ethical obligations in a fast-changing world."

Surden encourages current and aspiring lawyers to use their knowledge to uncover novel and ethical ways to navigate the future of AI.

"One of the most important traits for students, graduates, and lawyers is adaptability. The world is always changing, and where people get stuck is when they stop learning," he explained. "Growth isn't something to fear. It's something to embrace."





UNCOVERING WHAT WAS

Black History at Colorado Law

BY / REBECCA CIOTA, LIBRARIAN

As some institutions retreat from efforts to lift marginalized voices, it is more essential than ever that we continue the work of recovering our past. This project is about pursuing a whole understanding of our institution's past, making this essential part of our shared historic tapestry visible. Recognizing the contributions of our Black students and alumni enriches our institution and illuminates the path forward in our ongoing pursuit of excellence. We do this work because we can, and because we must.

While this project focuses on the University of Colorado Law School, it reflects a broader reality: the histories of Black students, faculty, and staff have too often remained hidden at law schools across the country.

This research restores these individuals to the narrative of Colorado Law after, for some, more than a century of erasure. **Franklin LaVeale Anderson (ex. 1899)**, Colorado Law's first Black student in 1899—whose image, long mislabeled, hung in a dark corner of the library—is now remembered as a successful Boulder businessman and landowner. **Franklin Henry Bryant (1907)**, the law school's first known Black graduate, appears only briefly in a 1909 yearbook but emerges through research as a poet with training in both medicine and law. **Adele “Della” Parker (ex. 1914)**, the first Black woman law student, known only through newspaper clippings and yearbooks, was a gifted orator and dedicated educator. And alumni from the 1940s—**Arthur Erthal Green (1945)** and **Isaac**



S ALWAYS THERE

Edward Moore Jr. (1949)—are recognized for their significant contributions to civil rights advocacy in Colorado and California. These stories are not footnotes; they are foundations.

A Barber Goes to Law School: 1892 – 1899

“Owing to a considerable demand for a Law School in the Rocky Mountain region,” the University of Colorado Board of Regents opened a law school at CU in 1892. Neither the university nor the law school had a racial or ethnic discrimination policy,

which enabled **Franklin LaVeale Anderson** to enroll in 1896 as Colorado Law’s first Black student. His story and those of several other early Black law students who attended Colorado Law can be found at colorado.edu/law/BlackHistory.

More than a century later, Anderson’s law school career still inspires students and alumni. Reflecting on 130 years of the law school’s history, **Ryan Haygood '01** spoke of Anderson’s image in the 1899 class photo:

“I cannot imagine what Mr. Anderson endured, the hostility he confronted, or the racism he

Franklin LaVeale Anderson (ex. 1899), Colorado Law’s first Black student, pictured on far left.

“I cannot imagine what Mr. Anderson endured . . . I drew inspiration from [his] 1899 class photo every day as I walked past it in the law school.”

/ RYAN HAYGOOD '01

Miss Della Parker enters the law department of the University of Colorado soon. She will enjoy the double distinction of being one of the few colored students, and the only one of her sex in the class. Miss Parker was formerly a Denver University student. She takes much interest in athletics and her work here in Denver gives every hope for a bright future for her.

FEATURE



SACRED SANCTITIES OF LAW SCHOOL SHATTERED
Destroyer of Masculine Superiority is Miss Della Parker, a Colored Girl From Denver.
At last the sacred sanctities of the law school have been shattered and the superiority of masculinity no longer appears self-evident, for woman has entered the majestic portals of that building where hitherto mere man has reigned supreme.
The aforesaid shatterer of this sanctity and destroyer of this masculine superiority is Miss Della Parker, a colored girl of Denver, who

Miss Della Parker enters the law department of the University of Colorado soon. She will enjoy the double distinction of being one of the few colored students, and the only one of her sex in the class. Miss Parker was formerly a Denver University student. She takes much interest in athletics and her work here in Denver gives every hope for a bright future for her.

battled, and I drew inspiration from Mr. Anderson's 1899 class photo every day as I walked past it in the law school... I'd like to think we [Haygood, **Lisa Calderón '01**, and **Joi Williams '01**] were then—and are now, 20 years into my practice as a lawyer—walking in his footsteps. Mr. Anderson has been an example to me both of what is possible and what is required of us now. And for inspiring us to use our law degrees to fight for it."

The Poet and the Rhetorician: 1900 – 1940

During the early 20th century, the nearby city of Denver was seen as a profitable place for Black attorneys to establish their practices. This likely attracted Colorado Law's first Black graduate, **Franklin Henry Bryant (1907)**—a poet educated in medicine and law and the first and youngest Black attorney to argue a case (*Graeb v. Board of Medical Examiners*) before the Colorado Supreme Court—and the first Black female student, **Adele "Della" Parker (ex 1914)**, to enroll.

After Parker's departure, records show no other Black students attending Colorado Law for more than 30 years. Several factors might have accounted for this, including the First World War. However, the political landscape in Boulder likely had a larger impact. Though Colorado laws prohibited denying access to "public accommodations" due to race by 1908, de facto Jim Crow segregation persisted. In the late 1910s and early 1920s, the city bought or seized the homes of Black residents, demolishing them to make a public park. Shortly after, the Ku Klux Klan gained political and cultural power before national scandals lost the Klan influence nationally and in Boulder. Then, from 1929 to 1939, the Great Depression left nearly half of Black working-age adults

unemployed by 1932, leaving many without the fiscal resources for graduate education. New Deal policies had varied impacts for Black Americans.

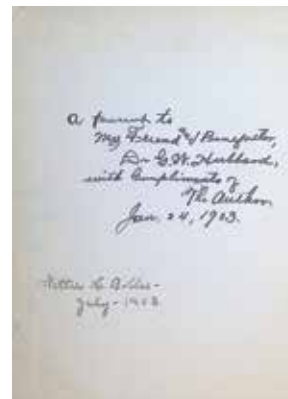
Separate and Unequal: 1940 – 1959

The 1940s and 1950s brought a significant shift in law school enrollment nationally and in Boulder. During World War II, Colorado Law lost many of its faculty and students to conscription. After the war, several civil rights cases against predominantly white law schools and the ensuing backlash from white communities deterred Black applicants from enrolling in law schools from the late 1940s to the early 1960s. This occurred even as the Association of American Law Schools implemented antidiscrimination objectives, the American Bar Association formally allowed Black lawyers to become members, and the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregation in educational institutions unconstitutional.

In Boulder, Black residents faced discrimination in many settings, including at CU, where Black students faced a lack of housing and social and recreational opportunities; with some noting that the white students "act[ed] superior." Black students were confined to live in boarding houses at the town's edge and were barred from most of Boulder's shops, stores and restaurants in town. White students refused to share housing with their Black classmates, and the university asked Black and other marginalized students to "live with their people." One Black Colorado Law student, **Isaac Edward Moore '49**, was effectively forced off campus and faced housing discrimination in the town of Boulder; Moore ended up sleeping in a coal shed while attending law school.

Della Parker class photograph, Coloradoan, 1913.

Below: Pages from a book of poetry authored by Franklin Henry Bryant (1907).





Arthur Erthal Green '45



Patrick H. Butler '61

Colorado Law likely admitted five Black students during the 1940s and 1950s: **Arthur Erthal Green '45**, who founded the New Frontier Democratic Club in California; **Isaac Edward Moore, Jr. '49**, who later became a Colorado representative; **Clarence Edward Blair '56**, who served as the city attorney for Compton, California; and two unidentified men in 1946 and 1948.

Pushing for Change: 1960 – 1979

During the 1960s, very few Black students attended CU. The sole Black faculty member, English professor Charles Nilon, estimated that 50–60 Black students in total attended CU during the early 1960s. Records indicate **Patrick H. Butler '61**, an attorney for Eli Lilly and Company for 25 years, and **Penfield Wallace Tate II '68**, Boulder's first and only Black mayor, graduated from Colorado Law.

After the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., CU Boulder implemented its first affirmative action program, the Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP). Multiple versions of the EOP's origins exist and should be considered, including narratives that center Black law students Tate and **W. Harold "Sonny" Flowers, Jr. '71**.

In 1970, graduates included the **Hon. Gary Jackson '70**, a retired senior judge for Denver County Court, and **James "Jim" Cotton '70**, who went on to work for IBM's legal department. Following them were Flowers, a Boulder attorney who established CU Boulder's Black Alumni Association and endowed a scholarship for students of color; **Alfred Tate '71**, who founded the civil rights firm Tate & Renner; **Clayton Adams '71**, who was the vice president of community engagement for State Farm; **Carol Lievers '72**, who served for 24 years as first assistant attorney general

for the state of Colorado; and **Theodore "Ted" Woods '73**, one of CU's first Black athletes who went on to work as a corporate attorney for U.S. West Communications.

During the first half of the 1970s, Colorado Law's administration made efforts to recruit students from diverse backgrounds. Jackson recalls "going on recruitment trips ... trying to encourage diverse students, students of color, to come to Colorado." Black law students worked to establish a community, founding a chapter of the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) at Colorado Law. An early member of the BLSA, Lievers said the purpose was "bring[ing] our legal training to bear upon some of the problems, legal and nonlegal, in the Black community." In the mid-1970s, Colorado Law faced pressure from students and the Sam Cary Bar Association to diversify its faculty. Colorado Law hired its first woman professor, **Marianne "Mimi" Wesson**, in 1976 and its first permanent Black professor, **David Hill**, in 1977.

