

GW LAW

WE THE PEOPLE

GW LAW AT THE FOREFRONT OF
THE FIRST AMENDMENT



10

At the Forefront of the First Amendment

Meet GW Law's prominent First Amendment scholars at the forefront of the national conversation on free speech on campus and in society at large.



16

Multiracial Democracy Project

As the country emerges from one of the most politically charged elections of our time, we take a deep dive into Professor Spencer Overton's Multiracial Democracy Project—dedicated to protecting voting rights for all.



22

Launching Impactful Government Careers

GW Law has a long history as a national leader in launching impactful government careers. The Career Development Office is striving to stretch the pipeline even wider.



28

Protecting Privacy in a Tech-Driven World

GW's new Center for Law and Technology is expanding the law school's footprint in one of the hottest fields of legal practice—privacy, cybersecurity and artificial intelligence law—led by a faculty of top global scholars.



GW LAW

a magazine for alumni and friends

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contents

FALL 2024

2

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



3

LAW BRIEFS



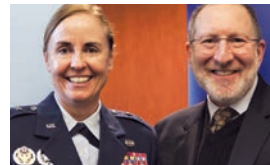
32

ALUMNI & PHILANTHROPY



34

CLASS NOTES



44

ALUMNI BOOKSHELF



45

20TH & H





“ GW LAW STANDS AT THE FOREFRONT OF OUR NATIONAL CONVERSATION ABOUT THE U.S. CONSTITUTION’S FIRST AMENDMENT. ”

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

GW LAW AT THE FOREFRONT

DEAR FRIENDS OF GW LAW,

I AM PLEASED AND PROUD TO PRESENT THE FALL 2024 EDITION OF *GW Law* magazine. Inside these pages, you will find ample evidence that GW Law stands at the forefront of our national conversation about the U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment.

Our cover story introduces you to GW Law’s deep “bench” of the nation’s most prominent First Amendment scholars who are helping to advance the national dialogue about free speech on campus and in society. They share their thoughts about the critical issues emerging from the recent student protests on campuses nationwide and provide valuable perspective on the history and culture of free speech in America.

As the country emerges from one of the most historic and politically charged presidential races of our time, our next story takes a deep dive into leading election scholar Professor Spencer Overton’s Multiracial Democracy Project—dedicated to protecting voting rights for our nation’s increasingly diverse population.

Our third feature updates you on some of the exciting transformations underway in our Career Development Office (CDO) under the leadership of a dynamic new associate dean, Suzanne Hard. Not only are these developments important to the work of restoring our rankings, but even more importantly this work is core to our law school’s mission to equip lawyers who lead through service. Nearly 17 percent of our 2023 graduates began their post-graduate careers in government service, a placement rate for that sector that exceeds the national average by almost five percentage points. Our CDO is striving to stretch that pipeline even wider—adding staff and kicking off an accelerated effort to broaden the pool of talented students and alumni who pursue public interest and government service while also growing GW Law’s historic strength in placing our graduates in outstanding private sector jobs throughout the country and around the world.

Finally, I’m thrilled to share that on October 9th, we launched our groundbreaking new Center for Law and Technology, which brings our preeminent IP and Technology Law programs together with our cutting edge leadership in privacy, AI, and cybersecurity law. “Protecting Privacy in a Tech-Driven World” spotlights GW’s globally renowned privacy law scholars who are advancing legal scholarship and shaping the next generation of leaders to tackle the challenges of this rapidly evolving field. No law school in the country will be able to rival our depth of expertise.

Enjoy the magazine. I extend my very best wishes to each of you and hope to have the chance to meet you at one of our many upcoming events on campus and across the nation. Please keep in touch.

SINCERELY,

DAYNA BOWEN MATTHEW

Dean and Harold H. Greene
Professor of Law

Big Data and Armed Conflict Panel Discussion



Professor Laura Dickinson (left) led a panel discussion on the complex legal issues posed by the use of big data on the battlefield.

HOW DOES THE ERASURE OR alteration of big data during armed conflict fit into existing legal frameworks? Are they considered attacks? What if the data erasure affects civilians?

These and other issues were the focus of a GW Law panel discussion by distinguished legal scholars who contributed to the new book, *Big Data and Armed Conflict: Legal Issues Above and Below the Armed Conflict Threshold*. The book was edited by GW Law's Oswald Symister Colclough Research Professor of Law Laura Dickinson, who led the panel discussion. Dickinson is the faculty co-director of GW Law's National Security, Cybersecurity, and Foreign Relations Law Program.

Dickinson noted that this is the first major book that grapples with the complex legal issues posed by the use of big data on the battlefield. The book focuses on three core international legal frameworks: the law of armed conflict (LOAC), human rights law, and the conditions under which states may resort to war, or *jus ad bellum*.

Big data is becoming increasingly relevant to the battlefield, said Dickinson, because data is both a tool and a target during armed conflict. Data can be an enormously complicated and expansive resource,

she acknowledged, especially when civilian and military data are commingled.

Panelists included retired U.S. Cyber Command Staff Judge Advocate Gary Corn, who serves as program director and adjunct professor in the Technology, Law, and Security Program at American University College of Law, and former UN Special Rapporteur for Counterterrorism Fionnuala Ni Aolain, who is the Robina Chair in Law at the University of Minnesota Law School and on the faculty at The Queens University of Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Corn explained how he analyzed the *jus ad bellum's* governance of big data for the book. Likewise, Ni Aolain detailed her examination of human rights law's application to big data, specifically how counterterrorism offers a useful framework for analyzing big data and armed conflict issues.

The event was organized by the National Security, Cybersecurity, and Foreign Relations Law Program and three GW Law student organizations: the National Security Law Association, the Veteran Law Students Association, and the Military Law Society. The book is part of a series sponsored by the Lieber Center for Law and Land Warfare at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

AI: EDUCATING THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE

GW LAW WAS SELECTED, ALONG-side Stanford University and Princeton University, to provide AI training to thousands of executive branch policymakers and senior leaders this fall as part of the General Services Administration's AI Community of Practice.

Associate Dean for Government Procurement Law Studies Jessica Tillipman and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Aram Gavoor are leading the 2024 AI Training Series' acquisition track, a key federal initiative focused on equipping government employees with the knowledge to effectively procure and manage AI technologies. Topics include risk management, national security, and regulation compliance.

"It is an honor that George Washington University was selected to partner with the U.S. government to educate the federal workforce on artificial intelligence acquisitions and public procurement best practices," said Provost Christopher Alan Bracey. "This kind of interdisciplinary public interest work showcases the expertise of GW's faculty as well as our deep and continued relationship with the federal government."

"I am proud to see our GW Law colleagues share their formidable expertise on government procurement and AI—in furtherance of a federal statute and an executive order no less—and use their platform to make an impact by equipping our nation's federal workforce to deploy artificial intelligence and machine learning ethically, effectively, and with excellence," said GW Law Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew.

“IT IS AN HONOR THAT GW WAS SELECTED TO PARTNER WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATE THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ACQUISITIONS AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT BEST PRACTICES.”

—Provost Christopher Alan Bracey

Supreme Court Preview: What's on the Docket?



A panel of journalists and faculty experts discussed cases on the U.S. Supreme Court docket for the upcoming term at a GW Law Constitution Day event.

THE JACOB BURNS MOOT COURT Room was packed to capacity Sept. 19 as leading journalists and faculty experts previewed the cases on the U.S. Supreme Court docket for the upcoming term.

Panelists included Kimberly Atkins Stohr, senior opinion writer and columnist for *Boston Globe Opinion*; GW Law's Lerner Family Associate Dean for Public Interest and Public Service Law Alan B. Morrison; and Visiting Associate Professor Caroline Cecot. Mark Joseph Stern, a legal analyst and senior writer at *Slate*, moderated the annual Constitution Day event for the eighth time.

The panel kicked things off with Cecot's discussion of three pending administrative law cases, including one that may curb the power of the EPA. *City and County of San Francisco v. Environmental Protection Agency* questions whether the Clean Water Act enables the EPA or an authorized state to impose what are called "generic prohibitions" in permits granted under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination

System. Given the Supreme Court's recent interest in curbing the regulatory power of government agencies, Cecot predicted the EPA will not be given deference in this case.

Cecot also discussed *Seven County Infrastructure Coalition v. Eagle County, Colo.*, which asks whether the National Environmental Policy Act requires agencies to study environmental impacts beyond the proximate effects of the action over which the agency has regulatory authority, and *Food and Drug Administration v. Wages and White Lion Investments, LLC*. The latter case arose when the Food and Drug Administration denied an application to market fruit- and candy-flavored e-cigarettes, citing research clearly showing that adults prefer e-cigarettes with a tobacco flavor, but the fruit and candy flavors are more attractive to children.

Stohr focused on cases involving the rights of transgender minors and an Oklahoma death penalty case. A "blockbuster" LGBTQ rights case this term,

Stohr said, is *U.S. v. Skrametti*, which challenges bans in Tennessee and Kentucky on gender-affirming care for minors.

"Parents in both states challenged these bans," Stohr said, "saying they targeted trans people. Whether it's hormone therapy, puberty blockers, or surgical transitions, they are all banned for anyone under the age of 18, [with the] reasoning that it is harmful for trans youth to get this sort of gender-affirming care, despite the fact that there is a tremendous amount of research saying that it could be very harmful if they don't."

"It's a really important case because there are other states, too, that have such bans," Stohr said, noting that medical associations and the Biden administration have argued on the side of trans youth and equal protection under the law for all citizens.

Other pending cases involving LGBTQ issues, Stohr said, include challenges to the Affordable Care Act's protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and sports bans keeping LGBTQ and trans kids from being able to participate in sports, among others.

The death penalty case *Glossip v. Oklahoma* first came before the court in 2015. It involves a death row inmate who has been given an execution date eight times and served his last meal three times, which Stohr pointed out would seem clear violations of the Eighth Amendment's prohibition against cruel and unusual punishment. She thinks that *Glossip* will succeed in preventing his execution and that his conviction could be tossed out, especially since it is known that prosecutors hid exculpatory information.

Morrison discussed a series of cases touching on the internet, social media, and First Amendment rights. The first of these involves *Free Speech Coalition v. Paxton*, an ongoing battle between the state of Texas and the trade association for the adult entertainment industry. With the goal, Texas officials say, that nothing sexually explicit should be seen by minors, the state wants to require certain internet platforms to make users prove that they're over the age of 18. Opponents say that filter software allowing parents to block objectionable material is a much more effective and realistic solution. Morrison predicts the Supreme Court will rule against Texas.

Moving on to a discussion of the TikTok ban scheduled to take effect Jan. 19

(the day before the inauguration of the next president) unless its ownership changes, Morrison said he thinks the platform will survive. A particularly interesting facet of the case, he added, is that TikTok might seem to have a strong argument on First Amendment grounds even though objectionable content is not the issue. The issue here is foreign (in this case, Chinese) ownership and potential influence or monitoring of data.

“If you were trying to shut down an entity for First Amendment purposes,” Morrison said, “you wouldn’t do what Congress did, which will allow somebody else to operate TikTok as it was. So, my own view is that it could be very difficult to win this case on First Amendment grounds.”

Stern gave sustained attention to a gun rights case involving ghost guns. The question at issue in *Garland v. VanDerStok*, presented by Stern, is whether existing statutes may be applied to emerging problems.

“Over the last decade or so, we have seen a proliferation of ghost guns used in crimes in this country,” Stern said. “Ghost guns are essentially weapons kits sold on the internet that you can put together into a fully functioning weapon with a 20-minute YouTube video as assistance.”

There are essentially no restrictions on ghost guns, Stern added, and the market for them is extremely lucrative. One of the major issues with such weapons is that they are untraceable. While federally licensed firearm dealers are generally required to sell only firearms that have a serial number, ghost guns have no such number.

“Because of the lack of federal regulations, there are companies that make a lot of money selling ghost guns,” Stern said. “And when the Biden administration said it would restrict the sale of ghost guns, these companies filed suits.”

Existing federal statute enacted decades ago bans any weapon that can “expel a projectile by the action of an explosive,” and so the Biden administration interpreted the statute to cover ghost guns, which are killing large numbers of people in America every year. Stern thinks there’s a good chance that the Supreme Court will side with the Biden administration in the case.

VAN VLECK COMPETITION SPARKS TOP CALIBER ARGUMENTS

IN AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF ORAL advocacy, Simon Poser, JD ’24, and Angela Seeger, JD ’24, won the Best Team Overall award in an electrifying Van Vleck Constitutional Law Moot Court Competition last semester that showcased the exceptional talent and intellectual prowess of GW Law students. The award for Best Oral Advocacy went to the competing team of Tessa Lasser, JD ’24, and Samantha Raggio, JD ’24.

Nevada Supreme Court Judge Patricia Lee, JD ’02; Cheryl Ann Krause, a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; and Cornelia T. L. Pillard, a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, presided over the standing-room-only competition on the GW campus.

“Your oral advocacy across the board is of the caliber that I would be thrilled to have in my courtroom,” Judge Krause told the winning competitors.

The problem presented at this year’s competition involved a woman in the State of New Columbia who wished to become pregnant but hesitated because of a medical condition that could lead



Van Vleck 2024 overall winners Simon Poser and Angela Seeger confer during the final round of the competition.

to the need for an abortion. The State of New Columbia’s anti-abortion law limits the circumstances under which a pregnancy may be terminated. The case sought to determine whether the woman’s medical condition fell within the ambit of the statute.

In other competition awards, first place for Best Brief went to Kyle Atwood, JD ’24, and Nicholas Chesrown, JD ’24, while first place for Best Oral Advocate went to Karsten Ball, JD ’24.

Next year will mark the 75th anniversary of the prestigious annual competition, which will take place on January 30, 2025. Six sitting U.S. Supreme Court justices have presided over the Van Vleck finals in recent years. GW Law’s premier advocacy contest is named for William Van Vleck, the longest serving dean in GW Law history, who led the law school from 1924 to 1948.



The judges and winners of the 2024 Van Vleck Competition treated a standing-room-only audience to an impressive display of oral advocacy.

Shapiro Symposium Spotlights Environmental Justice and Hope



Keynote speaker Robert Verchick

THE J.B. AND MAURICE C. SHAPIRO Environmental Law Symposium turned a spotlight on youth climate activism and environmental justice issues, including climate migration, bringing together lawyers, activists, and other environmental justice experts across disciplines.

In his keynote address, legal scholar and author Robert Verchick acknowledged that the massive implications of climate change can overwhelm people into inaction. To counter this, he urged individuals to look for remedies that affect the issues they care about most.

“This is a moment when people are learning about climate change in a very personal, visceral way,” said Verchick, who is the Gauthier-St. Martin Eminent Scholar Chair in Environmental Law at Loyola University. “What we have to learn is that the opposite of despair is action.”

Verchick discussed local efforts detailed in his latest book, *The Octopus in the Parking Garage*, including attempts to protect Joshua

trees in the Mojave Desert and the work of citizen scientists to restore coral reefs in the Florida Keys.

Verchick is also the author of the book *Facing Catastrophe: Environmental Action for a Post-Katrina World*, a senior fellow in disaster resilience at Tulane University, and the president of the Center for Progressive Reform. He served as deputy associate administrator for policy at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency during the Obama administration.

Panel discussions at the 2024 symposium titled “Environmental Justice Solutions Summit: Strategic Litigation, Resilience and Hope” examined youth community organizing and climate justice; climate change displacement and migration; strategic litigation to promote human rights and environmental protection; and environmental justice and public health.

Assistant Dean for Environmental Law Studies Randall S. Abate said that the range of speakers at the symposium reflected the growing scope of GW Law’s Environmental and Energy Law Program, which organizes the annual event.

In another highlight of the day, the winner of the \$5,000 Grodsky Prize for Environmental Law Scholarship was announced. The annual award honors the legacy of Jamie Grodsky, who was a GW Law environmental law professor at the time of her 2010 death. It is given for the best paper written by a GW Law student in the environmental field.

James Crisafulli received the 2024 prize for his paper on the interstate economic and public health problems caused by interstate pollution. In accepting the prize, Crisafulli thanked faculty members and expressed gratitude to Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew

THE ARC OF A GREAT CAREER BREYER CONCLUDES ORAL HISTORY SERIES

RETIRED U.S. SUPREME COURT Justice Stephen Breyer returned to GW in May for the fifth and final installment of “An Oral History of the Arc of a Great Career,” a series of public conversations hosted by GW Law. In a wide-ranging discussion with longtime friend Alan B. Morrison, the Lerner Family Associate Dean for Public Interest and Public Service Law, Breyer talked about his early days on the court, the problems with originalism, and whether politics have infiltrated the high court.

