



Inter Alia

SAN JOAQUIN COLLEGE OF LAW • Volume 33, Issue 1



Adjunct Faculty Appreciation

AFFIRMING OUR GRATITUDE

This spring we are proud to celebrate the Adjunct Faculty members of SJCL. They are the dedicated, unsung heroes who give so generously of their time and knowledge to ensure our students receive a solid legal education. Our adjunct professors are experienced lawyers and judges who bring the world of legal practice into their classrooms. In addition to serving as a bridge between academia and the legal community, they are accessible, supportive, and genuinely committed to each student's success.

A look through the roster of adjunct faculty reveals the diversity of legal specialty and the institutions attended by our instructors. They include: Berkeley, UCLA, McGeorge, USC, Rutgers, New York University, UC Davis, Indiana University, Georgetown, Yale, Harvard, University of Michigan, College of William & Mary, UC Hastings, Notre Dame, Chapman, and of course – San Joaquin College of Law.

It's no surprise that our alumni are often praised by judges who count them among the most professional and well-prepared litigators who come before them. Like the "Little Engine That Could,"

SJCL faculty and the attorneys they train perpetuate the excellence of this small but mighty law school. We are so very grateful to all our adjunct professors, most of whom fulfill their teaching duties in addition to their own legal careers (as if they have any spare time)!

Here is what some of them say about why they do it...

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A Message From the Dean

COMMITTEE OF BAR EXAMINERS ACCREDITATION

SJCL hosted a virtual accreditation site visit from the California Committee of Bar Examiners October 26-28, 2021. A visit of this type is required every five years. Some of you may recall participating in interviews and sessions with the site team. The team also reviewed more than 4,000 pages of materials of all types.

We recently received the official Report on Periodic Inspection of San Joaquin College of Law. The report detailed SJCL's compliance with more than 125 COBE guidelines ranging from requirements for academic programs to the competence of board, faculty, staff, administration, and students to financial stability. Their only recommendations were two language clarifications. As a result, once the team's report goes to the Committee of Bar Examiners, SJCL's continued accreditation is expected to be granted with the next site visit scheduled for fall of 2026.

SCHOLARSHIPS

This year, SJCL will award to students a record number of scholarships, totaling a record number of dollars. The Student Scholarships & Awards Ceremony is scheduled for Zoom at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 2, 2022.

Fifty-five scholarships will be awarded totaling \$58,525. All of us at SJCL are grateful for this support for students as they strive to complete their degrees. New scholarships were created, for example, to assist a graduating employed student with bar exam costs and to assist students with pandemic hardships. Thoughtful family and friends of graduates established scholarships to honor beloved SJCL graduates who died during 2021.

The Jennifer Lynn Oleksa (Law '16) Scholarship was created by family and friends to honor Jenn's life, work at the California Attorney General's Office, professorship at San Joaquin College of Law, and courageous fight against a rare form of brain cancer. You can learn more about Jenn's passionate journey on page 17.

Trudi Gale Manfredo (Law '93) was a force in the bankruptcy practice community in the San Joaquin Valley. She was a greatly respected specialist in the intersection of family and bankruptcy law whom many other lawyers turned to for advice in that area. Family and friends from the bankruptcy community have created the Trudi Gale Manfredo Memorial Scholarship in her honor.

George Joseph Vasquez (Law '13) practiced civil litigation. As a professor and mentor for students at SJCL, he taught Moot Court. As a student, George was a member of the three-person team that won the Best Oral Argument and Best Brief awards at the 2013 statewide Roger J. Traynor Appellate Advocacy Competition. In honor of him, family and friends created the George J. Vasquez Memorial Scholarship.

The work and lives of Jenn, Trudi and George touched many people, and they are greatly missed. We would like to thank their families and friends for continuing their legacies in a way that will help other aspiring lawyers for years to come.

Sincerely,

Janice Pearson

Dean

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Vision: *To be the premier provider of legal education, scholarship, and service in the San Joaquin Valley.*
Mission: *To educate and develop individuals to become highly skilled attorneys and problem solvers who will benefit their communities through public and private service. In seeking this vision and attaining this mission, SJCL shall embody the values of civility, excellence, integrity, intellectual inquiry, and service.*

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The Evolution of Corporate Legal: Rethinking the “Department of NO”

Historically, corporate Legal Departments were gatekeepers focused on managing a company’s risk. Being highly conservative in its outlook, the Legal Department typically sought to mitigate risk and liability regardless of the organization’s priorities and strategic goals.

BY CARY LEVITT, ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

Not surprisingly, Legal Departments were referred to as the “Department of NO.” One of my colleagues was referred to as “Doctor No!” It was for this reason that corporate Legal Departments were disconnected from the company.

Today’s modern, in-house teams, however, are empowered to apply the risk mitigation mindset and integrate legal knowledge and business acumen to enhance the company’s productivity and efficiency, and save costs.

At the same time, the legal profession has become more complicated and demanding. In-house counsel must navigate through an ever-changing landscape of multidisciplinary responsibility.

These evolving changes and demands have been a catalyst to the evolution of the Legal Department and the role of in-house counsel. They

are now more integrated into the value and service delivery of the business.

Outside counsel as well, are adapting to these changes and demands. Which causes law schools in turn, to modify their curricula so that law students learn how to cope with the multidisciplinary demands of the legal profession.

Corporate Recovery Programs

One key area where in-house counsel are developing new skills and adding value to companies is in the area of Corporate Recoveries. In-house counsel can use company-wide knowledge to work collaboratively with business units to define and generate value. Too often, companies have become willing to accept or ignore underperformance from trading partners. Underperformance, however slight, is a source of business uncertainty and unwanted precedent.





Legal Departments should evaluate and determine whether underperformance should be grounds to pursue a recovery on behalf of the company. At a minimum, using tactical negotiation to assert the company's rights to the counterparty's will garner attention and facilitate important dialogue. Pursuing a recovery should act as a warning mechanism that a company will assert its demands for first grade performance on the agreed terms of business partnership.

