# THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

**Spring Commencement 2025** 

College of Law Sunday, May 11 Student Union Auditorium







# Letter from the President

Dear graduates:

Welcome to the Spring 2025 Commencement exercises at The University of Toledo! We're incredibly proud of your accomplishments and excited to celebrate with you, your families and guests.

The University of Toledo is a transformative public research institution that amplifies the initiative and activates the potential of our students. We shape the next generation of doers – those who dare to do what others only dream. You are now a part of this legacy.

As a UToledo graduate, you have a strong foundation for future successes and join a network of more than 173,000 alumni who continue to make an impact in the Toledo community and around the globe.

When you began your academic journey as a Rocket, you entrusted us with your dreams to land a job that aligns with your passions and advance in a career that you find fulfilling while positively impacting your community. On behalf of our Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, it has been our privilege to share in this journey with you and support your success that we celebrate today. We can't wait to see what you achieve next.

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Congratulations and Go Rockets!

Sincerely,

Matthew J. Schroeder Interim President The University of Toledo

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Vice Chair

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Vice President for Academic Affairs

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# **Deans**

Melissa Valiska Gregory, Ph.D. Dean, College of Arts and Letters

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College of Business and Innovation

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Rebecca E. Zietlow, J.D. Dean, College of Law

Imran I. Ali, M.D.

Dean, College of Medicine and
Life Sciences and Vice Provost for
Health Education

Marcus S. Seigar, Ph.D. Dean, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Mark A. Merrick, Ph.D., AT, ATC, FNATA Acting Dean, College of Nursing

Pamela C. Heaton, Ph.D., B.S.Pharm, FAPhA Dean, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

Thomas A. Atwood, B.A., M.L.I.S. *Dean, University Libraries* 



# **Order of Exercises**

# Commencement of Law Degree Candidates Sunday, May 11, 2025 | 1 p.m. Student Union Auditorium

**Welcome** Rebecca E. Zietlow

Dean, Distinguished University Professor and Charles W. Fornoff Professor of Law and Values

**Student Welcome** Stacey M. Alphonse

Immediate Past President, Student Bar Association

**Faculty Welcome** Geoffrey C. Rapp

Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Harold A. Anderson Professor of Law and Values

Student Address Allison I. Gilbert

Valedictorian

**Commencement Address** David M. Beller

Class of 2004

**Presentation of Class** Associate Dean Geoffrey C. Rapp

**Conferring of Degrees** Matthew J. Schroeder

Interim President

**Recognition and Hooding** Dean Rebecca E. Zietlow

**of Candidates** Associate Dean Geoffrey C. Rapp

**UToledo Alumni Welcome** Sarah K. Skow

Class of 2004

Closing Remarks Dean Rebecca E. Zietlow

Recessional

# College of Law

# Rebecca E. Zietlow, J.D. Dean

# **Juris Doctor**

#### Vincenzo Adduci

B.B.A., University of Kentucky

# Stacey Meika Alphonse

B.S., Florida State University

## **Riley Parker Anderson**

B.A., Indiana University-Bloomington

# Daniel J. Angel

B.S., Liberty University

## Bisan Alexandra Ashhab

B.S., Michigan State University

#### Akosua Oforiwaa Asiedu

B.A., University of Ghana

#### Owen D. Balas

B.A., Gannon University

## **Abigail Claire Anne Bashor**

B.A., University of Akron

#### **Declan Daniel Beaton\*\***

B.A., Michigan State University

# Joshua L. Begg

B.A., Bowling Green State University

#### **Alexis Emily Bengel**

B.S.B.A., University of Pittsburgh

# Benjamin J. Bergstrom

B.A., The University of Toledo

## Isabella E. Bettura

B.A., Kent State University

# Je'Quillan T. Bowers

B.S., Fordham University

# **Taylor Brooke Carr**

B.A., Marietta College

# **Alexis Elizabeth Clark**

B.S., SUNY College at Potsdam M.S., SUNY College at Potsdam

#### **Conner Cooksey**

B.A., The University of Toledo

#### **Daniel Richard Corwin**

B.S., Ohio State University M.S., Ohio State University M.B.A., The University of Toledo

