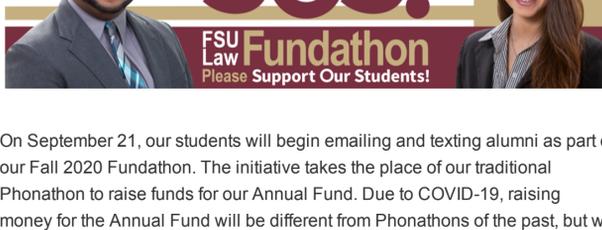


From the Dean



On September 21, our students will begin emailing and texting alumni as part of our Fall 2020 Fundathon. The initiative takes the place of our traditional Phonathon to raise funds for our Annual Fund. Due to COVID-19, raising money for the Annual Fund will be different from Phonathons of the past, but we still need your support. The theme of this fall's Fundathon is Support Our Students—or SOS—and gifts will benefit scholarships, the Student Emergency Fund (which supports students, including those suffering economic loss due to COVID-19, and also recent graduates who have been financially impacted due to delays with the Florida Bar Exam), student organizations and activities, and other student opportunities. We hope you will consider donating and designating your gift in one of these ways. For those who would like to donate now, you can make a gift online at give.fsu.edu/law or you can call 1.800.788.7097. Many thanks to everyone for Supporting Our Students!

-Dean Erin O'Connor

FSU Law Research Center Makes Adjustments for COVID-19 Learning



New plexiglass installed at the Research Center circulation desk

For the fall 2020 semester, the FSU Law Research Center made many adjustments to help students stay safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic, while still being able to access the library resources they need to be successful. The Research Center installed plexiglass barriers at the circulation desk and social distancing signage throughout the library. They also designated only certain, properly-spaced tables and carrels for in-person study. They scanned the first two weeks of course readings to help students with textbook shipping delays. They also subscribed to online digital study aid materials from West Academic and Wolters Kluwer/Aspen so students could access Research Center resources from home. The WK/Aspen package was funded by a Student Technology Fee Award, a competitive grant awarded by the university. The Research Center's popular weekly research workshop series was moved entirely online so that all College of Law students—whether taking classes virtually or in person—could access the workshops at their convenience. The Research Center librarians are also offering all students and faculty extensive research and reference support virtually via live chat and email.

"The Research Center, like many academic libraries, has been engaged in acquiring digital resources and building parallel digital services for more than two decades," said Professor Elizabeth Farrell Clifford, Director of the Research Center. "While we miss seeing all of the students and faculty in person this semester, we are well equipped and eager to continue teaching, researching and serving them all."

Alum Profile: The Honorable Samantha L. Ward ('90)

Judge Samantha L. Ward presides over cases in the Criminal Justice/Trial Division of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit in Tampa, and currently serves as the administrative judge of that division. She was first elected to the bench in 2008 and her current term ends in 2027. She previously served as bureau chief of the Office of the Public Defender and as an assistant state attorney, both in the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, and has been board certified in Criminal Law since 1997. Judge Ward is involved in many professional activities and civic



organizations, including serving on the Florida Supreme Court Criminal Rules Committee from 2012-2018, the Florida Supreme Court Committee on Standard Jury Instructions in Criminal Cases from 2007-2012, and The Florida Bar's Criminal Law Section Executive Committee since 2009, where she currently serves as secretary. In June, Ward was appointed vice chair of The Florida Bar Rules of Judicial Administration Committee, on which she has served for several years. She is extremely active in the local Hillsborough County Bar Association and has twice received the Young Lawyers Division's Outstanding Jurist Award. During the pandemic, Judge Ward has been assisting her chief judge with the implementation of policies and procedures to enable criminal court proceedings to continue in spite of courthouse closings and limitations on in-person hearings.

"The courthouse is a different place since COVID-19, just like other segments of our society," said Judge Ward. "Through partnerships and many, many meetings with the defense, prosecution, clerks and jails, we have instituted procedures to take pleas for incarcerated defendants via audio-visual connections to the jails, since jails are not transporting inmates to and from courthouses. We have set up Zoom room capability in the jails themselves, which allows inmates to participate in evidentiary and other hearings, while still enabling them to have private, confidential communications with their attorneys in 'meeting rooms.' We have developed the ability for out-of-custody defendants to report to sheriff district offices to have fingerprints taken before they resolve their case by pleading in a Zoom setting, obviating the need to report to the courthouse to do so.