Seeking redress for faulty performance invites a serious discussion. I have observed a law firm develop a practice area focused on helping companies seek appropriate redress. The methods used can set the course of the future business relationship. More importantly, they recognize the importance of adopting an approach that extends far beyond the typical outside counsel mindset. For example, a process like mediation or other non-litigation methods should be used to identify all parties' interests, and focus on efficiently resolving disputes. This ethos revolves around the inner workings and vulnerabilities of business conflict and how to help clients pursue claims while preserving relationships.

Corporate Recoveries programs are designed to identify and reduce conflict while nailing down value along the way. When properly implemented, such programs directly align Legal Departments with business objectives by boosting the bottom line, enhancing contract performance, policing and enforcing IP assets, and reducing future conflict with difficult constituents. Through a simple yet systematic approach, a centralized core team regularly identifies where the business is leaking value and applies an efficient means to evaluate if a recovery is worth pursuing.

Corporate Recoveries programs provide the in-house Legal Department with the ability to bring in revenue across diverse, quantifiable rights and assets, from cash (royalty payments, settlements, adjustments) to intellectual property rights. As a program builds momentum, its results will enhance Legal's alignment with the

business by establishing a reputation that demands first grade performance from trading partners, suppliers, third parties, and customers while instilling standards and consequences if parties fall short of obligations.

Implementing a Corporate Recoveries Program

A Corporate Asset Affirmative Recovery (CAAR) program is an advisory based approach that begins with an assessment of the potential fit. Exploratory discussions should evaluate the company's goals, and how a program can result in the generation of "recovery revenue" that enhances the productivity of Legal. Ultimately, the CAAR program adds to the company's bottom line.

It requires that a company confront its vendors, customers, and other trading partners to seek compensation for their substandard performance. The promise of a CAAR program to prevent trouble in the future is only limited by the intention of the parties involved and the creativity to find agreeable resolution.

Once an in-house lawyer has embraced the evolution of their role, it is vital to retain and develop their standing within the Legal Department. Failure to remain relevant as a strategic contributor could result in the Legal Department being viewed as a cost center – and possibly inside counsel even outsourced!

In-house counsel (and by extension outside counsel) can become all-round business advisors and team players that just happen to be legal experts. While this may be easier said than done, there are great ways to safeguard the future of in-house counsel:

- Being a visible and engaged business advisor
- Participating in the business planning process and ensuring the Legal Department is aligned with the business's objectives
- Being innovative and embracing change including implementing



Cary Levitt, Adjunct Professor

and/or leading initiatives such as a Corporate Recoveries program

- Taking a strategic approach to the legal advice
- Being flexible, adaptable, agile, and approachable
- Expanding management, business finance and leadership skills
- Developing people skills

In-house counsel must be patient and persevere. While not always welcome, in-house lawyers have an opportunity to win new respect among business colleagues. At the same time, as the costs of running a legal function increase, more will be demanded of their teams from ever tightening budgets – and consequently many companies will further embrace a Corporate Recoveries program.

As for in-house lawyers themselves, evidence suggests that their roles will continue to evolve and expand. In addition, law school professors will need to monitor shifts in the profession to adapt law school curricula to integrate legal knowledge and business acumen, in order to assure that Legal Departments are not the Department of "No".

NALC & BREN

The New Americans Legal Clinic (NALC) offers services to legal immigrants seeking a path to citizenship, and the BREN Clinic helps individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities obtain the services they need.

NALC Helps Young Girl Get Urgent Surgery

Under the direction and supervision of New American Legal Clinic (NALC), 4-L student, Diana Aguilera, helped obtain an emergency temporary guardianship for a 14-year-old girl in need of urgent surgery.

BY LINDA BARRETO, NALC DIRECTOR

The child was born in Mexico and given to her current guardian as an infant. The child's biological mother did not have the means or ability to care for the child. There is no father listed on the child's birth certificate. There were no other family members willing to care for the child. The child was brought to the United States by the guardian and has lived in the United States undocumented since that time. Prior to their arrival in the United States, the biological mother of the child signed a notarized letter giving authority to the guardian to care for the child. Sadly, the child's biological mother died from COVID in 2020.

For the past two years, the child has been dealing with severe health issues impacting her spinal cord and brain. Her condition is very painful, and she is unable to walk properly. Her care team at Valley Children's Hospital advised spinal surgery to correct the issues. However, due to the lack of legal guardianship, the surgery was pushed back several times because the hospital could not accept the notarized letter as sufficient. Due to lack of resources, the guardian could not afford an attorney to assist her with obtaining the legal guardianship necessary to consent to

the surgery and up to this point no other legal aid service was able to assist the family.

On January 24th, 2022, a social worker from Valley Children's Hospital and the guardian consulted with NALC for assistance. Both were desperate, because after several months, the guardian had been unable to obtain legal guardianship of the young girl and the surgery had to be pushed back once again to February 4. The guardian did not have the resources to hire a private attorney and no other legal aid servicers were able to help her.

The NALC legal team and Diana jumped right on the case and completed the Ex Parte request for temporary guardianship. The temporary guardianship was granted on February 3, 2022, one day before the scheduled surgery. Additionally, a hearing was set in April to obtain full guardianship and Special Immigrant Juvenile Findings. If the orders are granted NALC will also help the young girl obtain lawful permanent residency in the United States. The child is recovering at home and says her pain has significantly improved and she can now focus on her schoolwork.

For her part Diana says, "It was a great learning experience, and I am grateful to use the skills that I have



NALC helps bring about successful surgery and relief and for 14-year-old.

learned in law school to help a family in need."

The New American Legal Clinic (NALC)'s mission is to train law students with hands on experience and create a sustainable pipeline of future immigration attorneys in the Central Valley, while providing a much-needed free resource to the community. To refer a case please call 559-326-1553.

BREN Provides Critical Training For Parents

Like all parents, Arti Nayyar wants the best possible public education for her kids. Unlike most parents, she finds herself embroiled in a battle to obtain it.