Breyer also discussed his new book, *Reading the Constitution: Why I Chose Pragmatism, Not Textualism*. He said he favors trying to understand the principles underlying the words in the Constitution before applying them to the statute in question. A big problem with those who rely on a strict reading of the Constitution and what it meant to its framers, he said, is that at the time the Constitution was written, it did not recognize much of the population as full citizens.

The former justice said the appeal of originalism lies in its promises: to simplify matters, to ensure fairness by removing personal preferences from consideration, to help Congress interpret and make laws, and to hem in judges who might veer widely in their decisions.

“Those are great promises,” Breyer said. “Unfortunately, none of them can be kept.”

He also discussed criticism that his book is too fair-minded about his

for spearheading the school’s investment in public interest law, particularly environmental law.

“I came to GW because it’s in the nation’s capital,” Crisafulli said. “I had a policy interest and background and just wanted to be where the action was. I was passionate about environmental issues, but I didn’t really realize what I was going to be getting at GW in terms of environmental law. And I’ve been so grateful.”



Retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Breyer

colleagues, attributing the best motives to them when some court observers feel they are politically motivated.

“It’s more open in my experience than people think. I do not see politics,” Breyer said. When Morrison suggested that perhaps ideology, rather than politics, is at play, the former justice agreed.

“Ideology does play a role,” the justice agreed. “You can’t jump out of your own skin.”

Morrison also asked the former justice about *stare decisis*, the principle that legal precedent must be respected. The U.S. Supreme Court’s 2022 decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* overturned the high court’s ruling 50 years earlier in *Roe v. Wade*, which protected women’s right to choose an abortion.

If *stare decisis* were carved in stone, Justice Breyer said, we wouldn’t have positive outcomes such as the landmark 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case overturning the practice of separate-but-equal racial segregation in schools.

Originalists maintain that judges simply rule from their gut if they do not lean on the text of the Constitution. Breyer countered that he believes originalists do exactly that, ruling with a view to the outcome they think is best. In the *Dobbs* case, he said, some colleagues on the bench voted to overturn *Roe* because they felt it was wrong.

As the discussion concluded, Breyer told GW Law students that they are “going into practice at a difficult time for the country.” He then offered the following advice:

“Talk to people who disagree with you and give them credit. It’s better to get a percentage of what you want than to be a scorched-earth purist,” he said.

SCHENCK ESTABLISHES NATIONAL SECURITY LAW COMPETITION

GW LAW’S NEW SCHENCK NATIONAL Security Crisis Negotiations Competition, which debuted last semester, introduces first-year students to the dynamic world of national security law. Funded by a gift from Associate Dean for National Security, Cybersecurity, and Foreign Relations Law Lisa M. Schenck and her husband, James, the annual event marks a significant leap forward in advancing experiential learning opportunities for GW Law students.

Students participating in the inaugural Schenck Competition applied skills that are useful to both national security professionals and attorneys across a wide range of legal fields—and the results were dynamic. Two-person student teams took on the roles of key national security stakeholders and navigated a simulated crisis involving Arctic Russia. Their task was twofold: advocating for their department’s position and negotiating a lawful course of action before the simulated National Security Council.

The students received comprehensive training from experienced adjunct faculty; lectures by experts from government agencies provided insights into the workings of each department. GW Law adjunct faculty members Michael Coffee, John Gountanis, Daniel Richard, and Matthew Thrasher helped ensure that students were well-equipped to tackle the intense challenges of the two-day competition, which culminated in heated debates and strategic negotiations.

Faculty and upper-level students served as judges as teams vied for recognition as the best in their respective agencies. At the end of the competition, special recognition went to four teams: Alex Greenberg and Talia Spillerman representing the Department of Defense, Austin Yanoti and Sam Girioni for the Department of Homeland Security, Zack Minsk and John Hollander for the Department of State, and Sophie Young and Gray Kinnier representing the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

BENÍTEZ RECEIVES ELMER FRIED EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

THE AMERICAN IMMIGRATION Lawyers Association has recognized Professor Alberto M. Benítez, who directs GW Law’s immigration clinic, with the 2024 Elmer Fried Excellence in Teaching Award. In nominating Benítez, current and past students joined colleagues to extol the longtime professor’s dedication, kindness, and desire to help them become better practitioners.

They credited him for reminding them that the crucial characteristic of immigration law is that it is about people.

“Professor Benítez is an outstanding clinical law professor and an authority in immigration law issues, widely admired by students and faculty alike,” reads one of the nomination letters. “He is not only incredibly knowledgeable [about] immigration law, but he is also generous in sharing his knowledge and mentoring students. ... His



Alberto M. Benítez

contributions to immigration law and its practice are boundless.”

Before joining GW Law in 1996 to direct the immigration clinic, Benítez was on the faculty of legal clinics at Chicago Kent College of Law and Northwestern University. Prior to that, he was a staff attorney at the Chicago Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the Legal Assistance Foundation of Chicago, as well as an intern at the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Schaffner Propels Passage of Pets in Housing Act

THE ANIMAL WELFARE PROJECT at GW Law, supervised by Professor Joan Schaffner, served a pivotal role in obtaining the passage of the Pets in Housing Act in the District of Columbia. The new law is designed to provide accessible and affordable housing for individuals and families with companion animals. It also outlaws breed discrimination by housing providers.

Schaffner is the faculty co-director of the Animal Legal Education Initiative at GW Law and the leading advisor to the GW Animal Welfare Project and the GW Student Animal Legal Defense Fund. The Animal Welfare Project worked closely with the Humane Rescue Alliance and DC VRA in drafting and promoting the bill.

“The GW Animal Welfare Project, with the help of local and national animal advocates, ... worked for the past several months researching the housing barriers to D.C. residents with pets,” Schaffner said, noting that the new law is designed to keep families together and increase the likelihood that homeless animals in D.C. will find caring homes. The legislation eliminates non-refundable pet move-in fees and caps both pet rent and security deposits.

The Pets in Housing Act promotes equity by prohibiting landlords from

“THE GW ANIMAL WELFARE PROJECT, WITH THE HELP OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL ANIMAL ADVOCATES, ... WORKED FOR THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS RESEARCHING THE HOUSING BARRIERS TO D.C. RESIDENTS WITH PETS.”

—Joan Schaffner



Joan Schaffner

discriminating against pets based on breed, weight, and size. It also provides for at least one pet-friendly shelter for D.C.’s unhoused community, eliminating the need for unhoused individuals to choose between a safe place to sleep or remaining with their pet.

Schaffner’s scholarship focuses on animal protection law, most recently on the issue of free-roaming cats. Ze also has contributed to the development of an international convention for animal protection.

The GW Law Animal Welfare Project was established in 2003 by Professors Mary Cheh and Joan Schaffner as an independent pro bono effort to raise awareness of animal welfare issues and promote legislative changes. Students participate in the project by researching aspects of animal protection, enforcement issues, and legal reform across the country. The project is a resource for the D.C. government, humane organizations, and community groups interested in strengthening the protection of animals. It also works with other law schools, non profit organizations, and the bar on joint animal law projects.



Alfreda Robinson (center) received the 2024 Charlotte E. Ray Award.

ROBINSON RECEIVES 2024 CHARLOTTE RAY AWARD

THE NATIONAL BAR INSTITUTE presented GW Law Associate Dean Alfreda Robinson with the 2024 Charlotte E. Ray Award in recognition of her significant contributions to legal education, advocacy, and leadership. Charlotte E. Ray was the United States’ first female African American lawyer.

Robinson has played a pivotal role in shaping the next generation of legal professionals, emphasizing academic excellence and the importance of ethical practice and public service. She is also known for her commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the legal profession and a dedication to mentorship, particularly of women and underrepresented minorities in law. Her work extends beyond the classroom into significant legal practice and service on various boards and committees.

She is the recipient of many other high marks of distinction. Robinson served as the 77th president of the preeminent National Bar Association (NBA), and has received the NBA’s highest honor, the C. Frances Stradford Award. Last year, she was inducted into the Washington Bar Association Hall of Fame, and in 2022, she was inducted into the NBA Hall of Fame. In July 2023, Robinson was the first woman recipient of the Trial Masters Award, National Bar, Civil Trial Advocacy Section. She’s also the recipient of the National Bar’s prestigious Heman Marion Sweatt Award, Sankofa Award, and many Presidential Outstanding Service awards.

ABIDIN NAMED RECTOR OF PRESIDENT UNIVERSITY



Dr. Handa Abidin, LLM '10, is the new rector of President University in Indonesia.

DR. HANDA ABIDIN, LLM '10, recently added an impressive new title to his distinguished résumé—rector of President University in Indonesia. As rector, akin to a university president in the United States, he oversees the acclaimed university and its

approximately 10,000 students. The university has the highest number of international students in the country, and Abidin says he brings lessons from his time at GW to the post.

According to Abidin, enrolling at GW Law in 2009 marked a significant turn in his professional journey. It deepened his interest in an area of the law—exploring how legal frameworks can be leveraged to protect vulnerable populations and promote global justice—that would define his later work as a researcher and a rector.

“During my academic career, I delved deeply into global climate change and indigenous peoples’ law,” said Abidin. “In my previous research, I had discussed indigenous peoples on various occasions because they play a crucial role in climate action and require greater participation in the agenda. My interest intensified at GW when I took Professor David Freestone’s International Climate Change Law course. This was a rare path for Indonesians, yet it felt crucial for climate action.”

“My learning experience at GW Law was transformative,” said Abidin. “The Socratic method I learned there continues to shape my teaching, and the kindness and professionalism of faculty like former Dean Susan

Karamanian, Professors David Freestone, and David Jonas were instrumental in my development as an educator and now as a rector.”

Abidin’s academic journey began at the University of Indonesia, where he earned his Sarjana Hukum (equivalent to Bachelor of Laws). Along with his LLM from GW Law, he received his PhD from the University of Edinburgh Law School.

From 2006 to 2007, Abidin served as vice chair of the Student Executive Body at Fakultas Hukum Universitas Indonesia, the largest student organization at the university. This experience sparked a passion for higher education.

“We engaged in discussions on Indonesian law, supported students at risk of dropping out, and helped others find employment opportunities,” he said. “Though I never dreamed of becoming an attorney or a university rector as a child, I always aspired to positively impact others.”

In advising students, Abidin encourages them to look for opportunities that may expand their knowledge and understanding. “For aspiring lawyers, I advocate broadening their studies beyond law to include emotional and artificial intelligence,” he said. “This holistic approach can significantly accelerate their careers and prepare them for a future where integrity and innovation are paramount.”

– Sarah Kellogg

CAROLINE PHAM RECEIVES 2024 BELVA ANN LOCKWOOD AWARD

THE GW LAW ASSOCIATION FOR Women and the GW Law Alumni Association honored Commissioner Caroline D. Pham, JD '11, who sits on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, as the 2024 Belva Ann Lockwood Award recipient.

The annual award recognizes a successful and inspiring alumna who is a trailblazer in her field. Pham is an internationally recognized leader in financial services compliance and regulatory strategy and policy, with deep expertise in derivatives and capital markets and emerging issues such as digital innovation.

Her substantial experience spans key

international issues, among them prudential regulation and systemic risk. She also is an expert on currencies and commodities, fintech and digital assets, and the impact of major disruptions like the savings and loan crisis, the 2008 financial crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This year’s winner, Commissioner Caroline Pham, faced very stiff competition in the selection process, and she emerged victorious because she is the best of the best,” said Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew, adding that Pham “truly exemplifies the ideals of Belva Lockwood.”

Lockwood graduated from the National University School of Law (now GW Law) in 1873. A towering historical



Marvin S.C. Dang, JD '78, and 2024 Belva Lockwood Award winner, Commissioner Caroline D. Pham, JD '11

figure, she was a lifelong suffragist and the first woman to argue a case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

GW LAW *at the* FOREFRONT *of the* FIRST AMENDMENT



BY SARAH KELLOGG

UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES TEEMED WITH PROTESTERS AND encampments last spring, becoming theaters for fierce discontent yet largely peaceful protest. The demonstrations illuminated how deeply polarized campuses are, not only about the Israel-Hamas war but also about how best to safeguard free speech at such a politically charged moment.

GW is uniquely positioned for this moment. The law school's deep bench of First Amendment experts allows the university to host much-needed conversations to explore the intersection of protest, free speech, and academic freedom. GW Law's team of scholars and thought leaders are at the forefront of the debate about approaches to free speech at public versus private universities, the differences between free speech and fearless speech, and the ever-present danger of censorship.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KLAUS GURITENCO



“ONE OF THE MISSIONS OF A UNIVERSITY IS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO MODEL HOW LEGAL PROBLEM-SOLVERS CAN HOLD PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE ACROSS SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES.”

said Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew, the Harold H. Greene Professor of Law. “As a law school, GW Law has a responsibility to educate future leaders about the fundamental rights guaranteed by our Constitution and to encourage students to consider the essential constitutional questions, like the principle of free speech, that animate our university and our nation.”

Here, we continue that conversation by featuring GW Law’s prominent First Amendment scholars to further the national dialogue about free speech on campus and in society. They share their thoughts about the critical issues that have re-emerged as a consequence of the recent student protests, and the history and culture that shape any discussion of free speech.



JEFFREY ROSEN

An Indispensable Freedom

THROUGHOUT AMERICAN HISTORY, THOSE ON both sides of the political spectrum have challenged the First Amendment paradigm. In the United States, speech can only be banned if it is intended to and likely to cause imminent violence, said Professor Jeffrey Rosen, who also serves as president and CEO of the National Constitution Center.

That principle—recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court and articulated by justices such as Louis Brandeis—dates back to the founding period when Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison questioned the Alien and Sedition Acts. The belief has always been under siege from a wary public, government, and private sector.

“For universities, it is urgently important to defend the First Amendment and not allow one group of students to drown out the speech of another, and to not take sides in the great political controversies of our day,” said Rosen. “Universities must remain neutral platforms for free speech, and only then can they maintain their function as beacons of light for the free exchange of ideas.”

Many university presidents who have defended First Amendment principles have been successful in preventing hecklers’ vetoes and invasions of the rights of students and faculty to speak and learn, said Rosen. “Other universities have struggled with this balance,” he added. “It’s more important than ever to remember the basic framework of First Amendment law in order to maintain the teaching function of the university.”

Rosen said it is fundamental to teach this generation of students to embrace the principles of the First Amendment because it is the United States’ “greatest constitutional achievement,” and one that distinguishes our nation from other countries.

“We protect free speech more vigorously than any other country in the world,” said Rosen. “Our protections for speech have allowed a greater exchange of ideas than any other country in human history, and at a time when those ideals are under assault from all sides, it’s very important to defend them.”





MARY ANNE FRANKS

Free Speech v. Fearless Speech

MARY ANNE FRANKS, THE EUGENE L. AND BARBARA A. Bernard Professor in Intellectual Property, Technology, and Civil Rights Law, doesn't share her colleague's strong reverence for the First Amendment. She believes the amendment is flawed because it has been unevenly applied throughout the nation's history.

"What we tell ourselves about the American tradition, and what most people believe, is that in the United States we uniquely have provided protections for free speakers, and that we believe in siding with the downtrodden, the opposed, and the marginalized," said Franks. "Actually, that is just not true. We think we've been standing by fearless speakers. Instead, it's been things like Nazis and pornographers. When you scratch the surface, it's not people speaking boldly who are protected, it's people speaking controversially."

Franks spotlights the concept of "fearless speech" as a response to this moment. Borrowing from the ancient Greeks and French philosopher Michel Foucault, she believes the country should strive for a new standard of fearless speech, characterized by courage and directed at those in power—criticizing authority rather than praising it.

"Fearlessness in speech isn't just about saying something offensive that might provoke a violent reaction. It's deeper than that," said Franks. "True fearless speech requires sincerity. It can't be anonymous or just playing devil's advocate. The speaker must fully identify with what they're saying. By its nature, fearless speech challenges the status quo."

The line between the two is not always clear, suggested Franks. For instance, events like the January 6 riot at the Capitol raise difficult questions: Were the protestors engaging in fearless speech by putting their lives on the line for what they believed was a fight against tyranny? But fearless speech cannot involve destroying property or threatening others—it must remain non-violent to qualify as true criticism.

