

From the Dean



U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit Judge Robert J. Luck speaks to Legal Writing & Research II students

On Tuesday, February 16, we were honored to welcome the Honorable Robert J. Luck to the law school through our Jurist in Residence Program. Judge Luck currently sits of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit and previously sat on the Florida Supreme Court. During his special visit to campus, Judge Luck gave a socially distanced presentation about the “Law Clerk Experience.”

Judge Luck was extremely engaging, asking questions of the audience and encouraging students to ask him questions throughout his talk. He discussed in great detail how federal courts operate in comparison to state courts, providing many details about the powers provided by Article 3, which he called an “amazing document.” He also talked about the responsibilities of law clerks in federal courts, what students need to do to best prepare for obtaining a clerkship, and the special relationship between a judge and a clerk. Judge Luck also discussed extensively the characteristics he looks for when hiring law clerks: the capacity for hard work, intelligence concerning the law, good writing skills, personality and humility in understanding the role of a clerk. When the allotted time for his talk was finished, students lined up to continue to ask questions of Judge Luck, which he invited them to do during his presentation.

Judge Luck also visited Professor Glenda Thornton’s 1L Legal Writing & Research II class and met with faculty members comprising our Judicial Clerkship Committee. It was very nice to be able to once again welcome Judge Luck to campus and to have him interact with our bright, talented students. We are grateful to the many judges who have participated in our Jurist in Residence Program over the years and look forward to hosting more judges on campus in the future.

-Dean Erin O’Connor

Business Law Lecture Features Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Law Firms



Panelist Tiffani G. Lee during last week’s virtual Amelia Rea Maguire Business Law Lecture

The College of Law hosted our second annual “Amelia Rea Maguire Business Law Lecture: A Panel on the Economics of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion” on Thursday, February 11. The virtual event, co-sponsored by the FSU College of Business, featured Tiffani G. Lee, a partner at Holland & Knight who also serves as the firm-wide diversity partner; Natalia Marulanda, a Mansfield Rule and knowledge sharing specialist with the Diversity Lab; and Jenea M. Reed, a shareholder at Stearns Weaver Miller who chairs the firm’s Diversity Committee. Carla Harris, CEO and managing director of The People Institute, moderated the panel and the event was sponsored by FSU Law alumna Amelia Rea Maguire (’87), who provided opening remarks.

Harris began the discussion by framing the importance of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) in the legal field for two main reasons: clients are now requiring that outside firms reflect the diversity of the customers they serve, and the high cost of attrition, stating the loss of just one associate can cost a firm hundreds of thousands of dollars. The expert panelists discussed the need to give more attention to pipeline development—more people from traditionally underrepresented groups coming into the profession, the importance of creating system-wide processes to mitigate unconscious individual bias, and the critical role of leadership in driving the culture of DE&I, including the important layer of middle-management leadership. They also discussed Diversity Lab’s Mansfield Rule as a framework for tackling DE&I and the reasons for the slow progress that has been made in DE&I over the last 20 years.

“It’s not just about mentorship and figuring out your way, but sponsoring and elevating is critically important,” said Reed. “One of the things that has been hard is making sure that structurally there is support and there are opportunities for diverse attorneys to get the types of quality assignments that will help them develop and build a book of business that will help them advance and keep them at a law firm.”

You can learn more about the panelists and watch the lecture in its entirety [on our website](#).

Alum Profile: Jason D. Lazarus (’96)

Jason D. Lazarus, J.D., LL.M., CSSC, MSCC, is the founder and chief executive officer of Synergy Settlement Services. Synergy offers healthcare lien resolution, Medicare secondary payer compliance services, pooled trust services, settlement asset management services and structured settlements. Lazarus is also the managing partner and founder of the Special Needs Law Firm—a Florida law firm that provides legal services related to public benefit preservation, liens and Medicare



secondary payer compliance. Lazarus is an Amazon best-selling author and his book, “Art of Settlement,” is a detailed guide for trial lawyers related to regulatory compliance when resolving catastrophic claims. His written work has been cited as authoritative on Medicare compliance by the Florida Supreme Court and the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Lazarus received his B.A. from the University of Central Florida and his J.D. with high honors from Florida State University. He received his LL.M. in elder law with distinction from Stetson University College of Law.

“Everything we do at Synergy is focused on helping to improve the lives of the catastrophically injured.”

Student Profile: 3L Hannah DuShane

Desired Practice Location: Tallahassee or Central Florida

Expected Graduation: Spring 2021

Field of Law Sought: Interested in criminal law, appellate work and state government



Hannah DuShane is originally from Ann Arbor, Michigan, but she moved to Oxford, Florida, before her senior year of high school. She earned a bachelor’s degree in history from Thomas Edison State University and will graduate from FSU Law this spring. Currently, DuShane is a clerk at Ausley McMullen, where she conducts legal research, drafts memos and assists with preparation for upcoming cases. Last fall, DuShane externed with the United States Attorney’s Office, Northern District of Florida. She assisted with trial preparation, conducted research, and drafted memos on pending cases on criminal and civil matters. During her 2L summer and into the fall semester of her 3L year, DuShane clerked at the Division of Alcohol and Tobacco, Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, where she researched pending cases and drafted closing orders and administrative complaints. During her 2L year, DuShane was a legislative intern for the Florida House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. She drafted staff analyses for bills relating to criminal and civil justice issues, conducted legal research on assigned bills and assisted with amendment drafting. DuShane attended the FSU Summer Program in Law at the University of Oxford in England during her 1L summer. DuShane interned for Florida Supreme Court Justice Alan Lawson (’87), drafting determination of jurisdiction memos and assisting with other projects.

During law school, DuShane has been a member of the Moot Court Team, serving as intramural co-chair and participating in the 2020 Gabrielli National Family Law Moot Court Competition, where she and her team were named national champions. DuShane is also a member of the *Journal of Transnational Law & Policy* and the First District Appellate American Inn of Court. She was a member of the 2019-2020 Black Law Students Association Mock Trial Team. If you are interested in connecting with or hiring DuShane after graduation, [visit her LinkedIn profile](#).

“I chose FSU because I was interested in working in government law. FSU has provided amazing opportunities to work in both state and federal government, allowing a broad variety of experience and the ability to explore and work on issues affecting Florida. I look forward to taking the skills learned at FSU and through my work experience into future practice.”

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