BY DIANE SKOUTI, ALUMNI LIAISON

A veterinarian with her own private practice, Arti is the proud mother of two children. Her son Kabir, now six, was diagnosed with autism when he was three. With no prior knowledge about the condition, Arti felt overwhelmed and lost with the diagnoses, unsure how to find the proper resources for Kabir's education.

She met Jodie Howard at a seminar on inclusion and Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for special needs children. In her presentation, Jodie shared her own experiences in pursuit of her son's rights to an appropriate education. Jodie's son Bren is autistic too.

For Arti, meeting Jodie confirmed the need to learn all she could about navigating this puzzling new world. Sadly, the first thing most parents learn is that the behavioral, social, and education issues of children within the autistic spectrum often become fodder for battle.

Upon witnessing the damaging effects of excluding children whose progress is dependent upon inclusion among their peers, parents find that the very programs created to assist their children can sometimes become their undoing. The path to attaining what is best for special needs kids necessitates arming oneself with knowledge about the legal right of each and every child to a free and appropriate education, and a fair chance to reach their full potential.

For Jodie that meant becoming an attorney herself. Her determination to obtain support and equity for her son led her to become the valedictorian of her graduating law class, and to create the BREN clinic, named after her son, on the campus of San Joaquin College of Law.

Jodie's mission as Director of the BREN clinic and the volunteers and law students who help staff it, is to provide the knowledge and assistance that can help individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities obtain the education, community

services, and related support they need to reach their full potential.

Arti says she took the BREN training program (33 hours of comprehensive advocacy training spread over 11 class sessions) for parents and caregivers – twice - because it was so full of helpful information. It was only after learning the terminology, the procedures, and the limitations of school districts to fully serve special needs children, did she know how to go about defending her son's rights.

It is unfortunate that most families learn they must fight for the kinds of opportunities general education inclusion offers in public schools. While it is not the intention of school districts to become adversaries of children with special needs, most parents straddling the worlds of autism and general education (Gen Ed) are forced to take aim against slights that seem to occur routinely.

With assistance from the BREN clinic, Arti was able to get a knowledgeable and legal review of her son's IEP. Armed with the knowledge of how to request what she felt was the best course of education for her son, Arti persuaded the school to let Kabir participate in Gen Ed as a kindergartner.

"Children at that age are naturally inclusive, and forgiving," she said. "When you go into a classroom of the younger children, you won't find judgement or cruelty. Just understanding and acceptance, which is what special needs kids, need most."

If an autistic child is struggling in a Gen Ed class that is too challenging, the answer is often to place him in the autism class. If the autism class is not challenging enough, he will flounder. If his best option is to be placed in a general education grade below where the school thinks he should go, a battle ensues where factors like budget, resources, regulations, and bias often rear their ugly heads.

In the classes set up for those children who need separate instruction, like an autism classroom, the range of ability



Arti Nayyar, her son **Kabir** (Left), and family.

level is quite diverse. Arti says her son was too advanced for that sort of setting, even without having attended in-person kindergarten due to COVID. Even with that chunk of schooling missing, she says he was close to being at 1st grade level when the schools opened again, but she wanted him to begin, like all kids do, with kindergarten. The school district didn't agree. The frustration he is experiencing from being placed above his grade level is what Arti says brings out the negative behavior. Arti says he has none of those issues when he is not being challenged in an unfairly difficult situation, so she continues to fight, with the BREN clinic's guidance, for what is best for Kabir.

"It is rewarding to help prepare students for their future in the law and then see them become colleagues."

– Robert C. Abrams

"One of my greatest pleasures over my long career has been to teach and train young lawyers and law students. The earliest piece of advice I was given on the day of my swearing-in to the bar was that the law is that which is plausibly maintained and boldly asserted."

– Mark Broughton

"Make the law fun and learning will follow."

– Matthew Farmer

"It is a great privilege to introduce Fresno's future lawyers and leaders to concepts of ethics, due process, principles of justice, and the laws and procedures that determine how our society will be judged."

– Douglas Treisman

"The students I have had the privilege of teaching at SJCL are well prepared and excited to learn. I find teaching water and environmental law and sharing my experiences with them to be personally and professionally rewarding. The next generation will be in good hands."

– Arthur Baggett

Thank You! ACTIVE ADJUNCT FACULTY

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"My favorite part of teaching at SJCL is the opportunity to mentor students during their first year. I am honored to help provide critical support for new students to thrive, or at least survive, in the law school environment."

-Amelia Thompson

"It is rewarding to engage with our dedicated students who are the next generation of Lawyers. They are the reason I teach."

- Jason Hamm

"It's a challenge and a pleasure to explore difficult legal subjects (with the student) and also rewarding to see those students grow into important members of our legal community."

- Honorable Erica Grosjean

"I enjoy working with new law students as they grapple with applying intellectual property law to constantly changing technologies."

- Mark Miller

"As professors, we have an obligation to go beyond simply teaching the contents of the assigned casebook or preparing students for an exam. One cannot truly understand the law solely by knowing its contents; rather, it is essential to understand the reason that the law has developed to where it stands today."

- David P. Chiappetta

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Attorneys Rank 9th of Top 100

This just in: From their annual list of Top 100 Jobs, U.S. News and World Report ranked “Lawyer” at #9 for 2022.



