

class notes

ALUMNI NEWSMAKERS

1960s

Joseph F. Baca, JD '64, who served two terms as Chief Justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court, was recently honored by the Court, who presented him with a bound copy of his opinions and filed a copy of the document in the Supreme Court Library.

1970s

Robert Cogan, JD '70, serves as the principal attorney at his firm Continuum Law in downtown San Diego. In addition to business, DoD contracting, and patent-trademark-copyright, the firm now engages in litigation.

Ralph Wolff, JD '71, is the new president of the World University Consortium, which is dedicated to promoting the development of accessible, affordable, quality higher education worldwide. He is the founder and former president of the Quality Assurance Commons, a national nonprofit dedicated to integrating job skills into academic programs.

1980s

Bruce York, JD '80, recently retired as the chief negotiator and senior advisor for the Air Line Pilots Association, International.

Antonio "Tony" Salazar, JD '85, who serves as Maryland's commissioner of financial regulation, was elected by his fellow state financial regulators to serve

as chair of the board of the national Conference of State Bank Supervisors.

Barry Barth, JD '86, has joined Rubin and Rudman as of counsel in the firm's real estate practice group.

Mark Egert, JD '87, is managing director and chief compliance officer at Brevet Capital Management in NYC.

Scott Levin, JD '87, has joined Chicago-based Accel Entertainment as chief legal officer and secretary.

1990s

Maria Strong, JD '90, serves as the associate register of copyrights and director of policy and international affairs at the U.S. Copyright Office.

Dirk Haire, JD '93, has joined Burr & Forman LLP as the managing partner of the firm's Washington, D.C., office. He is ranked as one of the leading construction law attorneys in the District of Columbia by *Chambers USA*.

Jean Witz, JD '94, has joined Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati PC as a senior patent counsel based in the firm's Washington, D.C., office.

Adele L. Abrams, JD '95, recently joined Littler as senior counsel in the firm's expanding Washington, D.C., office. She focuses her practice on occupational safety and health, and employment law.

ALUMNI PROFILE

From Courtroom TV to IP Law

ANDREA HENCE EVANS, JD '02, STILL REMEMBERS RACING home from school to watch *The People's Court* with her grandmother—a daily ritual that first sparked her belief that she, too, could help lay down the law. By second grade, she had already declared she wanted to be a judge or better, after some research, a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Years later, that childhood fascination with courtroom problem-solving led her to GW Law, where she discovered intellectual property and began building what would become a successful career in IP law.

Evans grew up in Houston, excelling in math and science and surrounded by a family of engineers. Though she once imagined studying marketing, her mother encouraged her to pursue engineering. That advice led Evans to a Spelman College and Georgia Institute of Technology dual-degree program. She graduated with a mathematics degree from Spelman and a civil and environmental engineering degree from Georgia Tech, all while spending summers working at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

“I'M VERY PROUD TO HAVE BUILT MY LAW FIRM FROM THE GROUND UP AND TO REPRESENT A RANGE OF CLIENTS, FROM INDIVIDUALS TO FORTUNE 50 COMPANIES AROUND THE WORLD.”

— *Andrea Hence Evans*

But the dream seeded by *The People's Court* never left her. Believing that “everything was happening in D.C.,” Evans set her sights on law school and chose GW for its national reputation and strong environmental law program. The encouragement of professors opened her eyes to intellectual property law, and GW Law's top-ranked IP curriculum sealed her path.

“GW's IP program is world-renowned,” she said. “Being taught by judges and former Patent and Trademark Office attorneys gave me incredible insight into the field.”

Summer positions at small, medium, and large firms solidified her interest, but rather than head immediately into private practice, Evans followed the example of her mentors and joined the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. She spent three years as a patent examiner before transitioning into the highly competitive trademark examining corps. Along the way, she continued networking and unintentionally cultivated a client base of people she had met nationwide who sought her advice. Because government work posed conflicts of interest, she referred them to her mentor's firm, eventually sending so



much business his way that he urged her to consider private practice herself.

"So often people don't understand the importance of intellectual property, and there are so many myths and misconceptions," said Evans. "Traveling around the country, going to trade shows and speaking, and being in the environment where my clients were, has made a difference."

Eighteen years ago, Evans took the leap, launching The Law Firm of Andrea Hence Evans, LLC. She has since built a thriving practice representing clients from individual inventors to Fortune 50 companies, while also becoming a nationally recognized voice on IP issues. Through social media, speaking engagements, books, and her role as the patent attorney on the TV show Make48, she has worked to demystify intellectual property for the public.

