FOUR SCORE
Northeastern Law graduates are shaking things up in Massachusetts
J. Stephen Casscles '84 is a pioneering grape grower and winemaker in New York’s Hudson Valley.
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On co-op in her native Hawai’i, Lauren Yamaguchi ’24 joins an agile legal team evolving to meet the needs of the Native Hawaiian community.

Noah Lapidus ’20 continues his involvement with the Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project’s quest to document Jim Crow era atrocities.
Dean’s Message

Out in Front

The cover of this magazine is a stunning pictorial of our school’s leadership in Massachusetts, with ripple effects beyond. It also speaks to the critical — and intentional — role this law school has played in educating women since our re-opening in 1968. The epitome of women’s leadership on our faculty is the legendary Judy Brown, who along with her husband, Jim, is paying it forward through their generous support of the Brown Forum for Women in the Law. Professor Margaret Burnham and her team recently launched the unparalleled Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, and I urge you all to read her riveting new book, *By Hands Now Known: Jim Crow’s Legal Executioners*. And for a lifetime of leadership in health law, we celebrate Professor Wendy Parmet, who was honored this fall by the American Public Health Association.

I am consistently amazed at the outstanding accomplishments of our graduates. As you’ll read in this issue, our graduates are at the forefront of the fight for reproductive rights justice, leading the way to a cleaner environment in California, serving as CEOs of major nonprofit organizations and helping to shape the legal landscape of data privacy, technology and healthcare. A consistent theme that runs through the stories in this magazine and the life of our law school is that ours is a community that instills a passion for social justice in our students, however they choose to use their degrees. This is nowhere more evident than in the achievements of Ralph Martin ’78, who after decades of public service, private practice and nonprofit leadership (including as Northeastern University’s general counsel) was recognized by the Eastern Bank Foundation with its 2022 Social Justice Award.

We also see the domino effect of our graduates giving back. Judge Angela Ordoñez ’89 and Geoffrey Spofford ’89 lead an inspiring mentoring program. Joan Fortin ’96, chief executive officer of Bernstein Shur in Portland, Maine, was instrumental in establishing the Roux Institute Legal Fellow program, which provides legal advice to start-up ventures in Maine, and she continues to mentor our legal fellows. Deb Freitas ’10 and Cris Freitas ’10 were recently honored by the American Bar Association as “reunification heroes” for their work to safely and quickly reunite children with their families. The list goes on and on.

As our cover story makes clear, Northeastern Law graduates know how to shake things up, root out injustice and lead the charge for a better world. Governor Maura Healey ’98 is rolling out her vision for the commonwealth; Senate President Karen Spilka ’80 continues to advocate for the most vulnerable members of our society; and we have two extraordinary, diverse women at the helm of our federal justice system in Massachusetts. I could not be more proud and more excited about what these four women will accomplish.

I wish you all the best in 2023. May it be a year of peace and happiness for all of us.

Best,

James Hackney
Dean and Professor of Law

Letters

Comments? Kudos? A point you want to make (or three)?
Send letters to Northeastern Law magazine, 416 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115, or email to lawcommunications@northeastern.edu.
Hassan Wins in New Hampshire

Hearty congratulations to US Senator for New Hampshire Maggie Hassan ’85, who was re-elected in November to a second term in the Senate. She is the second woman in US history to be elected both governor and US senator.
Moquete Named Roux Institute Fellow

Sofía Moquete LLM ’22 has been named the 2022-2023 Roux Institute Legal Fellow. The fellowship is a collaboration between Northeastern Law and the university’s Roux Institute to support start-ups and entrepreneurs affiliated with the Roux Institute by providing guidance on a variety of business formation and related matters. Founded in 2020, the Portland-based Roux Institute is designed to spur innovation, build talent and drive economic growth in Portland, the state of Maine and northern New England. Pierce Atwood, one of Maine’s top law firms, has partnered with the Roux Institute to provide supervision and mentorship to Moquete. “I am thoroughly enjoying my time with the Roux Institute and supporting the region’s start-ups. There is so much talent in Maine, and I am excited about collaborating with a wide range of innovators,” said Moquete, who attended Northeastern Law as a Fulbright Scholar.

Moquete is collaborating with and receiving mentorship from the directors of the law school’s Intellectual Property Law Clinic and Community Business Clinic.

“There is so much talent in Maine, and I am excited about collaborating with a wide range of innovators.”

— Sofia Moquete LLM ’22

Northeastern Law Receives AALS Award for LGBTQ+ Inclusive Excellence

The banner, “Queerest Law School in the Nation,” that hangs proudly in Northeastern Law’s student commons should not be mistaken for hyperbole. In early January, Northeastern was honored with the 2023 LGBTQ+ Inclusive Excellence Institutional Award from the Association of American Law Schools Section on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Issues. The award recognizes innovative contributions to the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in the legal academy and the legal profession more broadly. This fall, a record 30 percent of incoming JD and FlexJD students at the law school self-identified as LGBTQ+.

Law School Welcomes Top Students

This fall, Northeastern Law welcomed an incoming class of JD and FlexJD students that boasts the strongest academic profile in the school’s history.

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<td>Students of Color</td>
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FRONTLINE Art Installation Humanizes Those Lost in Racial Violence Cold Cases

There's no doubt that art can be visceral — shocking and moving, emotional and inspiring. These feelings and more were summoned this fall when a partnership between PBS’ FRONTLINE, produced by GBH in Boston, and the law school's Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project (CRRJ), took their previous collaboration on the multimedia investigation "Un(re)solved" to the next level through an art installation on campus. The installation, which is touring nationally, is an immersive, augmented reality project that brings together investigative reporting, fine art, technology and a civil rights mission to bring racist murders out of the past. Through rows of engraved trees with roots stretching out below, hundreds of names framed on quilted panes jump out at the viewer. Each name belongs to someone who was killed in a racial violence cold case that was reopened due to the 2008 Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act.

The art installation is just one piece of an Emmy-winning multimedia investigation from FRONTLINE. “Un(re)solved” also spans a documentary, podcast, interactive web component and even a high school curriculum. Professor Margaret Burnham, director of CRRJ, served on the FRONTLINE project’s advisory council. Of the more than 150 cases included in the project, CRRJ provided information on 50.

"In the storytelling, it’s not just a memorial reflecting upon something that was very difficult and saddening. It’s also speaking to the beauty and the brilliance of the lives that were lived."

— Erika Howard, Director of Impact Strategy and External Relations, FRONTLINE

FlexJD Goes National

To expand access to a top-tier legal education, Northeastern Law will extend its FlexJD program to prospective students across the nation beginning in fall 2023. The hybrid, four-year FlexJD is ideally suited for well-qualified, working professionals who intend to continue full-time employment while pursuing a law degree. The ABA-approved program is delivered through flexible, remote courses, a series of required on-campus meetings and co-ops.

“Our FlexJD students have embraced self-paced and online coursework since the program launched for Boston-area students in fall 2021,” said Dean James Hackney. “This is an exciting time for working professionals who want to earn a law degree on their own schedule and take advantage of our leadership in practical legal training. The FlexJD program makes a first-rate legal education accessible to students wherever they are.”
CPIAC Awarded Northeastern Impact Engine Grant

Northeastern Law’s Center for Public Interest Advocacy and Collaboration’s (CPIAC) flagship interdisciplinary research initiative, the Cradle-to-Prison Pipeline Project (C2P Project), has been awarded a Northeastern Impact Engine Grant to expand its work supporting advocates and stakeholders dedicated to dismantling the cradle-to-prison pipeline.

Launched in 2019 with a Northeastern University Tier 1 grant, the C2P Project is a collaboration among CPIAC, Northeastern University’s College of Arts, Media and Design and Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the College of Social Sciences and Humanities. The project team is building a holistic model of contributors to mass incarceration in Massachusetts to identify and validate policy interventions. It will also provide a model for other states while connecting stakeholders to facilitate identification of collective interest and scalable solutions. Beyond Northeastern University, the project has been strengthened by engagement and collaboration with people currently and formerly incarcerated, lawyers, policy advocates, nonprofit organizations and people impacted by the family regulation system.

“CPIAC is thrilled to be able to channel Impact Engine support into a cutting-edge tool to empower advocates,” said Professor Lucy Williams, faculty director of CPIAC. “With this grant, the Cradle-to-Prison Pipeline Project will address an urgent need for data access, and in so doing will continue to advance advocates’ critical work dismantling the systems that feed incarceration.”

Butt Joins Center for Health Policy and Law

Mehreen Butt has joined Northeastern Law’s Center for Health Policy and Law as managing director. A public policy attorney with more than 15 years of experience working in the social justice and public policy fields and on local, state and federal campaigns, Butt brings expertise in healthcare, anti-poverty, sexual and reproductive rights, immigrant rights and voting reform to the Northeastern Law community.

Butt most recently served as associate director of policy and government affairs at Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts. Previously, she held positions at Rosie’s Place, Tufts Health Plan and Health Care For All and was a researcher for the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture at the Massachusetts State House.

Butt was elected to the Wakefield Board of Selectman (now known as the Wakefield Town Council) in April 2017, becoming the first Muslim American woman elected to a board in Massachusetts. As a member of the council, she has successfully advocated for by-laws banning plastic bags, plastic straws and Styrofoam; championed funding for a community garden and a rail trail; and secured a full-time social worker position and funding for Narcan and implicit bias training for public safety officers.

In 2021, Butt was honored among the Top Women of Law by Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly and in 2019, she received the Women’s Bar Association’s Emerging Women Leader Award. She also serves on the board of trustees for MelroseWakefield Health Care, as an advisory member of the South Asian Bar Association of Greater Boston, an elected member of the Democratic State Committee, where she co-chairs the Women’s Outreach Subcommittee, and is an associate member of the Wakefield Alliance Against Violence. Butt is a member of the New England Muslim Bar Association and an alumna of both the Women’s Bar Association Women’s Leadership Program and Emerge Massachusetts.

“It is an honor to advance the amazing work of the center, alongside Faculty Director Wendy Parmet and the many talented people at the law school who are passionate about health policy and law,” said Butt, who received her JD from American University’s Washington College of Law and BS from Tufts University.
New Certificate in Legal Design

To meet the need for creative and technologically savvy lawyers, Northeastern Law is launching the JD x Graduate Certificate in Legal Design — an interdisciplinary certificate program that encompasses courses and experiences that will provide JD students with opportunities for in-depth study and practice of legal design and its application in specific contexts, positioning them for the increasing number of postgraduate jobs in this area.

A leader in the field of legal design, Northeastern Law founded NuLawLab, the first staffed legal design lab at a US law school, in 2013 to create new strategies of legal agency through engagement with the fields of art and design.

The NuLawLab team leads the JD x Graduate Certificate in Legal Design, which includes courses, legal design co-ops and practical legal design capstone projects or papers. The certificate program will prepare students to expertly apply legal design methods as innovators in the legal profession.

Examples of NuLawLab projects include apps to assist women veterans in obtaining the legal services they deserve, a one-of-a-kind virtual tour of a Colorado courtroom that helps demystify the legal labyrinth for litigants and founding a coalition to provide technological and personal support for those facing the housing crisis in East Boston.

Jackson Appointed Chair of ABA Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services

Dan Jackson ’97, executive director of Northeastern Law’s NuLawLab, has been appointed chair of the American Bar Association (ABA) Standing Committee on the Delivery of Legal Services. The mission of the committee is to improve access to lawyers and legal services for those of moderate incomes — those who do not qualify for legal aid yet lack the resources for full legal representation.

Burnes Center Partners with Mexican Tribunal to Promote Democracy

Democracy and the rule of law will get a boost south of the border thanks to Northeastern’s Burnes Center for Social Change. Supported by the late Nonnie Burnes ’77-’78 and her husband, Richard, the Burnes Center and its affiliated GovLab have partnered with the Mexican Electoral Tribunal to create the Open Justice Initiative (OJI). The tribunal is Mexico’s highest court dedicated to the resolution of electoral disputes, such as objections to the conduct of an election or the demand for a recount; working with the OJI, it will develop strategies for using data and community input to improve its overall effectiveness, efficiency and accountability.

“As part of the project, we created the world’s first MOOC (massive open online course) in Spanish and English to teach judicial and legal reformers how to use data, technology and community engagement,” said Professor Beth Noveck, head of the Burnes Center. In addition, the initiative has spurred 10 innovation projects developed and designed by a collaboration of court employees and their stakeholders, including political parties, lawyers and academics, relating to opening data, fostering collaboration across the system of courts, promoting access to justice for indigenous people, developing a process for citizen engagement and assessing gender equity in the courts’ work.

Noveck also credits Orna Madigan ’25, a research assistant with the Burnes Center, for providing field scanning and research to identify open justice innovations in countries as diverse as Brazil, Ghana and Fiji for applicable information.

