

# TRANSCRIPT

FALL 2025

## Making History: Rebecca E. Zietlow Named College's 14th Dean

Zietlow becomes the first woman to lead  
Toledo Law as Dean

### Inside this Issue:

Raising the Bar Fund Recipients  
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Affairs and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs  
Upcoming Events and more



COLLEGE OF LAW

THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

**THE POWER TO DO**



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Transcript is published once a year by the College of Law in collaboration with The University of Toledo Office of Marketing and Communications.

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# Dean's Letter



**As we enter the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year, I am pleased to share some updates and highlights from the past year.**

I am delighted to report that The University of Toledo College of Law is continuing to grow and attract top applicants. This year, our applications are up a full 30% from the fall of 2024, and our number of applications are the highest in the past ten years with students with excellent credentials from all over the world!

The good news extends to bar passage and employment rates. On the February 2025 bar exam, Toledo graduates achieved the highest passage rate in the state of Michigan for first-time takers. In Ohio, our bar passage rate was the third best in the state. This spring, our 2024 graduates had the second highest rate of employment in J.D. required or J.D. plus jobs since the College of Law began taking records in 1999, narrowly missing our mark from last year. Many thanks to all of the College of Law faculty and staff for their hard work in supporting our students' success.

I am also happy to report that the College of Law has hired four excellent faculty members who will start in the fall of 2025. Jason Steed joins us from the University of Kentucky College of Law. David T. Harold '00, a former chief assistant prosecutor and Toledo Law alum, will be stepping up from an adjunct position to full-time. Jeffrey Schmitt joins us from the University of Dayton School of Law after serving as their assistant dean for graduate programs since 2020. Finally, Katharine Talbott '97 will be joining us as an assistant professor of legal writing after working at the Sixth District Court of Appeals. All four of our new professors bring extensive practice experience, are dedicated to scholarship, and are excellent teachers. I am so glad that they are joining us.

As we look forward, we strive to continue teaching our students about the Toledo Way and connecting them to our amazing alumni. Last fall we began our Toledo Way Series, and through it, brought back notable alumni; the Honorable Myron Duhart '96, the Honorable Jack Zouhary '76, Sean McNulty '94, Jeffrey Bogart '72, Susan Hurst '84, and Corey Minor Smith '01, to celebrate the tradition of collegiality, respect, and integrity that marks the Toledo community and our community at the College of Law.

It has been one of the greatest honors of my career to be named the 14th dean of the College of Law. I am grateful for the many opportunities to meet and work with our alumni, rekindling relationships with former students and starting brand-new friendships. I look forward to more outreach in the coming year.

I count myself fortunate to lead a legal community of alumni, students, faculty, staff, and friends who share the College of Law's dedication to excellence. Together, we support our future leaders by providing the very best in legal education, upholding our professional and individual values, and fostering a sense of community regionally, nationally, and globally.

Warm regards,

Rebecca E. Zietlow, J.D.  
Dean and Professor of Law  
The University of Toledo College of Law



#150

Ranked by U.S. News  
& World Report 2024

85.54%

Ultimate Bar Pass Rate  
in 2025

23%

First generation college  
students in 2024

81%

First generation  
law student in 2024

3.58

Entering class GPA  
fall 2024

60%

Women in entering  
class 2024

#1

Michigan Bar Passage  
Rate for first-time takers  
in February 2025

#3

Overall Ohio Bar  
Passage Rate  
in February 2025

## Exceptional Education at an Affordable Price

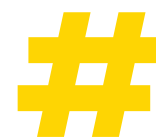
Toledo Law offers a phenomenal education at one of the lowest tuition rates of any law school in the region. We are thrilled to offer merit scholarships to most of our students.

\$18,000

Median first-year merit scholarship

63%

Received merit scholarship



BY THE

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# College News



## Katie Carollo named Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

Katie Carollo '07 was named assistant dean for student affairs at The University of Toledo College of Law on June 30, 2025.

In this role, Assistant Dean Carollo will help coordinate a variety of services and programs to enrich the overall experience of Toledo Law students and to support their academic, professional, and personal development. Her portfolio will include student organizations, character and fitness disclosures, and student well-being. She will also serve as the advisor to the Student Bar Association.

Carollo was previously the director of the Office of Professional Development (OPD) at the College of Law, where she worked with law students and graduates on career development for the legal profession. Before joining OPD, she was a contracts specialist at a local industrial contractor and an associate at a private law firm in Toledo with a focus on litigation defense.

Carollo earned her B.A. with honors in history from Ohio State University and her J.D. magna cum laude from Toledo Law.

She currently serves on the board of the Access to Justice Campaign and the Anthony Wayne Youth Foundation. She is also a member of the Toledo Bar Association, American Bar Association, Ohio State Bar Association, Federal Bar Association, and National Association for Law Placement.

"I am honored to step into the role of assistant dean for student affairs. Throughout my career, working with students has been an especially rewarding experience, and I am grateful for the opportunity to continue that commitment in this new capacity," Carollo said.

"I look forward to supporting our students and student organizations to equip them for success in law school and the legal profession."



## Evan Zoldan named Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

Evan C. Zoldan assumed the role of associate dean for academic affairs for the College of Law in July 2025. He succeeds Geoffrey Rapp, who is departing Toledo Law after 21 years of service. "I am delighted to take on this new, challenging role," Zoldan said. "I am looking forward to continuing to serve the College of Law and the broader University of Toledo community."

Professor Zoldan researches legislation, administrative law, and state and local government issues. His work has been cited by both federal and state courts and in briefs, treatises, and scholarly works. He is a past chair of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Legislation and Law of the Political Process.

Professor Zoldan also serves as the director of the College of Law's Legal Institute of the Great Lakes, a multidisciplinary research center, founded in 1993, that supports research, maintains publications, and sponsors conferences on legal, economic, and social issues of importance to the Great Lakes region of the United States and Canada. He also was recently appointed the John W. Stoepler Professor of Law and Values. This endowed professorship is awarded to a faculty member who is a superior teacher and scholar, who has established a national or international reputation, and who reflects in teaching and scholarship "a concern for the highest levels of integrity among members of the legal profession."

Professor Zoldan received his law degree, cum laude, from Georgetown University Law Center, where he served as Notes and Articles Editor of Georgetown's Law and Policy in International Business journal. He received his B.A., summa cum laude, from New York University, where he studied political philosophy. Before joining the faculty of Toledo Law, he worked as an associate for Kirkland and Ellis LLP and as a trial attorney for the United States Department of Justice.



## New Faces in Admissions and Communications

Get to know the new faces in the Office of Admissions and Office of Communications at the College of Law.

Briana Palmer '23, assistant director of law admissions, is a two-time graduate of The University of Toledo. She earned her B.S. in Legal Specialties in 2020 and her J.D. from the College of Law in 2023. Palmer started at UToledo as an undergraduate Legal Research and Writing professor. She now brings her passion to the College of Law as assistant director of admissions.

Lauren Smieszek, program coordinator, Office of Admissions, brings over a decade of experience in communications. She earned her B.S. in Tourism, Leisure and Event Planning from BGSU. She joined the College of Law in 2018 as marketing and events coordinator. In January 2025, she transitioned to the Office of Admissions as program coordinator where she supports prospective law students through the admissions process.

Laken Walker, program manager, Financial Aid, is a two-time graduate of The University of Toledo, receiving her B.A. in General Studies and M.Ed. in Higher Education. In 2016 she became staff at Rocket Solution Central where she realized her love of working with students. In December 2024, she joined the College of Law as program manager for financial aid.

J. Judson Lohman, director of communications, joined the College of Law in December 2024. He transitioned from the University Libraries after three years as their event coordinator. He holds a double B.A. in Visual Arts and Theatre from Wittenberg University and is currently completing his M.Des. in Integrative Design at BGSU.

Lauryn Henderson, promotion specialist, joined the College of Law in spring 2025. She graduated in April 2024 from BGSU with a B.A. in Marketing. Previously she served as a marketing and communications intern at O-I Glass, and as the VP of digital marketing and social media for The American Marketing Association at BGSU.



## University of Toledo College of Law Announces Inaugural Recipients of The Raising the Bar Fund

In April, the College of Law named the first class for The Raising the Bar Fund, a new initiative designed to support law students as they prepare to sit for the state bar exam. This fund offers a stipend for basic living expenses such as housing, food, utilities, and transportation to graduating students, to help alleviate financial burdens during the critical 10-week study period leading up to the bar exam.