"Ultimately, while it's possible to establish boundaries between fearless and reckless speech, these distinctions are not always easy to make," said Franks. "The complexities of human behavior and intent often leave room for ambiguity, and the challenge lies in carefully discerning where fearlessness ends and recklessness begins."



JONATHAN TURLEY

The Evolving Threat of Censorship

TODAY'S ATTACKS ON THE FIRST AMENDMENT ARE not new and are not restricted to the Israel-Hamas protests of the past year. They have precedents in U.S. history, argued Jonathan Turley, the J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Professor of Public Interest Law.

The United States has gone through periods where "rage rhetoric" has become "state rage," resulting in a crackdown on free speech. In fact, Turley said, many leaders have used the same excuses for censorship and blacklisting today, including terms like "fake news" or "false news," that were used to rationalize censorship at the founding of the United States.

Yet, Turley believes that the current anti-free speech movement is different in size and sophistication than those of the past. The contemporary alliance assembled against free speech—joined by the government, corporations, academia, and the media—poses a greater threat.

"The current anti-free speech movement originated in higher education and then metastasized in the government and the media," said Turley. "At the same time, the anti-free speech movement in Europe has [grown]. In countries like Germany, France, and the United Kingdom, free speech is in a freefall with an ever-widening array of arrests for speech that is deemed inciteful, inflammatory, or degrading."

The assumption that the United States will weather the current "age of rage" without lasting damage to this "indispensable right" is a dangerous conceit, Turley said. Madison referred in 1800 to speech prosecutions as the "monster" that dwells within society. It rises at times when people are angry or afraid, and unleashing it has always led to great injury of political dissidents and minority groups.

"We are living through not just an age of rage but a certain crisis of faith," said Turley. "It takes a great deal to convince a free people to give up freedoms. They have to be afraid, very afraid. The anti-free speech movement has preyed on those fears by convincing citizens that free speech is now a threat to them and even the democracy."

"These are the same voices that we have heard throughout our history, often using the very same terms to justify the silencing of others," added Turley, noting that technology has upped the stakes. "However, they now have the means to achieve a far greater degree of speech regulation."



DAWN NUNZIATO

Students First

AS A PRINCIPLE, FREE SPEECH CANNOT BE SACROSANCT, blindly disconnected from and standing above the people and communities that animate and protect the right, believes Dawn C. Nunziato, the Pedas Family Endowed Professor of IP and Technology Law and the William Wallace Kirkpatrick Research Professor. It is essential that universities, in particular, listen to those who feel harmed by others' speech in order to make responsible decisions about where to draw the line when necessary.

"I think we should aim to protect civil discourse and even impassioned and heated civil discourse, especially on matters of public importance, including criticisms of national, international, and university leaders," said Nunziato, "so long as this doesn't cross the line to becoming discriminatory harassment."

Nunziato said that universities cannot determine when a violation exists without gaining more information about how student groups and other members of their community are affected by others' speech. For example, in recent Palestinian protests, there were situations in which Jewish students began to feel more than unwanted on campus, they felt unsafe.

"We need to be as inclusive as possible in hearing from students about what our rules should be, what sort of conduct and speech should be protected and what sort of speech conduct should not be protected," said Nunziato. "I think that having a process that is as inclusive as possible—having students sit on panels and boards that come up with university policies—is important."

Some say the current generation of students is exceptionally "sensitive" to criticism, frequently talking about being triggered by both disagreeable and seemingly even non-controversial speech, but Nunziato takes issue with that characterization. This is not a generation of so-called "snowflakes," and universities have a responsibility to respond to harassment in its many forms, she said.

Of course, what constitutes discrimination or discriminatory harassment can be a subjective test. Unwelcome conduct based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics can be offensive and so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, noted Nunziato. "We must listen to our students and find solutions that serve their needs and respect their concerns," she said. "No one should feel unwelcome on our campuses."



MARY-ROSE PAPANDREA

Free Speech on Campus

UNIVERSITIES IN THE UNITED STATES FACE A Catch-22 in protecting the First Amendment and their students from its potential harms. Public universities cannot regulate speech because they are required to adhere to the First Amendment, which applies to government institutions. At the same time, those institutions are able to impose time, place, and manner restrictions as long as those restrictions are reasonable and designed to prevent significant disruption.

"What I hope comes out of this very difficult and fraught time is that we appreciate that there are costs and benefits to the freedom of speech, and that everyone is able to see that," said Mary-Rose Papandrea, the inaugural holder of the Burchfield Professorship of First Amendment and Free Speech Law, beginning the fall of 2025. "Everyone would like to be able to express themselves, and we have to figure out how we can give that space for people to express themselves on core political issues."

Private universities like GW are not government entities, and they are not required to uphold the stern interpretation of the First Amendment like their public peers. They can impose stricter limits on speech even beyond those for time, place, and manner, but if they receive federal funding, like GW and many private institutions do, they must adhere to federal Title VI requirements to honor free speech for students and faculty.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

"Private corporations and other private actors are not required to follow the First Amendment, but because we operate in a university setting, we have a commitment to robust discourse," said Papandrea. "The freedom of speech runs very deeply in academia."

Papandrea said organizations such as the American Association of University Professors have tried to help universities find middle ground in crafting policies balancing academic freedom and free speech, but each institution will respond in a manner that befits their schools and students.

"I think universities are going to have a lot more freedom to be proactive in passing restrictions in an attempt to navigate the conflict between wanting to allow for robust discourse on campus, while also avoiding Title VI violations," Papandrea concluded.

AN EVOLVING FUTURE

WHILE THERE IS LITTLE CONSENSUS TODAY ON what the appropriate balance is between free speech and the harms that can result from that freedom, there is wide agreement that this is an evolving field as progressives and conservatives have flipped sides over the years depending on the debate and the speech. And there is often a dramatic, public flurry on both sides of wrapping oneself in the flag and the First Amendment to protect certain speech at certain times.

“Everyone would like to be able to express themselves, and we should be able to,” said Papandrea. “As a society, we have to figure out how we give space to people to express themselves on core political issues. My hope is that we no longer have conservatives or liberals with knee-jerk reactions: ‘I love the First Amendment. I hate the First Amendment.’ No one is served by that.”

Additionally, in the age of artificial intelligence and deep-fakes, the line between free speech and reckless speech is increasingly blurring, and the dispute often moves at the speed of light. The challenge lies in distinguishing between the two, particularly when any statement or image could potentially provoke outrage or even threats of harm before the university even has time to respond.

“EVERYONE WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES, AND WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO, AS A SOCIETY. WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW WE GIVE SPACE TO PEOPLE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES ON CORE POLITICAL ISSUES.”

—MARY-ROSE PAPANDREA

Still, the dangers ahead of censorship are real. Technology allows governments and private companies (and universities, as well) to make sweeping judgements that could roundly impact students and their right to free speech, which many consider a basic human right.

“Again, it is now in vogue to combat speech in the name of democracy, an oxymoronic notion that cloaks viewpoint intolerance in the language of altruism and patriotism,” said Turley.

Ultimately, universities will be left to chart their own path through the maze, and Dean Matthew is hoping that GW Law can serve as a welcoming forum where students, faculty, and experts in the First Amendment can come together to enjoy respectful conversations, explore free-speech challenges, and continue to make an impact on the most pressing issues of our time.

SCHOLARSHIP ADVANCES CONSTITUTIONAL THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

GW LAW IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF SCHOLARSHIP IN constitutional law, shaping public policy and enlivening society-wide conversations on divisive issues—from the free speech rights of protesters to the threat of artificial intelligence to individual privacy.

As always, the law school’s pioneering scholarship is driven by its distinguished professors who have made significant contributions to the field of law and public understanding of U.S. constitutional history. In 2024, GW Law faculty authored three books on the topic:

In *Fearless Speech*, Professor Mary Anne Franks explores the role of the First Amendment in American democracy. While free speech is hailed as a cornerstone of freedom, Franks argues that it has been co-opted by powerful interests to often support misogyny, racism, and corporate greed.

Through memorable examples—from civil rights leaders to #MeToo advocates—Franks, the Eugene L. and Barbara A. Bernard Professor in Intellectual Property, Technology, and Civil Rights Law, champions the idea of “fearless speech”: voices that risk everything to expose injustice. The book urges readers to rethink what kind of speech should be protected and promoted in a democracy.

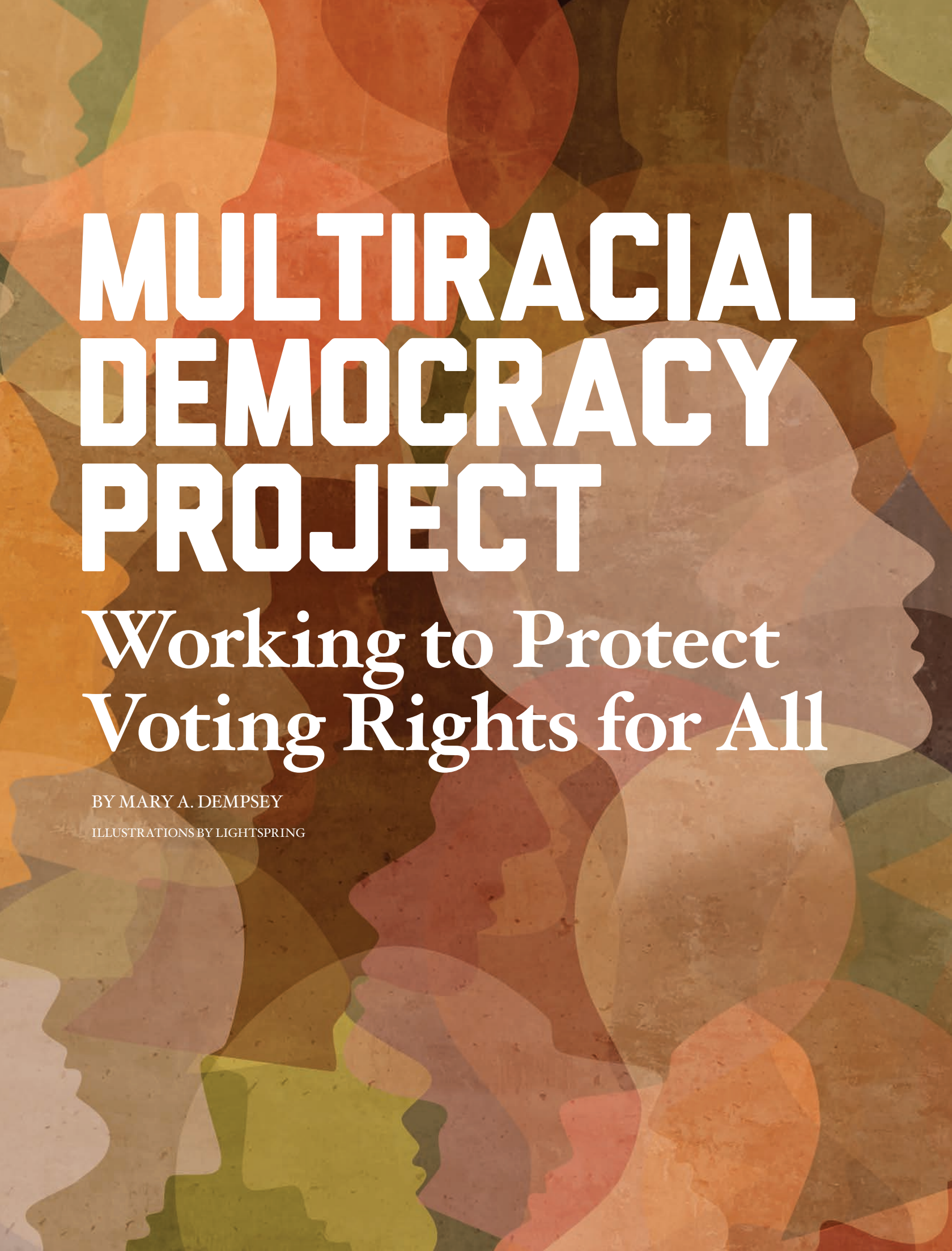
In *The Indispensable Right*, Professor Jonathan Turley places the current attacks on free expression, in particular on the First Amendment, in a historical, legal, and political context. Turley offers examples of the systemwide effort to bar opposing viewpoints on subjects ranging from racial discrimination to police abuse, from climate change to gender equity.

Using examples from 250 years of U.S. history, Turley, the J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Professor of Public Interest Law, details accounts of the struggle for free speech in America. He features the stories of people who refused to yield to authority as they sought to protect their free speech rights.

In *The Pursuit of Happiness: How Classical Writers on Virtue Inspired the Lives of the Founders and Defined America*, Professor Jeffrey Rosen delves into the lives of five influential Founders—John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and George Washington—analyzing their understanding of “the pursuit of happiness” as a quest for virtue.

Inspired by classical philosophers, the Founders saw happiness as lifelong moral improvement, not fleeting pleasure to satisfy a particular moment. Rosen, president and CEO of the National Constitution Center, explains how this ideal shaped their personal and political lives, offering a compelling look at the foundation of American democracy and its enduring relevance.

Rosen’s book made the *New York Times* bestseller list. A prolific author, his other books include the *New York Times* bestseller *Conversations with RBG: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg on Life, Love, Liberty, and Law*, as well as biographies of Louis Brandeis and William Howard Taft.


The background of the entire page is a collage of overlapping, semi-transparent human profiles in various colors including shades of orange, brown, green, and purple. The profiles are facing different directions, creating a sense of diversity and community.

MULTIRACIAL DEMOCRACY PROJECT

Working to Protect
Voting Rights for All

BY MARY A. DEMPSEY

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LIGHTSPRING



SPENCER OVERTON, THE PATRICIA ROBERTS Harris Research Professor of Law, traveled to Ireland in June to learn first-hand about the voting system that went into place in 1998 under the Northern Ireland Good Friday Agreement. While there, Overton met Gerry Lynch, a man whose family had lived through the three decades of political violence the Irish refer to as The Troubles.

The Irishman talked about how his mother had carried bombs for the Irish Republican Army when she was a young teen. His father had been imprisoned for his political activity. Then the man raised a question: What do you do when you have a country full of armed people and a political system they don't trust?

The man wasn't referring to Northern Ireland in the 1970s and 1980s. He was talking about the United States today.

What *do* you do with a country that has an increasingly diverse population, a dramatically polarized political system, and rising anti-democratic tendencies? How do you manage identity politics, including white nationalism, as well as election deniers, extreme gerrymandering, and high court rulings that erode voting rights? What if many people no longer trust government or feel they have a voice, including in decisions on issues over which they disagree?



Professor Spencer Overton (far right) and students enjoying a class discussion at the Lincoln Memorial

Those are among the questions the Multiracial Democracy Project, which Overton directs, seeks to answer. As its first step, the project has begun looking at alternative election systems with an eye on race.

“Right now, research shows that race is the most significant demographic factor in voting behavior,” Overton said. “It is more significant than gender, education, class, or marital status. Religion is up there, but race is still more important. And I’m not simply talking about the differences between Black voters and white voters. There is also a big gap between the voting behavior of white voters on one hand, and the voting patterns of Asian American and Latino voters on the other.”

Democracy reform groups have lobbied for voting-system changes such as proportional representation, ranked-choice voting, open primaries, final four primaries, and fusion voting. However, Overton said this advocacy has come without a complete understanding of how those reforms might affect communities of color. Even more, voting rights organizations do not have the resources to undertake that investigation.

“We’re at a juncture where some people feel cultural anxiety. How can we facilitate power sharing and deal with the issue of polarization ... without promoting assimilation and mandating that everyone just has to tone it down and blend in?” Overton asked. “If we think of ourselves as founders of a large diverse democracy, what are the systems we should set up to both facilitate power sharing and accommodate our differences?”

Overton said the country’s founders thought little about

racially polarized voting when they drafted the Constitution and set up the federal government. At the time, laws limited citizenship to “free white persons” and most states limited or would later limit voting to white males. Political factions took the form of merchants vs. farmers or advocates of strong federal government vs. believers in states’ rights. Today, the electorate’s fast-changing ethnic and racial composition—produced through federal laws restricting racial discrimination in voting rights and immigration laws—has brought forward very different divisions.