U.S. News and World Report Top 100 Jobs for 2022

- 1. Information Security Analyst**, Bachelor's Needed, \$103,000 annual median salary
- 2. Nurse Practitioner**, Master's Needed, \$111,500 annual median salary
- 3. Physician Assistant**, Master's Needed, \$115,000 annual median salary
- 4. Medical & Health Services Manager**, Bachelor's Needed, annual median salary \$104,000
- 5. Software Developer**, Bachelor's Needed, \$110,000 annual median salary
- 6. Data Scientist**, Bachelor's Needed, \$98,000 annual median salary
- 7. Financial Manager**, Bachelor's Needed, \$134,000 annual median salary
- 8. Statistician**, Master's Needed, \$92,000 annual median salary
- 9. Lawyer**, Doctorate Needed, \$127,000 annual median salary
- 10. Speech-Language Pathologist**, Master's Needed, \$80,500 annual median salary
- 11. Physician**, Doctorate Needed, \$208,000 annual median salary

Just a step below Statistician at #8, and two steps above Physician at #11, the basis for the ranking was an overall score calculated by assigning points to several job factors. The factors included: pay, intellectual stimulation, advancement opportunities, and the degree of demand for the skill set, among others. The jobs were further ranked in sub-lists within categories like Best Paying, Best in Health Care, Best in Business, etc. “Lawyer” came in at #18 for Best Paying – based on a median annual salary of \$127,000.

Of course, these factors are highly dependent on things like geographical location and the subjective nature of intangibles like work-life balance, but overall, the ranking is in-line with the predictions that attorneys will be in high demand throughout the coming decade. This all adds up to reinforce the notion that as a career choice, the legal profession rises to the top!

Due to the cyclical nature and desirability of specific jobs, the same job title can find itself in the top 10 one year, and halfway toward bottom, the next. When orthodontists, for example, are in demand and doing well, everybody and their cousin wants to sign up for dental school. This creates a glut of orthodontists in the five or so years that follow, so during that time, fewer students consider it for a career. Jump ahead five years and there is now a shortage of orthodontists, so the cycle repeats. Social stigmas that create perceptions of job popularity are another cause of wild fluctuations in job rankings. At varying times over the past 50 years, dentistry as a career – like lawyering - has been both highly fashionable and dreadfully out of favor, and their job cycles have reflected that.

For 2022, it appears that lawyers are continuing on an upswing with a score of 7.6 out of 10 overall as a career. According to a top jobs list by Indeed, Attorneys/Litigation Associates have moved up dramatically since 2018, with projections that lawyers will be among the most in-demand

jobs by 2030. In addition to their 9th place ranking overall, they ranked #1 in the category of Best Social Services Jobs. Those altruistic desires to make a positive impact on society and to help those in need are still alive and well within the legal profession. It is, however, a far cry from where it all began.

As old as Ancient Greece and Rome, the first lawyers were called “orators,” who were able to plead for themselves, or the case of a friend, well enough to elevate their name. While these orators were not allowed to collect fees for their efforts, violations often occurred when items of value (chickens, olive oil) privately changed hands.

Eventually this service became an official profession, but it paid too little to provide much of a living. The irony! Because the first notaries were paid by the written line and most had no legal training (many were barely literate), they learned to draw up simple transactions using convoluted legal jargon to confuse and lengthen the documents.

During the Middle Ages demand for lawyers grew with the needs of the church and its laws, but negativity was attached to those litigators who were overzealous or incompetent.

The growth and development of the legal profession ultimately brought about a regulatory body in the bar, and requirements for training with an oath of ethics before one could practice law. Once the American colonies were advanced and prosperous enough to need lawyers, the prejudices against them began to subside and the profession grew in respect, and power. Of the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence, 25 were lawyers.

As is the case in most all areas of employment, new trends continue to impact the legal profession: more use of consultants, contracted legal services, and accountants by legal professionals, but legal services remain one of the most important industries in nearly every sector of employment. Whether they are ranked among the Top 10 jobs or somewhere near the bottom, there will always be a need for Lawyers.

For more and the complete list of the top 100 jobs, visit:

<https://money.usnews.com/careers/best-jobs/rankings/the-100-best-jobs>

Hatakeyama is Newest, and Maybe Youngest, Administrative Law Judge

BY MISSY MCKAI CARTIER, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Bryce Yonehiro Hatakeyama grew up with a legacy which included great sadness. While both of his grandfathers served in the Army during World War II, his grandmothers spent that time in a Japanese Internment camp. This family history was a part of what eventually drove his desire to become a judge, to leave behind a different “family legacy.”

That drive was rewarded when he was recently appointed as an Administrative Law Judge for the State Workers’ Compensation Appeals Board, after years of being a Workers’ Comp attorney. During that time, he worked with numerous Hmong and other Southeast Asian clients, noting they were “good people who were often taken advantage of,” adding “There are not a lot of attorneys helping these people.”

He also noticed a dearth of Asian ALJs and began to feel the lack of representation on the bench was another obstacle for

Southeast Asians. While becoming an ALJ wasn’t always his goal, he began to feel it take hold. He was surprised when he heard he had been elevated to the position after his third or fourth try but admits he would have tried again in the future if it hadn’t happened now. Part of the reason for his surprise comes from his age; at 39-years-old, he believes he is the youngest ALJ locally, and possibly statewide.

While the position comes with a slight pay cut compared to his previous job, he is excited to start and plans to stay until retirement. He says he is “always an optimist, ready to fight the good fight.”

Judge Hatakeyama has a wife and four-year-old son. He offers special thanks to San Joaquin College of Law, thanking nearly every professor by name, but especially Dean Pearson. He recalls crying in her office after an especially brutal part of his first year, absolutely certain he would flunk out. She wouldn’t have it, and he



remembers how gentle and kind she was when he was so low. He speaks of his class of 2009 as “a special class, a special experience.”

Judge Hatakeyama is the 22nd ALJ from the SJCL alumni ranks, and its 61st bench officer.

In Memoriam

San Joaquin College of Law notes with sadness the passing of

James A. Dubbels (Law ’92) on December 16, 2021. He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Linda, sister Marilyn Johnson, sister-in-law Marcia Dubbels, sons Bradley Dubbels (Carol), Andrew (Caitlin) Dubbels, and Denton Dubbels, along with his five grandchildren.

Sue Manzell Kilijian (Law ’84) on February 19, 2022. Sue is survived by her husband, Michael; her daughter and son-in-law, Michelle and Thomas Soares; two grandchildren; her brother-in-law Edward Kaye; her sister-in-law Hasma Severian; a nephew; and numerous cousins.