From 1972 through 1979, Colorado Law graduated more than 20 Black students, including **Frederick Charleston '72**, who had a notable career as an attorney for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; the **Hon. Larry Naves '74**, a former district court judge for Colorado's 2nd Judicial District; **Hon. Robert "Beau" Patterson '74**, the first Black appointee to serve as presiding judge of the Denver County Court; **Wallace "Wally" Wortham '74**, former Denver city attorney; and **Charles L. Casteel '75**, senior of counsel for Davis Graham. These alumni and others contributed to an increasingly representative law school, where 12–13% of the students were students of color by 1978.

Making Strides: 1980 – 1999

From 1980 to 1985, Dean **Betsy Levin**—the first

Pictured, left to right:

Hon. Larry Naves '74, W. Harold "Sonny" Flowers Jr. '71, James Cotton '70, Penfield Tate II '68, David Hill, Hon. Gary Jackson '70, and Tate Alfred '71.





U.S. Rep. **Joe Neguse '09** with his family at his community swearing-in ceremony for the U.S. Congress at Colorado Law in January 2019. Colorado Supreme Court Justice Melissa Hart, one of Neguse's first professors in law school, administered the oath.

woman dean of Colorado Law—attracted “nationally prominent practitioners” to teach and lecture at the law school. Enrollment of students of color in CU’s graduate programs, including the law school, grew by 65% in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Several notable Black alumni attended and graduated during this prestigious period in Colorado Law’s history, including the **Hon.**

Claudia Jordan '80, the first Black legal analyst at the Colorado Legislative Council and the first Black woman judge in the Rocky Mountain region; **Velveta Golightly-Howell '81**, who served as the director of the Office of Civil Rights at the Environmental Protection Agency; **Henry Cooper III '87**, a prosecutor in the Denver District Attorney’s Office; and the **Hon. William D. Robbins '87**, a judge in Colorado’s 2nd Judicial District.

Dean **Gene Nichol** highlighted the law school’s racial diversity during the early 1990s: 25% of students were students of color. In 1996, Colorado Law hired its first permanent Black woman faculty member, **Juliet Gilbert**, to teach the immigration law clinic. Almost 40 Black students graduated from Colorado Law during the 1990s, including **Shirley Wilson Durham '92**, a public defender; **Vance Knapp '94**, a partner at FisherPhillips; and **Yvette Lewis-Molock '98**, assistant general counsel for Xcel Energy.

New Milestones: 2000 – 2019

Records concerning Colorado Law’s Black students from 2000 – 2015 are limited. Several esteemed Black faculty and staff joined the school during this time: Professors **Ahmed White** and **Dayna Matthew** joined the faculty in 2000 and 2003, respectively, and in 2011, the law school hired **SuSaNi Harris** as its first senior director for diversity and inclusive excellence. During the latter half of the 2010s, students pushed for a more

representative student body, and in 2017, the law school welcomed its most diverse incoming class to date. However, Black student enrollment remained comparatively low. On average, each incoming class between 2004 and 2019 included five Black students.

Many accomplished Black attorneys and legal experts graduated during those two decades. This includes but is not limited to **Janea Scott '00**, who served as senior counsel in the Land and Minerals Management Division of the Department of the Interior; **Lisa Calderón '01**, executive director for the Denver-based nonprofit Emerge Colorado; **Ryan Haygood '01**, CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice; **Thomas Benson Martin '03**, who worked at the 9-11 Victim Compensation Fund at PriceWaterhouseCoopers; the **Hon. Nikea Bland '05**, a district court judge in Colorado’s 2nd Judicial District; **Joseph Neguse '09**, a former CU regent and a U.S. representative for Colorado’s 2nd congressional district and Colorado’s first Black member of Congress; **Hiwot Covell '09**, senior assistant attorney general at the Colorado Attorney General’s Office; **Jackline Nyaga '12**, dean of the Riara Law School in Nairobi, Kenya; **Kira Robinson '12**, a vice president at Goldman Sachs; **Nneka C. Obiokoye '17**, a partner at Holland & Knight; and **Dardoh Skinner '18**, who works in trademark enforcement.

Looking Forward: 2020 and Beyond

So far, the 2020s have presented profound challenges and opportunities for Colorado Law. During an alumni roundtable in 2022 to commemorate Colorado Law’s 130th anniversary, **Lindsey Floyd '21**, a staff attorney at the ACLU of Colorado, noted the extraordinary impact of the Black Lives Matter movement in summer 2020 on

the law school community and its commitment to racial justice: “[T]he entire fabric of the law school changed in response to the protests in 2020. We’ve created more affinity groups, like the Council for Racial Justice and Equity and the Women of Color Collective. Professors who had never had a racial justice component to their syllabus added discussions and readings about the ways in which their subjects of law were not isolated from racism,” she said.

Former Dean **S. James Anaya** committed himself and the law school to confronting racism and to making advancements in the representation and welcoming of Black people at the law school and within the larger legal profession. In fall 2020, Colorado Law welcomed its most racially and ethnically diverse incoming class, which included five Black students. In 2021, Colorado Law named its first Black dean, **Lolita Buckner Inniss**, and that fall, welcomed eight Black students – the most in an incoming class in 14 years. Dean Inniss has heightened the excellence and diversity of the student body and filled critical instructional needs by hiring one of the largest and most accomplished cohorts of new faculty in school history. In 2023, the law school named its first Black director of the Wise Law Library, **Shamika Dalton**.

The Black Law Student Association continues to be active at Colorado Law, with around 20 members. Co-president **Armania Heckenmueller '27** reflected:

“The Black community at Colorado Law may be small, but it’s incredibly strong. Whether I’m close friends with someone or just recognize a familiar face, there’s a deep sense of support and solidarity. That said, in my class of nearly 190 students, there are only six Black students. With law school applications rising nationwide, I’m hopeful that future classes will reflect greater diversity and a stronger representation of Black students.”

Below: Members of Colorado Law’s Black Law Students Association attend the Sam Cary Bar Association Gala.

Heckenmueller also noted a desire to strengthen relationships among Black attorneys beyond the walls of CU.

While we are proud of the progress made—from breaking racial barriers to fostering a community where everyone matters and all can thrive—we also recognize that the work is far from over. The experiences of our early Black students and alumni underscore the need for lasting efforts to ensure that all students have equitable access to opportunities, that the diversity of the student body and faculty reflects the broader society, and that every individual feels valued, supported, and included. Colorado Law remains committed to learning from its past while actively working toward a more just and inclusive future.

The author used many sources in writing this piece. To see a complete list of sources, please visit colorado.edu/law/HistorySources.

The author would like to thank Mona Lambrecht, interim director and curator of history & collections at the CU Heritage Center, and David Hays, archivist at the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries, for their assistance with this research.

We invite readers in possession of relevant historical information or narrative to partner in this vital effort. Contact the research team at law-communications@colorado.edu.

Pictured, clockwise from left:
Hon. Nikea Bland '05, Essence Duncan '23, Beverly Ledbetter '72, Hiwot Covell '09, Velveta Golightly-Howell '81, Ryan Haygood '01, Heather Younger '96, and Jemil Kassahun '24.



Colorado Law Fields New **NAME, IMAGE** and **LIKENESS PRACTICUM**

BY / ADAM LIPSIOUS '27

Last year, as the definition of amateur athletics was being rewritten in the courts and revised in university handbooks through the creation of Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) guidelines, Colorado Law's inaugural NIL practicum began offering 2Ls and 3Ls experience tackling these issues right here in Boulder. In spring 2025, the school launched a practicum intended for aspiring lawyers who dreamed about practicing their passion for sports after passing the bar, and it was headed by someone who knows exactly how they feel: Adjunct Professor **Leigh Augustine**.

"I got laughed at in law school," Augustine explained, "because I told everyone I was going to do sports and entertainment in Colorado, and they're like, if you're gonna stay here, you're gonna do DULs and corporate law like the rest of us."

Undaunted, he pitched himself as an up-and-coming sports attorney at DU Law where his mentor, John Coombe, a retired partner from Holland and Hart, told him that he ought to learn intellectual property while pursuing his dream. That was the key. Augustine, who earned his undergraduate degree in business from CU Boulder, realized that "sports is really a conglomeration of contracts, business law, antitrust, copyrights, trademarks and licensing—with the biggest slice, in my opinion, being intellectual property (IP)."

He would go on to build sports law practices at Moye White (now Fennemore Craig) and Sherman & Howard (now Taft Stettinius & Hollister), but fresh out of law school he hung out his shingle doing primarily trademarks and copyrights while assembling a roster of young Olympic skiers and professional



lacrosse players as clients.

"I still love working with these lesser-known athletes and influencers because they need someone looking out for them—companies often overstep their boundaries with regard to name-image-likeness [endorsement] deals," Augustine said. "With lacrosse players, for example, the average playing salary is \$25,000. So if I can get this guy an extra \$2,000 for an NIL, that's huge to them." He smiled, "Sometimes it feels like pro bono work, but I also get to be Jerry Maguire for some very thankful clients, so it's great work."

Unbeknownst to Augustine, Colorado Law students had been advocating for a course on NIL for almost two years. Back in September 2023, a group of law students, including **Tad Elliott '25** and **Katrina Chavez '26**, approached Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss**. They "got the ball rolling," according to Associate Dean for Instructional Development **Amy Bauer**.

Dean Inniss had "already been thinking about the opportunities NIL presented for legal education and immediately saw the alignment," Bauer explained. Following the students' pitch, Dean Inniss was enthusiastic and on board to form a practicum.

In medicine and the sciences, a practicum refers to a class in which students learn by doing, and the same applies in law. The administration's goal was to give students firsthand experience dealing with real-life Name, Image and Likeness issues under the supervision of an experienced professor.

This coincided with the arrival of head football coach Deion Sanders, who launched CU athletics into the stratosphere of national conversation, creating opportunities for many student athletes beyond football players. The time was right. All that was missing was someone to teach the course.

