

Akron Law MAGAZINE



**Where Are
Akron Law's
Newest Alumni?**

Integrating AI in the
legal field

Meet our new faculty

Law School bids Jack
Sahl adieu

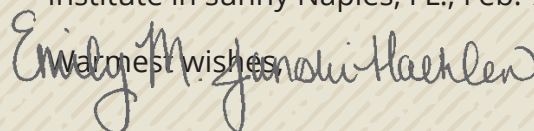
Greetings Akron Law family!

The 2023-2024 academic year is off to a great start. This year we welcomed 131 impressive first-year students. The new students range in age from 20 to 52, come to us from across the nation and world, and have some of the highest credentials we have seen in our entering classes. As you will read in the pages of this magazine, Akron Law's students and graduates are doing amazing things and are really making their mark on the legal world. I am proud of all our graduates, and I think you will enjoy reading about their successes and seeing where in the world they are going.

This past summer I traveled to Vietnam with a group of faculty and students to establish our study abroad program in Hanoi and Hue. We explored the cities, learned about the Vietnamese legal system and culture, and formalized agreements with Hanoi Law School and Hue Law School for future collaboration. It was an amazing experience to travel with the students and to meet Vietnamese law students and attorneys. In addition, we recently signed letters of intent with two law schools in Arequipa, Peru, for a spring break trip in 2025, and we are exploring an opportunity with the University of Eastern Finland for late summer 2024.

We welcomed six new faculty members to the Akron Law family. Assistant Professor Ben Cohen, Assistant Professor Mike Doane, Assistant Professor Ashley Keith, Assistant Professor and Law Librarian Amelia Landenberger, Associate Professor James Steiner-Dillon and Visiting Professor Steve Lee joined us at the beginning of the fall semester. I am excited about these new additions as each one of them adds something unique to the teaching faculty whether from their practice experience or innovative teaching styles. I hope you will have the opportunity to meet them at a future alumni event.

Thank you for staying in touch and continuing to instill Akron Law pride in all of us. I encourage you to stop by the McDowell Law Center to say hello and join us for our holiday celebration on the evening of Dec. 12 at the Law School and the Akron Law Winter Institute in sunny Naples, FL., Feb. 7-9, 2024.

Warmest wishes,


Emily M. Janoski-Haehlen



AKRON LAW MAGAZINE



...and ... captures the company's 150th anniversary, but also guides our 21st century commitment to new products, research, and educational advances.

In the 1970s, reemphasizing Our Circle as its key statement of principle, Johnson & Johnson began regular Circle surveys asking employees worldwide to comment anonymously on how well we live up to our ideals. It's one of countless ways in which Our Circle remains a living document and a daily inspiration.

As the company expands globally, Our Circle leads the way. It's a message of responsibility that resonates powerfully with employees and communities everywhere.

CONTENTS

Briefs

- 2 3+3 agreement inked with Central State U
- 3 Vietnam Study Abroad was a hit
- 4 School introduces Prep Week program
- 5 Author delivers Constitution Day lecture
- 6 Meet the incoming class of 2023
- 7 Buckingham Leadership Series
- 7 Pickleball makes for a unique internship

Features

- 8 Integrating AI in the legal field
Initiative encompasses education and practice
- 10 Where are Akron Law's newest alumni?
Our grads are off to a great start on their careers

Faculty & Staff

- 14 Akron Law bids adieu to Jack Sahl
Sahl is a national expert on professional ethics
- 16 Meet Akron Law's new faculty
Six new faculty are teaching this fall

Alumni

- 19 Letter from the Law Alumni President
- 20 Akron Law launched alum's corporate tax career
Jay Fischbein '97, has had a seat at the top of J&J
- 22 Class Notes
- 24 Graduation Photos

COVER: Our December 2022 and May 2020 graduates are working in 11 states, from New York to Hawaii.



PRESIDENT
Gary L. Miller

DEAN, SCHOOL OF LAW
Emily Janoski-Haehlen

DIRECTOR, ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENT
Andreas Ellis

EDITOR
Patrick Gallagher, School of Law,
Communications and Marketing Consultant

PRINTING AND GRAPHIC DESIGN
Crossbridge Marketing

EMAIL
law.magazine@uakron.edu

SEND CLASS NOTES TO
lawalum@uakron.edu

@AkronLaw

@AkronLaw

@AkronLaw

University of Akron School of Law

3+3 PROGRAM ESTABLISHED WITH CENTRAL STATE UNIVERSITY

Akron Law has established a 3+3 degree partnership with Central State University in Wilberforce, Ohio, that will enable students to obtain both a bachelor's degree from Central State and a J.D. from Akron Law in just six years instead of the usual seven.

The program offers an exceptional educational opportunity for qualifying students. Central State becomes the sixth college to have a 3+3 program with Akron Law and the first historically black college or university

(HBCU) in Ohio to have a 3+3 partnership with any law school.

Qualifying Central State students can apply the first year of law school courses at Akron Law to satisfy the graduation and degree requirements at Central State, and concurrently apply the first year of Akron Law courses toward a J.D. degree granted by The University of Akron.

"We are delighted to begin this new 3+3 partnership with Central State University," Akron Law Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen said. "For eligible

students, the program can be a game-changer. The students complete both baccalaureate and J.D. degrees on an accelerated schedule at a substantial cost savings and are able to enter the job market a year earlier than their undergraduate peers."

"Central State University is thrilled to make this opportunity with Akron Law available to our students," said Sidney Williams, director of graduate school preparation programs. "Students who are committed to pursuing a law degree will be able

to get a one-year head start on their J.D. after completing three years of a baccalaureate degree."

After completing the application to Akron Law, participants who have completed at least 91 credits toward a bachelor's degree may be automatically admitted to Akron Law if they are in good academic, financial and disciplinary standing at Central State; satisfy the character and fitness standards required of all students admitted to Akron Law; and meet certain LSAT and grade point average standards.

Other 3+3 program partners include Kent State University, Walsh University, the University of Mount Union, Robert Morris University and Youngstown State University. University of Akron students majoring in political science, history or philosophy may also take advantage of the Akron Law 3+3 program.

Barbara DiGiacomo, Akron Law associate dean for administration and enrollment management, and Sidney Williams, Central State director of graduate school preparation programs, display the agreement following the signing.



LAW SCHOOL'S VIETNAM STUDY ABROAD HAS A BRIGHT FUTURE

The University of Akron (UA) School of Law's inaugural two-week study abroad excursion to Vietnam last May was, by all accounts, an unqualified success—except for the steamy tropical heat.

Faculty members Patrick Gaughan, assistant dean of global engagement and associate professor of law, and Gary Spring, former clinical and current visiting professor, led the group of seven students. They were joined a few days in by Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen, who signed an updated memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Hanoi Law University and a new MOU with Hue University of Law.

"It was an amazing experience for the students and me," Janoski-Haehlen said. "We will definitely be returning to Vietnam, but in January, when the weather there is more temperate."

The students arrived in Hanoi on Friday night, May 19, and had Saturday and Sunday to begin acquainting themselves with Vietnam's capital city.

