

USC MAGAZINE Law

FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF THE USC GOULD SCHOOL OF LAW | ISSUE 19 | FALL/WINTER 2021



BUILDING ON EXCELLENCE

Distinguished cohort of new faculty experts joins law school community dedicated to service, leadership

USC Gould



This fall has been a time of exciting and extraordinary change at the USC Gould School of Law. For the first time in more than a year, we reopened our doors and welcomed a new class to the Trojan Family. We also welcomed back faculty and staff, along with our returning students, some of whom had never before stepped inside our building.

Indeed, the world is a different place since we were last together at the law school. Yet while so much around us has changed, our shared commitment to advancing the educational and scholarly mission of USC Gould has remained steadfast.

In this issue, I invite you to read about the newest additions to the Gould community, including our outstanding cohort of new professors, renowned researchers and award-winning educators who also happen to comprise the largest incoming faculty cohort in recent years. We are also excited to announce the law school's first-ever Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Nickey Woods.

In addition, we highlight the impact of student scholarships and shine a spotlight on new scholarship gifts from our remarkable alumni. We also feature the talented 1L class, who set new marks in terms of their academic credentials and in terms of diversity.

This magazine includes inspiring stories about alumni mentorship, from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., to Tokyo. You can also learn more about one of our pioneering alumnae who became the first African American dean at Georgia State Law.

“This magazine includes inspiring stories about alumni mentorship, from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C., to Tokyo. You can also learn more about one of our pioneering alumnae who became the first African American dean at Georgia State Law.”

Further, the impressive work of our faculty is on full display in this issue. Vice Dean Franita Tolson shared her legal expertise with Congress, testifying on voting rights and election law three times in a span of 10 weeks. Professor Emily Ryo published new and first-of-its-kind studies on immigration enforcement and detention in leading academic journals. Professor Edward McCaffery's work on “buy, borrow, die” has garnered national media attention. Professor Elyn Saks was recently honored by Harvard Medical School's Mahoney Neuroscience Institute; Professor Marcela Prieto received an outstanding dissertation award from NYU; and Professor Ariela Gross was named a Harvard Radcliffe Institute fellow. On a more solemn note, we pay our respects to the great legacy of Professor Christopher D. Stone, who passed away in May. Professor Stone was widely admired as an innovator and authority on environmental law; and here at Gould, he was a beloved colleague and educator, who played a pivotal role in shaping Gould into the interdisciplinary school that it is today.

In closing, I wish good health to you and your loved ones, and I thank you for being part of our Gould Trojan Family.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ATG'.

Andrew T. Guzman
*Dean and Carl Mason Franklin Chair in Law,
Professor of Law and Political Science*



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6 EXCELLENCE IN SCHOLARSHIP

Gould welcomes five distinguished new faculty this year, whose research and experience broaden the law school's academic expertise.



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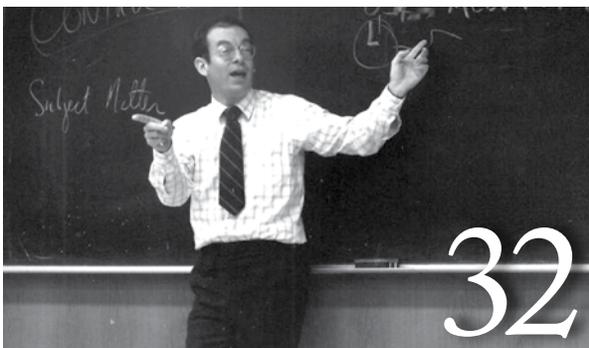
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Gould School of Law



BY THE NUMBERS: USC GOULD STUDENT SNAPSHOT

NEW JD CLASS OF 2024

3.82 GPA | 168 LSAT

STRONGEST COMBINED ACADEMIC PROFILE IN GOULD HISTORY

LARGEST PERCENT OF WOMEN STUDENTS EVER FOR AN INCOMING JD CLASS

62%

23%

FIRST IN THEIR FAMILY TO EARN A COLLEGE DEGREE OR PURSUE A GRADUATE DEGREE

LOWEST ACCEPTANCE RATE ON RECORD

13%

50%

FROM A HISTORICALLY UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITY GROUP