The inaugural class includes Stacey Alphonse, Joshua Begg, Lynn Hancsak, Corrie Brooke Kettler, Klara Matuskova, and Nathaniel Vanden Brook. These outstanding graduates sat for the bar exam in July and have already secured positions that reflect their commitment to public service and community-focused legal work.

Stacey Alphonse plans to begin her career as an assistant attorney general at the Ohio Attorney General's Office. Joshua Begg will serve as an associate public defender with the Toledo Legal Aid Society. Lynn Hancsak will join the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office as an assistant prosecutor. Corrie Brooke Kettler will work as an associate attorney at the Law Office of Kevin M. Gilhool, PC. Klara Matuskova intends to practice immigration law. Nathaniel Vanden Brook is set to work as an assistant public defender with the Van Buren County Public Defender's Office.

"I think becoming an assistant attorney general, and the platform that I will have will allow me to be able to connect with other individuals," Alphonse said. "It will also allow me to make meaningful change in those individual's lives."

The Raising the Bar Fund reflects Toledo Law's continued commitment to student success, professional readiness, and public service.

## WANT MORE NEWS?

Catch up on the latest Toledo Law news at [utoledo.edu/law/news](https://utoledo.edu/law/news).



# Congratulations, Class of 2025!



Toledo Law held an in-person commencement celebration on Sunday, May 11, in the Student Union Auditorium, where 80 law candidates and graduates were recognized.

**David Beller '04** was the commencement speaker and delivered remarks. He was a first-generation college graduate with a B.S. in biomedical science/public and environmental health from Colorado State University and earned his law degree from Toledo Law, where he founded OUTLaw and the Latino Law Students Association, chaired Moot Court, and received the 2004 Dean's Award. His dedication to justice and public service led him to work as a Colorado State Public Defender and later as a faculty member at the National Criminal Defense College. He has held significant roles including vice-chair of the Colorado Supreme Court's Character and Fitness Committee, president of the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar Association, and commissioner for Denver's public defender system. Recognized for his legal excellence, Beller was named one of Denver Business Journal's "Top 40 Under 40,"

Colorado's Best Criminal Defense Lawyer by Law Week Colorado, and received national recognition for his federal antitrust litigation work. A frequent media legal commentator, he is now a partner at Recht Kornfeld, P.C., specializing in criminal defense, ethics, and internal investigations.

UToledo **Interim President Matthew Schroeder** conferred degrees.

**Allison Gilbert** received the Valedictorian Award and served as the student speaker.

Gilbert earned a B.Ed. in special education and teaching from Bowling Green State University prior to coming to Toledo Law. She is graduating summa cum laude while also serving as the editor-in-chief of the Law Review. Gilbert will be joining Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP as an associate following passage of the bar exam.

**Stacey Alphonse** received the Dean's Award, which honors the graduate who has made a significant contribution to the college while maintaining high academic performance.

Alphonse has been a leader of her class in many ways and throughout her time at Toledo Law she has

contributed to and strengthened the College of Law community. She has served as co-captain of the mock trial team, as articles editor for the Toledo Law Review, and president of the Student Bar Association, becoming the first Black woman elected to that role. After graduation, and upon passage of the bar exam, Alphonse will move to Columbus to begin working as an assistant attorney general for the State of Ohio.

"I always say that it is a privilege to join the legal profession. It is a privilege to be part of something bigger than us," Alphonse said. "It is a privilege to be able to help those who need it the most. It is a privilege to amplify voices that have been silenced. That privilege feels more urgent today than ever... Be brave. Take up space. Speak up. And be great."

The graduating students selected **Professor Joseph Slater** as the recipient of the Outstanding Professor Award for Dedication to Legal Education. **Professor Gregory Gilchrist** won the Beth Eisler First Year Teaching Award, which is chosen by the first-year class.





Watch the livestream recording  
at [utoledo.edu/law/events/  
commencement](https://utoledo.edu/law/events/commencement).

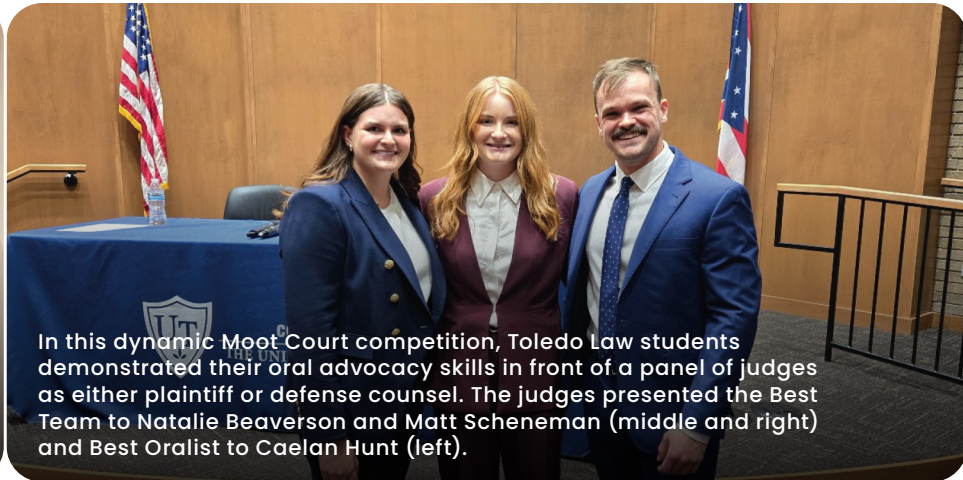


# The Year In Review

Throughout the 2024-25 academic year, Toledo Law hosted events for students and faculty to engage through networking, building culture and scholarly enrichment.



Professor of Law Llewellyn Gibbons and Legal Writing Professor Katherine O'Connell both announced their retirement from Toledo Law after a combined 47 years of service.



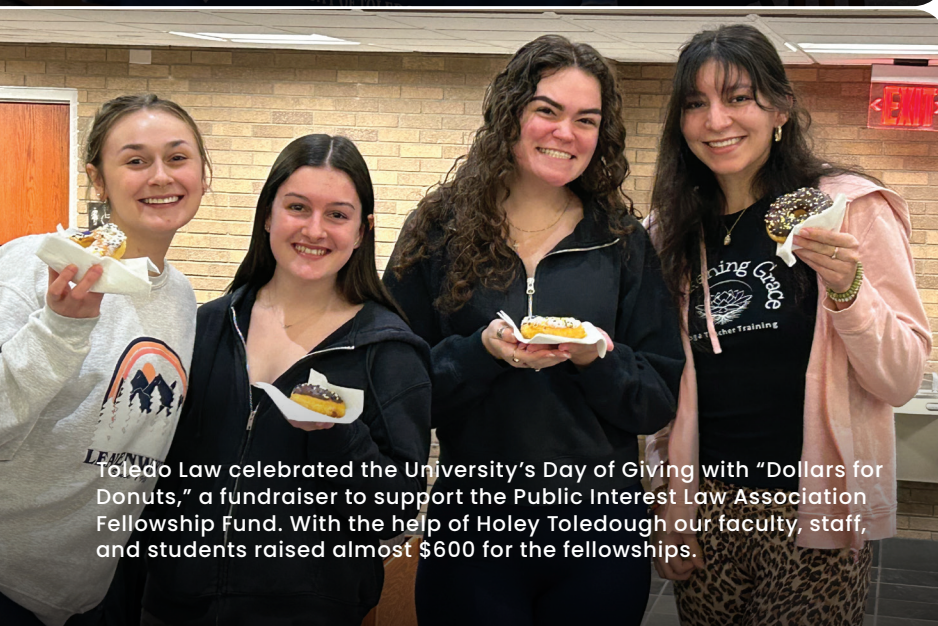
In this dynamic Moot Court competition, Toledo Law students demonstrated their oral advocacy skills in front of a panel of judges as either plaintiff or defense counsel. The judges presented the Best Team to Natalie Beaverson and Matt Scheneman (middle and right) and Best Oralist to Caelan Hunt (left).



Professor of Law Gregory Gilchrist hosted campaign finance expert Caleb Burns and former Cincinnati Councilman P.G. Sittenfeld for a discussion titled "Public Corruption or Criminalizing Politics: Democracy, Campaign Donations, and the First Amendment."



The Toledo Law Tax Controversy Clinic and Latham & Watkins LLP. Clinic staff and student attorneys were given the opportunity to attend the oral arguments at the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.



Toledo Law celebrated the University's Day of Giving with "Dollars for Donuts," a fundraiser to support the Public Interest Law Association Fellowship Fund. With the help of Holey Toledough our faculty, staff, and students raised almost \$600 for the fellowships.