# **Amanda Renee Creighton**

B.F.A., University of Utah M.F.A., New York University

#### **Maha Ahed Daas**

B.S., University of South Florida

#### VyJet' Monic Derden\*\*

B.S., The University of Toledo M.A., The University of Toledo

# Abigail Lyn Douglas\*\*

B.S., The University of Toledo

#### Yasmine A. Elder

B.A., University of Michigan-Dearborn

#### Hannah Elizabeth Elias\*\*\*

B.A., University of Michigan-Dearborn

## Juliana Nicoletta Fierro

B.A., University of Akron

#### Colin Robert Flanagan\*

B.A., Ohio State University

# Gina Galanti

B.A., Montclair State University

#### Collin R. Garcia

B.F.A., University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

# **Allison Irene Gilbert**

B.S.Ed., Bowling Green State University

#### Belinda Awo Kroma Grant

B.S., University of Illinois-Urbana

<sup>\*</sup> Graduated December 2024

#### **Hannah Noel Grime**

B.A., Miami University

#### **Charlotte Elizabeth Gross**

B.A., Ohio Wesleyan University

# Lynn Jeanesse Hancsak

B.S., Grand Valley State University

# **Edward Charles Hastings II\***

B.S., University of Phoenix M.S., Tiffin University

#### **Kent Heiser**

B.S.B.A., Bowling Green State University

# **Zachary Hewitt\***

B.A., Trine University

# Nicole D. Hopkins\*\*

B.A., Spring Arbor University

## Rahma I. Ismail

B.S., The University of Toledo

#### **Corrie Brooke Kettler**

B.S., Eastern Michigan University

# Daniel Ray LaValley

B.S., Colorado State University

#### Julie A. Lorincz

B.A., Xavier University

#### **Thomas Edward Lyden**

B.S.B.A., Youngstown State University

## Ronald Leroy Lynch Jr.\*

B.A., University of Arizona

#### Kimberly Ann Madden

B.S., Brigham Young University

# **Brendan Patrick Magolan**

B.M.E., University of Detroit Mercy

## Cory Lee Marcum\*

B.A., University of Cincinnati B.I.S., University of Cincinnati

#### Klara Matuskova

B.A., Indiana University-South Bend

#### **Zander Pearce Meehan**

B.A., Madonna University

#### Jacob A. Mertus

B.C.J., Tiffin University M.S., Tiffin University

## **Kennedy Kristine Mick**

B.A., The University of Toledo

#### **Collin Patrick Mischak**

B.A., The University of Toledo

# **Abigail Mary Morales**

B.B.A., University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley

#### Jackson D. Murphree

B.S., The University of Toledo

# **Morgan Nicole Murphy**

B.B.A., Tiffin University

## William John Nagy II\*

B.A., The University of Toledo

## Kim E. Nielsen\*\*

B.A., Macalester College Ph.D., University of Iowa

#### **Breanna Renae Norman**

B.A., Eastern Washington University

## Kaitlyn D. O'Connor\*

B.S., Eastern Michigan University

# **Maggie Christine Ohmer**

B.A., Ohio Northern University

#### Daniel Thomas O'Neill

B.S., University of Louisville M.A., University of Louisville

#### **Grace Alixandra Palmer**

B.A., Western Michigan University

## Kaleigh Rhiane Paré

B.A., Michigan State University

#### Anjali Patel

B.A., Ohio State University

## Camryn Marie Patton

B.S., Central Michigan University

# Alec Brandon Poland

B.A., Michigan State University

## **Crystal Hadeer Poota**

B.S.B.A., University of Detroit Mercy

# Anthony J. Pugh\*

B.B.A., Grand Valley State University

## Ryley Noel Ressler\*

B.S., Pennsylvania State University

# Raul Victor Rodrigues do Nascimento

B.A., Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte

## **Hannah Kaye Roegner**

B.A., Adrian College M.A., Adrian College

#### Anna E. Rowland

B.A., The University of Toledo

## Sarah Sahmarani

B.A., The University of Toledo

# College of Law

Rebecca E. Zietlow, J.D. Dean

# Eileen Pamela Salisbury

B.S., Indiana Institute of Technology M.S., Indiana Institute of Technology

## Ryan M. Scherer\*\*

B.A., Youngstown State University

## Madison E. Scheuer\*\*

B.A., The University of Toledo

#### Jack Devon Shannazarian

B.A., California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo

## Romina Shehab\*\*

B.B.A., Siena Heights University

# Harupraj Singh\*\*

B.A., University of California-Berkeley

#### Erika Skenderas

B.A., Wayne State University

## **Ryan Martin Skie**

B.A., University of Dayton

# Anya M. Slota

B.A., John Carroll University

# **Madison Rose Smith**

B.A., Hope College

# Scott M. Stevens

B.A., The University of Toledo

#### Natalie Eileen Sullivan Baker

B.S., Cornell University

# Jaclyn M. Tadlock\*\*

B.A., The University of Toledo

## Nathaniel Robert Vanden Brook

B.A., Western Michigan University M.A., Western Michigan University

## **Avery M. Viers\***

B.A., The University of Toledo

# **Sydney Jane Voss**

B.S., Lake Erie College

# **Emily R. Warnimont**

B.S., The University of Toledo

# **Emily Anne Wilhelm**

B.B.A., The University of Toledo

## Josh Yeager

B.S., The University of Toledo

## Ryleigh L. Zettle

B.S.B.A., Central Michigan University

#### Katherine O. Zura

B.A., The University of Toledo

# **Master of Studies in Law**

## **Kristy Ann Heath**

B.B.A., The University of Toledo

# **Joint Degrees**

# Joint J.D./M.B.A.

Alexis Emily Bengel Collin R. Garcia Belinda Awo Kroma Grant Kent Heiser Anthony J. Pugh\* Madison Rose Smith Jaclyn M. Tadlock\*\*

# Joint J.D./M.P.A.

VyJet' Monic Derden\*\* Colin Robert Flanagan\*

# **Degrees with Honors**

# Summa Cum Laude

Daniel Richard Corwin Amanda Renee Creighton Allison Irene Gilbert Brendan Patrick Magolan

# Magna Cum Laude

Joshua L. Begg Alexis Elizabeth Clark Kimberly Ann Madden Jacob A. Mertus Breanna Renae Norman Grace Alixandra Palmer Alec Brandon Poland Anna E. Rowland Anya M. Slota

# Cum Laude

Stacey Meika Alphonse Bisan Alexandra Ashhab Abigail Claire Anne Bashor Alexis Emily Bengel Benjamin J. Bergstrom Isabella E. Bettura Je'Quillan T. Bowers Taylor Brooke Carr Conner Cooksey Maha Ahed Daas Juliana Nicoletta Fierro Collin R. Garcia Corrie Brooke Kettler Julie A. Lorincz Jackson D. Murphree Morgan Nicole Murphy Kaitlyn D. O'Connor\* Anjali Patel Crystal Hadeer Poota Raul Victor Rodrigues do Nascimento Hannah Kaye Roegner Natalie Eileen Sullivan Baker Sydney Jane Voss Josh Yeager Ryleigh L. Zettle Katherine O. Zura

# College of Law Faculty and Professional Staff

# **Administration**

Rebecca E. Zietlow, J.D., B.A. Dean, Distinguished University Professor, and Fornoff Professor of Law and Values

Geoffrey C. Rapp, J.D., A.B. Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Anderson Professor of Law and Values

Cindy M. Kirby, J.D., B.A. Assistant Dean for Student Affairs

Amber L. Caldeira, J.D., B.A.
Assistant Dean for Law Admissions

Rick Goheen, J.D., M.S.L.S., B.A. Assistant Dean for the LaValley Law Library and Associate Professor of Law

Kelly J. Tomlinson, J.D., B.A. Director of Academic Success and Bar Preparation and Assistant Legal Writing Professor