"I'm very proud to have built my law firm from the ground up and to represent a range of clients, from individuals to Fortune 50 companies around the world," said Evans. "I'm also very proud to have made a name for myself now when I serve as an expert witness."

Today, Evans credits her GW Law foundation—its faculty, its network, its IP reputation—for helping her shape a career that began with an after-school TV habit and grew into a platform for empowering innovators around the world. And her early dream of becoming a judge? She says she's realized her dream with her own thriving law firm and, more importantly, a loving husband and their two children.

— Sarah Kellogg

Jocelyn Aqua, JD '95, has joined HWG LLP as chair of the data, privacy, and cybersecurity practice group and as a member of the artificial intelligence and emerging technologies practice group.

William Barry, JD '95, a white collar criminal defense litigator, was elected chairman of Miller & Chevalier Chartered.

Jeffrey J. Hessekiel, JD '96, was appointed executive vice president and chief legal and administrative officer at Cytokinetics Inc.

Francesco Di Pietro, LLM '97, has joined Blank Rome LLP as a partner in the business litigation group based at the firm's New York office.

Amie Ravitz, JD '97, serves as vice president of labor and corporate counsel at Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co. of New York and vice president and corporate counsel at the Honickman Companies, one of the country's leading beverage manufacturers and distributors.

Christopher Bright, JD '99, a partner at Snell & Wilmer, has been recognized as "Top Intellectual Property Lawyer" by the *Daily Journal*.

Jahna Hartwig, JD '99, was elected to partnership at Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.

Lily Wound, JD '99, has joined the New York office of Ballard Spahr LLP as a member of the firm's intellectual property team.

2000s

Victor Chen, JD '00, has joined Loeb & Loeb LLP as a partner in the firm's capital markets and corporate department in Los Angeles. He previously served as a private equity partner at Goodwin Procter LLP based in Hong Kong.

William J. Curtis, JD '00, has joined Spencer Fane LLP as a partner in the environmental and energy law practice groups in the firm's St. Louis office.

Josh Gardner, JD '00, recently joined the DC office of DLA Piper as a litigation partner in the firm's white collar, investigations, and government enforcement practice. He previously served for more than two decades with the Department of Justice's Civil Division.

Thomas Levato, JD '00, has joined DLA Piper as a member of the firm's capital markets and public company advisory practice in New York.

Donald English Jr., JD '00, has rejoined Morgan Lewis & Bockius after serving as an officer in the U.S. Air Force.

Christine Fernandez Owen, JD '02, was appointed U.S. co-head of projects real estate at the global law firm Norton Rose Fulbright in Chicago. She also is an adjunct professor at the Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law lecturing on clean energy law.

Derek T. Mello, JD '03, was elected to partnership at Neubert, Pepe & Monteith. He practices civil litigation with a focus on motor vehicle, premises liability, construction, and general liability defense matters.

Sarah Belger, JD '04, has joined Holland & Knight as a partner in the firm's Tysons-based labor, employment, and benefits practice.

Alex Canizares, JD '06, has joined Vinson & Elkins as a Washington, D.C.-based partner in the firm's litigation practice and as co-head of the government contracts practice.

Stuart R. Reilly, JD '06, is the new general manager of Austin Energy. His expertise

ALUMNI PROFILE

The Nexus of Politics and Policy

CANDIDA "CANDI" WOLFF, JD '89, KNEW EARLY ON THAT she wanted to build a career at the nexus of politics and policy. Law school, she realized, was the tool that would let her operate at that intersection—and Washington, D.C., was where that work actually happened.

That conviction drew her to GW Law and set her on a path that would wind through Congress, the White House, major law firms, and ultimately the global public-policy arena at Citi, where she now serves as managing director and global head of government affairs.

Wolff arrived at GW already fascinated by the way policy is shaped, negotiated, and translated into law. A math and political science major at Mount Holyoke, she had been pulled toward tax and economic policy after watching the 1986 Tax Reform Act unfold. GW Law's proximity to Congress made it the perfect place to cultivate that interest. She dove into courses in legislative drafting and tax, gaining the analytical tools she wanted without losing sight of her goal: to become a strategic thinker who could navigate complex policy landscapes.

That focus guided her from graduation straight into Akin Gump's public policy practice. She bypassed the traditional corporate law track in favor of advocacy work—exactly what she had envisioned when she chose GW Law. Three years later, she moved to Capitol Hill to work as tax counsel for a member of the Senate Finance Committee. Eight years in the Senate followed, culminating in a senior role within Republican leadership that broadened her portfolio beyond finance into a wider range of policy issues.

