

# SUFFOLK LAW

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

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SUFFOLK  
UNIVERSITY  
BOSTON  
LAW SCHOOL

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## MESSAGE

# A MESSAGE FROM DEAN ANDREW PERLMAN

Dear Suffolk Law Alumni:

The past year is one we will not soon forget. We have faced a deadly global pandemic, political polarization, a severe economic downturn, and a reckoning on issues of racial and social justice.

Suffolk Law alumni are at the forefront of tackling these kinds of challenges, and this issue of the *Alumni Magazine* covers just some of their accomplishments. For example, our graduates are addressing flaws in the criminal justice system; they are working within the government, at the federal, state, and local level, to solve a wide range of pressing problems; and they are raising essential concerns about the obstacles that lawyers of color face in our profession.

Suffolk Law faculty and students are also playing their part. For instance, just this year, they have uncovered pervasive discrimination in the Boston housing market, led an international effort to automate court forms for the public while courthouses are closed, and established a new transactional clinic that offers legal assistance to small businesses during difficult economic times.

In these and so many other ways, the Suffolk Law community is making a difference in a changing, challenging world. At the same time, we are carrying out our core mission of providing an outstanding legal education to talented students who want to achieve professional success. Here are some recent notable developments:

***Continuing classes in a pandemic.*** In March, we temporarily moved our entire program online to respond to the public health crisis. Our faculty and staff then worked hard over the summer to prepare for a fall semester that has included a mix of in-person and online classes that are interactive, engaging, and delivering on our educational promise.



***An exceptional group of first-year students.*** The fall 2020 entering class was 9% larger than we were expecting, and our 409 first-year students have median LSAT scores (154) and undergraduate GPAs (3.44) that were the strongest of any Suffolk Law class in the past 10 years.

***Increasing bar pass rates.*** For the class of 2020, Suffolk Law's first-time bar pass rate in Massachusetts increased substantially to 80.7%. This is our highest first-time bar pass rate in six years.

***Record-setting donations.*** The Law School received three \$1 million commitments in one year. These were the three largest commitments ever made by living Suffolk Law alumni, and two were made after the start of the pandemic. We also now have 45 Dean's Cabinet members, each of whom has committed at least \$50,000 to advance the Law School's work. These contributions are enhancing our programs and ensuring that Suffolk Law remains affordable to everyone regardless of financial circumstances.

***Top rankings in experiential education.*** Suffolk Law is the only school in the country that has had four top-25 ranked legal skills specialties in *U.S. News & World Report* for five years in a row (2017–21 editions).

***Diversity, equity, and inclusion.*** The national focus on issues of racial and social justice is reflected in our own community. For several years, the Law School has been

making strides to ensure that our community is diverse and inclusive. This year, we began taking additional steps in a wide range of areas, such as admissions, the curriculum, and hiring, to advance that important work.

***Transforming legal education.*** Suffolk Law has launched a pioneering new Hybrid JD Program (HJD). The program, which had been in the works long before the pandemic, is the first in the country to offer full- and part-time students a traditional in-person first-year classroom experience, followed by the option of taking all remaining classes online.

In this issue of the magazine, you will find more details about these developments as well as stories about the many ways that all of you—Suffolk Law alumni—are making a difference.

Thank you for everything that you do, both through your professional impact and your contributions to Suffolk Law. Together, we are advancing the Law School's longstanding mission of providing an exceptional, practice-oriented legal education that enables our graduates to make a difference in the world. That mission has never been more important.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Perlman". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Andrew Perlman

# SUFFOLK LAW BY THE NUMBERS

**ONE  
IN  
TEN**

The incoming class has the best academic credentials of any in the last 10 years.

**3 OF 7**

Governor Baker has nominated Suffolk Law alum and adjunct faculty member Judge Serge Georges, Jr. JD'96 to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. If confirmed, Judge Georges would become the third Suffolk Law graduate to join the Commonwealth's seven-member high court in the last four years, joining Elspeth Cypher JD'86 and Frank Gaziano JD'89.

**3**

new \$1 million commitments in the last year.

**45**

The number of Dean's Cabinet members. Each has committed \$50,000 or more to Suffolk Law.

**ONE**

THE ONLY LAW SCHOOL WITH FOUR TOP-25 LEGAL SKILLS PROGRAMS FOR FIVE YEARS IN A ROW, *U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT* (2017–21 EDITIONS).

**FIRST  
IN  
THIRTY**

10 months after graduation, the Class of 2019 had the best employment outcomes of any graduating Suffolk Law class in at least 30 years.

LEGAL WRITING

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#22

## NATIONAL HONORS FOR CIVIC-MINDED STUDENT

**S**am Faisal JD'20 was named a finalist for the *National Jurist* 2020 Law Student of the Year. The honor is given to just 10 students across the country.

“Sam has this great quality of being gentle, at ease, and warm yet tenacious,” Professor Ragini Shah, director of the Immigration Clinic, told *National Jurist*. “Whether he’s helping clients in the immigrant community, teaching high school kids through our Marshall Brennan Program, or advocating for fellow students, he brings that warmth and determination to bear—and good things happen.”

During his 1L summer, Faisal volunteered in Boston Municipal Court, working with indigent clients and attempting to get their cases

dismissed. He went nine for 12 on the dismissals, *National Jurist* reported.

Faisal served as a mentor in the Law School’s Marshall Brennan Program, commuting a few times a week to instruct a public high school class in constitutional law. One of his students went on to win the preeminent high school moot court—with federal judges deciding the final round.

In the last five years, Suffolk Law has made the Student of the Year shortlist four times. Last year, *National Jurist* honored Justin Rhuda JD'19, noting that he helped stop the eviction of a former U.S. Army prisoner of war and his family, who were facing homelessness. Rhuda was a U.S. Marine Corps captain from 2010 to 2015, stationed for two years in the Persian Gulf.

## GRANTS



### \$1 MILLION GOVERNMENT GRANT PROPELS FAIR HOUSING EFFORT

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has awarded Suffolk’s Housing Discrimination Testing Program (HDTP) a three-year grant totaling more than \$1 million to continue its nationally recognized work. In addition to training the next generation of civil rights attorneys, the HDTP has uncovered widespread discrimination against tenants in the Boston area on the basis of race, the use of housing vouchers, and other protected categories. Since 2012, the program has received \$4.2 million in grant funding to support its work.



### THE PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS TURNS TO SUFFOLK

In response to the pandemic, Suffolk’s Legal Innovation & Technology Lab created mobile-friendly guided interviews that walk litigants through court forms without the need for physical contact; think Turbo Tax, but for legal issues like a restraining order. With support from The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Lab is building tools that last beyond the pandemic, to bring data from those court forms directly into a court’s case management system. That means court employees will not need to fill in case data by hand, speeding up court response times and simplifying processes for pro se litigants. Most importantly, it offers the potential to revolutionize data collection and analysis in trial courts throughout the country.



## IN THE MEDIA

### “DEADLY FORCE BEHIND THE WHEEL” WASHINGTON POST, AUGUST 24, 2020

Professor Emerita Karen Blum addresses a controversial police driving maneuver used to end car chases. Blum and Suffolk Law students filed a brief in a Supreme Court case brought by a man who was paralyzed in 2001 during an attempted “precision immobilization technique” by a Georgia police officer.

## BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME

ALUMNA DESIGNS DIVERSIONARY PROGRAMS APP

**D**efense attorneys, especially when they're handling low-level offenses like small-quantity drug possession and petty theft, often ask judges to divert their clients into social programs—such as substance abuse treatment or group therapy—to avoid a criminal record.

They do that in part because the effects of a criminal record can be so far-reaching: ineligibility for college scholarships or financial aid, lost opportunities for employment, and denials for private and public housing.

While working in Suffolk's Juvenile Defender Clinic, Nicole Siino JD'18 saw how difficult it was to find her clients a place in treatment or job programs before they were arraigned, and her student colleagues and public defenders experienced the same problem.

"I sat in court and listened to judges, attorneys, and probation officers talk about dozens of programs designed to help juveniles succeed and discovered that there was no

master list of community-based resources. No place to go to do a comprehensive search where you could learn about programs and determine if they had openings," she says.

The idea that young people would lose an opportunity for professional help and a shot at redemption largely because lawyers and social workers didn't have a basic web resource seemed wrong.

So she conquered her fear of coding, turning to Suffolk Legal Innovation & Technology (LIT) Lab teachers for instruction. And then she built the tool she envisioned, the Juvenile Resource Finder. Today, Massachusetts attorneys (and anyone else, for that matter) can check her app on their phones from a courtroom—and help their clients avoid the potentially devastating effects of a criminal record.

*Siino is a consultant focusing on legal innovation and technology at Fireman & Company. Find her app at [bit.ly/NicoleApp2020](https://bit.ly/NicoleApp2020).*



## NEW DEGREE PROGRAM FOR LIFE SCIENCES LAW

In collaboration with Suffolk's Sawyer Business School and the College of Arts & Sciences, the Law School has launched a new Master of Science in Law: Life Sciences degree. The interdisciplinary program is designed to help students secure jobs and advance careers in the life sciences, one of the nation's fastest-growing fields for job growth. A 2019 Massachusetts Biotechnology Education Foundation report indicates that the state does not have enough suitably trained workers for available life sciences positions and that filling openings often takes more than three months as employers compete to hire promising candidates.


### QUESTIONS?

Contact Jennifer Karnakis at [jkarnakis@suffolk.edu](mailto:jkarnakis@suffolk.edu).




## PROFESSOR EARNS ABA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**A**t an event headlined by Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, Suffolk Law Professor Janice C. Griffith received a Lifetime Achievement award from the American Bar Association Section of State and Local Government Law for her years of service and impressive professional accomplishments. She began her career as an associate with the Wall Street firm Hawkins, Delafield & Wood, then served as general counsel for New York City's Housing and Development Administration. Griffith also served as Suffolk University's Vice President for Academic Affairs and dean of Georgia State University College of Law.



**IN THE MEDIA**



**LIVING TOGETHER?  
YOU MAY NEED SOME  
LEGAL ADVICE**

A recent study by the Pew Research Center has found for the first time that the percentage of people cohabiting is higher than the percentage of married couples.

In March, Boston News 25 turned to family law expert Professor Maritza Karmely to ask if she had any legal advice for people living together.

She had several recommendations: Put your names on all assets. Hire an attorney for four important documents—your house deed, your will, a power of attorney for financial decisions, and a health care proxy.

Marriage provides tax benefits as well as safeguards if couples decide to split up, she added. For example, unmarried fathers have fewer rights than married fathers when it comes to custody, at least until a judge gets involved.

## NEW SUFFOLK LAW FACULTY ON ISSUES THAT MATTER

“TELL US ABOUT A LEGAL ISSUE THAT IS ANIMATING YOU.”  
NEW PROFESSORS WEIGH IN



### JENNIFER CIARIMBOLI

*Assistant Professor of Academic Support*  
*BA, Boston University*  
*JD, University of Notre Dame Law School*

Ciarimboli served as in-house counsel at Re:Sources and at Sapient Corporation, where she advised on a variety of global legal issues, including contracts and compliance. Prior to working in-house, she was an associate at Goodwin Procter LLP.

#### **Remote bar complexities**

“Due to the pandemic, 2020 graduates dealt with months of changes to the dates and format of the bar examination. Most students took a remotely administered test in October rather than a live exam in the summer. I’m thinking a lot about how those changes impacted our students, whether they disproportionately affected particular groups, and how I can support our future graduates who are dealing with continuing uncertainty around the administration of the exam.”



### STEPHEN CODY

*Assistant Professor*  
*BA, Temple University*  
*MPhil, Cambridge University*  
*JD, PhD, University of California, Berkeley*

Before coming to Suffolk Law, Cody was a research director at Berkeley Law’s Human Rights Center and prosecuted criminal cases for the U.S. Attorney’s Office (Eastern District, California). His interviews with hundreds of child soldiers and other survivors have helped determine how best to prepare, support, and protect witnesses who testify against perpetrators of mass violence.

#### **Supporting witnesses of war crimes**

“Witnesses are the lifeblood of international criminal trials. Most victims and witnesses have survived killings, torture, or the destruction of their homes. For many, testifying in a war crimes trial requires an act of great courage, especially when perpetrators still walk the streets of their villages and towns. Criminal prosecutors must be part of national and international efforts to support and protect victims and witnesses and help to restore communities affected by violence.”





## MAURICE DYSON

*Professor*

*BA, Columbia University*

*JD, Columbia Law School*

Dyson practiced law with Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, where he specialized in mergers and acquisitions, securities, and leveraged buyouts valued at over \$166 billion. He participated in landmark pro bono school-finance litigation, winning a \$14 billion judgment that was upheld on appeal. He also led federal civil rights enforcement as the Special Projects team attorney for the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

### **Saying no to the “hired gun”**

“We often seek a ‘hired gun,’ but we should advocate for the ‘hired dove’ attorney to engage in creative problem solving as a deliberate peacemaker, using restraint, reconciliation, and healing rather than acting as instruments to perpetuate malice and bitterness. As such, the hired dove lawyering model, first put forth by Professor Mary C. Szto, gives us a more effective manner for empathic cooperation in the practice of law, uniting parties riven asunder by conflict to reach lasting compromises built on mutual respect and need.”



## ALI ROD KHADEM

*Assistant Professor*

*BA, MA, JD, University of California, Berkeley*

*MA, PhD, Harvard University*

Khadem has worked as an associate in King & Spalding's Middle East and Islamic finance group; as an associate in Linklaters' China mergers and acquisitions group; as a senior director for global strategic relationships at Westport Innovations; and as a senior vice president for Asia and Middle East strategy at Macquarie Capital. He speaks several languages, including Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Farsi, and French.

### **Collaboration in a “post-truth” era**

“In our so-called post-truth era, we are experiencing increasing polarization around fundamental existential questions, whether they be related to the pandemic, climate change, religion, race, gender, or nuclear threat. If information is part of the commons, then how does pollution of the information ecology (whether through misinformation, misunderstanding, or cognitive overload) undermine the possibilities for agreement and collaboration? And what new modalities are needed, at the levels of the individual and the collective, for resolving the ensuing conflicts?”



## CARLOS M. TEUSCHER

*Assistant Clinical Professor*

*Director, Transactional Clinic*

*BS, University of Southern California*

*JD, Georgetown University Law Center*

Teuscher was a lecturer and clinical instructor at Harvard Law School, where he directed the community enterprise project of the transactional law clinics. Before joining Harvard Law, he worked on domestic and international finance, mergers and acquisitions, and other commercial transactions at Linklaters LLP and Dechert LLP.

### **“A horrible year”**

“COVID-19, the murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, murder hornets, and now raging fires along the West Coast. 2020 has been a horrible year. Regardless, people have come together in different ways to support each other. Mutual aid networks have sprung up across the country, including in the Greater Boston area, to support immigrants and other oppressed groups with money, labor, and education programs, among others. Tax, business, employment, immigration—the legal issues are vast!”

# LEGAL 500 RECOGNIZES RECENT GRADUATE

Recognition by The Legal 500 typically takes years of building a career and clientele. An organic chemist turned Suffolk Law student has accomplished the feat while still in law school.

Paul R. Fleming JD'20, who serves as a patent agent with Dechert LLP, was recognized this year by *The Legal 500 U.S.* for his patent prosecution work.

"The partner I worked with said that it's a big deal," says Fleming, who received his PhD from MIT and did his postdoc at the National Institutes of Health before working as a scientist for AstraZeneca. "I think my background in the pharmaceutical industry really helped me. I am able to help clients because I understand

drug discovery so well; it's deeply ingrained in my system."

His work as a staff scientist at Choate, Hall & Stewart with Andrea Reid JD'06, a former chemist herself, helped inspire his own transition to law. The two continue to work together today at Dechert.

"It definitely took me some time to get comfortable making the switch from research to being a patent agent. That's a big switch," he says. "So, for me, it was really gratifying to see that the clients appreciated the work I did and found that I was a valuable part of their team."

Through Suffolk Law's new Accelerated JD Program, Fleming completed his JD a year and a half early.

# RECOGNITION FROM THE NATIONAL BLACK PRE-LAW CONFERENCE



Suffolk Law was recognized at the 15th-anniversary celebration of the Annual National Black Pre-Law Conference & Law Fair with that organization's "Outstanding Law School Diversity Outreach Award."

The school's admissions outreach and focus on diversity pipeline programs contributed to the honor. One example of the pipeline in action is recent graduate Sam Faisal JD'20. As a public high school student in Boston, Faisal wasn't thinking of becoming an attorney until he began receiving lessons in constitutional law from two Suffolk Law students. His mentors were serving as Marshall Brennan fellows, teaching subjects like free speech in the high school context, search and seizure law, and civil rights in police encounters.



# SUFFOLK HELPS LAUNCH NATIONAL POLICING CONSORTIUM

Dean Andrew Perlman helped lead the creation of the ABA-Legal Education Police Practices Consortium, which launched in October. The Consortium is creating opportunities for more than 50 law schools across the country to work with the ABA and local, state, and national stakeholders to improve police practices, from use of force policies to training and oversight.