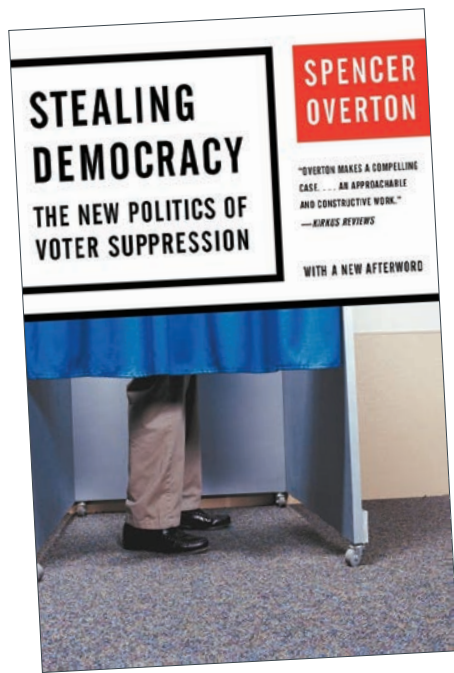
The Multiracial Democracy Project has been designed as a bridge to connect academics, policymakers, civil rights groups, the tech industry, election reformers, voting rights communities, and funders. Through research, analysis, conferences, policy advocacy, and public education, the project hopes to inform the nation’s transition to a well-functioning democracy that represents its increasingly diverse population.

The initiative examining election systems and alternative election reforms is the project’s first focus, but right behind it is a separate initiative that will examine how artificial intelligence (AI) can influence the democratic process.

“Both these projects are premised on the notion that this work needs to be done, but other universities are not doing it,” Overton said.

The Multicultural Democracy Project’s overall goal is ambitious: a pluralistic democracy in which there is respect for different cultures and identities.

“Our goal is not simply conquest and assimilation. It’s not just



“Is there some way we can have diverse communities share power? The question is what are the implications of different election systems for a diverse America?”

- SPENCER OVERTON

about saying you have to accept my norms and plug yourself into this preexisting tableau,” Overton explained. “To me, it’s unfair to say that folks who are in areas that are largely white can’t have an identity, and that they have to be muted. At the same time, however, we don’t want to stoke xenophobia and white supremacy.

“We’ve got to both acknowledge and respect the centrality of cultural, religious, gender, and other identities to Americans, while also acknowledging the challenges of polarization and devising systems to manage it and allow people to build new coalitions to collectively address our most pressing challenges,” he continued, acknowledging that the task is made more difficult by politicians who stoke resentment and division to acquire political power.

Overton traveled to Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland this summer while elections were underway to examine whether their single-transferable voting systems held lessons for the much larger, much more demographically diverse United States. In Ireland, non-citizen immigrants are also allowed to vote in local elections, a system now in place for local elections in Washington, D.C.

Overton is also studying Alaska’s election reforms that went into place in 2022, including Ranked Choice Voting that allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference. Alaska’s groundbreaking Final Four Voting system combines top four nonpartisan primaries with instant runoff general elections. But he cautioned that voting systems that bring fairer representation for one racial or ethnic group may not work for other racial or ethnic groups.

And there is the question of how any election reform system will accommodate future demographic shifts.

“Should it be winner-take-all, for whoever has a plurality? Is it whoever gets 50 percent plus one? Is there some way we can have diverse communities share power?” Overton asked. “The question is what are the implications of different election systems for a diverse America?”

Over the next three years, the Multiracial Democracy Project and the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at Harvard Law School will partner with as many as 15 national voting rights and voter mobilization organizations that serve communities of color. The collaboration will examine the implications of

alternative election methods, commission research, and work with voting rights and voter mobilization organizations to identify which reforms best ensure representation for communities of color.

Overton already organized panels on multiracial democracy at the 2023 annual meetings of the Association of American Law Schools and the Association of Black Foundation Executives. He has also discussed election reform at events organized by the University of Virginia, Emory Law School, UCLA School of Law, Shepard Broad College of Law at Nova Southeastern University, and several summits focused on the resilience of democracies. In September, he spoke at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association.

Overton, one of the country’s leading election law scholars, first joined GW Law in 2002, then left to work in the Obama administration. He also led the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, America’s Black think tank, for several years. He returned to GW last year to launch the Multiracial Democracy Project, citing Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew’s leadership as the draw.

“She has this vision of a law school focused on action, on Washington, D.C., and on solving real problems that matter for the future of the country. I told her about my vision for this project, and she was excited about it,” he said. “I had other options that I had been considering, but her vision was important to me in terms of the kind of work I wanted to do. Doing academic work is important to me, but I also want the ideas to have an impact.”

Grants from Civic (Re)Solve, Crankstart, Democracy Fund, Open Society Foundations, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Protect Democracy, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Unite America, and Wellspring Philanthropic Fund provided the seed funding for the launch of the Multiracial Democracy Project.

All eyes may be on the immediacy of the upcoming U.S. elections, but Overton said the Multiracial Democracy Project is playing the long game.

“Whatever happens in November, we’re still going to have people not feeling connected to the people governing them,” he said. “The Multiracial Democracy Project is not focused on the next election cycle. We’re focused on the long-term democracy, the next 10 years, the next 20 years.”

AI AND ELECTIONS

Great Equalizer or Threat to Democracy?

THANKS TO GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI), the ability to disrupt and disinform election campaigns has reached a speed and savviness that is unprecedented. AI's growing capacity also positions it, ironically, as a potential weapon against that very misinformation—and perhaps even as a tool for building a racially inclusive democracy.

Research into that double-edged sword is one of two initiatives now unfolding at the Multicultural Democracy Project, which is housed at GW Law.

“AI poses some very real threats to democracy, including disinformation, increased cultural anxiety, racial polarization, and targeting local election offices with nuisance open record requests and cyberattacks. At the same time, optimists note that AI could be a great equalizer that reduces power imbalances in democracy—and, by extension, in public policy and society broadly,” said Spencer Overton, the founder and faculty director of the Multicultural Democracy Project. “The question is whether we can design legal and economic incentives so that most AI applications benefit inclusive democracy.”

The Multiracial Democracy Project was created to identify strategies and solutions to guarantee that the U.S. democracy infrastructure keeps up with the country's increasingly diverse population. The AI project is one of two research initiatives the center recently announced. The other focuses on alternative election systems, such as ranked-choice voting or Final Four primaries, with an eye on how they could affect the engagement and representation of people of color.

“I've done some work in the past on disinformation, such as Russians impersonating Black activists urging Black voters to boycott the 2016 election, for example. I felt that generative AI was going to be significant in politics,” Overton said. “Looking at these tools in this context is important but it is still an underexamined area.”

Overton has testified before Congress and organized several panels focused on AI and multiracial democracy issues. He has also presented at conferences on the topic. His examination of AI's threat to the political system is detailed in his article, “Overcoming Racial

Harms to Democracy from Artificial Intelligence,” scheduled for publication in the *Iowa Law Review* in early 2025. A complementary article focused on the potential of AI to help facilitate the country's transition to a well-functioning, inclusive, pluralistic democracy is in the works.

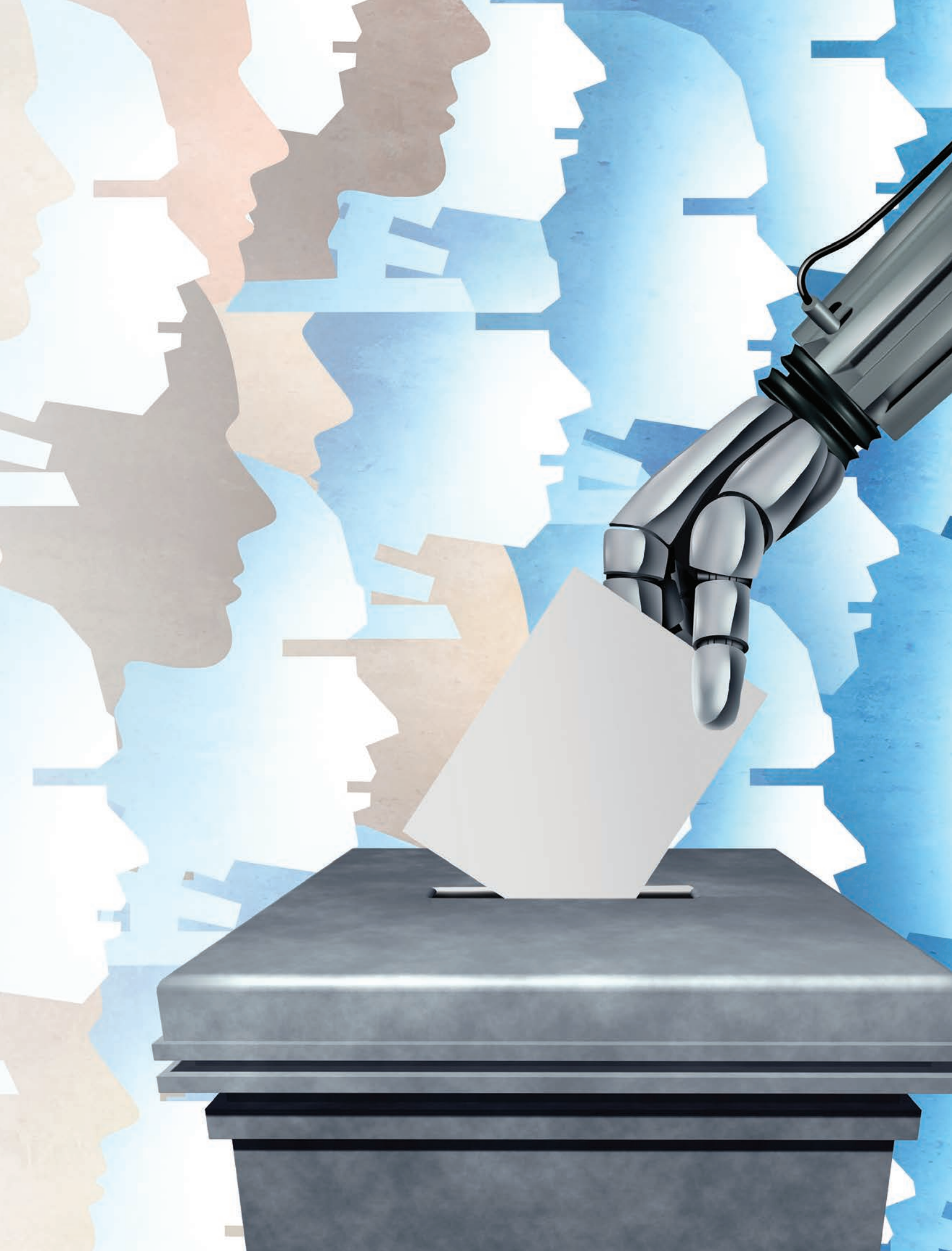
AI interference has become an entrenched danger to U.S. elections. FBI Director Christopher Wray has said his agency is bracing for complex threats to the U.S. elections this fall, and Microsoft has warned that state-backed cyber groups in China may be targeting campaigns. While the use of AI as a political weapon can disrupt political campaigns, its greater threat is its ability to undermine the public's trust in its institutions, including voting systems.

Yet, Overton believes AI could also be deployed to enhance democracies. Provided certain economic, political, and legal preconditions are in place, he said, AI could be leveraged to address racial disparities in political participation, racial polarization, and racial inequities across government policies and services.

Pretty much anyone with a smartphone can create sophisticated mis- and dis-information. That means they could also create sophisticated legitimate messaging, opening opportunities for resource-challenged candidates and communities—notably communities of color—to more fully participate in the democratic process. By taking on the grunt work of database management and fundraising emails, for example, AI could free volunteers for face-to-face engagement with voters. It might also be used to overcome language barriers; more than 8 million voting-age citizens do not speak English well enough to vote in English.

“AI is not a silver bullet that will make intractable problems disappear,” Overton said. He noted that technology alone will not eliminate economic factors that affect voting and campaigns. And even if the technology can be used as a tool to make politics more inclusive, tech companies and policymakers may not be interested in advancing a racially inclusive democracy.

Overton said the big question is whether the benefits of AI outweigh its harms—or whether the will exists to craft technologies and law so that the benefits outweigh the harms.





LAUNCHING IMPACTFUL GOVERNMENT CAREERS

BY MARY A. DEMPSEY

ILLUSTRATION BY VIVIANA PICO

SCOTT HEPLER, JD '23, APPLIED TO GW LAW because he wanted a career in public service law. The school's location was a big draw, close to federal agencies. But Hepler said GW offered other benefits: faculty with connections to government, an outstanding government contracts program, knowledgeable career counselors, and a culture that values public service.

As a 1L, he landed an internship with the National Science Foundation's Office of Inspector General. He followed that with an internship with the Office of Inspector General at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"I got a GAO job—like a summer associateship—in between my second and third years. From that, I was hired back when I finished law school," said Hepler, who now provides legal support to GAO's Contracting and National Security Acquisitions audit team.

Nearly 17 percent of Hepler's Class of 2023 took positions with government agencies, continuing GW Law's reputation as one of the top feeder schools for the government workforce. But the school isn't satisfied with that distinction. It has ambitions to stretch that pipeline even wider.

"It's no surprise that we, by order of magnitude, outperform most law schools in the United States in placing students in government



“Our government employment numbers are among the best in the country for law schools, and we seek to build on that success.”

- SUZANNE HARD

service. We attract the kind of students who want to have a positive impact on the world,” said Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew. “We have a tremendous history of educating people who serve in the military, including judge advocate generals. We have a history of people who are not only trained in the doctrine and theory of criminal law, but who also go on to litigate as state and federal prosecutors or public defenders. We are the strongest school in the nation at training people who will serve to transform government and protect the democratic experiment that is the United States of America.”

The GW Law Career Development Office (CDO) has added to its staff and kicked off an accelerated effort to broaden the pool of talented students and alumni who pursue government service through internships and permanent employment. The drive includes the launch of an annual career fair focused on public sector and public interest law, stepped-up career coaching, and more comprehensive engagement by faculty and alumni with experience in the government.

The strategy will be strengthened by soon-to-be-launched GW Law Link, a professional social networking and mentoring platform for students and alumni.

“Government employment, particularly with the federal government, has historically been very strong for our grads,” said Suzanne Hard, associate dean for professional development and career strategy. “Our government employment numbers are among the best in the country for law schools, and we seek to build on that success.”

She noted that GW Law easily outpaces the American Bar Association’s finding that 12 percent of law school graduates go into government work. Many of the school’s adjunct faculty members work in federal agencies, and students benefit from their experience and connections.

Among members of the Class of 2023 who went into government law, some 63 percent landed federal positions. A fifth went to work for state agencies. Local government positions accounted for another 11 percent, and 3 percent took international government jobs. The Career Development Office is mobilizing to raise those numbers in all categories and expand GW Law’s strength as a feeder school for federal employment, in part because of its location in the nation’s capital and students’ ability to complete multiple federal internships and academic year externships during their law school experience.

“Dean Hard takes a holistic approach to career advising and has encouraged the Career Development Office to coordinate efforts across the law school, including faculty and student organizations,” said Erin Kelly, who is assistant director of career counseling and part of the Public Interest and Public Service Law Center team. Kelly joined GW Law in January 2024 after practicing employment and administrative law with the Merit Systems Protection Board, Department of Commerce, and Social Security Administration.

The law school’s reputation as a channel to government employment is already bolstered by the school’s subject matter concentrations, including the preeminent Government Procurement



Suzanne Hard

Law program and the National Security, Cybersecurity, and Foreign Relations Law Program headed by Associate Dean Lisa Schenck, a retired colonel and Army judge advocate who has held several high-profile appointments, including chief judge of the U.S. Court of Military Commission Review.

Hepler said the Government Procurement Law program, which is more than 60 years old, provided him the knowledge and skills needed to succeed at the GAO.

“The program was super well known and it was something I got involved with. The classes were helpful and the professors were very knowledgeable and had connections to the government,” he said. “At the GAO I’m working on government contracting issues. It’s interesting legal work and it’s a great agency to work for. I really believe in our mission of overseeing federal spending,” added Hepler, who emphasized that he’s expressing his private opinion, not that of the GAO.

GW Law also has a long and successful track record with students selected for the Judge Advocate General’s (JAG) Corps of the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The CDO has relationships with field screening officers and facilitates on-campus interviews. This summer, Kelly attended a two-day career services course at Maxwell Air Force Base to gain a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities available for GW Law students with the Air Force, both as JAG officers and as civilian attorneys with the recently launched Palace Acquire Program.

For students interested in criminal defense across the United States, the Career Development Office has connected with Professor Lula Hagos, director of the school’s Criminal Defense and Justice Clinic, to enable student engagement with interested employers and increase student awareness of public defender offices in active hiring cycles.