“I am honored to be entrusted with the leadership of this important committee at a time when fewer and fewer Americans can obtain the legal help they need.” — Dan Jackson ’97, Executive Director, NuLawLab
CLEAR Claims Victories

Northeastern Law’s Center for Law, Equity and Race (CLEAR) and Criminal Justice Task Force recently achieved three major victories in the fight for systemic changes to make our criminal and civil justice systems fairer and more just. Working with legislators and stakeholders, members of the Criminal Justice Task Force, launched by Professor Deborah Ramirez in 2020, successfully advocated for three significant victories:

- **The Ralph Gants Reentry Services Program** will contribute $2 million to the Massachusetts Community Justice Support Centers (CJSC) to provide every person coming out of prison or jail with reentry services at one of the 19 CJSC centers. Massachusetts is the only state with state-funded, state-wide reentry services centers focused on providing services to individuals after they have left prison or jail. With this additional funding, the state-wide reentry services program will be able to more effectively help those coming out of prison or jail navigate the path to a productive life.

- **Diverse students across the commonwealth will now have access to stipends for co-ops or internships with state judges.** Working inside a judge’s chambers allows law students to hone their research and writing skills, enrich their insights about the development of jurisprudence and develop a close relationship with a judge who can be a mentor and advisor. Currently, all state co-ops and internships are unpaid. The Chief Justice Ralph D. Gants Judicial Scholarship Program will provide $150,000 to law students across the commonwealth who cannot afford to take an unpaid internship or co-op. It is hoped that this initiative will help diversify the pipeline for post-law school judicial law clerks and for judgships.

- **The Chief Justice Gants Access to Justice Fund** will engage and educate the judicial community about how restorative justice practices can be used to advance equity efforts within the trial courts administration. This program is headed by Professor Susan Maze-Rothstein of the Center for Restorative Justice at Suffolk University.

“I can think of no better way to honor the memory of my late husband, Chief Justice Ralph Gants, than these initiatives to increase access to justice.”

— Professor Deborah Ramirez, Founder, Criminal Justice Task Force and Faculty Co-Director, CLEAR

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**Honors**

Kudos to Our Students

- **Hira Ahmed ’24**
  - Women’s Bar Association of Massachusetts Women of Color Book Scholarship; South Asian Bar Association of Greater Boston Law Student Public Interest Fellowship; Equal Justice America Scholarship

- **Allyson Crays ’24**
  - If/When/How Writing Competition
  - THIRSD PLACE: “Limitations of Menstrual Equity Advocacy and a Path Towards Justice” (forthcoming, UCLA Journal of Gender & Law)

- **Amber Kolb ’23**
  - Howard C. Schwab Memorial Essay Contest, ABA Section of Family Law
  - FIRST PRIZE: "Influencing a New Generation: Guardians’ Duties to Protect the Interests and Safety of Children on Social Media"

- **Julia Gaffney ’23**

- **Annemarie Guare ’22**
  - National Lawyers Guild Massachusetts Chapter Student Award: Annemarie Guare ’22

- **Sebastien Philemon ’24**
  - Ropes & Gray Roscoe Trimmier Jr. Diversity Scholarship: Sebastien Philemon ’24

- **Rachael Chen ’23 and Henry Gaylord ’23**
  - Northeast Regional Thomas Tang Moot Court Competition
  - FIRST PLACE: Rachael Chen ’23 and Henry Gaylord ’23
Northeastern Law Ranked No. 10 for Racial Justice

In recognition of its national leadership in preparing the next generation of attorneys who are ready to tackle racial injustice, Northeastern University School of Law was ranked No. 10 for racial justice in the fall 2022 issue of preLaw magazine. The rankings are conducted every two years, with data from the American Bar Association and individual schools.

In its rankings article, the magazine extensively quotes Dean James Hackney. “This generation of students wants to know what people are doing, not what they are saying when applying to law school,” said Hackney. “We think it’s important for us to have an ethos and a holistic view of these issues. Racial justice can be seen in all areas of law.”

Briefing Paper Marks “Imagine a Day Without Water”

In conjunction with October’s “Imagine a Day Without Water,” a national day of action that brings together diverse stakeholders to highlight how water is essential, invaluable and in need of investment, Northeastern Law’s Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy (PHRGE) released the latest publication in its series on water and human rights in the US, “How Five Creative Water Utilities Are Assisting ‘Hard-to-Reach’ Renters as Water Rates Rise.”

“Renters have long been excluded from many assistance programs aimed at helping low-income consumers with rising water costs, even though they pay for water either directly or indirectly,” said Professor Martha Davis, a PHRGE faculty co-director who authored the report with Zain Walker ’24. “This briefing paper highlights five water utilities that have recognized the equity and human rights issues created by renters’ exclusion and have taken creative steps to ensure that renters get the assistance that they need. We hope that the information in this briefing paper will encourage other water utilities to likewise think outside of the box.”

In its rankings article, the magazine extensively quotes Dean James Hackney. “This generation of students wants to know what people are doing, not what they are saying when applying to law school,” said Hackney. “We think it’s important for us to have an ethos and a holistic view of these issues. Racial justice can be seen in all areas of law.”

Northeastern-Mills Merger is Official

Northeastern University and Mills College, a pioneering women’s college located in Oakland, California, officially merged over the summer to create Mills College at Northeastern. Northeastern is now the only university in the United States with comprehensive campuses on both coasts — robust campuses that include undergraduate and graduate learning, residential life, recreation and research.

“By joining together, Mills and Northeastern can reach new heights and have broader impacts on our world. This is our collective mission, our calling, our guiding star,” said Northeastern University President Joseph E. Aoun.

This fall, approximately 500 Northeastern undergraduates joined returning Mills College students for a full course load of classes and activities on the stunning 135-acre campus, which boasts Spanish-style buildings and a campus bell tower designed by the legendary architect Julia Morgan.

“Mills College at Northeastern opens up all kinds of possibilities for our law school,” said Dean James Hackney. “We are exploring ways to partner with our West Coast colleagues and to create programs that will benefit our law students.”

Spotlight in Geneva

In August, Professor Martha Davis and Jenny Wakefield ’23 traveled to Geneva for a meeting of the United Nations Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which reviewed US compliance with the Race Convention. PHRGE submitted two shadow reports to CERD: “Race and Representation in the United States: Civil Right to Counsel as a Human Right,” and “Toward an Effective National Human Rights Institution for the United States of America,” on behalf of the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel and the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies, respectively. “Geneva was a place for imagining an America where human rights and racial justice are firmly enshrined and respected,” wrote Davis in a reflection for the Human Rights at Home Blog.
NewsBriefs

Hear a Lecture, There a Lecture
Fall 2022 Lectures, Conferences and More

Judith Olans Brown Forum for Women in the Law

11.16-11.18.22 Brigitte Amiri ’99, deputy director at the ACLU’s Reproductive Freedom Project and one of the nation’s leading litigators for reproductive freedom, visited the law school for three days in November as the Judith Olans Brown Forum for Women in the Law Practitioner-in-Residence for 2022. While at Northeastern, Amiri shared comments and insights about her high-profile cases, including successfully advocating for a pregnant teenage immigrant who was barred from accessing abortion services during the Trump administration and her efforts in the wake of the Dobbs decision, including a lawsuit in Kentucky seeking to block two abortion bans by asserting the Kentucky Constitution protects the right to privacy and bodily autonomy. (See related article, page 48.)

Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project
By Hands Now Known: The Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Archive

10.6-10.7.22 This celebration and conference launched the unprecedented Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, a collection of almost 1,000 cases of anti-Black racial killings from 1930 to 1954 in the Jim Crow South. (See related article, page 20.)

Center for Health Policy and Law
Center for Health Policy and Law and Center for Law, Information and Creativity
“The Genome Defense” and the Civil Rights Case Against Gene Patenting
11.17.22 Professor Jorje Contreras, director of the Program on Intellectual Property and Technology Law at the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law, spoke about his new book, The Genome Defense: Inside the Epic Legal Battle to Determine Who Owns Your DNA (Hachette/Algonquin, 2021).

Center for Public Interest Advocacy and Collaboration and Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy
Future Imperfect: Chile’s Constitutional Journey
10.31.22 Professor Amaya Alvez Marin of the University of Concepción in Chile spoke about the Chilean constit-uent process and her work to replace Chile’s Pinochet-era constitution with one incorporating robust human rights and ecological protections. Jackie Dugard, senior lecturer at the Institute for the Study of Human Rights and the Department of Political Science at Columbia University, led a conversation after the lecture. The event was co-sponsored by the International Law Society, Latin American Law Students Association and the law school’s chapter of the National Lawyers Guild.

Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project (CRRJ) Racial Redress and Reparations Lab
Reparations: The Constitutional Law Landscape
11.30.22 This first panel in a series of three focused on the legal frameworks surrounding reparations policies, including the constitutionality of various reparations proposals and how policymakers might anticipate and structure reparations initiatives with Equal Protection challenges in mind. CRRJ is co-hosting this series with the Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy and the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs at Northeastern University.

Center for Health Policy and Law
Biological Sex Essentialism in Law and Public Policy
10.28.22 The Center for Health Policy and Law’s annual lecture featured Professor Sarah Richardson of Harvard University. Author of several books, including Sex Itself: The Search for Male and Female in the Human Genome, Richardson spoke about how experts interpret the often-contested state of knowledge on the biology of sex and the responsibilities of scientists conducting related research.

“"The violence that is the thread throughout has often times been insufficiently understood and appreciated."” — MIT Chancellor Melissa Nobles
In 2022, William Allen was granted clemency by then-Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker after 28 years of incarceration for felony murder for his participation in a robbery. Allen and his attorney, Patty DeJuneas, fought for years to convince Baker and the Governor’s Council to commute his sentence, which is a constitutionally provided procedure for individuals serving life without the possibility of parole. At this event, Allen and DeJuneas talked about the clemency process, Allen’s many successes while incarcerated, the unavailability of programming for lifers and barriers to reentry.

While in prison, William Allen (above, left) completed a significant number of educational programs, including some focused on alternatives to violence as well as restorative justice. He also maintained employment throughout his time in prison, working as a referee, barber and special needs assistant among other positions. His attorney, Patty DeJuneas (above with Allen, at right), spoke about fundamental issues of unfairness in sentencing.

Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project (CRRJ) and Center for Law, Equity and Race

Reckoning with Historical Injustice: Journalists at the Frontlines

This spirited conversation with Jerry Mitchell, an investigative journalist, Pulitzer Prize finalist, MacArthur Fellow and founder of the Mississippi Center for Investigative Reporting, was co-hosted by the School of Journalism at Northeastern’s College of Arts, Media and Design and FRONTLINE, which produced “Un(re)solved,” an investigative series featuring CRRJ’s work.

Jerry Mitchell (left), author of Race Against Time: A Reporter Reopens the Unsolved Murder Cases of the Civil Rights Era, in conversation with Erika Howard (right), director of impact strategy and external relations for FRONTLINE.
Practice Makes Perfect

Kyle Jackson came to Northeastern Law for co-op, excited about the prospect of testing classroom learning in the real world. Hands-on experience more than delivered when he had an “ah-ha” moment on his first co-op with Takeda Pharmaceuticals in Cambridge. “It’s been amazing to see classes like Contracts and International Business Transactions come to life while working on confidential disclosure agreements,” says Jackson. He has also been able to flex his legal research and writing muscles in a handful of research assignments. “As a result of my co-op, I’m so much faster at writing legal memos than I was a year ago.”

The benefits of co-op go well beyond what Jackson anticipated. He has sat in on product review meetings that bring together professionals from medical, regulatory and legal to make sure that product marketing stays within the necessary guidelines. “It’s been really interesting because there is a lot more that goes into it than I ever would have imagined,” he observes.

Jackson wanted to try out an in-house role and was attracted to Takeda by his supervisor’s promise to have him experience as many different areas of the company as possible, including research and development as well as the role of a brand attorney. “They’ve been true to their word,” he notes. “For example, I told them I was interested in privacy, and they’ve given me opportunities to work with their privacy people.”

Jackson expected to enjoy the work at Takeda, and he does. To him, the surprise has been the people. “Everybody has been so welcoming, going out of their way to introduce themselves and give me work,” he concludes. “It makes me feel like a full-time employee rather than someone who is here for 14 weeks.” —Maura King Scully
I picked this co-op because within the world of immigration law, employment-based immigration was the only area I had yet to experience. I’m enjoying learning about various areas of science, business, medicine and other professional work while acquiring the skill of writing employer support letters. This co-op is just the type of experience that will help me advance toward my goal of one day opening an immigration law practice in my home state of Vermont.

As a sixth-generation settler on Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) land, I am deeply invested in being of service to this land and its peoples. The Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation is not only a leader in Indigenous rights advocacy, but also the only nonprofit law firm that exclusively practices Native Hawaiian rights law. This co-op has provided me with an invaluable perspective on the choices and tensions that are present when using law as a tool for decolonization.
The thick drapes, the dark wood, the marble fireplace, the gilded clock: Everything inside the chambers of the Massachusetts Senate President screams tradition — especially the austere portraits of former Senate presidents, nearly all white men, reverently lining the walls.

