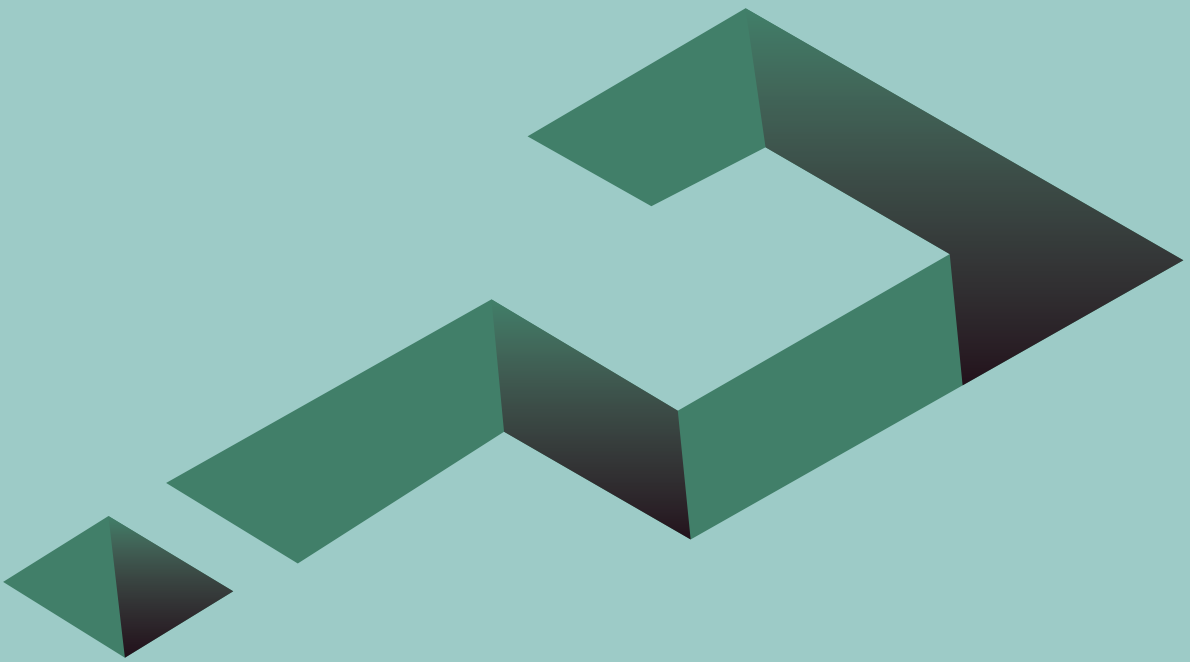


UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN LAW SCHOOL

Gargoyle

Volume 43, No. 1
Spring 2021



WHAT'S NEXT?

CANCEL CULTURE
& THE FUTURE OF
FREE SPEECH

THE FUTURE OF
THE SUPREME
COURT

21 REASONS
FOR OPTIMISM
IN 2021

A HOUSE DIVIDED:
THE STATE OF
THE UNION



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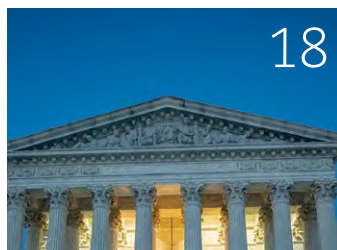
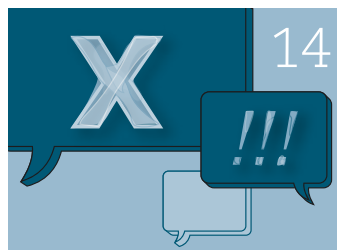
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Why Gargoyle?

In 1963, when the existing Law School was demolished to make way for a new building, Law School Dean George Young found and rescued a sandstone gargoyle from the rubble. This figure and its twin sat on the roof of the 1893 building for almost 70 years.

That rescued gargoyle, which is now permanently installed in the Law School's atrium, gives its name to this magazine, representing the indomitable strength and spirit of our University of Wisconsin Law School and its many graduates.



The *Gargoyle* is the alumni magazine of the University of Wisconsin Law School, 975 Bascom Mall, Madison, WI 53706-1399. It is funded by private donors.

Dear Friends,

As I sit down to write my first column for the *Gargoyle* alumni magazine, I'm just over a half year into my tenure as dean of this great law school. And what a year it has been so far!

While we've all seen more than our share of disruption, the University of Wisconsin Law School is poised to emerge from this difficult period stronger than ever. Our country has been reckoning not only with a global pandemic, but also major economic upheaval and our persistent racial injustices. UW Law has emerged as a leader in confronting and finding a way forward through these multifaceted challenges.

I'm especially proud of the adaptability and resiliency that the UW Law community has demonstrated over the past year. Our hardworking faculty and staff have developed a conversance with new technologies that allow us to deliver an outstanding legal education through a variety of means. Our students learned how to engage in virtual and hybrid learning, while adapting to the testing-and-wellness protocols that have helped minimize the spread of COVID-19 across campus.

Most important, we continued to make progress on a range of social problems. As a law school and as lawyers, we have a special duty to respond, lead, and help advance equal justice in our communities. Faced with pressing issues of democratic governance, racial equity, bioethics, technology, and so many topics, our faculty leveraged their expertise to help find solutions.

We're also focused on making our learning environment better for all our students. That includes the top-notch experiential training that our seventeen clinics and externships provide. Throughout this academic year, we've

held a series of town halls on racial justice, worked to develop a strategic plan that we intend to implement this year, and moved to bring our patented Law in Action approach to learning into the digital age.

As you'll see throughout this issue, our faculty are leading the way in thoughtfully addressing society's most complex legal and social issues. Our two most recent faculty hires, Joshua Braver and Franciska Coleman, are both rising stars in constitutional law. They examine the "packing" of the Supreme Court and the role of cancel culture, respectively. Our faculty also weigh in on the future of our democracy, after what has been one of the most unusual election cycles in memory.

Every day since I became dean, I've felt the love from our community — including people right here in Madison, Wisconsin, and our alumni across the state, country, and world. And UW Law's future is brighter than ever. In the article "21 Reasons for Optimism in 2021," you can read our faculty and staff's hopes for the coming year.

We will need your help to move forward on all these fronts. The path forward won't be easy, but there can be no doubt that UW Law's students, staff, faculty, and alumni have what it takes to advance the ideals of the UW Law School and make the world a better and more just place.

On, Wisconsin!

Sincerely,



Daniel P. Tokaji
Fred W. & Vi Miller Dean and
Professor of Law



UW LAW LIBRARY RECEIVED GRANT TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO TRIBAL LAWS

The UW Law Library received an Institute of Museum and Library Services grant for its Digital Publication of Tribal Laws Pilot Project. Together with other partners — including the Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians, the UW Law School Great Lakes Indigenous Law Center, the National Indian Law Library, and the Open Law Library — the Law Library aims to expand access to tribal laws. “The right to know the law by which we are governed is a fundamental right. Access to our laws is essential to protect and promote due process and equal protection, access to justice, and self-governance,” says Bonnie Shucha, director of the UW Law Library. “However, for a majority of the 574 federally recognized tribes, no laws have been published. Where it is available, tribal law is scattered across databases, websites, and print publications, often incomplete and outdated. This lack of access to tribal law is the impetus behind the application for this project grant.”



#2 Best Value

The University of Wisconsin Law School has been named a “Best Value Law School,” ranking second among law schools nationally in a recent report by *PreLaw* magazine. To determine the top schools for 2020, the magazine considered a number of academic and financial variables, including price of tuition, student debt accumulation, employment success, bar passage rate, and cost of living.



BRUCE RICHTER

PROFESSOR MIRIAM SEIFTER WON TOP HONORS for her article “Understanding State Agency Independence,” which appeared in the *Michigan Law Review* in 2019. The award comes from the American Bar Association Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice, which annually recognizes the best work of administrative law scholarship for the prior year. Seifter has received numerous awards for scholarship and teaching. For her article “Gubernatorial Administration,” she was named the 2017 winner of the American Constitution Society’s Richard D. Cudahy Writing Competition on Regulatory and Administrative Law. In 2018, she received one of twelve Distinguished Teaching Awards from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, just a year after being honored by UW Law students with the 2017 Classroom Teacher of the Year Award.



PROFESSOR LINDA GREENE WAS NAMED THE INAUGURAL DEAN of Michigan State University's College of Law. Professor Greene joined the UW Law faculty in 1989, becoming the first female African-American member of the Law School faculty. Her teaching and scholarship focus on constitutional law, civil procedure, legislation, civil rights, and sports law.



**PROFESSOR MITRA
SHARAFI RECEIVED A
2021 DISTINGUISHED
TEACHING AWARD**

Sharafi was among thirteen faculty members chosen on the University of Wisconsin–Madison campus. The honor has been awarded to the university's finest educators since 1953.

LIFT Dane launches free app to help Wisconsin residents resolve civil legal issues

How can Wisconsin's unemployed and underemployed residents get legal support on civil matters that might make it harder to find and keep a job?

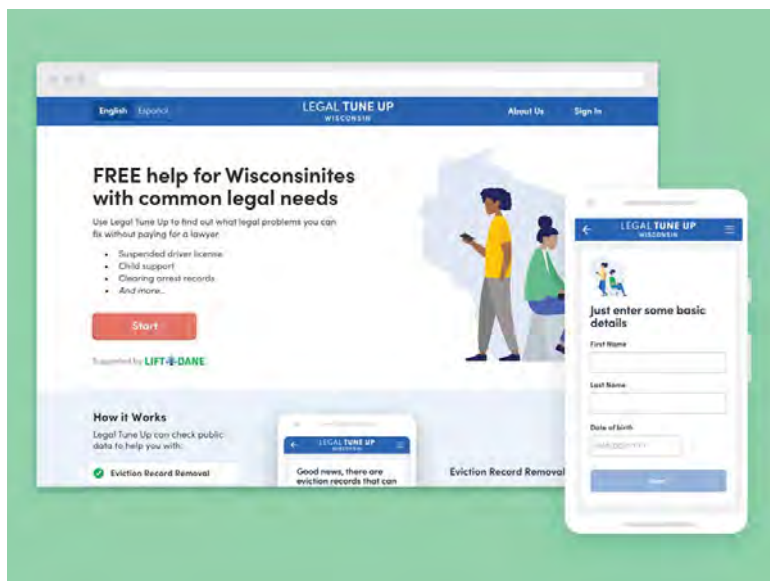
Thanks to an innovative partnership known as LIFT Dane, there's an app for that. The partners behind LIFT Dane — made up of UW Law professors, local attorneys, and government professionals — launched their free Legal Tune Up app to help users resolve civil legal issues on their own by accessing publicly available data.

According to Marsha Mansfield, a UW Law professor emeritus and the director of LIFT Dane, the app can help eligible job seekers clear past criminal charges or dismiss evictions from the public record.

“Users of the Legal Tune Up app will be able to see if they have old eviction or criminal records on Wisconsin's online public records database (CCAP) that are eligible for removal, and the app will automate creation and filing of the appropriate paperwork with the court to get the process started,” she explains.

Having an eviction or criminal charge listed online can cause serious damage to a person's employment prospects and overall health, Mansfield says. However, research shows that those who successfully clear their records experience gains in their employment and wage status, increasing annual earnings by 23 percent on average.

More app features are in the works, including the ability to identify and resolve issues related to driver's license suspensions and child support orders. The app will also connect users to community resources related to employment, housing, and healthcare.



LIFT Dane got its start after placing first in last year's inaugural Alliance for the American Dream competition, with the goal to increase shared prosperity and stabilize and expand the middle class. In 2020, LIFT Dane expanded services to the Racine area, with support from a \$1 million Community Impact Award from the Wisconsin Partnership Program.