Jennifer L. Oleksa (Law ’16) on February 15, 2022. Jenn is survived by her siblings, Dana and Curtis Charles, Ryan Oleksa, and Ashlyn Oleksa, her parents Richard and Michelle Oleksa (Law ’99), her grandfather Richard (Dick) Oleksa, her fiancé Cory Dugan, and her aunt Suzanne Golden (Law ’01)

Helen Smades (Former Board Member) on February 24, 2022. She was one of the first women to break into the Fresno Real Estate Market in the 1950s, eventually opening her own office. She also served on the SJCL Board or Trustees from 1989 through 1992.

A Message from the Alumni Board President

BY MARLA GARCIA, ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD PRESIDENT

As the 2022 SJCL Alumni Association Board President, I look forward to the opportunity to serve our alumni. The Board strives to be a resource for SJCL alumni, and I am proud to be part of this collective endeavor. This new year, we look forward to creating more networking opportunities and finding new ways to support alumni, and we hope to return to holding more events for alumni and their families.

I and the Board welcome and encourage all SJCL Alumni to join the Alumni Association and participate in Alumni Association events. These are great opportunities to reconnect with fellow alumni, establish new connections, and be a part of the collective effort to support all SJCL Alumni.

ATTENTION SJCL ALUMNI Are you in

Your SJCL Alumni Association works for you by providing MCLE opportunities, mentoring, speaking opportunities, community service like the Marjaree Mason Children's Christmas Party and Senior Citizen's Law Day, support to your alma mater and current law students, and an extensive alumni network of attorneys throughout the Central Valley. Your participation benefits everyone. Join today at sjcl.edu/alumni and re-connect. Your legacy awaits!

FIRM VISITS

Do you work in a firm with fellow SJCL graduates? If so, we want to know! Please drop an email to: dkkouti@sjcl.edu so we can come for a firm visit to say hello! (We bring cookies – the good ones - so you won't be sorry!) We look forward to hearing from you.



Leslie Dillahunty (Law '97)

SENIOR ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY, WEAKLEY & ARENDT
Civil trial litigation defending predominantly public entities and their employees.

"At this point in my career, I feel it's important to share my knowledge and experience with others and offer mentorship to those now coming up in the profession."



Stefanie Krause (Law '14)

STEFANIE KRAUSE LAW, SOLO PRACTITIONER IN ESTATE PLANNING AND PROBATE.

Adjunct professor at SJCL teaching Advanced Research and Writing for over 10 years.

"I hope to see more SJCL Alumni connect for networking, education, and support."



Marla Garcia (Law '13)

LAW OFFICES OF DAN D. ENDOSO & ASSOCIATES
Trial II Attorney, In-House counsel for Kemper Insurance

"I hope to continue the Alumni Board's presence as a resource to future Alumni, new Alumni, and the community."

President



Hon. Jim Petrucelli (Ret) (Law '89)

JUDGE PETRUCELLI, RETIRED SUPERIOR COURT JUDGE

"Participating in our Alumni Association is an excellent opportunity to reach out and assist fellow graduates and make our presence in the legal community stronger."

Liaison to Board of Trustees



Kristina Garabedian (Law '14)

CARBONE, SMITH & KOYAMA
In-House Insurance Defense

"My hope is that we can find some exciting, new ways to connect with SJCL Alumni."



Sabrina Prindiville (Law '14)

LAW CLERK, YRULEGUI & ROBERTS

"SJCL and its alumni have greatly enriched my life. I am honored to have this opportunity to serve the school and this community of people who have given so much to me."

Vice President



Carey Haydon (Law '15)

HAYDON LAW
Family Law and Juvenile Dependency

"I hope to help guide and support law students and new attorneys to understand and overcome obstacles that are just raw materials of accomplishments."



Maritza Uribe (Law '19)

ASSOCIATE ATTORNEY, PEREZ, WILLIAMS, MEDINA & RODRIGUEZ LLP

Plaintiff Personal Injury, Family Law

"As a new board member, I hope to build connections with fellow alumni and get others to join."



Joshua Hernandez (Law '18)

PARTNER, HERNANDEZ LAW OFFICES
Workers' Compensation, Personal Injury, and Criminal Defense

"Being part of the Alumni Association allows me to give back in a small way to the institution that afforded me so many opportunities."

Secretary



Craig Waters (Law '16)

OWNER, MODERN LEGAL PC

Real Estate Litigation, Landlord-Tenant Disputes & Resolution, and Business Litigation

"I look forward to spending my time as a board member welcoming recent graduates to the Alumni Association and the legal community as they begin and develop their careers."

Treasurer



The Alumni Board makes personalized tee-shirts and packages goodies.



Alumni Board "elves" stuff laundry baskets to the brim.

Alumni Deliver Comfort and Joy

Large laundry baskets and gift bags filled with toys, games, necessities, cozy blankets, personalized T-shirts, and more were delivered to 72 families at the Marjaree Mason Center(s) just before Christmas last December. Provided by the generous donations of SJCL Alumni and Staff, the Alumni Association elves worked for weeks prior to prepare the gifts for delivery by the big man himself, along with a pizza dinner and some holiday treats! Having just concluded its 28th year, the Marjaree Mason Children's party provides a bright spot for the families staying at the centers each December. MMC Executive Director Nicole Linder

posted a message of gratitude that sums up the reason for this annual effort.

"The San Joaquin College of Law Alumni Association brought many smiles to MMC this week! Every year, they bring gifts for the adults and children receiving services at MMC and Santa stops by for photos with the families. We appreciate them for continuing this tradition to grant the wishes of adults and children experiencing domestic violence." -December 23, 2021

The outpouring of support by our alumni and staff for this event each year is heartening. We graciously thank each of you for your continued generosity.

2021 Marjaree Mason Center Children's Party Donors

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The Impact of Your Scholarship Donation



One of the best parts of SJCL is the way it changes so many families' futures.

Our alumni ranks are swelled by attorneys who were the first in their family to graduate college or even high school. There are also those who came from backgrounds including generations of nearly debilitating poverty who broke that chain and headed for the stars.