From there, Wolff transitioned to the White House, serving three years under Vice President Dick Cheney, the latter two as head of legislative affairs, a year in the private sector, and then three more years in the George W. Bush administration as the first female head of legislative affairs. It was a period defined by a rapidly

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— Candi Wolff



changing policy environment, and she carried forward the problem-solving discipline and strategic thinking habits she'd developed in law school.

"Logical thinking and my ability to break down complex issues have been what I've relied on throughout my career," she said. "In fact, those are the tool sets that have helped me to advance in the public policy arena to this day."

When she moved back to private practice at Hogan & Lovells and then into the global arena at Citi in 2011, those same skills became even more essential. Today, she leads Citi's worldwide government-affairs strategy at a time when economic and national security policy have fused, geopolitical risk has surged, and businesses face an increasingly fragmented landscape. Understanding emerging trends, anticipating political pressure points, and developing informed strategies are her daily work.

For Wolff, the through-line is clear: Washington taught her how policy gets made, GW Law taught her how to think, and the combination equipped her for a career at the highest levels of government affairs—right where politics and policy meet.

— Sarah Kellogg

spans utility operations, grid resilience, clean energy, and financial strategy.

Jeffrey Saltman, JD '06, has joined Cole Schotz PC as a member of the firm's litigation and intellectual property departments. A skilled trial lawyer, he has helped secure six successful jury verdicts in federal court.

Shawna Yashar, JD '07, has joined O'Melveny as a partner in the firm's intellectual property and technology practice group based in Washington, D.C.

James P. Young, JD '07, was selected for inclusion in *Upstate New York Super Lawyers* for 2025. He is chair of the litigation department at Hancock Estabrook LLP.

Lewis Goss II, JD '08, has joined DLA Piper as a member of the firm's real estate team. He plans to split time between the firm's Washington, D.C., and Dallas offices.

Amber Hilliard, JD '08, will be leading the new Latitude office in Washington, D.C. Hilliard comes to Latitude from Tupperware Brands Corp., where she served as vice

president of law, securities, and corporate governance.

Cameron Kilberg, JD '08, has joined Allied Universal®, a leading security and facility services provider, as vice president of government relations.

2010s

Patent litigator **Tawfik Goma, JD '10**, has joined Mintz

ALUMNI PROFILE

Legal Leadership in Academia

A COVETED FEDERAL FELLOWSHIP LED **STANNIS SMITH, JD '14**, to the legal experience he will now leverage as the new vice president of legal affairs and general counsel at Delaware State University. But he almost said “no” to the fellowship offer.

Persuasive “arm twisting” by Renee Devigne, GW Law’s dean of academic development at the time, made him reconsider.

“I was selected as a Presidential Management Fellow,” Smith said, referring to the U.S. government’s two-year training and leadership program that inevitably leads to a federal job. “There were 15,000 applications. I was one of six from GW Law. Two of us from GW were chosen.”

“But I didn’t want the fellowship. For me, working in the government meant being political. And I had no interest in politics,” he explained.

Looking back, Smith now says the year he spent working as a federal policy analyst under the Obama, Trump, and Biden administrations was transformative.

“I WAS SELECTED AS A PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOW. THERE WERE 15,000 APPLICATIONS. I WAS ONE OF SIX FROM GW LAW. TWO OF US FROM GW WERE CHOSEN.”

— *Stannis Smith*

In his decade as a senior analyst and, for a year, attorney in the Office of Management and Budget, he was engaged in a broad range of issues, from employment and health care to real estate and regulatory compliance. He was involved in development of the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014, better known as the Data Act, and he wrote the Biden administration guidance documents on medical debt.

“I am so grateful that I spent more than a decade in federal government because of all the issues that I was able to touch,” said Smith, who grew up in Georgia.

From the government, Smith eventually moved into higher education—his goal. To join Delaware State University, he leaves the



position of executive general counsel and labor designee at the City University of New York School of Medicine.

Smith earned his undergraduate degree at Morehouse College, where he had a federal work-study assignment in the financial aid office. After graduating, he built a professional career in that area, eventually joining GW and rising to become director of financial aid at GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences. He continued in that full-time job while taking night classes at GW Law.

Smith said he is not someone who goes in and makes immediate changes at an organization. Rather, he takes time to assess and identify areas of vulnerability.

“That’s the effective way to bring about change. And you make change with buy-in from stakeholders,” he said. He said his liaison work between the White House and multiple federal agencies helped him become an effective communicator—and a good listener.

But more than anything, he sees his biggest strength as his ability to quickly change gear.

“My friends tease me, saying ‘We’ve never known anyone else who can pivot the way you pivot,’” Smith said.

— *Mary A. Dempsey*

as a member in the firm’s Miami office.

