

From the Dean



This year, 10 of the 12 Florida House of Representatives legislative interns were FSU Law students.

According to American Bar Association data recently analyzed by Law.com, FSU Law is the nation's eighth best in terms of law schools with the highest percentage of Class of 2018 graduates who obtained government and public interest jobs. This ranking is particularly gratifying because we know a large percentage of our students aspire to work in government and public interest positions, and because we devote ourselves to making a wide variety of experiential opportunities in these areas available to our students. These opportunities include externships at state agencies and in public defender and state attorney's offices, and representing clients through the clinics of our Public Interest Law Center. Because of our location, students are also able to easily work at the Capitol and participate in the Gubernatorial Fellows and Legislative Intern programs – year after year, FSU Law students comprise a majority of the fellowship and internship seats. We also have several privately funded summer scholarships that allow students to work at public interest organizations in major metropolitan areas. In recent years, students who have earned those scholarships have spent summers working for the Human Rights Institute of the International Bar Association in London, Emory Summer Child Advocacy Program, Department of Justice Office of Immigration in Washington, D.C., National Housing Alliance in Washington, D.C., Disability Rights Florida in Tallahassee, Bet Tzedek (House of Justice) in Los Angeles, GLAD Legal Services in Boston, and American Civil Liberties Union offices in Atlanta, Miami and New York City. Through all of these and many more opportunities, students obtain valuable hands-on experience in their chosen areas that they can use to immediately make an impact in post-graduation employment. I hope you will join me in recognizing our many graduates who have chosen to pursue important government and public interest service!

- Dean Erin O'Connor

Faculty Profile: Terri Casey

Terri Casey is an adjunct professor at FSU College of Law teaching Employment Discrimination Law this summer to both J.M. and J.D. students. Casey worked in the human resources field for 15 years before attending law school. After admittance to the bar, she continued working as an HR executive, using her legal education to further create workplaces that were compliant and fair, and where employees could do their best work. Throughout her career, Casey also has served as in-house counsel and general counsel for several companies in a variety of industries, including government, healthcare, information technology and manufacturing. She currently leads Engagement Advisors, a consulting firm partnering with clients on everything from employment investigations to HR infrastructure to building effective company cultures. Casey's current writing project is an employee's guide to evaluating workplace culture and she'll be traveling to Germany and Chechnya this fall to conduct book research. She lives in Tampa with her husband and two dogs.



“My satisfaction in teaching comes from watching students experience their personal ‘light bulb’ moments—whether it’s finally getting something they’ve struggled with or it’s gaining confidence in their own abilities to figure things out. I believe that I’m making a difference in the lives of others.”

Alum Profile: Mary Thomas ('05)

Mary Thomas has risen to become the highest-ranking female political appointee in a litigating component at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), where she serves as deputy associate attorney general for civil rights. In this role, Thomas works on a broad spectrum of civil rights law enforcement, including enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the anti-discrimination provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Among her other law enforcement duties at DOJ, Thomas is the founder and chair of the governmentwide Task Force on Human Trafficking in International Fishing. She recently represented DOJ at the Buy American and Hire American Listening Session, where she highlighted the Trump administration's work to protect American jobs. As the daughter of Indian immigrants, Thomas brings a unique perspective and understanding to her work in this area. She was also recently quoted in a May 5, 2019, *Wall Street Journal* article, [Administration Backs Plan for More Visas for Seasonal Workers](#). Thomas began her federal government service when she was appointed by the president to serve as director of policy at DOJ's Office of Justice Programs, where she worked closely with law enforcement agencies across the country to prevent and reduce crime. Thomas has also appeared on [C-SPAN](#) representing the Office of Justice Programs at the DOJ Human Trafficking Summit in February 2018. Thomas previously lived and worked in Tallahassee, where she was a candidate for Congress in 2016, served as general counsel at the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and served in Governor Rick Scott's General Counsel's Office. There, she advised the governor on environmental, land use and administrative law, as well as on cabinet-related issues. In addition to earning her J.D. from FSU Law, Thomas has an LL.M. in Real Property Development from the University of Miami School of Law. Although currently residing in Maryland while working in the administration, Thomas and her family still call Florida home and look forward to returning after their service in Washington.



Student Profile:

2019 Grad Kristen Rivenbark-Cook

Desired Practice Location: Denver, Colorado
Field of Law Sought: Prefers to work in state or local government—agriculture law, working with national or state parks, or environmental law

Kristen Rivenbark-Cook is originally from Ridott, Illinois. She graduated *summa cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in interior merchandising from Harding University in Searcy, Arkansas, and graduated from FSU Law in May 2019. Rivenbark-Cook participated in the Veteran's Legal Clinic, where she focused on driver's license cases. She worked with veterans who had suspended driver's licenses due to DUIs, child support, outstanding court fines and fees resulting from unpaid tickets. The clinic provides a unique opportunity that allows indigent veterans to convert outstanding court fines and fees to community service hours to satisfy their outstanding court debts, and Rivenbark-Cook drafted motions for these cases. She also participated in a judicial externship with the Florida Division of Administrative Hearings the summer after her 1L year. In this position, she attended hearings, read transcripts of hearings, conducted legal research on a variety of topics and drafted proposed recommended orders. Rivenbark-Cook was an article and notes editor for the *Journal of Transnational Law & Policy*. She was a student member of the William H. Stafford American Inn of Court and the Women's Law Symposium. Rivenbark-Cook was also a Lexis Nexis student representative for the 2017-18 academic year and the head student Lexis Nexis representative during her 3L year. If you are interested in hiring Rivenbark-Cook or helping her make connections in Denver, [visit her LinkedIn profile](#).



“FSU Law became an unexpected home for me these past three years. I am grateful for the overwhelming support and mentorship I received from FSU Law that has shown me a world of possibilities in which to serve my community. I look forward to beginning my legal career in Colorado due to the excellent level of education I acquired while attending FSU Law.”



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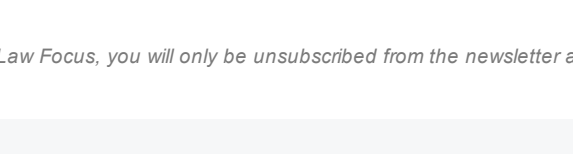
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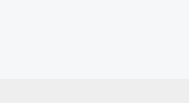
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