LIFT Dane is a collaboration of the Economic Justice Institute at UW Law School, UW's Center for Patient Partnerships, Legal Action of Wisconsin, and the Employment and Training Association of Dane County.



Marsha Mansfield

NICK WILKES

Recent Retirees

A number of cherished UW Law School faculty and staff have recently retired. UW Law School bids farewell to these individuals who have given so much to the Law School community.



Tammy Kempfert served as a valuable member of our communications team since 2012. Kempfert had many tasks, but her focus was on telling the Law School’s story to a variety of audiences, a job she performed amazingly well. Her excellent work is visible on digital platforms — including the website, social media, and YouTube. She often worked with faculty to publicize their scholarship or pitch them to media sources.



Joanne Fitz began working at the Law School in 1981. A valuable member of the Continuing Legal Education of Wisconsin (CLEW) team, she served in multiple roles over the years. Fitz assisted the publication process, supported CLE programs, and processed CLEW’s finances. She also supported a number of website projects.



Wenjie Hu worked on a wide variety of programs and initiatives for both Graduate Programs and the East Asian Legal Studies Center over the past eighteen years, including the successful Shanghai Judges Program. Hu has also been invaluable in developing and maintaining relationships with visiting scholars, partner universities, and alumni; in recruiting LLM-LI students from mainland China; and in establishing partnership relations with institutions in Asia.



Alta Charo, the Warren P. Knowles Professor of Law and Bioethics, joined the Law School in 1989. An expert on bioethics, stem cell policy, and women’s reproductive health, Charo serves on numerous national committees and boards. She is an elected member of the World Technology Network and a member of the National Academy of Medicine, as well as the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She served on President Obama’s transition team, where she was a member of the Health and Human Services review team. Charo taught courses on public health law, bioethics, biotechnology law, food and drug law, stem cell policy, torts, and legislative drafting.

Gretchen Viney ’78, a distinguished clinical professor, directed the Lawyering Skills Program (formerly known as General Practice). Through the program, students learned the fundamentals of law practice from practicing lawyers on a range of substantive topics. She also taught courses on client interviewing and counseling, real estate transactions, and guardian ad litem practice. Since arriving at the Law School in 1997, through 2017, Viney practiced law on a part-time basis in Baraboo, where she was a partner with her husband in the firm of Viney & Viney. She is recognized for her work and expertise as a guardian ad litem for children, elders, and the disabled.



UW Law School announces the John and Rylla Bosshard Professorship



John Bosshard

A new endowed professorship at the University of Wisconsin Law School will honor the memory of an alumnus and his wife, while supporting faculty work. The John and Rylla Bosshard Professorship was formed to recognize and support a UW Law professor who has significant stature in the legal academy.

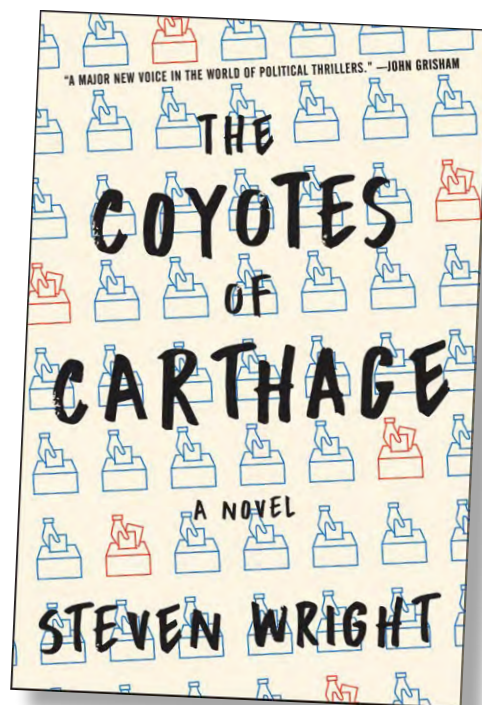
An endowed professorship distributes income annually in perpetuity to support faculty salary and research. Dean Tokaji says this professorship will support the school's mission to attract and retain world-class faculty. "The Bosshard Professorship will help us build on the legacy of excellence in research and teaching for which this great law school is known. It signifies an important link from UW Law's past to its present and future."

John Bosshard, a 1947 UW Law graduate, was a prominent lawyer, banker, and businessman from Bangor, Wisconsin. In his honor, his four adult children — Sabina, John III, Kurt, and Bill Bosshard — donated funds from their parents' estate to endow the professorship.

Sabina Bosshard, a 1973 UW Law School graduate, took over the practice of her father's firm after his death in 1990.

A matching gift from UW alumni John and Tashia Morgridge made the endowment possible. In 2020, the Morgridges announced a one-for-one matching opportunity to donors wanting to establish or enhance an endowed professorship or chair fund.

"Endowments are gifts that truly last forever," says Tokaji. "On behalf of all of us at UW Law School, I want to thank the Bosshard and Morgridge families for their continued dedication to our Law School and the UW. I am humbled and inspired by their faith in the value of our work and their generous investment in the future of generations of Badgers."



The Coyotes of Carthage rakes in the accolades

NICK WILKES



Steven Wright

It's safe to say that Professor Steven Wright's debut novel, *The Coyotes of Carthage*, is a hit. The novel explores the power of dark money in local politics and follows political consultant Dre Ross, who is given a last chance to redeem himself after an embarrassing loss on the campaign trail. Sent by

his boss to a rural South Carolina county, Ross leads a dark money campaign to trick citizens into selling public land for toxic mining.

On top of receiving rave reviews from the likes of John Grisham, the novel has won the following accolades:

- Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence, second place
- 100 Black Novelist and Fiction Writers you should read, *USA Today*
- Best Crime Novels of 2020, CrimeReads.com



A new book highlights contracts scholar Stewart Macaulay's enduring influence

A new book showcases the work of Stewart Macaulay, the University of Wisconsin Law School professor known for pioneering the “law-in-action” approach to contracts.

Stewart Macaulay: Selected Works — edited by the leading British contracts scholar David Campbell — highlights Macaulay’s six decades of contributions to contract theory and to the sociology of law. The book contains some of Macaulay’s best-known research, as well as more obscure publications.

Included in the book is Macaulay’s 1963 landmark work, “Non-Contractual Relations in Business: A Preliminary Study,” which would become one of the most cited in the law and society canon. Macaulay is also known for *Contracts: Law in Action*, the

casebook that has been read by generations of law students at UW and elsewhere since its first publication in 1995.

In one of two introductory essays appearing in *Selected Works*, University of Minnesota Law Professor Brian Bix writes, “Macaulay has taught contract law scholars many things: to focus on practice not theory, on relationships not models, and on the power and politics behind everything.”

Elizabeth Mertz, a University of Wisconsin law professor, co-wrote a second essay with Stanford University’s Lawrence Friedman, “Law in Reality, Law in Context: On the Work and Influence of Stewart Macaulay.”

Stewart Macaulay: Selected Works was published by the Switzerland-based Springer press in October.



Elizabeth Mertz



Improving Virtual Learning and Building the Classroom Community

As a co-chair of the Law School's Excellence in Alternative Delivery Working Group, lecturer Megan McDermott dove into the world of virtual learning, building guidelines and toolkits for remote instruction. It wasn't such a big surprise, then, that UW–Madison took notice and highlighted her work as a part of Instructional

Highlights, an ongoing series honoring the new ways instructors are adapting their classroom practices. For many, the virtual environment has posed new challenges for robust exchange and classroom participation. It's something McDermott has paid close attention to, finding that detailed self-assessment tools have

helped her students monitor and improve class participation.

McDermott says students sometimes point out that she “over-engineers” things in her classes. She doesn't deny it. “I always think it's better to over-engineer something at the start, then take away things you don't need later,” she says.



Megan McDermott

She approached student participation in her virtual classes last fall the same way. McDermott says she has always based part of a student's grade on class participation and engagement. Pre-pandemic, that meant she kept a log sheet and an ongoing tally of each student's contributions.

With virtual learning, she worried that some of the usual cues that helped her get a sense of the health of a classroom community would be gone or more difficult to catch. Her solution was to

create a tool in Canvas, the online course portal, that required students to regularly self-assess their engagement in various categories using a detailed point system. She also made class participation a more significant part of a student's grade.

Students could give themselves points for obvious things like attending synchronous class sessions and watching class videos. But they could also earn points for, among other things, answering a poll, writing on a whiteboard, or raising a hand to ask a question.

A couple of examples from McDermott's framework: Give yourself three points for every time you served as a facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, or reporter for a case briefing exercise or other tiered discussion. Give yourself one point for every question posed on Canvas discussion posts, and three points for every meaningful reply citing course material by page number, up to a total of ten points. McDermott gave students regular feedback and also asked them if there were additional ways not

specified in her list in which they contributed meaningfully to the classroom community or to the collective learning experience. Students could make a case for how many points they should receive for those contributions.

The approach encouraged ownership, autonomy, and creativity — core values in McDermott's classroom. "I think allowing students flexibility in the ways they chose to engage in the material and with each other allowed them to draw on their natural strengths and aptitudes," she says.

An extra bonus: Students appreciated the transparency and fairness in how this part of their grade was being calculated, McDermott says.





IN FOCUS *Campus During the Pandemic*

Things look a little different this year. During the fall and spring semesters, many classes were held virtually, and those held in person required a number of safety measures. Professor Kathie Hendley, shown here, conducts a class during the fall semester. All participants wear face masks and follow physical distancing measures. With distancing measures in place, large classrooms were required to allow ample space, even for small numbers of students. Each classroom indicated where students should sit, and cleaning materials and hand sanitizer were provided. Campus testing sites were launched in the spring semester. Also spotted on campus: Starship Badger, a robotic food delivery service, brings food to students and employees.



CANCEL CULTURE

and the Future of Free Speech

BY NICOLE ETTER

When is “cancel culture” warranted and when does it go too far? How do we preserve the United States’ tradition of free speech and community-enforced speech norms without giving individuals and private companies too much control?

Assistant Professor Franciska Coleman, whose research examines critical discourse analysis and constitutional law, explores “cancel culture” and how it intersects with constitutional choice. Her research is all the more salient in an era when seemingly anyone can lose their job over comments uttered online and when even the president of the United States can be banned from popular social media platforms for his alleged role in inciting violence.

The First Amendment was designed for the social regulation of speech by communities, Coleman notes. But that approach is more challenging in highly divisive times, when an online comment can set off a firestorm.

“There are many categories of speech with different levels of offensiveness, but cancel culture offers a uniform response without regard to degree of offensiveness,” she explains. “Cancel culture is a type of social speech regulation that facilitates domination. It resembles the very type of nationwide censorship that the founders were trying to avoid when they prohibited government censorship of speech.”

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DANIELLE LAMBERSON PHILIPP





THE RISE OF CANCEL CULTURE

Coleman's interest in cancel culture was sparked by the boycott of Chick-fil-A after CEO Dan Cathy's anti-gay marriage comments. "I read about the boycott and I thought, 'Oh, wow, that's an interesting use of people power,'" she says. "The US has a strong tradition of prohibiting the legal regulation of speech, but at the same time, it has a very robust system of social regulation of speech. And we're constantly broadening the definition of speech that can be socially regulated and censored."

So when did social regulation of speech tip into full-fledged cancel culture? "I think it's a confluence of factors. Social media played a role because it has made it easy for local communities to take action across time and space. Social media allows minorities in a community to use nationwide boycotts to pressure their local majorities," she says. "Social media has also made people's private lives more visible. Normally if someone

says something offensive over lunch with a friend, they aren't going to lose their job as a result. Now with social media and cell phone cameras, what used to be private violations of speech norms have become public, with public consequences."

