## law briefs

## 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.

WAS SELECTED TO PARTNER WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATE THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ACQUISITIONS AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT BEST PRACTICES. 39

- 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. Skrmetti*, 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 show-cased 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-roomonly 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

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 resumé—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.