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

91%

CALIFORNIA BAR PASSAGE RATE

OVER 170%

INCREASE IN STUDENT AID OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

95%

STUDENTS RECEIVE AID

STRONG FINISH FOR GOULD NATIONAL MOOT COURT TEAM IN ABA NATIONAL APPELLATE ADVOCACY COMPETITION



Kelly Butler

The USC Gould National Moot Court team, comprised of 3L students Kelly Butler, Nikki Long, Danielle Luchetta and Charlene Smith, finished strong in the American Bar Association’s recent National Appellate Advocacy Competition (NAAC), the largest, most prestigious moot court competition in the country.



Nikki Long

Long and Luchetta won third place in the best brief competition, with Butler and Smith taking fourth place. Gould was the only law school in the competition to have two briefs place in the top 10. In the oral argument competition, both Gould teams made it to the final round. Gould’s teams competed in the NAAC San Francisco Region against 31 teams hailing from law schools throughout the western United States.



Danielle Luchetta

Long was also honored as one of the top 10 best advocates among all competitors, earning a spot as eighth best advocate.

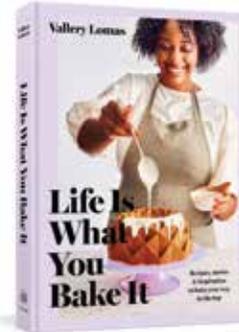
The team was supported and coached by professors Rebecca Lonergan, Rebecca Brown and Sam Erman. Lonergan praised the team’s efforts.



Charlene Smith

“Our students showed such incredible maturity and poise preparing for this new kind of competition in isolation in their separate locations. We should be quite proud,” she said. “I am certain that they will all become exceptionally talented attorneys.”

—Yulia Nakagome



ALUM TAKES THE CAKE WITH NEW COOKBOOK, CAREER

Vallery Lomas (BA 2007, JD 2010) — past winner of the Great American Baking Show on

ABC TV, host of the show Vallery Bakes Your Questions on Food Network and author of the blog Foodie in New York — spoke this summer at a virtual event hosted by the USC Gould Alumni Association. She shared about her path from law school to the Food Network, her favorite recipes and her first cookbook, *Life is What You Bake It*, published in September. She also appeared on KTLA TV to promote the book, and is a regular contributor to *The New York Times* Food section.



IHRC STUDENTS' WORK INFLUENCES FORMATION OF UNITED NATIONS PANEL INVESTIGATING SYSTEMIC RACISM IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

Recommendations by two USC Gould International Human Rights Clinic students as part of a collaborative submission were cited in a report to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland advocating for law enforcement reforms to address systemic racism against Africans and those of African descent.

The submission was written in collaboration with Access Now, a civil rights nonprofit, by 3Ls Laura Penaranda and Ava Habibian. It included an overview of federal, state and local laws and policies affecting the rights of peaceful protestors in the U.S. and the absence of accountability for abuse of those rights. Their submission included more than 40 recommendations for dealing with systemic racism in U.S. law enforcement, said Hannah Garry, founding director of IHRC.

"I am proud to say that the High Commissioner cited to Laura and Ava's submission 12 times (a few times as sole

authority) in making her recommendations to U.N. Member States," Garry said. Following the report, the U.N. decided to form a panel of experts to investigate systemic racism in policing, according to a story posted in mid-July in *The New York Times*, which also quoted Garry.

"It's a very important step forward," she said. "I see this international mechanism as a precursor to a future commission of inquiry."