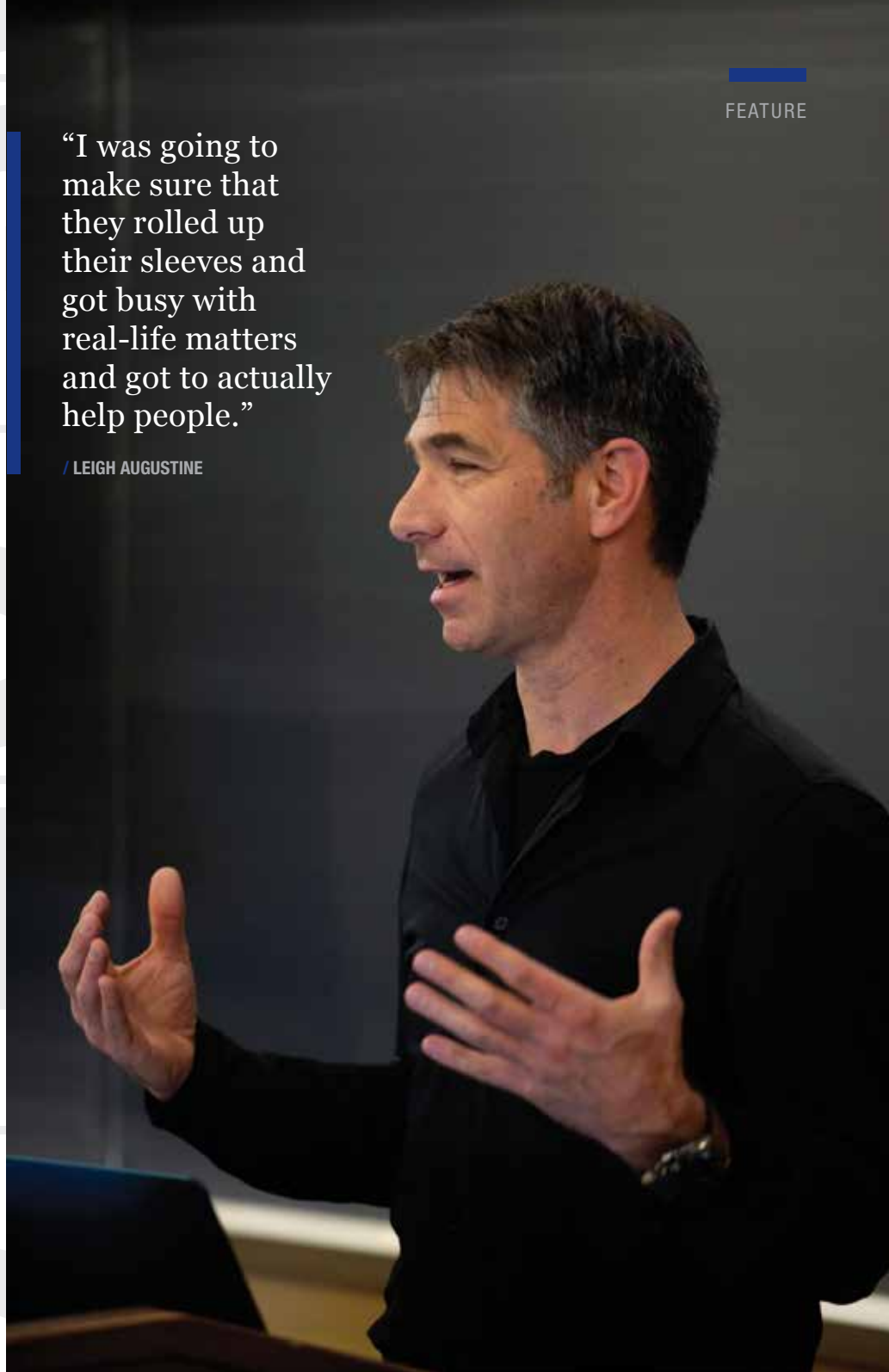
Enter Leigh Augustine, who gave a talk on campus about opportunities in sports law in spring 2024, electrifying his audience. Bauer approached him to see if he'd be interested in teaching at his undergraduate alma mater, and he couldn't wait. Augustine's "deep expertise and enthusiasm for NIL law was the spark we needed to launch the practicum," Bauer said.

Eleven students enrolled in the section in January 2025 after taking Augustine's fall 2024 course on Sports and Media Law, and their reviews have been enthusiastic. "I joined the practicum knowing that it was going to be the first semester of it running," said **Ursula Davy '25**. "So I knew there were going to be growing pains and kind of just getting your feet wet. The fact that I still got to work on a really hands-on project and got to have client communication, and just even do a little bit of lawyering, has been so helpful."

The practicum was organized around both client outreach and student collaboration, emphasizing teamwork. "We actually put real contracts up on

"I was going to make sure that they rolled up their sleeves and got busy with real-life matters and got to actually help people."

/ LEIGH AUGUSTINE



the screen in class," said **Tyson Agla '26**. "And we examined them figuring out 'What red flags does everybody see?' 'What do you think we should work on?' Stuff like that. And so everybody got to see the process of how an experienced attorney would go through it, and then we made suggestions to everybody and went through and made all the adjustments."

Augustine summed up his approach to the practicum this way: "I was going to make sure that they rolled up their sleeves and got busy with real-life matters and got to actually help people."

Abbey Shea '16, assistant athletic director of Name, Image and Likeness for the University

of Colorado Athletics Department and Colorado Law alumna, said, “I knew this was going to be an interesting time for the students to have eyes on what’s happening, given all the court cases [around NIL]. There was a gap between student athletes who have agents and full teams behind them and those who don’t. After talking with Amy and Leigh, I was pretty confident there would be some population who’d at least want to give it a go.”

A handful of CU student-athletes, as well as some professional pickle-ballers, a 14-year-old tennis player hoping to go pro whose father went to CU, and other aspiring talents filled out the practicum’s freshman class of clients. “We learned that most student-athlete NIL deals at CU get inked in the fall with the arrival of new students, so the course shifted to the fall for the 2025-26 school year,” Augustine explained. By May, it was fully enrolled with eager students.

“I was impressed with how the students met the challenge,” Shea said. “I can’t speak for how often new practicums come up, but starting something from nothing is hard work. That was a challenge that they took on. Walking up to a table of 10 football players and being like, ‘Can I talk to you about the law?’ can be intimidating, but I think they did that.”

Practicum student **Matt VanWert '26** echoed the hard work that launching this program took but also stresses how thrilling it was. “Professor Augustine works very hard for this. When clients come in, it’s exciting. We all work hard. It’s really exciting to be part of the start of this program.”

Shea counsels that “the more you do something, the more it’s ingrained.” She believes that the more student athletes know that the practicum exists and offers resources that can help them, the more they’ll tap into it, and for that reason she said, “I hope this practicum becomes an ongoing thing.”



Augustine said, “I teach so I can give back some knowledge to people and have them in turn go out and make a difference in the world. I can’t change the world, but I can change the corner of the world that I live in, and the people who pass through it. I really enjoy working with students and the level of enthusiasm they bring. It gives me life.

It gives me hope that the next set of lawyers are going to be a great set of attorneys who make a difference in the world.”

He spent all summer counting the days for the new practicum to get underway, and that next set of great student-attorneys are already putting their passion into practice.

Q&A:

Meet a Colorado Law Alumna on the Frontlines of NIL

Abbey Shea '16 grew up a big CU fan. Her dad and grandfather played basketball for CU, and she grew up coming to campus, going to games, and rooting for the Buffs. She started working in the compliance department at CU Athletics her 2L summer and has never looked back. She now serves as assistant athletic director in charge of Name, Image and Likeness.

What's the best part of your job?

The interaction with the student-athletes. NIL enables student-athletes to explore and embrace their identity outside of sport, as often it is their personal interests that are more valuable to brands. Assisting student-athletes throughout the execution of an NIL deal and experiencing them develop professional skills (public speaking, working on a production set, coming up with thoughtful & creative social media deliverables) is extremely rewarding.

What skills did you learn at Colorado Law that you use today?

Although I don’t work with “clients” in the traditional sense, my time at Colorado Law helped me develop the skill of distilling and ‘translating’ complex legalese into digestible education. Student-athletes are expected to understand, and comply with, many complex regulatory structures during their collegiate tenure—CU Law helped me learn how to make information accessible to a wide range of audiences. CU Law also taught me how to be a problem-solver - working in an industry that’s constantly evolving; we don’t often have black-and-white answers. There is rarely a rulebook I can consult. Instead, I use critical thinking, risk management, and resourcefulness to come to the best conclusion.

Do you have advice for law students or anyone else getting into NIL?


Be adaptable and resourceful - the best way to figure out how to solve a problem is just to try. Don’t let your ego get in the way of getting the job done. We often say that “Other Duties as Assigned” is the most important job description in our department. Being a “jack of all trades” who is willing to learn or do something that may not be strictly “your role” is how you develop knowledge and proficiency in diverse areas, which makes you an extremely valuable employee to any organization.

Sko’ Buffs, and thanks Abbey!



Above: Abbey Shea (far left) at a CU football game.

Below: Abbey Shea, second from left, at her graduation from Colorado Law.



From the Bench to the Blackboard

Spotlight on Adjunct Faculty Judges

BY / ASHLEY HUMPHRIES '27

Walking down the halls of the University of Colorado Law School on a typical day, you will see students carrying books, professors engaged in discussion, and faculty on their way to meetings. But sometimes you will also see esteemed judges walking to classrooms where they take time out of their busy dockets to invest in the lawyers of tomorrow.

Each year, about five to eight classes at Colorado Law are taught by judges including Hon. **Susan Blanco '03**, chief judge of Colorado's 8th Judicial

District; Colorado Supreme Court Justice **Melissa Hart**; Hon.