But there is another tradition, both venerable and emerging. It includes Elizabeth Freeman (1742-1829), the first enslaved woman to successfully sue for freedom in Massachusetts; Dr. Frances Jones Bonner (1919-2000), the first African American physician to train and be a faculty member at Massachusetts General Hospital; and Jennie Loitman Barron (1891-1969), the state’s first full-time female judge. Senate President Karen Spilka ’80, only the third woman ever to hold the office, had her staff print out the images of these and dozens of other notable Massachusetts women, and tape them over the portraits of the men. Only a woman confident in her vision and clear in her goals could get away with such a thing.

Along with Spilka, Kyana Givens ’02, Rachael Rollins ’97 and Maura Healey ’98 are Northeastern Law alumnae holding significant office in Massachusetts, each shaking things up in her own way, confident in forging new traditions and determined to shape a brighter future.
CLOCKWISE FROM CENTER:
Massachusetts Governor
Maura Healey ’98, Massachusetts
Senate President Karen Spilka ’80,
Federal Public Defender for Massachusetts,
New Hampshire and Rhode Island
Kyana Givens ’02 and US Attorney for
Massachusetts Rachael Rollins ’97
Karen Spilka '80
President, Massachusetts Senate

Listening First

"I try to listen. I think that's one of the most important skills of being a Senate president.” — Karen Spilka '80

Fostering change through legislation is an art. “I believe that my background in social work and in conflict resolution and my legal education at Northeastern helped hone the skills that have guided me as a reformer,” she says. “My style of leadership is including people, bringing them in.” That takes time, but Spilka insists it’s worth it. “To have people have their own input — somebody plants a little seed and then another person takes that and lets it grow — you come out in the long run with a much better product. It’s richer, more inclusive and fuller; you have more input and buy-in, and it is usually more successful.”

“I try to listen,” she says. “I think that’s one of the most important skills of being a Senate president.”

Spilka’s commitment to justice in all its forms was shaped in childhood. Her grandfather, an activist for reform in czarist Russia, awoke one day to the horror of his best friend hanging in the village square and, knowing he was next, fled to America. From him, she learned the gifts that immigrants bring to our shores and the importance of helping them become productive and self-sufficient. She draws strength in her unending fight for people with disabilities from the memory of her late sister who had Down syndrome, whom she cared for as legal guardian. She traces her devotion to mental health reform to her father, a World War II veteran haunted by mental illness. He died when she was just 20.

“I honestly don’t know, if I hadn’t lived in that family with my father and sister and all that we went through, if I would be a state senator now, let alone Senate president,” she says.

Spilka’s legislative achievements are many. Notably, she was the driving force behind the 2019 Student Opportunity Act, which ensures $2 billion in additional public-school funding primarily benefiting underserved students, and the sweeping 2022 Mental Health Addressing Barriers to Care Act that enforces mental health parity and also focuses on emergency-room boarding, suicide prevention, school services and so much more.

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kyana Givens was a first-year law student when she learned about the foster-care-to-prison pipeline. Appalled, she turned to her roommates — one an occupational therapist, the other a teacher — and told them, “We need to do something, and we need to do something now.” The three women, all in their twenties, became foster parents. “We became a harbor for teenagers,” she says. “They were what they labeled back then as chronic runners, and they would come to our house and never run away.” She has since served as a foster parent in every state where she has lived. The experience has influenced her nearly two-decade career as a public defender: “It has made me think about the ways social service, mental health, medical and criminal justice systems are all interlocked,” says Givens, who was appointed last year to head the head the Federal Public Defender Office covering Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. “I come to the stories of my clients and the stories of their lives very differently because I have an intimate understanding of some of the roads they have traveled before they get me as their lawyer.”

Public defenders carry out the Sixth Amendment imperative that even those who can’t afford a lawyer are entitled to legal representation in criminal proceedings. “We’re the only profession that is named in the Constitution,” Givens notes. “As public defenders, we’re assigned our clients. We don’t select them, and they don’t select us.” That’s why she didn’t blink an eye when she, a Black woman, wound up representing a January 6th defendant considered to be a white supremacist. “I think that’s a good example of when a public defender is being their best to carry out the mission,” she says.

Yet, “I would be remiss not to talk about race,” Givens says. “I think to be a Black woman in this work, where most of my clients are predominantly Black, my presence alone can often feel like a salve to families.” Even at the most awful moments, such as when her young client has been sentenced to prison, the grandmother or the father will pull her aside. “They’ll say, ‘We’re so proud of you. We’re so glad we got you. We’re so glad we have met you,’” she says. “That’s what me bringing my full self as a Black woman to the work does as well.”

“... I have an intimate understanding of some of the roads they have traveled before they get me as their lawyer.” — Kyana Givens ’02
As Suffolk County’s first woman district attorney and first woman of color to serve as a Massachusetts DA, Rachael Rollins famously issued a list of 15 offenses her office would have a rebuttable presumption to decline, divert or dismiss. Instead, her office focused on violent, serious crimes, not nonviolent misdemeanors whose aggressive prosecution has been shown to increase recidivism. Now, however, as the first Black woman to lead the Massachusetts US Attorney’s Office, she has no such list. Her priorities conform to those of the Department of Justice. Nevertheless, as she manages a staff of 300, including some 125 prosecutors, Rollins has plenty of room to advance her philosophy of law enforcement.

Take hiring. “I inherited a criminal unit of assistant United States attorneys, over 90 of them,” she says. None was Black. There were no Black or Latina women prosecutors at all. She has recently hired 12 assistant US attorneys, including four people of color. More than half have been criminal defense attorneys.

Another change: “For the first time in the history of our office, I mandated that we, the US Attorney’s Office, leave the Moakley Courthouse and go into the communities impacted by our decisions,” she says. She implemented mandatory carceral visits for every attorney. Together with federal and state law enforcement partners, her attorneys have also visited communities impacted by gun violence. She organized visits to the Massachusetts State Police, the Boston Police Department and the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe’s police department and courtroom. These visits, she believes, have improved her office’s relationships with law enforcement at every level.

As her prosecutors fight violent crimes, the opioid crisis, healthcare fraud, economic crimes, human trafficking, instances of police misconduct, and violent hate crimes, Rollins insists that their professional development connects to a deeper purpose. For example: “How does this training help us understand what an agent, the family and the neighborhood experience when the no-knock warrant is executed and a 91-year-old grandmother or 7-year-old child is inside the dwelling?” she says. “Every decision we make deeply impacts people’s lives. As the government, we have to get it right. And in the times that we don’t, we cannot be silent. We must speak about what happened and work on rebuilding trust with the impacted individual or community.”

“Every decision we make deeply impacts people’s lives. As the government, we have to get it right.” —Rachael Rollins ’97
Elected in 2014 as the first openly gay state attorney general in the country and re-elected by Massachusetts voters in 2018, Maura Healey sued the Trump administration over the Muslim travel ban, family separation at the border, attempts to delay or roll back environmental regulations and nearly 100 other offenses. She has won billions of dollars in settlements against perpetrators of the opioid crisis, including Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family, Teva Pharmaceuticals, Allergan, Walmart and Johnson & Johnson. She sued Exxon Mobil for lying about climate change, and she's won multi-million-dollar settlements against predatory lenders.

As she begins her term as the first woman and first gay person ever elected governor of Massachusetts, and as one of the first two openly lesbian governors in the United States (the other is Tina Kotek of Oregon), Healey says, "I think about what this means for young girls across the country who finally see more leaders who look like them. I hope our victories show them that their potential is limitless."

"Representation matters," she says. "When we have more people in leadership positions who reflect the people we serve, we get better policies, better laws and better work done."

Acknowledging the leadership of Federal Public Defender Givens, Massachusetts Senate President Spilka and US Attorney for Massachusetts Rollins, Healey says, "It's because of Northeastern's commitment to public service that so many graduates are serving in important leadership positions, and I'm honored to be one of them."

Healey says that Northeastern is where she learned how to use the law to drive progress. She'll be applying those lessons and everything she's learned since to address the many intractable challenges facing the commonwealth — like the lack of affordable housing, childcare and elder care; a mass transit system in disarray; social and economic inequality; climate protection and resilience; healthcare and behavioral healthcare; and reform of the criminal legal system. She's smart enough to know she can't do it alone: "We're building an administration for everyone," she says, "and I'm excited to work alongside policy experts, community advocates and government partners from all regions of the state with diverse backgrounds. Together, we will make Massachusetts more affordable, increase our housing supply, make transportation more safe and reliable, expand job training across the state and so much more."

Jeri Zeder is a contributing writer.

“...When we have more people in leadership positions who reflect the people we serve, we get better policies ....” — Maura Healey ’98
An unprecedented digital archive launched by Northeastern Law’s Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project makes available thousands of documents related to lynchings and anti-Black violence in the South.

By REBECCA BEYER

When students from the School of Law’s Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Project (CRRJ) traveled to Birmingham, Alabama, in early 2020 for CRRJ’s Remembrance and Repair Conference, they — along with hundreds of students before them — had already investigated almost 1,000 individual cases of racial homicide in the Jim Crow-era South. But what they hadn’t been able to do yet was analyze cases collectively — to step back and look for patterns that would reveal the systemic nature of such violence. In Birmingham, they did just that.

Building on many years of prior work in the city — including oral histories and workshops on racial violence with legislators — they presented evidence of 123 police killings between 1930 and 1970 in which African Americans were the victims. In a report published later that summer, CRRJ was able to show that at least 20 Birmingham police officers were involved in more than one fatal shooting over that time yet faced little or no consequences.

Now, compiling that kind of comprehensive evidence will be significantly easier thanks to the launch of CRRJ’s Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive, a web-based tool that makes one of the most thorough collections of information related to racial homicides in US history publicly available. “I think I am joined by the hundreds of people who worked on this project in hoping it will deepen our understanding of the function and impact of anti-Black violence in our country’s history, and concomitantly, the character of the resistance movements that fought against it,” says Professor Margaret Burnham, founder and director of CRRJ.
FILLING A VOID
The genesis of CRRJ and its first-of-its-kind digital archive took place in 2007 when Burnham convened a national meeting focused on investigating crimes of the civil rights era, anticipating that a new federal law — the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act — would spur the FBI and US Department of Justice to investigate civil rights cold cases. When official efforts weren’t immediately forthcoming, Burnham and Melissa Nobles, then a political science professor and now chancellor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, began to investigate the cases themselves.

“We realized there was this period of history that had gone untouched, and that the families [of victims] deserved an accounting,” says Burnham, who officially founded CRRJ later that year to foster investigations, research and restorative justice. “They deserved to be heard, and they deserved to have the documents that told part of their stories returned to them.”

Burnham recognized that the materials also offered opportunities for teaching both skills and substantive law. “Fairly soon after the initial conference in 2007, I designed a course centering on the case investigations,” she explains.

That course soon turned into the groundbreaking Civil Rights and Restorative Justice Clinic, also under Burnham’s direction. Her vision for the clinic was grounded in a remarkable career that began with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and included serving as a partner in a civil rights firm that focused on international human rights, an appointment to the Boston Municipal Court bench (she was the first African American woman to serve on that bench) and an invitation from President Nelson Mandela to serve on an international human rights commission that was a precursor to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Burnham’s experience and deep connections to individuals and organizations across the South positioned her both as a mentor and guiding light in teaching law students how to investigate complex and often horrifying material while letting compassion guide their steps when interacting with family members and communities impacted by violence.

The work was hard. To find cases initially, Burnham and Nobles searched the archives of African American newspapers for terms such as “lifeless body,” “dumped in a river” and “lynched.” But the results were significant. As the clinic developed, Burnham taught students how to use such articles, along with government records, letters to the NAACP and genealogical databases to identify victims and sometimes their surviving descendants. Their goal was to collect data, correct often blatantly false records and provide some measure of restorative justice for the descendants of the victims. Over the years, CRRJ’s work expanded across the university to include students from other colleges and even high schools involved in researching cold cases.

PERSONALIZED RESPONSE
“Professor Burnham lights a fire in her students to get us to think broadly about justice. She gives all of us the gift of permission and encouragement to think beyond the confines of legal precedents to meet the true needs and desires of our clients,” says Kaylie Simon ’11, a public defender in Contra Costa, California, who participated as a student in the clinic, has served on CRRJ’s advisory board since 2011 and even took a year off from her current job in 2017-2018 to serve as a CRRJ project director. “CRRJ taught me that you always go to the scene where an incident took place to fully understand what happened, and that you need to know the life histories of everyone involved to fully understand the crime charged. I use all of these skills daily.”