"Hanoi is very safe," Gaughan said. "We asked that the students stay together for the first few days, but after that they were allowed to break into



The signing of a MOU with the University of Law at Hue University was a highlight of the trip.

smaller groups. They visited Hanoi's famous Hoan Kiem Lake, the Old Quarter, the Supreme People's Court, a criminal trial and the Hanoi office of global law firm Baker McKenzie. Every single one of the students was just blown away by Vietnam."

The next week the students attended classes at Hanoi Law University during the day, where they learned from the school's professors about the Vietnamese government, legal system and approaches to environmental law. They had more courses like this at Hue Law. Prior to leaving Akron, the students took a 2-credit intercession course on Global Lawyering taught by Spring and also took either a 1-credit or a 3-credit Law & Economics course taught by Gaughan.

3L Nadine Jones was pleased by the opportunities to engage with Vietnamese law students in Hanoi and Hue. "The whole trip was very exciting, but I especially liked that we had a lot of contact with the students there. With my background in foreign relations and political science, we had a lot to talk about in the geopolitical area," she said.

"It was a fast-paced schedule and there was a big focus on academics, so initially we worried that there wouldn't be enough free time, but there turned out to be plenty," said 2L Will Hatt. "In Hanoi they paired us up with a couple of the law students who spoke excellent English. They traveled with us to different places in Hanoi."

The students also enjoyed side trips to Hạ Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Site several hours east of Hanoi that features thousands of islands and limestone karst formations, and Da Nang, a popular tourist destination on the coast south of Hue, famous for its beaches.

The group's tour guide at Baker McKenzie was Ngoc Le, a young associate who took Gaughan's UCC Sales course in fall 2017 when she attended UA on an undergraduate study abroad program.

Hatt was particularly inspired by the trip. "When I came to law school, I didn't have a clear understanding of what I wanted to do, but I've always had a passion for international experiences and opportunities. Now, I would love to work in Vietnam."

LAW SCHOOL INTENDS TO BRING BACK NEW PRELAW PROGRAM IN 2024

Following a well-received debut this past May, the Law School's new prelaw pipeline program Akron Law Prep Week is on track to return next year.

The program is intended for, but not limited to, college students and recent college graduates from racial and ethnic minority groups and other underrepresented groups in the legal profession. Program participants learned about law school, the admissions process and the LSAT. They also met with practicing attorneys and current students and participated in mock classes, social events, and an etiquette lunch, along with LSAT prep support.

"A few judges came to speak, and we visited the courthouse, Akron Bar Association, and the offices of Brouse McDowell," said Admissions Director Anthony Colucci, who co-led the program with Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Mike Gentithes. "We were able to give the students a good sense of not just Akron Law, but of legal practice in Summit County."

"I was really grateful to be part of this event," said Khatonia Ford, now



Akron Law Prep Week students met over lunch with Brouse McDowell attorneys.

a UA senior majoring in criminal justice. "As a first-generation student, I would have been blindsided if I had gone down the law school path without knowing the things I learned at this program. It was especially helpful to talk with current law students and recent grads."

"The whole week was very thorough," said Tommy Witschey, who graduated from Ohio University in 2022 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. "It provided a good feel for how law school would be and what classes are like."

Akron Law Prep Week is modeled on the Pre-Law Undergraduate Scholars (PLUS) program that the School successfully offered from 2018-21 in collaboration with the

Law School Admission Council. The four-week PLUS program was open to students from around the country. For the first two years, the students resided on campus. The 2020 and 2021 sessions were 100% virtual due to the pandemic.

"We had a lot of success with the PLUS program, both in getting students from diverse backgrounds interested in the law generally, and then drawing some of them to enroll at Akron Law," Gentithes said. "We wanted to try to replicate that with Prep Week."

The inaugural Prep Week ran Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The commitment proved difficult for some applicants because of jobs, summer school or other obligations. As a result,

the Law School is looking to build in more flexibility next year.

Some of the sessions could be online and asynchronous while some of the in-person activities could be scheduled over long weekends. That would allow the program to spread out over multiple weeks and conclude with a capstone experience.

"There will be an evolution of the program, but we're still gathering feedback from our students and thinking over how to provide the best experience," Gentithes said.

Akron Law Prep Week is part of a broader initiative to increase diversity at the School of Law. For example, in June 2023, the School

hosted the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association's Stephanie Tubbs Summer Legal Adventure. This program is for Northeast Ohio high school students from underrepresented groups who are interested in a career in the law. Akron Law is also one of eight sites for the statewide Law and Leadership Institute. Students enroll prior to ninth grade and continue in the program through the summer following high school.

This winter, the Akron Law began a partnership with AccessLex Institute to broaden access to legal education for promising applicants through its LexScholars Post-Baccalaureate Program (LexPostBacc). Program participants are exposed to a yearlong online law school prep curriculum designed to help them thrive as law students.

"We've also started working with Akron Municipal Court Judge David Hamilton '07, and his Raising the Bar program, which is aimed at encouraging local minority students to consider careers in law, starting as early as middle school," Gentithes said. "We think we're going to have a little more success if we can start these pipelines earlier and build interest over time. Our new 3+3 partnership with Central State University is also part of the pipeline strategy."

CONSTITUTION LAW DAY SPEAKER DISCUSSES HIS BOOK ON COLD-WAR ERA JUDGE



Martin Siegel and Professor Tracy Thomas

The 2023 Constitution Day Lecture on Sept. 12 featured author Martin J. Siegel talking about his new book, *Judgment and Mercy: The Turbulent Life and Times of the Judge Who Condemned the Rosenbergs*.

Ethel and Julius Rosenberg were a young American married couple convicted of providing nuclear bomb secrets to the Soviet Union in a famous Cold War-era trial. The 1951 trial was presided over by the recently confirmed, brilliant and young federal district court judge Irving Robert Kaufman, who sentenced the Rosenbergs to death.

Siegel clerked for Kaufman during the last six months

of the judge's life and 40 years on the appellate bench. The clerkship began shortly after Siegel graduated from Harvard Law School in 1991. He then served as an assistant U.S. attorney in the Southern District of New York and a staffer on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee. He now practices law in Houston and teaches American Legal History at the University of Houston Law Center, where he also directs the Appellate Civil Rights Clinic. He told the Akron Law audience he started writing the book in 1994.

Siegel began the lecture by reading the book's prologue. This was followed by a discussion and question-and-answer session moderated

by Professor Tracy Thomas, John F. Seiberling Chair of Constitutional Law and director of the Constitutional Law Center.

U.S. public opinion at the time was that the Rosenbergs got what they deserved, and Kaufman was hailed as a hero, Siegel said. But beginning in the 1970s, Kaufman became widely reviled amidst allegations—and some evidence—that he had conspired with the government in a "frame-up."

Kaufman had maneuvered to have the case heard in his courtroom because he knew it would prove historic. He had a passion for publicity. He ended up living the rest of his life on the defensive, perpetually under siege, threats and denouncement. Fifty years after the trial, a few septuagenarians "still hated the man enough to find and infiltrate his funeral and hound him one last time, literally into the grave," Siegel reported.