## IN THE MEDIA

### NIGHTLINE AND ESQUIRE COVER SUFFOLK LAW HOUSING STUDY

On July 1, the *Boston Globe* reported that undercover investigations by Suffolk Law's Housing Discrimination Testing Program (HDTP) "found that Black people posing as prospective tenants were shown fewer apartments than whites and offered fewer incentives to rent, and that real estate agents often cut off contact when the renters gave Black-sounding names like Lakisha, Tyrone, or Kareem."

The HDTP study was also covered in *Esquire*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, on *NPR*, and cited on *ABC News Nightline*.



# MICHAEL J. NICHOLSON: MAYOR BY DAY, LAW STUDENT BY NIGHT

As Suffolk Law students navigate law school, there's a lot to think about. For some, there are work responsibilities, babies to feed, parents to care for. Michael J. Nicholson, Class of 2021, is only 26 years old and running a small city. He was elected mayor of Gardner, Massachusetts, this summer.

Since his election, he's been working through all manner of thorny problems, including a truncated \$70 million city budget-planning process and making an educated decision about how the state would likely fund cities despite its own pandemic-related budget challenges.

Nicholson and Gardner's school superintendent worked through four separate plans required by the state to get the

city's students back to school safely this fall. Gardner, a city of about 20,000, lies 57 miles west of Boston. By charter, the Gardner mayor serves as chair of the school committee.

As part of the city's hybrid schooling model, Nicholson proposed the city start off with two weeks of remote learning for all students. "That two weeks up front allowed us to see how other districts were faring, what mistakes or blips were happening, so we could avoid those. It made the learning curve a little less steep," he says.

It's no surprise that he's been thinking back to lessons from his favorite Suffolk Law professors, including Judge Serge Georges, Jr. JD'96 and Professor Anthony Polito. "I'm responsible for managing the procurement process for the city," Nicholson

THREE  
SUFFOLK  
LAW  
STUDENTS  
WON  
LOCAL  
ELECTION  
RACES IN  
2020

says. "Professor Polito helped me see the whole system, how we got to the process that we use to set a city's excise and property tax numbers."

Nicholson's Government Lawyer class included some equally politically minded students who ran for office in Massachusetts—for example, 33-year-old Meghan K. Kilcoyne, Class of 2021, who was elected state representative for the 12th Worcester District. Another classmate, 31-year-old Michael J. Owens, Class of 2021, served for four years as a town councilor in Braintree. And another Suffolk Law student, John J. Cronin, Class of 2022, was elected state senator for the Worcester and Middlesex District.

Before becoming mayor, Nicholson served as town administrator of Rutland, Massachusetts, and as top aide for then-mayor of Gardner, Mark Hawke.



## SUFFOLK LAW STUDENT WINS PATENT AWARD

While working as an investigator in oral biology at Boston University, Eva Helmerhorst, Class of 2021, discovered that a naturally occurring oral bacteria, *Rothia mucilaginosa*, can break down gluten proteins. Her discovery and forthcoming inventions will create a natural therapy for individuals with celiac disease or other forms of gluten intolerance.

Going through the patent process spurred Helmerhorst's interest in law, she says: "I was in contact a lot with the Office of Technology Development during the time, and this is how I actually became interested in patent law."

Helmerhorst, who holds a doctorate in oral biochemistry, was recognized in 2019 as one of 13 honorees at the Boston Patent Law Association's 9th Annual Invented Here! Awards, and was one of four honorees invited to share more about their work.

"I remember one of the questions I was asked was: 'How do you get to a discovery?' My answer was 'Just let your brain wander and see where it goes and make connections' ... because, when I found the enzyme ... it was kind of an accidental discovery. It often goes like that," says the Suffolk Law 4L evening student.

Helmerhorst's journey from science to IP law is not uncommon at Suffolk Law. In a typical year, more than a dozen entering students hold a PhD, many in STEM fields. They often pursue patent law, one of the reasons that 30% of Boston-area patent lawyers are Suffolk Law alumni.

## THE DOCTOR IS IN

35 PhDs ENROLLED AT SUFFOLK LAW

The incoming Law School class boasts 14 PhDs, 46 students with graduate degrees, and even a nuclear engineer. While impressive, this is not unusual. In recent years, Suffolk Law has attracted an increasing number of students with advanced degrees, with 35 PhDs currently enrolled.

"Many of these students have graduate degrees in STEM fields, and they know that the Law School has a terrific local and national reputation in IP law," says Professor Rebecca Curtin, co-director of the Intellectual Property Concentration. "Many

of these students already have jobs in law firms working on patent matters, so they need to go to law school at night. We pair an outstanding IP program with a highly ranked evening program. It's a perfect match."

Many attend Suffolk Law for the IP Concentration, which is one of the largest and most developed of its kind in the country, offering a patent law specialization and a full range of IP courses—patents, copyright, trademarks, trade secrets, and licensing—to introduce students to the diversity of the field.





Michael Murray (right), in his previous position as the AHL executive vice president of hockey operations, presents the AHL Playoff MVP award (Jack A. Butterfield Trophy) to Andrew Poturalski of the Charlotte Checkers following their AHL Calder Cup championship during the 2018-19 season.

## ACHIEVING HIS NHL DREAM

ALUMNUS JOINS THE MINNESOTA WILD

**M**ichael Murray JD'08 has been named assistant to the general manager of the National Hockey League's Minnesota Wild. In his new role, Murray will assist in the day-to-day responsibilities of the Wild's hockey operations department, including contract negotiations, scouting, and player development. He will also support hockey operations for the American Hockey League's (AHL) Iowa Wild.

Hockey is part of Murray's DNA—he first wore skates and handled a hockey stick when he was 3 years old. He played at Dartmouth and for two seasons professionally, and his father, Bob Murray, was part of Boston University's 1971 and 1972 NCAA championship teams. Murray was previously the executive vice president of hockey operations for the AHL.

"You can never have too many smart people around you, especially during these unprecedented times," said Wild General Manager Bill Guerin. "Between Michael's education and experience in the hockey world ... he will help make our organization better."

Murray says he wouldn't have achieved his dream of working in the NHL without his Suffolk Law degree, noting that he regularly applies the lessons he learned in courses like sports, labor, and employment law. "I think one of the best things about Suffolk is the diversity of the faculty and the ability to learn from their personal and professional experiences," he said. "Their firsthand knowledge and expertise is invaluable."

## NEW GROUP ASSISTS FIRST-GEN STUDENTS

Lauren Bertino, Class of 2022, a first-generation law student, said imposter syndrome set in on her first day of classes last fall.

"I realized I had no idea what was going on," she says. And she wasn't alone. "There are plenty of students around me, especially at Suffolk ... who don't have an uncle or a family friend to tell them what to expect [when attending law school]."

This experience led Bertino, along with her 2L classmates Melanie Stallone, Cassandra Munoz, and James Lockett, to create the First Generation Law Student Association and its podcast "Firsthand from FirstGen" to support other first-generation law students in understanding the nuances of law school.

The podcast delivers insights from other students, faculty, and alumni. "Firsthand from FirstGen" is working on more episodes now and seeking out alumni for interviews.

"Suffolk is well-known for its strong alumni network," Bertino says. "That is why I came to Suffolk in the first place and why it is such an especially good place for first-gen students. When I was looking to see whether I wanted to even go to law school, I spoke to Suffolk alumni who were so willing to just say, 'Yeah, here's the deal.'" **SL**

Episodes 1 and 2 of "Firsthand from FirstGen" can be found on Spotify, [tinyurl.com/suffolkfirstgen](https://tinyurl.com/suffolkfirstgen). Alumni interested in participating can email the organization at [sulsfirstgen@gmail.com](mailto:sulsfirstgen@gmail.com).



### IN THE MEDIA

#### "WET" INK SIGNATURES REQUIREMENTS MAY FADE AFTER CORONAVIRUS" BLOOMBERG LAW, APRIL 10, 2020

With the logistical challenges of meeting in person during a pandemic, many states are moving away from requiring "wet signatures." Professor Gabe Teninbaum JD'05 explains why this idea is long overdue. He argues that wet signatures remain a common practice, like a lot of legal practice processes, simply because of inertia.

## PANDEMIC PIVOT

Clinical fellow Quinten Steenhuis interviewed by NBC 10 about the court forms project



# CLOSING THE COVID-19 JUSTICE GAP

By Michael Fisch

Imagine a woman living with an abusive partner, isolated for months during the pandemic shutdown. Eventually, she goes to the local courthouse to get help, but the doors are locked when she arrives—because of the pandemic, Massachusetts courts are closed to the public except for emergencies. She waits outside for hours, until a clerk finally comes with a stack of complex papers for her to complete on her own.

“Unfortunately, this actually happened,” says Quinten Steenhuis, a legal technologist and clinical fellow in Suffolk’s Legal Innovation & Technology (LIT) Lab. “It’s a problem that was foreseen by Ralph Gants, the late chief justice of the Supreme Judicial Court [SJC], at the start of the COVID-19 crisis. He put out a call for ideas to increase public access to the courts, and the LIT Lab answered that call.”

Within weeks, the SJC’s Access to Justice Commission COVID-19 Task Force’s Access to Courts Committee, co-chaired by LIT Lab director David Colarusso, had started tackling the question of

## A TEAM GATHERS ACROSS FIVE CONTINENTS. WATCH NBC 10 COVERAGE AT [bit.ly/LITLabNBC](https://bit.ly/LITLabNBC)

how people facing legal emergencies could access the court from home.

The answer: court forms that could be filled out and submitted to the courts entirely via mobile phones. Simply placing existing court forms online wouldn’t get the job done. The forms would need to walk users through complex legal questions, in the same way that TurboTax simplifies tax documents, and provide a way to be submitted without the usual printing and signing requirements.

By the end of April, the LIT Lab had recruited a group of 100 volunteers across five continents: coders, user experience experts, designers, lawyers, linguists offering translation services, and the LIT Lab’s own committed student team.

Working at rapid speed, the team launched MassAccess in June with an initial array of forms. The project is a remarkable feat, both for its swift turnaround and its \$0 price tag for the courts. Without the volunteer army, Colarusso estimates the project could have cost over \$1 million.

The mobile forms address legal issues from restraining orders to unlawful eviction and even “breach of quiet enjoyment”—say, when a landlord won’t repair a sewage leak in your kitchen. The creation of court forms in other legal areas, such as consumer debt, education, health, and

guardianship, is ongoing.

“In the U.S., even before the pandemic, a majority of people faced their civil legal emergencies without a lawyer,” said Suffolk Law Dean Andrew Perlman—a problem called the justice gap.

Additionally, many courts have forms that must be printed out, filled in by hand, and delivered to a courthouse or scanned and submitted to the court, said Steenhuis. “But many people don’t have a printer or scanner at home, and they don’t have access to a library right now—or a retail store’s computer station,” he noted. These are some of the hurdles that the mobile tools overcome.

And because the framework for the mobile app, Docassemble, is open to anyone, technologists in other states will have a leg up in creating similar forms for their courts.

“This project is extremely helpful,” said Jorge Colon, a court service center manager with the Massachusetts Trial Courts. “When people call to receive assistance at the Court Service Center, we can refer them to the different tools that this project has created, and they are able to do the same things that they could do at the courthouse through this project.”

View the MassAccess project forms at [courtformsonline.org](https://courtformsonline.org).



## NY TIMES HIGHLIGHTS EVICTION RELIEF TOOL

Millions of Americans have been facing the very real possibility of eviction—in the middle of winter, with a pandemic spiking.

This fall, the Suffolk LIT Lab released a free online tool that has helped thousands of tenants across the nation determine whether they qualify for eviction relief, based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) eviction moratorium order.

If a renter qualifies, the tool produces a customized letter that

can be sent to their landlords, as CDC rules stipulate. In September, *The New York Times* featured the tool in its primer on the topic, “The New Eviction Moratorium: What You Need to Know.”

At press time, the CDC eviction reprieve covers qualified renters through December 31.

Check out the tool at [courtformsonline.org](https://courtformsonline.org).



## A QUICK TURN TOWARD THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

While COVID-19 has created widespread hardship, it is also driving rapid innovation—including at Suffolk Law School, says Professor Gabe Teninbaum, JD’05.

As the recently appointed assistant dean of innovation, strategic initiatives, and distance education, Teninbaum knew that the fundamentals of a Suffolk legal education would remain the same whether faculty and students were miles apart on a Zoom call or six feet away in a Sargent Hall classroom.

But because the two experiences can feel very different, he’s made it a priority to get faculty the resources they need to make their remote classes more intimate and interactive, as well as rich in content.

Law librarians now serve as “tech guides” or, more formally, library distance education liaisons, assisting faculty with the finer details of remote teaching. Faculty tech facilitators (FTFs), hired students, are the virtual world’s new teaching assistants, serving as an extra set of eyes to help professors.

Faculty, in turn, are gaining a sense of the new medium’s unique rhythm and how to incorporate digital tools—from instant polling of students to building in commentary from experts around the world.

“So far,” says Teninbaum, “it’s gone terrifically, because we have a staff and faculty working together to put students’ needs first.”

# CLINICS FORGE AHEAD IN FACE OF PANDEMIC

While the COVID-19 pandemic has upended the traditional face-to-face interactions of Suffolk Law’s 11 clinical programs, students have found creative ways to help their clients.

- The Legal Innovation & Technology Lab created cell phone-guided interviews that walk pro se litigants through complex court forms. The team’s effort drew media attention, including a television segment on NBC Boston.
- Students in the newly created Transactional Clinic are working on legal documents that set out the governance and financial structure of Puntada, an immigrant women’s worker cooperative that produces face masks and other personal protective equipment.
- In April, the Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples Clinic learned that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights had referred their case against the government of Guatemala, addressing persistent government raids of indigenous community radio stations, to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. The Clinic’s student attorneys drafted and submitted a lengthy merits brief to the Court in October. Expert witnesses will include UN Special Rapporteurs and Suffolk Law Professor Lorie Graham.
- As the Massachusetts District Attorney’s Offices faced court closures, the Prosecutors Clinic has jumped in to assist. Working in 17 courts with five Massachusetts District Attorney’s Offices, students have created COVID-specific templated motions, flowcharts, and analyses to help criminal cases proceed without undue delay as litigation resumes.
- The Accelerator Practice represented a mother with a housing voucher who faced discrimination for over a year as she sought in vain to rent an apartment for herself and her two disabled children. The Accelerator Practice and the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office negotiated settlements for the family with several of the offending housing providers.

## EMERGENCY FUND HELPS STUDENTS IMPACTED BY COVID-19

One law student, the mother of a toddler, was laid off from full-time work. Another was unable to find summer legal employment or find work as a nanny to make extra income. A third lost his regular gig as an Uber driver. These are just a

few of the reasons why students have applied for grants through the Suffolk Law CARES Emergency Fund.

The Fund—made possible through the generosity of alumni, faculty, and staff members—aims to help support law students facing

financial challenges brought on by the pandemic. As of September 24, \$33,200 in grants had been awarded to students in need.

To support Suffolk Law Cares visit [app.mobilecause.com/vf/SUCARES\\_SL](http://app.mobilecause.com/vf/SUCARES_SL)



A portrait of Serge Georges, Jr., a Black man with short hair and glasses, smiling. He is wearing a blue suit jacket, a light purple shirt, and a dark tie with red and yellow diagonal stripes. The background is a blurred indoor setting with warm lights.

IMPACTFUL  
ALUMNI

# SERGE GEORGES, JR. NOMINATED TO SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT

SUPREME JUDICIAL  
COURT NOMINEE HAS A  
REPUTATION FOR LEGAL  
BRILLIANCE—AND FOR  
TREATING EVERYONE WITH  
DIGNITY AND RESPECT

*By Beth Brosnan*



Over the course of his 25-year legal career, Judge Serge Georges, Jr. JD'96 has earned a reputation as a remarkably gifted communicator.

Whether he's talking with professional colleagues, defendants in his Dorchester courtroom, or his students at Suffolk Law, Judge Georges is the kind of person who can connect with his listeners and cut to the heart of the matter, says Suffolk Law Dean Andrew Perlman.

Yet for a few brief moments this fall, Georges, 50, found himself speechless.

On November 17, Governor Charlie Baker announced Georges' nomination to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. At a State House press conference, the governor praised Georges not only for his legal brilliance, but also for the humanity he has brought to his work as both a Boston Municipal Court judge and a teacher at Suffolk Law.

"Many lawyers say he's their favorite judge," Baker said. "Not because he gives them the answer they want, but because he knows the law, does his homework, and treats everyone in his courtroom with dignity and respect."

Stepping to the microphone, Georges paused to collect himself. After thanking the governor, he said, "I can't adequately express what this means to me—I just don't have the words." As a young Haitian-American boy growing up in Dorchester, he added, "I would never have dreamed this was possible."

Yet Georges has spent his life believing in the possible—including in the classroom, where he has mentored law students, and in the courtroom, where he has earned a reputation for making litigants feel listened to, fairly treated, and able to move forward with their lives. As the governor put it, "It seems clear that no matter when Judge Georges becomes your friend and colleague,

that relationship will last."

"None of us get to where we are alone," Georges said a few days later. "I try to give people the opportunity to be successful."