While restorative justice is typically CRRJ’s goal, there have been significant triumphs in court. In 2008, Burnham headed a team of outside counsel and law students in a landmark case that settled a federal lawsuit accusing Franklin County, Mississippi, law enforcement officials of assisting Klansmen in the kidnapping, torture and murder of two 19-year-olds, Henry Dee and Charles Eddie Moore. This case and many of CRRJ’s investigations have been widely covered in the national press...
including a recent, Emmy-award-winning PBS FRONTLINE documentary series, “Un(re)solved.”

But prosecution in almost all of CRRJ’s cases isn’t possible as the perpetrators are deceased. Instead, students have worked with family members to secure apologies from government officials, correct death certificates that described murders as accidents, install memorials, hold commemorative events and even facilitate dialogue with the descendants of perpetrators.

Sarah Ratsimbazafy ’23, who participated in the clinic last summer, researched the 1949 killing of an African American named Emma Johniken who went mostly unnamed for decades — even after her killer became the subject of a movie and a podcast. “You can easily find this killer, and yet Emma’s story goes unknown,” Ratsimbazafy says. “I wanted to make sure her story was told.”

Noah Lapidus ’20, now a research manager with Ancestry, became involved with CRRJ as an undergraduate at Northeastern and then attended the law school to continue working with the project. With Burnham as his mentor, Lapidus identified hundreds of descendants of lynching victims and even previously unnamed victims, such as Ollie Hunter, who was killed by a white store manager after she apparently picked up a can of oil. He also researched the case of Leonard Butler, an African American miner and union leader who was killed by police officers working for the mining company. Lapidus identified one of Butler’s living children and spoke to her on the phone twice. Within a year of their conversations, the woman died.

“She told me every single detail about her father’s life,” Lapidus remembers. “About being a child of someone who was framed for raping a little girl when in actuality he was the hero of their community. There was no event, no street renaming, but the end result was the most important result in my opinion: a discussion with a descendant. That is the most restorative justice.”

Photo by Matthew Modoono/Northeastern University
“SHE TOLD ME every single detail about her father’s life. About being a child of someone who was framed for raping a little girl when in actuality he was the hero of their community.”

—Noah Lapidus ’20, Research Manager with Ancestry

LOOKING FOR PATTERNS

Eventually, the CRRJ team knew the documents it was finding and the truths that were being revealed needed to be more accessible to families, scholars and the public so that larger trends — economic harm, legacies of racial violence or its impact on the movement of African Americans from southern states to northern ones — could be examined. Burnham says Nobles was the “intellectual inspiration” for creating a digital archive of the materials, bringing a political scientist’s lens to the task of creating a repository with national reach.

“With the archive, we have an opportunity for public justice and a broader conception of what public justice means, particularly when prosecution is not an option,” says Professor Rose Zoltek-Jick, associate director of CRRJ. “The archive presents a path to help families destroyed by the death of loved ones to be seen and for communities to acknowledge their histories and to find a path toward restorative justice, reconciliation and healing.”

Often, that path is rocky. Sheila Moss-Brown says learning about the lynching of her grandfather, Henry “Peg” Gilbert, from CRRJ was a “mixed bag” for her family. On the one hand, it was traumatic for her mother to learn the details about the death of her father, a farmer and church deacon, at the hands of a Georgia police chief in 1947. On the other hand, Moss-Brown says she has “a stronger sense of who I am” because of what she learned about “the amazing man” her grandfather was. The archive, she adds, will make that possible for more people.

“We feel blessed that we were able to know what happened to my grandfather,” she explains. “There are so many families out there that are broken and don’t really know why. The archive will give them an opportunity to at least research and find out if there is a loved one within their family who experienced lynching during the Jim Crow era. From a healing standpoint, that’s going to be huge.”

Taking thousands of records from individual investigations and making them searchable as a collection was a “massive job,” says Gina Nortonsmith, who was hired as CRRJ’s archivist in 2020. To fund the creation of the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive in a partnership with Northeastern’s Library’s Archives and Special Collections, Burnham wrote grant applications and secured support from the Mellon Foundation, Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which also selected Burnham for its prestigious fellowship program. The team also brought in historian Jay Driskell to investigate the related holdings of the National Archives and Records Administration and the Library of Congress.

Nortonsmith and her library colleagues met regularly with CRRJ team members to identify the kinds of information that could be used to search for cases, including the location of the incident, occupation of the victim and the perpetrator, and whether there was a trial or a conviction. Then, library staff organized and catalogued the records and — perhaps most
importantly — ran all those documents through a character recognition program that makes them searchable by text. “We made the information much more discoverable,” Nortonsmith says. “The archive allows users to investigate patterns about the victims and the circumstances of their killings.”

Driskell says the archive fills a void in history. “The victim’s voice is silenced by the killers,” he says. “All we have left are echoes of that murder, and the only way we can ever get close to recapturing that voice is through the archive.”

In addition to official records and documents, the archive includes case narratives written by CRRJ students based on their interviews with public officials and family members. One of the archive’s first official users was Aidan Milliff, a postdoctoral fellow at Stanford University who researches political violence. He had first learned about the work of CRRJ while earning his PhD in political science at MIT, where Nobles was then dean of the department. He called the new archive an “incredible resource.” “It’s sometimes hard to get all the primary evidence you want about things that happened a long time ago,” Milliff says. “It’s also hard, once you have all this primary evidence, to understand the narrative that ties it all together. The combination between the original sources and the student narratives makes the archive a really great resource.”

Burnham has also interpreted the material in the archive in a new book, *By Hands Now Known: Jim Crow’s Legal Executioners*. Published in September by W.W. Norton & Company, the book explores arguments for reparations, apologies and truth proceedings that could allow the American public to confront the legacy of Jim Crow. (See related article, page 35.)

### THINKING BIG

At an event celebrating the archive's launch last fall, dozens of CRRJ graduates and collaborators crowded into Northeastern’s Alumni Center to hear about the project’s past and potential impacts. Northeastern University President Joseph E. Aoun spoke about the significance of the archive. “We all realized very early on that this project doesn’t belong to the law school,” he said. “This project doesn’t belong to the university. It belongs to society as a whole and indeed the world.”

While the Burnham-Nobles Digital Archive currently includes more than 20,000 pieces of evidence from 1,000 incidents that took place between 1930 and 1954, eventually, it will include all the cases investigated by CRRJ, from 1930 to 1970. “This archive is not a closed file drawer,” says Burnham. “We hope it will invite further scholarship and academic discourse, and, importantly, provide communities with the resources they need to create memory, acknowledge trauma and support demands for a more just future.”

Rebecca Beyer is a freelance writer and editor in Boston.

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“THE ARCHIVE presents a path to help families destroyed by the death of loved ones to be seen ....”

— Professor Rose Zoltek-Jick, Associate Director of CRRJ
Northeastern Law graduates are helping to build a more diverse justice system in a four-pronged mentoring program that engages lawyers with students in high school, college and law school.

BY ELAINE McARDLE

Photographs by Kathleen Dooher
JUDGE ANGELA ORDOÑEZ ’89 served as assistant register of probate in the Suffolk Probate and Family Court before her appointment to the bench in 2000.
raised by her single mother and grandmother — both immigrants from Colombia — taught herself English by watching TV. A few years later, after seeing the movie “And Justice for All,” she was eager to become a lawyer but had no idea how to get there.

Loren Forbes was a second-year student at Roxbury Community College in Boston with no particular career track in mind. When Carol Liebman ’89, a criminal justice professor and department coordinator who taught his constitutional law class, invited him to join a mentoring program that introduces students to law and law-adjacent careers, he figured, why not?

“It was great,” says Forbes, who was inspired by his mentors to become a lawyer. Forbes got so much out of it that he stayed in the program for six years, including two more years as an undergraduate — he graduated summa cum laude from UMass Boston — and three years as a student at Suffolk Law School. Today, he is a staff attorney with Greater Boston Legal Services, where he handles housing law and eviction defense. “It was helpful because it opened me up to a new world of law,” continues Forbes, who is the first lawyer in his family. “Speaking to attorneys made the idea of being an attorney very attainable, and it does the same for others who want to do forensic science or law enforcement. It opens up avenues for kids who may not otherwise have those avenues open to them.”

OPENING DOORS

“There’s an old saying, ‘Necessity is the mother of invention.’ I built what I wish I’d had as a teenager, a way to learn things to help guide your career,” says Ordoñez, an associate justice sitting in the Barnstable Probate and Family Court in Massachusetts and former chief justice of the Massachusetts Probate and Family Court Department. Her path to a legal career also hinged on a mentor: When she learned that her high school English teacher’s husband was a lawyer, she asked for his help. He guided her through the process, including helping her get a volunteer job in the Natick District Court probation department. “From then on, it was me and the trial courts throughout the years,” she says.

Ordoñez is the first to point out that without that stroke of luck, her life might have turned out very differently. To ensure other young people have more opportunities and mentorship than she did — especially those with little access to the legal world — she created the award-winning Massachusetts Bar Association (MBA) Tiered Community Mentoring Program (TCM) in 2009. TCM, explains Liebman (who is also Ordoñez’s spouse), was designed to expose students — especially those from historically marginalized communities — to career choices in the justice profession. Working in teams of four — each includes a high school student, a college student, a law student and an attorney mentor — they meet judges, lawyers, clerks, probation officers, court officers, police officers, FBI agents, federal marshals, interpreters and others. The teams get together throughout the academic year and also join other teams for bigger events, including a networking event, trivia night and workshops.

Fourteen years later, TCM is thriving in two cities: Boston and Worcester. Each year, there are approximately 10, four-person teams in each city. A number of law schools participate — Northeastern, Suffolk, Boston University and Western New England — as well as colleges and high schools in the Boston and Worcester areas. A majority of the students are from the BIPOC and/or LGBTQ+ communities, Ordoñez explains, and the program has twice received awards from the American Bar Association for its commitment to diversity.

“It’s meant to open doors for folks who really didn’t have the kinds of opportunities other folks have had,” adds Quaime Lee ’02, assistant dean for co-op and career development at Northeastern Law, who became involved with the program when he worked in the career office at Suffolk Law. For five years at Suffolk and now at Northeastern since 2021, Lee has worked with area law schools to recruit law students for the program, plan events and select candidates. “It’s also a chance for law students to give back to the Boston community by mentoring a college and high school student.”
LOREN FORBES is a staff attorney with Greater Boston Legal Services.
GEORGE SPOFFORD '89
was honored in 2019 with
the Massachusetts Bar
Association’s Community
Service Award.
WESTWARD EXPANSION

When Ordoñez approached Geoffrey Spofford ’89 about launching a Worcester branch of the program in 2016, he was enthusiastic. A partner with Lian Zarrow, Spofford is a former president of the Worcester Bar Association. “We’ve never been a program trying to show people what the path is to become a lawyer or what kind of lawyer to become,” says Spofford, who now co-chairs TCM with Ordoñez. “We are trying to expose people to what you can do within the legal community.”

TCM holds five or six events each year, including a popular speed networking event that gives students the chance to talk in small groups with judges, lawyers, FBI agents, court officials and others. The teams visit courthouses to talk not only with judges but also probation officers, clerks and interpreters. One year, the Worcester teams focused on the opioid epidemic and toured the Worcester House of Correction, which has a program for inmates recovering from substance use disorder. In between these types of events, the four-person teams meet to deepen the mentoring experience. Since 2020, due to the pandemic, the program has been virtual — yet it continues to thrive. In 2021, it launched a paid internship program within the Massachusetts trial courts for high school, college and law students — it was so successful that it was expanded from five to nine students in 2022.

The mentoring program is so popular among lawyers that some teams this year have two lawyer mentors. Spofford, who serves on Northeastern Law’s Alumni/ae Association board of directors, recently recruited three other board members to join the mentoring program: Lennox Chase ’88, founder of Chase Legal Services; Michelle De Oliveira ’12, a partner with Kenney & Sams; and Andrea (Evans) Zoia ’12, a partner with Morgan, Brown & Joy. “For the attorney mentors, they really feel they get as much as they give, this joy of helping a young person develop, to be able to guide them, just to be a sounding board whenever they need it,” says Ordoñez.

“I think in many respects, everyone is mentoring everyone,” says Spofford. “The high school student may come in much more technologically adept so the lawyer may pick up on something from the student. The student may be struggling with issues in school that the lawyer didn’t know existed. Every lawyer I know who has been a mentor has spoken about what they get out of it.”

That’s certainly true of Amanda Zuretti ’98, who’s in her second year as a lawyer mentor in Worcester. Zuretti, who practices real estate law with Bowditch, says, “Those of us who’ve been working professionals have a chance to listen to those just beginning their journey, and they have a safe place to ask questions: ‘How did you get where you are now? What do you have to do? Is it really possible?’”

Zuretti notes that there is significant diversity among the participants, including race, gender identity, age and educational experience. “The primary focus is to encourage students of color in high school and college to consider the law but also — and here’s the key part — to feel a sense of belongingness to the profession,” she says.