What the haters seemed to have missed was that in the years that followed the Rosenbergs trial, their bete noir became one of the most liberal jurists of his time. He was the first federal judge to desegregate a northern school. Among his decisions after being

elevated to the appellate bench, he upheld the right of conscientious objectors to avoid military service in Vietnam and championed the press and free speech in both the Pentagon Papers case and a landmark libel case against 60 Minutes. "His support for individual rights and civil liberties made him an unlikely partisan for dissidents and outcasts," Siegel wrote.

Siegel told the audience that he doesn't agree with the view that Kaufman changed his stripes to atone for the Rosenbergs' death sentence or simply to remain in tune with the changing times. "I think the liberalism was always there," he said.

"Our students study constitutional law, but the courses typically don't get into the historical narrative and the personalities behind decisions that have shaped our Constitution," Thomas said. "Hearing from speakers like Martin Siegel provides students with a different perspective."

MEET THE INCOMING AKRON LAW CLASS OF 2023

The University of Akron School of Law welcomed 131 new students during Orientation Week, Aug. 15-18, and at a well-attended early-evening welcome reception for the students and their families on Sept. 8.

The main focus of the event was the administration of the Oath of Professionalism by J. Philip Calabrese, United States district judge of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio. In his brief remarks, Judge Calabrese said that he was not aware of any other law school holding an event such as this and that was indicative of the special place that is The University of Akron School of Law.

The group includes 127 first-year J.D. students and four two-year international J.D. students. Of this group, 83 started in the

fall, 41 started in January and seven started in May. Five of the incoming J.D. students came via the 3+3 program, through which they will earn both a bachelor's and J.D. degree in six years. The class also includes one student pursuing the Master of Laws in Intellectual Property and six students pursuing a Master of Studies in Law.

The 131 students range in age from 20 to 52 with an average age of 27. The class is almost equally split between men and women. Twenty-one students are from outside of Ohio—from the states of California, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, D.C. and West Virginia — and the nations of Jamaica, Zimbabwe, Ghana and Oman. The students have attended 60 different undergraduate institutions.

Among the class are mothers and fathers, business owners, animal shelter volunteers and an Eagle Scout. There are Division 1, 2 and 3 college athletes, including swimmers, football, baseball and basketball players, an equestrian, a volleyball player, track & field stars and golfers. Several have served or are currently serving in the military or National Guard. Career backgrounds include teachers, engineers, police officers, paralegals, college professors, coaches, food service and factory workers, bailiffs, patient coordinators, retail sales associates and creative writers. Many are the first in their families to graduate from high school and college and a vast majority are the first in their families to attend law school.

ADMISSIONS

Under the new "Ohio Guarantee" program, the Law School will offer automatic admission for any Ohio resident who meets or exceeds an LSAT score of 151 and a GPA of 3.4. Applicants will still need to submit an application and satisfy the character and fitness standards required of all students admitted to Akron Law.



Judge Calabrese administers the Oath of Professionalism. David Gottas

BUCKINGHAM LEADERSHIP SERIES, SEASON 2

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Recruitment and Retention in Today's Workforce and The Taming of the Trolls: Navigating Negative Reviews and Internet Defamation were the two timely topics addressed by panels in the second annual Buckingham Leadership Series lecture, held Sept. 21st in the Brennan Courtroom.

Panelist Heather Steele '19, an associate attorney at Buckingham, observed that since the pandemic, employers have become much more comfortable hiring employees from outside Ohio who will work remotely. She cautioned that employment laws in other states may be different from Ohio, and those will be the laws that apply to remote employees. In Massachusetts, the employer must hand the dismissed employee their full final check on their last day of employment.

The Recruitment and Retention panel was moderated by Buckingham Partner Susan Rodgers. Other panelists included Amy Byers, COO of Medina-based Slicker Trucking, Inc., and Nicole Thorley, human resources business partner, senior director, GOJO Industries, Inc.

The Taming of the Trolls



Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs, LLC, Managing Partner Steven Dimengo and Akron Law Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen posed prior to the event. Scott Horstman

panel was moderated by Akron Law Associate Professor Vera Korzun and included Buckingham Partner Andrew Stebbins and Associate Christina Williams.

"Online reviews and ratings are crucial for many service-oriented small businesses," Stebbins said. "Fake or malicious reviews can do real damage. In most instances, Google will take down a malicious review in response to a defamation suit where the troll is not a real customer."

"Commercial clients account half of the practice," he noted. The other half involves online defamation or harassment of individuals. He and Williams caution clients not to expect to be awarded financial damages for online defamation if they cannot document a clear dollar value.

NOT YOUR EVERYDAY INTERNSHIP

Before starting at Akron Law in 2022, John Enger earned a bachelor's degree in finance and an MBA from Cleveland State University all while playing pickleball professionally. This past summer, the 2L worked as a law clerk for the PPA Tour, the world's largest pickleball tournament association, which hosts tournaments where the top professional players in the world compete for the largest payouts in the sport.

"During this experience I attended the biggest tournaments where I was able to meet with the PPA's general counsel and other executives to discuss the work I had done and the plan for projects to come. I am looking

forward to continuing my work with the PPA Tour, as there is nothing better than combining two things you love into one experience."



INTEGRATING AI ACROSS THE CURRICULUM AND IN THE FIELD



David Szalay

Three faculty members at Akron Law are spearheading the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in legal education and practice. Assistant Professors Sean Steward and Sarah Starnes and Associate Dean Kerry Lohmeier are actively researching the applications of AI-powered tools, including ChatGPT, to determine how to best utilize them both in and out of the classroom, as well as in the legal field.

In spring 2023, the three initiated a series of research presentations to demystify AI and its implications for the legal profession. A presentation to the University Board of Trustees marked the beginning of their outreach. Based upon the support they received following the presentation, the team planned a series of presentations to local law firms, beginning with Roetzel &

Andress in June. They also provided a presentation to the University's Department of Development.

In May 2023, the team offered a continuing legal education presentation on the ethical use of AI tools, focusing on providing practical, actionable advice for legal practitioners. The Ohio Supreme Court's Continuing Legal Education Department praised this presentation as a model CLE.

"Partnering with Dean Lohmeier and Assistant Professor Steward has been a great opportunity to combine and share our knowledge with others," Starnes said. "We're excited to be at the forefront of this rapidly evolving technology."

In addition to their presentations, the team is developing a practical handbook on this evolving technology.

It is intended as a resource for legal professionals and law students interested in using AI as research and writing tool.

Part one of the handbook aims to demystify the technology behind AI tools like ChatGPT. Written to be accessible, it assumes no prior computer science knowledge from the reader. This section will also focus on potential ethical pitfalls to help practitioners and students avoid them in their own practice.

Part two addresses the practical application of AI tools in legal practice. This will include a discussion of relevant legal topics and provide practicing attorneys with the tools to safely and responsibly use AI in their legal practice. A few examples include the exploration of contract review, legal research, case management, inherent bias and predic-

tive analysis of legal outcomes. Part three will serve as a user guide, assisting readers in interacting with AI systems efficiently and effectively. It will include practical tips and common troubleshooting advice and may also feature case studies illustrating both successful and problematic uses of AI in legal work.