The new Public Interest and Public Sector (PIPS) Career Fair,



GW Law's Career Development Office team

which was launched this fall, is expected to attract as many as 40 employers from the federal government, D.C. government, and legal services organizations. Federal agencies taking part include the Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Department of Justice, and U.S. Department of Labor. Noting that the Career Development Office is also committed to supporting students who want to pursue non-government public interest legal careers, Kelly said D.C.-area legal services providers representing a broad range of practice areas will also be participating, in addition to organizations such as Immigrant Justice Corps, which hires a fellowships class of 3Ls each year.

"The PIPS Career Fair will help fill the lack of in-person networking opportunities that have frustrated both law students and employers," said Kelly, explaining that many of the major public interest career fairs and other legal recruiting initiatives have remained virtual since the pandemic.

A goal of the Career Development Office, Kelly said, is to increase students' awareness of opportunities at government agencies and other public interest employers. Although the fair is designed as an informational and networking opportunity, not a formal recruiting event, many of the employers involved have hired GW Law students and graduates. The PIPS Career Fair will benefit students of all class years, from 2Ls and 3Ls actively applying for internships and post-graduate positions, to incoming 1Ls, who will be able to learn about opportunities. Kelly said a majority of 1L students do government and nonprofit internships their first summer, regardless of whether they ultimately pursue private practice or public interest careers.

The career fair complements the office's many other outreach efforts. Career counselors educate students on the unique requirements of job applications for government attorney positions, such as demonstrating a commitment to government service in resumes and cover letters and the types of writing samples that federal hiring managers value. Recent in-person events at GW Law have included an information session with the Department of Justice's Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management and a panel discussion on Honors Programs.

"We are the strongest school in the nation at training people who will serve to transform government and protect the democratic experiment that is the United States of America."

- DAYNA BOWEN MATTHEW

The Honors Program is the nation's principal recruitment program for entry-level federal attorneys. The GW Law panel featured alumni from the Internal Revenue Service and senior attorneys and officials from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Department of Commerce. Over the summer, the Career Development Office sent periodic updates to rising 2L and 3L students interested in government practice, highlighting agencies hiring for positions both in the D.C. area and around the country.

Henry Castro, JD '23, an honors attorney in the Office of the Chief Counsel at the IRS, took part in the Honors Program's panel discussion.

"My plan in going to law school was to do nonprofit or public interest work. I knew I didn't want to go to a firm," Castro said. "I wasn't planning to go into tax law, but Professor [Jeremy] Bearer-Friend got me interested in tax and tax policy."

Castro said at least half his professors had practitioner experience in public interest law. He described them as "great resources" in understanding what government law entailed. In the summer after his 1L year, he interned for the State Attorney's Office in Montgomery County, Md. That was followed by a clerkship with Superior Court of the District of Columbia Associate Judge Fern Flanagan Saddler. When he applied for his current position at the IRS, he found that he had an advantage as a GW Law student.

“GW was sort of special because it’s one of the schools where the IRS does pre-interviews, before the honors interview,” Castro said. “You can ask questions about what the chief counsel’s office does. I’m grateful that GW had that.”

At the IRS, Castro is involved in procedural law, including on cases in partnership with the Department of Justice. He said he also contributes to the lawmaking process through work on briefs in response to inquiries from Congress.

“Being in the national office, I get to work on novel issues, issues that have little to no case law,” he said. “I love it. And all the attorneys I work with are really great. Being a first-year attorney is nerve-racking, but they’re patient and understanding and helpful in guiding you.”

The Career Development Office currently works one-on-one to connect students with alumni inside these agencies, but a faster and more efficient networking tool is in the works. GW Law Link, a new mentorship-focused web platform, debuted in a soft launch in August. It is open to all GW Law students and alumni—not just those interested in public service—but the CDO underscored its ability to connect students with government lawyers who graduated from GW Law.

“It’s a platform that can be used for student-to-alumni, alumni-to-alumni, and student-to-student connections. It’s a really great hub for connection,” said Leah Hollar, the program associate for professional development and mentorship at GW Law. “Alumni would be able to share their expertise with students, and students could seek out advice through resumé reviews and informational interviews. The school, too, can use it to reach out to alumni to take part in events.

“Hopefully,” she added, “it will also be great for our eventual alumni mentorship program.”

Hollar said the closed network has a function that enables students and alumni to directly upload their LinkedIn profiles to the site. And GW Law Link users can break into subgroups on the platform. “It could connect evening students and alumni to one another, for example, or it could connect evening students to alumni employers at small and medium firms,” Hollar explained.

GW Law’s career services also address employment in federal agencies’ regional offices, and the school’s geographic location gives students a leg up when seeking public service employment in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Dean Matthew also noted that the school’s faculty and alumni include attorneys working in international law.

“Our international law scholars are fabulous and productive scholars. Courts cite them, tribunals cite them,” the dean said. “But they are also founders of nonprofit organizations that litigate and advocate to protect humanitarian rights around the globe.”

But federal government work is the goal of many students who enroll at GW—and the law school carries that torch high.

“I think the role of higher education is to educate a citizenry that can defend and preserve democracy. There’s no law school in the nation better situated to fulfill this goal than GW—for its location, its size, and the way our students and faculty combine intellectual curiosity, academic excellence, and pragmatic impact,” said Matthew. “We are a community of deeply talented scholars who are experts at translating our intellectual expertise to actionable change. We don’t just talk and think about the law, we use the law to help solve society’s greatest challenges. And that’s what’s great about GW Law.”

OPENING DOORS TO COVETED JUDICIAL CLERKSHIPS

KENDALL ARCHER, JD ’24, WAS ONE OF THE first members of the Class of 2024 to report a clerkship—a pinnacle experience in building a legal career. She will clerk next year with Chief Judge Robert J. Shelby on the District Court of Utah, the same judge she interned for as a 1L. In 2027, she has lined up a federal clerkship in Denver with Judge Veronica S. Rossman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit.

Fifty-three other members of her class also have secured clerkships, 18 in federal courts and 35 in state courts.

“Clerkships are unique professional experiences that JDs carry with them throughout their legal careers. Every clerkship, whether it be with a federal appellate court, a state trial court, a bankruptcy court, or an agency is a worthwhile opportunity,” said Suzanne Hard, GW Law’s new associate dean for professional development and career strategies. “A clerkship strengthens a grad’s experience and puts them in a better position for everything they do next, including applying for other roles. As a clerk, you are going to be around people who think seriously about legal writing and analysis. You will see how conflicts are resolved through the courts and what judges value.

“I want every one of our students to get the information they need to make their own decision about pursuing a clerkship and to be a competitive candidate. I want them to count themselves in,” she added.

Archer did not come from a family of lawyers, and she said she didn’t quite understand the role a clerkship plays in a legal career until she spoke with GW Law career counselors. William Cranch Research Professor of Law Bradford Clark then guided her in creating a job plan, and Distinguished Professorial Lecturer in Government Contracts Law, Practice, and Policy Jessica Tillipman served as her mentor.

Archer, who was slated to join Williams & Connolly LLP in Washington, D.C., at the end of September after passing the bar exam, found the internship with Shelby through GW Law’s job platform. The internship led to the offer of a clerkship.

“I think the clerkships offer an unparalleled opportunity to access the judicial court system. You get involved in the decision process—that’s going to strengthen my skills as an attorney. I want to be the best writer I can be, and that’s what clerks are doing day in and day out,” said Archer, who served as editor-in-chief of *The George Washington Law Review*. “To have the opportunity to hone those skills is great.”

About 10 percent of GW Law’s graduating class members each year land federal and state clerkships. Hard wants to see the numbers rise.



Kendall Archer, JD '24, has two clerkships lined up.

Hard's push for clerkships dovetails with Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew's strategic plan for the school. Hard believes that increasing clerkship-related programming and support in the Career Development Office will enable more students to apply for and secure these roles.

"Not every student who joins us understands what a clerkship is or their value professionally. As a result, they may not pursue these opportunities as they are not aware of them, or they may not see themselves as qualified. We are working to ensure that all students understand the broad range of these opportunities and how to apply for them," Hard said.

She sees clerkships as both a growth area for post-grad employment and an additional avenue through which GW Law can bring greater diversity to the legal profession. Hard previously worked at the University of Connecticut School of Law, where she directed the Center for Career Development. At GW Law, she is part of the dean's advisory team.

Clerkships are highly competitive, and many law students assume they are out of reach. The American Bar Association said only 3.4 percent of the country's more than 35,000 JD graduates in 2023 found work in federal chambers. But Teresa Kona, GW Law's judicial clerkship coordinator, said there are misconceptions about who secures clerkships.

"We think it is important to reach students in the 1L year to let them know that grades are not a definitive factor. Many of our students have secured clerkships even though they were not at the top of their class," Kona said. "We keep an eye out for students who bring unique qualifiers—they have prior work experience, they are active in clinics."

GW Law is adding to the robust list of services and support it deploys to guide students to both internships and clerkships. In April, Kona helped launch clerkship drop-in hours for students who have questions about the process. This fall, the Career Development Office will hold a Judicial Opportunities program to introduce students to judicial internships and clerkships. Plans are

also in the works for a nuts-and-bolts program, primarily targeting 2Ls and 3Ls, to assist students in their application process. In January, a resumé collection will enable 1Ls to be considered for summer judicial internships with several federal chambers.

Hard described the internships as transformative experiences for students.

"Each year our students serve as interns or externs, through the Field Placement Program, with dozens of members of the federal judiciary. These opportunities are lifechanging and career building," Hard said. "I have seen nervous first-year students return after a summer interning in chambers with new skills, a new confidence, and a feeling of belonging in this profession. Although they are generally unpaid, these opportunities are worthwhile for all of our students, and it is my hope that we can provide additional guidance and funding so that we see an increase in students applying for and securing these roles."

The school is also deepening the most important resource it makes available every February: its judicial clerkship handbook.

"I think the clerkships offer an unparalleled opportunity to access the judicial court system. You get involved in the decision process—that's going to strengthen my skills as an attorney."

— KENDALL ARCHER

The handbook walks students and alumni through the clerkship process, detailing benchmarks, listing judges with GW affiliation, and identifying GW alumni who have clerked over the last 10 years so that students may network with them.

"Not only does the Career Development Office provide students with a GW Law-specific handbook, we supplement it with extensive programming and one-on-one counseling," Kona said. This programming includes alumni panel discussions on federal clerkships and events that cater to evening students, for whom clerkships may be more complicated. Three part-time students in the Class of 2024 obtained clerkships.

The Faculty Clerkship Committee is another resource. Committee members write the majority of the letters of recommendation submitted on behalf of GW Law students. They also let the clerkship team know about chambers with opportunities and upcoming deadlines, information that is added to a twice-a-month newsletter for students.

"We've even had clerkship committee members walk actual applications to judges, just to make sure students are able to meet their deadlines," Kona said. "They provide that level of personal touch."

Although Sam Borrus, JD '24, plans to work in labor and employment law, he pursued—and landed—a clerkship with the Nevada Supreme Court.


"I think it's a good extra year of experience to get. It is interesting to work with a judge instead of working with clients on one side or another of issues," he said. "And a lot of the lawyers at firms I've interned at or clerked at did clerkships, and they encouraged me to."

PROTECTING PRIVACY IN A TECH-DRIVEN WORLD

BY SARAH KELLOGG

The rise of new technologies has ushered in an era of unprecedented connectivity, productivity, and convenience. Yet, as innovations such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and blockchain reshape sectors, they also introduce significant challenges to privacy and civil liberties.

ILLUSTRATION BY CHAZ CONRON

 TAYING WELL INFORMED ABOUT PRIVACY law is no longer optional for legal professionals—it’s a necessity. Those who fail to adapt risk not only legal repercussions but also the erosion of public trust, a quality more valuable than ever in the digital age. The legal profession—and law schools—must rise to the occasion, embracing the challenges and opportunities that come with protecting privacy in a tech-driven world.

“I think law students in today’s age realize this is the future, and this is where the legal issues are going to keep coming up,” said Daniel J. Solove, the Eugene L. and Barbara A. Bernard Professor of Intellectual Property and Technology Law. “Every company is a data company. Every industry is touched by this.”

The GW Center for Law and Technology (GWCLT) has taken on the challenge, committing to train lawyers who can both harness these technologies and safeguard privacy and civil rights. GWCLT stands as a nexus for thought leadership, fostering interdisciplinary scholarship, advancing the global privacy dialogue, and bridging the gap between academia and practice.

“As digital technologies like AI and large language models (LLMs) continue to evolve, the potential for privacy breaches grows exponentially,” said Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew, the Harold H. Greene Professor of Law. “By offering a broad understanding of privacy law, the Center for Law and Technology equips our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate this increasingly complex legal landscape.”



“I think law students in today’s age realize this is the future, and this is where the legal issues are going to keep coming up.”

— DANIEL J. SOLOVE

GWCLT, as a hub for cutting-edge research and thought leadership, offers students the opportunity to explore the tensions and legal intricacies of intellectual property, cybersecurity, and digital privacy. The center features a dynamic blend of academic rigor and real-world experience, and prepares students to tackle the challenges of a tech-driven future.

The Sweeping Power of Technology

THE ADVENT OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES capable of mining vast amounts of information, tracking online activities and behaviors, reading faces and emotions, and even predicting future actions has happened steadily over the last two decades. Only in recent years, as the breadth of their disruptive powers have been appreciated, have these innovations raised profound concerns in Washington and more widely in society.

As these technologies are integrated even more so into everyday life, it has become clear they can reshape lives and companies. They promise efficiency and productivity, improved quality of life and better health outcomes, solutions to complex problems that were previously insurmountable, and access to an increasingly interconnected and fast-moving world.

Even more importantly, the technology holds great promise: AI and LLM systems are turbocharging nearly every industry they touch—biometric data collection such as fingerprint scanning and iris recognition is strengthening security; affective computing and emotion detection is informing customer interactions; blockchain is guaranteeing greater financial transparency; personalized medicine is innovating biomedical research and health care; deepfake technology is stimulating creativity; and the Internet of Things (IoT) is personalizing the sweeping power of technology.

As much as society has come to rely on these innovations, it now grapples with the potential for unauthorized access to organizational systems and personal details, data hacking, and the exploitation of sensitive information, such as trade secrets for companies and location data, health metrics, and preferences for individuals.

“People are coming to the realization that every major interesting problem in the law is a problem about technology as well,”



said Mary Anne Franks, the Eugene L. and Barbara A. Bernard Professor in Intellectual Property, Technology, and Civil Rights Law. “I think some problems are so big, and are going to affect all of us so existentially, that we have to understand technology as being a significant factor in all our lives, and we need to prepare lawyers for this future.”

No one feels this delicate balance more acutely today than corporations, many of which have invented these technologies and are also searching for ways to counteract their negative consequences. This requires a deep understanding of the technologies in play, and how they interact with legal frameworks. Law firms and corporate counsels are now expected to work closely with IT departments, ensuring that privacy is even embedded in design.

“Corporations really need to be aware of the threats from new technologies. It’s not just about health care, health care providers, and health plans anymore,” said Deborah L. Gersh, JD ’83, co-chair of Ropes & Gray’s health care practice and co-leader of the firm’s Health Care and Life Sciences Industry Group.

“Any company in America that has technology or data that somebody wants is in danger. Despite having security, many corporations outside of the health care and life sciences industries have not had the runway that health care companies have had due to the laser focus on health care and privacy beginning principally with HIPAA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996],” she said.

Navigating the Growing Legal Response

IN THIS EVOLVING LEGAL LANDSCAPE, LAW FIRMS and corporate general counsels find themselves at the forefront of a legal battleground where defending privacy has become paramount. As governments enact stringent new laws and regulations to protect privacy, law schools are called upon to supply lawyers with a depth of knowledge and skills to navigate this legal environment.

Today, some 160 countries around the world have privacy laws regulating everything from data privacy to social media interactions to health privacy. The most prominent of these laws is the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) law, enacted in 2016, and its recently adopted brother, the EU AI Act. The combination of the two laws provides fundamental protections for the processing of individual data, and sets strict governance and transparency guardrails on the use of AI.

In the United States, more than 20 states have passed privacy laws since 2018, ranging from consumer privacy to social media regulations to health privacy protections, and there are even more being debated at the state and federal level. These regulations impose strict requirements on data collection, storage, and sharing, with severe penalties for non-compliance.

"It's not just the EU affecting privacy law, but also states such

as California, Colorado, and Virginia that are adopting their own comprehensive data privacy laws," said Dawn C. Nunziato, the Theodore and James Pedas Family Professor of Intellectual Property and Technology Law and the William Wallace Kirkpatrick Research Professor. "This is basically requiring law firms to stand up privacy information practices, but they also need to do the same thing with content and AI regulations.