Frank J. Manfiatordi, JD '11, has joined Gibson Dunn’s New York office as a partner in the firm’s real estate practice group.

Christie Matthaei, JD '11, has joined the intellectual property team at Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP.

Megan Provost, JD '11, has joined the American Feed Industry Association as chief operating officer.

Jack Hobaugh, LLM '12, a shareholder in Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck’s corporate and business department, has been elected to the Colorado chapter board of trustees for Blood Cancer United.

Kevin C. Lee, JD '12, was appointed by California Gov. Gavin Newsom to serve as a judge in the San Bernardino Superior Court.

Tom Sundlof, JD '12, has joined the Washington, D.C., office of Blank Rome LLP as a partner in the firm’s life sciences industry team and corporate, M&A, and securities practice group.

Kirk Cooper, JD '13, celebrated the three-year anniversary of the founding of his appellate boutique law firm, Cooper Appeals PLLC, based in El Paso, Texas. He is the former chief staff attorney of the Texas Court of Appeals for the Eighth District.

Melanie Harris, JD '13, has joined Maximus as senior counsel for AI and emerging

ALUMNI PROFILE

Realizing the American Dream

WHEN **DAVID TRUONG, LLM '08**, LOOKS BACK ON HIS LIFE, HE sees not a straight line but a remarkable arc—one that begins on a small boat fleeing postwar Vietnam and winds, improbably, toward an executive office in Northern Virginia. Today, as general counsel at Planned Systems International Inc., Truong's professional success is inseparable from the extraordinary family story that shaped him.

Truong was only 7 when his family finally reached the United States, the end of a perilous three-year odyssey set in motion by the fall of Saigon. His father—who had previously been imprisoned in a reeducation camp—crafted an intricate escape plan that began with sending two of Truong's older brothers to a distant fishing village to learn the trade and blend in. The family's hope was simple but dangerous: acquire a boat quietly and slip away without drawing attention. Their first attempt left them lost at sea for days before a fishing family, practicing their own escape, spotted and saved them. A later, and ultimately successful, attempt carried them to a remote refugee island in Malaysia, propelled by the unexpected kindness of many along the way—mechanics, smugglers, and even the Prince of Johor.

That generosity left a lifelong impression. "You never achieve anything alone," Truong says. It's a theme woven throughout his new memoir, *Escape to America: A Family Memoir*, which chronicles not just the daring escape but the many hands that helped make it possible.

After arriving in Northern Virginia, sponsored by an aunt, the family began the hard work of rebuilding. Like many refugee families, they leaned on one another and anchored their hopes in education. Fluent in English, Truong spent his teenage years helping his parents interpret leases, fill out forms, and navigate social norms in America. "What felt like a burden at the time became a privilege," he says. "It taught me responsibility and not to be afraid to tackle scary tasks at an early age."

At his parents' urging, Truong pursued law. His father believed deeply in the power of the profession to protect and elevate the

“MY LIFE HAS BEEN INFLUENCED BY THE KINDNESS AND COURAGE OF MANY PEOPLE.”

— David Truong



family. After earning his JD from the University of Dayton, Truong started his career in government contracts. While serving as assistant general counsel for procurement at the National Science Foundation, he was encouraged to deepen his expertise through GW Law's renowned LLM in Government Procurement Law.

The program, he says, "rounded out my legal education" and became a springboard to corporate leadership roles. For more than 15 years, he has served as general counsel—and even stepped into the unfamiliar terrain of chief operating officer during the company's rapid growth period—drawing on the broad base of legal and business knowledge he gained at GW Law.

As he wrote his memoir, Truong realized just how much of his professional philosophy comes from his parents' example. Their unbounding courage, he says, was the key to their success. They had the ability to act quickly by quieting the voice of doubt. It's the mindset he carries into complex legal questions, corporate challenges, and every new responsibility. Compared to what his family overcame, most obstacles feel small.

For Truong, success is not measured by titles or achievements. "My life has been influenced by the kindness and courage of many people," he said. "I hope my work honors those who helped me and my family reach the life we have today."

— Sarah Kellogg

technology. She previously served as associate general counsel at the U.S. Department of Defense.

Brandon Smith, LLM '13, has joined Holtzman Vogel Baran Torchinsky and Josefiak PLLC as a partner. Smith will lead the firm's new Nashville, Tenn., office and join its national government and corporate

investigations and political law practices.

Andrew Baskin, JD '15, was elevated to partnership at ArentFox Schiff. He practices in the firm's complex litigation group.