### **Proud, Joyful Tears**

If confirmed in early December, he will join two other Suffolk Law graduates on the seven-member court: Justices Frank Gaziano JD'89 and Elspeth Cypher JD'86. Even more significantly, he will become only the fourth Black person ever to serve on the 328-year-old SJC.

Georges' longtime friend, Suffolk Trustee Ernst Guerrier BS'91, JD'94, a Haitian-American who grew up in Mattapan, wept when he heard the news.

"Serge's appointment was a great day for Suffolk, and for our diverse community," he says. "It signifies everything that we preach. You can grow up in Dorchester or Mattapan or Roxbury or Jamaica Plain, and if you are given the opportunity and work hard, you can reach the highest level."

Cherina D. Wright JD/MBA'17—the law school's assistant dean for diversity, equity, and inclusion, who first met Georges when she was president of Suffolk's Black Law Students Association—was also moved to "proud, joyful tears."

While plenty of systemic racial barriers remain, she says, "I hope this helps Suffolk Law students, especially our students of color, realize the sky is the limit. Serge is proof of that."

University President Marisa Kelly calls Georges "a role model for our students, someone who embodies our very highest ideals. And in a period when our country is wrestling with criminal justice reform, he brings a deep understanding of how different communities navigate our legal system."

Dean Perlman points out that Georges' tenure on the Boston Municipal Court will provide "an often under-represented

perspective" for the Supreme Judicial Court, whose members are rarely drawn from the district and municipal courts. "His professional experiences, particularly those involving the civil and criminal legal issues that individuals regularly encounter, will be especially valuable to the court," he said.

**“WHAT SERGE HAS DONE FOR THE PAST SEVEN YEARS IS LIKE PRACTICING LAW IN THE ER. HE HAS PRESIDED OVER THE BUSIEST COURT IN THE COMMONWEALTH, AND HE’S DONE SO WITH INTELLIGENCE, COMPASSION, AND COMMITMENT.”**

—Ernst Guerrier BS'91, JD'94

Guerrier puts it this way: "What Serge has done for the past seven years is like practicing law in the ER. He has presided over the busiest court in the Commonwealth, and he's done so with intelligence, compassion, and commitment."

**Continued on page 16**

### The early years in Dorchester

Georges was first appointed to the Boston Municipal Court in 2013 by Governor Deval Patrick, following more than 15 years as a trial attorney concentrating in civil litigation, criminal defense, and professional licensure and liability.

“I can’t tell you how much it has meant to me to be a judge in the neighborhood where I grew up,” he says.

From age 4 until his early 20s, Dorchester was home. He lived with his parents and two older sisters in a rented two-bedroom apartment on Hancock Street in Kane Square, surrounded by Irish-American, Cape Verdean, and Puerto Rican families. He and his friends loved to ride their BMX bikes through the neighborhood, flying past the courthouse where Georges would one day preside.

Education was everything to Georges’ parents, who had left Haiti to avoid political persecution. His father, Serge Sr., who taught in the Boston public schools by day, held down a second job at Honeywell by night, while his mother, Maryse, worked as a data entry clerk for the Boston Stock Exchange and at the Safety Insurance Company, all so they could afford to send their children to Catholic schools.

Georges graduated from both Boston College High School and Boston College, where he majored in English. (He can still recite poetry he studied there from memory.) Having put their three children through college, Serge Sr. and Maryse Georges bought their first home, in Randolph, where they live today. The judge lives nearby, with his wife, Michelle, and their two daughters.

Yet Dorchester remains home, the place that taught him “there are a lot of really good people who get bad breaks,” he says.

It’s a perspective he brings with him to the courtroom, where he is known for giving people a chance while also holding them accountable. “When you are practicing at the district and municipal court level,” he says, “you see there are plenty of people

who have just made mistakes and need some guidance to get back on their feet, stop committing crimes, and become productive members of society.”

From 2014 to 2018, he presided over the Dorchester Drug Court, working with a team of clinicians, attorneys, police, and parole officers to provide substance-use offenders with consistent structure, expectations, and support. He calls the experience the most rewarding of his professional life.

“I’ve seen the kind of miracles that come with sobriety,” he says, “when people who have lost everything are able to reconnect with family, find employment and housing.”

After Georges’ SJC nomination was announced, his email inbox and phone were flooded with congratulatory messages, including some from former Drug Court clients. “It’s ironic they are calling to thank me,” he says. “I feel I should be thanking them. This work has given me so much.”

### Lighting an intellectual fire

Prior to accepting his nomination to the SJC, Georges accepted another honor: Suffolk’s invitation to serve as Commencement speaker for Suffolk Law’s Class of 2021, where he will receive an honorary degree.

An adjunct faculty member since 1999, Georges has now taught a full generation of Suffolk Law students. At the start of every school year, when he leads incoming 1L students in their oath of professionalism, he shares how the notorious 1989 Charles Stuart case galvanized him to study law.

When Stuart shot and killed his pregnant wife, Suffolk Law alumna Carol DiMaiti Stuart JD’85, and blamed her death on an unidentified Black assailant, city officials spent two months indiscriminately rounding up Black men and interrogating them. Boston newspapers called for the restoration of the death penalty.

Georges still has a copy of that newspaper. “It’s old and yellow and I’m going to be buried with it, because it informed the rest of my life,”

he says. Stuart was eventually revealed to be the murderer and committed suicide, yet there was no immediate reckoning, no admission of how an entire community had been presumed guilty and deprived of its legal rights.

After graduating from BC in 1992, Georges enrolled at Suffolk Law. There was, he says, a warmth to everyone he met, and the sense that faculty and staff alike cared deeply about students and wanted them to succeed. “People would take the time to check in with you, when things were going well and when they weren’t,” he says. “Suffolk was a place you could always come home to.”

Suffolk also lit a fire under him. “My professors were the best in the business and they started my love of the law,” he says. Friday nights would find him in the basement of the Archer building, debating the latest slip opinions with his classmate and close friend, Hank Brennan JD’96, now a noted criminal defense attorney. “I’m a nerd,” he cheerfully admits. “I love the intellectual stimulation of reading the law and thinking about how to apply it.”

Today, Georges lights those same fires under his own students in his courses on Trial Advocacy, Evidence, and Professional Responsibility. “He is an exceptional teacher,” says Dean Perlman. Assistant Dean Wright adds he’s the kind of professor “who empowers his students, and gives them a real sense of ownership of the material.”

If confirmed, Georges will bring all this with him to the Supreme Judicial Court—not only “his clear command of the law and his sharp analytical mind,” says Dean Perlman, “but also his desire to make a positive impact on the lives of others.”

The prospect of joining the nation’s oldest supreme court, operating under its oldest constitution, renders this most eloquent of men speechless once more. “I want to be part of a team that is working to get it right,” Georges says after a pause. “For a kid from Kane Square, this means everything.” **SL**

“ONE OF MY PASSIONS IS TRYING TO BRIDGE THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DIVIDE THAT EXISTS BETWEEN, SAY, SILICON VALLEY AND WASHINGTON.”

—Brett Freedman JD’07



By Jon Gorey

On a late December day in 1988, Brett Freedman JD’07 and his family were readying for an overnight flight to Israel, where they were planning to celebrate 13-year-old Brett’s bar mitzvah. As they packed their bags, anticipation turned to anxiety when they heard that a passenger jet, Pan-Am Flight 103, had exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland—killing all 259 people aboard and 11 on the ground in one of the most deadly airline bombings in history.

“We were watching it on television when the van came to pick us up to go to the airport,” Freedman recalled. As a suburban Boston middle-schooler, Freedman says he didn’t grasp the full dynamics of what was happening at the time, beyond the burning wreckage on the TV. But he could sense and understand his parents’ fear, concern—and resolve. “My mom was upset, and my dad said, ‘There’s nothing more important than to actually do this now.’”

Freedman didn’t decide in that moment to pursue a career in national security, but the experience was influential.

After earning his juris doctor at Suffolk in 2007, Freedman went on to provide legal counsel at both the National Security Agency and the National Counter-Terrorism Center in Washington, DC. Now, he serves as minority counsel for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI), which oversees the entire U.S. intelligence community.

Working for Senator Mark Warner of Virginia, the committee’s Democratic vice chairman, one of Freedman’s top priorities in most years is to help get the bipartisan Intelligence Authorization Act (IAA) through Congress—the critical legislation that authorizes funding and oversight for the nation’s

powerful intelligence apparatus.

Security threats have evolved since the Lockerbie bombing, of course, with cybersecurity and election interference among the committee’s current concerns. “There’s certainly a public knowledge of the efforts by the Russian Federation and other countries to interfere [with the election] in one way, shape, or form,” Freedman said in October, citing as examples the spread of false narratives and innocuous-sounding disinformation that proliferate on social media.

Freedman isn’t on the front lines of election cybersecurity and doesn’t consider himself an especially technical person. “But in order to be able to put forth policy, you need to understand the innards of what’s happening,” he said, so he’s had to familiarize himself with technologies like the 5G wireless standard, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing—with some help from the Congressional Research Service. He also relies on relationships he’s built with trusted academics, think tanks, and private industry leaders.

Recognizing the importance of these relationships, Freedman pushed for the most recent IAA to include a public-private talent exchange, which would allow intelligence officials to spend a year or more immersed at a company in the private sector and vice versa.

“One of my passions is trying to bridge the public and private divide that exists between, say, Silicon Valley and Washington,” he said. Through the pilot exchange

program, a computer scientist at the NSA could, for example, spend a year or two working at Google—honing their skills and gaining a better understanding of its culture—while maintaining their government tenure and benefits. Meanwhile, an engineer from the tech industry could take time to learn how the government operates—and how to get things done within its bureaucracy—without leaving their job.

Freedman hopes that this cross-pollination of talent could help the two camps, which are often at odds, get past what they read about each other in the news. These exchange workers can “meet the people, see what the mission is, and get a sense of the challenges facing them,” he said.

Freedman also hopes the program could open up the intelligence community to a more diverse talent pool. If the intelligence community as an analytical body does not reflect the composition of the country and the globe, decision makers are going to miss critical nuances, he warned.

Imperfect as U.S. national security is, Freedman cherishes his role in keeping people safe, and feels fortunate to be part of something much bigger than either himself or politics.

“I’ve been proud to be a part of one of, if not the only, remaining truly bipartisan congressional committees, where we put our noses down, look at the issues, and continue to work together to try to find solutions,” he said. **SL**

# REGINA HOLLOWAY'S CAREER IN POLICE OVERSIGHT TAKES A NEW TURN

By Alyssa Giacobbe

Regina D. Holloway JD'15 began law school the year someone close to her went to prison. She was raising four children, working a hodgepodge of jobs to make ends meet, and living in public housing in Cambridge. Naturally, her life informed her approach to law.

"Everything I did in law school had some relationship to my personal experience," she says.

At Suffolk, she found support from faculty and staff, often turning to Professors Kathleen Engel and Karen M. Blum JD'74. Blum ignited her interest in criminal justice reform, specifically civilian oversight. After working as a clinical fellow in Suffolk's Housing Discrimination Testing Program and as a bar advocate in the Boston District Courts, Holloway relocated to Chicago.

At the Civilian Office of Police Accountability there, she worked as an investigator overseeing "critical incidents," including officer-involved shootings and deaths in custody. The job was fascinating, yet frustrating.

"There was not a lot of stability, and these departments ... really need political will. I just didn't see it there," says Holloway. "It wasn't the substantial change I was looking for."

Next, she worked with a Chicago neighborhood policing pilot program founded by New York University law professor Barry Friedman. The initiative was designed to help inform policing priorities with a deeper understanding of a community's concerns. While police might focus on loitering teens, for example, the community was more concerned about hidden sex trafficking

of 13- and 14-year-old girls, she says.

"Even when a problem couldn't be fixed immediately, which was often the case, people still felt like they had a better quality of life," says Holloway. "Everyone felt more like they were a part of the process of police and community."

She then received an unexpected offer. Friedman, who serves on the board of public safety technologies company Axon (perhaps best known as the makers of the Taser), approached her this summer about joining the company.

"I thought it was crazy. I was just like, what in my life makes you think that I would work for Axon?," recalls Holloway, a Senior Atlantic Fellow for Racial Equity.

But following the murder of George Floyd and other Black civilians by police, Axon had expanded its company mission to include a focus on racial equity, diversity, and inclusion. Its "Sprint for Justice" initiative resulted in eight new products to support transparency and officer development.

Holloway ultimately decided to take the job as vice president of community impact. "I think they have started to realize—and I'm hoping to help them make good on this realization—that the community is our customer," she says. "And that these products need to be solving for them, and for their lives."

She points to one new feature, Axon's priority-ranked video audit, as an example.

"Civilian Oversight might get 30 hours of body-worn camera footage. Trying to piece through that stops the investigation process, stops people from finding out whether their complaint went through," she says. Using the new tool, investigators can instead seek out keywords

among hours of footage in as little as 30 minutes, helping them to quickly see what happened in a specific interaction.

Holloway now helps develop initiatives that connect Axon with the communities it hopes to serve, educating civilians on Axon products while learning about their specific safety concerns. She'll also work with police departments seeking training in nonlethal weapons and other de-escalation tools and practices.

Next year, she will assemble a community coalition that includes members from the mental health, philanthropy, and educational fields to examine Axon's products with a racial equity toolkit. The goal is that community groups will help the company develop products that are less likely to result in injury or escalation to use of force, and Axon product teams will begin to view their products through a more equitable lens.

"My hope is that it will be training on both sides," Holloway says. Axon employees are going to need to do their part, she points out. "I can't be the constant reminder of the need for equity." **SL**



# THREE ALUMNI MAKE \$1M PLEDGES IN SINGLE YEAR

## ALUMNI INVEST IN SUFFOLK LAW'S FUTURE

Within a single year, three different alumni have committed million-dollar gifts to help advance Suffolk Law's mission of delivering an outstanding, affordable legal education. Two of the commitments were made after the pandemic began.

"We are deeply grateful for these remarkable commitments," said Suffolk University Law School Dean Andrew Perlman. "They are a testament to the impact of a Suffolk Law education and the desire of our alumni to give back and help the next generation of graduates achieve similar success."

Most recently, an anonymous donor, who was a first-generation college and law school graduate, wanted to contribute life-changing support to first-generation Suffolk Law students in an effort to bridge financial gaps that unfairly burden deserving students. This particular scholarship is focused on eliminating barriers and widening the pipeline for first-generation students to enter the legal profession, helping them thrive as successful and confident lawyers.

Another alum, Warren G. Levenbaum JD'72, has long supported the Law School as a member of the Dean's Cabinet. Levenbaum, founding partner of the West Coast personal injury law firm Levenbaum Trachtenberg, recently said, "The true test of lifetime achievement is the ability to give back, and I am forever grateful to Suffolk Law School, which has given me this opportunity."

Last fall, the Law School announced the first of the three gifts, when Dean's Cabinet member Barry C. Cosgrove JD'85 honored the spirit of his wife's grandmother, Graciela Rojas-Trabal. She grew up in the Dominican Republic, and her hard work and ethics were an inspiration to her family. Today, the Graciela Rojas-Trabal Term Scholarship Fund supports law students from Cosgrove's hometown of Brockton, Massachusetts, as well as law students who have a significant interest in and knowledge of the Dominican Republic's history and culture.

## SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS SHARE THE IMPACT OF THE GRACIELA ROJAS-TRABAL TERM SCHOLARSHIP



**WILLIAM G.  
HARDIMAN,  
CLASS OF 2022**  
*Brockton, Massachusetts*

I have wanted to be a lawyer since I was a freshman in high school, when I was a member of my high school's mock trial team. During my time as an undergrad, I interned at the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office, which was an amazing chance to see the criminal process in action.

Suffolk's JD/LLM in Taxation Program really stuck out to me. Being able to get my JD and LLM in three years was a no-brainer. After law school, I plan on practicing tax law.

The scholarship has been immensely helpful in offsetting the burden of paying tuition. Barry Cosgrove and I both attended Cardinal Spellman High School in my hometown.



**TAILAYAH LECHÉ  
MACKLIN,  
CLASS OF 2024**  
*Brockton, Massachusetts*

My family has always instilled in me the value of an education and the power that comes with knowledge. I grew up in a community that did not believe in the criminal justice system because they felt as though it failed them. For me, this was hard to

grasp. I knew I wanted to be a part of the change. ... I wanted to be a voice for my community to bridge the gap between the communities and the justice system.

I plan to focus my legal education on civil rights and human rights law. The support of this scholarship will allow me to build a legal career where I can become the voice of those individuals who need to be heard in our society.



**HECTOR PAGAN,  
CLASS OF 2024**  
*Caguas, Puerto Rico*

I moved to Boston to continue pursuing my education. I had a big dream, law school being my end goal. However, I had one obstacle to overcome: mastering the English language. I was not ready for law school back then, so I decided to pursue graduate studies in psychology and behavior analysis and improve my writing and communication skills so I could be prepared to pursue studies in the law. After completing my two master's degrees, I felt ready to pursue my biggest dream and decided to apply to law school.

When I visited Suffolk Law, I felt that I was home. I felt that I belonged there.