# **Faculty**

John A. Barrett Jr., J.D., B.A. Associate Professor of Law

Zsea Bowmani, J.D., B.A. Assistant Professor of Law

Lesa R. Byrnes, J.D., M.A., B.A. Director of Legal Writing Program and Legal Writing Professor

Shelley L. Cavalieri, J.D., B.A. *Professor of Law* 

Maara A. Fink, J.D., B.A. Clinical Professor of Law

Llewellyn J. Gibbons, J.D., LL.M., M.A., B.A. Distinguished University Professor and Professor of Law

Gregory M. Gilchrist, J.D., A.B. *Professor of Law* 

Rick Goheen, J.D., M.S.L.S., B.A. Assistant Dean for the LaValley Law Library and Associate Professor of Law

Candice L. Kline, J.D., M.B.A., B.A. Assistant Professor of Law

Jessica A. Knouse, J.D., LL.M., B.A. *Professor of Law* 

Deborah P. Machalow, J.D., B.A. Assistant Professor of Law

Adrian A. McKinney, J.D., M.P.A., B.A. *Assistant Professor of Law* 

Eugenio Mollo, J.D., B.A.

Clinical Professor of Law

Katherine R. O'Connell, J.D., B.A. *Legal Writing Professor* 

Marilyn F. Preston, J.D., B.A. *Legal Writing Professor* 

Geoffrey C. Rapp, J.D., A.B. Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Anderson Professor of Law and Values

Robert S. Salem, J.D., B.A. Clinical Professor of Law

Joseph E. Slater, Ph.D., J.D., B.A. Distinguished University Professor and Balk Professor of Law and Values

Glenys P. Spence, J.D., LL.M, B.A. *Assistant Professor of Law* 

Lee J. Strang, J.D., LL.M., B.A. Stoepler Professor of Law and Values

Kelly J. Tomlinson, J.D., B.A.
Director of Academic Success and
Bar Preparation and Assistant Legal
Writing Professor

Rebecca E. Zietlow, J.D., B.A.

Dean, Distinguished University

Professor, and Fornoff Professor of
Law and Values

Evan C. Zoldan, J.D., B.A. *Professor of Law* 

# **Lecturers in Law**

Mark S. Barnes, J.D., B.A.

Krysten E. Beech, J.D., B.A., B.Ed.

Christopher L. Bourell, J.D., LL.M., B.A.

Claire R. Cahoon, J.D., B.A.

Amber L. Caldeira, J.D., B.A.

Nakisha N. Chaney, J.D., B.A.

Shelby J. Cully, J.D., B.A.

Hon. Myron C. Duhart II, J.D., B.A.

LaKeytria W. Felder, J.D., B.A.

Paul Finkelman, Ph.D., B.A.

Nathan Goetting, J.D., M.A., B.A.G.E.

Brian C. Goodell, J.D., B.A.

Donna M. Grill, J.D., B.S.

Marilyn M. Grohe, J.D., B.A.

David T. Harold, J.D., M.A., B.A.

Katherine Hunt Thomas, J.D., B.A.

Richard T. Karcher, J.D., B.A.

Rena S. Leizerman, J.D., B.A.

John D. Mackewich, J.D., B.S.

Charles R. McDonald, J.D., B.A.

Thomas Moga, J.D., M.A., B.S., B.A.

Benjamin R. Syroka, J.D., B.A.

Jacob M. Ward, J.D., B.S.

Kurt Young, J.D., B.A.

# History of The College of Law

The College of Law, started by the downtown Toledo YMCA in 1906, became affiliated with The University of Toledo in 1909. For a time, its faculty consisted entirely of lawyers engaged in practice in Toledo. From 1922-27, the college was a department of the University's former College of Arts and Sciences. In 1927, it was reestablished as the College of Law under the leadership of Dean Charles W. Racine. During his tenure, the college's curriculum was revamped and the law library collection was expanded.