Within Akron Law, the team encourages the responsible use of AI among students and faculty. Steward is examining how AI tools can create more engaging and complex classroom hypothetical scenarios. He is also developing a course to help law students understand this new technology and responsibly prepare them for a future where these tools will likely be commonplace in legal practice.

Lohmeier and Starnes, capitalizing on their experience as law librarians, are exploring the pedagogical potentials of AI. They are actively implementing these tools to aid course design and material creation. They also use AI to craft innovative and relevant problems for students' research and writing classes.

"This effort positions the Akron Law

Library as a leader in cutting-edge legal education methods and ensures that Akron students are introduced to these technologies in a guided, ethical and effective manner," Lohmeier explained.

An essential aspect of the team's work is their focus on the ethical implications of AI in law. They are not just teaching how to use AI tools, but are instilling in their students a deep understanding of the ethical considerations these tools require. They advocate for a thoughtful, informed approach to AI, encouraging future lawyers to consider issues such as data privacy, bias in AI algorithms and AI's potential to violate attorney-client privilege inadvertently.

Looking ahead, the team at Akron Law envisions a future where AI tools are a standard part of legal work, utilized to enhance efficiency without compromising the integrity or quality of legal services. Their work today is laying the groundwork for that future.

Speaking on his work with AI, Steward stated, "With the advent of the NextGen Bar Exam, practical legal education is more important than ever. We want to leverage these

revolutionary technologies to create well-rounded attorneys of the future."

The team is making strides in preparing both current students and practicing lawyers for a future likely to involve the widespread integration of AI throughout every sector of the economy. Their work is marked by a dual focus on education and ethical considerations, aiming to equip legal professionals with practical knowledge of these emerging technologies and the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate the complex ethical landscape that these tools may present. By laying this groundwork now, Akron Law is taking a proactive leadership role in the evolution of legal education and practice in the age of AI.

CONNECT

If you are interested in having the team present to your firm, please contact **Sean Steward (srs95@uakron.edu)** or **Sarah Starnes (sstarnes@uakron.edu)**



L to R: Associate Dean Kerry Lohmeier, Assistant Professor Sean Steward and Assistant Professor Sarah Starnes. Scott Horstman

WHERE ARE AKRON LAW'S NEWEST ALUMNI?

The Class of 2023 is off to an impressive start with the legal career opportunities they have secured. These graduates are working in private practice in firms ranging from 2-500 attorneys; local, state and federal government; corporations and clerkships. To date, they are working in Florida, Hawaii, Indiana,

Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C. Seventy-six members of the class sat for the bar exam in Hawaii, Michigan, Ohio, New York and Washington, D.C. They will receive results in late October, after the magazine's editorial deadline. Akron Law is excited to see what the future holds for the Class of 2023. Here we profile some of the Class of 2023's outstanding graduates.



Jason Sanders
Akron Childrens Hospital,
Akron OH



Demetria Kimble
Jones Day, Cleveland OH



Megan Parker
Benesch, Cleveland OH



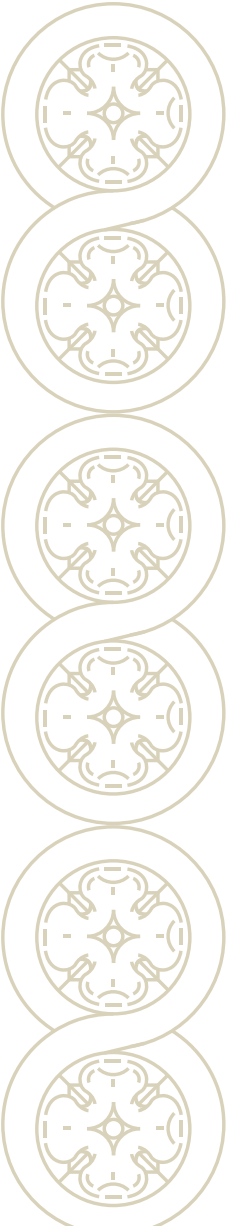
Tolulope Ajifowabaje
Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co,
Akron OH



Natalie Browning
Mansour Gavin,
Cleveland OH



Jennifer Cranmer
Vorys, Akron OH





Austin Keith
Haug Partners, NY



SaiPranay Vellala
King & Spalding,
Washington DC



Diana Quezada
Roderick Linton & Belfance,
Akron OH



Cassandra Meyer
NASA, Stennis Space Center
MS, Cleveland OH



Holly Baer
Black McCuskey, Canton OH



Kyrielle Williams
Cuyahoga Co. Prosecutor's
Office, Cleveland OH



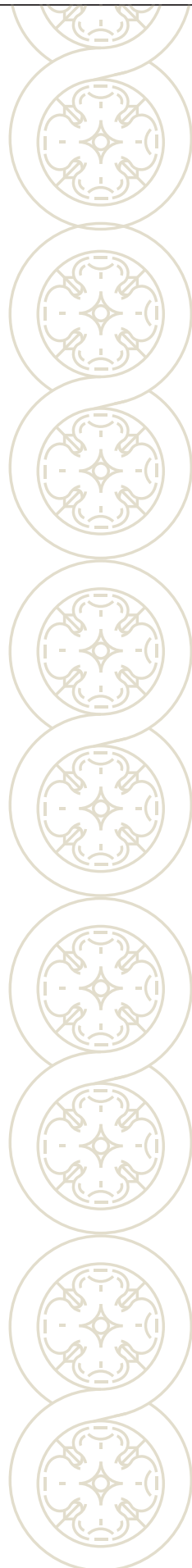
Alex Kuzmik
Pease Bell CPAs,
Cleveland OH



Rachel Pearson
Delaware City Prosecutor's
Office, Delaware OH



Nicolas Smith
Eschweiler & Potashnik LLC,
Cleveland OH





Courtney Middleton
Behm & Henry LLC, Tiffin OH



P. J. O'Brien
Legal Assistance of Western
New York (LawNY),
Geneva NY



Anthony Paniccia
GOJO Industries, Akron OH



Xul Perez
Plante Moran, Cleveland OH



Mackenzie Pensyl
Roetzel & Andress, Akron OH



Rachel Richards
Stark & Knoll,
Akron OH



Alaa Elnakoury
Lakeshore Legal Aid,
Dearborn MI



Christina Jamba
Community Legal Aid,
Springfield MA



Shelby Hanrich Hwang,
National Center for
Manufacturing Sciences,
Ann Arbor MI



Eric Sullivan
Lippes Mathias,
Cleveland OH



Joseph Zahn
Buckingham Doolittle,
Akron OH



Malcolm Acheampong
KeyBank, Cleveland OH



Christian Cook
US Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science and
Transportation