Margaret B. Beasley, JD '15, was promoted to partnership at Bracewell, LLP. She practices

in the firm's government enforcement and investigations group in New York

Laura Kilgariff, JD '15, a former Transportation Security Administration attorney, has joined Kaplan Kirsch LLP based in Denver.

Francis McCabe, JD '15, has joined Hughes Hubbard &

Reed LLP as a partner in the firm's project finance practice based in Washington, D.C.

Diana S. Bae, JD '16, was elevated to partnership at ArentFox Schiff, where she specializes in the management of global trademark portfolios and the protection and enforcement of clients' intellectual property rights.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Health Law Leader

FOR **DEBORAH GERSH, JD '83**, HEALTH CARE LAW IS ONE OF THE most consequential areas of the legal profession—and it becomes more interesting every year that passes.

"Health care is the largest industry in our country, and it's continuing to morph. Think about it—artificial limbs, robotics, COVID-19, medical research, telemedicine," said Gersh, co-chair of Ropes & Gray's nationally recognized health care practice and the co-leader of the firm's health care and life sciences industry group.

"There are so many areas of health law that you can get involved with. You can focus on health care regulatory matters, health care privacy, acquisitions of hospitals and health systems, telehealth, telemedicine, and the purchase and sale of health care and life science businesses. And now artificial intelligence is the fast-moving target," she said. "AI will be key in advancing health care and treatment of diseases that we never thought possible."

Gersh has spent almost her entire career engaged with health care law, expanding her portfolio of expertise as the industry shifts and changes. She is also helping GW Law advance its reputation in the area through her service on the Dean's Advisory Council and her gift to endow the Deborah L. Gersh Medical Privacy Law Research Fund.

She stepped up her engagement with her alma mater after Dayna Bowen Matthew became dean and pushed for the new Health Law and Policy program, which Gersh said is "a differentiator for the school."

Gersh enrolled at GW Law after graduating from Northwestern University, unsure of how she wanted her legal career to unfold. Her first job was working on government contracts at what is now Watt Tieder Hoffar and Fitzgerald LLP. At the time she was also in a long-distance relationship with the man she would eventually marry. He was in Chicago studying to become a retina surgeon.

"All the way through his residency and fellowship, we talked about medicine. I began to see how health care was so central to our economy, the significant dollar amounts that go into it. It fascinated me and I thought the legal side would also be interesting," she said.

One summer, Gersh clerked at a health care firm. Then she landed a job doing franchise law.

“AI WILL BE KEY IN ADVANCING HEALTH CARE AND TREATMENT OF DISEASES THAT WE NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE.”

— Deborah Gersh



"I jumped at the chance when health care businesses started to franchise, such as with optical centers. Then I started taking anything that was health-care related. That was about the same time that health care started to boom and expand in ways we never thought possible," she said.

In 2009, Ropes and Gray asked her to help establish an office in Chicago and co-lead its health care practice. At the time, she was particularly interested in the privacy rights of patients and hospitals. Then she got involved with legal issues linked to clinical trials.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Gersh also was involved in a project to convert warehouse space along Chicago's lakefront to expand the city's medical capacity. When a vaccine appeared, the project was no longer needed, but Gersh saw how the pandemic had recalibrated the health care sector.

"COVID-19 became a defining moment in health care. It was when telemedicine and telehealth were created by necessity. The crisis created ingenuity that forever changed the framework of health care," she said.

Gersh also experienced firsthand the ravages of the pandemic when her husband, a front-line medical worker, died of COVID-19, a reminder, she said, that "at the core of health care are individuals and their wellbeing."

— Mary A. Dempsey

Andrew Chesser, JD '16, has joined Helsell Fetterman in Seattle. He practices in the firm's commercial litigation and health care groups.

Robert Holup, JD '16, has joined Riker Danzig LLP as an associate practicing in the firm's trusts and estates and commercial litigation groups. He previously served as

deputy attorney general for the state of New Jersey.

Chelsea Pizzola, JD '16, has joined Willkie Farr & Gallagher LLP as a partner in the firm's asset management practice based in Washington, DC.

Barnabas T. Fekete, JD '17, was promoted to

partnership at ArentFox Schiff. He is a member of the firm's patent group.

Neela Pack, JD '17, was promoted to partner at Mayer Brown.

Kevin M. Voelkel, JD '17, was promoted to partnership at Bracewell, LLP. He practices in the firm's environment,

lands, and resources group in Washington, D.C.

Cassandra Horton, JD '18, has joined Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP as an associate in the firm's national labor and employment group based in Washington, D.C.