Panelists discussed "Beyond the Code: Ethical and Regulatory Dimensions of AI in Law" during the Law Review Symposium.

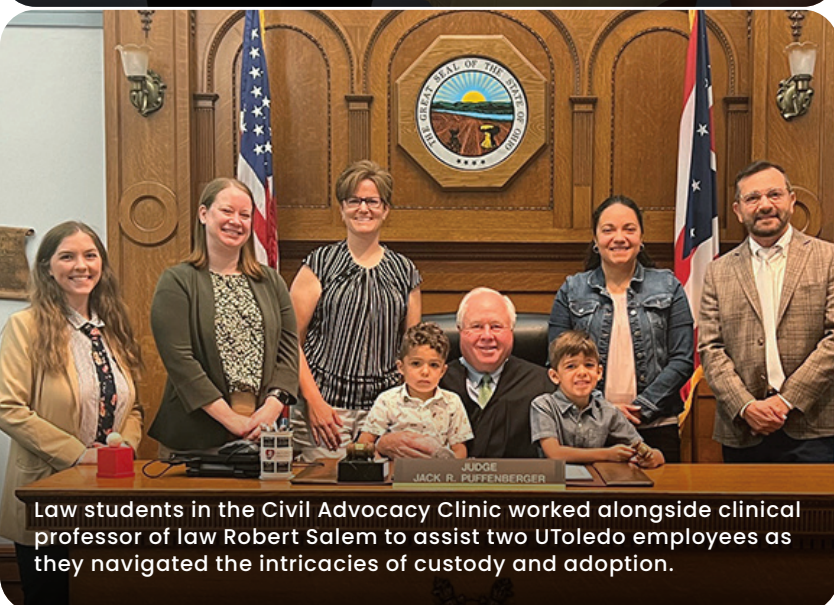




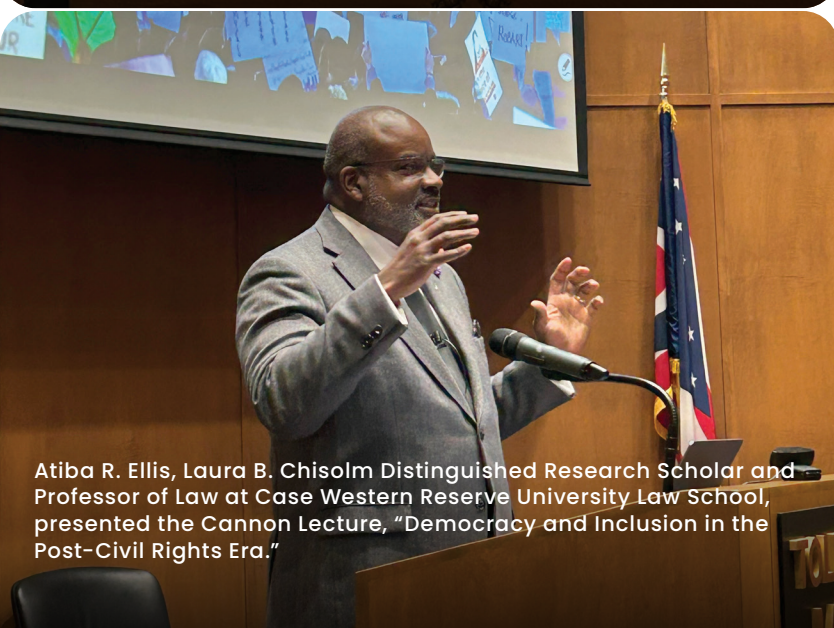
The Public Interest Law Association held their first-ever Pickleball Tournament Fundraiser this March at Toledo Pickle. Between the tournament, sponsorships, and silent auction, PILA raised almost \$4,000 toward their Summer Fellowships.



The University of Toledo recognized Professor of Law Gregory Gilchrist as one of its outstanding teachers for the 2024-25 academic year!



Law students in the Civil Advocacy Clinic worked alongside clinical professor of law Robert Salem to assist two UToledo employees as they navigated the intricacies of custody and adoption.



Atiba R. Ellis, Laura B. Chisolm Distinguished Research Scholar and Professor of Law at Case Western Reserve University Law School, presented the Cannon Lecture, "Democracy and Inclusion in the Post-Civil Rights Era."



Former Governor Richard Celeste joined us for a reflection on the political challenges he faced as governor in the '80s and his perspective as a private citizen 40 years later.



# Making History: Rebecca E. Zietlow Named College's 14th Dean



When Professor Rebecca E. Zietlow arrived at the College of Law in 1995, she brought with her a passion for justice, a sharp constitutional mind, and a commitment to making a difference. Three decades later, she's still drawing on these qualities as one of the nation's foremost scholars of constitutional law and civil rights – and as the new dean of Toledo Law.

Zietlow was appointed to this position in March after serving as interim dean since 2023. She is the first woman in the college's history to hold this role on a permanent basis.

"I am delighted to be leading the school I love and the community I care for and continuing the great work and unprecedented growth of the Toledo Law family," she said. "I look forward to serving the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of the College of Law as we continue to nurture and instruct our new lawyers in the Toledo Way for years to come."

— Rebecca E. Zietlow



Zietlow serves as the Charles W. Fornoff Professor of Law and Values at Toledo Law, where she teaches courses in constitutional law, federal courts, and civil procedure. Her scholarship focuses on the U.S. Constitution as a tool for empowering individuals, especially in the context of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. Through her research, writing, and classroom leadership, she inspires students to think critically, act ethically, and lead courageously.

She is the author of two groundbreaking books: “The Forgotten Emancipator: James Mitchell Ashley and the Ideological Origins of Reconstruction” (Cambridge University Press) and “Enforcing Equality: Congress, the Constitution, and the Protection of Individual Rights” (NYU Press). These works, along with her dozens of published articles and book chapters, illuminate how laws shaped during Reconstruction continue to influence questions of citizenship, civil rights, and social justice today.

Before entering academia, Zietlow practiced public interest law in Chicago, representing low-income clients at the Legal Assistance Foundation and clerking for Judge John F. Grady in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. She earned her juris doctor from Yale Law School, where she helped launch the Yale Journal of Law and Liberation, and she was a Fulbright Scholar in Brazil, researching the cultural impact of political reform.

Zietlow’s influence reaches far beyond the classroom. She has been a visiting professor at Vermont Law School, the University of Iowa College of Law, and the University of Wisconsin Law School. She regularly speaks at major academic conferences and universities including Yale Law School, Dartmouth College, Georgetown Law, and McGill University. Her ability to connect historical insight with present-day legal challenges has earned her national recognition, along with honors such as UToledo’s Outstanding Faculty Research Award, the Scholarly Achievement Award, and the Law Alumni Outstanding Faculty Award.





She has co-authored amicus briefs for the U.S. Supreme Court and U.S. Courts of Appeals, contributed to legal reforms, and served on the Judicial Nominations Commission for the Southern District of Ohio. A trusted thought leader, Zietlow has chaired sections of the Association of American Law Schools and helped organize national symposia on the Constitution, gender equity, and economic justice.

As dean, Zietlow continues to lead with integrity and a strong sense of purpose. Her historic appointment is a milestone for the college — and a meaningful step forward for the legal community she has helped shape for 30 years. Her vision for the College of Law is grounded in access, equity, and academic excellence, with a focus on preparing students not only to understand the law, but to use it to make a difference.

A leading part of her vision for Toledo Law is taking bold steps to meet the growing need for criminal attorneys in Ohio and beyond. Zietlow is proposing a three-year Criminal Law Practice Program, built around rigorous classroom curricula and experiential learning through a newly established Criminal Defense Clinic, Prosecutors Clinic, and/or externships with prosecutor's offices and criminal defense attorneys. This program would be the first of its kind in Ohio and Michigan. It will be designed to train practice-ready prosecutors and public defenders while attracting top-tier students committed to public service.

**"Criminal law is one of the most popular areas of interest among our applicants. This program will offer students the tools and support they need to launch impactful legal careers and serve their communities."**

**— Rebecca E. Zietlow**

This initiative is also a strategic investment in student success. By offering more intentional support and robust experiential opportunities, this program is expected to boost placement outcomes, increase enrollment, and deepen alumni engagement.

According to the Ohio Supreme Court and the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 90% of Ohio counties currently lack adequate legal representation, and both prosecution and defense offices in Lucas County are chronically understaffed. Toledo Law's new program will aim to directly address this need with a rigorous, experience-driven curriculum. Zietlow is working with local, state, and national leaders to address the urgent need for access to lawyers in rural communities, in Ohio and beyond.