Tuition at SJCL is about half the costs of attending McGeorge, Stanford and so on, but it is still a burden for many of our students. Many face rent, child care, and other costs along with the inability to work fulltime while studying fulltime.

We are always unapologetically ecstatic and grateful for the many scholarships offered by supporters of SJCL; it lessens the burden for many who have come a long way with very little, enabling them to dedicate more energies to their studies.

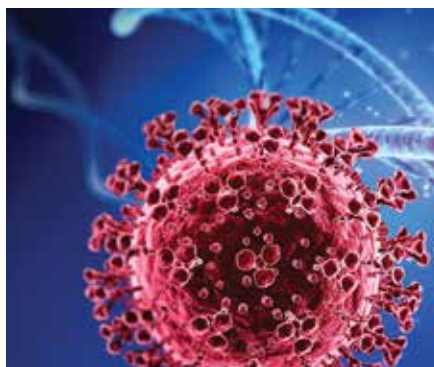
This year, we have extra reason for celebration, with the addition of multiple new scholarships. Several are mentioned elsewhere in this edition of *Inter Alia*, but these also deserve applause.



The Employed Student Bar Study Scholarship

SJCL Alumni Sally (Law '15) and Justin Vecchiarelli (Law '14) of Proper Defense Law Corporation have created a scholarship for a graduating student who is employed and studying for the Bar exam. The Employed Student Bar Study Scholarship was inspired by both Sally and Justin's experiences during their final year of law school.

"We will never forget how difficult it was to study for the Bar exam when both of us were in law school and working full time. We believe that the best approach to passing the Bar the first time is to take time off to work and focus 100% on studying. We hope that this scholarship will assist a working law student so they can take the time off work and commit fully to their studies."



Covid-19 Pandemic Hardship Scholarship

Also new to the list are two "Covid-19 Pandemic Hardship" scholarships sponsored by the Student Bar Association. Any enrolled 1st-5th year law student who demonstrates hardship due to the COVID-19 Pandemic is qualified to apply.



James C. Pell Memorial Scholarship

The James C. Pell Memorial Scholarship has been created by his daughter, former Adjunct Professor Shannon Pell (Law '06). She says "My Dad was in law enforcement his entire career. He started as a cop in Oakland CA." He eventually earned his AS in criminal justice and went through the academy to become a special agent with the CA Department of Justice, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement, retiring in 1996.

Meanwhile, Shannon earned her degree in Criminology at Fresno State and enrolled at SJCL. All along, she says her Dad was her rock. "Dad had great respect for the role defense attorneys played even though he was on the other side. He was proud despite, as he laughingly put it, I worked for the 'dark side.' I got where I am today because my Dad loved criminal justice and passed that on to me. And even though I went a different way with my undergrad degree, I felt it would honor him and the way he was always there for me, to honor his memory with this scholarship, making it available to anyone with an interest in criminal law practice whether it be prosecution or defense."

As this issue of *Inter Alia* heads to press, there are nearly 60 scholarships available for our students, with another one waiting in the wings. We are so grateful to those who have created these scholarships and those who have donated to sustain them. We believe these students will do great things. You already have.

Public Service Scholarship

BY **MISSY MCKAI CARTIER**, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Bill Hazen was excited to begin a career as a Public Defender after he graduated from San Joaquin College of Law in 1986. The only problem? He resided in Kings County, where there was no Public Defender's Office.

So Hazen ended up putting his name on a roster of attorneys willing to take cases traditionally handled by that office, and found himself rotating around Kings County to smaller cities like Lemoore and Corcoran, even taking on cases of those in Avenal State Prison.

Hazen remembers he was simply the "Attorney of the Day" when he would show up in court, where he would be handed somewhere between five and 20 cases each time. Even now, he points to the uneven amount of resources devoted to indigent cases compared to those available to defendants with money.

He feels a kinship with those who hear the calling of the under-financed and under-served. Hazen and his wife, Rachael, have created the Public Service Scholarship at SJCL for someone "who wants to do that kind of work."

The scholarship is one of at least a half dozen new scholarships at the Law School this year. It will be awarded to a 2nd-5th year student in good standing who has demonstrated both financial need and a commitment to public service with an intent to practice in that area upon graduation from SJCL.



Hanson Scholarship

Congratulations **Armida Mendoza**, a fourth-year law student, on receiving the Justice Pauline Hanson Scholarship. For the past ten years, Armida has dedicated her time to assisting the Central Valley immigrant community with various immigration issues. She will be taking the bar this summer and the Hanson Scholarship will assist her with her preparation.

Fresno County Bar Association Scholarships Head to SJCL Students

The Fresno County Bar Association gave a boost to two of its future colleagues, handing out scholarships to a pair of San Joaquin College of Law students. The money came from a combination of FCBA dues and funds donated to the FCBA Memorial Fund at the two En Banc In Memoriam Sessions of the Fresno County Superior Court last year. Congratulations to both of them!



Hannah Ravizza is a first-year student at SJCL. When she was just ten years old, she lost her father, who had been her biggest cheerleader. She knew there was one way to honor him; she is following in his footsteps to become an attorney. Hannah previously won the Larry Hoskins Scholarship at the November 2021 Mario G. Olmos Memorial Banquet.



Jacqueline Vasquez is a second-year law student at SJCL. It was simply by chance she ended up in love with the law; she got a courtroom job working as a Criminal Law Examiner and immediately knew it was her destiny. She felt a kinship with those she saw there and knew she could make a difference. She is also the 2021 winner of the Mario G. Olmos Scholarship.

Jennifer Oleksa: A Loss and a Legacy

Jennifer (“Jenn”) L. Oleksa (Law ’16) passed away on February 15, 2022 following a courageous battle with brain cancer.

Jenn was a Deputy Attorney General in the Criminal Division of the California Attorney General’s Office and an SJCL Professor, most recently teaching Appellate Advocacy. Although she was just 31-years-old, her connection with San Joaquin College of Law goes back 26 years.