Zachary A. Zamore, JD '18, has joined Caplin &

ALUMNI PROFILE

From Whistle to Whiskey

LISA SAWYER DERMAN, JD '92, LIKES TO SAY HER CAREER IN THE alcohol beverage industry started with a whistle. As a summer associate at McDermott Will & Emery (now McDermott Will & Schulte), she was standing among a crowd of buttoned-up lawyers shuffling toward a partner dinner. Trying to help the group get organized, she instinctively put two fingers to her mouth and let out a sharp, commanding whistle.

A partner in a Hawaiian shirt—T. Raymond Williams, one of the most respected alcohol beverage attorneys in the country—turned, pointed, and said he wanted to work with her. That moment cracked open the door to the field that would define her career.

Derman's path to that dinner began far from corporate law's conference rooms. She grew up in tiny Albany, Kentucky, population 2,000, and arrived at law school almost by accident. After studying math and computer science at the University of Kentucky, she fled a future in basement robotics labs for New York City, where a colleague encouraged her to consider law school.

Ultimately, she chose GW Law for its location and opportunities, a decision that would shape both her personal and professional life. She met her husband, Adam, there, and the school's proximity to federal agencies gave her early exposure to the regulatory structures that govern the alcohol industry. "Being in D.C. opened up so many opportunities," she recalls. "It changed my life."

After graduation, she eventually followed Williams into a practice that blended corporate, tax, and regulatory complexity with entrepreneurial energy. She worked with iconic brands like Sam Adams and, later, served as a general counsel and senior executive at companies including Absolut, Proximo, Stoli and Macallan. Along the way, she developed a fascination with the founders she met such as

“ I ALWAYS KNEW I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING IN THE BOURBON INDUSTRY, BEING FROM KENTUCKY. BOURBON IS ROOTED IN TRADITION, AND I FELT THERE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HONOR THE TRADITION BUT EMBRACE SOMETHING NEW IN THE CATEGORY. ”

— Lisa Sawyer Derman



firefighters, chemists, and everyday dreamers who built spirits brands from scratch. Their creativity planted the early seeds for her own leap into entrepreneurship.

"I always knew I wanted to do something in the bourbon industry, being from Kentucky," said Derman. "Bourbon is rooted in tradition, and I felt there was an opportunity to honor the tradition but embrace something new in the category."

Her answer was founding Five Springs Infused Bourbon, her Kentucky-made line of infused bourbons inspired by the cocktail culture she watched her kids and their friends embrace. Today, the company is a full family affair: her husband contributes his legal expertise, her daughter runs marketing, and her son plans to join after college. Landing national distribution with Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits this year marked what Derman calls a major turning point.

From a whistle to a bourbon venture, Derman's path reflects a truth she learned at GW Law: a JD isn't a limitation, it's a launchpad.

— Sarah Kellogg

Drysdale as an associate in the firm's international tax practice group.

2020s

David Levintow, JD '21, has joined the business litigation group at Smith Anderson.

Nicole Vele, LLM '21, has joined GrayRobinson as a

shareholder in the firm's Washington, D.C., office. Vele is a U.S. Air Force Judge Advocate General veteran and seasoned litigator.

Julian Yowell, JD '21, has joined Holtzman Vogel's congressional investigations practice as an associate attorney in the firm's Washington, D.C., office. Yowell

previously served as counsel to the U.S. House Judiciary Committee. He also serves as an adjunct professor at GW Law.

Matthew Gino, JD '24, has joined Barclay Damon as an associate based in New York City. He practices in the firm's environmental, regulatory, and energy groups.

Harrison Hemminghaus, JD '24, has joined Mullins Law Group. He brings experience in government litigation and regulatory compliance to the firm.

Victoria Chen, JD '25, has joined the appeals team at Kantor & Kantor, LLP, one of the nation's leading plaintiff-side insurance litigation firms.