Alongside the proposed Criminal Law Practice Program, Toledo Law is also developing a new rural law clinical and externship program. This effort — undertaken in partnership with the Ohio Bar Foundation, the Ohio State Bar Association, and the Ohio Supreme Court — will connect students with attorneys in rural communities, where the need for legal professionals is urgent and growing.

These programs are more than academic offerings. They're pathways for students who want to make a difference — and a promise to the people of Ohio and beyond that Toledo Law is doing its part to expand access to justice.

Zietlow is working with The University of Toledo Foundation, among other partners, both public and private, to bring these programs to life.

## The University of Toledo College of Law

Est. 1906

### Deans

Charles W. Racine	1927-1937
Edward S. Stimson	1937-1942
Charles W. Fornoff	1942-1960
J. Allen Smith	1960-1963
Karl Krastin	1963-1976
Francis X. Beytagh	1976-1983
John W. Stoepler	1983-1991
Thomas D. Crandall	1991-1995
Albert T. Quick	1995-1999
Phillip J. Closius	1999-2005
Douglas E. Ray	2006-2010
Daniel J. Steinbock	2010-2015
D. Benjamin Barros	2015-2023
Rebecca E. Zietlow	2025-



# 50th Reunion



On the second weekend of July, the College of Law had the singular pleasure of hosting a 50th reunion for the class of 1975, who had the unique distinction as the first class to enter the year the “new” building opened.

On Friday evening, Dean Rebecca E. Zietlow, with the support of the Law Alumni Affiliate and The Foundation, sponsored a welcome reception on campus. Guests traveled from Washington, Colorado, Minnesota, Maryland, and Virginia as well as Michigan, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and Ohio to reconnect with friends, many of whom they had not seen in 50 years. Alumni had the opportunity to stroll through the building or take a golf cart tour of the campus.

On Saturday, there were optional afternoon activities of either meeting up for a game of pickleball or rediscovering our world-class Toledo Museum of Art and viewing the Rachel Ruysch: Nature into Art exhibit. The evening brought this wonderful group back together for dinner at The Toledo Club and additional time to share memories and marvel at where life led them post-graduation. A warm welcome was given by classmate, Jim Greene, who was the catalyst for the weekend reunion and the driving force behind its success.





# Distinguished Alumni



## Selecting an individual to serve as the Distinguished Alumni for The University of Toledo's annual Homecoming is a challenge that Deans welcome every Spring.

There are no set parameters for selection, but there are qualities that are common such as intellect, integrity, leadership, mentorship, and professionalism, and the challenge in the College of Law is that the pool of candidates is a very crowded field.

For this year's annual Homecoming festivities, Dean Rebecca E. Zietlow chose **Judge Arlene Singer '76** to serve as the College of Law's Distinguished Alumni and was thrilled when Judge Singer accepted the nomination. When we heard of her passing, we without reservation remained committed to honoring her as the 2025 Distinguished Alum and with her family's blessing, posthumously showering her with all the appreciation we had hoped to do in person.

For this reason, we are sharing a handful of memories and stories graciously submitted by her friends and colleagues. This is by no means an exhaustive collection of reflections, rather, it is a beginning. The College of Law will celebrate Judge Arlene Singer as our Distinguished Alum this year and we welcome you to share your story or memory by sending them to [katherine.abu-absi@utoledo.edu](mailto:katherine.abu-absi@utoledo.edu). Everything that is sent will be compiled and given to her family as a testament to her indelible impact on our community.

I have known Judge Singer since I was an intern in the Public Defender's Office in 1994. She was the first Judge I ever spoke in front of as a "certified" intern. Ever since that time, I have stayed connected to her. She encouraged me to join the Toledo Women's Bar. She supported me with my goal of becoming a judge by giving me advice and putting me in contact with important people.

When she was putting together a committee for the Toledo Women's History Project I immediately volunteered.

She was then the one that I asked to swear me in when I was elected to the bench and in the middle of Covid, she did it.

She was approachable and was a mentor to many of the women that I grew up with in the legal field. There is not a person I know that has a negative thing to say about her. She was smart, kind, soft-spoken, but very strong and had a definite presence.

### Judge Lori Olander

I was mentored by fantastic women law librarians at Cincinnati (Taylor Fitchett and Virginia Thomas) and St. Thomas (Margie Maes and Paddy Satzer) before coming back to Toledo to be a law library director myself...and then I met Arlene Singer.

Along with Dean Dan Steinbock, Judge Singer invited me to join the small but growing group of Toledo lawyers, mostly women, who were beginning to build the Toledo Women Lawyers History Project. As a prosecutor and state representative before becoming a judge, Arlene carried an aura much like the amazing women I had worked with and learned so much from. You didn't want to disappoint her, and even when I (rarely) disagreed with her I knew she was probably right.

Together we redesigned the space on the second floor of the LaValley Law Library, creating the first home for the project's portrait wall. Choosing furniture and paint colors was exciting, but secondary to the legacy of the women lawyers we wanted to identify and celebrate and promote. We had always planned to add more portraits to the wall, and eventually Arlene herself became one of them. The portrait wall now resides on the first floor of the College, near the Forum, where its legacy continues. Along with so many others, I have been privileged and blessed to know Arlene and learn from her.

**Rick Goheen**  
**Assistant Dean for the LaValley**  
**Law Library and Associate**  
**Professor of Law**

The phrase "small but mighty" might well have been invented to describe the late Judge Arlene Singer. Petite in stature, she was a giant in the Toledo legal community for nearly fifty years. Her passing leaves a regrettable void in the lives of her many, many friends and colleagues. She was a beacon of fairness, respect, and humor within the confines of the sometimes raucous and arcane day to practice of law "in the trenches". All who appeared before her were fortunate to have the benefit of her wisdom and understanding.

As a judge in Toledo Municipal Court, she ultimately inherited Court Room #8. She called me and asked if I could procure a framed copy of the U.S. Constitution. I did so and arranged to meet her on a Saturday shortly before she was to occupy her new Courtroom. We performed a mock exorcism and then proudly mounted the Constitution prominently on the wall of the court. Those old enough to remember will appreciate not only the humor of the act but the need Judge Singer felt to ensure that justice was a priority in her Court and her daily routine. This singular act encapsulates how this most excellent and humane person synthesized her many personal attributes in a way that made the legal community and the community at large a far better place. She is missed.

**S. Scott Schwab**

It is hard to write an appreciation of Judge Arlene Singer so soon after her passing, because it is hard to accept that such a dynamic and important person is no longer with us. Her curiosity, intelligence, and impish sense of humor will be dearly missed by all of her friends. We must remember, however, that our loss pales before that of her family. Her husband, Jack Wilson, was her greatest admirer and friend. It is remarkable that two so apparently different personalities could take such delight and comfort in each other. Her kids, Shelley and Josh, have lost a mother who was at once an extremely fun parent and also an extraordinary role model.

Karin counts herself lucky to be one of the many (once) young women lawyers who Arlene mentored and nudged forward. She recognized Karin's interest and potential for appellate work and gave her an internship at the Court of Appeals. John first met Arlene in his first Gridiron Show and often appeared before her at Municipal Court and later the Court of Appeals. Arlene gave great advice to them both over the years; she was also very supportive of their relationship as it began and developed.

Because of her work in politics, the law, and history, Judge Singer was known as a strong and proud feminist. Her brand of feminism was universal. She did not believe that women are better than men but, rather, that a woman is as capable, strong, and virtuous as any man. She also knew that women and men equally share flaws and imperfection.

As a judge, Arlene believed in the basic dignity and rights of all people – whether they be rich and powerful, or poor and vulnerable. If you represented an ordinary or marginalized person in front of Judge Singer there was no guarantee that you would win, but you and your client knew that the playing field was level no matter who was on the other side. She had no fear of powerful interests such as wealth, governmental authorities, the media (especially including The Blade!) and could be counted upon to always rule "without fear or favor."

Arlene Singer was serious about her principles and the law, but she never took herself too seriously. As friends, as lawyers, and as citizens, we are extremely fortunate to have lived in a community improved by Judge Arlene Singer for so many wonderful years.

**Karin Coble and John Coble**

I lived on the same block as Judge Singer while in law school and we would often chat while walking our dogs – me with my tiny Yorkshire Terrier and her with her giant St. Bernards. She would tease me for taking any breaks from studying for the bar exam. With a tremendous gift for humor and storytelling she was always very generous with her time, especially with young lawyers. She was kind and accessible and never stopped contributing to the profession.

