

From the Dean

Like many Americans, one consequence of COVID-19 for our students is job loss and job insecurity. I have talked to many students who are concerned that the summer work and post-graduation jobs they previously secured will no longer be available. Others about to graduate are fearful that they won't be able to secure full-time employment, especially given national uncertainty about how bar exams will be administered. We have already started contacting alumni and other friends who may have job openings for current students and those who are about to graduate, but our work is far from over. If we haven't reached out to you yet and you anticipate having work opportunities for law students and new attorneys, please [email Assistant Dean for Career Services and Professional Development Debra Henley](#).



The good news is that some of our students were already working for organizations that find themselves with more work as a result of the novel coronavirus outbreak. We are thankful that their employment is secure and realize that there are legal job opportunities available for students like ours who are talented, hard-working and determined to help. Our students are also willing to work remotely if needed. Many state agencies and law firms are in need of more lawyers and clerks due to the impacts of COVID-19, resulting from executive orders and legislation among other things, and we are working diligently to connect our students with those opportunities. We appreciate anything you can do to help in those efforts!

We are also asking alumni to send encouraging words to our students during this difficult time. Please email alumni@law.fsu.edu and we will share your sentiments with students. In addition, if you wish to make a donation that will directly support law students in need of financial assistance due to COVID-19, you can give online. [Click here](#) to make a gift designated to our Student Scholarships and Loans Fund (F03349), which serves as our emergency relief fund/account. Thanks to everyone for supporting and encouraging our students!

- Dean Erin O'Connor

FSU Law Hosts ABA Task Force



ABA Criminal Justice Section Women in Criminal Justice Task Force members in the John W. Frost, II Courtroom during a listening session in early March.

FSU College of Law hosted the American Bar Association Criminal Justice Section Women in Criminal Justice Task Force on campus March 5-7. Serving on the task force are Carla Laroche, task force co-chair, FSU clinical professor and director of the Public Interest Law Center Gender and Family Justice Clinic, and third-year law student Daniela Donoso—the only student representative. During the three-day meeting, task force members discussed what members have accomplished during the past year and planned their next steps.

On Friday morning, March 6, the task force hosted a half-day listening session, where criminal justice practitioners and members of the judiciary from various parts of the state shared their experiences. The day's panelists included Tiffany Baker, of The Law Firm of Baker & Associates; Lolia Fernandez ('17), Office of the Public Defender, Second Judicial Circuit; the Honorable Barbara K. Hobbs ('81), of the Second Judicial Circuit; Edrene Johnson, Office of the Public Defender, Second Judicial Circuit; Caitlyn Kio ('18), formerly of the FSU Public Interest Law Center; Kayleigh Lamphere ('19), Office of the Public Defender, Ninth Judicial Circuit; Kathryn Lane, Office of the Public Defender, Second Judicial Circuit; Kim Mears, Office of Public Defender, Third Judicial Circuit; Laurel Tallent ('19), Office of Public Defender, Third Judicial Circuit; and Jessica Yeary, of Caminez & Yeary, P.A. Third-year law students Stefanie-Jo Osborn and Adam Hubbell also provided much-appreciated assistance during the sessions.

"During the last year, the Women in Criminal Justice Task Force has held meetings and listening sessions across the nation," said Laroche. "It was rewarding to have the members come to FSU Law and to show them all that Tallahassee has to offer. I appreciate the work of the staff and faculty who helped make this event a success."

In addition to Laroche and Donoso, other Women in Criminal Justice Task Force members in attendance included Maryam Ahranjani (reporter), of the University of New Mexico School of Law; Barbara Creel, of the University of New Mexico School of Law; Maria Carmen Hinayon, of the Law Office of Maria Carmen Hinayon; Tina Luongo (co-chair), of the Legal Aid Society of New York; Ann Ratnayake Macy, of the National Center for Child Abuse Statistics and Policy; Gloria Ochoa-Bruck, of Whitworth University; the Honorable Rachel Pickering, of the Third Judicial District in Kansas; Sarah Redfield (via Zoom), of the University of New Hampshire School Law; and Major Susan Upward, Command Judge Advocate, U.S. Marine Corps.