The submission was an outgrowth of work Habibian and Penaranda began in fall 2020, when they joined an effort by 600 civil society groups to ask the U.N. to condemn the killing of George Floyd and look into systemic racism in the U.S. 📌

—Leslie Ridgeway

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TAPS ELYN SAKS TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH ILLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE



Professor Elyn Saks was invited by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Antitrust Division to speak on its Disability and Inclusion Speaker Series panel in late July. More than 200 participants logged in for the virtual event, which covered ways to increase awareness of attitudinal obstacles affecting people with mental illness.

"They asked me to speak to help put them in a better place to respond to mental health challenges among both colleagues and clients at the Department of Justice," said Saks. "The panel was in a Q&A format, which is different than most presentations I do for businesses about disability and accommodations. It was a huge honor and I was pleased to help."

In a letter from Richard A. Powers, acting assistant U.S. attorney general, Saks was praised for her candid discussion of the challenges presented by her own mental illness and thanked for helping facilitate a conversation about how to assist DOJ employees living with mental illness. 📌

ADDRESSING THE CRISIS IN CAMEROON

Professor Hannah Garry testifies before Canadian legislators

Though the troubles of the central African nation of Cameroon may register as a blip among topics of global concern, Professor Hannah Garry, founding director of USC Gould’s International Human Rights Clinic, is working hard to change that.

In February 2021, she testified before a Canadian legislative body about atrocities that have escalated since a conflict erupted in 2016 between the Francophile government of Cameroon and its minority English-speaking population.

The warring factions in the nation of more than 27 million have created a humanitarian crisis that could devolve into a genocide, Garry warned.



The tragic and sobering numbers and facts so far include 200 villages burned to the ground, some 6,000 widespread killings, arbitrary detention, torture, and rape, over 700,000 civilians forcibly displaced from their homes, three million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and more than one million children in the English-speaking regions unable to attend school since 2017.

Garry’s testimony, before Canada’s Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the House of Commons Standing Affairs and International Development, is part of her broader effort to get the U.S., Canada, and other countries to act to help end the bloodshed and deal with the resulting refugee crisis.

This was Garry’s first time testifying before any legislative body.

“I was so glad to get this invitation indicating Canada was concerned about the situation,” Garry said. “I was impressed by the depth of the questions.”

Garry urged Canada to play a leading role in intervening since it is a member of the Commonwealth that has provided humanitarian and security aid to Cameroon.

Since her testimony, Garry has briefed U.S. and Swiss officials about the crisis and soon will do the same for the United Kingdom — virtually, as she did with the Canadians.

The IHRC, established in 2011, is requesting targeted sanctions from governments against perpetrators in Cameroon and is preparing a detailed report on the situation in Cameroon for the United Nations and other governmental bodies. The report should be completed this fall.

“My hope is that these countries will take notice and take action to avert a potential genocide,” Garry says. 🗡️

— Greg Hardesty

USC GOULD OFFERS TWO NEW MINORS THIS FALL

This fall, in response to heightened student interest, Gould added two new undergraduate minor academic programs to its curricular lineup — Law and Social Justice, and Law and Migration Studies. Professor Robert Rasmussen was instrumental in developing the minors along with Maddy Zamany, director of undergraduate programs.



Professor Robert Rasmussen

The minors were developed in partnership with other schools at USC including the USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

“We really think, at USC, students should be taking courses from across the university,” Rasmussen said. “We’re lucky that we have great people in the law school to work with and our partners across USC see the value in these minors and are very cooperative in working together to make these programs the best that they can be.”

The Law and Migration Studies minor was developed in response to student interest in immigration-related issues due to the current political and social climate, and the Law and Social Justice minor was inspired by students’ growing interest in social justice, Rasmussen said.

Journalism major Olivia Tyler said the Law and Social Justice minor fits into her goal to complement her major while exploring her interests in legal studies and social justice.