Judge Singer blazed a trail for women lawyers in Toledo and kept the path lit in a way that will continue to inspire generations to come. Her passion project in recent years was documenting the history of female attorneys in our area, which I had the honor of working on with her through the Toledo Women's Bar Association. It was her vision to bring influential women's stories to life through artistic renderings and robust narratives based on her own extensive research and interviews. Thanks to Judge Singer's tireless efforts and tenacity, that vision has been immortalized at Toledo Law.

Her light will always shine brightly and may her memory be a blessing to us all.

**Rebecca A. Facey**

Judge Arlene Singer is the reason there is a Toledo Women Attorneys History Project. She dedicated years to making sure that women attorney pioneers were not forgotten. There was no personal gain for her; other than, knowing the importance of the preservation of those stories. Judge Singer was a valued friend of both my late husband and me. Check out her Wikipedia page!

**Holly Taft Sydlow**

I first became acquainted with Arlene Singer through the Toledo Junior Bar and the Gridiron Show. Arlene was always ready to pitch in and work on the Show, with a smile and enthusiasm. She was active in many professional and community organizations, including the TBA, the Toledo Women's Bar Association, and the Old West End Association.

Arlene Singer has been the moving force and passionate leader of the Toledo Women Lawyers History Project since its inception. Throughout its existence, Arlene has always found a way, despite many obstacles, to keep the Project alive, invite new members and energize the group to find new ways to memorialize past leaders and to encourage young women lawyers in this area. Because Arlene mentored so many young lawyers, both male and female, she reveled in keeping the History Project searching for new ways to recognize and reward women lawyers and judges.

Arlene encouraged, wheedled, brow-beat, cajoled, and led by example whomever she saw to keep the History Project going for these past years. Arlene was the one who called each meeting, convened the members of the group to pursue the next task, shifting to Zoom as necessary, but keeping it going, and even writing minutes after each meeting, to scheduling the next meeting. Arlene was indomitable and unrelenting in her efforts to elevate and mentor women in the law in this locale.

Although she was unique in her leadership success in the History Project, the group will certainly continue to pursue its goals, with her splendid example and legacy.

**Tom Pletz**  
**Cofounder, Toledo Women**  
**Lawyer History Project**



# Transforming Toledo's Justice System

By Lauryn Henderson



Judge Timothy Kuhlman '91 counts more than three decades in the legal community of Toledo, including the municipal courthouse where he once interned and now presides as a judge. He recently shared his reflections on his time at The University of Toledo College of Law and discussed the Toledo Municipal Court's Community Diversion Program.

Kuhlman earned his degree from Hillsdale College in 1988 and from Toledo Law in 1991. He spent nearly 15 years working at Eastman & Smith Ltd. before he was appointed a judge for the Toledo Municipal Court in 2005.

He attributes his career success to his time at The University of Toledo College of Law.

A favorite opportunity at Toledo Law came when he was a prosecuting intern for the Toledo Municipal Court. This was part of a class that taught how to work in court as certified legal interns. He said this experience was essential because, by the time he graduated from law school, he had already gained a deep understanding of how the courthouse operated, having gained expertise even before starting his first full-time job.

The Toledo Municipal Courthouse has undergone ongoing improvements since the mid-1990s, starting with the implementation of an assignment and arraignment system. In the early 2000s, the system evolved into a single assignment system that resulted in significantly improved court operations. In 2013, Sheriff John Tharp addressed the issue of jail overcrowding, aiming to reduce the population from over 500 to the low 300s. This goal was achieved by streamlining court processes, which cut down the cycle of bench warrants and probation violations, thereby lowering the jail population.

The focus then shifted to managing cases more effectively, especially addressing the high number of lower-level incidents. In 2015, the Toledo Municipal Court collaborated with the MacArthur Foundation to develop strategies for addressing low-level offenses, with an emphasis on procedural fairness. This approach emphasizes voice, neutrality, respect, and trust, which has been proven to increase compliance with court orders.

"I thought I got an unbelievable legal education at Toledo. My professors were great, and the other students were great. I have never felt that I had to attend Harvard, Yale, or Michigan to become a better lawyer."

— Judge Timothy Kuhlman

Kuhlman is particularly invested in the Community Diversion Program. Created by the Toledo Municipal Court in 2018, it aims to break the cycle of repeated low-level offenses and short-term incarceration. Instead of focusing on punishment, it emphasizes procedural fairness principles to promote long-term behavioral change. At the Core Treatment Facility, led by Sheronda Ridley, a class was developed to address these issues. Participants, who are repeat offenders, take part in facilitated conversations rather than lectures, learning skills such as stress management, decision-making, and cognitive behavioral therapy techniques. The class includes recounting events, breathing exercises, and discussions on decision-making, lasting approximately 3.5 hours. This method has calmed participants and helped them recognize their mistakes.

At the end of the class, they are asked to complete a survey. Ninety-four percent said they gained at least one new coping skill. Eighty-one percent achieved a new perspective on criminal justice. Ninety-seven percent said they would recommend the class to others. Some described the tools they received as “stress management,” “information to help me in life,” and “new ideas and choices I didn’t know about before.”

The MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice Challenge funds the program. It costs less than \$25,000 annually for up to 1,500 participants, making it a cost-effective alternative to probation and jail. With nearly 3,000 referrals and a sixty-four percent success rate, the program has demonstrated promising results in improving individual outcomes and enhancing public safety and trust.

Harvard Law School’s Access to Justice Lab is conducting a study that tracks participants for two years to assess better the program’s impact on recidivism and broader life outcomes, including employment, mental and physical health, and housing security. This study commenced in March, and the first group of participants will be completed by March 2027, with a total of 2,000 participants. The study divides participants into two groups: one that receives the 3.5-hour class and the other that receives 3.5 hours of community service. Once they complete their requirements, their case is dismissed. The expectation is that a dramatic difference will be evident between the two.

There have been limited studies on diversion programs, and none have demonstrated that such programs can bring about positive changes in participants. This new program aims to be the first to achieve this goal. By aligning with the Harvard study’s long-term objectives, the program is designed to produce outstanding results, paving the way for its potential expansion across Ohio and even nationwide. If successful, it could be a game-changer for probation officers and help redefine community safety to build stronger, more resilient communities.



# Alumni Affiliate Message



## Hello, Fellow Toledo Law Alumni!

It's hard to believe, but the 2025–26 academic year is already here. Over a decade has passed since I first walked through the doors of the College of Law – and today, I'm both honored and excited to serve as this year's president of the Law Alumni Affiliate.

My journey with this board began during my 3L year, when I served as Student Bar Association president. Since then, it has been a privilege to continue working alongside such dedicated and passionate alumni. Although I'm not originally from Toledo, I made a commitment when I moved here for law school: to fully engage with and become a part of this legal community. Thanks to the incredible support of professors, staff, local attorneys, and the friends I've made, I'm proud to now call Toledo my home.

Over the past decade, both the College of Law and this Alumni Affiliate board have experienced meaningful growth and change. Many of the board's recent efforts have focused on expanding our reach and making our alumni community more inclusive and accessible. One of our most successful initiatives, Law LaPalooza, will continue this year – bringing alumni together to reconnect while raising vital support for the John W. Stoepler Scholarship Fund.

I'm excited for the opportunity to collaborate with our new dean, Rebecca E. Zietlow, and the staff at the College of Law to engage and support our current law students. Our goal is to inspire them to become active, contributing members of the legal community after graduation. Each spring, the Law Alumni Affiliate seeks your support to provide portfolios for incoming students and diploma frames for our graduates. These meaningful gifts are a symbol of our commitment to welcoming and celebrating the next generation of attorneys.

If you're not yet a member of the Law Alumni Affiliate, I encourage you to join us and take part in the exciting events we have planned this year. With that being said, we will see you on Sept. 18 for Law LaPalooza and Sept. 26 for the Dean's Breakfast. Mark your calendars!

Go Rockets!

Kayleigh L. Summerville, '17  
Law Alumni Affiliate President, 2025–26

# Faculty Notes



**Zsea Bowmani**, assistant professor of law, focuses his research on environmental law, community development and emerging AI-related legal issues. He teaches Environmental Law, Constitutional Law and Property Law. His recent scholarly work includes a book chapter on the origins of the climate crisis in the volume "Climate Justice in a Globalised World," under peer review with Cambridge University Press, and review of a book proposal on media, identity, and political violence for Emerald Publishing. Collaborating with UToledo faculty, he has submitted grants to address environmental harm from Ohio dairy farms. Committed to local service, he works with Junction Coalition and Toledo Land Trust. Bowmani advises the Environmental Law Society, the student chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, and the Women Law Students Association, and he serves on the Education Committee of the Ohio National Lawyers Guild.