Timothy O'Hara, United States Magistrate Judge in the District of Colorado; Hon. **Jon Olafson**, a Colorado District Court judge; Hon. **Tim Tymkovich '82**, judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit; and Hon. **Thomas Ward '12**, a District Court Magistrate in Boulder



Chief Judge Susan Blanco '03

County. Their courses range from Legal Ethics and Professionalism, Motions Advocacy, and Election Law to Advanced Torts and Federal Litigation—Everything But the Trial.

Colorado Law seeks out judges for adjunct faculty roles because of the unique perspectives they bring as neutral decision makers and fact finders, explained **Amy Bauer**, associate dean for instructional development and teaching professor, who oversees the hiring and coordination of adjunct faculty. Further, judges are already educators by virtue of their jobs. This makes them experienced at taking complex legal concepts and explaining them to people in digestible ways, she said.

Julia Gessert '26 has taken two classes taught by judges: Legal Ethics and Professionalism with Magistrate Ward and Federal Litigation—Everything But the Trial with Judge Olafson. Gessert said she enjoys taking classes from judges, because they offer practical insights into how the concepts they teach are applied in the real world. “As someone who hopes to practice litigation, it feels like you are receiving a behind-the-scenes look into how judges think through certain problems or consider different types of information,” she said.

Magistrate Ward teaches Legal Ethics and Professionalism by incorporating small-group discussions of real-life ethical scenarios. “I wanted to teach, because I take seriously the lawyer’s oath to use my legal knowledge for the betterment of society and the improvement of the justice system,” he said. “I hope that by sharing my experiences in owning a law firm handling both transactional and litigation matters, as well as the attorney behavior I have observed from the bench, I will enrich students’ law school experience and set them up with lessons they can draw from in their careers.”

Chief Judge Blanco expressed that it has been a fun experience returning to her alma mater to teach and mentor students outside the classroom. She likes to set up interactive activities in class like working in small groups or getting students on their feet and litigating.

Her favorite part of teaching is interacting with and learning from students; she strives to build positive relationships with students so they feel comfortable asking questions about things they don’t understand. “It was really fun to develop the class in a way that I know I would have enjoyed as a student,” she said. “Being able to watch the students blossom into attorneys, like watching them litigate cases in the mock courtroom, has been a very rewarding experience.”

Magistrate Thomas Ward '12



For judges who also teach, serving as adjunct professors means taking on considerable extra responsibilities alongside their already demanding schedules. Magistrate Ward explained that his teaching duties (including lesson preparation, responding to students, and grading exams) require time outside business hours on evenings, weekends, and holidays, but that he takes inspiration from other judicial officers who teach and who have given him advice on time management. “This work has meaning to me, so I do my best to make it work. This is no different than balancing responsibilities as a lawyer, it just takes a different form,” he said.

This commitment yields valuable benefits for students. For example, **Celene Olguin '25** took Legal Ethics and Professionalism with Magistrate Ward and said his class had a “profound impact” on her law school career. She explained, “Judge Ward ensured that each and every voice was heard and he welcomed tough, and sometimes uncomfortable questions with no judgment. He answered questions thoughtfully in light of his experience and illuminated what would be expected out of us as attorneys.”

Bauer emphasized how grateful Colorado Law is for the judges who choose to teach. “It is a real added workload that they take on year after year, and it is a tremendous service to the law school—not only to the students but the faculty and staff as well as the broader legal community,” she said.

“It feels like you are receiving a behind-the-scenes look into how judges think through certain problems or consider different types of information.”

/ JULIA GESSERT '26

Interested in shaping the next generation of lawyers as a Colorado Law adjunct?

Contact lawadjunctsupport@colorado.edu.

H O N O R I N G

Alumni Who Make a Difference

The 44th annual Alumni Awards Banquet on March 20, 2025, recognized the extraordinary contributions of six distinguished alumni to the legal profession, community, and Colorado Law. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the evening raised over \$186,000 with net proceeds benefiting the Law Alumni Scholarship Fund. **Thank you!**



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The 2026 Colorado Law Alumni Award honorees:

(Below, left to right): Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss**; **William Leone '81** (Distinguished Achievement—Private Practice); **Marissa Kardon Weber '19** (Distinguished Achievement—Recent Alumna); **Michael McCarthy '75** (William Lee Knous Award); **Sara Hoverstock '04** (Distinguished Achievement—Corporate Counsel); **Eric Williams '05** (Distinguished Achievement—Public Service); **Amy Parsons '99** (Distinguished Achievement—Special Recognition).



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Emergency Funds Help Students Weather the Unexpected

BY / JULIA ROTH

Law school is demanding enough with exams, long hours, and tight finances. But when an unexpected emergency hits—a car breakdown, a medical bill, or even the need for professional clothing—it can push students to a breaking point.

Beverly Ledbetter '72 wants to ease the burden of financial emergencies for law students. In 2016, she created the Law Student Emergency Fund to support students who demonstrate a financial need relating to their legal education or their preparation to transition to the legal profession following law school. She's contributed to the fund ever since and now seeks to endow the fund to support law students for decades to come.

"I lacked and still lack the financial means to substantially support scholarships, but I could help out with short-term

emergencies," said Ledbetter, who retired in 2018 after 40 years as Brown University's legal counsel. "Students might need to get home for a family emergency, come up short with their auto insurance, or need a one-time essential purchase—just instances where a small amount might help them get over the hump. I also wanted no pressure to pay back, although you always hope the thought might occur on its own."

During the 2024-25 school year, the Emergency Needs Fund supported five law

students (everyone who requested emergency funding) with a total of \$4,850 for unexpected expenses like medical expenses, a replacement laptop, and car repairs for students to get to and from their internships.

"I'm at a loss to describe the relief and gratitude I feel," one student recipient said. "I am looking forward to getting these [car] repairs so I can complete my summer internship. Thank you to all who made this possible!"

Ledbetter strongly believes students should develop a habit of giving back to their communities early in their lives through volunteer experiences that are not for credit or motivated by external influences—values instilled in her from a young age by her parents, who were both middle school teachers. In addition to her support of the Law Student Emergency Needs Fund, Ledbetter intends to support a fund at CU's Service Learning & Impact in Community Engagement Program that provides stipends for students doing volunteer service-learning work both in and out of state.

"My passion is service to the community. I want people to feel privileged to be lawyers. Giving back to the community is my guiding principle," she said.

Ledbetter hopes the fund will not only provide much-needed support to students facing financial emergencies but also instill in them the spirit of philanthropy. "I like the idea of helping students when they really need it," Ledbetter said.



Beverly Ledbetter walks with Brown University President Christina Paxson during the 2018 Baccalaureate Procession.

"Through this, we are also teaching them to do the same when they are able."

Though the grants from the Law Student Emergency Fund may be modest, Ledbetter believes they can have a significant impact.

"These grants may only impact one of law school's challenges," she said. "But even a little help can make a difference down the road. I'm drawn to the small things we can do today to ease someone's burden. If we have the chance to reduce that stress, why wouldn't we?"

To learn more about the Law Student Emergency Needs Fund, please contact **Robert Garelick**, assistant dean for advancement, at robert.garelick@colorado.edu or 303-735-5845 or **Jeremy Jones**, director of development, at jeremy.jones-1@colorado.edu or 303-735-8463.

New Endowed Professorship in Space Policy and Law to Expand Global Collaboration

BY / EMILY WIRTZ, CU OFFICE OF ADVANCEMENT

Through a generous investment in the future of space governance, CU Boulder donors **Dale and Patricia Hatfield** have given \$2.5 million to establish the Hatfield Endowed Professorship in Space Policy & Law.

Underscoring the university's commitment to leadership in this fast-evolving field, the professorship will drive teaching and research on space policy and law, with broad implications for national security, global communications, navigation, weather forecasting and international collaboration.

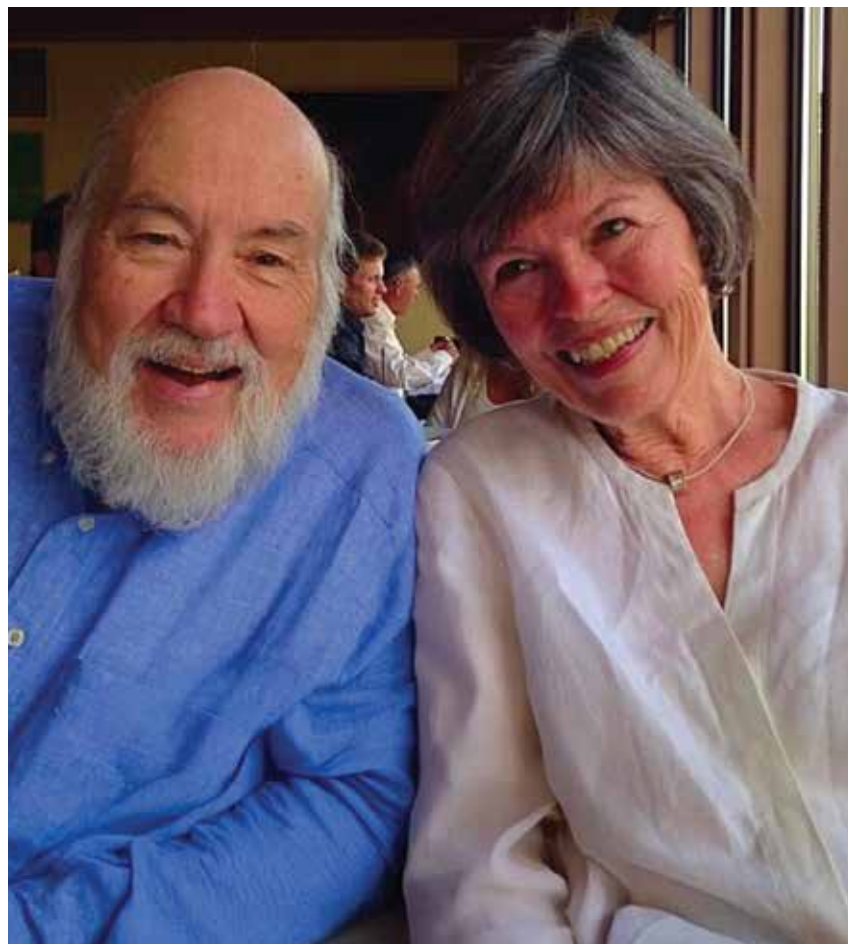
This interdisciplinary position will rotate every two years between Silicon Flatirons at Colorado Law, College of Engineering and Applied Science, and the Leeds Schools of Business, supporting faculty whose teaching and research advance this work.