“In today’s environment, social justice is all there is to talk about,” Tyler said. “And, I’ve always been interested in the law. As a journalism major and person of color, it’s important for me to stay up to date with important issues. Knowing the law, no matter what career you choose, is helpful to whatever you’re going to do, so I think this minor will help for sure.” 🗡️

—Yulia Nakagome



DIVERSITY, STRENGTH MARK 2021-22 GRADUATE AND INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS CLASS

New Master of International Trade Law and Economics cohort included in new class

Students in the newest class in the USC Gould School of Law's Graduate and International Programs (G&IP) are enrolled in one of eight degree programs and hail from 36 countries.

The 2021-22 class includes the first cohort of the new Master of International Trade Law and Economics (MITLE), a joint degree with USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences.

"MITLE, the newest joint degree offered at USC Gould, is designed for students who want to focus on the global legal and regulatory issues as well as enhance their understanding of core economic principles that are related to international trade," says Sarah Gruzaz, director of G&IP and adjunct assistant professor of law.

"The pairing with economics training is unique. I'm not aware of any other degree like this."

Gruzaz is impressed by the strength and diversity of the overall 2021-22 G&IP class.

"USC Gould thrives on the diversity of our students," she says. "Many of our G&IP students are already successful attorneys, judges and corporate counsel in their home countries. We are fortunate to host these students from around the world who enhance the class discussion with their varied cultural and professional backgrounds."

The one-year, 32-unit MITLE program is full time and on campus. It's the latest academic program at USC Gould designed to allow students to focus on a specific area of law, with the added value of understanding economic modeling and impact.

The MITLE degree was established in response to the evolving global business landscape to provide an interdisciplinary, global perspective to navigate the legal, policy and business parameters that shape today's international trade and economics.

"Trade law and economics go hand in hand," Gruzaz says.

The MITLE curriculum was championed by Brian Peck, executive director of the Center for Transnational Law and Business and adjunct assistant professor of law at USC Gould. Alongside Gruzaz, the Gould and Dornsife teams believe the MITLE program will grow along with the needs of the global marketplace.

"This is a really interesting degree because it gives students an extra foundation on which to build," Gruzaz says. "A legal education is helpful whether or not you decide to practice law. Students learn a lot of analytical and critical thinking skills. We envision our MITLE students going to work as leaders in global corporations or working for governments around the world, where higher-level critical thinking is going to be crucial for them to succeed."

"For our MITLE students to interact with U.S. JDs as well as international lawyers, and to be able to bring their perspective and economic focus to class, really creates a unique experience for them." 

—Greg Hardesty

GOULD QUOTABLES



"The concern is that this may be just hollow symbolism, and we should not just settle for mere

symbolism at the expense of substantive reform."

JODY ARMOUR on Congress' approval of a bill making Juneteenth a federal holiday, KNBC Los Angeles, June 16, 2021



"There's a strong need for more transparency on what mutual funds are doing with their votes."

DOROTHY LUND on a proposal that would trigger greater investor scrutiny of how mutual funds' proxy ballot votes correspond with their environmental and social claims; *Bloomberg Law*, Oct. 1, 2021



"This is really the first time that two states are before the U.S. Supreme Court saying ... how do we treat groundwater?"

ROBIN CRAIG on a rare SCOTUS case over shared groundwater between Mississippi and Tennessee, *Courthouse News Service*, Oct. 6, 2021

TEACHING ADDS UP TO SUCCESS FOR JORDAN BARRY

New USC Gould faculty member brings expertise in business law, taxation, law and economics

By Leslie Ridgeway

Professor Jordan Barry knows the value of keeping your options open. After studying math and economics as an undergrad at Cornell University, he surprised his friends when he decided to attend Stanford Law School. He wasn't sure what kind of law he wanted to practice, but he was certain that his future wouldn't involve either tax law or academia. He's now a professor who teaches tax law.

"It's good to be open-minded," he says. "At law school, I started seeing how different legal regimes changed how parties interacted. I saw how these models I had studied actually applied to things in the real world, and I got excited. Law school really helped me connect theory and practice."

The more Barry learned, the more he gravitated toward scholarly research and teaching in business law, including taxation and tax policy, securities regulation, corporate finance, and law and economics. "I practiced law for a few years, then decided to try my hand at teaching, and that's worked out well."