“’If we really want to change the complexion of our legal landscape in terms of who is participating and how they are participating and the power they have to participate, it starts not just with law students but engaging law students to help those coming after them — the high school and college students — so we are building multi-generational change,' says Lee, who notes that students of color are increasingly interested in law firm careers. Last summer, a record 56 Northeastern Law students worked as summer associates; of those, 55 percent identified as BIPOC.”

NORTHEASTERN NEXUS

The program has many Northeastern Law connections. In addition to Ordoñez’s spouse, Liebman, whom she met in law school, Spofford’s wife, Juliana Spofford ’89, whom he met at Northeastern, is also involved. She is general counsel and chief privacy officer at Aidentified, a data services and technology start-up. Gina Plata-Nino ’12, who is deputy director of SNAP at the Food Research and Action Center, a national organization based in Washington, DC, was a law student in the program at Northeastern and then a lawyer mentor in Boston. She helped Spofford launch the Worcester program. Ordoñez and Spofford also praise the MBA as an exceptional partner, including the support of MBA presidents and the ongoing help of Elizabeth O’Neil, the MBA director of community and public services, who helps administer the program.

At the program’s 10th anniversary celebration in 2019, the keynote speaker was Rachael Rollins ’97, then Suffolk County district attorney and now US attorney for the District of Massachusetts. Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey ’98 spoke at program events during her years as the commonwealth’s attorney general. And last year’s keynote speaker for a December event was the Honorable Donald Cabell ’91, a magistrate judge with the US District Court in Massachusetts.

Once someone completes the program, the idea is that they will pay it forward by becoming a mentor themselves, Ordoñez says. Forbes was on the board of the program and was instrumental in launching its alumni program to encourage those who’ve been through it to remain involved. “Our goal is for the relationships to carry on, not that it’s one and done but that it continues and creates long-term relationships,” notes O’Neil.

“Everyone is a success story because we are providing connection,” says Ordoñez. “I always say that the goal was not for every high school or college student to become a lawyer but to be introduced to the legal system and criminal justice, the law environment, to learn more and hear from people in it and connect with them. We don’t have enough diversity on the bench, so my long-term goal is to make sure we have more people of color in the legal profession and in the court system because we need to represent who we serve.”

Elaine McArdle, based in Saratoga Springs, New York, is a contributing writer.
Legal Pioneer

Garin Recognized by WBA with Top Award

Professor Patricia Garin ’84, co-director of Northeastern Law’s Prisoners’ Rights Clinic and of counsel at Shapiro & Teitelbaum, was selected as one of two recipients of the Massachusetts Women’s Bar Association’s Lelia J. Robinson Award for 2022. The WBA’s top honor, the award recognizes women pioneers in the legal profession who have made a difference in the community. In recognizing Garin, the WBA salutes her work as a national leader in complex criminal defense and civil rights litigation, renowned for representing clients in parole, clemency and sentencing proceedings. Since 1994, Garin has served as an adjunct professor and co-director of the Prisoners’ Rights Clinic, where she and Professor Wally Holohan supervise law students representing inmates at Parole Board hearings and prison disciplinary hearings.

Public Health Plaudits

And the Lifetime Achievement Award Goes to Wendy Parmet

Professor Wendy E. Parmet, a leading expert on public health law, received the American Public Health Association’s (APHA) Law Section Lifetime Achievement in Public Health Law Award at APHA’s annual meeting in November. This award is given annually to an individual who, over the course of their career, has made significant contributions to the field of public health law.

“It’s a great honor to receive this award, especially because it was voted on by my public health law colleagues. I also need to give thanks to all of my colleagues at the Center for Health Policy and Law, who contribute so much to our interdisciplinary work that aims to improve the public’s health and reduce health inequities through law,” said Parmet, faculty director of the law school’s Center for Health Policy and Law. She is also an affiliated faculty member of Northeastern’s School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs in recognition of her national leadership in interdisciplinary thinking and problem-solving on issues related to public health.

“It is a special moment when the outside world, particularly the leading public health association in our nation, recognizes what we know to be true: Wendy Parmet is a scholar and advocate of the highest order,” said Dean James Hackney. “She is truly the embodiment of our mission: using the law to make people’s lives better. Through her scholarship, strategic advocacy, teaching and voice, she consistently devotes her energy and her heart to improving people’s lives and advancing public health.”

A prolific author, Parmet’s next book, Constitutional Contagion: Covid, the Courts and Public Health, will be published this year by Cambridge University Press.

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— Dean James Hackney
GOING PLACES

Fast Forward

International Affair
For the International Law Association’s International Law Weekend held in New York City in October, Professor Sonia Elise Rolland spoke on a panel, “Reforming the WTO for a Sustainable Future.”

Gravitating to the Golden State
Professor Ari Ezra Waldman participated in a November panel based on Danielle Citron’s book, The Fight for Privacy: Protecting Dignity, Identity and Love in the Digital Age, hosted by UCLA’s Institute for Technology, Law & Policy as part of its Big Ideas in Privacy series.

On the Common
In November, Professor Emily Spieler was invited to deliver the annual Donohue Lecture at Suffolk University Law School. She spoke about “The COVID-19 Pandemic: Occupational Safety and Health of Essential Workers in Massachusetts and Beyond.”

Across the Pond
As part of the University of Oxford Faculty of Law’s discussion series on the Future of Technology and Society, Professor Claudia Haupt delivered a talk, “Platforms as Trustees: Information Fiduciaries and the Value of Analogy,” in November.

Fair Trade
Roberts Named Senior Fellow with George Mason’s C-IP²

Professor Alexandra Roberts, a leading expert on intellectual property and social media, has been named a senior fellow for trademarks at the George Mason University Center for Intellectual Property x Innovation Policy (C-IP²). C-IP² produces research, education and service at the intersection of IP and innovation policy to better understand and shape the means of innovation as a positive force for good. During her fellowship, Roberts will collaborate with center leadership on strategic plans, help identify law and policy questions for research and writing projects, and assist with planning and executing IP programming with a focus on current issues in trademark law.

“I’m excited about the great intellectual property programming C-IP² and GMU Law have planned for this year and very much look forward to learning with and from the other C-IP² faculty, fellows and scholars,” said Roberts, whose research focuses on federal trademark and false advertising law, particularly in cyberspace. She has written on topics including influencer marketing, trademark use on social media, hashtags as trademarks and trademark law’s failure to function doctrine.

Politics and Patents
Swanson Honored by SHOT

Professor Kara W. Swanson, a renowned expert on intellectual property and the history of science, received the 2022 Martha Trescott Prize from the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) in recognition of her article “Inventing the Woman Voter: Suffrage, Ability, and Patents,” published in the Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (JGAPE). The annual prize recognizes the best published essay in one of two areas. In even-numbered years, the prize is awarded to an outstanding published historical essay in the area of women in technology. In odd-numbered years, the prize is awarded to an outstanding published essay in the area of social responsibility of engineers in history. Swanson, who also trained as a biochemist and molecular biologist, was presented with the award at the SHOT annual meeting in New Orleans in November.

“I am thrilled that this article, a contribution to a special issue of JGAPE on ‘The Nineteenth Amendment at 100,’ has been recognized as a significant contribution to the history of women and technology,” said Swanson. “The history it explores, how white woman suffragists used patents as political tools as they fought for the vote, is drawn from my book-in-progress, Inventing Citizens. The book examines the ways in which Americans have considered eligibility for full legal personhood through debates about who possessed inventiveness, from the Constitutional Convention of 1787 to present-day patent office initiatives.”

In October, Swanson was invited to deliver the annual Lyne Starling Trimble Public Lecture for the American Institute of Physics’ Center for History of Physics in College Park, Maryland. Her lecture was titled, “Heroic Inventors and Voting Rights — The Surprising Ways in Which American Ingenuity Has Defined American Identity.”
Professor **Alexandra (Xander) Meise** teaches in the law school’s Legal Skills in Social Context program. Her current research focuses on legal disputes and security policy issues presented by climate change and natural resource conflicts. Meise’s career has spanned five continents, including work for the Pre-Trial Chamber of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia through the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials and in international development in countries such as Yemen and Bosnia. Meise is a political partner of the Truman National Security Project and served as the Truman Center for National Policy’s inaugural visiting senior fellow for climate and energy security. She is also a member of the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs New Leaders program.

We asked Meise about two key areas of her research.

**Q:** You discussed the intersecting threats of nuclear weapons and climate change at the 2022 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference. How are they connected?

**A:** Nuclear and climate change policy both need to address existential threats to society and human life. For example, climate impacts may not be top-of-mind when people think of nuclear weapons, but the use of even a small weapon could have ramifications for human health and security just as devastating as those from climate change. A localized deployment would lead to massive destruction in the immediate area, but the resulting fire and ash could also lead to negative health outcomes across wide territories. Scientists estimate that the cooling from added atmospheric particles could reduce global precipitation and shorten growing seasons, setting off a food crisis.

In addition, the most vulnerable among us are often on the front lines of both climate change and the negative externalities of nuclear weapons and energy development. We should learn from the past with nuclear development, particularly regarding the potential negative effects of mining operations, and not repeat those mistakes as we shift away from fossil-fuels and work to develop greener technologies.

**Q:** Regarding the US Supreme Court ruling in *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency*, some people praised it as a check on the expansion of federal administrative authority while others worried that President Biden and the EPA would be barred from curbing carbon emissions. What’s your take-away from the case?

**A:** Contrary to some early media coverage, the Court’s opinion was not a blanket prohibition on President Biden and the EPA from taking actions to curb carbon emissions. While the Court’s interpretation of the Clean Air Act will make it harder for the executive branch to regulate emissions at the sector level, the ruling didn’t abrogate key holdings of past cases affirming the EPA’s authority to regulate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in many ways, including regulating carbon emissions in power-generation plants that require permits.

In my opinion, the most exciting climate policy news last summer was the Inflation Reduction Act, which includes $369 billion in climate adaptation and resilience funding — the largest climate investment package in US history. This support can help transform our power generation system and facilitate the country meeting its GHG emissions targets, which include cutting GHGs by 50 percent by 2030 and reaching “net zero” by 2050.
Great Reads

Faculty Books

From Publishers Weekly to The New York Times to the Chicago Tribune, reviewers are heaping praise on these brilliant books by our faculty stars.

Burnham Exposes Jim Crow’s Legacy

In 1945, a Black man named George Floyd was accused of being drunk on a Saturday evening and jailed. After he protested against a second invasive search, the arresting officer beat him to death as he lay on the cell floor. To Professor Margaret Burnham, the discovery of this precursor to the 2020 George Floyd murder was striking, but not shocking. “Lawless police acting on behalf of the state has defined how Black people experienced American law for two centuries,” says Burnham. Though the white officer who killed Floyd in 2020 was tried and convicted, many such killings have been carried out with impunity. In By Hands Now Known: Jim Crow’s Legal Executioners (W.W. Norton & Company, 2022), Burnham examines the true scope and nature of Jim Crow-era violence, the laws that condoned it and their legacy today.

By Hands Now Known focuses on the 20th century but is acutely relevant to the 21st century. Burnham probes arguments for reparations, apologies and truth proceedings that could further recover this history and allow communities to confront it and reform legal structures tainted by the legacy of Jim Crow. Publishers Weekly has called it, “an essential reckoning with America’s history of racial violence.” Kirkus Reviews said it’s “An indispensable addition to the literature of social justice and civil rights.” (See related article, page 20.)

Medwed Tackles Injustice of Wrongful Convictions

Professor Daniel Medwed has spent more than 20 years in the field of criminal justice, serving as a public defender, as cofounder of a law school clinic that investigated post-conviction innocence claims and now as a professor at Northeastern Law advocating for justice reform. He’s seen firsthand the deep-seated issues that plague the criminal process, namely how the system is complicit in putting innocent people behind bars. In his new book, BARRED: Why the Innocent Can’t Get Out of Prison (Basic Books/Hachette Book Group, 2022), Medwed reveals how convoluted legal procedures — essentially technicalities — make exonerations nearly impossible.

BARRED tells heartbreaking stories of people who have been wrongfully convicted to expose how technicalities are keeping innocent people behind bars. It is a powerful call to reform a system that has valued finality and efficiency over justice. “People sometimes say that prisoners get out on ‘technicalities,’” says Medwed. “That’s a misguided view. If anything, procedural technicalities are often what keep those who deserve freedom behind bars.” His previous books include Prosecution Complex: America’s Race to Convict and Its Impact on the Innocent (NYU Press, 2012) and Wrongful Convictions and the DNA Revolution: Twenty-Five Years of Freeing the Innocent (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

“Medwed writes with passion and expertise. ... An important addition to the literature on America’s addiction to incarceration.” — Kirkus Reviews

(“Medwed writes with passion and expertise. ... An important addition to the literature on America’s addiction to incarceration.” — Kirkus Reviews)
Antoinette Coakley joins the faculty as associate teaching professor and assistant dean of the Bar Success Program. An educator and corporate transactional attorney with more than 25 years of experience, she most recently served as director of business and regulatory law for Retail Business Services, a division of Ahold Delhaize, a multi-billion dollar international grocery retail company operating supermarkets and e-commerce retail operations in the US and Europe, including Stop & Shop, Giant, Giant/Martin’s, Food Lion and Hannaford supermarket chains, the Peapod online grocery service and Peapod Digital Labs (eCommerce and digital support services).