In some ways, cancel culture is a uniquely American problem, says Coleman, who is associate director of the Law School's East Asian Legal Studies Center and had lived in Korea for six years.

"Cancel culture rose in the US because of our strong prohibitions on legal censorship," she says. "In other places like Germany, you don't have to boycott a company to censor someone engaging in hate speech. You can report them, and they will receive a fine. In South Africa, Equality Courts punish hate speech. South Korea has a Communications Standards Commission. When legal mechanisms are in place, you have less need for cancel culture ... because the government will step in and see justice done. Cancel culture is a form of vigilante justice, and vigilante justice is not always proportional to the crime."

Franciska Coleman is an Assistant Professor of Constitutional Law at the University of Wisconsin Law School and the Associate Director of the East Asian Legal Studies Center. She joined the faculty in 2020.





WHO DECIDES?

In the US, private companies play a key role, whether it's an employer or a social media platform. "We don't want legislators to tell us what we can and can't say, so what we have instead is companies making those decisions based on profit motives," Coleman says. "This seems problematic. I really like the idea of social regulation of speech. It's a privilege of democracy. But like all privileges, it can be abused. Cancel culture is an example of such abuse."

Under the current system, vocal minorities can play an outsized role in curbing speech, she notes. "In the national uproar following the Capitol riot, Amazon forced Parler to go dark under pressure from its employees and a single congressperson," she says. "At Twitter, Trump's 88 million followers were deprived of a key source of their information about national affairs, while the president of the United States lost his most influential platform. Perhaps this was a decision that involved dozens of people, but it could also have been the decision of a single alarmed individual. That is not how social regulation of speech should work."

Violence and incitement are real dangers, but a time-limited restriction or legal recourse could have been alternatives to social censorship, Coleman says, and might have been adopted in a more inclusive process.

"The constitution's choice of social regulation of speech implies a preference for speech regulation that is limited and

local," she says. "So we need to think deeply about how to secure the benefits of social regulation of speech when it is mediated by global corporations whose power exceeds that of many nations."

The consequences aren't just for the individual who gets "canceled," she notes. There's a broader impact on society.

"Currently, there's a lot of ideological homogeneity underlying our speech norms," she says. "But one imperfect justification for letting communities regulate their own speech is diversity, the marketplace of ideas. In the marketplace, ideas are offered, contested, revised, rebutted. ... But what happens when there's no contestation, just cancellation? People leave the marketplace for their preferred echo chambers."

EDUCATION IS KEY

Cancel culture also heightens polarization, she notes. "You don't want to push people out of the community and make them even more extreme, so firing people and expelling people from school should be last resorts," she says. "My preferred approach is education. I think that a lot of offensive comments stem from ignorance, perhaps willful, but the solution is not to exclude the speakers, but to expose them to the people and ideas about which they lack knowledge."

Coleman believes it's important to use education to help the community learn to enforce speech norms in a more thoughtful way, beginning when students are in high school or college. She likes the idea of having students create their own speech code through an informed, collaborative process, but she recognizes that some people strongly oppose the idea of a speech code.

"There is a lot of pushback. But you're either going to have speech regulation by government, by an informed citizenry, or by an uninformed citizenry," she says. "I tell my students, 'Navigating this space is your responsibility,' and I try to give them tools. I view education as the solution. It is a multigenerational solution, but I am confident that over time, we will become our better selves." •





COURT PACKING

Should the Supreme Court be reformed?

BY NICOLE ETTER



Long after the Trump administration moves from headlines into the pages of history books, President Donald Trump's impact on the nation will remain firmly entrenched in the US Supreme Court. His nominations of three conservative justices to the nation's highest court cemented a right-wing majority that will endure for decades. Or will it?

"Congress controls the Supreme Court's size by statute, and you can weaponize that power by changing the size of the court," notes Assistant Professor Joshua Braver, whose research explores the intersection of constitutional law and political theory. Braver, who joined the Law School in June, recently published an article titled "Court-Packing: An American Tradition?" in the *Boston College Law Review*.

The topic is timelier than ever as President Joe Biden plans to form a commission to study court reforms. Some Democrats consider the controversial tactic of court-packing as the logical remedy to fix what they see as Republicans' theft of two Supreme Court seats — first because of Senate Republicans' refusal to confirm Merrick Garland nearly a year before the end of President Barack Obama's second term and then by their rush to confirm Amy Coney Barrett just days before the 2020 election.

Would expanding the court lead to a more balanced court? Or a decidedly liberal one? And what's to stop Republicans from immediately rolling back the changes or packing the court even more the

next time they have control of the White House and Congress?

Court-packing is "almost unprecedented" in American history, and for good reason, Braver says. "I think it's a very good idea if you care about the survival of the Supreme Court and its legitimacy to use less lethal options first and think about whether they can work before turning to something like court-packing," he says. "Why use a nuclear weapon when you can use something that has less collateral damage?"

The history of a fluctuating court

The US Supreme Court has changed in size seven times during its history, beginning with six justices and ranging from five to ten before settling at nine justices in 1869. Some of the early changes were related to the addition of circuit courts to accommodate the then-growing United States during a period when US Supreme Court justices also served on circuit courts. Four of the changes constitute court-packing, Braver says.

The first attempt was in 1801, when outgoing President John Adams rushed to replace a retiring justice and then his Federalist allies in Congress passed a law to shrink the court at the next vacancy to ensure that incoming president Thomas Jefferson wouldn't get to replace a justice. But that attempt failed when the law was repealed by Jefferson's allies the next year. Then in 1866, the



Joshua Braver

EMILIE BUCKMAN

“People were really afraid that you’d be permanently damaging the Supreme Court: You pack, I pack, and then what? How can you attack a Supreme Court that you don’t like without destroying its legitimacy?”

Republican-controlled Congress voted to shrink the court to prevent President Andrew Johnson, who opposed Reconstruction reforms and was loathed by both political parties, from filling any vacancies. The court was returned to nine justices when Republicans won the presidency in 1869.

The nation’s last court-packing attempt was in 1937. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, frustrated as the Supreme Court’s conservative majority struck down major elements of his New Deal, threatened to add six more justices. The Supreme Court then upheld FDR’s minimum wage law, prompting the Senate to block it and giving rise to the phrase “the switch in time that saved nine.”

“The traditional narrative is that even though Roosevelt lost the battle, he won the war,” Braver explains. But Braver is skeptical that this narrative is accurate: Evidence indicates that the court was ready to rule minimum wage constitutional before Roosevelt announced his plan and in response to other less devastating threats by Congress to curb the court.

But do those failed past attempts at court-packing mean that expanding the court won’t work now? Not necessarily, Braver says. “History doesn’t repeat itself and traditions don’t bind; they’re only there to help us think through the present,” he says. “It’s hard to know what might happen in this situation. But history suggests there’s a heavy burden of presumption against court-packing.”

Other possible tactics

Court-packing has always been a controversial tactic, which is why it’s rarely attempted, Braver says. “People were really afraid that you’d be permanently damaging the Supreme Court: You pack, I pack, and then what? How can you attack a Supreme Court that you don’t like without destroying its legitimacy?”

Congress does have other options, including stripping the court’s jurisdiction over a statute or preventing the court from meeting for a year. Both approaches have been used before.

“The difference between those measures and court-packing is they are reversible,” Braver says. “It doesn’t have that tit-for-tat kind of escalation. In other words, while court-packing perverts the court, these other measures curb rather than colonize.”

Other proposed court reforms include imposing

term limits. The highest courts in other countries don’t typically have lifelong terms.

“The life term is very aberrational,” Braver says. “Most liberal and conservative law professors think it’s a bad idea, and there has long been bipartisan support to reduce it to eighteen years.”

Adding to the complexity of any possible reforms: Polls show that a majority of Americans trust the Supreme Court more than the other branches of government.

“The Supreme Court is an extremely popular institution,” Braver notes. “The very moment that Democrats are trying to change it is when it’s at a 10-year high of its popularity. Chief Justice John Roberts has been really adept at giving things to both sides.”

But that change would require amending the Constitution, and there is debate about whether that change should apply to only future justices or also sitting justices, and whether justices should have the option to continue to serve on lower courts at the 18-year mark. “There’s a lot of excitement about 18-year terms, but a lot of disagreement about how you would achieve that change,” Braver notes.

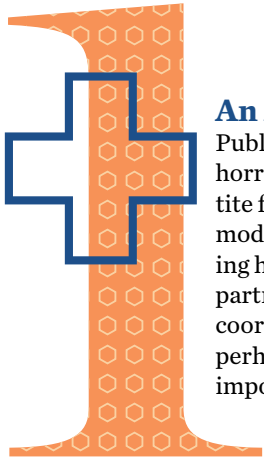
While the Supreme Court might dominate headlines, many in the legal field are more interested in expanding the overloaded lower courts to address the backlog of cases. “There’s a strong case to be made for expanding the lower courts,” Braver says. “There’s a history of it. The last time it was done was under Bill Clinton, and Jimmy Carter made a very, very big expansion of the courts. But it was a less partisan, much less polarizing era.”

Braver thinks that even with unified government, reform is unlikely, though not impossible. “Conservative Democrat Joe Manchin of West Virginia is the key pivotal vote in the Senate and has ruled out packing the court and abolishing the filibuster,” he says. “He might be amenable to some kind of reform, but the problem is that given his margin of victory in the last election shrunk dramatically, he is unlikely to stick his neck out on a touchy issue like this without some kind of Republican support.”

“In times of political polarization like this, it makes change really difficult,” he notes. “Change will come eventually, but it will require either incredibly large electoral victories by the Democrats or a decline in political polarization.” •

21 Reasons for Optimism in 2021

Despite the many challenges facing our country and world — a pandemic, racial injustice, economic woes, to name a few — members of the UW Law community have reason for hope, too. They found that when the world turned upside down, it also allowed new opportunities to see things differently and work differently. While the path forward isn't straightforward or simple, twenty-one members of the Law School community share their perspective on what they look forward to in the time ahead.



An Appetite for Improving Public Health

Public health is a pillar of an equitable, functioning society. Our horrendously inadequate response in 2020 has given us an appetite for improvement in our reliance on the best available data and models; our attention to supply chains; our commitment to reducing health disparities; our support for creative industry-government partnerships; our collaboration with international partners; and our coordination of legal institutions at every level of government. But perhaps the best reason for optimism in 2021 is found in the most important thing we learned from 2020: we are all in this together.



ALTA CHARO
Emeritus Professor



A More Globally Connected Community – Virtually

I'll be intrigued to see how we continue to meet for professional events virtually in 2021. We have learned that we *can* do it! Virtual events are not the same as in-person ones, but they offer some important advantages. When the time zones work out, virtual events enable people from around the world to attend in new ways. Virtual events are better for the environment. They are cheaper and more convenient to attend (for people who can't afford the travel time or expense or who have family obligations). And for academic events, scholars from the Global South don't have to deal with visa applications and denials.



MITRA SHARAFI
Professor



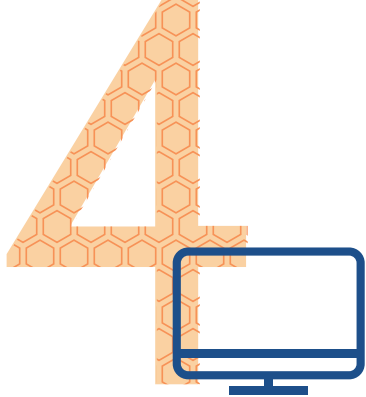
Student Resiliency

Grading (124!) final exams for my first-year Contracts class made me optimistic about 2021. The students' resiliency during such a difficult

semester was so inspiring! Despite flip-flops back and forth between in-person and online classes, technological snafus, a sense of isolation and distance, Zoom fatigue, and the like, the students maintained a sense of positivity, flexibility, humor, and focus, and they hit the exam out of the park. I am very proud of their accomplishments, and I am looking forward to giving them a normal academic experience in the fall.