Her first day of kindergarten was her mom’s first day of law school. She remembers handing her mom, Michelle Oleksa (Law ’99), a picture that day that said, “I want to be a lawyer like my mom when I grow up.”

Retired Professor Richard Cartier recalls the five-year-old frequently showed up at SJCL with her mom, and “she never left.” He adds “She always looked for the good, always saw the good, in everything and everyone.”

Jenn’s attraction to the law followed her through Fresno State, where she obtained her degree in in Criminology, followed by her blasting through the three-year program at SJCL, graduating with honors. Her primary goal was to practice criminal justice, and she secured an internship in the Criminal Division of the Attorney General’s Office after her second year of law school. She never left.

Jenn also says she “told the administration at the school, even before I graduated, that I wanted to come back and teach.” Shortly after bar passage, she began teaching Legal Methods and Appellate Advocacy. She says “I remember very fondly how accessible the professors were to me when I was there, so I’ve tried my absolute best to do the same for my students. They all have my cell phone number, which hasn’t burned me yet.”

She admits she worried that some of her students might not take her seriously because they were the same age as her, or older. However, she adds “I’m a little bit sassy, so I’m not afraid to put my students in their place, and it’s really weird being able to do that. I do it from a place of love because I want them to do well, so I will tell them if they’re slacking off.”



Jennifer Oleksa (Law ’16) with her mom, **Michelle** (Law ’99)

Her students understood her “sassy” attitude, respecting and accepting her. Two years ago, after a brutal round of radiation, Jenn found the burns on her scalp made her wig more than just uncomfortable. She asked her class if they would mind if she just wore a beanie. Not only did they immediately approve, but also the following class, several students showed up wearing beanies as a show of support.

Other support came from her former classmates at SJCL. Jenn said “Nobody really told me how intimately you get to know your fellow classmates in a way that does not happen in most other schooling. You spend so much time with these classmates of yours and see them more than you see your family, your significant others, and your friends outside of class. Some of my closest friends now are people I met in law school.”

After more than two years battling the cancer, Jenn decided to forgo further treatment and headed to hospice. Visits were limited due to Covid, but that didn’t stop the constant parade of friends at her window. SJCL Director of Human Resources, Beth Pitcock, attached a pouch of paper to the window so those stopping by could jot their notes for her. There were food trains and prayer circles, flowers and treats, but in the end, there was just love.

Jennifer Oleksa Scholarship donations may be made at: www.sjcl.edu/giving

Her sister, Dana, posted in a facebook support group on February 15th “Around 11am this morning Jenn took her leave from this world surrounded by her family. We know she’s free from a body that didn’t serve her anymore. The amazing staff here did her makeup and put her warrior t-shirt on, and opened up the window to let sunshine in. She looks more at peace than you could imagine.”

SJCL Dean of Students Logan Tennerelli posted “My heart hurts for you. And for Jenn. She simply glowed, and I wish her light had been able to shine for so much longer.”

And in a note to all, SJCL Dean Janice Pearson wrote “Jennifer tackled every day of her life with enthusiasm, determination, and a great ability to connect with people. She inspired people around her. We know that you who knew her feel a deep personal loss. She brought joy to all our lives. A short life - but one long on impact. Much love, Jennifer.”

Jenn is survived by her siblings, Dana and Curtis Charles, Ryan Oleksa, and Ashlyn Oleksa, her parents Richard and Michelle Oleksa (Law ’99), her grandfather Richard (Dick) Oleksa, her fiancé Cory Dugan, her aunt Suzanne Golden (Law ’01) as well as many other aunts, uncles, cousins, and her sweet pitbull Lucy.

Her legacy lives on, both in the heart of SJCL and in the form of the Jennifer Lynn Oleksa Scholarship fund. It reads, in part: “Jennifer exemplifies SJCL with her discipline, fighting spirit, and unwavering commitment to community and family... The applicant shall demonstrate commitment to community enrichment and/or family; the highest level of professional/personal integrity; and strong research/writing skills.”

A Brush with the Law

As a professor at San Joaquin College of Law, I have been honored in many ways.

BY DENISE KERNER, PROFESSOR OF LAW

The first honor was having the title “Professor” attached to my name when I was hired in 1989. “Professor Kerner”: a definite improvement from my previous title, “Hey, Denise.” Another honor was being given my own reserved parking space in the parking lot east of the building. While the space does not technically have my name on it yet,¹ I treat it like it does and leave tersely worded notes on the windshields of those who violate my turf.

By far, the greatest honor is the honor of being trusted to teach students the law and then measuring their knowledge of it through challenging assignments and exams. I take exam-writing seriously, and I’d like to think my skills have improved over the years.² In my daily life I try to keep my eyes open for legal issues that arise in everyday situations but have no clear-cut answers. The following is my latest effort:

“One day, Professor Dee was driving her car in the parking lot of a busy, privately owned shopping center in Fresno, CA. She came to an intersection that had stop signs on all four corners. Dee came to a complete stop at one of the four stop signs, signaled her intent to make a left turn, and



began to execute the turn. Suddenly, Dee felt something brush against the side of her car. She stopped immediately and looked around her. There stood Patty Pedestrian in the middle of the intersection, approximately 10 feet away from Dee’s car. (Patty had been foolishly and recklessly crossing the intersection diagonally, ignoring the warnings her mother undoubtedly gave her since Patty was in the cradle.) Patty looked

at Dee. Dee looked at Patty. No words were spoken; no emotion was displayed. After no more than 10 seconds, Patty turned and walked away, showing no sign of physical impairment. From her car, Dee watched Patty enter a nearby shop. Dee then drove away.

“Approximately two weeks later, Dee was shopping in the same shopping center where the above incident occurred. She saw Patty Pedestrian, and Patty saw Dee. Patty’s wrist was wrapped in gauze and tape. After a brief, civilized conversation, Dee provided Patty with the name and address of her insurance carrier, and Patty was made whole. Patty rewarded Dee’s candor and cooperation by filing criminal charges against her for hit-and-run driving.”