A native of Boston, Coakley is active in her community. She currently serves as a board member and clerk for CommonWealth Kitchen and is a former director and co-chair of the board of directors of The Freedom House. She graduated cum laude from Harvard-Radcliffe College with an AB in government, cum laude from The Freedom House. She earned her JD from Harvard Law School and is an alumna of Boston Latin Academy. In 2022, she completed a Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Program at Cornell University.

Nick Horan ’09 joins the faculty as associate teaching professor and assistant dean of the Academic Success Program. He offers one-on-one academic coaching to all students and runs weekly workshops on core study skills for 1L students. Horan teaches a series on legal analysis and exam writing to second semester 1L students. Horan also develops extra-curricular programs that support law students’ learning and academic success.

Prior to joining the Northeastern community, Horan directed the academic and bar exam support programs at Boston University School of Law. His legal experience includes four years as an associate with Keegan Werlin and four years at Cooley Manion Jones. Horan also spent just under a year in Kigali, Rwanda, teaching critical thinking and writing skills at a college pipeline program, Bridge2Rwanda. His pro bono work includes service with the Volunteer Lawyers Project in Boston and representing immigrant and refugee children through Kids in Need of Defense. In addition to his law degree from Northeastern, he also holds a BA from the university.

Zinaida Miller joins the faculty as a professor of law and international affairs, with a joint appointment in the School of Law and the International Affairs Program of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities. She is a leading authority on transitional justice, human rights and humanitar-ianism, focusing on the reproduction of inequality and structural violence in areas including South Africa, Rwanda, Palestine and the US.

Miller is co-editor of Anti-Impunity and the Human Rights Agenda (Cambridge University Press, 2016), which explores the increasing emphasis on punishment and prosecution in the human rights movement. Her articles analyze the use of the past in legal struggles over rights, race and redistribution in the US, Canada, South Africa and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Prior to joining Northeastern, Miller was an associate professor of international law and human rights at Seton Hall University’s School of Diplomacy and International Relations. She received her AB from Brown University, JD from Harvard Law School and her MALD and PhD from The Fletcher School at Tufts University.

Weight of Water

Davis Tapped as Human Rights Policy Fellow

Professor Martha Davis, an internationally recognized expert on human rights, has been appointed a 2022-2023 fellow of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy. The hub of the Harvard Kennedy School’s research, teaching and training in the human rights domain, the Carr Center embraces a dual mission: to educate students and the next generation of leaders from around the world in human rights policy and practice and to convene and provide policy-relevant knowledge to international organizations, governments, policymakers and businesses.

“I’m looking forward to an exciting year of making new connections and learning more about human rights work worldwide while building on the Carr Center’s history of work on the human right to water,” said Davis, a faculty co-director for Northeastern Law’s Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy as well as its NuLawLab.


“I’m looking forward to an exciting year of making new connections and learning more about human rights work worldwide....” — Professor Martha Davis
**Technically Speaking**

“Many Americans believe it’s easy to get out of prison on ‘technicalities.’ They believe the appellate and post-conviction process contains lots of escape hatches from the cellblock. That’s flat-out wrong. It’s virtually impossible to win on a technicality. On the contrary, technicalities are often what keep the actually innocent behind bars. The system exalts finality over accuracy, the appearance of justice over genuine justice.”

Professor Daniel Medwed

“The US Prison System Doesn’t Value True Justice”

TIME
November 29, 2022

**Call to Account**

“… we started this project because we knew there was much more to be discovered about the Jim Crow period and about the ways in which violence structured and protected Jim Crow. But it became pretty apparent to us quite quickly that there were hundreds of cases … that just disappeared into thin air.”

Professor Margaret Burnham

“Law Professor Unearths Cases of Racial Violence from the Jim Crow Era”

“Fresh Air,” National Public Radio
September 27, 2022

**Opportunity Lost**

“The harm of not being able to pass immigration reform is we’re losing out on really good people.”

Professor Hemanth Gundavaram

“Why Immigration Reform Has Been So Elusive Over the Years”

Cape Cod Times
September 21, 2022

**Government, Heal Thyself**

“Rather than permitting the governmental units that can best tackle health problems to do so, federalism invites partisan litigation and thwarts interstate cooperation. As a result, both the states and the federal government are increasingly unable to meet the nation’s health threats, even as those threats become ever more complex and dangerous.”

Professor Wendy E. Parmet

“Fights between US States and the National Government Are Endangering Public Health”

Scientific American, October 19, 2022

**Smoke Them Out**

“If we’re going to change corporate actions that damage public health, we need punitive awards that cause corporate miscreants to sit up and take notice.”

Professor Richard Daynard

“We Need Punitive Damage Awards to Protect Public Health”

The Hill, December 6, 2022

**TikTok Tsk**

“If the creator’s work was protectable and was incorporated into someone else’s work without their permission, that could constitute copyright infringement.”

Professor Alexandra Roberts

“TikToker Says Her Video Was Used in Refy Beauty Ad Without Her Permission, Sparking Debate”

Daily Dot
October 5, 2022
On the House

Deb Freitas (left) and Cris Freitas
To the Rescue

Twin sisters Cris Freitas ’10 and Deb Freitas ’10 use their legal superpowers to fight for the rights of children | By Andrew Faught

Superheroes stand watch at Freitas & Freitas in downtown Lowell. The 31-inch action figures — Superman, Black Panther and Green Lantern, among them — decorate a wall, forming a muscular welcoming committee for the real-life dynamic duo who occupy this most curious of law offices.

The true heroes are Cris and Deb Freitas, cape-free identical twin sisters who fight a nemesis far more iniquitous than what’s found in comic books and the movies. In their juvenile law and child welfare practice, the pair persistently work to vanquish racism in a system criticized for disproportionately targeting families of color in alleged child maltreatment investigations and children of color in juvenile legal proceedings.

Urgent Need

A landmark 2017 study published in the American Journal of Public Health reported that 53 percent of Black children are subject to a child protective services investigation by age 18, compared to a 28.2 percent rate for white children. According to the sisters, children who are removed from their homes face numerous negative health outcomes throughout life.

“The systems that were formed are largely made by people who are white,” says Cris, the younger sister by 20 minutes. “Children of color are more likely to be removed from their homes, and they’re more likely to be arrested, less likely to be bailed and less likely to get better dispositions. It’s something that we should all be urgently working on.”

And the sisters are. When they’re not in the courtroom, Cris and Deb run a mock trial program at a Lowell middle school under the auspices of Discovering Justice. The intent, they say, is to make children their own best advocates. Over 10 weeks — for 90 minutes each week — the sisters teach youngsters the fundamentals of the legal system. The goal is to make children aware of dynamics at play and give them tools that very well could help foment reforms.

“We give them the opportunity to put on the hat of a lawyer and try a case,” Cris says. “We teach important lessons about society and their rights. They learn about the First and Fourth Amendments. They learn about critical thinking skills and how to interact with their peers, even when they disagree.”

Adds Deb: “After 10 weeks, they walk away knowing that they can be a lawyer, even if they’re the first in their family to attend college. It helps bring joy into our work. It’s such a source of inspiration.”

Empowering Kids and Families

The sisters are the superhero-loving daughters of Portuguese immigrants from the Azores. Their work is focused on encouraging children to harness their own inner superpowers. The display at the law firm not only is meant to lighten the mood in wrenching situations, but also to stress to children that they have the untapped might to make right.

The women once helped to save lives as EMTs in Lawrence, but while both appreciated the human aspect of the work, they ultimately found it unfulfilling. (“We used to joke that it wasn’t a good profession for us, because you couldn’t appeal death,” Deb says.) They went on to receive law and master of public health degrees in a joint program offered by Northeastern and Tufts University. They found their calling in child welfare after taking a course with the Honorable Jay Blitzman (ret.), then first justice of the Massachusetts Juvenile Court, Middlesex Division, and now chair of the juvenile justice committee of Northeastern Law’s Criminal Justice Task Force. The sisters were recently honored as “reunification heroes” by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law for their work to safely and quickly reunite children with their families.

“The systems that were formed are largely made by people who are white.”

— Cris Freitas ’10

Law’s Criminal Justice Task Force. The sisters were recently honored as “reunification heroes” by the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law for their work to safely and quickly reunite children with their families.

The first in their family to attend college, the sisters thrill to their work, which Deb says is an “underdeveloped” area of law: “Every day presents an opportunity to bring a new argument and a new analysis that will provide better rights and protections for kids and their families.”
Climate change is coming for your glass of wine. But longtime viticulturalist J. Stephen Casscles has a solution: hybrid grapes. "Cultivating grapes is becoming harder and harder to do because the environment is getting a lot hotter and wetter and we’re experiencing more violent weather patterns with more hurricanes and droughts," explains Casscles, author of Grapes of the Hudson Valley and Other Cool Climate Regions of the U.S and Canada. "Hybrid grapes are generally more productive and disease resistant. They roll with the punches much better in the vineyard."

Casscles has witnessed this firsthand on the farm he and his wife, Lilly, bought in 1989 in New York’s Hudson Valley. There, he grows 107 different grape varieties in a region where winemaking dates back to the 1800s. He traces the evolution of heritage grapes — indigenous, native or historically notable — in his website, hudsonvalleyheritagewines.com, and in the forthcoming second edition of his book, in which he writes about varieties that were developed in New England in the 19th century.

Growing grapes and making wine is a labor of love that dates back to Casscles’ youth when he helped tend his grandparents’ fruit farm in the Hudson Valley. He recently retired from his day job — he spent 36 years lawyering for the New York State Senate and New York State Department of Public Health — which gives him all the more time to cultivate his passion for vinification.

In his own winemaking — Milea Estate Vineyard carries his signature line — Casscles features hybrids that combine European grapes, known for their taste, with more resilient Native American grapes, which require far less pesticide intervention to ward off disease. “Sustainable agriculture is the future,” says Casscles. “We can produce great tasting wines with hybrid grapes and frankly, I would much rather be at the pool than spraying toxic chemicals during growing season.”

— Deborah Feldman
CLASS NOTES

1971
Harry Daniels, of counsel at Barclay Damon in Boston, was named to the 2023 Best Lawyers in America list. With more than five decades of legal and management experience, Harry concentrates his practice on complex business litigation matters.

1978
Miriam Horwitz has been nominated to serve as a member of the city of Milwaukee’s Fire and Police Commission. She spent 20 years with the City Attorney’s Office before retiring in 2020 and entering private practice. In 2019, she was the first recipient of the Diversity and Inclusion Trailblazer Award from the State Bar of Wisconsin.

1986
Susan Benz, a partner at Barclay Damon in Buffalo, N.Y., was named to the 2023 Best Lawyers in America list in recognition of her achievements in healthcare law. Susan represents providers in regulatory compliance, managed care and corporate matters. Her many clients include provider networks, independent practice associations, behavioral healthcare collaboratives and care-coordination organizations.

James Levin, adjunct professor of law and associate director of the Center for the Study of Dispute Resolution at the University of Missouri School of Law (Mizzou Law), led three civil mediation training programs in 2022. James was a founding member of the National Association for Community Mediation. He serves on the Missouri Supreme Court Commission on ADR Services in Domestic Relations Cases and is chair of Mizzou Law’s Campus Mediation Service Advisory Committee. He also co-directs Mizzou Law’s summer study abroad program in Cape Town, South Africa.

1987
Manny Daskal has been elected president of the California DUI Lawyers Association, one of the oldest impaired driving defense bar associations in the United States. With a practice based in Humboldt County, Manny’s expertise in DUI includes training in the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s Standardized Field Sobriety Tests as both a student and instructor, as well as completion of the Drug Recognition Expert course. He has lectured and published on marijuana, particularly as related to DUI, and consults regularly with attorneys across the country.

1990
Carol Merchasin has joined McAllister Olivarius as of counsel, heading up cases involving sexual misconduct in religious, faith-based and spiritual communities. Carol brings a depth of legal experience to her new role: As an investigator, she has worked to uncover sexual misconduct within the Shambhala International lineage of Buddhism and the Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres. She has worked with survivors of abuse and misconduct across a number of global spiritual and religious movements and has extensive experience as both a litigator and an investigator. She was previously a partner in the Philadelphia office of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius.