**Lesa Byrnes**, legal writing professor, continued in her role as director of legal writing. As director, she oversees the college's legal writing program, including coordinating the annual Sixth District Court of Appeals of Ohio oral arguments at the college. She taught several legal analysis sessions in the Launch into Law Program in spring 2024. She continued her role as faculty advisor to the Disability and Education Law Association (DELA). She was honorarily inducted into the Order of Barristers, Toledo Law Chapter in recognition of her work with Moot Court.



**Shelley Cavalieri**, professor of law, continues teaching Property and a course on Trusts and Estates. She is delighted to be teaching Women and the Law to groups of excited students. She and her co-author, Lua Kamál Yuille, recently presented their paper "Girls These Days: The Legal Ramifications of Facile Corporatist Faux Feminism" at the Law and Society Annual Meeting.



**Maara Fink**, clinical professor of law, celebrated 25 years of service to the College of Law. She co-presented "Nurturing Communities & Building Leaders: Three Toledo Clinical Models That Strategically Yield Results" at the Midwest Clinical Legal Education Conference held at the University of Wisconsin Law School. She continues to expand the College of Law Externship Programs through which students gain practical experience in corporate counsel, public interest, and mediation placements throughout northwest Ohio and beyond. Professor Fink serves on the Ottawa Hills Local Schools Board of Education and works to support the advancement of dispute resolution initiatives in Ohio as chair of the Strategic Planning Subcommittee of the Supreme Court of Ohio Dispute Resolution Commission. She provides annual updates to Alternative Forms of Dispute Resolution, Baldwin's Ohio Practice — Domestic Relations Law.



## FACULTY NOTES



**Paul Finkelman** is a visiting professor at The University of Toledo, where he teaches Constitutional Law, Property, Religion and Law, and seminars on the law of slavery. He previously held endowed chairs at Albany and Tulsa law schools and served as Fulbright Chair in Human Rights and Social Justice at Ottawa Law School. In 2024–25, he published in top journals including the *Columbia Journal of Race and Law* and the *William and Mary Law Review*. He has spoken at multiple law schools and museums and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. He has been cited in legal briefs and interviewed on TV about the Fourteenth Amendment and birthright citizenship, contributing as amici on a Supreme Court brief.



**Llewellyn Joseph Gibbons**, Distinguished University Professor of Law, stepped down as University Research Integrity Officer in January 2025. Professor Gibbons joined the faculty in July 1998. During his

tenure, he has been instrumental in shaping the law program in intellectual property. After his spring 2025 sabbatical, he retired in July 2025 to travel and work on a few book projects. This year, he spoke at IP and AI conferences in Kentucky, China, England, and Finland. When asked about his favorite student interaction, he said it was taking students who have never left the state of Ohio to Beijing to compete in a moot court competition.



**Gregory M. Gilchrist**, professor of law, teaches Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, and White-Collar Crime at Toledo Law and the University of Houston Law Center. He also teaches undergraduates about civil discourse and its role in a free, democratic society for the Institute of American Constitutional Thought and Leadership. Appointed chair of the Ohio Supreme Court's Lawyers' Fund for Client Protection Board, he also serves on the CJA Panel, representing federal felony defendants. Gilchrist connects the classroom with the courtroom by bringing in judges, lawyers, and court staff. He was honored with the 2025 University Outstanding Teacher Award and the Beth Eisler IL Teaching Award.



**Rick Goheen**, assistant dean for the LaValley Law Library and associate professor of law, continues to work on library upgrades and technology upgrades for instructional spaces in the Law Center. Assistant director Maria Melssen has joined Dean Goheen on the library staff, and the statewide OhioLINK transition from the Sierra platform to the Alma system is complete.



**Candice Kline**, assistant professor of law, had her paper, “Revisiting the Role and Legality of Insurance Injunctions in Mass Tort Cases Post-Purdue Pharma,” accepted for presentation at the Chicago-Harvard-Wharton Insolvency & Restructuring Conference in September. She co-authored an article with 3L student Jacob Mertus, “Going Rogue: Revisiting Mediation and Preliminary Injunctions in Chapter 11,” for the American Bankruptcy Institute Journal. She completed presenting Financial Poise’s four-part MBA Bootcamp webinar series for attorney and accountant continuing education purposes.



**Jessica Knouse**, professor of law, teaches Constitutional Law: Structure, Constitutional Law: Rights, and Family Law. She has been accepted to present a work-in-progress at this year’s Law and Society Annual Meeting as part of the Feminist Legal Theory CRN’s programming.

She participates in various events at the College of Law, including a panel on recent deportation orders and a session on interviewing skills. She serves as director of faculty development and advisor to the Law Review and Family and Juvenile Law Society. She teaches LSAT skills in various settings, including as part of the Launch into Law program.



**Deborah Machalow**, assistant professor of law, teaches Civil Procedure: Pleading and Practice, and Civil Procedure: Jurisdiction. Her current scholarship focuses primarily on reproductive rights/justice. In 2025, she presented her scholarship at the Eastern Sociological Society’s Annual Conference’s Mini Conference on Reproduction, the University of Baltimore Law Review Symposium, Michigan State University College of Law’s Democracy Works-in-Progress Conference, Touro Law Center’s Institute for Health Law, Bioethics, and Policy First Annual Symposium, and Law and Society’s Annual Meeting. During the 2024–25 academic year, she also presented her research locally to the Toledo Women’s Bar Association and the Toledo Bar Association.



**Adrian McKinney**, assistant professor of law, joined The University of Toledo College of Law faculty in the fall of 2024. She teaches courses in Criminal Law, the Law of American Policing, and Race and the Law. Her scholarly interests center on criminal justice reform, policing, and legal pedagogy. This summer, she will present her forthcoming article on reform efforts surrounding the felony murder rule at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools (SEALS) conference.



**Eugenio Mollo, Jr.**, recently promoted to clinical associate professor of law, co-presented “Nurturing Communities and Building Leaders: Three Toledo Clinical Models that Strategically Yield Success” at the Midwest Clinical Legal Education Conference held at the University of Wisconsin Law School, with Professors Salem and Fink. He also presented “Reimagining Immigrant Justice: Legal Advocacy in a New Political Era” at the 2025



## FACULTY NOTES

University of Detroit Mercy Law Review Symposium titled "From Theory to Practice: Mastering the Art of Effective Legal Advocacy." Mollo speaks regularly on immigration topics before bar associations, schools, and community groups. In 2024, he was a recipient of the Outstanding Professor Award for Dedication to Legal Education and received the Eastman and Smith Faculty Achievement Award.



**Katherine Raup O'Connell**, legal writing professor, retired at the end of the spring semester after teaching 21 years at the College of Law, primarily teaching Legal Research and Writing and Lawyering Skills courses. In addition to teaching, she served as the assistant dean for student affairs from 2015 to 2018, as director of legal writing from 2018 to 2022, and as interim assistant dean for student affairs in fall 2022. She recently served on the Student Affairs Committee of UToledo's Faculty Senate and has served as College of Law's representative on UToledo's Student Legal Services Board, serving on its Finance and Bylaws Committees, since 2021. Reflecting on her tenure at Toledo Law, she is grateful to have worked with dedicated faculty and staff who share a passion for the College of Law and its students' successes.



**Marilyn Preston**, legal writing professor, also serves as site administrator for the Law and Leadership Institute (LLI), a comprehensive four-year program that supports high school students in grades nine through 12 as they explore careers in the legal field. In this role, Preston coordinates a range of activities, including field trips to the Toledo courts, college visits, and a four-day internship for upper-level students at legal organizations and law firms. She also brings in judges, attorneys, admissions professionals from law schools and undergraduate institutions, Toledo Law students, and members of the law school's leadership and faculty to speak with students about pursuing a legal career and to inspire and guide the next generation.



**Rob Salem**, clinical professor of law, received the Toledo Bar Association's Community Service Award in June 2023. He

co-presented on successful Toledo clinical models at the Midwest Clinical Legal Education Conference and gave talks on LGBTQ rights and end-of-life legal issues for sexual minorities. Salem helped create Tenant Tuesday, a program providing limited legal support for housing issues. He serves on the boards of the Ohio ACLU, Ohio State Bar Association, and Toledo School for the Arts, and continues work with the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. He was also inducted into the Ohio State Bar Foundation Class of 2024.