The scholarship has allowed me to focus more on my studies. **SL**

## SUMMA DONORS

In fiscal year 2020, Suffolk Law saw the largest number of Summa Society donors in 12 years. The Summa Society is composed of those who contribute \$1,000 or more annually.

# ALL RISE: CELEBRATING SUFFOLK LAW'S FEMALE LEADERS

The third annual celebration of Suffolk Law's female leaders—known as “All Rise”—took place on November 18. The event raised over \$95,000 to benefit the Catherine T. Judge Scholarship Fund and the Suffolk Law Student Emergency Fund.

One part of the program featured a panel presentation, “Rise Up, Speak Up and Lift Every Voice,” which highlighted individual and collective actions to advance racial and gender equity and justice. Moderated by Suffolk Law Professor Lolita Darden JD'91, the panel included Tamela Bailey JD'04, member of the Law School Alumni Board of Directors and commercial legal senior counsel, National Grid; Hon.

Stacey J. Fortes JD'90, First Justice of Lowell District Court; and Nina Mitchell Wells JD'76, former New Jersey Secretary of State and former director of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA).

Given the event's theme, “Rise Up, Speak Up and Lift Every Voice,” the alumnae panelists shared their thoughts on the importance and power of sisterhood, building community,

and personal empowerment, as well as on the collective responsibility of every legal professional to join the effort of transforming legal institutions into places of equity and inclusion for all.

The event also celebrated two remarkable women. This year, the Catherine T. Judge Teaching and Service Award was posthumously presented to Professor Emerita Victoria Dodd, who died earlier this year. The Marian Archer “Trailblazer” Award was presented to Judge Marianne B. Bowler JD'76, HLLD'94.

Judge Bowler has served as a magistrate judge, U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts, since 1990 and as chief magistrate judge (2002 to 2005). She was the first female president of the Suffolk Law School Alumni Association Board of Directors. In addition to her lengthy judicial service, Bowler recently concluded two terms as a member of the International Judicial Relations Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States, traveling to Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Kuwait, Nepal, and the United Arab Emirates to teach judges mediation techniques and to lecture on intellectual property issues, money laundering, and high-profile criminal cases including terrorism. **SL**



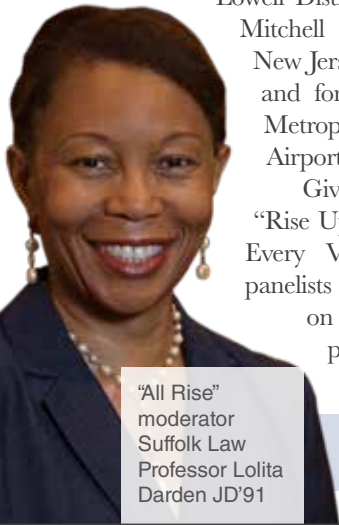
**POSTHUMOUS HONORS FOR PROFESSOR VICTORIA DODD**

Few are courageous. And even fewer are courageous often, regularly saying what needs to be said, even when it's risky to do so. When colleagues remember the life of Professor Victoria J. Dodd, they invariably recall moments when Dodd showed such courage.

“As one of very few tenured women, she always put herself out there on important issues so that we younger women never felt alone,” wrote Professor Rosanna Cavallaro on hearing of Professor Dodd's passing. “That plus her humor and fierce intelligence made her a larger-than-life figure whom I will miss.”

Dodd taught law for nearly 40 years at Suffolk, teaching criminal law, constitutional law, civil procedure, and federal courts and advancing the interests and status of women in the profession. As one of the pioneer female law professors, she faced gender bias head on, often with humor. She was honored posthumously with the Catherine T. Judge Teaching and Service Award at the All Rise alumni event on November 18.

Among her other accomplishments, Dodd served as a three-time chair of the Education Law Section of the Association of American Law Schools. And her book, *Practical Education Law for the Twenty-First Century*, has been widely used in the field, both inside and outside the classroom. **SL**



“All Rise” moderator Suffolk Law Professor Lolita Darden JD'91

The next All Rise event will be held March 8, 2021.

## CATIC FOUNDATION SUPPORTS ACCELERATOR-TO-PRACTICE PROGRAM

This past spring, the CATIC Foundation committed a generous \$55,000 to support Suffolk Law's Accelerator-to-Practice Program. The program prepares graduates to join or establish small law practices that serve average-income clients.

“We appreciate the CATIC Foundation's support, which enables Suffolk Law to fulfill its historic and nationally recognized commitment to preparing practice-ready lawyers,” said Suffolk University Law School Dean Andrew Perlman.

The award-winning program consists of an innovative professional

development and skills curriculum. Students learn about law office management, receive training in efficiency-enhancing law practice technology, and intern at financially successful small firms and learn how they operate. They also participate in a full-year capstone experience in the Accelerator Practice, which combines training in fee-shifting cases with an opportunity to manage the law firm embedded within the Law School. CATIC's funding will support the ongoing work of the Accelerator-to-Practice Program. **SL**



# ALUMNI CONTRIBUTIONS WITH PERSONAL MEANING

By Kara Baskin

Suffolk Law is fortunate to boast legions of alumni devoted to giving back. That giving is especially resonant when generosity dovetails with professional passions.

Consider Dean's Cabinet member Deborah Marson JD'78, executive vice president, general counsel, and secretary of Iron Mountain, a Boston-based global leader for storage and information management services. Her \$100,000 of funding supports a clinical fellow for Suffolk Law's Legal Innovation and Technology (LIT) Lab.

"I'm very involved in the new products that we offer, which are dependent on technological advancements. Supporting the LIT Lab just seemed like a great synergy to me between what I know and what I work with—cutting-edge, novel, and linked to the law," she says.

Iron Mountain and the LIT Lab both operate at the intersection of technology and data science. Marson, who was the longtime deputy general counsel for The Gillette Company before Iron Mountain, is delighted to help support these civic efforts through a legal lens.

"Suffolk gave me the gift of being a lawyer, and I've reached a few milestones in my career that I never expected when I was a graduate back in 1978," she says. "I believe in giving back and trying to make the road for students today a little bit easier where I can."

Her generosity currently supports clinical fellow and adjunct professor Quinten Steenhuis, who previously practiced housing and eviction defense law for Greater Boston Legal Services. At the LIT Lab, his projects focus on the intersection of access to justice and technology, with an emphasis on housing and evictions. During the

pandemic, his work is more important than ever. (See p. 12 for more details.)

Or consider University Trustee and Dean's Cabinet member Mark E. Sullivan JD'79, retired chief legal officer at Bose Corporation—a company whose audio innovations, from noise-canceling headphones to high-tech speakers, are often mimicked. To protect the company's inventions, Sullivan's practice focused on intellectual property, and he is devoted to supporting the next generation of Suffolk graduates interested in the nexus of IP and business.

He recently committed \$250,000, much of which is intended to advance the Law School's work in IP law. "Each decade brings its own wrinkle in terms of the knowledge and experience you need to succeed as a lawyer," he says. "For many new graduates, they'll need to operate comfortably in the innovation economy, and I wanted to help out in that subject area as it was critical to my career."

"These two remarkable Suffolk Law graduates have achieved so much in their careers," said Dean Andrew Perlman. "It is gratifying to see them give back, and it is especially meaningful to see them support the kind of work that has been critical to their own success."

Alumni appreciate the chance to share their professional passions through funding, but equally significant is an overarching appreciation for Suffolk as an institution.

"Suffolk Law is a place of intellectual curiosity, learning," says Marson. "It's a place that makes a difference in the lives and careers of its graduates. What more could anybody ask for?" **SL**



Ernst Guerrier with his family—son Myles, wife Marie, and daughter Christa—at the 2019 Suffolk Law Clinical Programs Reception.

## ERNST GUERRIER PAYS IT FORWARD

By Kara Baskin

Suffolk Trustee and Dean's Cabinet member Ernst Guerrier BS'91, JD'94 immigrated to Boston from Haiti at age 7, the son of a cab driver and a hospital worker. He learned the value of paying it forward at a pivotal time in his life. The self-described inner-city kid, who grew up in Mattapan, received a helping hand to attend Suffolk as an undergrad and later as a law student.

The opportunity came by way of Richard J. Trifiro JD'57, HLLD'87, the late Boston lawyer and philanthropist who was committed to city youth. The Trifiro family has given nearly \$1.6 million to Suffolk and has made a profound impact on the lives and careers of countless Suffolk students who needed financial assistance.

"I asked him: 'How do I pay you back? Do I have to work for you for 10 years?' And [Trifiro] said, 'You pay it forward,'" recalls Guerrier.

Today, he runs his own law firm, Guerrier & Associates. "My clients don't have the opportunity to hire a major Boston law firm; they just don't have that access," he says.

Guerrier conceptualized and has championed the Suffolk University Black Alumni Network (SUBAN). Recently, he and his wife, Marie, pledged \$100,000, half of which will establish the SUBAN Scholarship Fund—designed for students with an interest in African-American studies and social justice. His efforts also led to the creation of the Suffolk University Celebration of Black Excellence event, which, this year, showcased social equity champions.

Guerrier believes in developing a tradition of hands-on involvement among alumni, and is leading by example. "Giving back means everything to me. Without Suffolk, I would not be here today," Guerrier says. "My teachers became my friends. My administrators became my mentors. I'm hoping to preserve that opportunity for students who will follow me."

To join Ernst Guerrier in contributing to the SUBAN Scholarship Fund, text "suban" to 71-777 or visit: [app.mobilecause.com/vf/SUBAN](http://app.mobilecause.com/vf/SUBAN). **SL**



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION AT SUFFOLK LAW

By Michael Fisch

Against the backdrop of one of the largest national civil rights movements in generations, a seemingly endless list of Black victims of police brutality, the exposure of pandemic-related health disparities, and a resurgence of the white supremacist movement, Suffolk Law is reckoning with systemic racism.

In a letter to Suffolk Law students on June 19, Dean Andrew Perlman wrote the following:

“Today is Juneteenth, a day when we commemorate the end of slavery in the United States. We can use this moment to reflect on how far we still have to go to remedy slavery’s horrific and enduring legacy and to address the profound and deep problem of racial injustice in our country. As a law school, we have a special obligation to

pursue justice, to right wrongs when we see them, and to make an impact, not only in the broader community but in our own as well.

“Too often the burden of seeking change falls on those who have been most disadvantaged by the status quo. This must change. We all have an obligation, especially as future legal professionals, to address injustices where we see them. This is our shared obligation. I look forward to working with all of you in the weeks and months ahead to bring about real, meaningful change, both in our broader communities and within our own.”

### **A new steering committee**

Giving top leaders at the school a key role in recommending practical steps for the institution in these areas has been a priority

for Dean Perlman. This past spring, he launched a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Steering Committee chaired by three academic deans and comprising the faculty chairs of key standing committees.

These academic leaders will work with the existing DEI Faculty Committee and other standing faculty committees to develop proposals for improvement in the areas of curricular change, cultural competency of faculty and students, admissions, recruitment and retention efforts, scholarships, hiring, and more. While many of the outcomes will take more than one academic year to implement, the steering committee has already begun its work, and concrete proposals will be put forward to the faculty for approval and implementation as early as spring 2021.

**Continued on page 24**



# ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) AT SUFFOLK LAW



## RAISING AWARENESS

Expanding our existing antiracism, implicit bias, and LGBTQ+ inclusion **orientation trainings** for new law students and the entire Suffolk community.



## DIVERSITY FROM THE TOP

More than 1/3 of Suffolk Law's 11 deans are people of color and more than 60% are women. Suffolk Law elected its **second Black female Student Bar Association president** in 2020.



## ASSISTANT DEAN OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Appointing a newly created Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to **spearhead DEI initiatives** throughout the Law School.



## 11 CLINICS TO MAKE AN IMPACT

**Expanding access to justice** through our 11 nationally ranked in-house clinics and a **new Transactional Clinic** to support nonprofits and businesses that are committed to **creating economic equity**.



## SUPPORT FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

Supporting first-generation students and students from underrepresented backgrounds through our **First-Generation Law Students organization** and networking opportunities with **first-generation alumni**.



## CLASSES FROM DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES

Expanding our curriculum with new courses that examine **diversity and inclusion** in the legal profession and the law's relation to systemic injustice and inequality; enhancing our existing areas of focus in **Diversity and Social Justice** and **Civil Rights & Human Rights Law**.



## INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

Inspiring diverse and underrepresented high schoolers in law student-coached trial competitions in the **Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Law Program**.



## ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

The Suffolk University Black Alumni Network (SUBAN) serves current and future Black alumni through **mentoring, philanthropy, volunteerism, and events**. The **SUBAN Scholarship Fund** supports Suffolk students with a demonstrated interest in serving under-represented communities.



## DIVERSITY IN HIRING

Making the Law School faculty and staff more diverse by **changing our hiring practices**—minimizing the potential influence of implicit biases and maximizing our efforts to attract and recruit diverse candidates.



## AFFINITY STUDENT GROUPS

**Celebrating a more inclusive community** with over a dozen affinity groups that support students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds through multiple programs: Diversity Week, diversity receptions, anti-racism panels, and an alumni speaker series.



## PEER MENTORS

Growing our **Diversity Peer Mentoring Program** by including more students and new initiatives. Also offering more safe social spaces, professional development workshops, and academic enrichment through the **Student Bar Association's Diversity & Inclusion Committee**.



## HBCU & FIRST-GEN SCHOLARSHIPS

**Providing scholarships** for students from historically Black colleges & universities (HBCUs), as well as for first-generation students from Boston-area colleges.



**Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Cherina D. Wright JD/MBA'17 has been named the first assistant dean of DEI, building on her previous work as director of student engagement and inclusion. In this new role, Wright will provide strategic direction for the Law School's DEI efforts and will work closely with various institutional stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff,

and alumni. Starting this past summer, Wright has been leading all of the deans in monthly town hall meetings with students and faculty to address issues that are on the minds of student leaders of color, with upcoming topics including Suffolk's admissions and scholarship processes.

A recent town hall featured the co-chairs of the faculty curriculum committee. The co-chairs and deans addressed questions about the Suffolk Law curriculum, including how courses are chosen, what is taught in each course, and how faculty are encouraged to intentionally address issues of systemic racism, such as redlining and for-profit prisons.

"When a student asks a faculty leader in a public forum, 'Should a property law class address redlining?' there's a great sense of immediacy and urgency to that question," says Wright. "It's been a great experience for all sides—for the students to have direct access to faculty leaders, to hear their opinions, and for the faculty to hear directly from students. We're having these hard conversations as a community rather than in our siloes, and that's an important first step."

**Building on previous work**

Wright says that the national racial justice protest movement has been important in gaining traction for much broader conversations about race: "More people today are listening and open to talking about difficult DEI issues, but people should know that the Law School's DEI Faculty Committee has been working hard for many years. They've been helping colleagues improve classroom culture, offering suggestions to better integrate DEI matters into law classes, and training faculty on microaggressions and implicit bias."

Wright adds that the Progress to Success: Diversity Peer Mentorship Program has grown exponentially over the last few years to provide a full calendar of programming, ranging from social spaces for students to find community to professional development workshops and academic enrichment.

**A time for action**

This summer's protests compelled both the DEI Faculty Committee and the Student Bar Association to create documents laying out recommendations for change. The Steering Committee will use these two key documents to help drive its work in coming months.

"I want to make public, as I have several times," Dean Perlman says, "that studying proposals won't be enough. The times demand action, and that is my expectation. I'm committed to finding ways to implement as many of the community recommendations as possible. Our school can do better, and we will be a force for change."



**A leading role in the Student Bar Association**

Elected this year as president of Suffolk Law's Student Bar Association (SBA), Dayana Donisca (at left), Class of 2021, is the second Black woman to serve in the role. She has led a critical conversation around DEI. In honor of Juneteenth, she spearheaded an SBA virtual town hall, where professors Renée M. Landers and Karen M. Blum JD'74 and adjunct

professor Judge Michael C. Bolden JD'78 presented on legal and social issues connected with systemic racism. On October 22, Donisca was honored as a racial equity champion by the Suffolk University Black Alumni Network, which highlighted her advocacy work at Suffolk, North Carolina's Queens University of Charlotte, and the AmeriCorps program in Baltimore.

**Rising to a historic moment**

When asked about the DEI work ahead for the Law School, Professor Maurice R. Dyson, co-chair of the Faculty DEI Committee, turned to the words of American artist William Merritt Chase: "Diversity ... is not casual liberal tolerance of anything not yourself. It is not polite accommodation. Instead, diversity is, in action, the sometimes painful awareness that other people, other races, other voices, other habits of mind have as much integrity of being, as much claim on the world as you do."

"As long as we can see ourselves in each other's hopes and ambitions," Dyson says, "and respect each other's equal right to occupy a life with the same dignity that we want for ourselves, then change is possible. I believe we can rise to meet this historic moment with the solemn, sustained commitment it deserves and requires." **SL**



## TRANSACTIONAL LAW MEETS SOCIAL JUSTICE

By Michael Fisch

When you think of the term “transactional law,” perhaps your mind turns to corporate law—someone in a suit drafting contracts, maybe working on a corporate merger.