1991
Alan Friel is now chair of the global data privacy, cybersecurity and digital assets practice at Squire Patton Boggs (SPB) in Los Angeles; he previously served as co-chair and deputy chair. Prior to joining SPB in 2021, Alan was a partner at BakerHostetler, where he led the firm’s US consumer privacy practice, co-chaired the retail, restaurant and e-commerce industry initiative and served as the California digital assets and data management leader. In 2022, BTI Consulting Group named Alan a Client Service All-Star, recognizing lawyers who stand above all others in delivering the absolute best in client service.

1992
Jaclyn Kugell, a partner with Morgan, Brown & Joy in the firm’s Boston office, was selected for inclusion in the 2023 Best Lawyers in America list in recognition of her achievements in employment and labor law. Best Lawyers also named her Boston’s “Lawyer of the Year” in the area of labor law—management.

1993
Joseph McConnell, a partner with Morgan, Brown & Joy in Boston, was selected for inclusion in the 2023 Best Lawyers in America list in recognition of his achievements in employment law. Joe is an experienced litigator and negotiator in defending management on employment and labor law matters.

US Navy JAG Captain Ann Minami retired from the Navy in December after 28 years of service and is now a Veterans Law Judge with the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

1994
Senator William “Mo” Cowan (ret.) has been elected chairman of the board of directors for MassChallenge (MC), a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting innovation and entrepreneurship through collaboration and development. Mo, who has been involved with MC since its launch in 2009, is chief legal and external affairs officer at Devoted Health, a tech-enabled all-in-one healthcare company founded to dramatically improve overall health and well-being for seniors.

In November, Andrea DiFabio joined Xenon Pharmaceuticals as chief legal officer and corporate secretary. Based in Boston, Andrea provides strategic leadership and oversight of the planning and execution of the neurology-focused biopharmaceutical company’s legal function on a global basis. Prior to joining Xenon, she was the chief legal and administrative officer and corporate secretary at Repertoire Immune Medicines.

1995
Amy Rosenberger, a partner with the Pennsylvania labor, employment and workers’ compensation law firm Willig, Williams & Davidson, was named the 2023 Best Lawyers in America “Lawyer of the Year” in Philadelphia in the field of labor law. Amy has represented labor unions and employees for more than 25 years.

IN MEMORIAM:

1950s
Alphonse P. San Clemente ’51

1990s
Geraldine A. Fasnacht ’99
Lee V. Ward ’90

Photograph by Beth Mickalonis (opposite)
1997  David Connelly, a partner with Morgan, Brown & Joy in Boston, was named to the 2003 Best Lawyers in America list in recognition of his achievements in employment law. David represents private and public sector employers in labor and employment matters and collective bargaining.

Yvonne Hennessey, a partner in the Albany, N.Y., office of Barclay Damon, was recognized by Best Lawyers in America for her work in environmental litigation. Yvonne serves as chair of Barclay Damon’s environmental and lobbying and election law compliance practice areas as well as co-team leader of the firm’s oil and gas, linear infrastructure and energy markets teams.

Chaumtoli Huq, a member of the CUNY Law faculty and founder/editor of Law@theMargins, received a Fulbright Scholarship to research new migration to Spain, with a focus on Bangladeshi immigrants. She and her family are based in Málaga.

Dan Jackson, executive director of Northeastern Law’s NuLawLab, has been appointed chair of the American Bar Association Standing Committee on Delivery of Legal Services (see page 7).

1998  Danielle Mason Anderson, senior principal at Miller Canfield in Kalamazoo, Mich., has been elected chair of the firm’s managing directors. Danielle focuses her practice on commercial litigation and creditors’ rights resolution with a concentration on loan enforcement, insolvency, bankruptcy and receiviships.

1999  Most recently, Danielle has been appointed to the firm’s Total Rewards Committee. She continues to focus her practice on commercial litigation and creditors’ rights resolution with a concentration on loan enforcement, insolvency, bankruptcy and receiviships.

2000  Last May, Dan Janis achieved his goal of completing a marathon in each US state when he crossed the finish line of the Eugene, Ore., marathon. A shareholder at Davis Malm in Boston, Dan has put in more than 25,000 miles to train for and run in 61 marathons. For the past 15 years, he has averaged about four marathons a year. He was also named to the 2022 Massachusetts Super Lawyers list in the business/corporate field.

In May, Jacqueline Nuñez, a Boston-based real estate developer, purchased an allegedly haunted, centuries-old farmhouse in Burrillville, R.I. The home was the inspiration behind the hit horror film “The Conjuring.” Jacqueline hosts regular investigations and tours with paranormal professionals guiding each experience.

2003  Debra (Feldman) Getts recently celebrated her 10th anniversary with Tobin & Reyes in Boca Raton, Fla., as a corporate attorney. As a side gig, she rents out two cabins in the Blue Ridge Mountains for vacations, special occasions and retreats.

James August Cappoli has joined the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board as deputy general counsel, continuing a commitment to the public interest and investor protection. James previously served as assistant general counsel at the US Securities and Exchange Commission and is currently an adjunct professor for advanced securities regulation at Howard University School of Law.

2004  Rebecca Knudson, a partner in the Wilmington, N.C., office of Cranfill Sumner, was selected for inclusion in the 2023 Best Lawyers in America. She focuses her civil litigation practice on representing builders, developers and homeowner associations.

Sarah Rothman has been named executive director of the New Hampshire Public Defender, a private, non-profit corporation that provides state-wide representation to indigent people accused of crimes. Sarah joined the organization as a staff attorney upon graduating from Northeastern and most recently served as managing attorney of its Manchester office.

2005  Lori Paci has been promoted to manager in the state and local tax practice of Baker Newman Noyes (BNN) in Woburn. Prior to joining BNN in 2021, she spent a decade working in state and city government and volunteered as a business coach for microbusinesses.

Sean O’Connor, a partner at Morgan, Brown & Joy in Boston, was selected for inclusion in the 2023 Best Lawyers in America list in recognition of his achievements in labor and employment litigation. Sean represents both public and private sector employers in numerous industries on the full range of labor and employment matters.

2006  Jennifer Rushlow has been appointed dean for Vermont Law & Graduate School’s new environmental public policy school. She also continues as faculty director of the school’s Environmental Law Center.

2009  Holly McClanahan has been appointed superintendent of schools for the Southeastern Regional School District in Massachusetts. Holly joined the district in 2013 as director of human resources and most recently served as assistant superintendent of human resources, grants and compliance.

In August, Sarah Schenkel, associate professor of academic support at Suffolk Law, won the Deborah Rhode Prize for Early Career Scholars from the International Association of Legal Ethics for her paper, “Due Dates in the Real World: Extensions, Equity, and the Hidden Curriculum,” which was published in the Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics.

2010  Samuel Segal, owner and principal of the Law Offices of Samuel A. Segal, is serving a one-year term as secretary of the Massachusetts Bar Association (MBA). A personal injury attorney with over a decade of litigation experience representing injured parties, Samuel is the former chair of both the MBA Young Lawyers Division and Lawyer Referral Service Committee. He was named to the 2022 Massachusetts Super Lawyers “Rising Stars” list.

2011  Rodney Bedow has joined the Boston office of Brown Rudnick as a partner in the firm’s tax group, where he focuses his practice on tax planning and transactions involving corporations, partnerships and multinational entities. Rodney was previously a partner at Burns & Levinson. Before that, he spent several years working at large multinational organizations in the aerospace and defense and software sectors.

Robert Kaitz, an attorney at Davis Malm in Boston, was selected for inclusion in the 2023 Best Lawyers in America “Ones to Watch” list as well as the 2022 Massachusetts Super Lawyers “Rising Stars” list. Robert’s litigation practice focuses on employment and business matters, representing clients in
employment discrimination, wage and hour claims and close corporation disputes.

**2012**  
Rachel Haskell, a partner at the Law Office of Christopher Q. Davis in New York, was named to the 2022 New York Super Lawyers “Rising Stars” list. A labor and employment attorney, Rachel represents clients in all employment-related matters.

Glynis Ritchie has joined the Pittsburgh, Penn., office of Dentons Cohen & Grigsby as a shareholder in the global firm’s trusts, estates and wealth preservation practice. She also assists clients with their long-term philanthropic and charitable goals through the creation of nonprofit organizations. Glynis previously practiced with Day Pitney.

Andrea (Evans) Zoia, a partner with Morgan, Brown & Joy in Boston, was selected for inclusion in the 2023 Best Lawyers in America list in recognition of her achievements in labor and employment litigation.

**2013**  
Jennifer Ioli Connelly, a partner with Sherin and Lodgen, was named to the 2022 Massachusetts Super Lawyers “Rising Stars” list. She practices in the field of commercial real estate.

Valerie Jackson, an associate with Jackson Lewis, was selected for inclusion in the 2022 Best Lawyers in America “Ones to Watch” list. Valerie’s practice focuses on employment and labor law, with a particular emphasis on labor relations, employment law counseling and litigation.

**2014**  
Catherine Scott, a litigator and employment lawyer at Morgan, Brown & Joy in Boston, was selected for inclusion in the 2022 Best Lawyers in America “Ones to Watch” list. Catherine helps companies navigate workplace allegations such as employment discrimination, retaliation, wrongful discharge, Family and Medical Leave Act, breach of contract, and wage and hour class actions, among others.

**2017**  
Cory Lamz has joined the global legal team at Autodesk as corporate counsel, where he serves as the legal business partner in support of global revenue operations, business models and pricing.

Fighting the Good Fight

PROFILE

Sharon Scott-Chandler ’93  
President & CEO, Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD)

“Poverty is the original pandemic,” says Sharon Scott-Chandler, who was named the first woman president and CEO of Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) last summer. “It’s an incredible motivator and reason to get up every morning, to know that you are part of that fight to get people access to the things that they deserve.”

As head of the largest social services agency in New England, Scott-Chandler is responsible for a $200 million budget that helps 100,000 people stay warm, take advantage of job training and education, access food and more. A native of Mattapan, Scott-Chandler joined ABCD in 1999 from the Massachusetts Attorney General’s office where she had been an assistant attorney general. “I had been working at the policy level and wanted to get closer to the people,” she says. “Coming to ABCD brought me back into my community.”

Still, it was big career change, going from high-level legislative policy coordination to front-line human services work. “It intrigued me,” she explains. “I knew that Northeastern prepared me for anything — both because of the analytical skills that all law schools teach but also because Northeastern was, and always has been, rooted in justice and equity.”

The move proved to be the perfect fit. Scott-Chandler became director of ABCD’s Child Care Choices of Boston, then vice president of Head Start and children’s services in 2003 and then, in 2009, the first female executive vice president and COO.

“I can tell you that when I came to ABCD, I had no thoughts of becoming CEO,” she concludes. “I was excited by the opportunity to address poverty and promote economic mobility and justice at the ground level.”

Twenty-three years later, she still finds “being in the fight for justice and economic equity to be fulfilling.”

— Maura King Scully
Previously, Cory was the general counsel at Buoy Health, a Boston-based health-tech company. Earlier this year, the Association of Corporate Counsel named Cory as one of its “Top 10 30-Somethings,” an award that recognizes 10 in-house counsel worldwide for their innovation, approach to challenges, well-rounded perspectives, contributions to the in-house community, as well as pro bono and volunteer work.

2018

Alvin B. Carter III, an associate in Brown Rudnick’s corporate practice group, was recently recognized as one of the "Top 40 Under 40" African American lawyers in Massachusetts by The National Black Lawyers. Alvin also serves as co-chair of the Boston Bar Association’s New Lawyers Forum leadership team.

Women Grads Honored By Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly

Congratulations to our seven remarkable trailblazers and role models who were honored at Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly’s Top Women of the Law event in November.

TOP WOMEN OF LAW

Julia Devanthy ’09
Housing Justice for Survivors Project, Harvard Law School

Kristin McGurn ’91
Seyfarth Shaw

Stesha Emmanuel ’11
McCarter & English

Gina Plata-Nino ’12
Food Research and Action Center

Marisol Garcia ’97
Health Law Advocates

Laura Schneider ’92
WilmerHale

Jane Peachy ’04
Federal Public Defender Office

CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

TOP WOMEN OF LAW CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

2020

Catherine Raissipour was promoted in July to legal counsel in the Burlington, Mass., office of Sophos. She previously served as associate legal counsel at the global cybersecurity company, where she has held various positions since 2018.

As a pro bono fellow at Hunton Andrews Kurth in Houston, Texas, Henry Sturm works with Houston Volunteer Lawyers, the pro bono arm of the Houston Bar Association, on civil legal aid cases and also assists the organization with its virtual clinics.

2022

Aidan Cullinane has joined Pierce Atwood in Portland, Maine, as an associate in the firm’s business practice group. While in law school, Aidan spent a summer co-op at Pierce Atwood and provided legal research for attorneys in a wide range of practices.

Madeleine Lafitte is now an associate at Robinson+Cole in Boston, focusing on real estate. As a co-op student at the firm, she gained valuable practical exposure working across a number of its practice groups.