**Joseph Slater**, Distinguished University Professor and Eugene N. Balk Professor of Law & Values, teaches Torts, Evidence, and Labor and Employment law classes. He is working on new editions of both his casebooks. Through February 2025, he was a member of the Federal Service Impasses Panel (appointed by President Biden), a body that resolves bargaining impasses in the federal sector. In January, he received the ABA's Arvid Anderson Award for contributions to public-sector labor law. He is a leader of the law faculty union. He coached the Labor and Employment Law Moot Court team. He enjoys playing and recording music.



**Glenys Spence** teaches Contracts, Business Associations, and International Human Rights Law, guiding students in global and domestic human rights projects. She writes in commercial, business, maritime, and human rights law. In fall 2024, she presented her paper on the impact of Red Sea piracy on maritime contracts and the global supply chain at the DC Roundtable on National Security and International Business and at Capital Law School. She advises the International Law Students Association, serves on the Faculty Appointments Committee, and helped grade the 32nd Vis Moot. She also joined panels on immigration and human rights and co-presented UCC success tips with Professor Kline.



**Kelly Tomlinson**, associate professor of legal writing and director of academic success and bar preparation, teaches Lawyering Skills I, Legal Ethics and Professional Responsibility, and 3L Extended Bar

Preparation. In fall 2024, Tomlinson received an Eastman & Smith Ltd. Faculty Achievement Award. She was recently selected for the 2025 Fellows Class of the Ohio State Bar Foundation, and continues her involvement with the Law Alumni Affiliate Board of Governors, Toledo Women's Bar Association, Morrison R. Waite American Inn of Court, and Toledo Bar Association.



**Rebecca E. Zietlow**, dean, distinguished university professor, and Charles W. Fornoff professor of law and values, published "Fugitives From Slavery, Free Black Activists and the Origins of Birthright Citizenship" in *Mississippi Law Journal* (2025) and "Abortion Rights, Fugitives From Slavery and the Networks That Support Them" in *North Carolina Civil Rights Law Review* (2025). She presented numerous lectures such as "Fugitives From Slavery, Free Black Activists, and the origins of Birthright Citizenship" at the Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association, "Substantive Equality" at The Fourteenth Amendment: Its Past and Future, University of Mississippi School of Law, and was one of two featured scholars in the Yale Law School Rosenkranz Program on Originalism.



**Evan C. Zoldan** was named the John W. Stoepler Professor of Law and Values and appointed associate dean of academic affairs. He also continues to serve as director of the Legal Institute of the Great Lakes. Zoldan's research, which focuses on legislation, administrative law, and state and local government issues, appeared in the *Iowa Law Review* this year. He presented his research at the MSU Democracy Works-in-Progress Conference, as part of the Brennan Center State Constitutions Lab seminar series, and to the Federation of Association of Regulatory Boards. He organized the 24th annual Great Lakes Water Conference, which explored climate migration's effects on the Great Lakes region.



# New Faculty



**David T. Harold '00**, assistant professor of law, has taught Evidence and Criminal Procedure as an adjunct since 2023. He served as chief assistant prosecutor in Wood County from 2014 to 2025, focusing on appellate litigation, and previously worked in Lucas County and clerked for Justice Judith Ann Lanzinger. He received the 2019 Outstanding Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Award and is admitted to practice in multiple courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court. Harold holds degrees from Bowling Green State University and The University of Toledo College of Law, where he was Law Review editor and received the Dean's Award in 2000.



**Jeffrey Schmitt**, professor of law, joined the faculty in the fall of 2025. Prior to that time, he served as Professor of Law and Dean for Graduate Programs at the University of Dayton School of Law, where he helped develop several successful master's and certificate programs. His scholarship explores issues of

federalism and judicial power, and his most recent article, "Rethinking the Scope of State Power," will be published in the William and Mary Law Review. He will teach Constitutional Law, Constitutional History, and Criminal Procedure in his first year at the College of Law.



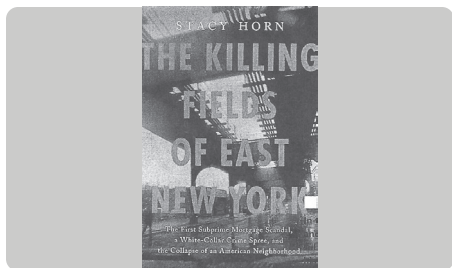
**Jason Steed**, assistant professor of law, joined the faculty at The University of Toledo College of Law this fall. In his first year he will teach Evidence and Federal Courts. He comes from the University of Kentucky College of Law, where he taught Civil Procedure, Statutory Interpretation, State Constitutional Law, Remedies, and Law & Literature. He holds an M.F.A. in creative writing and a Ph.D. in American literature and was an English professor from 2001 to 2006, before leaving academia for the University of Texas School of Law. He was an appellate attorney in Texas from 2009 to 2023 before he returned to academia.



**Katharine Talbott '97**, assistant professor of Legal Writing, joined the faculty at The University of Toledo College of Law this fall. Prior to joining the University, she served as staff attorney to Judges Thomas Osowik and Christine Mayle at the Sixth District Court of Appeals. Earlier in her legal career, Talbott was an associate attorney at Eastman & Smith, where she specialized in labor and employment law. Talbott holds degrees from the University of Michigan (B.A.) and the University of Toledo College of Law (J.D.).

# Alumni Class Notes

## 1969



**Jeffrey Kay** assisted NYC crime author Stacy Horn, in writing her new book, "The Killing Fields of East New York", released in January 2025. As one of the lead FBI case agents he was able to recreate the details of the federal investigation into the 1969-72 FHA Housing Fraud Scandal in the New York City Metropolitan area and received two commendations for his work.

## 1985

Roderick Linton Belfance is proud to announce that Managing Partner and alumnus **William Chris** assumed the position of Ohio State Bar Association President in July of 2025.

## 1986

**Bradley Le Boeuf** was reappointed by the Mayor of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio as a Trustee of the Cuyahoga Falls Library and member of the Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council.

## 1987



Leech Tishman is pleased to announce the addition of **Larry Meenan** as Counsel in the firm's Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania office. Meenan is a member of the Intellectual Property practice group.

## 1991



**Cristin Reid**, chairman and CEO of Capitol National Bank, was named top 25 most powerful women to watch in banking by American Banker.

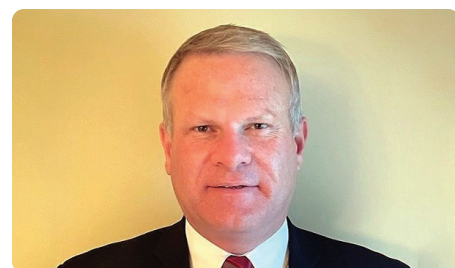
## 1996

In 2024, **Julie Gibbons** was named the first female clerk of the Toledo City Council since 1837. She has worked for the city for 26 years and was named a member of Who's Who in America for that accomplishment.



Senior attorney **Matthew Planey** recently joined Plunkett Cooney, one of the Midwest's oldest and most accomplished law firms, as a member of its Torts & Litigation Practice Group.

## 1997



**Daniel Brandt** become a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, one of the premier legal associations in North America.



# ALUMNI CLASS NOTES

2003



**Ken Walz** was elected Judge of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, General Division in November of 2024.

2005

**Ryan Gembala**, director at Dooley Gembala McLaughlin Pecora Attorneys & Counselors, marks 20 years as an Ohio attorney and earning recognition as a Super Lawyer for Business Litigation from 2023 to 2025.

2010



**Jason Currie** recently rejoined Bodman PLC as a member in the Firm's Banking Practice Group based in Detroit.

2011

**Nicholas Wittenberg** was appointed to the 2024-26 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Advisory Committee.

2012



**Fredric Roth** has been named Vice President and Associate General Counsel of Technology and Data Privacy at Compass Group USA.

2013



Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP has announced that **Philip Stovall** will be joining the Columbus office as a partner in the Firm's Business Practice Group.

2019



**Genavieve Lee (Hilgenbrink)** accepted a new position as an Attorney at Grover Lewis Johnson in Grandville, Michigan. She is excited to become a resident of the Grand Rapids area.



**Lino Taormina** was welcomed to Foster Swift's firm in Southfield, Michigan. Lino primarily represents insurance carriers in First-party, no-fault suits, third-party auto negligence suits, and insurance coverage disputes.

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## SEND US YOUR CLASS NOTE

Share your latest news at [utoledo.edu/law/alumni/class-note](https://utoledo.edu/law/alumni/class-note). Notes will be published in the next issue of Transcript and may be edited for consistency or clarity.