"I think it's a nice tie to the growth of the new center," Nunziato added. "Our electronic lives have changed so much in the past 30 years. This is a whole new world."

The unfolding legal framework indicates a trend toward increased accountability and transparency in data management and AI deployment. Meanwhile, lawsuits are moving through the courts to challenge the use of copyrighted materials without permission to train AI models. These cases continue to highlight the tension between innovation, intellectual property rights, and privacy.

A Center for Leadership in Privacy Law

GW LAW'S PRIVACY AND TECHNOLOGY LAW Program was formally created in 2023 and incorporated into the new GWCLT, but its history dates back several decades. GW Law was one of the first law schools to offer classes in information privacy, cybersecurity, computer crime, cyberlaw, and other privacy-related arenas.

Beyond its extensive course offerings and specialized concentrations in Intellectual Property (IP) and Patent Technology (PT) programs, GWCLT presents a wealth of opportunities, including prestigious fellowships, scholarly publications such as the *Journal of Law and Technology*, dynamic events and webinars, and essential career resources for aspiring privacy attorneys.

With globally respected privacy experts, GWCLT has generated scholarship that is frequently cited because it breaks new ground in privacy law. GW Law is also one of a handful of U.S. law schools offering a JD concentration in Privacy, Data Security, and Technology Law.

"I think if you really want to have a complete education in the law, you have to be knowledgeable about privacy and its intersection with technology," said Solove. "The center gives students the opportunity to learn and apply complex legal frameworks so they can be effective practitioners in a world where data privacy is crucial."

"People are coming to the realization that every major interesting problem in the law is a problem about technology as well."

— MARY ANNE FRANKS



A Chip Off the Old Block: Family Behind Utz Brands Endows GW Law Scholarship



Michael Rice, JD '68, and his wife, Jane, created the Rice Family Foundation in 2017.

MORE THAN A CENTURY ago, Bill and Salie Utz founded a potato chip operation in their Hanover, Pennsylvania, kitchen and began selling their product door to door. Today, Utz Brands, Inc., is the third-largest branded salty snack platform in the United States, producing over 3.3 million pounds of snacks each week and generating more than \$1.4 billion in annual sales.

Bill and Salie's grandson and his family are still

involved in managing the now-public company. With deep roots at the George Washington University, these alumni recently created a need-based scholarship to GW Law, the Rice Family Endowed Scholarship.

"My grandparents founded Utz, and they instilled in us an obligation to give back to the community," said Utz Chairman Emeritus and Special Advisor Michael Rice, JD '68.

Rice started his family's

GW tradition, although a law degree wasn't originally part of his career plan. Indeed, unsure of what he wanted to do with his life, he dropped out of college during his sophomore year. His father immediately put him to work at Utz shoveling potatoes in the potato cellar.

"By spring of that year, I said I didn't want to do this, and I decided to complete college and then get a law degree," Rice said. He passed the Pennsylvania Bar exam

after graduation, but never planned to practice law as a career.

"I wanted the skills that come with a law degree," he said, describing his GW Law education as "extremely valuable" in preparing him to join the leadership team at Utz. Rice and his wife, Jane, a former Utz public relations director, created the Rice Family Foundation in 2017. Their daughter, Stacie Rice Lissette, JD '92, serves as director of the family foundation.

GW is truly a family affair: Stacie's husband, Utz Chairman Dylan Lissette, BBA '93, studied business economics and public policy at GW. Their daughter, M. Payton Lissette, BA '18, earned a degree in communications at the university.

"My father and I both had really great experiences at the law school," said Rice Lissette. "We were so blessed that we were able to go to GW Law, and we felt really fortunate that we didn't have to go into debt to do it. We are conscious that this is not necessarily the case for others.

"We wanted to create this scholarship to pay it forward and give someone the same opportunity we had," she said.

GW President Ellen M. Granberg expressed gratitude for the family's support of student scholarships, a top university priority. "GW Law offers unmatched exposure to some of our nation's most respected legal scholars and practitioners," Granberg said. "This generous gift helps support talented students who face financial challenges, allowing them to focus on their studies, take advantage of only-at-GW opportunities, and gain a meaningful hands-on legal education, particularly



Michael Rice and many of his GW Law Class of 1968 classmates have maintained their friendship for more than a half century. Pictured at a recent gathering are, from left: D.C. Superior Court Senior Judge Robert Tignor, Michael Rice, James Stein, Dolph Sand, Martin Snider, and Larry Thomas.

in nonprofit and government service where funding is more limited.”

Rice’s decision to study in the nation’s capital was driven by his admiration for the early U.S. presidents that grew out of learning to read with a set of childhood books given to him by his mother. He still keeps in touch with a sizable group of law school friends. “In those days, classes were divided alphabetically, so I knew everyone from R to Z,” he said. “A group of us have gotten together regularly through the years to share special occasions and stay in touch with each other.”

He and Jane were married between his first and second years of law school, and he was still a student when Stacie was born. To support his new family, he took a job at the Census Bureau and switched to night classes at GW Law.

GW’s connections to the Washington, D.C., community

influenced Rice Lissette’s decision to attend GW Law. Even though her family was based in Hanover, her parents spent a lot of time in Washington when she was growing up. The city felt like home.

“I loved studying law in the nation’s capital. My professors were awesome, and my classmates were such a diverse group of people. And I loved the clinics. That kind of hands-on experience, to be able to use the skills I was learning, was really meaningful.” Today, she serves on the school’s Clinical Law Advisory Council.

Rice, his wife, and his daughter are deeply committed to providing opportunities for others. By supporting education in particular, Rice Lissette said, “you provide people with the ability to create their future.”

GW Law Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew hopes the Rice/Lissette Scholarship will inspire others to pay it forward.



Stacie Rice Lissette, JD ‘92, serves as director of the Rice Family Foundation.

“The incredible success and generosity of the Rice family through the generations is a shining example of the impact that a GW Law education can have on students and entire families,” she says.

“We’re grateful beyond words for the wonderful opportunities they’re creating for our students. They are truly building an enduring legacy here at GW.”

– Mary A. Dempsey

Dunner Endowed Lectureship: Commemorating A Patent Law Giant



Legendary patent law attorney Donald Dunner (left) taught at GW Law for nearly 50 years.

ATTORNEY DONALD R. Dunner was more than a leading practitioner of intellectual property law and talented GW Law adjunct professor. He was an influential pioneer who helped shape the very fabric of the patent appellate practice in the United States, particularly within the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

The legendary patent law attorney passed away in 2019, but his legacy will live on at GW Law. To honor his vast contributions to the profession and to generations of students, GW Law; Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner (Finnegan); the American

Bar Association (ABA); the American Intellectual Property Law Association; and the Federal Circuit Bar Association are partnering to create The Donald R. Dunner Endowed Memorial Lectureship.

“Don Dunner taught for nearly 50 years at GW Law,” said Dean Dayna Bowen Matthew, the Harold H. Greene Professor of Law. “We believe this lectureship will not only honor his work in the profession but reflect his steadfast dedication to learning and passing on knowledge about patent law to future practitioners.”

The lectureship will be supported through a \$250,000 endowment, with donations

coming from Dunner’s former partners, colleagues, and students. Once fully funded, the endowment will allow Dunner’s impact to resonate at GW Law in perpetuity, inspiring future generations of patent lawyers.

“Don gave so much to the profession,” said J. Michael Jakes, a partner at Finnegan, which Dunner joined in 1978 and helped transform into an intellectual property law leader. “I’m hoping this lecture will do that as well. It will serve as a way to further understand and study IP law. And it will bear his name, so that his legacy will go on and people will remember what he did for the profession.”

Dunner’s prominence in patent law dates back to the 1970s, before the establishment of the Federal Circuit. Back then, he was a recognized authority on the Federal Circuit’s precursor, the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals. He also wrote the highly regarded book *Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit: Practice and Procedure*, which he used to teach his course at GW Law.

Dunner was instrumental in the creation of the Federal Circuit in 1982, the court that holds jurisdiction over patent appeals in the United States. He served as chair of the court’s advisory council for its first decade and helped to draft the court’s rules.

Over his illustrious career, he argued 175 appeals before the Federal Circuit—more than any litigator in the country. He also served as president of the American Patent Law Association and the ABA Section of Intellectual Property Law.

“He loved what he did, and he did it intensely,” said Laura P. Masurovsky, a partner at Finnegan. “He did it with great passion, and he shared that and conveyed that. I learned so much from hearing him talk, practicing with him, watching him in action. He was just constantly available. He gave so much of himself to practitioners and to the profession.”

– Sarah Kellogg

A Legacy of Public Service



Ida and Irving Kator, LLB '51, both had distinguished careers in civil service.

AS A PUBLIC SERVANT FOR more than 20 years with the U.S. Civil Service Commission, and then for another three decades in private practice, Irving "Irv" Kator, LLB '51, was a tireless advocate for equal opportunity and public service.

To honor that legacy, his children—Michael J. Kator, David Kator, and Anne Kator—and his law firm, Kator, Parks, Weiser & Wright PLLC, which he founded in 1975, have established the Irving Kator Scholarship for Equal

Employment Opportunity and Civil Service Law. The scholarship will benefit students interested in pursuing careers in areas that were dear to Irving Kator's heart.

"He was a true believer in equal opportunity," said Michael Kator of his father who also served in the United States Army Air Forces. "When he served in the military, it was segregated and that affected him. He believed people should be given opportunities based on their merit, on what they

can do and not on what they look like."

Irving Kator began his career with the Civil Service Commission as a lawyer in the early 1950s, rising through the years to assistant executive director and assistant to the chairman. He helped implement the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972, which established protections for government employees against discrimination. He carried that work forward at his law firm, representing government

“ HE BELIEVED PEOPLE SHOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES BASED ON THEIR MERIT, ON WHAT THEY CAN DO AND NOT ON WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE. ”

— Michael Kator

employees in various actions against their employer.

The Civil Service Commission was eventually dissolved and became the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Merit System Protection Board. Irving Kator's wife, Ida Kator, was also a civil servant, working for years as an industrial psychologist for the federal government.

"There should be a number of students at GW who are interested in this kind of law," Michael Kator said. "There are a lot of lawyers who get hired in Washington, D.C., who do this for the government or the private sector. We wanted to support people who care as much about equal opportunity as our father did."

The Kator Scholarship also continues the family's long history of supporting the George Washington University. With a generous minimum commitment of \$400,000, the scholarship will provide crucial financial support to GW Law students.

"We wanted to make it possible for someone who has an interest in this area of law to go through their life without starting out with a debt," said Michael Kator. "We wanted to lighten their burden."

— Sarah Kellogg

class notes

ALUMNI NEWSMAKERS

1970s

Mississippi Senator **Hillman T. Frazier, JD '74**, was sworn in as the most senior member of the Mississippi State Senate in January. He will celebrate 50 years of state legislative service in 2025.

Javier A. Lopez, JD '76, has joined Vedder Price as a shareholder in the firm's Miami office.

J. Michael Sconyers, JD '76, has joined Murtha Cullina as of counsel in the firm's new Bantam, Conn., office. His practice centers on litigation, primarily title litigation.

Capt. Milton L. Smith, JD '76, has joined Greenberg Traurig LLP as chair of the space and satellite industry group.

1980s

S. Craig Holden, JD '80, an attorney at Baker Donelson, was named to the American Health Law Association's 2024 Class of Fellows.

Philip B. Zipin, JD '82, received the Lawyer of the Year Award from the Metropolitan Washington Employment Lawyers Association.

Dennis LeVine, JD '83, has joined Brock & Scott as the managing partner in the firm's auto bankruptcy, replevin, and impound group.

Michael Heim, JD '87, of Houston's Heim, Payne & Chorush LLP, was named the Houston Patent Litigation

Attorney of the Year in the 2024 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. He was also included among the country's top intellectual property attorneys in the 2024 *IAM Patent 1000* guide.

Gail Friedberg Rottenstrich, JD '87, was elected mayor of Fair Lawn, N.J., on March 12. Rottenstrich, who is the co-founder and CEO of ZAGO Manufacturing, was also recognized this year by *NJBIZ* as a Power 100, as well as by ROI-NJ as an ROI Influencer: Women in Business.

David A. Cohen, JD '88, a shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, was named a member of the firm's executive committee.

1990s

Sharon Berlin, JD '91, has joined Keane & Beane as a principal member. She represents private and public sector management in labor and employment law matters.

Joseph C. O'Keefe, JD '91, has joined Faegre Drinker as a partner in the firm's labor and employment practice group based in New York City.

Anna Gomez, JD '92, was nominated by President Joe Biden to serve on the Federal Communications Commission. She previously served in key roles at the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, including as acting chief.

David Joy, JD '92, has returned to his longtime professional home of Keller &

ALUMNI PROFILE

Reaching New Legal Heights

FOR MAJOR GENERAL **REBECCA R. VERNON, LLM '03**, A chance informational interview with a U.S. Air Force attorney changed the course of her career, and her life.

"The thing that struck me about our conversation was she expressed a genuine passion about legal issues, and she loved the people she worked with," said Vernon, deputy judge advocate general (JAG) for the U.S. Air Force. "I walked out of the interview thinking, if I can be that happy doing my job, count me in."

Several years into her JAG service, Vernon enrolled at GW Law as part of a JAG Corps program that allowed her to pursue an LLM in government procurement law. At GW Law, she won the Government Contracts Moot Court Competition and graduated with highest honors.

Decades later, Vernon is not only happy with her job—she assists the judge advocate general in leading thousands of attorneys and other staff who work for the Air Force JAG Corps. She is near the top of a legal hierarchy that provides counsel to the Air Force and Space Force in their daily missions.

"We practice labor, government contracts, environmental, criminal justice, and international law," she said. "Our practice encompasses all the laws needed to enable the Air Force and Space Force to perform their critical national security missions. Our client basically is the United States of America."

Heady stuff for someone who grew up on a New Hampshire farm, caring for cows, pigs, and chickens every morning. "Taking care of animals was the last thing a teenager in the '80s wanted to do,"

“OUR PRACTICE ENCOMPASSES ALL THE LAWS NEEDED TO ENABLE THE AIR FORCE AND SPACE FORCE TO PERFORM THEIR CRITICAL NATIONAL SECURITY MISSIONS. OUR CLIENT BASICALLY IS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.”

— Rebecca Vernon

Heckman as a partner after 15 years with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Stuart Kupinsky, JD '92, was appointed executive vice president and chief legal officer at Mercury Systems, Inc.

Joerg Modellmog, LLM '93, was awarded the Sustained Outstanding Civilian Award at a JAG Corps Judge Advocate Legal Services award ceremony. The award recognizes his 27 years of service as a JAG and

his contributions to solving a decade-long German taxation issue concerning U.S. forces stationed in Germany.

Ethan R. O'Shea, JD '93, of Hamburg, Rubin, Mullin, Maxwell & Lupin, was selected for inclusion on the 2024 Pennsylvania Super Lawyers list in the areas of employment and labor, and employment litigation.

Adam Pearlman, JD '93, and the firm he founded, Lexpat



Major General Rebecca Vernon, LLM '03, the top female attorney in the Air Force, with Senior Associate Dean Steve Schooner during her recent visit to GW Law to headline a Women in Legal Leadership event.

Vernon said. "But I believe it was instrumental in teaching me the value of hard work, and the satisfaction that comes with accomplishing goals."

Even when she was strapped into her dad's Cessna 180 as a child, she never saw her future in the Air Force. She just loved aviation. Today, when a plane flies overhead, she can't help but look to the sky. "It never gets old," said Vernon, who isn't a pilot. "I'm very lucky."

Vernon's professional success has been a steady ascent, due to hard work and a passion for her work. She has served in a number of roles, including director of military justice and discipline at Joint Base Andrews, Md.; staff judge advocate for combined joint special operations air component–Afghanistan; and assistant staff judge advocate (chief of legal assistance), 347th Wing, Moody Air Force Base, Ga., her first posting.

As the first woman deputy judge advocate general in the Air Force, she also feels a responsibility in her position to be both a role model and mentor to the many young lawyers she works with and law students she encounters.

"I encourage people to think about what their values are and then find some place that matches them," Vernon said. "That's why I ended up in the Air Force JAG Corps, and that's why I have stayed for nearly 30 years."

– Sarah Kellogg

Global Services, was selected by the UCLA Alumni Association as an honoree on the 2023 Bruin Business 100 list.

Robert Johns, JD '94, is the new executive director of Legal Aid of the Bluegrass based in Kentucky.