JASON YACKEE
Professor



Focus on Student Experience

As the Law School's IT team, the last year has been incredibly hectic but also gave us hope. We've been impressed by how students, faculty, and staff put their energy into connecting with one another and using new technologies to do so, even when there were hiccups. To better aid those connections in this challenging environment, we've vastly improved sound recording and voice amplification, and invested heavily in improving remote learning. Everyone has picked up new skills, and this will give us ways to continue to improve in the year ahead. Most of all, from everyone in IT to all the faculty and staff we've worked with, the most encouraging aspect has been a focus on giving students the best experience we could in these unique times.



ERIC GIEFER
Director of IT



Expanding Access to Justice

As librarians, we are optimistic that 2021 will bring improved access to justice. This year will see the continued development of the UW Law Digital Repository and our grant partnership with Open Law Library and Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians to make tribal codes freely available to all. The Law Library will also continue to support alumni, pro se litigants, and attorneys remotely through our chat, email, and phone reference services. Access to legal information is essential for access to justice and is central to the Wisconsin Idea. We look forward to expanding that access in 2021.



KRIS TURNER
Law Librarian



BONNIE SHUCHA
Law Librarian

STICK PEOPLE PRODUCTIONS; ANDY MANIS



A Path toward Democracy

In recent years, many countries have struggled with populist leaders who attack political institutions and curtail rights. When faced with mass protests over socioeconomic inequality, however, Chile did not go this route. Rather, Chileans have embarked on the creation of a new constitution through what is shaping up to be a deliberative,

participative process. I am hopeful that Chile's constitutional convention, which begins this year, will show us a new path toward leveling the playing field while respecting democratic traditions and human rights.



ALEXANDRA HUNEEUS
Professor

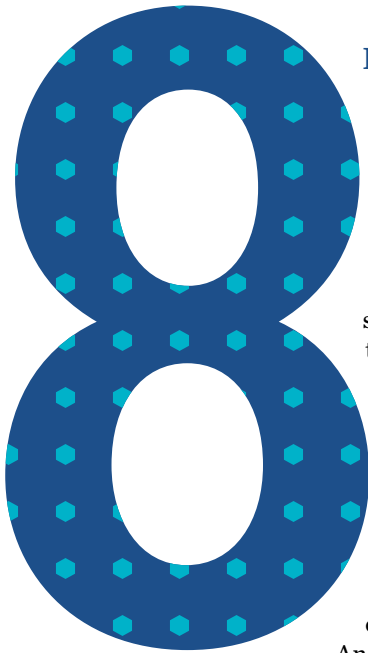
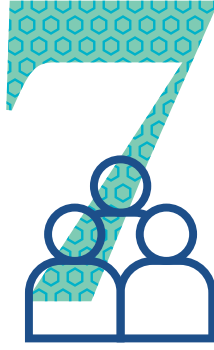
NICK WILKES

Hope for Humanitarian Relief

After years of historically high deportations, family separations, and detentions, I am hopeful that 2021 will be a year when the United States again becomes a leader and a role model by offering humanitarian relief to people around the world. The United States will hopefully commit to offering refuge to as many as 125,000 people, initiate a comprehensive immigration form that will keep families together instead of promoting separation, provide a pathway to citizenship for people with DACA, and offer reparations to the families that our government forcibly separated on our southern border. There is finally a scintilla of hope.



ERIN BARBATO
Director of the Immigrant Justice Clinic



Insights to Carry Us Forward

Perhaps optimism in 2021 can come from what we've discovered about ourselves in these past months. We may have discovered that we're more resilient than we thought — even if that resilience feels hard-fought every day. We may have discovered that we're more patient than we thought — even if patience often has to co-exist with deep frustration. We may have discovered that gratitude and kindness must inform our perspectives each day — especially in light of others' suffering.

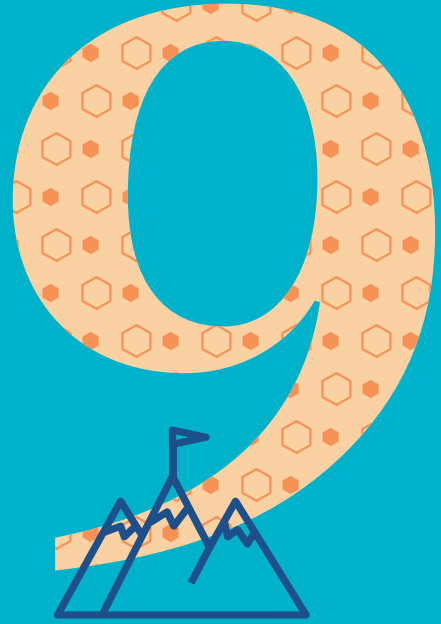
And surely we have rediscovered

just how much we're connected to each

other — and all that means for our lives. Those insights can carry us forward well after the current crisis has passed.



URSULA WEIGOLD
Associate Dean, Experiential Learning

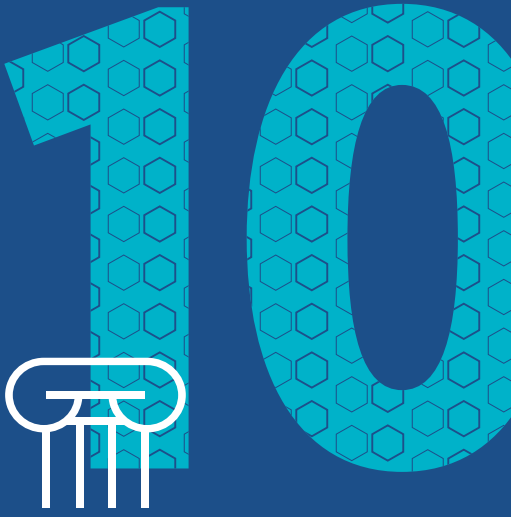


Addressing our Biggest Challenges

These are challenging times, yet 2021 promises to open the door to a more hopeful future. Aside from the vaccines, the new year promises greater attention to the use of law and the constitution to address issues of climate change, racial justice, and economic insecurity, problems that are threatening the sustainability of the country and humanity itself. While political differences remain stark, the degree of political participation and the failure of the attempt to reverse a democratic election is a truly hopeful sign that democracy will be reinvigorated despite the recent trends toward authoritarianism at home and abroad.



HEINZ KLUG
Professor



The Future of American Law Schools

I'm incredibly optimistic for the future of American law schools and the legal profession in 2021 and beyond. It has been a busy application season for us in the Admissions & Financial Aid Office, and we're seeing tremendously qualified applicants demonstrate strong interest in a law degree. We've been impressed by applications from all over the world and throughout our state, and so many of them have done extraordinary things prior to embarking upon their law school journeys. We've seen interest from professional athletes, military veterans, former legislative aides and policymakers, individuals with deep experience in public service, first-generation students, applicants who have faced challenging socioeconomic circumstances, individuals with disabilities, people who are fluent in multiple languages, individuals coming from farming communities, and so many others with unique backgrounds and experiences. These diverse applicants are the future of our school and profession, and I'm optimistic that so many of them will travel through the doors at 975 Bascom Mall as part of their journeys.



REBECCA SCHELLER
Associate Dean for
Admissions & Financial Aid

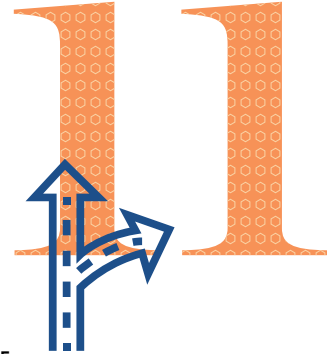
NICK WILKES

Hope from an Elder

This very morning (in January) I heard an elder pray from Turtle Mountain, the Turtle's Heart, the heart of Turtle Island. She said: "Ogema told us that the new people on Turtle Island will face a new world choice, a fork in the road, and they will be free to choose which path." The elder added: "Ogema told us this will happen when [translation: in 2024], but this fork in the road will present itself, and the choice will start to be made, in [translation: 2021]." So, personally, I can't help but be hopeful, I think.



RICHARD MONETTE
Professor



Lessons for Climate Crisis

The current pandemic highlighted many paradoxes — it brought out the best in people and the worst in people. It showed our resilience, our capacity to give, and to make adjustments and sacrifices in the face of a global challenge. It highlighted how minority groups are affected

disproportionately and that we need to address the underlying injustices that led to these disparities. The climate crisis is a similar global challenge requiring us to make big adjustments. Like COVID-19, climate change also impacts the poor and the marginalized disproportionately. Let us draw on our experience from COVID-19 and tackle climate change with human dignity and equal worth of all people as our guiding principle. Together, we can do it.



SUMUDU ATAPATTU
Director of Research Centers



The Strength of the UW Law Community

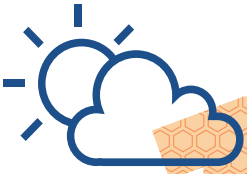
I have the privilege of speaking with a broad cross-section of the UW Law community every day — including students, faculty, staff, and alumni. I’m consistently amazed by the resiliency, idealism, and love for this Law School among everyone I meet. We’ve made it this far together. There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and we will emerge from this pandemic even stronger than before.



DANIEL TOKAJI
Dean



BETH SKOGEN



Unbreakable Entrepreneurial Spirit

Despite the many challenges of the pandemic, at the Law and Entrepreneurship Clinic we’ve witnessed a notable uptick in entrepreneurship: we had more clients from March through December 2020 than we did the year prior. The entrepreneurial and innovative accomplishments of people working together in 2020 give me optimism for 2021! In twelve short months, lifesaving treatments for a virus unknown to the world as the year began were deployed. At “warp speed,” vaccines to immunize all of us against that same virus were developed and are being distributed. New tools for all of us to work, learn, and connect were created and enhanced. Each of us adapted in our own way to a devilishly new and different world. Our combined accomplishments of 2020 give me optimism for 2021 and beyond!



ANNE SMITH
Director of the Law and Entrepreneurship Clinic



Law Students Turned Obstacles into Opportunity

My optimism comes from seeing how our law students turn obstacles into opportunity. The past few months have proven how resilient, kind, and determined these students are when presented with seemingly insurmountable challenges. In the Government and Legislative Clinic and in our Externship Program, our students worked with experts in the legal community on COVID-19 orders and relief, racial and legal reform, elections and security, and myriad other pressing issues, often at a moment’s notice. In virtual classrooms and remote externships, students gained so much more than a strong command of the substantive legal material. They became digital masters, master multitaskers, and strict time managers. They gained a deeper world view and thanks to their dedicated efforts, saw the instant impact of their work.

The pandemic world has produced the most varied, purposive, and palpable learning environment we as faculty could never have scripted on our own. What these students do next with this opportunity, this unique gift of preparation and experience, is what excites me the most.



ERIN MCBRIDE
Director of the Government and Legislative Clinic and Externship Program



BETH SKOGEN



Renewed Focus on Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is a public health concern, but one that is not often talked about. As the stay-at-home policies were implemented due to COVID-19, resources for victims of abuse were limited and access was much more difficult with everyone being home all the time. However, I'm optimistic as we move into 2021. Why? Because we are now talking about it! When the issue of violence in our homes is no longer taboo, we can make progress. Community organizations, particularly locally, haven't always coordinated efforts so well in the past, but now there seems to be a renewal of a desire to reconnect and work. Schools are discussing new alternatives, political leaders and legislators have argued that funds need to be provided to resources that assist victims, and reporters have increased coverage of this issue.