Professor Marcus J. Holzinger of aerospace engineering sciences is the inaugural Hatfield Endowed Professor, bringing expertise in space policy, domain awareness, development and strategy.

"As humanity ventures beyond our planet, space law and policy have emerged as a new frontier, offering vast opportunities to shape the future of space exploration and utilization," Dale Hatfield said. "The realm of space beckons a new generation to establish the legal and policy frame that will govern our cosmic endeavors."

Dale Hatfield, a pioneer in telecommunications policy, is known for his leadership in both government and academia. He began his career as chief of the Office of Plans and Policy at the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in Washington, D.C., before moving to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. He then founded a Boulder-based consulting firm before rejoining the FCC as chief technologist, eventually serving as chief of the Office of Engineering and Technology. He now serves as a distinguished advisor at Silicon Flatirons and an adjunct professor at CU Boulder.

Dale and his wife, Patricia, have supported the university for years, including an endowed professorship and scholarship fund for the ATLAS Institute, scholarships for the Lattice Scholars program and support for Colorado Law. Their latest investment exemplifies how private philanthropy can catalyze new areas of research, teaching, and discovery.



"The Hatfield Professorship reflects Dale's uncanny ability to see the big challenges and opportunities that are around the next corner in technology policy," said **Brad Bernthal '01**, executive director of Silicon Flatirons and associate professor of law. "Space policy involves so many issues that need attention. Dale and Pat's generous gift ensures that CU Boulder will play a role in helping solve problems in the coming years."

"The realm of space beckons a new generation to establish the legal and policy frame that will govern our cosmic endeavors."

/ DALE HATFIELD



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Breaking Barriers: How Chief Judge Susan Blanco '03 Is Reshaping Justice

BY / DRU NORTON '27

Practicing law was not always the plan for the Hon. **Susan Blanco '03**. However, her unconventional path led her to make history as the first woman to serve as chief judge for Colorado's 8th Judicial District.

In 2000, Blanco earned her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Colorado State University, with the goal of pursuing medical school. But after her pre-med advisor suggested joining the speech and debate team to distinguish her medical school applications, she uncovered a new passion.

"I was never one of those people who knew from the time that they were young what they wanted to do for the rest of their life," Blanco recalled. "After joining the speech and debate team, I felt going to law school would be something I would be good at. And the rest became history."

That pivot led her to Colorado Law. "I was born and raised in Colorado, and I wanted to stay close to home," Blanco said. "The administration at CU was very kind and offered scholarships. That was a big deal because I was paying for law school on my own."

After earning her JD, Blanco worked as a prosecutor in the 8th Judicial District Attorney's Office, where she handled cases in county, juvenile, and district courts. She later transitioned into criminal defense and family law, joining a private practice before launching her own firm in Fort Collins.

Her dedication to vulnerable populations led to her 2017 appointment to the bench by Gov. John Hickenlooper. In 2021, Blanco was appointed by then-Chief Justice **Nathan Coats '77** and Justice Brian Boatright of the Colorado Supreme Court as chief judge of the 8th Judicial District—the first woman in the district's history to hold the position. Blanco now presides over criminal, veterans, competency courts as well as review of magistrate orders. She manages over 200 employees across three courthouses and four probation offices.

The daughter of Iranian immigrants, Blanco often reflects on how different her path might have been had her family not come to the United States.

"In Iran, we don't have female judges. In some Middle Eastern countries, even being a female attorney is rare," she said. "I think we sometimes take for granted the opportunities we have in the U.S. because our society has progressed in ways others haven't."

Blanco has pioneered initiatives that have gained national recognition, including Colorado's first competency court and the district's Latinx Task Force. Both programs, launched in 2021, reflect her deep commitment to transforming the justice system from within.

The competency court uses a community-based model to assess and support defendants with mental health issues, prioritizing local treatment over prolonged custody.

"It just felt like something needed to be done differently," she

said. "We were watching people with serious mental health issues sit idle in jail, often in solitary confinement. That's not justice."

For Blanco, this issue hit close to home. Her experience caring for a grandmother with dementia, combined with her advocacy for vulnerable populations, reinforced her belief that the justice system must better address cognitive decline.

The program quickly demonstrated positive results, decreasing the amount of time people waited in jail and connecting vulnerable individuals with long-term housing. Since then, the competency court has been honored with the 2022 City of Fort Collins Human Relations Award and the Visionary Award from the Board of Larimer County Commissioners, inspiring similar models across Colorado.


"We've been really proud of the success we've had and the work that we're doing," Blanco said. "I don't think we have solved it all by any stretch of the imagination, but we feel like we're doing something to improve the circumstances by creating alternate exit strategies out of the criminal justice system for people who probably never belonged there to begin with."

Blanco's commitment to inclusion also led her to create the Latinx Task Force, addressing concerns raised during a statewide 'listen and learn' tour by the Colorado Access to Justice Commission. When community members expressed feeling unwelcome in the courthouse, Blanco knew the judicial system must do something to address their needs.

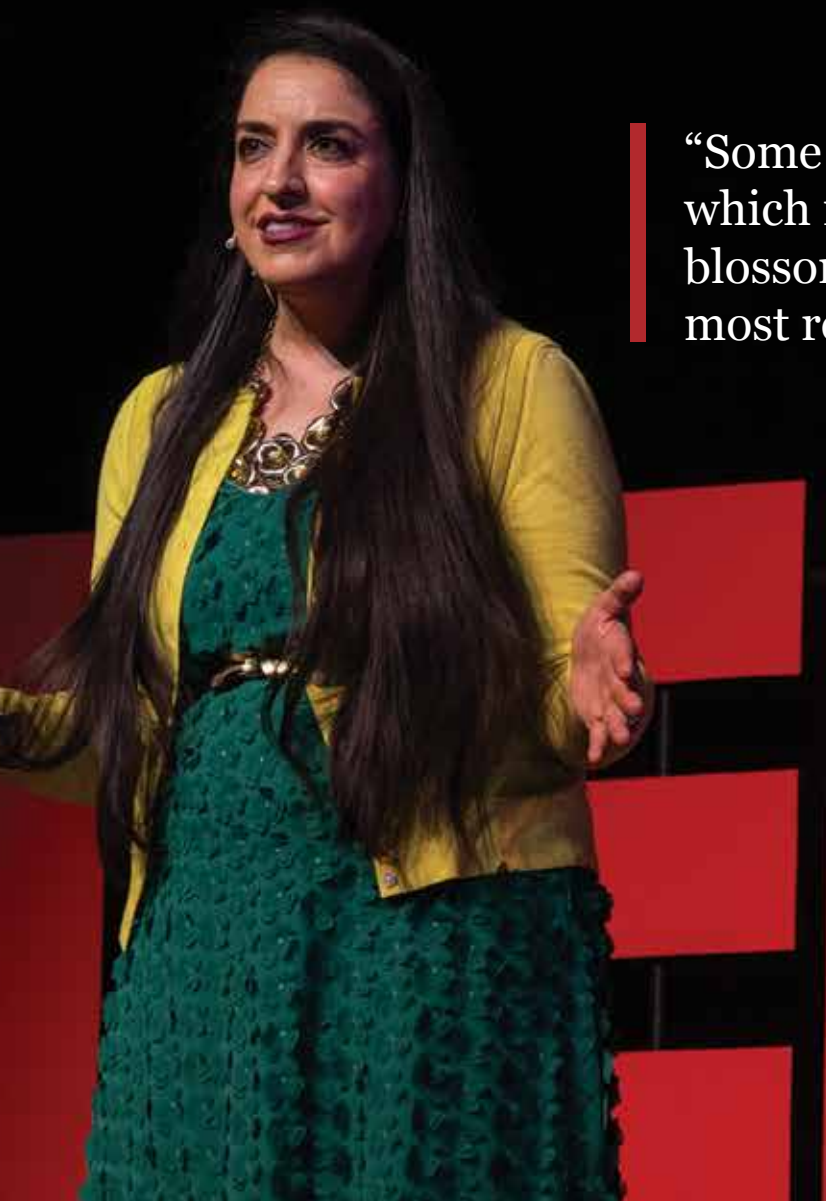
After convening community members and local nonprofits to examine the issues and find solutions, she introduced courthouse navigators, improved signage, and expanded Spanish-language resources, helping the community feel heard and represented.

"We were able to build bridges, and I think that has made the work so fruitful," Blanco said.

Her passion for justice extends beyond the courtroom. In 2024, she returned to Colorado Law as an adjunct professor to teach Motions Advocacy, the same course that once left a lasting impression on her. During her time as a student, the course was



Chief Judge Susan Blanco '03 presented "Accused and Confused: Why Every Community Needs a Competency Court," at a TedxMountainAve Talk in May 2024.