# Alumni In Memoriam

Toledo Law pays tribute to members of our community who passed away between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025.

## 1950s

'53 **Marigene Valiquette**  
8/06/2024

'57 **Richard Emch**  
8/07/2024

'58 **Allan Brogan**  
1/10/2025

## 1960s

'61 **Kenneth Mickel**  
9/13/2024

'63 **Frank Justen**  
2/11/2025

'66 **James Shindler**  
2/25/2025

'67 **Duane Skrzyniecki**  
3/03/2025

'69 **Stuart Radick**  
3/27/2025

## 1970s

'72 **Daniel Grna**  
9/04/2024

'72 **Guy Barone**  
6/06/2025

'73 **Nicholas Hetzer**  
2/21/2025

'73 **Julia Casey**  
10/28/2024

'74 **Richard Birchall**  
8/09/2024

'75 **Randall Whately**  
5/01/2025

'76 **Arlene Singer**  
6/29/2025

'76 **Walter Skotynsky**  
7/17/2024

'77 **Catherine Martineau**  
10/17/2024

'79 **Dr. John Drowatzky**  
3/18/2025

## 1980s

'80 **Elaine Johnson**  
8/04/24

'81 **Dave Zessin**  
4/13/2025

'83 **Jay Tressler**  
1/09/25

'84 **Mark Bever**  
7/27/24

'87 **Amy Berling**  
10/12/2024

'87 **Lawrence Daly**  
8/06/2024

## 1990s

'91 **Richard Emery**  
7/15/2024

'92 **Troy Gleason**  
4/07/2025

'98 **William LaForce**  
3/21/2025

## 2000s

'03 **Michael Scott**  
10/15/24

'06 **Roderick Thomas**  
1/08/2025



# New Funds

## New Funds

### Tax Controversy Clinic Progress Fund

Provides operational and programmatic support for the College of Law's Tax Controversy Clinic, which aids taxpayers in handling disputes with the Internal Revenue Service. The clinic is staffed by law students who are trained in tax law and supervised by the clinic director who is a practicing tax attorney and faculty member. The clinic not only gives students significant attorney/client experience but also fulfills the need of underrepresented taxpayers for free and competent legal representation.

### Toledo Way Series Fund

Supports the Toledo Way speaker series, including but not limited to speaker hosting, travel, and any event expenses. The Toledo Way sums up the culture of the Toledo legal community. It stands for the proposition that attorneys are collegial and cordial to each other. We stand by our word, and we treat even opposing counsel with respect and integrity. In addition, the Toledo Way means that we nurture and instruct our new lawyers so that they will become competent attorneys.

## Newly Endowed Fund

### Sara E. Rios Memorial Scholarship Fund for Social and Racial Justice

This fund was established to recognize and honor the legacy of Sara E. Rios and pay tribute to her exemplary work and her passion in working closely with BIPOC, women, persons with disabilities, and members of the LGBT community. The Sara E. Rios Memorial Scholarship Fund provides financial support to students pursuing a career in public interest law, with preference given to first-generation students and those who are members of traditionally underrepresented demographic groups.



## Speaker Series Embodies Collegial Culture

The Toledo Way Series of speakers is named as a nod to the well-known collegiality that characterizes the legal community in Toledo. In its inaugural year, this free and educational series featured prominent speakers Richard (Dick) Celeste, Jeffrey B. Bogart '72, Susan Hurst '84, and Corey Minor Smith '01. Topics ranged from being an active participant in your government and legislature to building long-lasting professional partnerships to overcoming significant personal and professional obstacles to rise to success.

Students, faculty, staff, and members of the Toledo community attended these lectures, which will continue into the 2025-26 academic year.

# Time Your Impact: Give From Your IRA

An individual retirement account (IRA) is an appealing way to save for retirement. Throughout your career you can make regular contributions to it and enjoy the tax savings. Eventually, the tax bill comes due — when taking annual distributions and again when you leave your IRA to heirs. If you want to avoid the tax bite and help College of Law students achieve their dreams, then consider a gift from your IRA.

## **Make Your Gift Today**

If you're 70½ years of age or older, there are multiple ways you can use your IRA to make a tax-free gift to The University of Toledo Foundation. The most common option is a qualified charitable distribution allowing you to transfer up to \$108,000 in 2025 to charity without paying income tax. For individuals currently taking a required minimum distribution, your gift can satisfy all or part of your obligation.

## **Magnify Your Impact After Your Lifetime**

Regardless of your age, you can make a legacy gift from your IRA by designating The University of Toledo Foundation as a beneficiary of your account. This is a great option for extending support from your IRA beyond your lifetime. By doing this you could also greatly reduce the tax burden for your heirs.



For more information, contact Nick Kulik, Senior Director of Planned Giving, at 419.530.5410 or [nicholas.kulik@utoledo.edu](mailto:nicholas.kulik@utoledo.edu).



# Upcoming Events

## Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025

### Law LaPalooza

6–9 p.m.

Enjoy an evening packed with live music, awesome activities, and tons of fun with fellow Toledo Law graduates and professionals! All proceeds support The University of Toledo John W. Stoepler Scholarship Fund.

## Friday, September 26, 2025

### Homecoming Dean's Breakfast

8–9:30 a.m. | The Toledo Club

Join fellow alumni and friends for the annual Homecoming Dean's Breakfast on Friday, September 26, at the Toledo Club. Check-in begins at 7:30 a.m., and the program runs from 8 – 9:30 a.m. Enjoy breakfast and reconnect with the UToledo College of Law community as Dean Rebecca E. Zietlow shares an update on the college and honors this year's award recipients.

## Tuesday, October 7, 2025

### Faculty Lecture: "Actually Innocent"

Noon | College of Law Auditorium

Prof. Nathan Goetting, who holds a joint appointment at Adrian College and The University of Toledo College of Law, will discuss how the Supreme Court has failed to adequately respond to the data on inmate exonerations since the DNA Revolution in forensic science.

## Tuesday, October 14, 2025

### The Toledo Way Series

Noon | College of Law Auditorium

Attorney Samuel Z. Kaplan will give a talk titled "32 years in the criminal courts and always on the 'wrong side' of an indictment."

## Thursday, October 23, 2025

### The Stranahan National Issues Forum

Noon | College of Law Auditorium

Associate Professor of Law at Minnesota Law will discuss his recent paper outlining five key vectors through which AI is likely to augment presidential authority, with a particular focus on the ultimate realization of a long-held constitutional theory: the unitary executive.

## Tuesday, October 28, 2025

### Fornoff Competition

Noon | College of Law Auditorium

This is a free public event presented by The University of Toledo College of Law's moot court board.

## Friday, Oct. 31, 2025

### Virtual Great Lakes Water Conference:

"Water Security"

9 a.m.–noon

Registration is free for the public and \$55 for CLE credit. Visit our website for the link to register.

## Wednesday, Nov. 12, 2025

### The Toledo Way Series

Noon | College of Law Auditorium

Blake Morant is one of the nation's best known and respected legal educators and scholars. He has served in numerous leadership positions in the American Association of Law Schools and the American Bar Association, and he regularly speaks across the country and abroad on legal education and diversity.

## Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026

### The Cannon Lecture Series

Noon | College of Law Auditorium

Sam Tsemberis, founder of Pathways to Housing and a UCLA professor who was featured in Time Magazine as one of the 100 most important people in the world in 2024 and Hillary Melton, Director of Pathways Vermont who helped Sam to found Pathways to Housing will speak on legal issues around housing.

## Wednesday, Feb. 18–

## Thursday, Feb. 19, 2026

### Day of Giving

One of the most powerful ways you can support the college, in addition to making a gift, is to become an advocate and encourage others to give as well.

## Friday, February 27, 2026

### Law Review Symposium

9 a.m.–3 p.m.

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## STAY UP TO DATE

Visit the College of Law events calendar for event details. [utoledo.edu/law/calendar](https://utoledo.edu/law/calendar)





Charles W. Fornoff Competition



Homecoming

Law Stranahan  
LectureLaw Review  
Symposium

Cannon Lecture

Great Lakes Water  
Conference





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**THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO**

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## EXPLORE EVENTS

We look forward to seeing you at Toledo Law alumni networking events, reunions, conferences, and other special occasions throughout the year. Visit our alumni events page for the latest schedule.

[utoledo.edu/law/alumni/events](https://utoledo.edu/law/alumni/events)

[utoledo.edu/law/alumni/magazine](https://utoledo.edu/law/alumni/magazine)

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Email us at  
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share your student or alumni story.