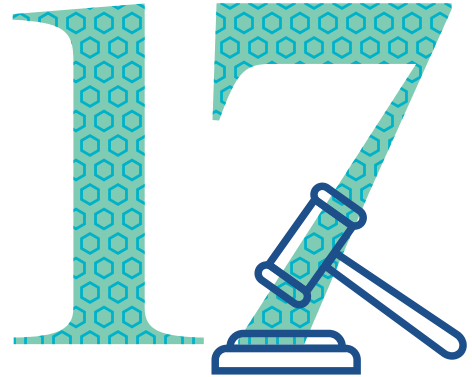


RYAN POE-GAVLINSKI
Director of the VOCA Restraining Order Clinic

TATIANA SHIRASAKI

Addressing the Civil Legal Justice Crisis

2020 shined a floodlight on economic and racial inequality — problems exacerbated by our civil legal justice crisis. We also witnessed accelerated efforts nationally to combat these intertwined crises, including through technology innovations. LIFT Dane is bringing together community and academic partners to leverage the strengths of technology and the superpower of legal and social service helpers with a full launch expected this year. We are optimistic that 2021 will bring continued efforts to combat the civil legal justice gap and concrete outcomes from innovative solutions like our app.



The LIFT
Dane team



Imagining a Better Approach for Healthcare

In 2021 we are free to imagine. Imagine the possibilities if the solutions to our most insidious health inequities are truly driven by partnerships between community members and healthcare and community leaders. Imagine if Black and Brown patients are given a meaningful place at the table and we truly confront the structural racism embedded in the healthcare system. In Dane County, with the largest disparities in infant and maternal mortality in the country, these stakeholders have joined together with urgency to craft real solutions. We are optimistic because change grounded in partnership, humility, and honesty is happening.



JILL JACKLITZ
Co-Director of the Center
for Patient Partnerships



SARAH DAVIS
Co-Director of the Center
for Patient Partnerships

ANDY MANIS (2)

19



Building on Momentum

2020 kept us on our feet. It gave us our fair share of struggle, concern, and sorrow. But 2020 also helped distill

some of the key issues that as a society we must face together — providing hope for a better tomorrow. As someone who studies corporate law, I've observed that 2020 has brought much needed attention to the important role of corporations in our society, their social and environmental impact, and the need for greater diversity and inclusion in corporate leadership. That recognition has already begun translating into concrete action in academia and practice, and I am excited to see how 2021 continues to build on that momentum.



YARON NILI
Assistant Professor

ANDY MANIS

21

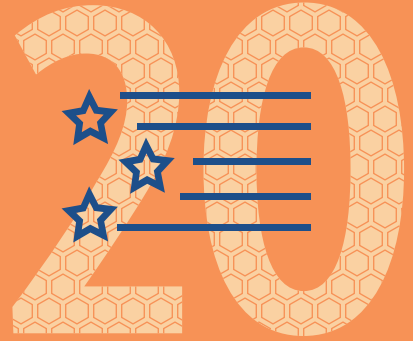


An Engaged and Resilient Alumni Community

Despite the many challenges of 2020, I am heartened by the resilient UW Law community, many of whom have engaged directly with us to see how they can help our students and new graduates succeed as they begin their legal careers. The generosity of our alumni — from donors to mentors to panelists — gives me optimism that despite the challenges we face, our community is engaged and willing to pitch in. •



JINI JASTI
Associate Dean of Alumni Relations
& External Affairs

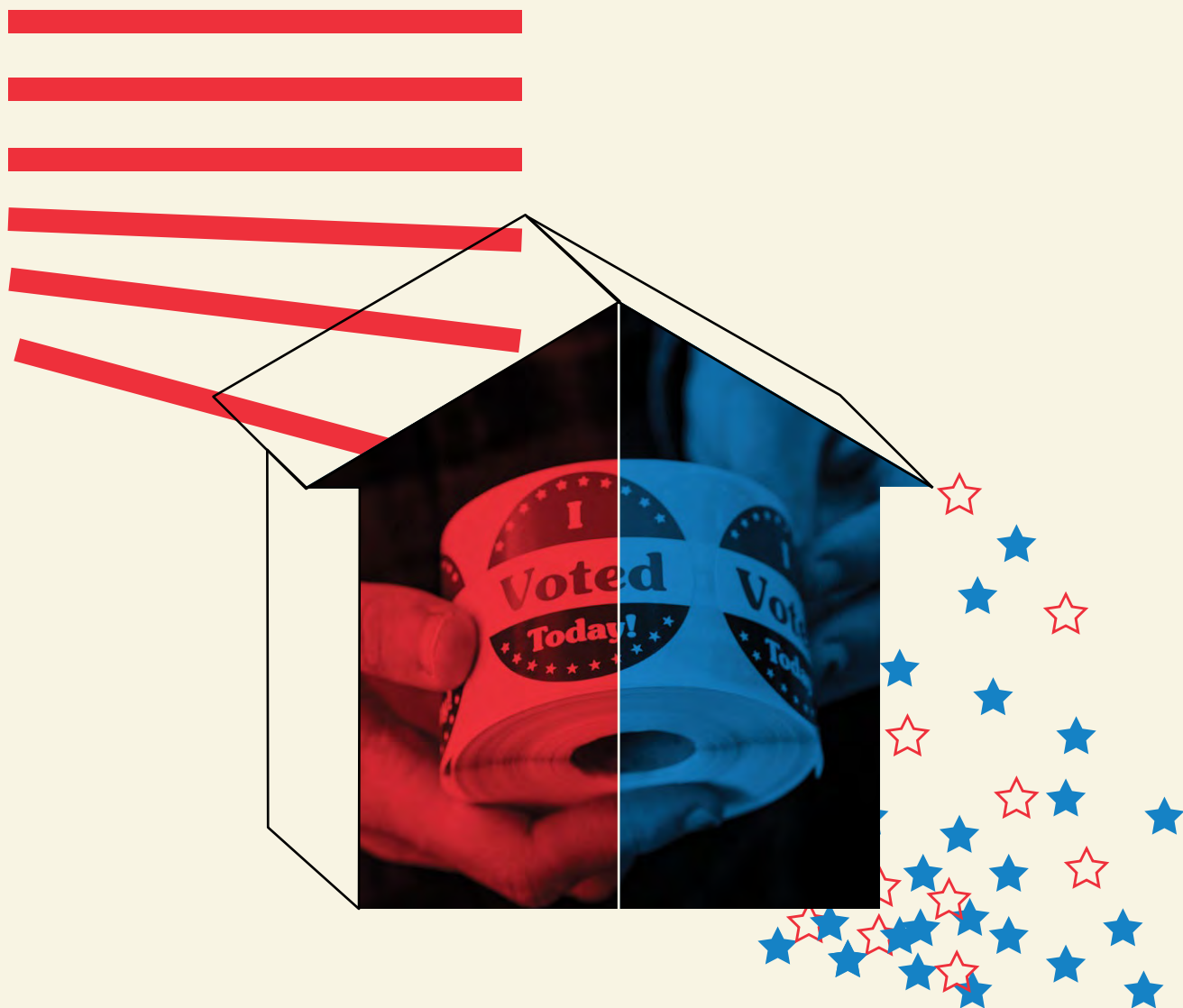


Addressing the Shortcomings of Our Democracy

In 2020, our democracy was tested, and some of its imperfections were laid bare. Yet even in the face of hyperpolarization, disinformation, and institutional dysfunction, we have reasons for hope as we look ahead. In spite of everything, record numbers of voters turned out in 2020, and tens of thousands of heroic local officials and volunteers stepped up to facilitate the casting and counting of ballots with remarkably few glitches. These are strong democratic fundamentals. Americans are engaged and resilient. They want our system to work, and they may be more eager than ever to address its shortcomings and advance its ideals.



ROB YABLON
Associate Professor



A HOUSE DIVIDED: THE STATE OF THE UNION

After a year of crisis, conflict, and change, four professors reflect on what the 2020 election tells us about the state of the Union, and what comes next.

BY JENNY PRICE

If we want to locate the cracks in the foundation of American democracy and the load-bearing walls holding it up, the past year offers a blueprint of the coming legal battles over election laws, ballot access, social media reforms, and how campaigns are funded.

“There are some vulnerabilities in the system that were revealed,” says University of Wisconsin Law School Dean Daniel P. Tokaji. “Democrats and Republicans no longer regard one another as reasonable adversaries but as the enemy, and that’s a real problem, especially in a system like ours that relies upon compromise to get things done.”

Tokaji says the 2020 election was a reaffirmation of democracy, successfully conducted in extraordinary circumstances with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and a candidate who refused to concede despite the results. But it also raised the prospect of some partisan officials — secretaries of state, legislators, and governors — stepping in to change the results. “After this election, the possibility that those officials could actually reverse the will of the people within a state seems greater than it was before,” he says.

ELECTION LAWS ★

In response to larger numbers of voters using mail-in ballots in 2020, state lawmakers on both sides of the political divide introduced hundreds of bills aimed at either expanding ballot access to make it easier to vote or implementing stricter security requirements and limiting early voting periods.

Tokaji says it seems like a “pipe dream” to imagine that Democrats and Republicans could reach a compromise such as agreeing on “reasonable identification requirements” in exchange for changes to voter registration laws.

“The trend has been for blue states to liberalize voting rules and red states to make them more strict,” Tokaji says. “It has been going on for years. It’s going to continue to go on.”

In March, the House of Representatives passed HR 1, a sweeping ethics and election bill that attempts to counter efforts at the state level to restrict voting access. Its prospects in the Senate are uncertain due the 50-50 split between Republicans and Democrats.

“Republicans are talking about voting integrity, while the Democrats are talking about voter suppression. It’s hard to have a shared solution to a problem without a shared understanding of the problem,” says Franciska Coleman, an assistant professor of constitutional law. “Without a shared truth, we’re going to remain a house divided, but a nation can function divided only for so long.”

BETH SKOGEN (2)



Daniel P. Tokaji



Franciska Coleman



Robert Yablon

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS



Steven Wright

NICK WILKES

The battle over voting access indexes the broader national struggle to define the scope of equal citizenship, says Coleman, who researches the constitutional implications of the United States' demographic shift towards a minority-majority society.

"We passed the 14th Amendment centuries ago, but this may be the first time that an almost fully enfranchised nation is seeking to define what equality and equal citizenship really mean — not just as formalities but substantively," she says. "I think that the Capitol riots and election fraud narratives reveal a deep discomfort with definitions of equal citizenship that allow people of color to be the deciding votes for changing the nation in ways some European-Americans oppose."

Seeing fellow citizens as enemies is a threat to democracy, Coleman says, because it can lead people to a point where, rather than share power with those with whom they disagree, they'd prefer to surrender their power to a strong leader or a strong judiciary. So long as those entities promise to suppress the "enemy," citizens will disregard the costs to their own autonomy, she says.

"Fear of the 'other' will cause us to give up our democratic decision-making power in order to keep our opponents from exercising democratic decision-making power," she says. "But that mindset can only lead to a nation that's a judicial oligarchy or elected dictatorship rather than a true democracy. To me, that outcome is what we should fear, not our neighbors."

ABSENTEE BALLOT BATTLE ★

Because absentee and mail-in voting have grown in popularity, controversies about their proper role in the electoral landscape are likely to persist in both legislatures and courts, says Robert Yablon, an associate professor who studies political and election law, constitutional law, federal courts, and statutory interpretation.

Before the election, federal courts declined to weigh in on those challenges or determined that those voting mechanisms are privileges rather than rights. "And so as long as a state is providing enough of an opportunity to vote in person on election day, state officials can argue that providing those other mechanisms really is a discretionary decision," he says. "Given what we saw from the federal courts in 2020, I don't think that you're going to see them jump in and recognize broad constitutional rights to vote absentee or by mail."