“Some of my students have stayed in touch, which means so much to me. Watching them blossom into attorneys has been one of the most rewarding parts of returning to CU.”



taught by her most impactful law school professor: former Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice **Nancy Rice**.

“I still have the papers I wrote for Justice Rice,” Blanco said. “I saved them because I was just blown away that a sitting Colorado Supreme Court justice was reading and commenting on our arguments. Her feedback meant everything to me.”

Now, Blanco hopes to provide her students with the same encouragement she once received.

“Some of my students have stayed in touch, which means so much to me,” Blanco said. “Watching them blossom into attorneys has been one of the most rewarding parts of returning to CU.”

Even as she balances teaching and leading one of Colorado’s busiest judicial districts, Blanco recently completed another milestone: In May, she earned her LLM from Duke University School of Law.

While Blanco’s journey to the bench was not linear, it reinforced her belief that success in the legal field does not need to follow a single path.

“I didn’t know if my path in criminal law would look as ‘successful’ as big law. But the truth is, if you love what you’re doing, you’ll work hard, and success will follow. It’s not a one-size-fits-all journey, and it shouldn’t be.”

Q&A:

Which Colorado Law professor had the greatest impact on you?

Justice Nancy Rice. Her teachings have stayed with me for years.

What’s the best career advice you’ve received?

To follow your passion. The sooner you figure out what it is that makes you tick, the better you’ll be as a professional and as a practitioner. You will find fulfillment in ways you never expected.

What is one of your favorite memories from life outside of work?

Toward the end of the pandemic, my kids, husband, and my parents traveled to Iceland. We hiked essentially the perimeter of the country—it was beautiful. As my kids grow older, I hope we will continue these adventures and multi-generational travel.

From Law School to the Legislature: Senator Dylan Roberts '16 Works to Uplift Rural Colorado

BY / EMILY BATTAGLIA

Colorado State Senator **Dylan Roberts '16** has built a legislative career marked by meaningful impact. From securing historic investments for affordable housing development to lowering health care and prescription drug costs, Roberts, a third-generation Coloradan, has championed the unique needs of Colorado's rural and mountain communities.

Roberts' legislative career began in 2018 when he was elected state representative for Eagle and Routt counties. After serving two terms in that role, he was elected to the Colorado Senate in 2022 to represent the state's Eighth Senate District. However, his interest in politics began far earlier, stretching back to his high school years.

"When I was in high school, my brother was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes," Roberts shared. "He was 11 years old at the time, and that was a big change and adjustment for him and for our family,"

Around the same time, the U.S. Congress was debating bills around stem cell research. Roberts recalls being drawn to this legislation, as he knew this work could potentially lead to cures for diabetes and other diseases. While Congress passed some of these bills, former President George W. Bush ultimately vetoed them.

"That was the first time I realized that what happens in politics and government impacts my life, even in a small town in Colorado," he said.

This interest and engagement in politics stuck with Roberts through undergrad and was sparked even further when Barack Obama began his run for president. During his campaign, Obama expressed strong support for expanding stem cell research and health care reform.

"That really inspired me," Roberts said. "When I came back

from my freshman year [of college], I started with an internship on his campaign in Denver, and they offered me the chance to stay on as a field organizer through the end of the election."

Roberts worked as an organizer in his hometown of Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where he recalls enjoying contributing to a national campaign while also making a tangible difference in the rural and mountain communities he cherished.

Today, Roberts continues to serve his community as a senator. Throughout his legislative career, he has been the prime sponsor of over 200 bills that have passed and become law, 99 percent of which received bipartisan support.

"What I love about the Colorado legislature is that it is still a place where things get done," Roberts shared. "I can bring ideas from my district and constituents—whether it's challenges they face or opportunities they want to pursue—down to the Capitol, write a bill, work it through the legislative process, see it signed into law, and witness it take effect and improve people's lives."

In the Senate, Roberts has championed legislation to lower health care costs, invest in affordable housing development, cap the costs of prescription drugs, protect the state's natural resources, and make life easier for families in mountain communities.

"My first year in the legislature, I wrote and passed a bill that made Colorado the first state to cap the cost of insulin," Roberts said. "Since then, more than a dozen other states have passed similar laws, and the U.S. Congress capped the cost of insulin for those on Medicare. To see that small idea [that came] from my personal experience expand across the country is a top achievement of mine."

Roberts' accomplishments as a legislator would not have been possible without his Colorado Law education. He realized

Q&A:

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

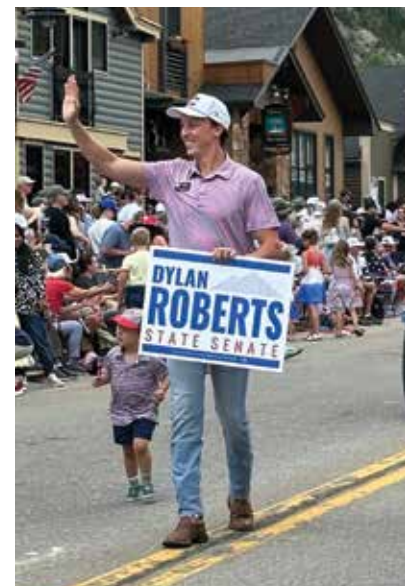
Fellow Colorado Law graduate former Congressman **Ed Perlmutter '78** and former Colorado Law Dean and now Attorney General **Phil Weiser** have always helped me find ways to combine my interest in the law and public service—and how to navigate the crazy world of politics.

What is one of your fondest memories as a student at Colorado Law?

During the first few weeks of my 1L year I traveled with a group of classmates to San Luis, Colorado, with the Acequia Assistance Project to learn about this unique form of water administration. This cemented my passion for water law and policy and desire to work to protect our water in Colorado.

What is the best career advice you have ever received?

A piece of advice that has rung true for me in both politics and the law is: "listen more than you speak." Those who speak the most at the Capitol are rarely the most effective legislators, and those who know how to make their point succinctly and confidently are more successful in politics and in the courtroom.



early on that if he wanted to improve the things he saw as problems across the state, he would need a law degree to help.

"I saw having a legal degree as a way to continue my public service and involvement in policy," Roberts said. "I wanted to find a way to have a bigger voice in that, and having a degree from Colorado Law has led me to where I am now."

From his water law coursework with Professor **Mark Squillace** to his time in the Criminal Defense Clinic with Professor **Ann England**, Roberts' legal education provided critical opportunities and foundational knowledge that have served him throughout his career. During his 1L year, he recalls taking on an internship at the Capitol with a state representative, an uncommon experience for first-year law students.

"At Colorado Law, I always felt supported to continue my political interest," Roberts said. "Even though that [internship] was unique for a 1L, they were always very supportive. The time I got to spend at the legislature opened my eyes to how that building works and gave me interest in working there one day."

After graduating from Colorado Law, Roberts became a deputy district attorney for Eagle County, supported by a Rural Prosecution Fellowship which seeks to encourage recent law school graduates to consider careers as prosecutors in rural areas of Colorado. He draws on this experience almost every day as a legislator.

"We have debated hundreds of bills related to the criminal justice system, and as the only former prosecutor I can talk about what that means," Roberts said. "I have also been able to work with victims' groups and DAs from across the state that address problems I saw when I was deputy DA."

From his early work as a student attorney in the Criminal Defense Clinic to his leadership at the Colorado State Capitol, Roberts exemplifies the values at the heart of the University of Colorado Law School. We are honored to count him among our distinguished alumni.



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 2024–25 board chair is Sonny Cave, and the chair-elect is the Hon. Sarah Wallace.**

Desta Asfaw '11, Holland & Hart LLP

Christopher Brock '14, Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition

Kristin Bronson '97, Colorado Lawyers Committee

Sonny Cave '85 (Chair), Sonny Cave Consulting, LLC

Vikrama Chandrashekar '15, Vicente LLP

Marco Chayet '97, Cheney Galluzzi & Howard, LLC

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

Mechelle Faulk '02, Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP

Alinka Flaminia '90, Retired

Tim Galluzzi '14, (Immediate Past Chair ex officio), Cheney Galluzzi & Howard, LLC

Stanley Garnett '82, Garnett Powell Maximon Barlow

Laurence Gendelman '15, Gendelman Klimas Edwards, Ltd.

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

Greg Hearing '12, Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP

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

Hon. Gary Kramer '89, Judicial Arbitrator Group, Inc.

Caitlin McHugh '12, Lewis Roca Rothgerber Christie LLP

Erin McLauthlin '09, Colorado Office of the Attorney General

Kevin Miller '20, Scott Law

Hon. Kristen Mix '85, Judicial Arbitrator Group

Kathleen B. Nalty '85, Kathleen Nalty Consulting

Dru Nielsen '97, Nielsen Weisz

Heather Carson Perkins '98, Faegre Drinker LLP

Hon. Nicole Rodarte '98, Denver County Court

Dr. Rita ("Ruta") Sanzgiri '06, Biotech, Pharma, and Lifesciences

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

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

Hon. Sarah Wallace '99 (Chair-Elect), Colorado's 2nd Judicial District Court

LETTER FROM THE

Law Alumni Board Chair Sonny Cave '85



Dear Colorado Law Alumni and Friends,

This year marks not only my term as chair of the Law Alumni Board (LAB), but also my 40th reunion since graduating from Colorado Law in 1985. As I reflect on the path that led me from law student to board chair, I feel immense gratitude for this community and the lifelong values it has instilled in me.

My connection to Colorado runs deep. I spent many summers as a teenager living in Rocky Mountain National Park, where my father worked as a seasonal park ranger. When it came time to choose a law school, CU was a natural fit. I couldn't have asked for a better place to pursue my interests in environmental and natural resources law.