What you might not think of is a worker-owned cooperative of immigrant women in East Boston producing face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE).

“People don’t necessarily connect transactional law with social justice,” says Clinical Professor Carlos Teuscher, who launched and directs Suffolk’s new Transactional Clinic. “But transactional law can be a transformative tool for our community-based clients. We can help create new economic structures that prioritize community and equity.”

Toward that end, his students work on legal formation, debt and equity financing, general contract drafting and negotiation, and commercial leases, among other work.

After working at two Big Law firms, Linklaters and Dechert, Teuscher brings experience in international finance deals and mergers and acquisitions to a whole new set of clients—one of those being Puntada, the East Boston mask-making cooperative.

Teuscher previously directed Harvard Law School’s Community Enterprise Project. We caught up with him to find out more about Suffolk’s new clinic.

### **Tell us about the work with Puntada.**

Puntada’s worker-owners came together during the COVID-19 pandemic to support themselves and their communities. They decided to form a worker-owned cooperative, meaning that the workers, and not third-party owners, fully own and control the business. The workers produce and sell—or donate, in many cases—face masks and other PPE to support low-income immigrant communities in the Greater Boston area. Their masks have made their way to families in East Boston, Chelsea, Chinatown, Lynn, and Dorchester, as well as to other cities across the U.S.

Working with the cooperative incubator Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity in East Boston, students in the Clinic recently conducted a bilingual workshop with the worker-owners to better understand their legal needs. In addition to learning presentation and other client-based skills, the Clinic students are developing Puntada’s internal legal documents, including a tailored limited liability corporation operating agreement that will set out Puntada’s governance and financial structure.

### **The Clinic is also working with Community Land Trusts (CLTs). What’s the basic idea there?**

A CLT is often a nonprofit corporation that is controlled by members of the community. In many CLTs, the CLT owns land with the

intent to hold the land in perpetuity for affordable housing, among other uses.

In the case of affordable housing, the CLT will often build a home on its land and sell the building only—not the land—to someone of low or moderate income. The land is leased to the building owner, often for 99 years.

This “ground lease” approach is designed to ensure that the nonprofit can hold onto the land—it won’t be sold to developers. But homeowners still gain equity through appreciation of the part they do own—the building.

There’s another big benefit here. As the land value goes up, the buyers in a low-income community aren’t saddled with that high land cost, just the building cost, so homes are more affordable.

There’s less displacement of low-income people, a lot less foreclosure, and affordable housing for generations. Also, because they have the ability to vote for the CLT’s board of directors, long-term residents have more of a say on how the land in their community is used.

### **Tell us about the students’ work on CLTs.**

One of our CLT clients this semester is the Boston Neighborhood Community Land Trust. BNCLT provides affordable housing to many families in Boston’s communities of color that have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

One of our student projects for BNCLT this semester is to develop a form of ground lease so that the CLT can move forward with donations of land from two separate homeowners in Dorchester. The lease contains affordability and other restrictions so that the land is controlled by the community, while still allowing the homeowner to build equity. **SL**

# DEAN PERLMAN HELPS LEAD ACCESS-TO-JUSTICE-EFFORT

By Michael Fisch



Lawyers from around the country came to the American Bar Association (ABA) House of Delegates meeting in Austin, Texas, in February 2020 with a controversial question at hand: Should states be encouraged to consider innovations in the regulation of legal services—alterations specifically designed to expand legal services to more Americans?

“The train is leaving the station. The ABA needs to be on that train,” Suffolk Law Dean Andrew Perlman told Bloomberg Law in an interview before the landmark vote on ABA Resolution 115.

The metaphorical train is the increasing number of states that are adopting innovations designed to address the access-to-justice gap—the large numbers, 80% to 90% in many states, of low- and middle-income Americans who face critical civil legal issues like eviction without a lawyer.

Resolution 115, which passed overwhelmingly, encourages states to try new ways to address the crisis. As one of the resolution’s primary drafters, Perlman, inaugural chair of the ABA Center for Innovation and the former vice chair of the ABA Commission on the Future of Legal Services, played a key role in the effort.

He recently answered some questions about his national advocacy effort.

## What drove the need for the resolution?

We’re falling further and further behind in terms of addressing the public’s civil legal needs. The problem is that traditional solutions over the last several decades, including increased pro bono efforts by lawyers, additional funding for legal aid, and civil Gideon [providing a lawyer as of right to indigent clients in civil matters], have been insufficient.

We need new ideas, and a number of states are trying them. The resolution says: Look at those states, assess what they’re doing, and consider trying some new approaches of your own.

## Did the resolution recommend any specific innovations?

The resolution doesn’t specify what types of solutions states should try, though states are experimenting with a lot of new approaches. For example, some are implementing ways for litigants to resolve their disputes entirely online; others are developing automated tools and forms of assistance for pro se litigants; and still others are adopting streamlined litigation processes.

Some states are also experimenting with new ways to regulate the delivery of legal services, including changes to the unauthorized practice of law, the creation of new categories of legal services providers [the legal equivalent to registered nurse practitioners], and the loosening of restrictions on lawyers’ abilities to partner and share fees with other kinds of professionals. For example, Arizona and Utah recently adopted major reforms in these areas, and other states are considering doing the same.

The resolution does not take a position on these specific innovations. Its intent is to encourage states to experiment with new approaches. Once we assess the data and see what works and doesn’t work, we’ll be in a better position to know which ideas are worth trying more broadly and whether it makes sense to recommend any changes to the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct and other model policies. In other words, the resolution encourages states to be the so-called “laboratories of democracy” when it comes to the access-to-justice crisis.

## Is the passage of the resolution important?

Yes, because it puts the ABA on record as encouraging states to consider innovations, including regulatory innovations, in the delivery of legal services at a time when many states have started to consider and implement such changes. With the weight of the ABA behind the idea, more states are likely to follow suit. And, most importantly, my hope is that we will see fresh ideas about how we can best serve the public’s unmet legal needs. **SL**

# SUFFOLK LAW LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE HYBRID ONLINE JD PROGRAM

By Michael Fisch

The Law School has launched a pioneering new Hybrid Online JD Program (HJD), the first in the country to offer full- and part-time students a traditional in-person first-year classroom experience followed by the option of taking all remaining classes online.

We spoke to Professor Gabe Teninbaum JD'05, who will oversee day-to-day operations of the program in his role as the Law School's assistant dean for innovation, strategic initiatives, and distance education. Teninbaum brings a deep background to the position. In 2017, the *ABA Journal* called him "perhaps the most tech-savvy law professor in the country," and since 2015 he has led the Law School's Legal Innovation & Technology Concentration.

**Suffolk is taking a new approach with this program: first year on campus, followed by as much remote learning as a student wants in the following years. Why structure the program this way?**

By enrolling in the same first-year courses as everyone else, HJD students will develop close connections with classmates and faculty. They'll get to experience those hallmarks of 1L year, from getting cold-called in Contracts class to participating in oral arguments in Legal Practice Skills. But then, as upper-level students, they'll have flexibility to live and work where they want during the remainder of law school.

Many students have good reasons for needing to live outside of the Boston area, whether being closer to family or a job, or living in a less expensive region. These are legitimate reasons that might otherwise prevent a person from attending law school. We're going to make it easier for these people to succeed by requiring them to be on campus for only one year.

In 1906, [Suffolk Law founder] Gleason Archer started teaching small law classes in his home for working-class people and immigrants who worked during the day and attended law school at night. Archer found a way to help people overcome obstacles by offering them the opportunity

to attend law school at a flexible time. We're now leveraging technology to offer students the opportunity to attend most of law school at a flexible location. We're basically updating Archer's original vision for the 21st century.

**Once students go remote, will they be able to do moot courts, the *Law Review*, and other activities?**

Absolutely. HJD students are full members of the community. They'll have access to all of it: extracurricular activities and support services, including student groups, law journals, bar prep classes, academic support, alumni networking programs, and career services. Also, they're welcome to be physically on campus any time they want, just like any other student. They'll have the additional option to take their classes, access services, and engage in extracurriculars remotely.

**Was the hybrid approach brought on by the pandemic?**

No. Many years before the pandemic, we started to see a trend toward online work and collaboration in the legal field. There's no doubt that COVID-19 is accelerating that trend, but we were ahead of this curve and have been planning this program for some time.

These days, if you aren't comfortable in a remote environment, you'll be at a disadvantage in the workplace. Our HJD students will be at ease engaging in significant work remotely and using the technologies needed to do it. This will give them an advantage in a changing marketplace.

**How big is the program expected to be? And what kind of student are you looking for?**

We'll have small cohorts of no more than 25 new HJD students per year, and those students will have certain qualities they share. They'll be the innovators, the first-adopters. In this unprecedented time, that's a good person to be. **SL**



# Empathy and Rehabilitation

Suffolk Law community helps forge new path for the courts

By Tom Mashberg with reporting from Michael Fisch

NO JUSTICE  
NO PEACE



Photographs from left: Cooper Baumgartner, Roberto Valdivia, Adobe (4), Tim Arterbury, Adobe, Clay Banks, Jon Tyson

**I**n his early years as a prosecutor in Suffolk County, Michael V. Glennon JD'10 says he struggled with how to help juvenile offenders.

“We were developing their criminal records but not doing the work needed to support them and keep them out of the system in the long term,” says Glennon, chief of the Juvenile Unit at the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office. “Or we’d lean on a program we were familiar with rather than calibrating to that particular youth’s needs. So the outcomes we were getting for moderate- and high-risk youth were all wrong.”

Glennon joined forces with another Suffolk Law alum, University Trustee Daniel F. Conley JD'83, who as Suffolk County’s district attorney from 2002 until 2018 created reforms like the 2017 Juvenile Alternative Resolution (JAR) Program. Glennon developed JAR and now oversees it as part of the Juvenile Unit.

Their goal was to increase public safety, while at the same time reducing youth involvement with the courts—and the lifelong barriers that ensue with a criminal record. That meant creating plans for services and interventions outside of the court system and appropriate to the specific offender.

Glennon is naturally bullish on the effort, calling it “one of the most important things I’ll do in my career,” and now he has hard data behind him.

Early statistics from the Juvenile Justice and Policy Data Board in Massachusetts, as well as a large body of national research, show that youths who have taken part in diversion programs are less likely to reoffend than those who are formally processed through the juvenile courts.

And according to the state’s Juvenile Justice Reform Coalition, each dollar spent on diversion produces benefits of \$10.60 to \$25.60 for the community.

## **Just one aspect of reform**

Juvenile diversion is one of a number of criminal justice reform measures that have emerged locally and nationally in recent years, many of them spearheaded by Suffolk Law alumni.

Reform is, of course, an elastic and amorphous term. But in the arena of court reforms, Suffolk Law experts say, it includes model initiatives like the expansion of both juvenile and adult diversion programs; specialty courts that focus on drug addiction, homelessness, veterans' issues, and mental health; major changes in bail laws; wider access to remote judicial hearings; greater use of prosecutorial discretion; and reducing jail populations, especially in the age of COVID-19.

A vital aspect of the reform movement is its tight focus on data and independent validation, so that skeptics can see if new approaches are objectively effective. One way to get the data is to offer more juveniles diversion programs. Nicole Siino JD'18, a graduate of Suffolk's Legal Innovation & Technology Concentration, has developed a tool that helps achieve that goal (see page 5).

While early results have been positive, more data is needed to learn whether the reforms championed by Suffolk-connected experts will pay long-term dividends in rehabilitation and public safety.

## **A Suffolk grad's pivotal role**

One Massachusetts legislator and Suffolk Law graduate instrumental in passing the state's landmark criminal justice reform legislation of 2018 is Rep. Claire D. Cronin JD'85 of the 11th Plymouth District, House chair of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, and the first woman to serve in that role. She was a primary author of the bill and oversaw the bipartisan conference committee negotiations that got it to the governor's desk.

The law affects people of all ages who become ensnared in the legal system. Provisions include upping the age when youths can enter the court system from 7 to 12; removing restrictions on diversion programs to keep

teenage first-offenders out of prison; allowing some criminal records for 18- to 21-year-olds to be expunged; ending mandatory minimum sentences for low-level drug crimes; and setting up a medical-release program for terminally ill and elderly inmates.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, 65% of inmates in American jails have not been convicted of the offense they are charged with. They are awaiting court action but cannot afford what are often onerous or punitive fees and bail amounts. Those situations, research shows, lead to a higher rate of future offenses.

A centerpiece of the Massachusetts legislation is its bail reform measures, which require that judges, in setting bail, take into account a person's financial resources and allow fees and fines to be waived for financial hardship. Judges must also justify in writing instances in which bail is set so high that it prevents someone's release.

Cronin says she was especially gratified that her efforts had strong bipartisan support. "We've seen justice reform become a bipartisan issue around the country," she says. "That's because research and data show these reforms reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and save money."

## **Improving prosecutorial discretion**

Christina E. Miller, who runs the Law School's Prosecutor Program and served as the Chief of District Courts and Community Prosecutions at the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, has long focused on the complex matter of prosecutorial discretion. She spent years managing the hiring and training of assistant district attorneys at a time when efforts to have prosecutors treat lower-level legal and criminal matters more holistically took hold as a reform priority.

"Every day an ADA makes from 30 to 100 discretionary decisions," she says. "There are charging and sentencing recommendations, financial penalties, bail amounts, and so on." For decades, some prosecutors focused on using those decisions to drive guilty pleas.

But a new generation of progressive DAs in Massachusetts are rejecting that mindset and embracing reforms.

"What I've seen that is really encouraging is that options are growing," Miller says. "Things like pre- and post-trial arraignments, diversions and alternative sentencing options, and the assigning of cases to specialty courts that are 'pre-adjudication,' so an individual is held responsible and is granted support without the need for a guilty finding."

Miller is working on increasing such options as co-chair of the Massachusetts Trial Court's Boston Community Justice Task Force, a group charged with increasing diversion, especially in the areas of mental health and substance abuse.

## **A new pre-sentencing approach for substance abusers**

Rachelle Steinberg JD'00, MSCJ'03, assistant deputy superintendent with the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office, says that the justice system is starting to see substance abuse as a problem that doesn't lend itself to simply leaving a person in jail. Public safety outcomes for the community are better and less expensive when people get needed medical, mental health, and substance-abuse treatment and learn some life and vocational skills, she says.

Steinberg oversees the Opioid and Addiction Services Inside South Bay program, or OASIS, which launched in 2018. The program focuses on intensive substance-abuse treatment and discharge-planning services for male pretrial offenders.

The men remanded to the unit, about 30 at any given time, aren't free to leave, but haven't been sentenced either, giving them a chance to turn their lives around through comprehensive substance-abuse counseling, mentorship and support from peers in the program, and other Sheriff's Department offerings.

Most of the participants create individualized reentry plans with OASIS staff that are coordinated with local service agencies and include detailed program and treatment steps.



When judges decide that such a plan seems reasonable and in keeping with the nature of the crime, offenders may be released on probation or to a residential treatment program, or both, with strict guidelines.

Correctional facilities like Suffolk County's are "managing a difficult challenge, as we have become de facto mental health and substance-abuse treatment facilities," she says. "Our goal is to have someone walk out of our facilities, and the OASIS program, more equipped than when they came in. To do that, we offer evidence-based treatment and services that are gender-specific and trauma-informed."

Charu Verma JD'11, a staff attorney at the Committee for Public Counsel Services (the public defender's office) and co-chair of the Massachusetts Bar Association Criminal Justice Section Council, concurs with Steinberg's root-causes approach.

"I think today there's more attention being paid to the science of substance abuse and mental health disorders, and how those intersect with criminal behavior," she says. "The science leads you to spending more money up front before people are caught up in the justice system—more money for treatment beds, transitional housing, social workers, diversion programs, specialty courts."

As enhanced data is collected about the savings accrued by treating the causes of criminal behavior as well as the positive public safety outcomes of keeping communities whole, she says, the state's budgeting priorities will start to change—and that's when criminal justice reform efforts will really begin to take hold. "Now," she says, "when hearts and minds are in the right places, we lack the resources."

### **Incarceration numbers**

Former DA Conley says Massachusetts prosecutors are more likely to embrace changes that would be politically anathema in more prison-oriented states. Prisoner numbers at the Suffolk County House of Corrections, for example, fell from around 1,000 when he took office to 500 in 2018.

"I think we have always been more advanced on justice reform," he says, noting a wealth of data showing that "over the years our rates of incarceration have declined—and, remarkably, crime was going down as jail populations were going down."

Anthony Benedetti JD'93, chief counsel for the Committee for Public Counsel Services, agrees that the state has made progress, especially with juvenile justice, probation practices, and bail reform. However, he cautions that "the state's incarceration rates are still astronomical compared to Europe."

"All of us who work in the system, including defenders, prosecutors, and judges, need to take responsibility for creating a fairer and more effective legal system," he says.

### **A judge takes the long view**

Judge Serge Georges, Jr. JD'96, nominee (at press time) for the Supreme Judicial Court and long-time teacher at Suffolk Law, grew up in Dorchester and ran the Municipal Drug Court there from 2014 to 2018. In the end, reliable financing for the specialty court system and its affiliated diversion programs is key to success, he says.