Marjorie J. Just, JD '94, a longtime principal attorney at Offit Kurman specializing in family law, was promoted to shareholder.

Paul N. Alp, JD '95, has joined Adams and Reese as co-leader of the firm's new aviation and aerospace team based in the Washington, D.C., office.

David Jury, JD '95, was elected a fellow of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers. Jury serves as general counsel of the United Steelworkers International Union in Pittsburgh. He also is a board member of the Peggy Browning Fund, a nonprofit organization that provides fellowships to law

students pursuing careers in the fields of union labor law and workers' rights.

James T. Asali, JD '96, has joined Chamberlain Hrdlicka as senior counsel in the firm's corporate, securities, and finance group.

Donna M. Byrne, JD '96, a leading energy regulatory lawyer, has joined Troutman Pepper as a partner.

Alan M. Freeman, JD '96, has joined the senior leadership team at Uncommon Cures.

Edgar D. Bueno, JD '97, has joined Hunter Maclean as a partner in the firm's health care and litigation group.

Lori S. Kovak, JD '97, of Fox Rothschild was recognized in the *Daily Journal's* 2024 list of Top Intellectual Property Lawyers in California.

Eric W. Leonard, JD '97, is Cosen O'Connor's newest shareholder, joining the firm after serving as a Wiley Rein partner for over 25 years. He co-leads the firm's government contracts practice.

Brooke P. Clark, JD '98, was appointed general counsel of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Regina A. DeMeo, JD '98, has joined Markham Law in Bethesda, Md., as a principal. She was also recognized as a top family law attorney in both *Super Lawyers* and *Bethesda Magazine*.

Shazmah Hakim, JD '98, was appointed chief legal officer at Remington Hospitality.

Kimberly Bullock Gatling, JD '99, partner and chief diversity and inclusion officer at Fox Rothschild, was elected chairwoman of the North Carolina A&T Board of Trustees.

Ingrid Hackett, JD '99, was appointed chief legal officer at Curriculum Associates. She brings extensive leadership experience from more than two decades as a corporate attorney focused on high-growth companies including Home Depot, Coca-Cola, and Proctor & Gamble.

Andrew R. Kopsidas, JD '99, has joined the Washington, D.C., office of Blank Rome as an IP partner.

2000s

Andrew Dahlinghaus, JD '00, has joined the executive team of Skillz, a leading mobile games platform, as general counsel.

Donald English, Jr., JD '00, of national employment law firm Jackson Lewis received the 2024 Lexology Client Choice Award for excellent client care and service. He is the firm's Baltimore office managing principal and also serves as co-leader of the trials and appeals group and on the firm's board of directors.

Hunter Goolsby, JD '00, a former director of data science, strategy, and analytics at Troutman Pepper, announced that he has started his own consulting firm, Legal DNA Strategies LLC.

Brandon H. Pace, JD '00, was appointed general counsel of the Gemological Institute of America.

Greg A. Brower, JD '02, has returned to Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck as a shareholder in the firm's litigation department.

Jeffrey MacHarg, JD '02, was selected to the "Managing Partners to Watch Power List" by *North Carolina Lawyers Weekly*.

Cynthia Beyea, JD '03, was elected to partnership at Dechert.

Two GW Law alumni began hearing cases in May as newly appointed immigration law judges. Their unique paths to the bench were propelled by their GW Law education. We proudly present their stories.

ALUMNI PROFILE

A Passion for the Law

FOR JUDGE **BRENT D. JOSTAD, JD '10**, IT'S POSSIBLE TO DRAW a line from his early passion for the law—from mock trial competitions in high school and college, to GW Law's Cohen & Cohen Mock Trial Competition (he won!)—to his own courtroom at the Richmond Immigration Adjudication Center.

"The mock trials were a lot of preparation, but I always enjoyed being in the courtroom," said Jostad. "I knew I wanted to be a trial lawyer from an early age, so spending time in court was always fun. One year, I played both an attorney and an expert witness. I always liked being the lawyer more than playing the witness."

After graduating from GW Law, Jostad began his career as an assistant state attorney with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office, where he started with misdemeanors and moved up to felonies, handling everything from firearms and armed robberies to murders. "I wanted to be a criminal prosecutor, which is what I

“AS A JUDGE, YOU CAN'T GO INTO A HEARING WITH A PARTICULAR OUTCOME IN MIND. YOU HAVE TO GO IN WITH AN OPEN MIND AND SEE WHERE THE EVIDENCE TAKES YOU.”

— Brent Jostad

started out doing in Miami. I took criminal law, criminal procedure, evidence, and trial advocacy. I thought I knew where I was going."

In 2019, Jostad made a change and switched from criminal to immigration law. He spent five years as an assistant chief counsel with the Office of the Principal Legal Advisor of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). He put his expertise to work there, serving on a team of more than 1,300 government representatives in immigration removal proceedings.

Today, he's seeing the courtroom from a different vantage point.



As an immigration judge, Jostad is part of a corps of judges under the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), an agency within the Department of Justice to adjudicate immigration cases.

"Every new position requires adjustment," said Jostad, who was appointed to the bench in May 2024. "The biggest change is shifting from an advocacy position to an impartial one. As a judge, you can't go into a hearing with a particular outcome in mind. You have to go in with an open mind and see where the evidence takes you."

Jostad said that his time on campus, both as an undergrad and in law school, were especially memorable with the friends he made and the experience of living in Washington, D.C. "The campus was beautiful," he said. "I loved being so close to everything. There were many nights when friends and I would do the monument walk. It was magical to see them lit up and be there essentially by ourselves at night. It was unique to Washington."

— Sarah Kellogg

Kristen M. Foslid, JD '03, was named the regional attorney in the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Miami district office.

Elan Daniels, JD '04, was promoted to counsel at Kramer Levin. He specializes in corporate restructuring and bankruptcy.

Daniel A. Lebersfeld, JD '04, has joined the litigation team at Genova Burns as a senior

associate based in the firm's Newark, N.J., office.

Nathan S. Mammen, JD '04, has joined Snell & Wilmer as a partner in the firm's intellectual property group based in Washington, D.C.

Kristi L.R. Sawert, JD '04, has joined Fish & Richardson, a premier intellectual property law firm, as a principal. She focuses her practice on representing life sciences clients,

particularly in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals.

Thomas Janczewski, JD '05, has joined Hansen Reynolds as a partner in the firm's Milwaukee office. He concentrates his practice on corporate transactional work and litigation.

Debora M. Jones, JD '05, was named chief operating officer at ProSearch.

Javier Lopez, JD '05, has joined

Vedder Price as a shareholder in the firm's Miami office. He focuses his practice on complex commercial and class action litigation cases.

Jeny Maier, JD '05, an anti-trust partner at Axinn, Veltrop & Harkrider, was named the firm's managing partner.

Dawn Stern, JD '05, is the new co-head of DLA Piper's government contracts group.

ALUMNI PROFILE

From Green Card to Immigration Judge

WHEN JUDGE **RAJESH K. MATHEW, MSL '20**, WAS APPOINTED to serve as an immigration judge in May 2024, it brought him back to a system he was all too familiar with. After all, he had experienced it himself.

"Going through the entire process from green card to citizenship, and having done all that on my own, I really became interested in immigration law and its complexities," said Mathew, who serves at the Hyattsville Immigration Court in Maryland. "Having gone through that process myself, I believe I have a unique perspective when adjudicating cases as a judge."

Born and raised in Germany, where his parents were civilians working with the U.S. military, Mathew came to the United States to attend college. "My entire family had green cards at the time," he said. "Since my siblings were already living in Chicago, I decided to move to Chicago after high school."

“THE IMMIGRATION LAW CLASSES I TOOK AT GW SPARKED MY INTEREST IN IMMIGRATION LAW AGAIN... GW WAS DEFINITELY A BIG STEPPINGSTONE FOR ME.”

— *Rajesh Mathew*

Mathew says his immigration law classes at GW Law rekindled an early interest in immigration. He attended GW as part of a special U.S. government program for attorneys with the U.S. Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG) to deepen their legal knowledge.

"The immigration law classes I took at GW sparked my interest in immigration law again," said Mathew, who was in the U.S. Air Force JAG from 2013 to 2023. "I took two classes with Professor Paulina Vera that ultimately shaped my career progression. GW was definitely a big steppingstone for me."

For Vera, Mathew's success is a confirmation of the unmistakable draw of immigration law. "I highlighted the need for fair



and compassionate adjudicators as they can make a tremendous impact in the lives of non-citizens," said Vera, who supervises the GW Law Immigration Clinic and is a professorial lecturer. "My hope is that these lessons have resonated with Judge Mathew, who is the first of my alums to become an immigration judge."

Before his judicial appointment by the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR), he served as an assistant general counsel with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. As a JAG attorney, he was stationed in a number of locations including Maxwell Air Force Base, Montgomery, Alabama; Ramstein Air Base, Germany; and Malmstrom Air Force Base, Great Falls, Montana.

It's his time in the military that Mathew feels is very much responsible for his professional path and his judgeship. Because of that, he encourages law students to be open to any and all opportunities that arise as they look to chart their careers.

"There are a lot of doors out there in the legal field," he said. "For students graduating today, I would encourage them to figure out what they really want and then walk through the doors that take them there."

— *Sarah Kellogg*

Amanda K. Brown, JD '06, has joined the New York office of Seward & Kissel as special counsel in the firm's maritime and transportation group.

Luis E. Lorenzana, JD '06, was named managing shareholder of the San Diego office of Littler, the largest global employment and labor law practice representing management.

Brandy R. McMillion, JD '06, was appointed to serve as

federal prosecutor for the U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of Michigan. Her appointment was confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

Lisa M. Percopo, JD '07, was promoted to partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. She focuses her practice on securities litigation.

Sheuti Bhutani Arora, LLM '08, was promoted to partner at BakerHostetler.

Ryan Foley, JD '08, a former Novartis senior corporate counsel, has joined Gibson Dunn as of counsel in the firm's antitrust and competition practice.

Laura Vartain Horn, JD '08, a former assistant U.S. attorney, has joined Kirkland & Ellis as a partner in the firm's intellectual property practice group.

Helen Lee, JD '08, a trusted advisor to financial institutions

and fintech companies, has joined Troutman Pepper's corporate practice group in New York as counsel.

Kathleen R. Salsbury, JD '08, a member of Baker Donelson's health law group, was elected a shareholder of the firm.

Jonathan S. Satinsky, JD '08, was promoted to general counsel, Catalyst Technologies and Platinum Group Metal Services, at Johnson Matthey.

David Williams, JD '08, was named chair of the investment management practice group at Faegre Drinker. He also serves on the firm's diversity, equity, and inclusion committee and is a member of the Chicago hiring committee.

Trent Bowen, JD '09, was selected to serve as counsel for the Naval Undersea Warfare Center in Keyport, Wash.

Erin E. Hertzog, JD '09, has joined Manatt, Phelps & Phillips as a partner in the firm's health care and life sciences industry practice.

Utibe Ikpe, JD '09, a partner at Meland Budwick, received the National Bar Association's 2023 "40 Under 40 Nation's Best Advocates" award.

Ricardo J. Pineres, JD '09, has joined the United States Senate Federal Credit Union as chief risk officer.

Arsenio Rodrigues, JD '09, is now a shareholder at Stern & Eisenberg. He is the firm's New York managing attorney, overseeing all facets of the New York office's day-to-day operations.

2010s

James M. Brower, JD '10, was elected to partnership at Morrison Foerster. He is a member of the firm's litigation department and national security group in Washington, D.C.

Chris R. Marando, JD '10, has joined Perkins Coie as a partner. He practices in the firm's intellectual property and patent litigation group in Washington, D.C.

Aaron R. Modiano, JD '10, has joined Lewis, Longman & Walker P.A., one of Florida's largest environmental law firms, as a senior attorney in the firm's West Palm Beach office.

Trevor R. Salter, JD '10, a financial services attorney, has joined Troutman Pepper's Washington, D.C., office as a partner in the firm's corporate practice.

Kristen W. Broz, JD '11, was selected to join this year's class of fellows of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity.

Christopher P. Healey, JD '11, a registered funds practitioner, has joined Davis Polk as a partner in the firm's investment management practice in Washington, D.C.

Meredith M. Ralls, JD '11, was promoted to senior assistant commonwealth's attorney for Fairfax County, Va. She focuses on prosecuting child exploitation crimes and crimes committed by juveniles

Kwan-Ho "Alex" Chung, JD '12, has joined Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP as a partner. He practices in the firm's intellectual property practice group and life sciences industry team in Washington, D.C.

Richard A. Crudo, JD '12, a member of Stern Kessler's electronics practice group, was named a director at the firm. He was also recognized as "One to Watch" by *Best Lawyers*.

Scott Gilmore, JD '12, was promoted to partner at Hausfeld. He handles complex and cross-border cases in U.S. and international courts.

Jack Hobough, LLM '12, a shareholder at Brownstein, was appointed chair of the Denver chapter of the International Association of Privacy Professionals' KnowledgeNet.

Matt Kirsch, JD '12, was elected to partnership at Arnold & Porter. He is a member of the real estate practice in the firm's Washington, D.C., office.

ALUMNI PROFILE

At the Center of Power

FOR MUCH OF THE LAST DECADE, **ALEX HASKELL, JD '11**, HAS had more than a front row seat to history. He's been knee-deep in the complex political and legislative relationship between the White House and the U.S. Congress.

First, he served as counsel for the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, where Haskell participated in both impeachment proceedings against former President Donald Trump, two U.S. Supreme Court confirmations, an investigation into Russian interference in the 2020 election, and inquiries about Trump's response to the pandemic.

"The day I got the offer, Justice Anthony Kennedy retired, and I spent the first three months working on the Brett Kavanaugh confirmation," said Haskell. "During my time on the committee, there was a parade of fairly dramatic events. There were calmer waters at times, during which I worked on a variety of policies, but most of my tenure was spent on those bigger ticket items."

Then, in January 2021, he moved from the proverbial frying

“ THE PRIVILEGE OF GETTING TO WORK AT THE WHITE HOUSE AND IN THE WEST WING, AND TO BE PART OF THE ENERGY AND THE INTENSITY OF THE PLACE, WAS A DREAM. ”

— Alex Haskell

pan into the fire. He became a senior deputy associate counsel in the White House, helping vet a tsunami of President Biden's early appointees requiring Senate confirmation—from Cabinet secretaries to a Supreme Court justice. He was on the vetting team for more than a year.

For the nearly two years that followed, Haskell served as a special assistant to the president and the chief of staff in the White House Office of Legislative Affairs. In that role, he helped win legislative support for Biden's prominent initiatives such as the CHIPS and Science Act, the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, the Respect for Marriage Act, and the PACT Act.

"The privilege of getting to work at the White House and in the West Wing, and to be part of the energy and the intensity of the place, was a dream," said Haskell. "You get to work on the most pressing issues in the country - oftentimes the world."

Haskell couldn't have known where he would land when he arrived at GW Law. He was raised in Los Angeles by parents who

Christopher Lutz, JD '12, has joined Jones Walker as a partner. He is a member of the tax practice group based in the firm's Washington, D.C., office.

Ross D. Margulies, JD '12, has joined Manatt, Phelps & Phillips as a partner in the firm's

health care and life sciences industry practice.

Evan R. Minsberg, JD '12, was elected to partnership at the Financial Services Group and co-chairs the firm's digital and interactive media industry group.



were very active in and cared deeply about politics. While he thought about working in politics and government, he didn't have a concrete plan to do so. Instead, he waited for the right moment, working as an associate with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP and clerking for the U.S. District Court Judge Amit P. Mehta.

"Long-term planning can be kind of futile if you want to work in politics and government, because you don't know who is going to be in power at any given moment," said Haskell. "You can say you want to work in the White House, but you can't know when the opportunity will arise, and then sometimes it does."

Leaving the White House in mid-2024, Haskell moved to New York City, where he serves as head of global affairs for ElevenLabs, an audio-focus AI company. In his new role, he oversees policy, government relations, regulatory affairs, and communications for the rapidly expanding company dedicated to pushing the frontiers of voice AI.

He said he's enjoying the shift from the public to the private sector. "I tried to turn myself into somebody that understands government broadly, from a lawyer's perspective, a courtroom perspective, a Congress perspective, and a White House perspective. I'm hopeful these experiences will allow me to add value outside the government in a range of impactful ways."

— Sarah Kellogg

Martina Polasek, LLM '12, was elected secretary-general of the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes in April.