"Jury trials have been suspended statewide and are beginning to be planned to resume in late October/early November," Ward continued. "We have had to restructure the entire juror empaneling process, from increasing the number of jurors summoned to anticipate higher non-attendance rates, redesigning the jury assembly area as well as jury seating plans in the courtrooms for the selection process and accommodating social distancing in jury boxes and deliberation 'areas' (instead of rooms). The day and age of setting large dockets which all begin at the same time in the morning or the afternoon are long gone; the clerk's office and the judiciary have worked together to implement staggered dockets beginning at many different times instead, allowing for hearings to be conducted virtually, without the necessity of 'waiting' for a judge to call your case. This has also been in anticipation for the new way in which we will be conducting business in the courthouse—fewer people together in each courtroom with social distancing protocols in place."

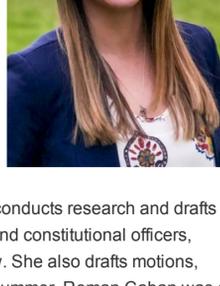
"It truly has been a monumental task for the judiciary. I have been busier during this 'courthouse closure' period than I am sitting regularly in a full-time criminal trial division. It truly takes teamwork—teamwork within the judiciary, and teamwork among the various criminal justice agencies that we interact with on a daily basis. We are very lucky in Tampa to have a great team for both of those sets of individuals."

Student Profile: 3L Stephanie Roman Caban

Desired Practice Location: Tallahassee or Orlando

Expected Graduation: May 2021

Field of Law Sought: Interested in the areas of civil litigation and appeals, employment law and immigration law; also currently developing expertise in local government law



Originally from Moca, Puerto Rico, Stephanie Roman Caban earned a bachelor's degree in political science with a minor in pre-law from the University of Central Florida. She will graduate from FSU Law in May 2021. Currently, Roman Caban clerks for Young Qualls, P.A., where she conducts research and drafts memos on issues regarding local governments and constitutional officers, proposed legislation, COVID-19 and election law. She also drafts motions, motion responses and discovery requests. Last summer, Roman Caban was teaching assistant for the FSU Law Juris Master Workplace and Cybersecurity course. She was also a judicial extern for the Honorable Lori S. Rowe ('97), of the Florida First District Court of Appeal. There, she drafted case summaries, which contained recommendations based on an analysis of the record and applicable law. During the summer after her 1L year and throughout her 2L year, Roman Caban clerked at Bishop & Mills PLLC, where she drafted answer briefs, statements of case and facts, and arguments. She also reviewed legal citations on all briefs. During the summer following her 1L year and during the fall semester of her 2L year, Roman Caban also participated in the Public Interest Law Center's Immigration and Farmworker Project. She represented individuals and families in immigration proceedings as well as any supplementary immigration concerns. She also conducted trauma-informed interviews, drafted a variety of humanitarian immigration petitions and participated in community outreach events. Additionally, during the second half of her 1L summer, Roman Caban was a summer associate at Losey PLLC, where she drafted memos and conducted legal research in the areas of employment, privacy and civil litigation.

Roman Caban is a member of the First District Appellate Inn of Court, the Florida Association for Women Lawyers and the FSU Women's Law Symposium, where she served as secretary during her 2L year. She was an ambassador for the FSU Law Admissions Office and a member of the William H. Stafford American Inn of Court. Roman Caban earned the Book Award for the upper-level writing course Human Trafficking Law. She also had the opportunity to participate in the E. Earle Zehmer National Law School Competition in 2019 and her team was a quarterfinalist. If you are interested in connecting with Roman Caban or hiring her after graduation, [visit her LinkedIn profile](#).

"I am beyond grateful for the opportunities I have had throughout my law school career. I am especially grateful for my mentors and friends who have helped mold me into the advocate I am today."

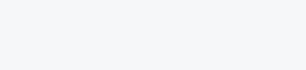
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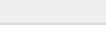
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