Georges has been praised by the Massachusetts Bar Association and *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*, among others, for showing extraordinary compassion to low-level offenders—urging them to embrace diversionary programs and assisting them in staying off the courtroom to prison-cell conveyor belt.

"An appropriately staffed drug court is worth doing," he says. "Otherwise it can be a waste of time. You need a clinician, a probation officer, the commitment of the DA's office, a defense attorney, and long-term treatment beds all in place to make it work."

Georges points to the drug courts, a major catch-basin for people who are headed for a life of crime. "It's a shame courts may be the only way a person can get help," he said.

In the end, criminal justice reform is as much about empathy and rehabilitation as it is about data and funding.

Benedetti asks, "If we cannot end the cradle-to-prison pipeline in Massachusetts, what hope does the rest of the country have?"

One answer to that question may lie within the pockets of the Massachusetts justice system that are finding practical ways to maintain public safety while giving some offenders a shot at redemption. **SL**

***"We've seen justice reform become a bipartisan issue around the country. That's because research and data show these reforms reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and save money."***

- Rep. Claire D. Cronin JD'85



# SUFFOLK LAW RESPONDS TO THE HOUSING CRISIS

*Tackling discrimination and  
affordable housing head on*

*By Michael Fisch with reporting from Mark Potts  
Photography by Michael J. Clarke*



## STUDY FINDS DISCRIMINATION PERVADES GREATER BOSTON'S RENTAL MARKET

When Aisha inquired about an apartment in Boston recently, the listing agent said he wasn't sure when he planned to show the unit, asked Aisha for her credit score, and told her to text her number so he could call the next day. The listing agent didn't follow up, so Aisha tried him again. The agent rushed her off the phone, saying, "You gotta stop calling me." She never heard from the agent again.

But when another young woman, Meredith, called about the same apartment, the agent immediately offered her a tour, confirmed it by text, and didn't ask for her credit score.

Why the difference?

Aisha and Meredith are race-associated names chosen quite purposefully by Suffolk Law's Housing Discrimination Testing Program (HDTP) as part of a study in which undercover testers interacted with rental agents or landlords of 50 randomly selected rental properties in Greater Boston from August 2018 to July 2019.

This summer, the HDTP's findings were compiled in a study co-authored by the Analysis Group and funded by The Boston Foundation.

### Highlights from the findings

Overall, Black testers faced discrimination in 71% of the tests, including issues like not being able to make an appointment, not being offered the discounts or free parking offered to white testers, and not being offered an application. Agents showed Black testers about half the number of apartments shown to white testers and were far less likely to return Black testers' calls—just 62% of the time versus 92% for white testers.

And for people using a Section 8 voucher, which helps low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities afford rental housing in the private market, the chances of even touring an apartment were few and far between.

Nearly 90% of testers who indicated they were using a voucher faced discrimination, regardless of their race. In a number of cases, the brokers told the testers outright that the owner was not accepting voucher participants.

Both state and federal law prohibit housing discrimination based on race and source of income, among other reasons, so the findings suggest both pervasive discrimination and unlawful conduct. The

HDTP's rigorously designed testing program began in 2012 and has resulted in multiple enforcement actions by state agencies.

### City signs agreement with Suffolk

The most recent findings were so compelling that they prompted immediate calls for change.

A few days after the study was released on July 1, 2020, industry publication *Banker & Tradesman* called on the state's Attorney General's Office to convene a task force to address the housing discrimination problem.

"No serious person can tell themselves that these results were the product of shoddy study design," the publication wrote. "To make sure no other factor could influence the broker's actions, the listings in each test were randomly chosen, testers did not know each other, participated in only one test each, and, in each test, had the same income, credit score, sex, disability, family size, and gender identity."

Boston City Councilor Matt O'Malley, who referenced the study on NBC 10, was just one of several councilors who took to local media this summer to decry widespread housing discrimination in the city and to announce a formal council hearing on the HDTP's findings.

At that hearing on October 13, Suffolk Law Professor William Berman, director of the HDTP, laid out the study's conclusions. William Onuoha, director of Boston's Office of Fair Housing & Equity (OFHE), then announced that the OFHE had signed an agreement with Suffolk Law to fund a new discrimination testing coordinator position, housed at Suffolk. The new hire will be part of the HDTP and will run a comprehensive undercover testing program across Boston.

### A commitment to enforcement

Spurred by Suffolk's data, Onuoha announced that the OFHE will file agency-initiated enforcement actions against agents and landlords found to be discriminating. "This is particularly important, because the responsibility of fighting housing discrimination shouldn't only fall on victims," says Jamie Langowski, assistant director of the HDTP.

"Imagine you're rushing to find a place to live for your family, addressing your work responsibilities, and then you add on a layer of trying to convince a lawyer to take on a housing discrimination case," says Langowski. "It's hard for anyone in that set of circumstances to make a legal case a priority." And people often don't

know they are being discriminated against, she adds.

Discipline of rental agents who discriminate is rare, and the state legislature should make it easier to suspend offending brokers, Langowski argues. Toward that end, the HDTP is regularly convening fair housing stakeholders from nonprofits, the government, and academia to push for changes in enforcement, punishment, broker training, and the legal processes for acquiring fair housing.

With a strong commitment for legal enforcement from the City, more instances of housing discrimination will be challenged and stopped, she says.

### **How does housing discrimination testing work?**

Seventy-one Suffolk Law students served among 200 testers posing as interested renters. Pairs of testers, equal except for the characteristic they were testing for, started the process by calling the advertisers of 50 randomly selected rentals in nine Greater Boston cities and 11 Boston neighborhoods. White testers were assigned names such as Brad and Anne, and Black testers were assigned names like Latonya and Jermaine. The testers recorded their experiences in meticulously structured reports.

For example, in one test, “Lakisha,” a Black tester and a Suffolk Law student, met with an agent to view an apartment. He did not offer her a rental application and did not mention any additional, unadvertised units.

However, when “Allison,” a white tester and also a Suffolk Law student, met with the same agent, he offered her a rental application before she even entered the apartment, and told her after the viewing that he wanted to show her an additional unit. He went on to explain “they don’t advertise that apartment because then they would have to respond to everyone who inquires” and they were looking for “people with quiet lifestyles who work, not CEOs necessarily, but people with good jobs.” He invited Allison to join “a select group” that would tour the unadvertised unit the following day.

### **A “hollow” promise**

“The promise of the Section 8 program is a hollow one if a voucher holder is turned away from renting a property nine out of 10 times just because they are trying to use a voucher—and this in a state where this kind of discrimination is explicitly illegal. A person can’t hope to use a voucher for upward mobility under these conditions,” Professor Berman says.

“Housing is the most basic of necessities,” he adds. “Where you live impacts your health, your access to education, and economic opportunities. The fact that such a high level of race discrimination exists in our community is a disgrace and acts as a barrier to opportunity that must be removed.”

## **ADDRESSING THE AFFORDABILITY CRISIS**

A separate but related problem for those who seek affordable housing is that there simply isn’t an adequate supply, says Suffolk Law Professor John Infranca, a housing and land-use expert.

In Massachusetts, and across the country, neighborhood activists in lower-income and working-class communities and residents of wealthy towns are both fighting against the development of new and dense multi-unit housing, says Infranca.

When it comes to these large apartment complexes, residents of wealthy towns often point to concerns about traffic and contend that schools and town services will be overburdened. While in some cases these concerns may have merit, they also reflect a longstanding tradition of NIMBYism (not-in-my-backyard), Infranca says, and sometimes personal prejudice. Some people, he says, won’t admit that prejudice against Black renters and voucher holders is a key reason why they stand against multi-story developments with affordable housing. But, as the recent HDTP study makes clear, racial prejudice remains alive and well.

Meanwhile, anti-gentrification activists in blue-collar towns argue that new housing

complexes will increase housing prices, alter neighborhood demographics, and displace current residents.

Infranca set out to better understand the fiery opposition in the Bay State, and across the country, to proposed changes in zoning laws, the substance of new laws that have passed in certain states, and a potential route forward. He is focusing his scholarship on related issues.

In November 2019, he organized a two-day national roundtable where leading academics, policy makers, and advocates from across the country discussed recent housing and zoning reform efforts. Speakers directly involved with reforms in California, Oregon, and elsewhere discussed lessons learned and potential roads forward in Massachusetts and beyond.

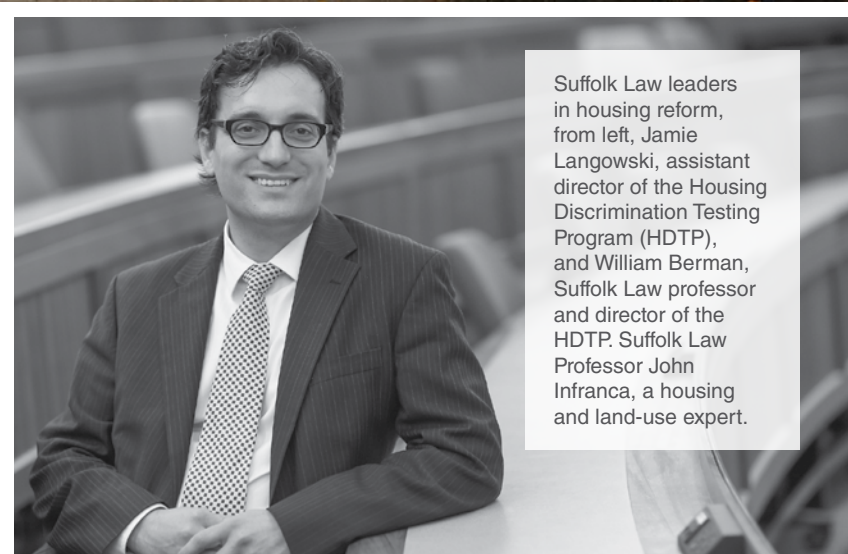
Last spring, he learned he was among just 16 professors to receive one of the country’s top legal academic honors for junior faculty, an invitation to present his research at the Stanford/Harvard/Yale Junior Faculty Forum. His paper, “Differentiating Exclusionary Tendencies,” is forthcoming in the *Florida Law Review*.

### **Build it or not, they will come**

The version of gentrification that has solidified in popular culture, usually including images of hipsters sipping lattes, suggests certain truths, Infranca says, but his research points to a different conclusion than that of many anti-gentrification activists. He contends that gentrification is largely caused by demand—not new supply.

People who can’t afford to live in Boston’s South End or Jamaica Plain, for example, will move into less expensive neighborhoods in Roxbury and Hyde Park whether developers build new housing or not, he argues. If no new housing stock is available, that means more competition for existing units, housing prices rise even more rapidly, and there’s even more displacement.

Infranca points to a study by Lance Freeman, a Columbia University affordable housing and urban planning expert, which shows that people in gentrifying



Suffolk Law leaders in housing reform, from left, Jamie Langowski, assistant director of the Housing Discrimination Testing Program (HDTP), and William Berman, Suffolk Law professor and director of the HDTP. Suffolk Law Professor John Infranca, a housing and land-use expert.



neighborhoods don't move out of their apartments more often than people do in persistently poor neighborhoods.

Regardless of their neighborhood, low-income individuals tend to move a lot, Infranca says. "What's different is who moves in when people move out, and in gentrifying neighborhoods it tends to be more affluent, oftentimes white residents moving in. So, if all that is true, new housing supply by itself is not going to lead to higher levels of displacement."

Instead, he argues, new housing supply should help keep housing prices from skyrocketing.

If we fail to increase the pace of new development, we risk moving in the direction of the San Francisco area, he warns, noting the images many have seen on television. In Palo Alto, California, in the heart of Silicon Valley, news crews document battered RVs and scruffy cars lining the main road next to Stanford University, makeshift living places for workers who can't afford the area's hyper-expensive housing.

Greater Boston, facing its own affordable housing crisis, has significant parallels with the San Francisco area, he says. Both have limited new development—even as their technology, health, and other hot job markets continue to attract affluent workers willing and able to pay top dollar for rent or home ownership.

"That combination has resulted in massive housing price increases and evictions. The status quo of too much demand and too little new housing supply is not going to work, and we've seen it play out. It's clear we need to figure out some creative approaches."

### Looking to the future

In many cases, Infranca says, longstanding zoning laws effectively limit the construction of new housing. Suburban towns, for instance, with zoning that mandates single-family homes on sizable lots, make it difficult, if not impossible, for new, denser housing to be built that might increase affordability. That in turn limits opportunities for new residents to move into those communities—and often exacerbates existing discrimination against people of color.

In Oregon, a recent state law requires cities with more than 10,000 people to allow duplexes in areas zoned for single-family homes, a concept called upzoning. In California, there's a movement to upzone across the state, Infranca says.

Such state upzoning measures—some of which prohibit exclusively single-family zoning and others that would permit denser, multi-family housing near transit hubs—are worth considering, he argues, but controversial. Efforts along these lines have found limited traction in Massachusetts.

### Should low-income communities have greater say regarding development?

In his paper, Infranca examines whether low-income neighborhoods should have a greater degree of control over new development than very affluent communities do.

There are a few critical reasons to consider doing that, he argues, including the historical injustices faced by these neighborhoods: redlining, discrimination, and disinvestment. Additionally, low-income communities generally have a high proportion of renters. The time commitment and costs of finding a new affordable rental is harder to bear for a lower-income person than for someone who is higher income, he says.

Infranca also points to Suffolk's recent rental housing discrimination study, which uncovers additional obstacles faced by voucher-holders and Black renters.

He concludes that treating certain neighborhoods differently than others makes sense as a way to target a narrow subset of gentrification concerns, including the claims of long-term residents to a stake in their neighborhoods. Infranca also suggests coming up with new ways to grant long-term residents of low-income communities a financial interest in development.

One option, his paper argues, would grant property owners and long-term tenants development rights they could sell to a nearby property. This would permit the purchaser to build a higher-density development, while giving residents a financial stake and some degree of control over new development in their community.

### An industry perspective

Dean's Cabinet member Jeffrey R. Drago JD'04, a partner at Drago & Toscano, a Boston zoning/permitting law firm that represents developers seeking to build large and small residential and commercial buildings, agrees with Infranca that higher-density development is part of the solution.

"In many cases we go out to start community processes in a neighborhood and folks will say it's too dense or too high or not enough parking. However, if you want to address affordability, you need to allow for larger-scale development," he says. "Then the municipalities can ask the developers for more affordable units in return. With a greater supply, the demand will also go down."

HYM Investments LLC, founded by Boston developer Tom O'Brien JD'93, is overseeing the redevelopment of East Boston's Suffolk Downs. The project increased the required 13% affordable housing to 20%—the highest feasible amount, according to O'Brien.

"We have two options: we can build a development that includes up to 20% of affordable housing or we cannot build the project at all—it's a pretty stark choice, unfortunately," he says. "We need a national initiative to go and build more housing and make that housing affordable to more people."

New affordable units are important, but equally important is equity, says HDTP director William Berman. He has been surprised by the vehemence of opposition to affordable housing in Massachusetts, and the veiled and not so veiled suggestions of race and class that go along with that: "That vehemence comes with a significant cost to the community, in that economically we can't promote growth if we don't have access to affordable housing." **SL**

# WALK IN MY SHOES:

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A BLACK WOMAN ATTORNEY

*Danielle Johnson's essay is reprinted with the permission of the Boston Bar Journal, where it appeared on May 28, 2020. She is a staff attorney at Greater Boston Legal Services, where her practice focuses on elder housing and disability benefits.*

*By Danielle Johnson JD'16*

If you approach the steps of the Edward Brooke Courthouse (named after the first African American elected to the U.S. Senate post Reconstruction) around 8:45 a.m. on a Thursday morning—colloquially known as “Eviction Thursday” in Boston—there is a seemingly endless line of people, mostly in street clothes, waiting anxiously to get through the security screening. I approach, dressed in a suit and dress shoes with my hair neatly dreadlocked. I walk quickly past the lines of waiting litigants with my bar card and driver’s license in hand. I am a young African American woman and I am an attorney. In court, I am both an anomaly and a chameleon, depending on whom I encounter.

### THE COURT: THE TALE OF TWO LINES

The familiar discomfort starts outside the courthouse. To get through the door of the courthouse to the Eastern Housing Court sessions on the fifth floor, I must walk past the long lines of fellow people of color waiting to submit themselves to the security screening—which often includes an electronic pat-down—before being allowed in the building. It is my weekly routine to swallow the discomfort of the two lines; one short line for predominantly white attorneys and another longer line for the litigants, including my clients, predominantly people of color. I present my bar card and

driver’s license, and after close inspection—notably which are not scrutinized for my white colleagues, who flash their cards and proceed before me—I am allowed to pass the first test and enter the foyer of the marbled courthouse.

Inside, the courthouse is buzzing, and the clamor of chatter and movements echo throughout the hallways. I make my way up to the fifth floor for the call of the lists. Exiting the elevator, the scene that awaits can overwhelm an unsuspecting person, but it is business as usual for Eviction Thursday. The two “Attorney of the Day” tables are set up to provide quick legal advice, one for pro se landlords and the other for pro se tenants. The area is so crammed with people that one cannot see the Attorneys of the Day. This is not surprising given that in 2019 alone, 39,600 households faced eviction in Massachusetts. Of these, 92% of the tenants were unrepresented; in contrast, more than 70% of landlords were represented.