Now for the call of the question. One option might be, “Discuss why there is no way under the sun Professor Dee violated the California Vehicle Code.” I could also turn this into a multiple choice question:

- “Professor Dee is
- A. Guilty of violating the California Vehicle Code because she left the scene of an accident.
 - B. Not guilty of violating the California Vehicle Code because Pedestrian Patty left the scene of an accident without telling Dee she had been injured.
 - C. Not guilty of violating the California Vehicle Code because Professor Kerner has not finished grading my Community Property midterm yet.
 - D. This didn’t really happen, did it?”

Whether an essay question or a multiple choice question, the correct answer is, of course, painfully obvious. For this reason, I will continue working on questions that present students with more of a challenge. It’s not just my job; it’s an honor.

Congratulations to Professor Barreto



Linda Barreto, Esq., Director of the SJCL New American Legal Clinic and Professor of Law passed the California Legal Specialist Exam in Immigration Law.

This makes her one of the five attorneys in the San Joaquin Valley to have passed this exam. She has chosen to use that considerable skill to represent low-income individuals in the NALC Clinic. Congratulations, Linda. We, and your many clients, are impressed by and grateful for all you do!

1. I am sure this is just an oversight on the school’s part which will be remedied with this gentle reminder.
2. Students in my last Community Property class may be puzzled by this statement. In their final exam I wrote a question set in the year 1974 and then went on to describe the defendant’s activities on eBay.

SJCL ON THE MOVE



New job? Big promotion? Special honor? Send your info to mcartier@sjcl.edu and be part of the "SJCL on the Move!" column!

Jared E. Bertoni (Law '20) is now an Associate Attorney at Tomassian, Pimentel & Shapazian.

Wesley L. Carlson (Law '14) is now an Associate Attorney at Proper Defense Law Corporation.

Amanda M. DeHart (Law '13) is now a Staff Attorney for the Tenderloin Housing Clinic in San Francisco.

Clare E. Demera (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Pascuzzi Pascuzzi & Stoker.

Jaymie A. Eaton (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at McCormick Barstow LLP.

Ashley N. Emmersen (Law '21) is now a Deputy County Counsel for Fresno County as a child dependency attorney.

Fernando M. Garcia (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Herr Pedersen & Berglund LLP in Visalia.

Jenna L. Halop (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Gordon Rees Scully Mansukhani, LLP.

George I. Harris (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Michael Sullivan and Associates.

Joslyn N. Hillberg (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Quall Cardot LLP.

Jessica Jaramillo Perez (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at the Law Office of Carlos Fuentes in Merced.

Scott L. Jones (Law '07) is now Vice Chair of the Board for the Fresno Free College Foundation.

David G. Litman (Law '12) has been named a partner at Sagaser, Watkins & Wieland PC. The firm specializes in representing employers in all labor and employment aspects.

Nathan J. Martin (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Wanger, Jones, Helsley.

D'Artagnan R. Montrose (Law '17) is now a Cal Bar Certified Specialist in Worker's Compensation. He has been promoted to Supervising Attorney at Michael Sullivan & Associates and has been sworn in to the US Supreme Court bar. In addition, one of his cases was selected for publication by Lexis as one deemed persuasive and citable for future cases.

Dusty B. Nunes (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at Michael JF Smith APC.

Frankie C. Olivares III (Law '21) is now a Staff Attorney at Central California Legal Services.

Jordan Ott (Law '19) is now an Associate Attorney at Albert and Mackenzie.

Surinder Padda (Law '21) is now a Housing Team Attorney for Central California Legal Services.

Jordan M. Penner (Law '14) is now an Associate Attorney at Gilson Daub in San Clemente.

Dana Robnett (Law '20) is now a Defense Attorney with Fitzgerald, Alvarez & Ciummo.

Rebecca A. Salgado (Law '21) is now a Health Team Attorney for Central California Legal Services.

Jordan S. Scrivner (Law '21) is now an Associate Attorney at the DeMaria Law Firm.

Travis J. Tubandt (Law '21) is now In-House Counsel for Zinkin Development Company, LLC.

Craig C. (Law '16) & **Kayla L. Waters** (Law '17) have opened Modern Legal PC, a boutique law firm focusing on Real Estate Litigation, Landlord-Tenant Disputes & Resolution, and Business Litigation.

Sara D. Widener-Brightwell (Law '94) is now General Counsel of the California Workers' Compensation Institute (CWCI). According to the Press Release, Ms. Widener-Brightwell will manage the Institute's internal and external legal affairs; serve as staff liaison to the Legal Committee, which directs CWCI's amicus activities; analyze regulatory and legal issues affecting California workers' compensation; and help develop and present research and legal programs for Institute members and other workers' compensation stakeholders.

Innessa Yenokian (Law '21) is now a Fresno County Deputy District Attorney.

Thank you FOR YOUR SUPPORT

San Joaquin College of Law thanks the following individuals and organizations for their gifts. Their generosity helps SJCL deliver an outstanding academic program to students.

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You deserve to be properly recognized for your contributions, and we strive for 100 percent accuracy. If we have made an error, please contact Lonsetta Hightower at 559/323-2100 or lhightower@sjcl.edu.



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Come Home & Reconnect

2022
S J C L A L U M N I
HALL *of* FAME

We are pleased to announce the Return of the SJCL Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and our 2022 honorees.

Please come celebrate your fellow alumni



Michael Goldring (Law '89)

&

Robert Williams (Law '75)



at a special event right here at home

Thursday, April 28, 2022

6:00PM Wine and Hors d'oeuvres

6:30PM Induction Ceremony

7:00PM Mingle and Reconnect
with Your Classmates

This is an outdoor event in the beautiful Veteran's Park just steps from the southwest entrance to the SJCL campus.
We encourage all alumni and faculty to attend.

Please RSVP to Diane Skouti at 559/323-2100 or dskouti@sjcl.edu