On the flip side, Yablon says states that expand absentee or mail-in voting rights may face court challenges of their own. "One question is whether election administrators on their own are authorized to engage in those expansions or whether it's some-

thing that has to come from the state legislature,” he says.

Yablon says the federal courts also seemed unwilling to intervene after the election and had little appetite for the dozens of challenges that were brought to challenge the electoral results. “They didn’t want to play that role,” he says.

SOCIAL MEDIA UNDER THE MICROSCOPE ★

Yablon says one issue to watch in the wake of the insurrection at the US Capitol is whether social media companies reform their platforms in ways that are “more likely to advance democracy and democratic discourse rather than create problems.”

There could be some attempts at federal regulation, though that would be constrained by the First Amendment, Yablon says. Another potential outcome could be broad anti-trust actions aimed at changing the market power of social media companies, he says. Social media companies may also make internal reforms, such as Facebook’s move to create an “independent court” to rule on some content-related issues.

“Some people think that isn’t enough and want these platforms to go even further,” he says. “Social media companies are certainly feeling the pressure to do more to moderate their content and to think about what kind of messages they’re amplifying.”

LOCAL ELECTIONS STILL AT RISK ★

The Supreme Court gutted Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, shortly after Steven Wright left his post in the US Justice Department, where he spent five years working on voting rights litigation. The law had required jurisdictions in Southern states to request permission before making changes to voting laws. “I became an expert in the law that no longer is on the books,” says Wright, a clinical associate professor.

While new legislative proposals to replace the act address more modern means of voter suppression, such as strict voter ID requirements, that weren’t contemplated in 1965 when Section 5 was passed, Wright says “old-school type discrimination” is persistent, especially at the local level.

Wright wrote the 2020 novel *The Coyotes of Carthage*, set in South Carolina and based on his experience working on Section 5 cases. Low funding for local elections in some jurisdictions, combined with lack of full-time professional staff and extremely low turnout, makes them vulnerable to “shenanigans,” he says.

“I’ve been to the elections where there’s only 4 percent turnout,” he says.

Local election officials sometimes violate laws because they don’t know the rules. “People make

up their own rules and sometimes those rules can be discriminatory,” he says. “Sometimes they’re intentionally discriminatory, sometimes they end up having discriminatory results.”

Wright says local elections will also continue to be targets for dark money from anonymous donors, which proliferated in the wake of the US Supreme Court’s 2010 ruling in *Citizens United* that lifted limits on political campaign spending by corporations and other outside groups. “The book deals with what happens when you go into a community where the average campaign budget is \$2,000, but a corporation wants to come in and spend a \$1 million, which distorts the ability of people to make their case and get out their message.”

PROSPECTS FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM ★

The recent House election reform bill requires super PACs and political organizations to make the names of their donors public. Legislation would be the most likely path to reforming campaign finance law, Yablon says.

“We have a Supreme Court that is very skeptical of campaign finance regulation and that is unlikely to change in the near term,” he says.

Public financing remains a constitutional option for campaign finance reform, Yablon says. New York and other cities have expanded matching funding programs that encourages candidates to prioritize smaller donations, he says. Seattle passed an “honest elections” ballot initiative to create a program that gives eligible city residents “democracy vouchers” to donate to candidates for local office.

“I suspect that you may see more of that and it’s possible that you may see that trickle up to the state level, conceivably the federal level, although that might be a heavy lift politically,” Yablon says. “I don’t expect us to overhaul our campaign finance system anytime soon.”

Wright is somewhat optimistic that the rise of populism could bring about progress on campaign finance reform. “There are a lot of people who very much feel that the system is rigged. And campaign finance, I think, is at the heart of that conversation,” Wright says.

Despite the conflict and division, Coleman is also optimistic.

“I do think that there is hope for the future, if we are willing to leave some disagreements to the legislative process rather than relying on judicial musical chairs,” she says. “Each generation is growing up more exposed to difference than the previous one, and I think we can trust them to reach the legislative compromises we could not.” ●





IN FOCUS *Connecting to the Land through Indigenous Lens*

Instructor **Daniel Cornelius '09** co-taught “Land Education,” part of a first-year interest group that connects students with the land through an Indigenous lens. Offered in the fall semester, students gathered online for virtual classes and in person for outdoor classes. “For Indigenous peoples, the land is always teaching,” says Cornelius, a member of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin and an outreach specialist at the Great Lakes Indigenous Law Center in the UW Law School. “Through an Indigenous lens, I’m trying to help students connect to place, so that no matter where they are, they’ll think more deeply about the land and its history.”



JOHN MILLER '06 APPOINTED TO UW BOARD OF REGENTS

Governor Tony Evers appointed **John Miller '06**, the founder and principal of Milwaukee-based Arenberg Holdings venture capital fund, to the UW Board of Regents in February. "I began my career serving the public and believe that I have an affinity for helping government institutions better serve their constituencies," Miller said in a statement. "With the onset of coronavirus and ever-present budgetary challenges, the university system is facing a profound set of dilemmas that require smart advocacy and adherence to the core belief that public universities must play a vital role in improving the health, quality of life, environment, and agricultural sector for all citizens of Wisconsin." Miller also serves on the UW Law School's Board of Visitors.



Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw (LLM '85), the co-founder of the African American Policy Forum, launched "Under the Blacklight," a webinar series that addresses the COVID-19 crisis through an intersectional lens. Crenshaw, who coined the term 'intersectionality,' launched the series in March 2020, and she has since moderated over twenty episodes, exploring racial disparities, financial and political inequities, and the power of narrative.

UW LAW GRADUATES AMONG WISCONSIN WOMEN OF THE CENTURY

When the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* named the most influential women in Wisconsin, two graduates of UW Law School were among those honored.

VEL PHILLIPS '51

"Vel Phillips was a civil rights activist who smashed racial and gender barriers as the first Black woman to graduate from the University of Wisconsin Law School, the first woman to be elected to the Milwaukee Common Council, the first appointed female judge in Milwaukee County, and the first Black person ever elected to statewide office in Wisconsin. As an alderwoman, Phillips drafted a strong open-housing ordinance, introducing it every 90 days between 1962 and 1967, and she marched with young members of the NAACP for 200 nights, facing down racist mobs who hurled threats, rocks, and feces. Her proposed legislation helped inspire the national Fair Housing Act, approved in 1968. One month later, Milwaukee finally adopted her legislation, which was stronger than federal law."

TAMMY BALDWIN '89

"US Senator Tammy Baldwin is a woman of many firsts. Baldwin, a Madison Democrat, was the first Wisconsin woman elected to the US House and later the US Senate. She has also made history as an openly gay woman. In 1998, she became the first openly LGBTQ woman elected to Congress. Then, in 2012, she became the first openly gay person to be elected to the US Senate. Baldwin has talked often about being a recent college graduate in Madison who was inspired to pursue a career in politics in 1984 while watching Geraldine Ferraro take the stage at that year's Democratic National Convention. She has said that while watching Ferraro's speech, she teared up and told herself, 'I can do anything.'"

THOMAS MITCHELL (LLM '99) NAMED 2020 MACARTHUR FELLOW

The “genius grant” will help Mitchell further his mission to help disadvantaged families and communities maintain ownership of their property and real estate wealth.

Thomas Mitchell, a property law scholar, was named a 2020 MacArthur Fellow for his work in reforming laws and developing policy solutions that help Black and other disadvantaged families deprived of land, home, or real estate wealth.

Known as the “genius grant,” the MacArthur fellowship is considered to be among the most prestigious prizes in academia. The distinction comes with a \$625,000 stipend. Mitchell was one of twenty-one fellows in the 2020 class.

He is the principal drafter of the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act (UPHPA), which was promulgated by the Uniform Law Commission to improve the ability of families that own heirs’ property to preserve their real estate wealth. It has been enacted

in seventeen states and the US Virgin Islands.

Heirs’ property, a subset of tenancy-in-common property, tends to be created in the absence of a will or estate plan and results in “undivided ownership,” which means each of the legally defined heirs owns a fractional interest in the property (rather than a specific piece or portion of the property). After several generations, ownership of land and other property, including single-family homes, may be fragmented among many heirs, any one of whom can sell their fractional ownership or seek to force a sale of the land, with or without the agreement of all owners.

The UPHPA’s three principal reforms — a co-owner buyout provision, guidance for courts to apply both economic and

non-economic considerations in their deliberations about how to resolve a partition action, and an innovative sales procedure designed to produce prices approximating a property’s fair market value — will enable more families to avoid involuntary and predatory disposition of their real estate.

Through his continuing advocacy to enact the UPHPA into law in several additional states and his other state and national law reform and policy work, Mitchell is remedying a major factor in the racial wealth gap and creating mechanisms for many more disadvantaged property owners and communities throughout the country to secure their land and preserve their wealth.

“Individuals with stable property rights are better able to participate in meaningful ways in our society. Growing up in San Francisco, I witnessed with much sadness the dramatic displacement of African-American residents and businesses that occurred in part because the people affected lacked secure property rights,” said Mitchell in a statement. “As a lawyer, I realized that certain property laws needed to be changed and better policies needed to be developed to give urban and rural African Americans, and other vulnerable people, stronger property rights that could enable them to build wealth and preserve important aspects of their history and culture.”

Mitchell, a graduate of UW Law School’s William H. Hastie Fellowship Program, was a professor at UW Law School before joining the Texas A&M faculty in 2016.



Vel Phillips statue would honor a lifetime of firsts

As the first woman and first African American to ascend to major political posts in Wisconsin, Vel Phillips' career was full of firsts. The lifelong civil rights leader was the first Black woman to graduate from the UW Law School and she worked against racial discrimination in many roles throughout her career.

Now, the board in charge of decorating the State Capitol has agreed to create a subcommittee to explore a permanent tribute to Phillips. The inspiration to build a monument to Phillips stems from racial justice protests in 2020, during which two statues were torn down outside of the State Capitol. Advocates seek to build a monument to Phillips, celebrating her tremendous accomplishments and taking a first step toward more visible representation at the Capitol. If erected, it would be the first statue at the Capitol to honor a person of color. Tentative plans include placing the statue at the South Hamilton Street entrance to the Capitol.

Returning home to Milwaukee after her 1946 graduation from Howard University, she married the love of her life, (Warren) Dale Phillips, and joined him to attend the University of Wisconsin Law School. She earned her law degree in 1951.

"I was the first Black woman to graduate from the Law School," Phillips recalled in *Dream Big Dreams*, a 2015 documentary about her life. "I just thought that was the biggest thing that could happen to me."

As law students, the Phillipses were assigned to housing where neighboring students soon petitioned to bar future

Black residents. The couple found another UW community that was more welcoming to them and their two sons, but she remained deeply affected by the experience. Inspired by advice from US Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall to use her profession to make the world better, she would go on to win a historic fight for fair housing and social justice.

Elected in 1956 as the first woman and first African American on the Milwaukee Common Council, Phillips sponsored legislation to outlaw racial discrimination in city housing ordinances. Success took six years of political tumult and 200 days of marches and nonviolent community protests, but she was eventually recognized nationally for her leadership.

In 1971, Phillips left her role as "Madam Alderman" when she was appointed to the Milwaukee County judiciary. She was Milwaukee's first female judge, as well as Wisconsin's first African-American judge. In 1978, she was the first woman and first African American to be elected as Wisconsin's secretary of state. Phillips thus became the first African-American woman in the nation elected to statewide office.

On campus, Phillips is honored at the UW-Madison Lakeshore Residence, now named Phillips Hall. A special tribute to Phillips is also located in the Wisconsin Alumni Association's Alumni Park, which opened in 2017. A sculpture of a megaphone with the front page of the *Milwaukee Sentinel* commemorates Phillips' arrest during a rally to support an open-housing ordinance in the city.



