

## From the Dean



(L-R): Alumni Justice Alan Lawson ('87) and Ben Gibson ('08) talked to students about navigating stress during Tuesday's Evening with the Bench and the Bar event.

Earlier this week, we hosted a special *Evening with the Bench and the Bar*, featuring alums Florida Supreme Court Justice Alan Lawson ('87) and Ben Gibson ('08), a partner at Shutts & Bowen. The event was moderated by graduate Melanie Kalmanson ('16), who is an associate at Akerman. Our alumni provided candid remarks about navigating stress during law school and law practice. Gibson, who serves on The Florida Bar Standing Committee on Mental Health & Wellness and Young Lawyers Division Board of Governors, talked about the importance of researching prospective employers to find a job and work environment that fits your priorities. He also remarked that students should seek jobs where their talents line up with their passions. Justice Lawson quoted Thomas Jefferson and John Locke in relation to the pursuit of happiness and thriving in life. He stressed that what works for each person in terms of finding solutions to stress is different and urged students to spend the necessary time to work on themselves to thrive through life's toughest challenges. Our alumni also discussed mental health resources available to students and lawyers. The session was well attended by students and was co-sponsored by several student organizations. Attendees were invited to submit questions before the event, which also included a dedicated Q&A portion. The event was part of our new Raising the Bar Professionalism+ Program, which is facilitated by our Office of Student Advancement and includes efforts to support students through a wide variety of events addressing mental health and wellness. Just last week, our Office of Student Advancement also hosted Mental Health and Wellness Week, which included a session on healthy eating, an exercise class exclusively for law students, and a workshop on financial health and planning.

- Dean Erin O'Connor

## Faculty Profile: Jennifer Winegardner

Jennifer Winegardner has joined our legal writing faculty this spring. She will be teaching Legal Writing II. Winegardner is an experienced trial and appellate litigator. She has worked as a staff attorney for the Honorable Peggy A. Quinn, of the Florida Supreme Court, and as a commercial litigator at Broad and Cassel and the Chase Law Firm. Winegardner co-authored the *PRO SE APPELLATE HANDBOOK* and served on the The Florida Bar Journal/News Editorial Board from 2005-2011. Winegardner holds a B.A. in English from John Carroll University and a J.D. from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law.



*"For nearly 25 years, I've helped my clients navigate a judicial system that can be confusing and intimidating. In doing my work honorably, I not only help my clients directly, but serve my profession. Teaching is an extension of that service. It is an opportunity to model professionalism and pride for work that is sometimes ridiculed and maligned. It gives me a moment early in a student's education to show them how a single sentence, paragraph and brief is meaningful for the client and the profession."*

## Alum Profile: George E. Tragos ('74)

[George E. Tragos](#) is the managing partner at the Law Offices of Tragos, Sartes & Tragos in Clearwater. He is board certified in criminal trial law and also specializes in personal injury law. A seasoned trial attorney, Tragos has defended clients in high-profile cases for more than 30 years. Before entering private practice, he was a state and federal prosecutor. Tragos served as chief of the criminal division for the United States Attorney's Office, a commissioner to the West German government, lead trial assistant for the president's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force, and a chief of the Felony Division for the Sixth Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office. Tragos is engaged in the legal profession and is a past president of the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, a past chairman of The Florida Bar Criminal Rules Committee, a past chairman of The Florida Bar Criminal Law Section, and a past president of the Clearwater Bar Association. He was recently honored with the Tampa Bay Goldberg Cacciatore Inns of Court's Jack Edmund Award for Excellence and Civility in Criminal Law. The award recognizes an attorney in the Tampa Bay area who has exhibited, both inside and outside of the courtroom, exceptional legal knowledge and ability in criminal law, as well as professionalism and civility to his adversaries and the judiciary.



*"The most professionally rewarding aspect of my practice over 40 years is the criminal trial. I get excited about it, I enjoy every minute of it and I believe it is the purest form of defense to our constitutional system of justice. However, my new greatest professional joy is the fact that I am now practicing with my son Peter Tragos, who is also a graduate of Florida State University law school."*

## Student Profile: 3L Stephen Barber

**Desired Practice Location:** St. Petersburg-Tampa area  
**Expected Graduation:** May 2019  
**Field of Law Sought:** Work experience reflects a longstanding desire to help people through public service and politics



Stephen Barber was born and raised in Seminole, Fla. A proud "Double Nole," Barber graduated *magna cum laude* from FSU with a double major in history and international affairs. When he graduates from FSU Law in May 2019, he will also earn the International Law Certificate. Barber is currently clerking at Nelson Mullins Broad and Cassel, where he is researching and drafting motions and memos on a variety of topics, including administrative law and constitutional law. Last fall, Barber clerked remotely for Heintz & Becker, a personal injury firm in Bradenton. Last summer, he worked as a legislative intern for Rep. Al Lawson, of the U.S. House of Representatives. Barber attended briefings and composed memos on an assortment of topics, including drafting analysis of proposed legislation and recommending topics of action. His proudest accomplishment was independently researching and drafting a letter destined for the Attorney General, which provided a legal basis for the Justice Department to bring a case against the State of Florida for alleged discriminatory voter re-enfranchisement practices. During the spring of his 2L year, Barber worked as a legislative intern with Becker & Poliakoff, where he performed a variety of tasks, including compiling and editing the *Weekly Legislative Municipal Update* for clients. In addition to arranging meetings between clients and legislators, Barber was also responsible for compiling weekly education reports for interested clients, analyzing bills considered in committee and relaying substantive debate. The summer after his 1L year, Barber interned at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, where he researched legal questions for intra-department clients and advised the best course of action, revised proposed changes to regulations, and gained exposure to the processes for drafting complaints, motions and proposed orders for the office's legal staff. Barber is a member of the *Journal of Transnational Law & Policy* and the Women's Law Symposium, where he served as the 1L representative. Barber is also a member of the International Law Students Association and served as chairperson for the organization's annual Diversity Week events. If you are interested in hiring Barber after graduation, [visit his LinkedIn profile](#).

*"Challenging as it may have been at times, my experience at FSU Law has been exceptionally rewarding. There were countless opportunities afforded to me, my professors were outstanding and the student body is composed of some of the most diligent, kind and generous people I know—some of whom I am lucky enough to call my friends. I am immensely proud to have been a part of this institution and I am eager to see what the future has in store."*

*We need your support for student scholarships!*

Visit [law.fsu.edu/pavetheway](http://law.fsu.edu/pavetheway) to learn how you can change lives and pave the way for future FSU Law students while increasing the value of an FSU Law degree. As of January 24, 2019, we have raised \$951,543 toward our \$2 million campaign goal.

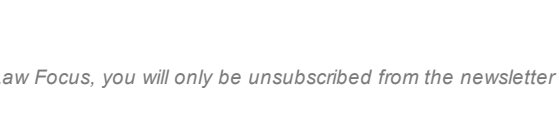
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