Brian Bixler
Krugliak, Wilkins, Griffiths
& Dougherty Co, LPA,
Akron OH



Joshua Guedea
Stark County Prosecutor's
Office, Canton OH



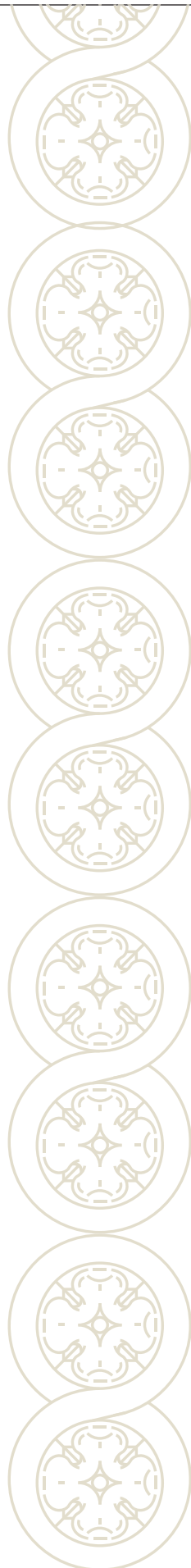
Dannie Smith
Summit Legal Defender,
Akron OH



Valerie Smith
Judge Robert Patton, Ohio
11th District Court of Appeals,
Warren OH



John Zolton
McBee Moore & Vanik IP, LLC,
Washington DC



LAW SCHOOL BIDS JACK SAHL ADIEU



Professor Jack Sahl at his September retirement party at the Akron Zoo. Nick Roth

A larger-than-life figure to many students, John (Jack) P. Sahl, now Joseph G. Miller emeritus professor, retired this past summer. He leaves behind a rich legacy, not only at The University of Akron, but statewide, nationally and even internationally.

Sahl joined the Akron Law faculty in 1991 with a Juris Doctor from Vermont Law School, a Master of Laws from Yale University, and a one-year federal appellate court clerkship. He gained practical experience as an entertainment lawyer and eight years on faculty at the University of Bridgeport School of Law, now Quinnipiac University School of Law.

For most of his time at Bridgeport, he was an assistant dean with a range of mostly external-facing administrative responsibilities. He taught one course per semester. "I really enjoyed teaching and wanted to do it full time," Sahl said.

His external-facing activities at Bridgeport included six years on the Connecticut Bar Association's Professional Ethics Committee, sitting alongside

senior partners from major law firms and prominent professors from Yale and the state's other law schools.

"We liked Jack's strengths in Professional Responsibility (PR)," recalled Akron Law Emeritus Professor William Jordan III, who participated in the decision to hire Sahl. But what they really needed him for was to teach Evidence, along with Antitrust, Sports Law and Entertainment Law. Teaching PR courses would have to wait a couple of years until the incumbent expert, the late William (Bill) Becker, became an associate dean.

Elon University School of Law Professor Steven Friedland collaborated with Sahl on an Evidence Problems and Materials casebook and teacher's manual, published in 2012 and still in wide use.

"The book was problem-oriented," Friedland said. "Many evidence books are problem oriented now, but this was one of the first ones. And the book has now gone beyond a single subject, to show how evidence issues relate to

professional responsibility. It was great to work with Jack. I'm sure I learned more from him than he did from me."

Patricia Ochman '17, an associate at Jones Day, worked with Sahl on his PR casebook as a research assistant while in law school.

"Professor Sahl is not only a great scholar and a great professor—I had him for two courses— but he was genuinely interested in the students," she said. "He spent time talking with me and the other research assistant about the things we were writing. As a teacher, he was good at cold-calling and his exams were challenging, but he got us ready for the Bar Exam."

Of course, Sahl will always be most closely associated with PR and the Joseph G. Miller and William C. Becker Center for Professional Responsibility, which he headed as director from 2015-2023, faculty director from 2008-2015, and deputy director beginning in 1998.

"It was such an honor to serve as director of the Center because I was there at the very beginning when Bill [Becker] was seeking funding to start an ethics center," Sahl said.

Sahl and Becker became close friends and colleagues. Based in part on articles Sahl authored in the Notre Dame and Cincinnati law reviews, they started doing professional conduct CLEs every year, which evolved into a daylong program that continues today as the Ohio State Bar Association (OSBA) Board of Professional Conduct's annual Miller Becker Seminar.

Sahl went on to be a frequent national and international speaker, consultant and expert witness on PR matters and other areas of the law. For 30 years, he taught six-week summer courses to international law professors, judges, lawyers and students at Yale.

Among his many national activities, Sahl chaired the Publications Board of Editors for the ABA Center for Professional Responsibility. Arthur Garwin was director of the Center at that time.

"In addition to all his work on that committee, Jack was very active on the Center's Coordinating

Council, which made policy decisions, and he was a regular speaker at our annual Client Protection Forum," Garwin said. "He and I used to talk about these topics all the time—and of course, he was writing his books too."

In 2019, OSBA awarded Sahl the Eugene R. Weir Award for Ethics and Professionalism, the highest ethics recognition the Bar awards, for his work to promote and uphold legal professionalism and ethics both in Ohio and on a national and international level.

Joe Caliguiri, head of the Office of Disciplinary Counsel at the Ohio Supreme Court, is one of many first-hand beneficiaries. "I met Jack shortly after I joined the office in 2002. I viewed him as just an incredible resource for all things ethics related. I would give him a call when I was really struggling with an ethical issue on a case."

Despite Sahl's many commitments, Akron Law was always a priority.

"Jack's tremendous energy and gift for multitasking enriched the law school in many ways," C. Blake McDowell, Jr. Professor of Law Bernadette Genetin said. "On the admissions committee, he advocated continuously for admitting strong students and increasing the academic credentials of the entering classes. He then held those students to high standards in the classroom."

"Jack has been a really good friend and supporter since I came here in 1995—in terms of teaching, how to relate to my colleagues, and especially scholarship," C. Blake McDowell, Jr. Professor of Law Willa Gibson said. "The students respect him tremendously, and you could always count on him to speak his mind on uncomfortable topics in faculty meetings."

"Jack will really be missed," said Christopher J. (C.J.) Peters, C. Blake McDowell, Jr. Professor of Law and former dean. "He is a good classroom teacher. He is a really good scholar. It's definitely unusual to have well-regarded casebooks in three very different areas of law as Jack does. And he really has had a major practical impact on the world of professional responsibility."

AKRON LAW WELCOMES NEW FACULTY



BEN COHEN

G. Ben Cohen has joined the faculty as an assistant professor of law. Cohen began his legal career as a law clerk at the Southern Center for Human Rights in Atlanta and continued working in capital defense at the Louisiana Crisis Assistance Center in New Orleans. He co-founded the Capital Appeals Project in 2001, where his work led to the exoneration of two condemned individuals, the reversal of six capital convictions and the setting aside of more than a dozen death sentences. He later co-founded the Promise of Justice Initiative, where he was counsel on landmark cases such as *Kennedy v. Louisiana* and *Ramos v. Louisiana*.

In 2021, after more than two decades as a capital defense attorney, Cohen was hired as chief of appeals for the Orleans Parish District Attorney's Office as part of a reform effort to restore confidence in the legal system.

He has co-authored chapters in textbooks on implicit bias and innocence and published over a dozen law review articles. He created a course entitled *The Promises, Compromises and Challenges of Progressive Prosecution*, which he taught at Tulane Law School and the University of Iowa College of Law. Most recently he was a visiting professor of law at the University of Missouri School of Law.

Cohen earned a Juris Doctor from the University of Michigan and a Bachelor of Arts in English

from Bowdoin College. During law school, Cohen created an externship to South Africa for students and clerked for then Judge Edwin Cameron at the Law Commission on HIV.