After graduation, my career took many turns, eventually culminating in 22 years as the founding general counsel at ON Semiconductor in Phoenix, Arizona. During the early years of that tenure, I reengaged with Colorado Law through conversations with the late Dean **David Getches**—one of my favorite professors—and with former Dean **Phil Weiser**, now Colorado's attorney general. That renewal led my wife, Dr. Stefanie Workman, and me to establish an endowment supporting ethics and compliance education, helping launch the law school's Master of Studies in Law (MSL) program. Since then, our support has grown alongside our admiration for the school's mission, students, and dedicated leadership.

I want to thank my predecessor, **Tim Galluzzi '14**, for his exceptional service as chair. His thoughtfulness, steady leadership, inclusive spirit, and sincere dedication have positioned the LAB for continued impact.

As we enter this next chapter, one of our new initiatives is the evolution of the annual Alumni Board Retreat. What was once a half-day meeting is now two half-days of immersive dialogue designed to deepen collaboration with faculty, staff, and students. With this new format, our September retreat in Boulder was a very successful event rooted in inclusivity, innovation, and meaningful engagement across the Colorado Law community.

Colorado Law's vision for continuous improvement and excellence calls on all of us. Whether you graduated five or 50 years ago, the school needs your voice, your perspective, and your support—especially in light of ongoing challenges to higher education funding. There are many ways to get involved: mentoring students, hiring interns, attending events, or contributing financially to sustain the future of legal education in Colorado. I encourage you to connect with Dean **Lolita Buckner Inniss**, Assistant Dean for Advancement **Robert Garelick**, and our outstanding Advancement and Engagement team, including **Georgette Vigil**, to find a path that fits your passion.

Under Dean Inniss' visionary leadership, Colorado Law is in a time of great transformation. With one of the largest and most accomplished faculty cohorts in school history, groundbreaking scholarship, and major investments in clinical education, the school is powerfully living its public mission. The LAB is proud to partner with her in amplifying these efforts and widening our circle of impact.

I look forward to working with each of you during my time as chair. Together, we can ensure that Colorado Law thrives for generations to come.

With warm regards,

Sonny Cave '85

Chair, Law Alumni Board

Class Actions



Bill Ritter '81

1981

Former Colorado Governor **Bill Ritter '81** joined Freestone Strategies as a partner. Ritter is a nationally recognized expert on clean energy and clean technology, a sought-after public policy mediator and facilitator, and a leading voice on climate and energy policy.

1988

Jonathan Miller '88, a freelance public defense attorney in New Mexico, was featured in a Wall Street Journal profile in June 2025. The article noted that Miller travels 4,000 miles a month as a private contract lawyer, a little-known job representing criminal defendants for a flat fee. On a typical day, he may attend numerous court hearings at more than one courthouse, while also logging into remote hearings and visiting clients in jail. Miller has also published several works of fiction, including the Rattlesnake Lawyer series, which draw from his work in the legal field. The series title is a nod to Miller's signature snakeskin boots that he can be seen wearing during his travels across New Mexico and in the courtroom.



Brent Beecher '01

1992

Mary Claire (McLaughlin) Mulligan '92, partner at Mulligan & Mulligan, PLLC, was awarded the 2024 Jonathan Olom Award by the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar. The award is presented annually to an outstanding attorney of the criminal defense community based on the activities and accomplishments over the previous year.



Tara Duhy '04

2001

Brent Beecher '01 was named principal of his firm, Lasher Holzapfel Sperry & Ebberson, effective January 1, 2025. He focuses his practice on litigating a wide array of issues, focusing on Trusts and Estates, Business Disputes, Insurance Coverage, and Insurance Bad Faith issues.



Claire Havelda '05

2004

Tara Duhy '04 was named president of Lewis, Longman, & Walker, P.A. Duhy has served on the firm's Executive Committee and managed the West Palm Beach office for nine years. She also chairs the firm's land use and development practice groups.



Alison Gorsevski '08

Gov. Polis appointed **Marika Frady '04** as a county court judge in El Paso County, Colorado, marking the first appointment of a judge with Asian heritage in El Paso County. Frady previously owned The Frady Law Firm, where her practice consisted of family law, criminal defense, and dependency and neglect cases.

Ryan P. Lessmann '04 has been recognized in the 2025 edition of Chambers USA, a prestigious annual guide ranking the leading law firms in the U.S., for his Labor & Employment practice. Lessmann is the office managing principal of Jackson Lewis P.C.'s Denver and Salt Lake City offices.

2005

Claire Havelda '05 was promoted to shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck. A member of the firm's Real Estate Department, she draws on her experience in municipal planning and development in northern Colorado to offer direct insight into the interpretation and application of land use codes, planning and zoning approvals, housing and transportation development, and historic preservation concerns.

Jonathan Pray '05 was elevated to Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck's first chief legal officer, where he works to balance the legal and business interests of the firm.

2007

Sarah Mercer '07, a shareholder in Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck's Denver office, was named co-chair of the firm's State Attorneys General practice group. Mercer brings a wealth of experience guiding clients through complex legal, business, and political challenges.

2008

Alison Gorsevski '08 was promoted to shareholder at Lyons Gaddis, P.C. She has been practicing water law since 2013, and during that time, has had the opportunity to assist clients with developing, protecting, and maximizing use of their valuable water rights. She represents clients across Colorado in water court, assists with water rights transactions, and serves as special water counsel for several governmental entities, including municipal water providers and water conservancy districts.



Mary Lynn Macsalkla '08

Mary Lynn Macsalkla '08 joined the city of Lafayette, Colorado, as its first in-house city attorney. A Colorado native and seasoned municipal attorney, she brings 17 years of experience advising local governments and state agencies. As city attorney, Macsalkla's responsibilities include guiding policy development, ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, managing litigation, and drafting and reviewing ordinances, contracts, and legal documents for the city.



Laura Makar '08

Laura Makar '08 was appointed to the 9th Judicial District Court by Gov. Jared Polis, effective Oct. 5, 2024. Makar previously served as a deputy county attorney for Pitkin County for over a decade, focusing on civil litigation.

2009

Valerie Ringland '09 published a book, *Healing Through Indigenous Wisdom*. The book is a guide to integrating Indigenous science into everyday life—regardless of whether someone identifies as Indigenous—with practical exercises to de-colonize and re-indigenize respectfully wherever you are.



Abby Kirkbride '13

Jennifer Rosenthal '09 was promoted to managing partner at KO Law PC. Rosenthal's practice focuses on corporate transactions, including mergers and acquisitions, venture capital, and private equity investments.

2010

Erik Schuessler '10 joined Wade Ash LLC as a partner, where he will continue his business litigation practice with an increasing focus on probate and trust/estate matters.

2011

Desta K. Asfaw '11 received the prestigious 2024 Richard Marden Davis Award, presented to young attorneys with an outstanding record of professional and community service by the Denver Bar Association and the Davis Family. Asfaw is a partner at Holland & Hart LLP.

James Barry '11 served as general counsel of Gravity Renewables, Inc., as the company was acquired by Relevance Power, LLC. For more than 8 years, Barry grew Gravity Renewables into a leader in the renewable energy industry resulting in a successful shareholder exit.

After a few years working in civil litigation and local government, **Jacey Cerda '11** went back to school to become a veterinarian. In 2024, she was awarded a Fulbright postdoctoral fellowship to complete fieldwork in Australia analyzing the response to the

2019/2020 "Black Summer" fires as a case study for how to develop well-supported transdisciplinary and collaborative emergency biodiversity support teams to protect, extract, and triage wildlife during fires. This project allows Cerda to use both her legal and scientific skillsets to work on biodiversity conservation.

Sarah Clerget '11 joined Holland & Hart LLP's Billings, Montana, office as of counsel and government affairs director. She leverages insider knowledge of how business is done with Montana government to help companies navigate regulatory, policy, and litigation issues.

2012

Gordon McLaughlin '12 was re-elected as district attorney for the 8th Judicial District, representing Larimer and Jackson counties.

2013

Abby Kirkbride '13 joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck as a shareholder in the Real Estate Department. Kirkbride's expertise spans all phases of real estate development, from joint ventures and due diligence to overseeing renovation projects and navigating municipal development review processes.

Holly VandeHoef '13 joined Midwest Trust Company, where she continues to work as a trust officer, helping clients by administering trusts, estates, conservatorships, investments accounts, and IRAs.

2015

Aditi Kulkarni-Knight '15 was promoted to partner at Davis Graham & Stubbs LLP, effective Jan. 1, 2025. She focuses her practice on all stages of commercial litigation, covering diverse sectors such as energy, technology, public utilities, and private equity.

Zach Siegel '15, a shareholder in Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck's Real Estate Department, joined the board of directors of the Staenberg-Loup Jewish Community Center (JCC Denver).

2017

In December 2024, **Lauren Swan '17** was appointed by Gov. Polis to the 11th Judicial District Court bench. Her docket consists primarily of dependency and neglect and domestic matters.

2018

Austin Cole '18 joined Steptoe & Johnson PLLC's Denver office as an associate in the Litigation Department. Cole focuses his practice on natural resources, administrative law, and real property matters.



Lauren Swan '17

Brenton Gragg '18 was promoted to shareholder at Allen Vellone Wolf Helfrich & Factor P.C. Gragg is a commercial litigation and bankruptcy attorney who represents clients at every level of state and federal courts in Colorado.

Gregor MacGregor '19 took over as lead author of the 6th edition of *Environmental Law for Non-Lawyers* with David Firestone of Vermont Law and Graduate School. They updated the text in 2025 to reflect the many changes in U.S. environmental law and policy over the last five years.

Erin Pierce '18 was promoted to shareholder at Lyons Gaddis. A member of the firm's Civil Litigation

Practice Group, Pierce also leads the group's Family Law practice.