Shalanda Baker (LLM '12) named deputy director for energy justice by Biden administration

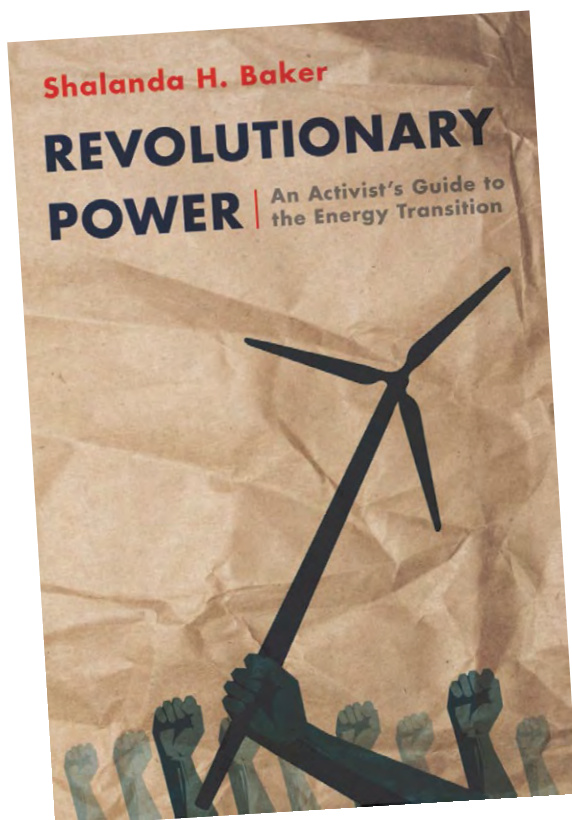
Shalanda Baker, a professor of law, public policy, and urban affairs, has joined President Biden's administration as deputy director for energy justice at the Department of Energy. Baker, a graduate of UW Law's William H. Hastie Fellowship Program, is taking a leave of absence from Northeastern University School of Law to serve in the administration.

A leading expert on environmental and energy law, Baker co-founded the Initiative for Energy Justice in 2018 to support the delivery of equity-centered energy policy research and technical assistance to policymakers and frontline communities across the country. The organization created a scorecard to guide communities and policymakers creating clean energy policies to ensure they accounted for often marginalized voices. In part because of this work, Baker was selected for the energy justice role.

Biden created the position to tackle climate crisis and build an equitable clean energy future, according to a Department of Energy statement. Biden has promised that more than 40 percent of all administration climate investments will go to environmental justice communities — populations near oil refineries or other fuel production plants where residents face heightened pollution.

In an interview on the *Science Friday* podcast, Baker said, "In my mind, energy justice is really about ensuring that the benefits and burdens of the energy system are equitably distributed. And further, it's about [not] censoring the voices of those who have been most harmed and most marginalized by the existing system. So it's a paradigm shift. It's about participation, and it's about equity, and ensuring that folks have a leg up in this new system."

In her new role, one early priority is addressing the growing home energy bills overwhelming many families that are jobless during the COVID-19 pandemic. Baker believes that access to clean energy and bill assistance are key to recovery and to addressing inequities. It's a topic she explored in depth in her new book, *Revolutionary Power: An Activist's Guide to the Energy Transition*, which argues that energy policy should be the next domain to advance civil rights. Examining how the energy system has negatively impacted communities of color, Baker describes the book as "part love story, part memoir, and part policy guide."



1960s

Thomas M. French '61 received the Vermont Bar Association 2020 Pro Bono Award for his post-retirement work in assisting military veterans to obtain monthly compensation benefits for service-connected disabilities caused by diseases or injuries that occurred while the veterans were serving on active duty. In the past four years, French has brought fifteen actions and succeeded in fourteen, resulting in more than \$1 million awarded to his clients. He also won increased disability awards and benefits for nine clients. Previously, he worked as a US Air Force judge advocate both in the United States and Germany, as well as working as a lawyer in private practice in Brattleboro, Vermont.

1970s

Bruce Meredith '73 and Mark Paige '07 recently published “Reversing Rodriguez: A Siren Call to a Dangerous Shoal” in the *Houston Law Review*. The article examines recent cases attempting to find a constitutional right to education.

Patricia Brady '76 authored *A History of the University of Wisconsin System*, recently published by the University of Wisconsin Press. Brady retired as general counsel of the University of Wisconsin System in 2010.

1980s

Raymond Taffora '86, UW–Madison's vice chancellor for legal affairs, plans to retire this summer. Taffora, a former general counsel to then-Governor Tommy Thompson and former deputy attorney general at the Wisconsin Department of Justice, received both his undergraduate and law degrees at UW–Madison. He was appointed by Chancellor Blank in September 2013. Among the areas that Taffora worked on during his tenure were the establishment of the Office of Compliance; integration of the University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation, School of Medicine and Public Health, and UW Hospital; creation of new faculty tenure policies in light of the removal of statutory tenure; creation of a new Title IX program; and public records and First Amendment issues.

1990s

Terence Thomas '93 was named to the Board of Trustees of The Helm at the John A. and Marlene L. Boll Life Center in January 2021. Thomas is co-founder of Thomas Group Consulting, Inc., a community engagement, receivership services, and business services company headquartered in Detroit. Actively involved in the community, he is a member of the Grosse Pointe City Council and serves on the boards of St. John Hospital Foundation, Loyola High School, Covenant House of Michigan, and the Board of Advisors for the University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy.



Jennifer Carleton '96, an attorney at Howard & Howard, is sharing her experience in gaming law as an adjunct professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Boyd School of Law. Carleton is teaching an online course titled “Special Topics: Indian Gaming Law.” Carleton has spent her entire legal career in gaming, first as in-house counsel for an Indian tribe and now as an adviser to premier gaming companies around the globe. Prior to joining Howard & Howard, she was senior staff attorney for the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin.

Christian A. Jenkins '95 was elected to a six-year term as a trial court judge on the Hamilton County, Ohio, Court of Common Pleas. Jenkins is managing partner of Minnillo & Jenkins Co., LPA based in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Patricia Baker '96 was appointed as a circuit court judge in Portage County, making her the first woman judge in county history. Baker is a family-law mediator and has served as guardian ad litem.

Lee Jones '97 was selected to manage the employment law and government ethics section for the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

Alethia Nancoo '97 was recently nominated and confirmed to the Global Executive Board for Squire Patton Boggs. Based in the firm's Washington, DC, office, Nancoo's practice focuses on public, private, and project debt finance, with particular emphasis on capital markets, infrastructure construction, airport, toll road, and surface transportation, mixed-use multifamily housing, and water and sewer utility sectors. She advises various public and private issuers, nonprofit corporations, and investment banking institutions on a wide range of transactions in the US and the Caribbean. Nancoo also serves as co-chair of the firm's Global Inclusion & Diversity Committee and is the first African-American woman to serve on the firm's board.

Timothy Stewart '97 was elected as DeWitt's new firm president and managing partner. He is also currently the managing partner of its Brookfield office. Stewart, who joined DeWitt in 2005, is an employee benefits and ESOP attorney.

Nia Trammell '98 was appointed as a Dane County circuit court judge, becoming the first Black woman to serve as a judge outside of Milwaukee County. Trammell has previously served as the deputy secretary for the Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services, a senior administrative law judge for the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, and an attorney in private practice.



Darius Davenport '02 was appointed to serve on the board of directors with the Norfolk Innovation Corridor and elected as the Norfolk division chair with the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce. A partner at Crenshaw, Ware & Martin, he chairs the firm's cybersecurity and data privacy and government and public sector practice groups. He also serves as the infrastructure and connectivity committee co-chair for the Hampton Roads Alliance 757 Recovery & Resilience Action Framework and on the advisory board for the Old Dominion School of Cybersecurity.

2000s

David Smith '02 was promoted to partner at Pryor Cashman in New York. Smith is a member of the corporate group and corporate trust practices and a member of the firm's Diversity Committee. He has extensive experience with public and private debt financing, project finance, and structured finance. His clients have included various trustees and collateral agents in multi-billion-dollar transactions on domestic and international fronts in numerous industries, including

financial institutions, pharmaceutical companies, oil service conglomerates, branded consumer products, and more.

Jason Myatt '03 was named partner at Gibson Dunn. Myatt's practice focuses on complex commercial and financial litigation and recognition and enforcement of international arbitration awards and judgments.

Michele Perreault '03 was named the managing partner for DeWitt's Madison office. Perreault chairs the firm's family law group and has an appellate practice representing clients in the Wisconsin Court of Appeals and Supreme Court. She has represented thousands of clients in cases ranging from very personal issues related to children and families to cases with hundreds of millions of dollars at stake. In addition to her family law litigation experience, she is also an experienced mediator, helping parties resolve cases without the need for court intervention.

Kelda Roys '04 was recently elected to the Wisconsin State Senate to represent District 26, covering most of the City of Madison, as well as Shorewood Hills and the Town of Madison. This district was represented for nearly six decades by another UW Law graduate, Senator Fred Risser, who retired. Roys is an entrepreneur and owns OpenHomes, an innovative real estate brokerage, and is a commissioner on Madison's Community Development Authority. She previously served two terms in the Wisconsin State Assembly.

Emily (Gold) LaGratta '08 recently published a book of interviews with twenty senior prosecutors from around the country about their early decision-making practices. The book is one of the first products published under the justice reform consulting firm she launched last year and is available for free download at lagratta.com.

Kathryn Conyers '09 opened Viola Heritage Breads with co-owner Carla Briggs. The New Orleans bakery celebrates Black entrepreneurship and

culinary heritage. Featured on the King Arthur website as well as other media outlets, the bakery is getting attention for its small-batch sandwich loaves featuring ingredients like oats, whole wheat, rosemary, and sweet potato.

2010s

Ashley Senary Dahlberg '10 was appointed to the San Antonio Bar Foundation's Fellows Program class of 2021. Selection is by nomination only and restricted to members of the San Antonio Bar Association (SABA). Fellows must demonstrate professional achievement, an exemplary reputation, and commitment to the legal community. Senary Dahlberg is a senior associate at Norton Rose Fulbright in San Antonio. Her practice focuses on financial services and securities litigation.



Richelle Martin '11 is the managing director of the Winnow Fund, a venture capital fund that invests in Wisconsin-based startups. The fund recently reached its goal of raising \$6 million and plans to invest in existing startup companies and entrepreneurs at colleges and universities in Wisconsin.

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class-notes](http://gargoyle.law.wisc.edu/class-notes)



Elliot Vilders '14 was appointed as shareholder at Howard & Howard. Vilders focuses on domestic and cross-border mergers and acquisitions, domestic real estate transactions, and general corporate matters. He advises clients through all stages of the business cycle, from formation through growth and the sale of the business.

Sherri Ann Charleston '12 was named the chief diversity and inclusion officer at Harvard, where she will serve as a senior central administrator. Charleston will prioritize and champion diversity and inclusion, working in collaboration with administration and faculty leadership across the university. A historian trained in US history with a focus on race, women, gender, citizenship, and the law, and an attorney with a specialization in constitutional and employment law, Charleston most recently served as the assistant vice provost for diversity, equity, and inclusion and chief affirmative action officer at the University of Wisconsin.

Brandie Morgenroth '12 has been promoted to a shareholder at Nilan John-

son Lewis. She practices in the product liability, mass tort, and business litigation practice areas.

Richard Orton '12 has been elected as a member of Gass Weber Mullins LLC in Milwaukee. His practice focuses on products liability, general liability, professional liability, and commercial, construction, and insurance litigation and appeals.