"We are pleased to welcome Ben to Akron Law," said Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen. "He is the perfect addition to our practice-ready program. I think Akron Law's students will benefit from his many years of real-world experience in the criminal legal system."



MICHAEL DOANE

Michael Doane has been named a full-time visiting assistant professor of law. Doane was previously general counsel at Kent Displays, Inc., in Kent, Ohio. Prior to that, he was principal at Miles & Stockbridge P.C., in Tysons Corner, Va. Earlier, he was a partner at the Washington, D.C., law firm Adduci, Mastriani & Schaumberg LLP. He specialized in international trade and intellectual property litigation.

"Michael has been teaching for us as a part-time faculty member for the past few years," said Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen. "I am delighted that he will now be a member of our full-time faculty. He brings practical experience in intellectual property practice to the classroom and will help us expand our IP offerings."

Doane earned a Juris Doctor from the

University of Washington School of Law and a Master of Laws in International and Comparative Law from Georgetown University Law Center. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science from Kent State University and a Master of Arts in International Studies from the University of Washington.



ASHLEY KEITH

Ashley Keith '09, has joined the faculty as a full-time visiting assistant professor of law. She was previously a staff attorney and assistant general counsel at University Hospitals (UH) Health System of Cleveland. Earlier, she worked within the health care field as a practice manager at UH's South Suburban Women's Center.

Her past experiences also include employment as a tax law specialist at the Internal Revenue Service; a general partner at Keith, Washington & Marshall, LLC, in Cleveland; and a mortgage loan originator at Quicken Loans and BBMC Mortgage in Cleveland.

Prior to receiving her Juris Doctor from Akron Law, she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and German from Illinois Wesleyan University.

Although a native of Detroit, Keith has remained in Northeast Ohio since her time at Akron Law. She is most looking forward to encouraging students to confidently approach the practice of law after their course completion.

"We are pleased to welcome Ashley to the Akron Law faculty," said Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen. "She brings a wealth of knowledge from law practice in the corporate world to the classroom. I am excited that she can help us build and strengthen our growing business law program."



AMELIA LANDEMBERGER

Amelia Landenberger has joined the Law Library faculty as an assistant professor. She was previously a senior legal information librarian at Boston University (BU) Fineman and Pappas Law Libraries. Prior to joining the BU Law Libraries staff, she had experience working and teaching at the University of Kentucky Law Library, working as a law library fellow at the William A. Wise Law Library at the University of Colorado and interning at the Ohio Supreme Court Law Library.

"I am delighted that we are expanding our Library faculty with the addition of Amelia. She is an experienced law librarian and will be an asset to our legal research program," Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen said.

Landenberger taught the legal research portion of the first-year Lawyering class, International Legal Research and legal research certification classes at BU. She also taught Essential Bar Skills for L.L.M.s and introductory legal research in the BU L.L.M. program. In addition, she taught Advanced Legal Research as an adjunct at New England Law | Boston. At the University of Kentucky, she taught legal research to first-year students and Kentucky Legal Research.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts in French Language and Literature from Case Western Reserve University, a Juris Doctor from The Ohio State University and a Master of Library and Information Science from Kent State University. She is an active member of the American Association of Law Libraries and the Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries.



JAMES STEINER-DILLON

James Steiner-Dillon has joined the faculty as an associate professor of law. Steiner-Dillon was previously an associate professor at the University of Dayton School of Law. Prior to that appointment in 2018, he was an associate in law at Columbia Law School, where he taught legal research and writing. He previously taught Civil Procedure as an adjunct professor at the University of California College of the Law (formerly UC Hastings).

"James Steiner-Dillon is a highly respected faculty member who brings years of experience in teaching practical, core courses such as Evidence and Civil Procedure. I am delighted that he has chosen to continue his career in legal education at Akron Law," said Dean Emily Janoski-Haehlen.

After graduating from New York University School of Law in 2003 with a Juris Doctor degree, Steiner-Dillon practiced litigation in the New York City offices of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP and Sullivan & Cromwell LLP, focusing on securities litigation, white collar defense, antitrust and bankruptcy. He also clerked for the Honorable I. Leo Glasser, senior U.S. district judge for the Eastern District of New York. In addition to his law degree, he holds a Master of Arts in Philosophy from New York University and a Doctor of Philosophy in Jurisprudence and Social Policy from the University of California, Berkeley. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from West Virginia University.

Steiner-Dillon's scholarship focuses broadly on the construction of legal knowledge, with particular emphasis on courts' engagement with scientific expertise. His scholarship has appeared or is forthcoming in the *Utah Law Review*, *Albany Law Review*, *Indiana Law Review*, the *University of Cincinnati Law Review*, the *Columbia Science and Technology Law Review*, the *St. Louis University Law Journal* and the *West Virginia Law Review*. His work has been featured on the podcasts *Ipse Dixit* and *Excited Utterance*.

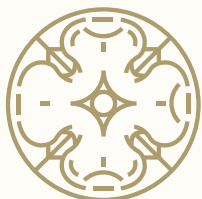


Y. S. (STEVE) LEE

Steve Lee has joined the faculty as a visiting professor of law. He is a scholar in law and development and an international trade lawyer. He has also taught and conducted academic research at leading universities throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, including Cornell University School of Law, Emory University, Tulane University, the University of Sydney (Australia), and the University of Manchester (U.K.). He graduated in economics with academic distinction from the University of California, Berkeley, and received law degrees from the University of Cambridge (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.). He has over 120 publications. He is licensed to practice law in multiple jurisdictions, including United States (Attorney at Law: California, North Carolina) and United Kingdom (Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales). "Steve brings an incredibly diverse background to the Law School," Dean Janoski-Haehlen said.

LAW ALUMNI BOARD

Christopher V. Goff '99, President
 Casey J. Davis '14, Vice President,
 Michael R. Pfahl '04, Immediate Past
 President and Treasurer
 Monica B. Andress '21
 Crystal D. Burnett '03
 Amber R. Crowe '13
 Victoria L. Ferrise '09
 Blake R. Gerney '95
 Samantha A. Lisy '10
 Marcus H. Pryor, II '15
 J. Alex Quay '09
 David A. Randolph '20
 Darrin R. Toney '95
 Andrew C. Voorhees '04
 Lauren M. Zidones '21
 Katherine Ainsworth '24, Student
 Director



ADVANCEMENT COUNCIL

Philip A. Lloyd '71, President
 Sally S. Benson '74
 Chaka Crome '02
 Jay F. Fischbein '97
 Dennis O' Garris '92
 Blake R. Gurney '95
 Edward L. Gilbert '76
 Joseph M. Gingo '71
 Daniel K. Glessner '93
 Angela R. Gott '07
 Patrick Keating '83
 Kevin C. Krull '77
 Curtis L. Mack '72
 Joann M. Sahl '86
 Mona Sarkar '94
 Jacqueline Silas-Butler '84

FROM THE LAA BOARD PRESIDENT



Greetings from the School of Law Alumni Association,

The Law Alumni Association Board of Directors kicked off the academic year with its first meeting on Aug. 8, 2023. The Board welcomed new members Crystal Burnett '03, Samantha Lisy '10, and Andrew Voorhees '04.