2022

Oluwayemisi (Kehinde) Winful's '22 debut contemporary fiction novel, *Flooding the River*, was released on January 29, 2025, and was named a finalist for debut fiction under 70,000 words by the Next Generation Indie Book Awards. Winful is an associate in the Denver office of Hall Booth Smith, P.C., where she practices in a variety of matters, including business litigation, correctional health care, general liability, health care, intellectual property, labor and employment, and medical malpractice.



Kehinde Winful '22



Catch Up on Class Actions Year-Round!

Visit our 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, 2026, for possible inclusion in the next issue of *Amicus*. If your contact information or communication preferences have changed, update them at: cu.law/reconnect.

In Memoriam

John Anderson Purvis '68, a highly respected attorney, educator, and leader in Colorado's legal community, died December 21, 2024, at the age of 82, surrounded by family.

Born in Greeley, Colorado, Purvis graduated from Harvard University cum laude in 1965 before earning his JD from the University of Colorado Law School in 1968. He began his career in the Boulder County Public Defender's Office, later establishing a private practice dedicated largely to representing brain injury victims. Purvis remained a practicing attorney until the year he died.

His professional service included chairing the Committee on Conduct of the U.S. District Court in Colorado, the Litigation Council of the Colorado Bar Association, and the Colorado Public Defender Commission. He also shared his expertise with future lawyers, teaching Evidence and Trial Advocacy at Colorado Law.

Purvis was a member and elected fellow of the International Society of Barristers, International Academy of Trial Lawyers, American College of Trial Lawyers, and American Board of Trial Advocates. In 1997, he received Colorado Law's Distinguished Achievement Award, and in 2019, its highest honor, the William Lee Knous Award.

Beyond his professional achievements, Purvis will be remembered for his humor, zest for life, and devotion to family.



John W. Rosenbloom '74, a distinguished attorney, loyal alumnus, and beloved friend to many in the Colorado Law community, died November 21, 2024, at the age of 75.

A graduate of the University of Colorado Law School with highest honors, Rosenbloom served as editor-in-chief of the *Colorado*

Law Review before clerking for Justice William Erickson of the Colorado Supreme Court. He went on to build a remarkable 40-year career at Williams McCarthy LLP in Rockford, Illinois, specializing in corporate, healthcare, and entertainment law—including representing several well-known rock bands.

After relocating to Colorado, Rosenbloom reconnected deeply with his alma mater, serving as a trustee for the University of Colorado Foundation and as a member of the Law Alumni Board. In 2016, he and his wife, Kathy, established the John and Katherine Rosenbloom Endowed Symposium for the Exploration of Ideas, fostering thought-provoking, interdisciplinary conversations in partnership with Colorado Law and CU Boulder's Conference on World Affairs.

Rosenbloom's legacy is one of professional excellence, generous service, and enduring love for Colorado Law. His impact will continue to inspire future generations of lawyers, leaders, and engaged citizens.



In Memoriam Myra Monfort

Myra H. Monfort '75, died on August 2, 2025, at age 87. Her deep commitment to the law, her alma mater, and the broader community continues to be celebrated through a dedicated space now bearing her name—the Myra H. Monfort Suite—in the Wolf Law Building's recently renovated garden level.

For decades, Monfort and her family devoted themselves to uplifting both Colorado Law and the wider community through philanthropy. The recently named Myra H. Monfort Suite serves as a testament to her dedication. Unveiled in February 2020, the 1,200-square-foot workspace houses the *University of Colorado Law Review*—the school's oldest journal of legal scholarship on which Monfort served while she was a student. The suite serves as a hub for collaboration and community for current and future generations of law students.

Monfort graduated from Barnard College in 1960 and supported her family as an interior decorator while her husband pursued his own legal studies at Columbia University. The family moved to Colorado in 1972, an opportunity Monfort seized to pursue her long-held dream of studying law, enrolling at Colorado Law the same year.

Following her graduation, she embarked on a meaningful legal career, specializing in labor law and eventually serving as vice president in charge of legal counsel at Monfort of Colorado, which later merged with ConAgra.

Monfort went on to become one of Colorado Law's esteemed alumni. She served on the Law Alumni Board (2001–2005), was honored with the alumni award for distinguished achievement in corporate counsel (1994), and in 2009 received the William Lee Knous Award—the law school's highest alumni honor.


Together with her late husband Kenneth, Monfort co-founded the Kenneth and Myra Monfort Charitable Foundation, supporting a wide range of causes, including legal education, music, health, and animal welfare. In 1990 they endowed a named professorship in commercial law, and in 2012, inspired by former Dean **David Getches**, established the Myra Monfort and David H. Getches Public Service Fellowship to support students committed to public service or nonprofit careers.

“Colorado Law was the place where her journey started,” her son Brad shared.

She leaves behind a powerful legacy of generosity, mentorship, and a profound impact on legal education in Colorado.



In Memoriam



William Hobbs '50
David C. Knowlton '53
Donald A. Melbye '53
Marcia Saunders '55
Lyle Richard Bratton '57
Jerry D. Winters '58
Timothy L. Campbell '59
Robert A. Ruyle '59
Karl L. Marks '60
Kenneth A. Baker '64
Clarence Phillip Miller '65
John M. Yeager '65
Joel Bradley Short '66
John A. Purvis '68
William John Ballas '69
William Gore Nye '70
Charley Hutchens '72
Thomas C. Thornberry '72
S. Ford Andersen '73
Richard D. Irvin '73
Robert Matthew Moyers '73
Curt Dean Rautenstrauss '73
John W. Rosenbloom '74
Richard Brian Keenan '80
Elizabeth Ann MacDonald '82
John Hocking Case '84
Heather Ann Eversley '97
Darrel T. Davis '98

Deaths reported July 1, 2024-July 1, 2025.

Last Word / Desta Asfaw '11

What do you enjoy most about your work at Holland & Hart?

I enjoy so many things about my work at Holland & Hart: my colleagues, my legal work, and my clients. Many of my colleagues feel more like family than work associates. Some of them were at my wedding over 10 years ago and have supported me through the expansion of my family. In addition to our personal connections, they have supported my professional development in so many ways.

My legal work is challenging, interesting, and rewarding. It requires me to navigate complex tax and legal issues in order to help my clients achieve their financial and personal goals. I have worked with several of my clients for almost 15 years now and have assisted them through difficult business issues as well as private family matters. It is truly rewarding to be the person that they call to help them resolve a diverse variety of problems.

You received the prestigious 2024 Richard Marden Davis Award from the Denver Bar Association, which recognizes legal excellence along with civic, cultural, educational, and charitable leadership. What does this recognition mean to you personally and professionally?

I have received recognition through various attorney rankings like Super Lawyers and Chambers, for example, but this award is special because it acknowledges my work as an attorney as well as my contributions to the community.

Personally, receiving the Richard Marden Davis Award is like receiving a pat on the back from your peers and your idols. It also serves as motivation to continue my community service—which can be hard to juggle with a full-time legal career and young kids!

Professionally, it is one of the biggest honors that I can think of. Past recipients include Colorado Supreme Court Chief Justice Monica Marquez, Colorado Court of Appeals Chief Judge Gilbert Román, former Colorado Governor **Bill Ritter '81**, and so many other titans of our state. My childhood friend and former colleague, U.S. Congressman **Joe Neguse '09**, came out to support me at my award ceremony, which was the greatest honor.

In addition to your legal practice, you lead Holland & Hart's Black Lawyers Network, serve as a member of the firm's Diversity Committee and Talent recruiting Committee, and support and mentor other Black lawyers and female lawyers across the firm. What drives your passion for this work, and what kind of impact do you hope to make?

Philanthropy and community service (especially for underserved communities) were part of the fabric of my upbringing. My parents, Geta and Janice Asfaw, taught us that it is our responsibility to contribute to our communities and help minority groups gain access to the same resources as the majority.

In addition to serving on a variety of community boards helping underprivileged people throughout my career, I spend a great deal of time serving on committees and panels internally at Holland & Hart to promote the recruitment, retention, and development of a

Hometown

Greenwood Village, Colorado

Professional Title

Partner, Holland & Hart LLP

Community Involvement

CU Law Alumni Board Member
Denver Zoo Board of Governors
Sam Cary Bar Association

Lives In

Greenwood Village, Colorado

diverse workforce. My family is responsible for igniting and driving this passion. I hope that my participation serves as an example to young attorneys and that the work we accomplish creates greater opportunities and improved experiences for our attorneys.

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

As a member of the CU Law Alumni Board, I serve on the Admissions & Recruitment Committee and truly enjoy speaking to law school candidates who are considering Colorado Law. I love serving as an ambassador for our incredible law school.

When I'm not working, you can find me....

Exploring Colorado with my husband Rob Folena and our two children. We love going on walks with our dog, dining al fresco, and escaping for our family ski weekends in the winter.



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

Your Support, Their Success

"Thank you for believing in me and giving me this opportunity to graduate with no student loans. It is absolutely life changing. I would not have been able to go to undergrad, or law school without the scholarship opportunities I have been given. As a first-generation college student and law student, sometimes I feel overwhelmed and discouraged, but **your belief in me encourages me and reminds me that I am here for a reason.**"

Madison Gallegos '25
Colorado State Public
Defender and Recipient,
Dan Barash Scholarship

GIVE NOW



Gift questions? Please contact Jeremy Jones at 303-735-8453 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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Visit colorado.edu/law/homecoming for more details and schedule of events.



45th Annual Alumni Awards Banquet / March 26, 2026

**Thursday, March 26, 2026 /
Sheraton Downtown Denver Hotel**

Visit colorado.edu/law/banquet for more details and schedule of events.



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