Alum Profile: Thomas K. Equels ('80)

Thomas K. Equels is the president and CEO of AIM ImmunoTech, where he leads a team of immunology research and development professionals dedicated to the clinical development of new drug entities for the treatment of serious and debilitating diseases. The company recently announced that Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases will be testing its flagship drug Ampligen as a potential treatment for COVID-19. The drug previously was used with success in mice to treat Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). AIM is also actively seeking investigators and additional sites for clinical testing of Ampligen as a protective prophylaxis and an early-onset treatment for COVID-19 in the United States, Europe, Asia and Argentina. Protocols for potential clinical trial are in the final stages of development. The company also is awaiting results in six ongoing clinical trials studying the effects of Ampligen on different types of cancers.



Before joining AIM ImmunoTech as CEO in 2016, Equels practiced law for 36 years. He was the managing director at Equels Law Firm in Miami, and focused on trial law and appellate advocacy. During his legal career, Equels earned numerous honors, including The Florida Bar President's Pro Bono Service Award and the Federal Bar Association Public Service Award, both in 1987. Prior to law school, he was a highly decorated combat pilot winning two Distinguished Flying Crosses. Equels has also established an endowment at FSU Law to teach legal students about the importance of social justice.

"Since the first news of the outbreak, our focus and efforts have been devoted to developing Ampligen as an intranasal and oral protective prophylaxis and as an intravenous early-onset treatment for this highly pathogenic coronavirus. As front-line workers fighting the pandemic around the world know—and as their families know—they are putting their lives on the line every day by working with COVID-19 patients. For example, health care workers account for a reported 13% of cases in Spain. I have a son and a nephew who are doctors, a daughter and a sister who are nurses, three nephews who are EMTs and one nephew who is a police officer. This fight is personal to me, as it is to countless others around the globe. In the absence of an effective vaccine, the development of early-stage therapies such as Ampligen may be critical both to the health of our front-line workers and to blunt the spread of the pandemic."

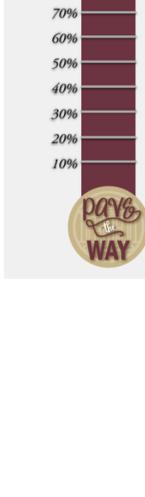
Student Profile: 3L Nathan Figueroa

Desired Practice Location: Miami
Expected Graduation: May 2020
Field of Law Sought: Business law—business litigation, transactional work, bankruptcy and copyright; has a special interest in wills and trusts



Originally from Miami, Nathan Figueroa earned a Bachelor of Music degree in keyboard performance, with a double minor in political science and business law from the University of Miami Frost School of Music. When he graduated in May of 2020, he will also earn the Business Law Certificate. Currently, Figueroa is participating in the FSU Business Law Clinic. He has assisted a number of clients in forming LLCs, conducted contract research and drafted documents such as engagement letters and articles of organization. During the fall semester of his 3L year, Figueroa interned at the Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Florida under Chief Judge Karen K. Spacie ('78). There, he researched topics such as venue, automatic stay and sanctions, wrote memoranda and presented one of his research topics to the judge. During the summer after his 2L year, Figueroa interned with Todd Rosen Law Group, a personal injury law firm in Miami, where he primarily drafted demands on behalf of clients and assisted with trial preparation. During this same time, he interned with Jones Health Law, a health and business law firm in Miami, where he assisted with document recovery and legal research regarding contracts and employee agreements. During the spring of his 2L year, Figueroa interned with Legal Services of North Florida at their Low-Income Tax Clinic in Quincy, Florida. There, he assisted with a variety of issues, including legal research and document drafting for immigration, domestic violence and divorce cases. If you are interested in hiring Figueroa after graduation, [visit his LinkedIn profile](#).

"I am skilled in understanding the culture and language of organizations. I want to be a team player and absorb the skills of my environment. If creativity is required, I relish that opportunity as a musician and an artist. However, my primary focus is usually to promote and proliferate the strengths of those around me, as well as to make those strengths my own."



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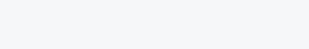
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