Ellen Masalsky has joined Murray Plumb & Murray as an associate. She focuses her practice on litigation, criminal law and family law, areas that she developed an interest in after advocating for clients as a student attorney with Northeastern Law’s Domestic Violence Clinic.

Isabelle Oviedo has joined Hinckley Allen’s Boston office as a first-year associate and a participant in the Hinckley Allen Assignment Pool program, a new first-year professional development program that seeks to facilitate integration across the firm and develop well-rounded associates with a wide range of foundational skills.

Chris Petronio has joined the private clients and fiduciary services group in the Boston office of Verrill, where he spent a co-op in his final year of law school. Prior to joining the firm, he also completed a co-op with the trusts and estates department at Rackemann, Sawyer & Brewster, which combined with Verrill earlier this year.

Abby Plummer is now an associate in the business law group of Verrill’s Portland, Maine, office, where she spent her summer co-op in 2021. Prior to law school, Abby worked with the Boston Public Schools Office of Equity focusing on the district’s diversity, inclusion and Title IX policies.

Robert Papandrea has joined Boston labor and employment law firm Morgan, Brown & Joy as an associate. His work includes guiding business owners and management, human resources professionals and in-house counsel.
Standing Up for Incarcerated Women

As part of her fellowship with Prisoners’ Legal Services of Massachusetts, Sarah Nawab ’20 authored a report, “A Different Way Forward,” detailing sexual misconduct against women incarcerated in Massachusetts and the urgent need to remedy the harm that women face in the carceral system. The report makes five recommendations, including increasing independent oversight of how jails and prisons handle sexual misconduct complaints.

Martin Honored by Eastern Bank

Ralph C. Martin II ’78 was honored by the Eastern Bank Foundation with its 2022 Social Justice Award. Martin, who retired in 2022 as Northeastern University’s general counsel and was previously the first Black man to serve as Suffolk County district attorney, was lauded for his inclusive leadership and for dedicating his life’s work to closing gaps, building up communities and advancing social justice. He is now a partner with Prince Lobel.

Anker Sails into Retirement

Professor Deborah Anker ’75, a nationally recognized pioneer in the study of refugee and asylum law, has moved to emerita status on the Harvard Law School faculty. Together with Greater Boston Legal Services attorneys Nancy Kelly ’84 and John Willshire Carrera ’85, Anker founded the legendary Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program. Her book, *Law of Asylum in the United States*, remains the key authoritative text in the field. She was also central to the founding and continuing success of the National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild.

Santos Honored as Heroine

Ann McGonigle Santos ’92 was honored as the 2022 Commonwealth Heroine by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women. Santos is associate dean of students as well as disability services coordinator for Suffolk University Law School.

Meyers Celebrated for Consumer Law Leadership

In recognition of her contributions to the practice of consumer law, New Mexico attorney Karen Meyers ’78 accepted the National Consumer Law Center’s 2022 Vern Countryman Award in November. The prestigious annual award recognizes an attorney whose...
special contributions to consumer law have strengthened and affirmed the rights of low-income and other vulnerable consumers. Meyers serves as the director of the Consumer Financial Protection Initiative, which she founded in 2019 for the city of Albuquerque. Among her previous positions, she served with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in Washington, DC, and the Consumer Protection Division of the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General, where she won a landmark case against two predatory lenders.

Garcia Heads California Environmental Protection Agency

In August, California Governor Gavin Newsom tapped Yana Garcia ’11 to serve as the state’s Secretary for Environmental Protection. Garcia, who most recently served as special assistant attorney general in California, is now overseeing the state’s efforts to fight climate change, protect air and water quality, regulate pesticides and toxic substances, achieve the state’s recycling and waste reduction goals, and advance environmental justice.

Grigsby Chairs Human Rights Commission

S. Mayumi Grigsby ’15 has been elected chair of the 11-member Cook County Commission on Human Rights in Illinois, which she joined as a member in 2021. She is also a member of the board of directors of Planned Parenthood of Illinois and has a day job as chief of staff at the Chicago Foundation for Women.

Gogel Receives Top French Honor

Sarah Gogel ’13 was recently honored with France’s National Order of Merit in recognition of her outstanding service and leadership through YES Akademia (YAKA), the global, grassroots organization she founded in France to empower young people from marginalized communities through intercultural dialogue, social entrepreneurship and and exchange programs.

Candela Recognized Among Top 50 Women Leaders

Vanessa Candela ’00 was among those included in Women We Admire’s Top 50 Women Leaders of Massachusetts for 2022. Candela joined Celonis in 2021 as the company’s first chief legal officer. She previously worked with Netcracker Technology, Virtustream and EMC.

Francisco Lauded by BBJ

Betty Francisco ’98, CEO of Boston Impact Initiative, was named to the Boston Business Journal’s “Power 50: Movement Makers for 2022,” an annual list of Boston-area business people who are making the most impact on the region.
Top Shelf Reads

Pen to paper, keyboards to the grindstone, check out these page-turners written by our graduates.

Sofia Ali-Khan '00
Public Interest Attorney
A Good Country: My Life in Twelve Towns and the Devastating Battle for a White America

Sofia Ali-Khan’s parents emigrated from Pakistan to America, believing it would be a “good country.” In her new memoir, Ali-Khan revisits the color lines in each of the 12 towns where she has lived, unearthing the half-buried histories of forced migration that still shape every state, town and reservation in America today. From the surprising origins of America’s Chinatowns, the expulsion of Maroon and Seminole people during the conquest of Florida, to Virginia’s stake in breeding humans for sale, Ali-Khan reveals how America’s settler colonial origins have defined the law and landscape to maintain a white America. She braids this historical exploration with her own story, providing an intimate perspective on the modern racialization of American Muslims and why she chose to leave the United States.

Stephen Saltonstall ’76
Volunteer water truck driver for undocumented migrants crossing the Sonoran Desert on foot
Renegade for Justice: Defending the Defenseless in an Outlaw World

Renegade for Justice begins by telling the story of how and why a privileged kid from Cambridge broke from family tradition and devoted his professional life to defending the defenseless in a justice system that is crippled by systemic injustice. Channeling the spirit of radicals like William Kunstler, Stephen Saltonstall writes not only for activists who want to better understand our society but also for those thinking about becoming lawyers. As he writes in the preface, “I hope my stories will challenge those of you — you know who you are, you who dream of soft landings in the glittering halls of boring, soul-free law firms doing the bidding of the uber-rich and powerful — to visualize the alternative, a career that’s built on cases and causes that further the public interest, human rights and care of the natural world.” Professor Michael Meltzner provides the forward to this courtroom war-story memoir.

Jamie Szal ’09
Partner, Brann & Isaacson
Women in Law: Discovering the True Meaning of Success

Women in Law: Discovering the True Meaning of Success chronicles the stories of 23 women lawyers as each one embarks on her own personal journey of self-love, self-reflection and self-awareness to define for herself what success means in law — and in life. In her chapter, “My ‘Unquantifiable’ Value,” Jamie Szal explores what success means to her by focusing on the idea that her success means identifying, owning, broadcasting and nurturing her value. Success, for Szal, is a process, not an outcome. In embracing the process of self-awareness and putting that confidence into practice personally and in community, she writes that she has succeeded far more than she did previously, head down, going it alone.

Gerard Cabrera ’99
Court Attorney, New York Civil Court
Homo Novus

Piety, compassion, lust, love … Feelings all the more potent when you are a Catholic priest confined to your hospital bed by an AIDS diagnosis, being comforted by the seminarian you sexually abused as an adolescent. It’s Holy Week 1987. The priest is Fr. Linus Fitzgerald, and the young seminarian is Orlando Rosario. Both are shocked and shaken as they reflect on their desires and dreams, secrets and sins, hopes and faith, and the paths that brought them together. In Homo Novus, Gerard Cabrera illuminates with deep empathy and stark emotional honesty the journey these two men take separately and together — a journey that began with a violation of trust and leads them to places — sacred and profane — that they never imagined.

Sunu Chandy ’98
Legal Director, National Women's Law Center
My Dear Comrades (pre-order available in advance of March 2023 publication)

Sunu Chandy’s poems include stories about her experiences as a woman, civil rights attorney, parent, partner, daughter of South Asian immigrants and member of the LGBTQ+ community. Her themes cover immigration, social justice activism, friendship loss, fertility challenges, adoption, caregiving and life during a pandemic. These poems provide some resolve, some peace, some community, amidst the competing notions of how we are expected to be in this world, especially when facing a range of barriers. Chandy’s work has appeared in a number of anthologies, including The Penguin Book of Indian Poets, The Queer Cookie Cookbook and The Long Devotion: Poets Writing Motherhood.

Peter Orner ’96
Professor of English and Creative Writing, Dartmouth College
Still No Word from You: Notes in the Margin

Stationed in the South Pacific during World War II, Seymour Orner wrote a letter every day to his wife, Lorraine. She seldom responded, leading him to plead in 1945, “Another day and still no word from you.” Seventy years later, Peter Orner writes in response to his grandfather’s plea: “Maybe we read because we seek that word from someone, from anyone.” A three-time recipient of the Pushcart Prize, Orner is the author of two novels and several story collections, including Esther Stories. His previous collection of essays, Am I Alone Here?: Notes on Living to Read and Reading to Live, was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award.
Like most of you, I did not predict that the Supreme Court would overturn Roe v. Wade in my lifetime. Immediately after Dobbs was decided, those of us who litigate reproductive rights pivoted to state courts, filing over a dozen cases to try to block abortion bans under the state constitutions. My biggest focus this fall was Kentucky, where we challenged two abortion bans in a case that reached the Kentucky Supreme Court. In the five days after Roe was overturned, our Kentucky client, an abortion clinic, turned away more than 200 patients, some of whom were in the waiting room when the decision came down. Fourteen states, including Kentucky, have total or early abortion bans in place.

Lack of access to abortion has numerous consequences: it can be catastrophic for someone’s physical or mental health; it can tether someone to an abusive partner; and it can prevent someone from keeping their job, finishing school or caring for their children. The impact of abortion bans hits people who are marginalized the hardest, especially Black women, who are approximately three times more likely to die due to pregnancy-related causes than their white counterparts.

What comes next? We need to employ all the tools in the toolbox, and we need everyone engaged in the fight. Call your elected officials — even if they support abortion access. Vote for candidates who promise to make abortion access a priority. Donate to or volunteer for reproductive rights, health or justice organizations, especially abortion funds that provide funding to people seeking abortion who cannot afford it. Talk about abortion with friends and family; the stigma surrounding abortion contributes to harmful policies.

The good news is that we have seen success when we come together, including in the midterm elections in November, when tremendous grassroots advocacy efforts yielded victories on every abortion measure on state ballots, including Kentucky and Michigan.

But things may get worse before they get better. The other side is pushing laws that will prevent people from travelling to another state to access abortion, and they have their eyes on a national abortion ban. We must, all of us, try to lessen the human suffering caused by the cruel US Supreme Court decision and try to prevent the situation from getting worse.

The path ahead is not easy. And restoring Roe cannot be the only goal. Even prior to the Dobbs decision, many people were unable to obtain abortions under Roe because access had been pushed out of reach by abortion restrictions, poverty and racism. We must envision a country where people can obtain abortion care without obstacles and have true reproductive freedom, including the ability to parent with resources and support — and to be able to make decisions about our bodies, including accessing gender-affirming care. It is this vision that drives me to come to work every day and put one foot in front of the other, as bleak as things seem today.
When you include Northeastern Law in your estate plan, your generosity provides future students with an unparalleled experiential education. Depending on your age, you can choose among several tax-advantaged options, such as gifts that pay you a dependable income, beneficiary designations on a retirement account, or naming Northeastern Law in your will or trust. At age 70½ or older, you may transfer up to $100,000 per year from your traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA) to Northeastern Law without having to recognize the distribution in your adjusted gross income.

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TAX-WISE GIFTS

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Randy came to Northeastern Law in the post-Vietnam era after running a half-way house in Minnesota. He was drawn to Northeastern Law because of the school’s social justice mission and the co-op program. “My pockets were far from deep in those days,” recalls Randy. “The money I earned from my co-ops made a real dent in paying tuition.”

As general counsel for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center of Baltimore, Randy knows that financial support is critical to advancing worthy causes. That’s why he decided to create a scholarship at Northeastern Law, both through current giving and estate planning.

“I am happy to include Northeastern Law in my estate plans and to be able to pay it forward for future law students. I’ve always been proud to say that I attended Northeastern Law, and I hope to make that possible for others in the future.”

GIVING BACK HAS ALWAYS BEEN TOP OF MIND FOR RANDOLPH “RANDY” KNEPPER ’77

LEARN MORE plannedgiving.northeastern.edu | giftplanning@northeastern.edu | 617.373.2030
See the complete schedule and list of speakers at law.northeastern.edu/wil.