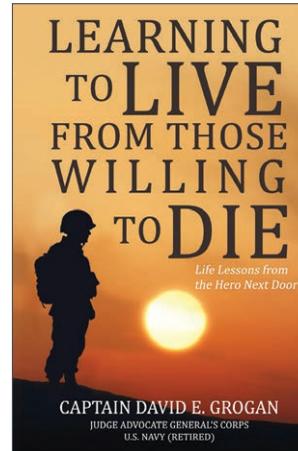
in memoriam

- William Threadgill, JD '49**, April 30, 2025
Fritz Reiner Kahn, JD '50, Oct. 2024
Gerald M. Gorrin, JD '51, Sept. 20, 2025
Herbert Kanki Shimabukuro, JD '57, Sept. 12, 2025
Thomas Madison Phillips, JD '59, Feb. 15, 2025
Robert F. Allnutt, JD '60, LLM '62, Aug. 11, 2025
David Carvel Bryan, JD '62, April 15, 2025
Stephen Danzansky, JD '64, June 2, 2025
David M. Bond, JD '65, Sept. 1, 2025
Spencer Boyer, JD '65, Nov. 14, 2025
Barry L. Haase, JD '65, Sept. 8, 2025
Alan K. Richards, JD '65, Aug. 17, 2025
Norman Dyer, JD '67, Sept. 7, 2025
David Peterson, JD '67, April 6, 2025
Jack C. Goldstein, JD '68, Oct. 24, 2025
Stephen Greenberg, JD '68, Oct. 6, 2025
Thomas Brigham, JD '69, Oct. 7, 2025
Clark Gruening, JD '69, June 17, 2025
John Noble, JD '69, July 11, 2025
John Stuckey, Jr., JD '70, May 30, 2025
John Walsh, JD '70, Oct. 18, 2025
Edward Caine, LLM '72, July 24, 2025
Gordon E. Wood, Sr., JD '72, May 15, 2025
John Ray, JD '73, April 2025
Fred Nelson, LLM '77, May 18, 2025
Maurice "Morrie" Scherrens, JD '77, April 6, 2025
Christine M. Cooper, JD '90, Oct. 16, 2025
Vera Fedoroff Mackanic, JD '96, Aug. 9, 2025
James P. O'Rourke, Jr., JD '03, Oct. 4, 2025
Eddie Shine, JD '24, Sept. 21, 2025

FACULTY + STAFF

- Professor Robert Park**, Aug. 11, 2025
Bob Stanek, JD '79, Feb. 16, 2025

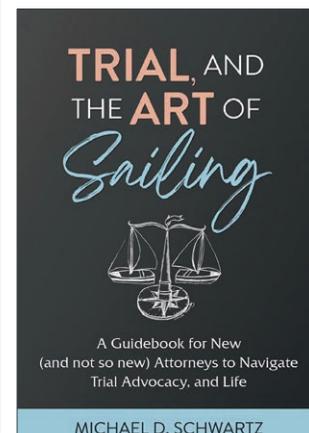
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Learning to Live from Those Willing to Die: Life Lessons from the Hero Next Door

CAPTAIN DAVID E. GROGAN, LLM '98, who served in the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps for 26 years, presents the captivating, real-life stories of our nation's military heroes in his new book, *Learning to Live from Those Willing to Die: Life Lessons from the Hero Next Door*. Through the engaging experiences of 26 veterans whose service spanned from World War II to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the book offers important lessons on how to navigate life's challenges. Each of the book's chapters introduces a life lesson like "If you don't see a path, blaze a trail," and then presents one or more veterans' stories to illustrate the lesson. From manning the deck of an aircraft carrier during a kamikaze attack, to patrolling the jungles of Vietnam, to riding in an armored vehicle across the Iraqi desert, the book's stories portray the full spectrum of

wartime and peacetime service. All royalties from the book are donated to America's VetDogs, which provides guide and service dogs to veterans and first responders.

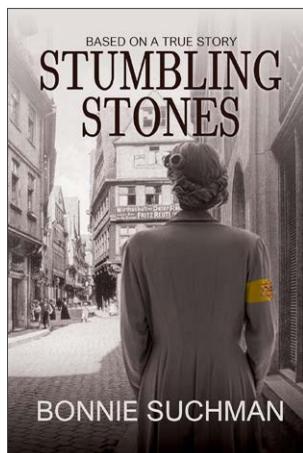


Trial and the Art of Sailing: A Guidebook for New (and Not So New) Attorneys to Navigate Trial Advocacy, and Life

In *Trial and the Art of Sailing: A Guidebook for New (and Not So New) Attorneys to Navigate Trial Advocacy, and Life*, top-rated trial lawyer **MICHAEL D. SCHWARTZ, JD '93**, combines life lessons with valuable advice on how to be a better trial lawyer. This informative and entertaining guidebook helps attorneys navigate trial work step by step, from the first client meeting to verdict. Like a good sail, *Trial and the Art of Sailing* zigzags back and forth along the waters of actual trial work and life, between blunt advice, mistakes lived and learned, anecdotes, war stories, strategy, and good, old fashioned commonsense.