At the Attorney of the Day table for tenants, I flip through the dockets and see the usual massive number of new eviction cases—about 150 in total—and 55 motion hearings on the two lists. The day will be long. I brace myself for the ongoing series of tests that I will face, each of which will demand that I prove who I am, making Eviction Thursday an even more exhausting day.

**Continued on page 40**





# “IN COURT, I AM BOTH AN ANOMALY AND A CHAMELEON, DEPENDING ON WHOM I ENCOUNTER.”

## THE CLIENT: “YOU’RE MY LAWYER?”

Finding my client among the sea of black and brown faces who are anxiously searching for answers from anyone who might be willing to listen is doable if I have previously met the tenant. Today is not that day. Working in legal aid, where there is a mismatch between high demand and limited resources, I often walk through the hall shouting out names of clients I will meet for the first time in court. When my first call does not yield a response, I call again. Success! I formally introduce myself to the client and field the expected question: “You’re the attorney I spoke with?” Surprise mixed with suspicion registers on my client’s face. For my clients, it is my youth that is concerning. I am used to this look of doubt as an attorney who practices exclusively with elders; this is my second test of the day. It is the unspoken challenge to my legitimacy raised by my appearance. I deflect their anxiety with humor using stereotypical images of attorneys common to their generation: “I must look adolescent, not the Matlock or Perry Mason you were expecting?” To get past the awkwardness, I direct my client’s attention to the goal for the day and what to expect in the courtroom. But sometimes this is not sufficient assurance. I confidently explain to my client that this is “not my first rodeo,” and hope that I have gained their trust. I leave them to their thoughts and move on to find opposing counsel.

## THE BENCH AND THE BAR

Housing courts tend to have their usual players, so locating a specific attorney is not often difficult. Again, today is not that day. Like a chameleon, I pass unnoticed through the tenants crowding the halls while waiting anxiously for the courtrooms to open, and quickly scan each white individual in a suit. In the courtroom, shades of brown dominate, speckled here and there by clusters of ivory. I am not the only person of color, or the only woman, or the only person of modest economic means. Even so, there is a clear dichotomy: The majority of the tenants are minorities while the majority of attorneys are white and male. Then there is me.

As the list is called, the attorneys jockey for seats in the jury box. In that segregated space, protected against the huddled masses packed into the courtroom, the color scheme flips; today, I am the only grain of pepper in a sea of salt. I sigh, recalling the day the court officer singled me out: “Hey, you can’t sit there. You a lawyer?” Moving past colleagues to an empty seat, I speculate that they are wondering: “Does she know this section is for attorneys?”

This is the daily reality of what it means to be an attorney of color in Massachusetts, navigating unwritten tests to prove that I exist, I am qualified, and that I belong.

Once the call of the lists begins, the doors to the standing-room-only courtrooms are shut. Any defendant not present in the correct courtroom for the call will be defaulted. Most tenants who answer are visibly anxious. Once referred to court mediation on the third floor, some will go over agreements with a housing specialist, but most will be diverted to sign, without the benefit of a hearing or trial, the pre-drafted form agreement for judgment offered by the landlord’s attorney. This is accomplished quickly in the hallway, often with no understanding on the part of the tenants of the document they have signed, including the waiver of their right to request a stay, seek reconsideration, or pursue an appeal. Instead, they blindly focus on the quickest option that allows them to remain in their home and escape the stress of being in court.

My client, who was previously pro se, had signed such an agreement for judgment with the landlord. The slightest breach of any of its conditions, including all incorporated lease terms, is deemed material and could trigger an execution for possession—and the agreement waived all stays of execution. But today, there will be no execution for possession. Today, I have prevailed in negotiating an amendment to the “sword of Damocles” agreement, and substituted a sustainable repayment plan with sufficient time to access third-party rental assistance through the Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) program for the onerous agreement for judgment. I also connected the elderly client to the court’s Tenancy Preservation Program (TPP). I am the most pleased with my success in changing the basis for the eviction from “fault” to “no-fault,” thereby protecting my client from mandatory termination of their Section 8 housing choice voucher.

I have passed today’s last test. I achieved a successful outcome. I demonstrated my competence to my client and proved my negotiation skills to an opposing counsel with whom I had not worked in the past.

## LEGAL AID AND THE MASSACHUSETTS BAR

Back at my office at Greater Boston Legal Services, my shoulders relax. Here, I am not burdened by expectations to

conform to the culture and hierarchy of a Boston law firm. I am not oppressed by inadvertent stereotyping nor subject to daily microaggressions that would stunt any lawyer's professional growth. Notwithstanding, my dominant experience navigating my chosen profession is one of alienation, exclusion, and discomfort—the price that I pay under the “invisible labor clause” for being a Black woman legal aid attorney in Massachusetts, serving the poorest people in Boston who are predominantly people of color, like me.

In my career, I have experienced racism, gender discrimination, and elitism. My experience is not unique. Throughout the Commonwealth, attorneys of color are called upon to prove their qualifications daily, to colleagues, clients, court personnel, and even clerks and judges.

The 2019 demographic survey conducted by the Supreme Judicial Court, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers, revealed that out of 22,743 participating attorneys, 20,043 (86%) identified as white, and only 494 (2%) identified as Black or African American, 519 (2%) as Hispanic or Latinx, and 574 (2%) as Asian. These numbers make clear what my experience has proven—there is a gross lack of minority representation in the Massachusetts bar.

This is not a “woe is me” story. It is a call to action for cultural diversity in law firms and legal organizations and, more importantly, for reflection on and recognition of each of our implicit biases. My day is over, but these challenges will repeat tomorrow and next week and every month thereafter with a new list of scared, mostly poor, minority tenants, assembled in lines to enter a courthouse named for the first African American attorney general of Massachusetts, all in effort to get “justice.” We should do better. We can do better. **SL**

## HONORING THE MEMORY OF A RISING STAR IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**The Sarita and Claire Wright Lucas Foundation strives for diversity in the law**

*By Kara Baskin and Janet Parkinson*



In her memory, Lucas' mother, Wanda Geer, established the Sarita and Claire Wright Lucas Foundation (SCWLF) in 2015 to support other Black women who want to pursue careers as prosecutors—a step toward making those demographics more representative of the U.S. population.

“There are very few women prosecutors—and very few women of color who are prosecutors. Our goal is diversity in the law to create a more equitable criminal justice system,” Geer says.

To that end, the SCWLF grants \$5,000 scholarships to Black female law students to cover the cost of preparing for and taking the bar exam in four states. “If you go into private practice, usually the firm will cover many of these costs, if not all of the cost—but people who want to go into public service are on their own financially,” Geer says.

A second \$5,000 employment incentive is available if recipients become prosecutors. In its first five years, the SCWLF has granted scholarships to 11 Black women.

Although the foundation has focused on the Mid-Atlantic region, it will launch a paid summer internship program in 2021 with the Suffolk and Middlesex County District Attorneys' Offices, with preference given to Suffolk Law students.

“Sarita wanted to make a difference in the justice system, as a woman of color, for victims. She was really just so passionate about it. We wanted to honor that,” Geer says. **SL**

Elected prosecutors in the United States are overwhelmingly white and male, according to the 2019 Reflective Democracy Campaign. Only 3% are men of color; and while 24% are female, just 2% are women of color.

As a Black assistant district attorney Sarita Wright Lucas JD'08 didn't let those demographics constrain her. At Suffolk Law, Lucas interned at a corporate law firm but found her calling as a prosecutor after an internship in Boston Municipal Court. She became deputy attorney general with the Delaware Department of Justice in Wilmington, Delaware, which is ranked one of the most violent U.S. cities on a per-capita basis. A rising star, Lucas took more felony cases to trial in 2013 than any other prosecutor. She was named head of the Wilmington Trial Unit in 2014, becoming one of the youngest attorneys to head a criminal unit, trying homicides, assaults, and other violent crimes.

Tragically, she died that same year of pregnancy-related complications.

## DEAN'S CABINET

COMMITTED ALUMNI INVEST IN  
THE FUTURE OF SUFFOLK LAW



### JACQUELINE L. PERCZEK JD'94

“Someone once wrote that the price of leadership in academia is to forge the path forward and await the judgment of the future. Dean Perlman is not waiting for the future. The future is now! An innovator and trailblazer, Dean Perlman’s global vision has taken our law school to the next level of excellence. Suffolk Law enjoys enviable national rankings in various categories, we have a spectacular faculty, and our school is defining the path forward. I made a gift to the school because I want to advance the mission of our leadership and honor the mission of our founders—to pass on a gift when we can, and to help widen the path to education.”

## DEAN'S CABINET GROWS TO 45 MEMBERS

The Dean’s Cabinet now has 45 members, each of whom has committed at least \$50,000 to support the Law School’s programs and students. Members meet with the dean twice per year to receive updates about Suffolk Law, offer strategic advice about the Law School’s direction, and engage with their accomplished fellow members.

Two new members share what inspired them to join.



### CARL P. GROSS JD'71

“I had Sargent for Torts, Lemelman for Property and Taxation, and Judge for Contracts. They inspired me, and I credit a lot of my success to them and Suffolk Law as a whole. Dean Perlman visited [my family]—I was impressed with him and his vision. His assurances to me that the Suffolk mission would not be altered convinced me to up my game financially.”

## SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL DEAN'S CABINET MEMBERS

### **Patricia M. Annino JD'81**

*Partner*  
Rimon Law  
Boston, MA

### **Joy L. Backer JD'15**

*Associate*  
Fish & Richardson PC  
Boston, MA

### **Todd L. Boudreau JD'98**

*Partner*  
Morrison & Foerster, LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Alexander A. Bove, Jr. JD'67**

*Partner*  
Bove & Langa P.C.  
Boston, MA

### **Brian T. Brandt JD'96**

*Managing Director*  
SCS Financial LLC  
Boston, MA

### **Claudine A. Cloutier JD'95**

*Partner*  
Keches Law Group, PC  
Taunton, MA

### **Barry C. Cosgrove JD'85**

*Chairman & CEO*  
Blackmore Partners, LLC  
Laguna Beach, CA

### **Gerry D'Ambrosio JD'93**

*Partner*  
D'Ambrosio Brown, LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Gerard S. DiFiore JD'84**

*Partner*  
Reed Smith, LLP  
New York, NY

### **Jeffrey R. Drago JD'04**

*Founding Partner*  
Drago + Toscano, LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Kevin M. Fitzgerald JD'82**

*Partner*  
Nixon Peabody, LLP  
Manchester, NH

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*Global Head of Corporate Real Estate and Services (ret.)*  
Deutsche Bank AG  
Santa Barbara, CA

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*Chief Executive Officer*  
Leading Builders of America, Inc.  
Washington, DC

### **Marc S. Geller JD'71**

*Managing Director*  
Sternhill Partners, Ltd.  
Houston, TX

### **Joseph W. Glannon**

*Professor of Law*  
Suffolk University Law School  
Boston, MA

### **Carl P. Gross JD'71**

*Director & President*  
GB Ltd. Operating Co., Inc.  
Freehold, NJ

### **Ernst Guerrier BS'91, JD'94, Trustee**

*Principal*  
Guerrier & Associates, PC  
Boston, MA

### **James F. Haley, Jr. JD'75**

*Partner*  
Haley Guiliano, LLP  
New York, NY

### **Bradley M. Henry JD'91**

*Partner*  
Meedhan, Boyle, Black & Bogdanow, PC  
Boston, MA

### **Henry G. Kara BSBA'66, JD'69**

*President*  
Kara Law Offices  
Boston, MA

### **George N. Keches JD'75**

*Senior Partner*  
Keches Law Group, PC  
Taunton, MA

### **James A. Lack JD'96**

*President and Founder*  
HPL Enterprises  
Sunny Isles Beach, FL

### **Warren G. Levenbaum JD'72**

*Managing Partner*  
Levenbaum Trachtenberg, PLC  
Phoenix, AZ

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*Founder & Board Member*  
Ligris + Associates, PC  
Co-Founder  
Escrow Mint, LLC  
Newton, MA

### **Deborah Marson JD'78**

*Executive Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary*  
Iron Mountain, Inc.  
Boston, MA

### **Michael J. McCormack JD'72**

*Partner*  
McCormack Suny, LLC  
Boston, MA

### **Timothy M. McCrystal JD'89**

*Partner*  
Ropes & Gray, LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Brian E. McManus JD'71**

*President*  
McManus Capital Management  
Fort Worth, TX

### **Robert T. Noonan JD'85**

*Regional Managing Partner (ret.)*  
KMPG, LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Eric J. Parker JD'86**

*Partner*  
Parker Scheer, LLP  
Lecturer  
Suffolk University Law School  
Boston, MA

### **Jacqueline L. Perczek JD'94**

*Partner*  
Black, Srebnick, Kornspan & Stumpf, PA  
Miami, FL

### **Jamie A. Sasson JD'04**

*Managing Partner*  
The Tickin Law Group, PA  
Deerfield Beach, FL

### **Lewis A. Sassoon JD'69**

*Partner*  
Sassoon & Cymrot LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Janis B. Schiff JD'83**

*Partner*  
Holland & Knight, LLP  
Washington, DC

### **Alan B. Sharaf JD'87**

*Partner*  
Sharaf & Maloney, PC  
Brookline, MA

### **Marie-Louise Skafte JD'96**

*Founder*  
Skafte Global Law, PA  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

### **Wayne E. Smith BSBA'77, JD'82**

*Adjunct Professor*  
Suffolk University Law School  
Firm Director (ret.)  
Deloitte Tax LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Mark E. Sullivan JD'97, Trustee**

*Partner (ret.)*  
Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP  
Boston, MA

### **Regina C. Sullivan JD'88**

*Managing Partner*  
Gaman Real Estate Group LLC  
Wellesley, MA

### **Thomas M. Sullivan JD'94**

*Founding Partner*  
Lando & Anastasi, LLP  
Instructor  
Suffolk University Sawyer Business School  
Boston, MA

### **James S. Trainor JD'00**

*Partner*  
Fenwick & West LLP  
New York, NY

### **Kenneth J. Vacovec JD'75**

*Senior Partner*  
Vacovec, Mayotte & Singer, LLP  
Newton, MA

### **Richard J. Walsh BA'58, JD'60**

*Attorney (ret.)*  
Federal Trade Commission  
Naples, FL

### **Stephen N. Wilchins JD'82**

*Founding Partner*  
Wilchins, Cosentino, Novins LLP  
Wellesley, MA

### **Linda J. Wondrack JD'95**

*EVP, Head of Compliance for Advice Solutions*  
Fidelity Investments  
Boston, MA

# RETIREMENTS

SUFFOLK LAW FACULTY  
RETIREMENTS

## STUDENT AWARD NAMED FOR FORMER DEAN ROBERT SMITH

Robert H. Smith served as the Law School's dean for eight years (1999–2007) and retired in May 2020 after serving an additional 13 years on the faculty. To honor his retirement and celebrate his contributions to the Law School, and to the Clinical Programs in particular, nearly \$50,000 has been raised to establish the Robert H. Smith Outstanding Clinic Student Award.

The award was created with an anonymous gift of \$25,000 and has grown with additional support from several Dean's Cabinet members who wanted to honor their relationship with Smith and acknowledge his contributions to the Law School.

Smith was a clinical professor before coming to Suffolk Law, and emphasized clinical education throughout his career. As dean, Smith helped reimagine the Law School's clinics and was instrumental in developing them into cutting-edge experiential programs.

"I am happy to support Dean Smith," said Trustee and Dean's Cabinet member Ernst Guerrier BS'91, JD'94, who contributed to the creation of the award. "We [Suffolk Law] owe him a debt of gratitude."



"Bob Smith was the dean when I was hired 20 years ago, and I learned so much from his leadership during his eight years as dean. Among other accomplishments, he transformed our experiential programs, especially our clinical and legal writing programs, and helped to make them the national leaders that they are today," said Dean Andrew Perlman.

The first award will be given in the spring of 2021 to a student who has engaged in outstanding work in a clinic and the corresponding seminar. Consideration will be given to a student's commitment to public service, either in the form of public interest work or through pro bono contributions, as well as to the student's commitment to mentoring future law students.

To make a contribution to the Robert H. Smith Outstanding Clinic Student Award, visit [suffolk.edu/law/alumni/give](https://suffolk.edu/law/alumni/give).



**Professor Dwight Golann** may be retiring, but the positive impact he has had on the field of alternative dispute resolution will endure. He has been a pathfinder in teaching his subject remotely—in a field that is so often dependent on in-person instruction. His scholarship has been informed by his own deep experience as both a mediator and a former chief of the Trial Division of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office. Dwight has been a wonderful colleague, generous with his learning and assistance. Suffolk's national ranking in dispute resolution draws heavily on his contribution.

—Professor Lisle Baker



Over his 40-plus years of teaching and service, **Professor Stephen Hicks** is largely credited as the inspiring force for global legal studies at Suffolk. He developed LLM degrees in Boston and abroad, an international internship program, as well as several exchange programs. Steve is a superb scholar, a wonderful mentor to many, and an influential teacher who has taught thousands around the world.