This year's committees consist of: Engagement, co-chaired by Monica Andress and Laura Zidones; Governance and Strategic Planning, chaired by board vice president Casey Davis; Nominating, chaired by Alex Quay; and Special Events, chaired by immediate past president Michael Pfahl.

We still have a few vacant alumni director positions. If you are a School of Law alumnus and have a desire to serve as a volunteer, please contact Alex Quay (aquay@bdbl.com). The Board meets five times per year in August, October, December, February and April.

At the August 8 meeting, the Board initiated plans to host a Law Alumni and Student Mixer on Oct. 4 at R. Shea Brewing-Canal Place in Downtown Akron. I hope you were able to join us for that event and mix it up with our current law students.

Please plan to join us for our holiday reception on Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2023, from 5-7 p.m. in the Law School Atrium.

If Naples, Florida, sounds like a good place to be in February, plan to attend the 2024 Akron Law Winter Institute, taking place Feb. 7-9 at LaPlaya Beach & Golf Resort. See the inside back cover of this magazine for program and registration information.

The Board is also planning a spring fundraiser to benefit the Law Alumni Association Scholarship Fund. You will receive an invitation in the mail this winter.

Looking further out, please add to your calendar our Outstanding Alumni Awards Breakfast on Apr. 23, 2024, in the Student Union Ballroom from 7:30-9 a.m. followed by a complimentary continuing legal education program in the Brennan Courtroom at the School of Law from 9:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

On behalf of the Board, I would also like to recognize Andreas Ellis and Pleshae McPhee, our professional staff that assist the Board. Andreas and Pleshae are invaluable in keeping the Board connected to the students, faculty and administration at the School of Law.

Sincerely,

Christopher V. Goff, Esq.
 President, University of Akron School of Law Alumni Association

NEW COUNCIL MEMBER BRINGS MULTINATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

When Jay Fischbein '97, head of ESG tax reporting, strategy & governance at Johnson & Johnson (J&J), was asked to join the Advancement Council last year, his first reaction was, "Why me? I've spent my entire career with a multinational corporation, not in a law firm."

Then-Council Chair Sally Benson '74, explained that to be effective, the council really needed alumni with different experiences.

"When I thought about it, I realized that a company like J&J offers so many legal career opportunities, whether it's regulatory law, patent law, litigation or other kinds of law," Fischbein said. "We definitely need more people in the corporate tax world that add diverse perspectives to the profession, so I got really excited and said yes. I can bring that voice of what a career in a multinational might look like."

That career might never have happened if not for Akron Law.

Fischbein, a native of Centerville, Ohio, near Dayton, graduated from the University of Kentucky with an accounting degree. His first job was as a financial auditor for the state of Tennessee. He did that for about three years, earned his CPA license and decided to apply to law school. He wanted to pursue a career in business, but he wasn't sure what field. He had a neighbor who was in a graduate program at The University of Akron, and so he visited the friend and the School of Law.

"I just really liked the school. I had a great feeling about how friendly the people were," he said.

Early in his 1L year, one of his professors, the late Malina Coleman, pulled him aside and urged him to attend an upcoming guest lecture. The speaker was a Yale Law professor, Boris Bittker, who was renowned



Akron Law alumnus Jay Fischbein spent most of his career with Johnson & Johnson.

in the world of corporate tax law. His visit was probably a favor to Coleman, a graduate of Yale Law.

"Professor Coleman invited me and a few other students to go to dinner with Professor Bittker after the lecture. Those other students were all enrolled in the J.D./M.Tax joint program with the College of Business. That was it. I was sold on corporate tax. I signed up for the program the next day and never looked back."

Following graduation, Fishbein entered the corporate tax world in Cincinnati with Coopers & Lybrand, now part of PwC. A few years in, he got a call from a recruiter about an entry-level tax position with Ethicon Endo-

Surgery, a J&J subsidiary in Cincinnati, where his wife, Kelly, worked.

"I initially turned them down because I thought my wife wouldn't want me working in the same company as her. But when I told her that evening, she had the opposite reaction, and I had to call back the recruiter."

He ended up working at Ethicon for eight years, rising to tax director.

"After servicing multiple clients in different industries at Coopers, I fell in love with the medical field at Ethicon. You could really see the good they were doing for patients. It was very rewarding."

Then he got a call from J&J Corporate asking him to join the pharmaceutical tax team in New Jersey.

"Pharmaceuticals is the largest business segment at J&J," he said. "It's a little over 50% of our business, and it had a huge tax department. I remember telling my wife I didn't know if I was going to be able to succeed at that level."

But he did succeed, and management was paying attention. He had been in that role for five years when J&J Corporate called again. The company intended to restructure its diffuse tax operations into a single tax department servicing all segments of the business globally. Management wanted Fischbein to lead the largest region as senior director North America tax operations. He would need to build a department from scratch—everything from people and processes to where the new department would be located.

"I remember laughing," Fischbein said. "I had this important title but no employees. I had to draw on all the business skills, leadership skills and soft skills that I had learned in my career to that point to create that department."

Once the task was accomplished, he was promoted again—to vice president of tax for the company's pharmaceutical segment. He spent seven years in that role, prior to being named to his current position earlier this year.

"I led the company's global pharmaceutical tax segment," he said. "We were the bridge between the legal department, the CFO and the business people. We were embedded in business strategy and execution and worked closely with the global supply chain team as we looked to diversify our manufacturing capabilities in the U.S. and

abroad, providing strategic tax counsel as they worked to finalize details of our manufacturing footprint.

"This was the part of my career when I really drew on my legal education," he recalled. "We wrote and read a lot of contracts, advised on acquisitions, and engaged in a lot of negotiations with tax authorities."

Fischbein acknowledged that he lost touch with Akron Law during his mid-career years in New Jersey. But in 2013, Akron Law classmate and Philadelphia lawyer Marshall Bleefeld '97, called Fischbein and suggested they attend an upcoming UA alumni reception in Philadelphia.

"I got reconnected at that event. It reminded me how important a role Akron Law played in my success. I didn't have a top GPA or LSAT score, so they could very easily have said no, but they took a chance on me. So, Kelly and I made the decision to give back to the program that helped shape me and provided a great foundation for my current career."

At the suggestion of the UA Department of Development, they set up a scholarship that will support students who have financial need and want to pursue a career in public service.

"I joke about corporate tax not being an interesting field, but that's not true," Fischbein mused. "I've had the opportunity to do all sorts of amazing things. I've had a seat at the top of the ship steering one of the largest companies in the world. I've toured sophisticated factories and R&D labs and gotten to meet some brilliant scientists who are way smarter than I'll ever be and whose work impacts millions of people around the world."

As for the next generation of lawyers, "This is a very exciting time to get in on the ground floor of the corporate tax world because we are going through a level of international tax reform that may never be seen again. This is a great opportunity for students to help shape the regulatory and business environment for years to come. And what better way to get involved in this field than to prepare for it at Akron Law?"

CLASS NOTES

Brooke Meneses '22, associate attorney at Plakas Mannos Law Firm; **Zach Hostetler '15**, senior vice president of client solutions at Employers Health; and **Matthew Hull '13**, attorney at Krugliak, Wilkins, Griffiths & Dougherty Co. L.P.A.; were recognized at the 2023 Twenty Under 40 awards as among the best and brightest in Stark County.



