



FSU LAW

Focus

October 27,
2023

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From the Dean



Please join me in congratulating our 3Ls Paul DeCoste and Raymond Betancourt (pictured L-R), who unanimously won Hofstra Law's Third Annual National Legal Innovation Tournament earlier this month. Betancourt and DeCoste beat eight other teams comprised of law and engineering students from around the country, besting a team from Hofstra's Deans' Legal-Tech Fellowship Program in the final round. The one-day virtual competition challenged students to design apps that will help change

the face of dispute resolution. Betancourt and DeCoste won the tournament for their app Privity, an AI-powered app that simplifies legal jargon and makes legal documents easy for anyone to understand. In addition to winning the tournament, Betancourt and DeCoste also pitched their Privity AI app at a pitch event in Miami on October 18. They were one of six teams selected from numerous applications to pitch their startup during the Miami Tech Happy Hour. We are extremely proud of Betancourt and DeCoste and excited to watch them continue to embrace and advance legal technology.

Erin O'Connor
Dean Erin O'Connor

FSU Law Celebrates Homecoming 2023



2023 Homecoming Tailgate

Last weekend, FSU Law held its 2023 Homecoming festivities. To kick off the exciting weekend, law students, alumni, and staff represented the law school in Friday's FSU Homecoming Parade. Then Friday evening, many alumni attended the Pittman Law Group FSU Homecoming Pig Roast hosted by Sean Pittman ('94) and his firm. On Saturday, the FSU Law Alumni Association Board of Directors conducted a productive meeting, and the law school tailgate was attended by approximately 300 alumni, students, faculty, and friends. Attendees enjoyed connecting with one another over food and lawn games. Several classes, and alumni who were members of the Journal of Land Use and Environmental Law, gathered for special reunions throughout the weekend. On Sunday, FSU Law celebrated the class of 1973 during the 50-Year Alumni Brunch. The event, which was sponsored by FSU President

Emeritus John Thrasher ('73), Jean Thrasher, Judge John Kest ('73), Judge Sally Dee Millward Kest ('73), Mel Martinez ('73), and Kitty Martinez, allowed the law school to specially honor our Class of '73 alumni. [Photos from the law school events](#) are available online. Many thanks to all of the alumni and friends who made this year's Homecoming festivities so special!

In Memoriam: James Dawson Beasley ('74)

Florida State University alumnus and supporter James "Jim" Dawson Beasley died peacefully on October 11, 2023, at the age of 76. Jim graduated from Florida State University in 1969 and joined the Army that same year. He served in many locations across the country, including Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where he served as a company clerk. He was able to observe the day-to-day work of Army lawyers in this position, and this ultimately inspired him to apply for law school.



Jim graduated from FSU College of Law in 1974 and joined the Ausley McMullen law firm, where he would remain for the rest of his career until his retirement in 2022. Jim made lifelong friends during law school and through his work at Ausley. During his more than four decades with the firm, Jim became known for his expertise in public utility law and was recognized as one of the "Best Lawyers in America" in Energy Law. Jim was a beloved figure at the Ausley firm and around the Florida Public Service Commission, where he practiced throughout his career. His colleagues benefitted from his wisdom, experience, and good nature.

Jim paid it forward through his devoted involvement with Big Bend Hospice and the LeMoyne Art Foundation. He was an avid supporter of local artists, including Michael Harrell and Ron Yrabedra. He also found joy spending time with his family while boating up and down the Apalachicola River, the Bay, and the Gulf of Mexico. By his example, Jim taught his daughters Elizabeth Beasley Smith and Sarah Logan Beasley the importance of hard work, the value in serving others, and the joy of finding beauty in art and nature.

- Tribute written by alumnus Jeff Wahlen ('74) and Malcolm Means, who both practiced with Beasley at Ausley McMullen

Student Profile: 3L Shannon Paramesh

Desired Practice Location: Open to any location but would prefer somewhere in the Midwest

Expected Graduation: May 2024

Field of Law Sought: Public interest, specifically criminal defense or civil rights



Shannon Paramesh is from La Crosse, Wisconsin, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and French from the University of Iowa. This semester, Paramesh is working as Dean O'Connor's research assistant, helping prepare the next edition of the *Conflict of Laws* casebook and performing research for an article about consumer contracts. Since January of 2023, Paramesh has worked as a legal intern with the Innocence Project of Florida, where she evaluates innocence claims by reviewing applicants' previous legal proceedings, drafts memoranda about the factual and procedural history of potential cases, and recommends subsequent steps for post-conviction relief. Since September, Paramesh has also worked as a law clerk with the Capital Division of the Public Defender's Office for Florida's Second Judicial Circuit. Her work there includes assisting attorneys with trial preparation, participating in jury selection, evaluating cases, assisting with the crafting of legal defense strategies for ongoing cases, and conducting legal research. Paramesh was a legal intern with the Missouri State Public Defender's Office during the summer before her 3L year. There, she evaluated priority cases; assisted with trial preparation, which included deposing witnesses, corresponding with clients, drafting motions, and participating in jury selection; and drafted memoranda to address inequality in the justice system. From June 2019 to June 2022, Paramesh was an honors intern with the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, D.C. She assisted executive staff in investigating high profile cases, served as a team lead in creating and strengthening plans to propel priority investigations, and drafted written materials to be distributed to domestic partners.

At FSU Law, Paramesh is president of the Asian Pacific American Law Student Association, and she previously served as the organization's 1L representative. She is also treasurer of the Trafficking in America Task Force student organization and previously served as the group's president and 1L representative. Additionally, Paramesh is a member of the Bridge to Law School Program. If you are interested in connecting with or hiring Paramesh after graduation, visit her [LinkedIn profile](#) or email her at sep21f@fsu.edu.

“I have been able to take my interest in criminal defense and bolster it with my involvement with the Second Circuit Public Defender's Office in both the felony and capital settings, as well as with the Innocence Project of Florida. These opportunities and experiences early in my legal career have been very rewarding, and I am excited to take lessons learned into practice with me.”

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