—Assistant Dean Bridgett C. Sandusky



I recruited **Professor Andy Beckerman-Rodau** to join the Intellectual Property Concentration as our patent specialist. It was Andy's idea that the High Tech Concentration be retitled the Intellectual Property Concentration. Andy has been the driving force in making Suffolk Law School the training grounds for more patent attorneys in Greater Boston than all of the other law schools in the area—combined. Asking him to join the faculty and be the co-director of the IP Concentration was the best decision I made as an administrator.

—Professor Michael Rustad

# CLASS NOTES

PROFESSIONAL AND  
PERSONAL MILESTONES  
FROM SUFFOLK ALUMNI

1955

**ARSEN TASHJIAN** turned 100 on December 1. He worked various jobs during the day and attended law school in the evening and spent his entire legal career working at Hanscom Air Force Base as a patent attorney for the federal government, a job that he found on the bulletin board at the Law School. During World War II, he worked at the Watertown Arsenal, testing metals for heavy artillery. He grew up in Everett and currently resides in Chestnut Hill. Married for 43 years, he has three children and two grandchildren.

1974

**THE HON. DAVID G. SACKS** has retired after nearly 34 years as a probate and family court judge in Springfield, MA. He is former chair of the Massachusetts Trial Court's Standing Committee on Dispute Resolution and remains a member and vice chair. As a judge, he worked with Suffolk interns from the FYSI Program from the program's initial year. After retirement, he was elected as a Joe Biden delegate from the First Congressional District. David and his wife, Deborah Leopold, senior manager for developmental disability services at BHN, Inc., continue to reside in Holyoke.

1975

**BRIAN M. HURLEY** of Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster, was named to *The Best Lawyers in America 2021*.

1978

**DIANE C. TILLOTSON** was named as one of the 2019 "Lawyers of the Year" by *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*. She was selected for her work on *McLean Hospital v. Town of Lincoln*, in which the Supreme Judicial Court ruled in favor of her client, McLean Hospital, clarifying the education use exemption under the Dover Amendment.

1979

**KEVIN F. BERRY** joined Vaughan Baio & Partners in Philadelphia as a partner. He is a commercial litigator who has tried more than 200 civil jury trials to verdict.

**WILLIAM B. FLYNN** is building a new international financial services platform that brings investors to privately owned mid-market investment opportunities in Europe and North America.



1983

Boston Law Collaborative LLC has added veteran employment lawyer and mediator **JODY L. NEWMAN** to its practice. She has more than 35 years'

experience resolving workplace disputes and investigating bias and sexual misconduct cases in workplaces and college campuses.



1984

**MADELINE S. BAIO**

recently founded Vaughan Baio & Partners in Philadelphia. She litigates product liability, premises liability, motor vehicle,

and employment-related matters, representing clients in the product manufacturing, retailing, transportation, pharmacy, grocery, and restaurant industries.

1986

**ELLEN M. HARRINGTON**, of Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster, was named to *The Best Lawyers in America 2021*.

1988

**DENISE I. MURPHY** was elected to serve as president of the Massachusetts Bar Association and as co-chair of the Supreme Judicial Court's Standing Committee on Lawyer Well-Being. She is co-chair of Rubin and Rudman's Labor and Employment Practice group.

Hermes Netburn shareholder **ANTHONY J. SBARRA, JR.** was elected a national director for the Defense Research Institute.

1989

**JOHN C. LA LIBERTE** at Sherin and Lodgen was named to *The Best Lawyers in America 2021*.



1990

**PATRICIA L. DAVIDSON**, a partner in the Probate, Trust, and Fiduciary Litigation group and the Business and General Litigation group at Mirick O'Connell, has been selected to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. She was also

selected to the 2019 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. Her practice focuses on helping families resolve issues involving wills, trusts, and real estate, as well as disputes involving family and closely held businesses.



**JANE LEARY LEVESQUE** recently celebrated 28 years as a full-time teacher of paralegal, business, criminal justice, and fire science at North Shore Community College.

1991

**MARIA R. DURANT** BA'88 has been named the managing director of Hogan Lovell's Boston office.

1992

**JOHN D. COLUCCI** of McLane Middleton has been named to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers.

1994

**PAUL W. CAREY**, a partner in the Creditors' Rights, Bankruptcy, and Reorganization group at Mirick O'Connell, has been selected to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. He was also named to the 2019 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. He concentrates his practice on creditors' rights, bankruptcy, and business reorganization matters.

**CHRISTINE E. DEVINE**, a partner and the chair of the Creditors' Rights, Bankruptcy, and Reorganization group at Mirick O'Connell, has been selected to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers.



**ISABELLA KIM** has joined Helsell Fetterman, a Seattle-based law firm serving businesses, organizations, and individuals. She will be leading its immigration practice area and will be working in the firm's business transactions practice group.

Leber IP Law, the boutique IP firm founded by **CELIA H. LEBER**, has been in business for nine years and continues to grow despite the pandemic.

**MAURICE E. MUIR** has been elected as justice of the New York State Supreme Court, 11th Judicial District, for a 14-year term. He previously served on the Civil Court of the City of New York, where he presided over civil cases relating to no-fault insurance, breach of contract, and personal injury claims.

1995

**SOL J. COHEN** has joined Kerstein, Coren & Lichtenstein as a partner. With more than two decades of practice, Cohen has tried over 40 cases to jury verdict and closed over 3,000 real estate transactions. He notes, "I've had my own firm for more than 20 years and am looking forward to practicing law in a collegial environment with a team of experienced attorneys."

McCarter & English, LLP has elected **MIA A. FRABOTTA** to its equity ranks.



**ROBERT B. GIBBONS**, a partner in the Litigation group at Mirick O'Connell, has been selected to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. He was also named to the 2019 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. He concentrates his practice in commercial litigation, where he handles a broad range of business matters involving commercial contracts, banking, construction, commercial landlord-tenant disputes, complex collections, and fiduciary fraud.



Morgan, Brown & Joy attorney **GREGORY A. MANOUSOS** was named to the Best Lawyers in America for Litigation—Labor and Employment.

**JENNIFER L. PARENT** at McLane Middleton was named to the 2020 New England Super Lawyers for Business Litigation.

1996

**JASON S. DELMONICO** has joined global law firm Greenberg Traurig LLP as a shareholder in the corporate practice in the firm’s Boston office. He has over 20 years of experience representing major financial institutions and other commercial lenders.

**TERRI L. PASTORI**, managing partner of Pastori | Krans, is delighted to announce Pastori | Krans’ inclusion in *Business NH Magazine’s* 2020 list of top women-led businesses for the second year in a row, one of only three New Hampshire law firms recognized.



Shareholder **DAMON M. SELIGSON** has joined Sheehan Phinney’s Business Litigation group, where his practice focuses on commercial litigation and real estate matters. He also focuses on assisting clients in medical malpractice and personal injury matters.

**KEVIN J. WILLIS** has been promoted to counsel at Ropes & Gray. He is a probate and trust counsel in the firm’s private client group. He has advised clients for nearly 25 years, creating sophisticated estate plans, settling estates and trusts, and advising fiduciaries concerning their responsibilities. He also advises beneficiaries of their rights in the trust and estate settlement process, and works with both fiduciaries and beneficiaries in connection with fiduciary litigation matters.

2000

**DAVID C. HARDY** manages the Hardy Law Firm PA in Tampa, FL. Last fall, his article “Simon a Slave v. State of Florida” was the cover feature of the *Florida Bar Journal*. He and his wife, Carolyn, are the proud parents of an 8-year-old girl and a 6-year-old boy.

2003

**JILL M. RYNKOWSKI DOYLE** has launched Bennett Doyle LLP in Washington, DC, specializing in estate and trust administration, family law, and litigation.

**ELIZABETH LEVINE**, a director at Goulston & Storrs, has been named an “Employment Law Trailblazer” by *The National Law Journal* for her visionary work helping companies across the country assess and reform their corporate culture. This is Levine’s second trailblazer award, after being named a “New England Trailblazer” by *The American Lawyer* in 2019.

2004

**HEATHER M. GAMACHE** has been named president-elect of the Women’s Bar Association for 2020–2021. As a director in Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster’s Litigation group, Gamache has a broad focus on real estate and commercial litigation matters.

2005

**MICHELE BEAUCHINE COLLINS** was elected to a three-year term on the board of directors for the Society of Financial Service Professionals. She is an advanced sales director with MassMutual Financial Group in Boston, president of FSP’s Boston chapter, and an active member of the Boston Bar Association, where she participates in the M. Ellen Carpenter Financial Literacy Program. She resides with her husband, Patrick, and daughter in Nahant, MA.

**DAVID L. FINE**, a partner and chair of the Construction Law group at Mirick O’Connell, has been selected to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. He was also named to the 2019 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. Fine represents and counsels clients in the construction industry, including commercial, institutional, and residential owners and developers, general contractors, construction managers, specialty subcontractors, suppliers, and manufacturers.

**MATTHEW RAY JD/MBA** joins Murtha Cullina LLP’s Business and Finance Department.



**JUDITH L. STONE-HULSLANDER** has been elected partner at Lathrop Gage, where she focuses her practice on patent preparation, prosecution, and client counseling in all areas of biotechnology. She holds a PhD in molecular genetics and microbiology and, prior to obtaining her law degree, worked as a technical specialist and patent agent.



2006

**MICHELLE-KIM (LEE) COHEN** has been promoted to deputy general counsel at Dassault Systèmes, where she is responsible for employment law and compliance matters.

2007

**JACK S. GEARAN** of global law firm Greenberg Traurig LLP has been elected to the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public Schools. The nonprofit is dedicated to graduating responsible, democratic citizens who are prepared for college and to advancing community, culture, and commerce.



2008

**MATTHEW R. FISHER**, a partner at Mirick O’Connell and chair of the firm’s Health Law group and a member of the firm’s Business group, has been selected to the 2020 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. He was also named to the 2019 Massachusetts Super Lawyers. Fisher helps guide clients through the regulatory maze that challenges all participants in the healthcare industry.

2009

**DAVID I. BRODY** of Sherin and Lodgen was named to *The Best Lawyers in America 2021*.



**STEPHANIE S. MCGRAW** has been named partner at Shook, Hardy & Bacon. She focuses her practice on complex product liability, commercial, and business litigation.

2010

**RYAN P. AVERY** of Mirageas & Avery LLC was selected as a “Rising Star” by the 2019 Massachusetts Super Lawyers.

**ALLISON AHERN FILLO** has joined the Boston law firm of Davis Malm, advising businesses and individuals seeking U.S. immigration and naturalization benefits. She counsels clients on immigration issues regarding employment and compliance, as well as immigration concerns arising in corporate transactions and obtaining all categories of non-immigrant visas and lawful permanent residence in the U.S.

**ELIZABETH RAHN GALLUCCI** has been named a partner at Ropes & Gray.

**JENNIFER L. JUNKIN** has joined Am Law 100 firm Polsinelli’s Seattle office as an associate in the firm’s national Intellectual Property Department.

**JACLYN S. O’LEARY** has been elected an individual clients partner in the Boston office of Day Pitney LLP. Her practice focuses in the areas of estate planning and estate and trust administration.

**HEIDI A. SEELY** served as speaker at the Boston Bar Association’s webinar, “Trusts & Estates End of Year Review 2020.” An associate in Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster’s trusts and estates practice, Seely represents families and individuals in estate planning, estate administration, tax planning, trust administration, and other trusts and estate needs. She is co-chair of the BBA’s Public Policy Committee and Practice Fundamentals Committee of the Trusts & Estates Section.

2011

**ANDREW A. KINGMAN** was named to *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*’s “Up and Coming Lawyers.” He is a senior managing attorney in DLA Piper’s intellectual property and technology practice. The publication highlighted Kingman’s work as general counsel to the State Privacy and Security Coalition, whose members include 30 of the largest technology, media, telecom, retail, and online security companies in the world, and identified him as “a key player in the debate over state privacy legislation.”

**ANDREW M. MACDONALD** was elevated to partner at Fox Rothschild LLP. He advises businesses on a diverse array of labor and employment law issues, including union organizing campaigns and National Labor Relations Board proceedings, collective bargaining, and labor arbitration, as well as employment discrimination and wage-and-hour litigation. He is based in the firm’s Philadelphia office.



**BRADFORD N. VEZINA** has been elected as a director of McLane Middleton. He focuses on estate plans for individuals and families across the economic spectrum.

2012

**CHRISTOPHER J. ABBOTT** was promoted to counsel at Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP, where he is a member of Weil’s global antitrust and competition practice in the Washington, DC office. He represents clients in civil and criminal antitrust investigations and litigation, and in obtaining antitrust approval for mergers and acquisitions.

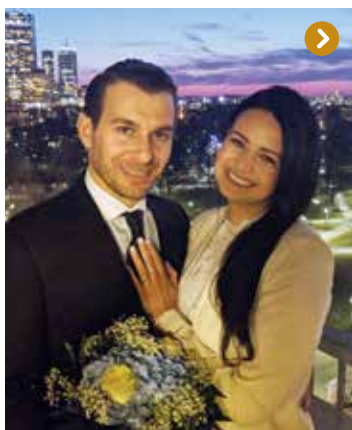
**JAMIE G. LEBERER** has created a new partnership, Leberer & Palladino PLLC, that will practice matrimonial and family law in the Buffalo, NY region.

**JACLYN L. MCNEELY** has joined Boston labor and employment law firm Morgan, Brown & Joy as an associate. McNeely counsels and represents employers in all aspects of labor and employment law, including workplace discrimination, leave laws, wage and hour disputes, collective bargaining and grievance arbitration, unfair labor practices, and related litigation.

2014

**BRIAN M. CASACELI**, an associate in the Labor & Employment group at Mirick O’Connell, was named one of the *Worcester Business Journal’s* “40 Under Forty” for 2020.

**MATTHEW R. O’CONNOR** joined Pierce Atwood LLP as an associate. His work involves commercial litigation, ERISA matters, and assisting an active receivership practice. He lives in Providence, RI, with his wife, Johanna, and their 1-year-old son, Theo.



On February 23, 2020, **DARIUS PAKROOH** married Aris deOliveira on the 7th-floor balcony of Suffolk Law School. “Choosing [to be married at] Suffolk Law School was a reminder of how far we’ve come together. During my law school library study marathons, Aris would routinely come visit to cheer me on and bring healthy food,” Darius reminisces. The newlyweds now spend their days operating Pakrooh Law in Boston.

2017

**MELISSA M. MARQUEZ** BA’14 joins Knox Ricksen LLP, a civil litigation firm specializing in complex health care fraud cases, as an associate.

IN MEMORIAM

**REMEMBERING KENNEDY FAMILY ADVISOR GERARD DOHERTY**

The passing of alumnus and former Trustee Gerard “Gerry” Doherty marks the end of an era in Massachusetts politics.

Doherty, who graduated from Suffolk Law in 1960 while serving in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, was deeply embedded in the civic life of the Commonwealth and worked on the historic presidential campaigns of all three Kennedy brothers. His 2017 memoir, *They Were My Friends—Jack, Bob and Ted: My Life In and Out of Politics*, details those relationships.

“Gerry Doherty was someone larger than life who actually made those around him better,” said Robert J. Allison, a Suffolk University history professor.

Doherty brought political savvy and legislative knowledge to his roles, but Allison said what made him truly indispensable was his character, integrity, and ability to bring people together.

“You can find people who can crunch numbers and can look at polling data, but understanding how to connect with people is the most important thing. It’s a character trait that he had and could use to great effect, and that’s one of the reasons the Kennedys and others relied on him,” said Allison.

Doherty served on the Suffolk University Board of Trustees from 1996 to 2014. He received the Law School Alumni Association’s Edward Bray Legacy Award in 2018 and the Alumni Service Award in 2005.

“Gerry was not only a civic leader—he was a philanthropic leader as well. For decades, he made a profound impact on the lives and careers of countless Suffolk Law students,” said Dean Andrew Perlman.

Doherty was responsible for nearly one-half million dollars in scholarship support, including one of the school’s public service scholarships. Many of the students benefiting from his philanthropy are from working-class towns, including Charlestown, where he was a lifelong resident.

“We admire his lifetime of tenacity and his insistence that individuals must make a difference in their communities,” Perlman said. “When America’s leaders needed counsel, he stepped up to help. And when Suffolk Law School and its students needed him, he answered the call.”

Doherty is survived by his wife, Judge Regina Quinlan Doherty, who received her Suffolk Law degree in 1973 and an honorary Doctor of Laws in 2005. **SL**



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# JOIN THE FROST SOCIETY

Consider a bequest—a gift through your will or trust. You can direct your gift to meet Suffolk's greatest needs or to support a specific program that is meaningful to you.

Establishing a bequest enrolls you in Suffolk's Frost Society. Please contact Corian Branyan BSBA'11, Associate Director of Planned Giving, at 617-573-8456 or [cbranyan@suffolk.edu](mailto:cbranyan@suffolk.edu).

SAVE THE  
**DATE!**

SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL  
**ALUMNI AWARDS  
CEREMONY**

**APRIL  
30**

Details Coming Soon