Reed Ryan, JD '12, has joined the Asphalt Pavement Alliance as executive director. Reed

previously served as executive director of the Utah Asphalt Pavement Association and recently completed his term as president of the State Asphalt Pavement Association's executive committee.

Mollie Simons, JD '12, was

appointed by California Governor Gavin Newsom to serve as legal advisor for the California Public Employment Relations Board. She is a partner at Leonard Carder and has served as a pro bono attorney for the Centro Legal de La Raza Asylum Project since 2018.

Jocelyn Weisner, JD '12, was promoted to counsel at Arnold & Porter. She is a member of the product liability litigation practice in the Washington, D.C., office.

Thomas Yeh, JD '12, was promoted to partner at Latham & Watkins LLP in Los Angeles. He is a member of the firm's intellectual property litigation practice and litigation and trial department.

Melissa L. Farrar, JD '13, was promoted to partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher.

Sam Knowles, JD '13, was recently promoted to co-head of DLA Piper's government contracts group.

Carla (Voigt) Castello, JD '14, was promoted to shareholder at Babst, Calland, Clements & Zomnir. She practices in the firm's litigation, emerging technologies, and employment and labor practice groups in Pittsburgh.

Adam R. Diamond, JD '14, was promoted to member at Clark Hill. He practices in the firm's Houston office.

Christopher M. Gallo, JD '14, was promoted to director at Stern Kessler. He is a member of the firm's biotechnology and chemical practice group.

Chris Gloria, JD '14, was elected partner at Morrison Foerster. He is a member of the transactions department and the patent strategy and prosecution group, based in Washington, D.C.

Matthew R. Mollozzi, JD '14, an attorney at Moore & Van Allen, was named to the 2024 Lawdragon 500 X - The Next Generation list.

Saurabh Prabhakar, JD '14, was named counsel at Debevoise & Plimpton. He is a member of the firm's intellectual property litigation group based in San Francisco.

Antonio J. Rivera, JD '14, was promoted to partner at ArentFox Schiff.

Derrick Rowe, JD '14, was promoted to partner at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati. He focuses his practice on patent prosecution and counseling in the firm's Washington, D.C., office.

Mohammad M. Shouman, JD '14, has joined the U.S. Coast Guard as an officer and judge advocate general (JAG). Shouman was also recently recognized by the Arab American Foundation on their 40 under 40 list.

James O. Springer, JD '14, was promoted to partner at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. He advises public and private companies, private equity firms, boards of directors, and special committees in connection with a variety of complex transactional matters.

Brian J. Stevens, JD '14, was promoted to partner at ArentFox Schiff. He specializes in patent law.

Jasjit S. Vidwan, JD '14, was elected to partnership at ArentFox Schiff. He concentrates his practice on patent litigation, prosecution, and counseling.

Yieyie Yang, JD '14, was elected to partnership at Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett, & Dunner, where she specializes in complex patent litigation.

ALUMNI PROFILE

In-House Powerhouse

ALICE ELDRIDGE, JD '91, CAME TO GW LAW FOR MANY OF THE reasons law students choose the law school: its reputation, its proximity to the U.S. government, and its location in Washington, D.C., which turned out to be a great introduction to city life.

Only later on, after she was deeper into her career, would she realize she had inadvertently attended the best law school to later spend a life working on government contracts and serving in the legal departments of global aerospace, defense, and security powerhouses.

"The fact that I had taken a fair amount of international law classes and been exposed to contracts, which is a big part of the GW Law curriculum, actually ended up helping me as I went into my in-house career and started working for multinational corporations," said Eldridge, senior vice president, general counsel, and secretary of BAE Systems, Inc.

Eldridge enjoyed her time at GW Law, and it was made all the more manageable by serving as a resident director her second and third years. It helped temper the rigors of law school, and it kept her living downtown to better enjoy the academic and social life. "It gave me a mental break from being fully focused on school," said Eldridge.

Graduating on her 25th birthday, Eldridge had a pretty good

“BEFORE I WENT TO LAW SCHOOL, I MET WITH THE GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DIVISION OF IBM THAT MY DAD WORKED FOR. AFTER THAT, I KNEW I WANTED TO GO IN-HOUSE.”

— Alice Eldridge

sense of how to plot her career path: start with respected law firms to embellish her credentials and then move in-house to work for an international company. In the years after graduation, Eldridge worked as an associate with both Howrey & Simon and Davis, Graham & Stubbs.

"Before I went to law school, I met with the general counsel of the division of IBM that my dad worked for," said Eldridge. "After that,



I knew I wanted to go in-house. I didn't really know what area or industry, but I knew I wanted to be an in-house lawyer."

Eldridge's first in-house stint was with Lockheed Martin, where she served in multiple roles including general counsel for the systems integration and tactical systems divisions and vice president of ethics and business conduct, overseeing the company's ethics program.

Eldridge said one of the most fulfilling aspects of her role is serving as head of ethics. "You get a view of a company's culture and—it sounds a little high-minded—how important it is to have employee justice," she said. "It is important to make sure people have a place where they can bring their concerns and know they're going to be heard, and the concerns handled."

At BAE Systems, Eldridge finds among her colleagues a respect for the gravity of their work and the commitment to their mission. "If you're going to have a company be responsible for creating equipment that men and women take into battle, I feel better knowing it's being done by a responsible company that puts a lot of time and energy into ethics programs and giving back to the community."

— Sarah Kellogg

Leela K. Baggett, JD '15, was named principal at Powers Pyles Sutter and Verville, where she specializes in healthcare law.

Eric J. Chang, JD '15, has joined the Department of Justice as an assistant United States attorney in the Eastern District of California.

Griffin Foster, JD '15, was elected to partnership at Faegre Drinker.

Richard A. Loubé, JD '15,

was elected principal at Miles & Stockbridge.

Crystal Tully, JD '15, has joined Wiley Rein LLP as a special counsel. In her previous role as general counsel for investigations and nominations with the Senate's Armed Services Committee, Tully helped draft the National Defense Authorization Act and helped pass several landmark bills such as the CHIPS and Science Act and the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act.

Cristina I. Vessels, JD '15, was promoted to counsel at Venable. She focuses her practice on matters related to nonprofit organizations.

Sylvia Yi, JD '15, has rejoined Bass, Berry & Sims as counsel in the firm's government contracts practice based in Washington, D.C. She previously served as an in-house senior attorney with IBM.

Megan Yung, JD '15, has been appointed chief strategy

officer and general counsel at Eterna Therapeutics, a life science company.

Neha Dhindsa, JD '16, was promoted to counsel at Venable. She focuses primarily on international trade and customs, and maritime and transportation issues.

Michael J. Foley, JD '16, has joined Holy Cross Hospital and Trinity Health as assistant counsel.

Racquel A. Muindi, JD '16, an associate at Ballard Spahr LLP in Los Angeles, has received this year's Associates Advisory Board Pro Bono Attorney Award from the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles in recognition of her service to clients in need.

Nicholas Cerulli, JD '17, was elected to partnership at Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner.

Jonathan Cornfield, JD '18, has joined McGlinchey Stafford as an associate in the firm's Washington, D.C. office.

Katelyn B. Cramp, JD '19, has joined Fox Rothschild as an associate in the firm's litigation department in Denver.

2020s

Victoria M. Manfredonia, JD '20, has joined the San Diego office of Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP as an associate in the firm's litigation practice.

Eric Stocking, JD '20, has joined the Chambliss law firm in Chattanooga, Tenn., as an associate in the firm's estate planning and business practice areas.

John B. Allen, JD '21, has

joined the Salt Lake City office of Spencer Fane as an associate in the firm's litigation and dispute resolution group. He focuses his practice on intellectual property rights.

Heewon Lee, JD '21, has joined the Los Angeles office of Blank Rome LLP as an associate in the general litigation practice group.

Isabel C. Mulino, JD '21, has joined the Tulsa office of GableGotwals as an associate. Her practice focuses on commercial litigation and governmental relations.

Julia B. Heasley, JD '22, has joined Fox Rothschild in Princeton, N.J., as an associate in the firm's family law department.

Eric M. Levine, JD '22, has joined Tonkon Torp LLP as an associate in the firm's litigation department. He joins the firm from the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia, where he was a Charles F.C. Ruff Fellow in the Office of the Solicitor General.

Lauren A. Cyriac, JD '23, has joined the New Orleans office of Jones Walker as an associate in the corporate practice group.

in memoriam

Theodore J. DiLorenzo, JD '52, July 2, 2024

Olga D. Murray, JD '54, Feb. 20, 2024

Alan S. Loesberg, JD '56, June 15, 2024

Edwin J. Monsma, JD '56, July 15, 2024

Harold W. Adams, JD '60, Dec. 30, 2011

Justice Paul L. Rudman, JD '60, Jan. 4, 2024

William E. Watson, JD '61, June 23, 2024

John B. Beemer, JD '66, Aug. 24, 2023

Edward Tupling, JD '66, May 12, 2023

The Hon. Paul Chernoff, JD '67, July 15, 2024

Sidney B. Williams, Jr., JD '67, May 5, 2024

Jack W. Hanson, JD '68, Jan. 13, 2024

Arthur "Buddy" A. Lemann III, LLM '68, Dec. 30, 2023

Joel P. Dictrow, JD '69, July 6, 2024

James A. Williamson, Jr., JD '74, Feb. 11, 2024

Mary M. Levy, JD '76, July 31, 2024

Christopher Laskowski, JD '05, Jan. 7, 2024

John H. Curry, JD '07, April 5, 2024

Claire Duggan, JD '13, July 10, 2024

FACULTY

Professor Barkley Clark, July 29, 2023

Colonel Francis A. Gilligan, July 6, 2024

Professor Susan Jones, April 29, 2024

class notes

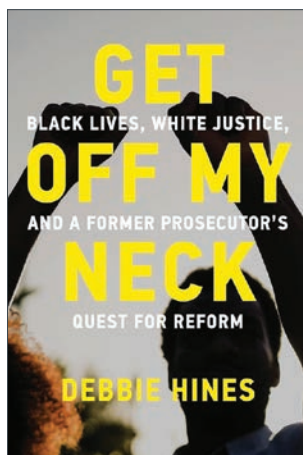
ALUMNI NEWSMAKERS

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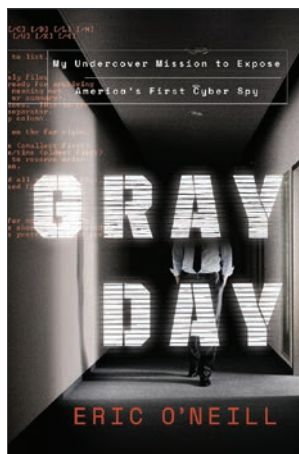
alumni bookshelf



DEBBIE HINES, JD '78

Get Off My Neck: Black Lives, White Justice and a Former Prosecutor's Quest for Reform

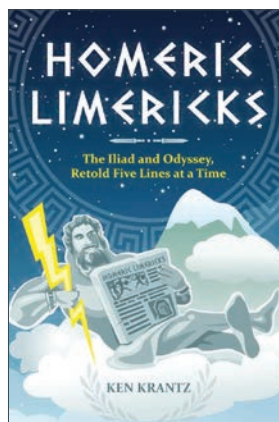
Debbie Hines draws on her perspective as a trial lawyer, former Baltimore prosecutor, and assistant attorney general for the State of Maryland in arguing that the most powerful players in the criminal justice system—U.S. prosecutors—systematically target and criminalize Black people. Hines describes her disillusionment as a young Black woman who entered the profession to help crime victims, only to discover herself aiding and abetting a system that prizes plea bargaining, speedy conviction, and excessive punishment. Her book offers a proactive approach to fixing a broken prosecutorial system through a broad-based alliance of reform-minded prosecutors, activists, allies, communities, and racial justice organizations—all working together to end the racist treatment of Black people.



ERIC O'NEILL, JD '03

Gray Day: My Undercover Mission to Expose America's First Cyber Spy

In 2001, GW Law night student Eric O'Neill was a 26-year-old technology specialist working undercover to identify an FBI agent feeding nuclear secrets to the Russians. The game of spy craft that O'Neill was pulled into netted Robert Hannsen, a rage-prone veteran agent, O'Neill's boss, and one of the most damaging spies in U.S. history. In a story that reads like a thriller, O'Neill obtains the spy's handheld mobile electronic device, delivers it to technicians who decrypt its contents, and returns the device before anyone's the wiser. *Gray Day* offers a first-person cautionary tale of how the United States allowed Russia to become dominant in cyberespionage.



KEN KRANTZ, LLM '84

Homeric Limericks: The Iliad and Odyssey, Retold Five Lines at a Time

Using more than 150 witty and imaginative limericks, Ken Krantz retells the epic story of the Trojan War and its aftermath in a book that is designed for both readers who are new to Homer's epics as well as those who are familiar with them. This inspired version of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* traces the abduction of Helen to the homecoming of Odysseus, offering a fresh take on one of the earliest classics of Western literature. The gods, the mortals, and the monsters are all here in the collection of limericks, along with the great wooden horse.

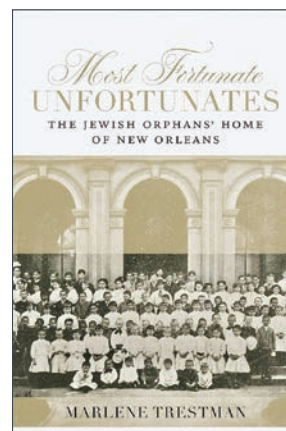


TRACY BADUA, JD '10

This is Not A Personal Statement

Tracy Badua's novel for young adults follows the anxiety-laden journey of a senior at a hyper-competitive school who fails to get into the university of

her dreams. What follows is a twisty tale of deception as the protagonist, Perla, forges an acceptance letter, breaks into dorm rooms, crashes classes, and dodges questions from new friends about her lack of a student ID. As her guilty conscience grows and campus security looms large, Perla starts to wonder if the dream she's pursued her entire life is something she even wants. This is a novel about acceptance, self-discovery, and the possibilities that present themselves when people embrace their imperfections.



MARLENE TRESTMAN, JD '81

Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans

Marlene Trestman's *Most Fortunate Unfortunates* is a comprehensive history of the country's first purpose-built Jewish orphanage. The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans opened in 1855 following a yellow fever epidemic and, by the time it closed in 1946, it had sheltered more than 1,600 parentless children and two dozen widows. Trestman looks at the home's triumphs and failures as her research delves into the lives of people living in the orphanage, the growing prosperity of the Jewish community, and the forces that impelled the home's founders and leaders to create and maintain what was seen as the "pride of every Southern Israelite."

20TH & H

REUNION WEEKEND

Alumni from across the country returned to GW on June 7 and 8 to reconnect and reminisce at GW Law Reunion Weekend. Highlights included an all-class dinner and awards ceremony, the Stockton Guard Luncheon, a Nats game, and campus tours.



Reunion celebrants and families enjoyed trolley tours of D.C.



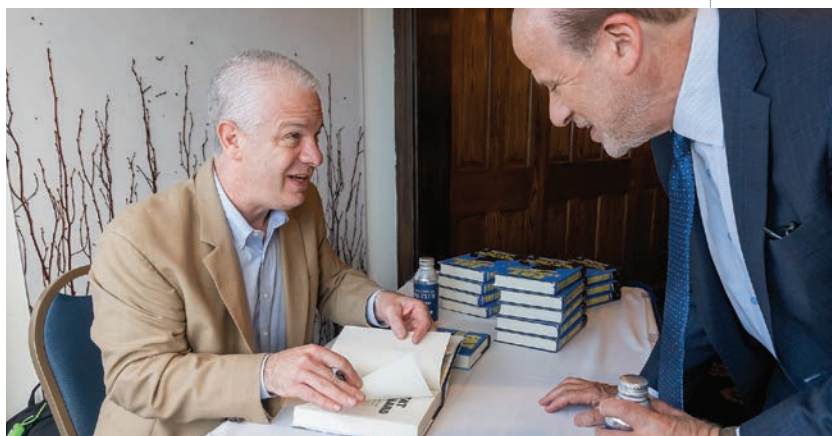
The Stockton Guard Installation and Luncheon drew a huge crowd.



Alumni turned out in force for the All-Class Dinner and Awards Ceremony at the National Press Club.



Cheering for the home team at Nats Park



Special events included a book talk and signing with NY Times best-selling author Craig Whitlock.



Associate Dean Scott Pagel (left) shares prized archival material with alumni during a campus tour.

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www.law.gwu.edu/reunion-weekend