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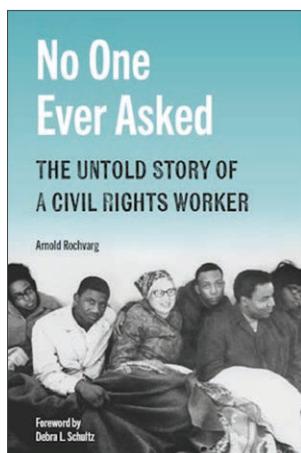
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Stumbling Stones

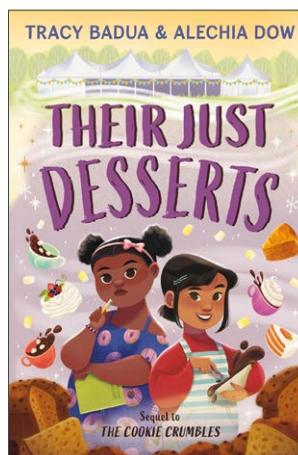
BONNIE SUCHMAN, JD '83,

is the author of the award-winning novel, *Stumbling Stones*, based on the true story of Alice Heppenheimer. Alice, who was born into a prosperous German Jewish family around the turn of the 20th century, prospers in her career until the rise of Nazi Germany transforms the book into a poignant journey through a dark period in human history as she navigates the challenges of persecution and hatred. Reluctant to leave the only home she has ever known, she faces the ultimate challenge—will she and her husband be able to escape Nazi Germany or have they waited too long to leave? *Stumbling Stones* is the first book in a trilogy by Suchman about the Heppenheimer family during the Holocaust. The second book in the series, *What Remains is Hope*, was just published and a third is in the pipeline.



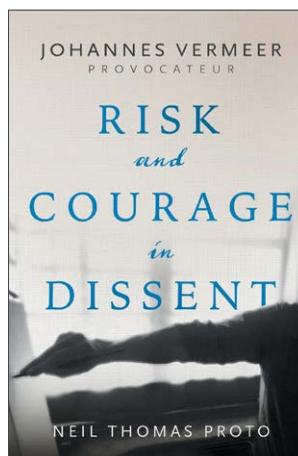
No One Ever Asked: The Untold Story of a Civil Rights Worker

ARNOLD ROCHVARG, JD '76, a professor emeritus at the University of Baltimore School of Law, presents a narrative history of the mid-1960s civil rights movement in his new book, *No One Ever Asked: The Untold Story of a Civil Rights Worker*. The powerful book centers on the true story of his cousin, Iris Geller, a white college student from Philadelphia dedicated to the cause of racial justice who quit college to join the civil rights movement and became involved with many of the important events and persons of the day. It is the fifth book by Rochvarg. His first book, *Watergate Victory: Mardian's Appeal*, draws upon his first-hand experience as a young lawyer serving as a member of the legal defense team on the appeal for one of the defendants convicted in the Watergate conspiracy trial.



Their Just Desserts

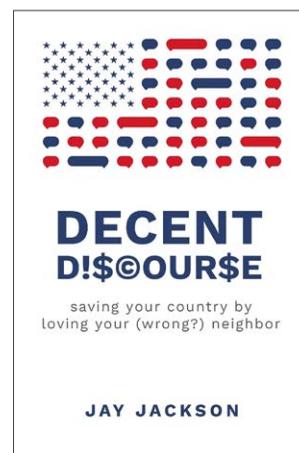
Their Just Desserts, the latest novel by award-winning author **TRACY BADUA, JD '10,** and co-author Alechia Dow, is perfect for fans of *The Great British Baking Show* and *Clue*. This enchanting and rollicking follow-up to *The Cookie Crumbles* follows two best friends caught up in a twisty mystery when jewels go missing at a high-stakes baking competition. As the investigation and competition heat up, their bond is put to the ultimate test. Can they solve this bakeoff mystery, or will they—and their friendship—crack under pressure?



Risk Courage Dissent

The 17th century. Delft. Working within the mythic “Dutch Golden Age,” Johannes Vermeer mastered light, color, and intimate

settings. In his new book, *Risk Courage Dissent*, award-winning author **NEIL THOMAS PROTO, JD '72,** throws off that limiting mask, weaving the documented strands of terror, slavery, and condescension with risk-taking, courage, and dissent into a revealing image of the religious and social repression Vermeer's countrymen unleashed at home and abroad. Civically driven, Vermeer defied the forces of law and corporate power that underpin that repression with the subtle strokes of his paintbrush.



Decent Discourse

In his timely book, *Decent Discourse*, attorney and veteran **JAY JACKSON, LL.M. '17,** offers a hopeful, helpful, and historical way to push back against the divisive rhetoric and echo chambers that dominate today's political discourse. He uses humor and optimism to build the case for decent discourse, showing how Americans have solved the immense challenges of our past with truth, humility, and compassion—in other words, by loving our neighbors (even when they might be wrong). The book identifies five critical problems with the state of our political discourse today and offers solutions to each, including practical action items for each of us.