Drew Wisniewski '12 has been elected as partner at Latham & Watkins LLP in Washington, DC. He is a member of the firm's litigation and trial department whose practice focuses on white collar defense, internal and government investigations, and related litigation. He helps clients navigate a range of criminal investigation and civil litigation matters involving alleged financial crimes, criminal and civil fraud, deceptive business practices, and other complex regulatory and cross-border issues.

Jacob Harris '14 has joined Husch Blackwell as an associate in its Madison office. He is part of the commercial litigation team.

Michael Stein '15 has been named counsel for the US House of Representatives Committee on Small Business. Prior to working for Congress, Michael was with the Organic Farming Research Foundation.

Megan Renslow '17 joined Moss & Barnett's litigation department. Renslow assists businesses and individuals with commercial disputes. Prior to joining Moss & Barnett, Megan served as a judicial law clerk at the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

2020s

Robert M. Ling III '20 joined Shook, Hardy & Bacon as an associate in the firm's Seattle office, where he practices intellectual property litigation. Ling brings his experience as a software developer for Microsoft to Shook. He will work with technology clients in intellectual property, dealing with computer and software-related intellectual property law matters.



ANDY MANIS

Shirley Abrahamson, the first female chief justice in Wisconsin's Supreme Court, died December 19, 2020. She was 87. Abrahamson was Wisconsin's longest service Supreme Court justice, having served for forty-three years before retiring in 2019. Appointed to the Court by Governor Patrick Lucey in 1976, Abrahamson went on to be the first woman to serve as chief justice when she assumed the role in 1996.

Abrahamson earned her JD at Indiana Law School before attending UW Law School, where she earned her Doctor of Juridical Science.

In 1962, Abrahamson became the first woman hired by La Follette Sinykin, the Madison firm co-founded by former governor Philip La Follette, grandson of Belle Case La Follette. She

stayed for fourteen years, making partner and leaving only when appointed a justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court in 1976.

Abrahamson remained the lone woman on the Supreme Court until 1993, becoming chief justice in 1996. (Today, six of the seven justices are women.)

Her reputation stretched far beyond the borders of Wisconsin. Recognized as a top legal scholar nationally and as a leader among state judges, Abrahamson participated in more than 3,500 written decisions. In 2004, she received the inaugural Dwight D. Opperman Award for Judicial Excellence from the American Judicature Society, which cited her efforts to expedite responses for child-related cases and to develop a more understandable system for self-representation.

For many years, she traveled extensively on behalf of the United States Information Agency, the United States Agency for International Development, and the International Human Rights Law Group, meeting with lawyers, judges, and women's groups in places such as Pakistan, Malaysia, and Russia.

During a 2019 ceremony for Abrahamson, US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said in a video message, "Among jurists I have encountered in the United States and abroad, Shirley is the very best."

"As lawyer, law teacher, and judge, she has inspired legions to follow in her way, to strive constantly to make the legal system genuinely equal and accessible to all who dwell in our fair land," said Ginsburg.

We remember and honor faculty and staff who have served the UW Law School community and who are no longer with us.

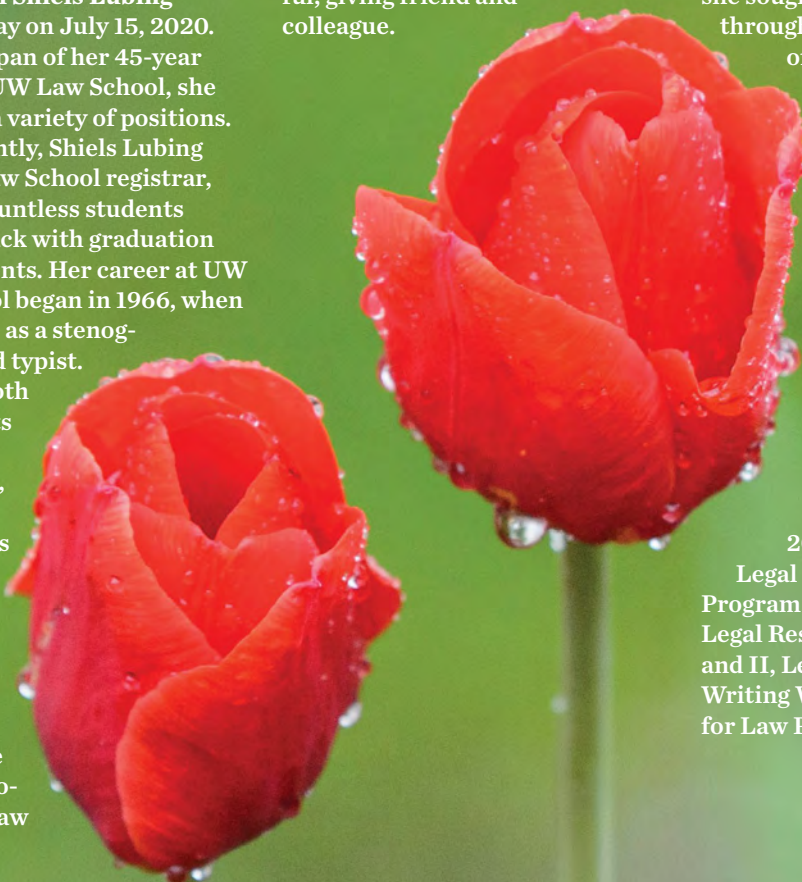
Lynda Hicks passed away on July 9, 2020. Hicks was a longtime employee of the Law School, where she served as support staff in the main office. In retirement, she enjoyed painting, volunteering, and advocacy. Colleagues remember her for her kindness and sense of humor.

Mary Beth Shiels Lubing passed away on July 15, 2020. Over the span of her 45-year career at UW Law School, she served in a variety of positions. Most recently, Shiels Lubing was the Law School registrar, helping countless students stay on track with graduation requirements. Her career at UW Law School began in 1966, when she served as a stenographer and typist. Beloved both by students and her colleagues, Shiels Lubing was known for her warm smile, unflappable approach, and deep knowledge of the history of the Law School.

Betty Karweick '85 passed away on December 10, 2020. After graduating from UW Law School, she practiced law for several years with firms in Minneapolis and Milwaukee. She then served as a law librarian and instructor in legal research at several law schools, including UW Law. Here, her duties gradually shifted, and she eventually worked full-time in the Legal Research and Writing Program. She retired in 2005. Colleagues remember her care for law students, passion for libraries, and for being a wonderful, giving friend and colleague.

Doris Wallsch passed away on October 28, 2020. Wallsch worked at the Law School for twenty-six years, serving in various roles, including as secretarial staff and as a supervisor in the main office. Remembered as being kind and unflappable, she was a cherished colleague.

Professor Trina Tinglum '89 passed away on March 22, 2021. Tinglum was a popular teacher who was devoted to law students both academically and personally. Even during her illness, she sought to help students through a difficult year and offered office hours that were quickly filled to capacity. A beloved friend and colleague, Tinglum will be remembered for her kindness, dedication, and empathy toward others. She felt that teaching was her calling and often said, "How lucky I am to get to do a job I love so much." Tinglum joined the UW Law faculty in 2012 as a lecturer in the Legal Research and Writing Program. Her courses included Legal Research and Writing I and II, Legal Sources, Law Firm Writing Workshop, and Writing for Law Practice.



1940s

Clifford D. Livingston '42
 Jerome M. Fisher '48
 Glenn R. Coates '49
 Vernon R. Molbreak '49
 Cody Splitt '49

1950s

Harold H. Emch '50
 Wilbert E. Schauer '50
 Vernon A. Swanson '50
 Victor B. Gerdes '51
 John R. Broadnax '52
 Robert E. Gilbert '52
 Sherwin C. Peltin '52
 William L. Seymour '53
 Justin Sweet '53
 Walter D. Thurow '53

Sally Weintraub '53
 Norman C. Anderson '54
 Norman J. Fons '54
 Alexander Hopp '54
 Jerome A. Maeder '54
 John H. Bowers '55
 F. Anthony Brewster '55
 Laurence C. Hammond '55
 Barbara Heaney '55
 Gordon A. Rice '55
 Lawrence Clancy '56
 Mark E. Leistikow '56
 E. Thomas Schilling '56
 Davis A. Donnelly '57
 Herbert O. Brickson '58
 Walter D. Jacobs '58
 Boyd F. Henry '59
 John C. Murphy '59
 C. Duane Patterson '59
 S. Dean Pies '59
 Harry K. Schoff '59

1960s

Burton F. Natarus '60
 Andre M. Saltoun '60
 James C. Hartwig '61
 James R. Hebbe '61
 Frank L. Mallare '61
 Richard L. Merkel '61
 Alphonsus C. Murphy '61
 Thomas R. Timken '61
 Shirley S. Abrahamson '62
 James L. Fetterly '62

Allen K. Kibler '62
 Carl B. Noelke '64
 Robert C. Onan '64
 Ronald J. Roessler '64
 Jerome F. Pogodzinski '65
 Allen L. Samson '65
 Joseph W. Skupniewitz '66
 David P. Cusick '68
 David D. Lucci '68
 Gary M. Luck '68
 John H. Jones '69
 James M. Miles '69
 Paul E. Root '69

1970s

Frank J. Crisafi '70
 Virginia A. Wolfe '71
 Stephen G. Katz '73
 Michael M. Cassidy '74
 Frederick T. Rasmussen '74
 Rodney A. Zemke '74
 Roger W. Le Grand '75
 Daniel W. Linehan '77
 C. William W. Foust '78
 Emilio E. Lopez '78
 Pierce A. McNally '78
 Joseph D. Obenberger '79

1980s

Laurel B. Berg '80
 John H. Priebe '80
 Randall M. Skiles '80
 James E. Vculek '80
 Judith Milke '81
 Betty J. Karweick '85
 Patricia Z. Risser '85
 William J. Richards '87
 Lynn M. Zuehlsdorf-Mack '88
 Joan L. Eads '89
 Mark C. Veldey '89

1990s

Colleen A. Barnett '90
 Thomas P. O'Donnell '91
 Dawn D. Newcomb '94

2000s

Ramon Alvarado '05

2010s

Riyad E. Moe '18



Shabnam Lotfi, the founder of Lotfi Legal, specializes in immigration law.

Describe your current job.

As an immigration attorney, my current job is to help people get one step closer to reaching the American Dream. People from all over the world contact our firm for assistance with navigating the very complex, convoluted US immigration system. They share their stories, dreams, timelines, aspirations, and concerns. My job is to understand all of that, analyze that information against the US immigration laws, and offer viable paths to achieving their goals.

What's the most rewarding aspect of your work?

Winning. I thrive off of hearing complex stories and having to use every ounce of creativity in my body to come up with a solution. Some cases are easy, but many others are 3D puzzles with multiple tiers of complex obstacles in the way. I enjoy the mental challenge. And getting to be a part of the joy my clients feel when I'm able to secure a win for them is an experience like no other.

What advice would you give to a new lawyer?

Take time to become self-aware. Figure out who you are and what you like. Life is short and it's not worth being in the wrong job. When you find the right job for you, you'll know, because you'll work harder than you've ever worked in your life. Not because you have to, but because you want to.

As someone working in immigration law, there has been significant change over the last few years. What has that meant for you and your clients?

Depression, anxiety, and perseverance. The last four years have

been a nightmare, and possibly the toughest years ever for people wanting to immigrate to the United States. Numerous travel bans were put in place. Cases were delayed indefinitely. Families were separated, stranded. Dreams and career opportunities were shattered. It was a close-up look at the cruelty of a system that is too often insensitive to the actual needs of people. It was bureaucracy on steroids.

With a new administration, what changes are you seeing or anticipating in your field?

We're hoping that a sense of normalcy and stability will be restored. Also, the immigration bill proposed by the new administration has a lot of provisions that would help millions of immigrants and their families; we just have to hope that as much of it as possible is able to make it through a polarized Congress.





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