In 1939, the college appointed its first full-time dean, Edward S. Stimson. Dean Stimson hired a full-time faculty, including the distinguished international law and jurisprudence teacher and scholar, Dr. Joseph L. Kunz. He and his colleagues brought the law library up to required size and content for purposes of accreditation. The American Bar Association (ABA) granted provisional approval and later full approval in 1941. The college was admitted to membership in the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) in the fall of 1941. Toledo was the first part-time law school to earn approval from the ABA and membership in the AALS.

Charles W. Fornoff joined the College of Law faculty in 1938 and replaced Dean Stimson in 1942. His 18 years of service in that capacity, from 1942-60, are the longest in the school's history. During Dean Fornoff's tenure, enrollment and faculty grew, and the school moved from University Hall to more commodious space on the upper floors of the then-University Library (now Gillham Hall). The school's intra-school moot court arguments — the Fornoff Competition — and the Fornoff Society are named in his honor.

Dean Fornoff was succeeded in 1960 by J. Allen Smith, who served as dean for three years. During this time, preparations were made for the start of a full-time, day-division program, and in 1963 the school admitted its first class of full-time students, ending 57 years of operating only as a part-time, evening-division school.

Karl Krastin was appointed dean in 1963. During his tenure from 1963-76, enrollment and faculty increased nearly threefold. The law library collection expanded rapidly and, in 1969, The University of Toledo Law Review began publication. Richard S. Walinski, now a Toledo lawyer, was its first editor-in-chief. During the late 1960s, the college became extensively involved in clinical legal education and is now a nationally recognized pioneer in this field. One of the highlights of Dean Krastin's tenure was construction and dedication of the badly needed Law Center building, which was completed in 1972. The University's affiliation with the state of Ohio's system of higher education in 1967 resulted in funds becoming available for the construction of the Law Center.

Francis X. Beytagh succeeded Dean Krastin in 1976. He spearheaded the \$500,000 law-library development drive and oversaw construction of the \$2.5 million Law Center addition. He established the Law Placement Office (now the Office of Professional Development) and helped organize the J.D./M.B.A. program in conjunction with the former College of Business Administration (now the John B. and Lillian E. Neff College of Business and Innovation), as well as an extensive set of continuing legal-education programs.

Following Dean Beytagh's term, alumnus and longtime faculty member John W. Stoepler was hired as dean in 1983. Stoepler, who served as dean until 1990, oversaw several major changes. The college converted from the quarter system to semesters to better serve the needs of its students, and a comprehensive alumni and development program was initiated, which eventually led to the publication of Toledo Transcript. A separate Law Admissions Office was established, and Dean Stoepler continued a trend, begun by Dean Beytagh, to scale back class size to ensure a high-quality learning environment. Due to the work of Deans Beytagh and Stoepler, in 1983, the college became only the second law school nationally with both day and evening programs to be awarded a chapter of the Order of the Coif.

In 1991, Dean Thomas D. Crandall joined the College of Law. Dean Crandall helped establish the Legal Institute of the Great Lakes in 1992. He also started the Fornoff Society, helped recruit its first 50 members, and hired the first full-time development professional.

Albert T. Quick served as dean of the College of Law from 1995–99. During his tenure, he launched an aggressive recruitment program, pursued a development plan in conjunction with the University's capital campaign and concluded the reaccreditation process with the American Bar Association. Dean Quick left the college in 1999.

Phillip J. Closius, who served as dean from 1999-2005, joined the College of Law in September 1979. Under his leadership, the college expanded its efforts to recruit highly qualified faculty and students, and improved its regional and national reputation. The Distinguished Lecture Series, which brings prominent speakers to campus, was initiated during Dean Closius' tenure. He returned to full-time teaching in 2005 and retired from the University in 2007.

Douglas E. Ray served as dean from 2006-10. He had previously served on the UToledo College of Law faculty from 1981-98, including as an associate dean and as the Charles W. Fornoff Professor of Law and Values. He was vice president of Widener University in Chester, PA, and dean of its College of Law, from 1999-2005 before returning to The University of Toledo. During his deanship, the college substantially expanded its professional development programming and public service activities. Dean Ray left the University in 2010.