Brooke Meneses '22



Zach Hostetler '15



Matthew R Hull '13

Montrella Jackson '99, chief executive officer for the Akron Municipal Court, and **Lauren Zidones '21**, attorney at Roetzel & Andress, LPA, were the two individual Greater Akron Chamber 2023 Women of Achievement Award winners. They were recognized at the

Chamber's Women's Network Leadership Institute's annual Women of Achievement dinner.



Montrella Jackson '99



Lauren Zidones '21

1970s

Judge Gene Donofrio '78, retired from the Ohio Seventh District Court of Appeals in January after serving on the bench for 30 years.

1980s

Lynne Callahan '84, retired after a long career in public service. She was a judge for the Summit County Court of Common Pleas and served as a judge for the Ohio Ninth District Court of Appeals.

1990s

Scot Stevenson '92, returned to the Ohio Ninth District Court of Appeals as a judge. He served there as a judicial attorney from 1992-94. **Stephanie York '94**, was named executive director of the Shaw Jewish Community

Center in Akron. **Christopher Van Blargan '95**, and **Devin Oddo '98**, were named partners at Kisling, Nestico & Redick, LLC. **Christopher Hunter '95**, attorney at Michigan Auto Law, has been named to the list of The Best Lawyers in America for 2024 and as a Michigan Super Lawyer for 2023. He has also been named one of the Top Lawyers in Metro Detroit by D Business Magazine. **Dynele Schinker-Kuharich '98**, recently joined the board of directors for the National Association of Chapter 13 Trustees.

2000s

Kris Raynes '00, was appointed and sworn in as Putnam County prosecuting attorney in Winfield, W. Va., on Aug. 29, 2023. She is the first female to hold this position in the county's history. **Steve Elliott '03**, was recently appointed chief magistrate in Summit County Probate Court. **Judge Jill Flagg Lanzinger '04**, was elected to serve in the Ohio Ninth District Court of Appeals

2010s

Daniel Hampu '14, president and CEO of the Burton D. Morgan Foundation, was selected by the Greater Akron Chamber to receive a 30 for the Future 2023 award. **Frank Mazgaj Jr. '18**, joined the Cleveland office of Reminger Co., LPA. **Kale Anderson '19**, is an attorney advisor for the Social Security Administration after serving as a housing attorney with the Center for

Visit uakron.edu/lawmagazine to read the stories in this issue and past issues.

Arkansas Legal Services.

In Memoriam

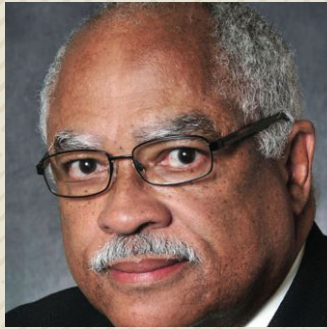


Jim Boyazis '66, passed away on Aug. 7, 2023, at 86 years. Boyazis grew up in Warren, Ohio, where he graduated from Youngstown State University and served in the United States Army. After completing his Juris Doctorate degree, he started his career at Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. He became vice president, secretary and associate general counsel in 1987 and served in that capacity until 2000.



Judge Willard Francis Spicer '65, '72, passed away Aug. 27, 2023. Judge Spicer was a descendant of Summit County's first settlers. He joined ROTC after receiving his law degree and served as an Army officer in Vietnam. He served as an assistant U.S. attorney, Akron law director and Akron Municipal Court judge before being appointed judge of Summit County Probate Court in 1980. He was remembered as a man of responsibility, basic

humanity, and a sartorial figure in the courthouse.



Judge Randolph Baxter '74, passed away on July 31, 2023. Judge Baxter was an honors graduate of Tuskegee University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. He attained the rank of captain in the United States Army and commanded a tank company in Vietnam before resigning his officer commission in 1971. Before serving 25+ years as a bankruptcy judge, he was employed by the B. F. Goodrich Company, Summit County Criminal Justice Commission and the City of Akron, and as an assistant U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio. After retiring from the bankruptcy bench, he served a term as president of AARP of Ohio. He also served as an adjunct professor at Kent State University and Akron Law, where he was awarded the Adjunct Professor of the Year Award.



Ann Amer Brennan '82, passed on July 25, 2023, at 90 years of age.

She and her husband, the late David Brennan, provided generous financial support to many Akron-area civic and philanthropic causes. She also served on numerous boards, including the UA Board of Trustees, including as president. In 1983, she and David established the David L. Brennan Chair of Law at the University. In 2017, the David and Ann Amer Brennan Courtroom was dedicated to honor the major gift the Brennans made toward the renovation of the C. Blake McDowell Law Center.



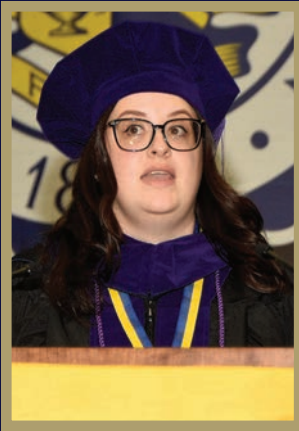
Frank G. Vari '84, passed away March 12, 2023. Vari was a native of Youngstown and graduated from Hiram College. In his lifetime, he worked at United Engineering and Foundry Company (Wear United) in Youngstown, Terex in Hudson, McNeil Akron Inc., Akron Children's Hospital, the Board of Mahoning County Commissioners and the Portage County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

CONNECT

Have you recently moved or changed jobs? If so, please submit your news (along with a photo) and update your contact information on the Alumni page of the Akron Law website.

uakron.edu/law/alum

2023 AKRON LAW GRADUATION PHOTOS





The University of Akron
School of Law

17TH ANNUAL AKRON LAW WINTER INSTITUTE

Feb. 7–9, 2024, Naples, Florida

For details, visit uakron.edu/law/alum/winter-institute

Earn 12 CLE credits while networking with new and familiar law alumni and friends at **La Playa Beach & Golf Resort**.

For program schedule, registration, and hotel reservations, visit: uakron.edu/law/alum/winter-institute

Early registration before Jan. 5, 2024: \$550/person
Registration after Jan. 5, 2024: \$600/person
All registrations must be received by: Jan. 19, 2024

Welcome Reception

Wednesday, Feb. 7, 2024 | 6 – 7:30 P.M.

Program

12 CLE hours, including professional conduct hours.

For more information contact Andreas Ellis at
ellis@uakron.edu or 330-972-5298.

For registration questions contact Pleshae McPhee at
pmcphee@uakron.edu or 330-972-6363.

YOUR SUPPORT

LIFTS OUR STUDENTS AND MORE

Help our students rise to their highest potential and support curriculum innovation, faculty excellence, emerging needs and more. Your support increases retention rates, decreases the burden of student loans, and helps us attract top students and top faculty. Every gift is important and will advance Akron Law.



To make a gift, use the return envelope bound into the magazine, give online at uakron.edu/law/giving or scan the QR code.



The University of Akron
School of Law