Daniel J. Steinbock served as interim dean for the 2010-11 academic year and was appointed the college's 17th dean in 2011, serving through 2015. He was a member of the faculty from 1985-2016, and also served as associate dean for academic affairs. During his tenure as dean, the college hired 10 talented, new faculty members. Dean Steinbock oversaw the renovation of the auditorium (now the Richard and Jane McQuade Law Auditorium), the Forum, and other areas of the Law Center.

D. Benjamin Barros, served as dean and professor of law from 2015-23. Prior to his service at The University of Toledo, he was a member of the faculty at Widener University School of Law, also serving as associate dean for academic affairs and associate dean for faculty research and development at that institution. During his time at the College of Law, he was committed to providing a student-centered education that prepared graduates for the practice of law, and led the college through a period of change in legal practice and education.

In 2023 Rebecca E. Zietlow, Distinguished University Professor and Fornoff Professor of Law and Values, was appointed as interim dean. She previously served as associate dean for academic affairs for the College of Law and had been a member of the law faculty since 1995. In March 2025, Zietlow was appointed as permanent dean of the College of Law, making her the first woman to hold the position.

These achievements establish a foundation for greater success in the future. The college and those associated with it are indebted to those who came before, whose efforts made these and future accomplishments possible.

# **Honors Criteria**

#### Summa Cum Laude

- Graduation with Highest Honors
- Highest Honors are awarded to students with an average of at least 3.9 on a 4.0 scale. This is equivalent to an "A" average.

# Magna Cum Laude

- Graduation with High Honors
- High Honors are awarded to students with an average of at least 3.6 on a 4.0 scale. This is equivalent to an "A-" average or above.

## Cum Laude

- Graduation with Honors
- Honors are awarded to students with an average of at least 3.3 on a 4.0 scale. This is equivalent to a "B+" average or above.

# **Academic Dress**

Academic dress was first used in medieval universities in Europe, having evolved from the attire of members of the monastic orders who were the chief scholars of that time. Many varieties of gowns, headresses and hoods have been used, but beginning around 1895, colleges and universities in the U.S. developed a code that most institutions follow.

#### The Gown

The gown is black and white, traditionally of serge, worsted, poplin or silk, and often made of modern fibers. Sleeves for the bachelor's gown are pointed, for the master's closed with slits for the arms, and for the doctor's round and open. The doctor's gown has a velvet facing and three velvet bars on the sleeves, either black or the color stipulated for the degree held.

#### The Hood

The hood originated from the tippet or shoulder covering worn by begging friars. The master's hood is narrower and more pointed than the doctor's hood. Hoods are lined with the colors of the institution from which the degree was earned and are edged with the velvet of a color designating the degree.

# The Cap

The cap most commonly worn is the black mortarboard. Doctor's caps usually have gold tassels. Others may have black or colored tassels, the latter indicating the field of study.

There are variations, both in hood and headdress, for the degrees earned in foreign countries. Some American universities also have distinguishing academic dress. Holders of doctoral degrees from The University of Toledo and members of its Board of Trustees are entitled to wear the official University of Toledo doctoral costume, adopted by the Board of Trustees on June 11, 1968, at the request of the Graduate Student Association and the graduate faculty.

The University of Toledo doctoral costume is in the official colors of the University. The robe is of midnight blue faille, with black velvet panels and bars outlined in gold. There is a choice of headgear — the mortarboard in blue or the black velvet tam, each with a gold tassel. The hood of black faille is lined with the colors of the University — midnight blue and gold.

Color of trimming for the doctor's gown and for the doctor's and master's hood and the field of learning represented are: white, arts and letters; sapphire blue or drab, business administration; light blue, education; orange, engineering; brown, fine arts; purple, jurisprudence; lemon, library science; green, medicine; pink, music; olive, pharmacy; dark blue, philosophy; and yellow, science.

## Cords

Red, white and blue military honor cords recognize graduates who have served or are currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.





# THE POWER TO DO