Barry, a new faculty member this year, comes to USC Gould from the University of San Diego School of Law, where he directed the Center for Corporate and Securities Law and co-directed the graduate tax program. He also burnished his teaching credibility by winning USD's Thorsnes Prize for Excellence in Teaching in both 2012 and 2019, being named Herzog Endowed Scholar for both 2014-15 and 2015-16, and being named a Favorite Faculty Member by the USD School of Law's Public Interest Law Foundation from 2011-12.

REAL-WORLD CASES ADD RELEVANCE TO LEARNING

He's encouraged that Gould students have expressed interest in the topics he teaches. He makes the subjects more



enticing with real-world examples like the bankruptcy of Barings Bank at the hands of trader Nick Leeson — "There are a lot of lessons in that story; that's why I like it," he says. He loves how a good case can stay relevant, even decades later. For example, he teaches *Benaglia v. Commissioner*, a 1937 case involving whether room and board provided by an employer to an employee is considered taxable income. "This issue has been getting attention now because of high-profile prosecutions of executives who didn't report those kinds of items as income."

His own experience growing up around a family business gave him a deeper understanding of the value of a good business lawyer, something he hopes to pass along to students. "If you are a small business owner, that business is a big part of your life," he says. "You have to keep the plates spinning. Having a good attorney to help you with the challenges that you encounter can make a big difference."

A distinguished scholar, Barry's research has been published in numerous academic journals including the *Journal of Political Economy*, *Southern California Law Review*, *Virginia Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* and *Stanford Law Review*. He and a co-author have a paper on foreign tax credits forthcoming in the *Tax Law Review*. His research has also been cited by news media outlets ranging from *The New Yorker* to NPR's Marketplace to the *Los Angeles Times*.

Barry is exuberant about the opportunities he sees ahead at USC Gould. "It has a tremendous faculty, renowned scholars, and the students are extremely strong ... and they're all set in L.A., one of the most vibrant legal communities in the nation and world. What's not to like?" 🍷

UNIQUE CAREER PATH BRINGS ROBIN CRAIG TO USC GOULD

USC presents perfect opportunity to study, teach ocean and coastal law

By Leslie Ridgeway

Professor Robin Craig's advice to students comes from her own experience developing a career combining the humanities with environmental law. After earning a bachelor's degree in English/writing at Pomona College, a master's in Writing About Science at Johns Hopkins University and a PhD at University of California, Santa Barbara focusing on how the English Romantic poets used science to explain social change, Craig still felt she hadn't found the role that allowed her to, as she puts it, "think great thoughts but bring them back to the real world."

Her husband suggested law school, not too tempting after earning three degrees, but he helped her study for the LSAT and she earned a JD *summa cum laude* from Lewis and Clark School of Law in Oregon, famous for its environmental law program. When she landed a job at the Oregon Department of Justice in the General Counsel section, working with attorneys representing the state's environmental agencies, she realized she'd found the nexus she'd been looking for.

"It was wonderful training for a public lawyer and the perfect blend of my science and chemistry background," she says. "That's why I tell law students, take the opportunities that come along because whatever you think you want to do, you don't know enough. Experiment!"

LOCATION, FACULTY, INTERDISCIPLINARY FOCUS MAKE IMPRESSIONS

Craig, originally from Long Beach, Calif., comes to USC Gould from the University of Utah S.J. Quinney School of Law and is relishing opportunities to dig in to coastal and ocean law at USC, with its strong marine biology program and Sea Grant office at the USC Dornsife School. She's impressed with the interdisciplinary focus at USC, as well as the law school faculty and students enthusiastic about an environmental law professor joining the ranks.

"Southern California is a prime place to train people about environmental law," she says. "Water law will only get more important in how it interacts with equity and the environment. I've started learning about everything going on with the L.A. River, which is very different than when I left."



Craig's accomplishments include authoring, co-authoring or editing 12 books on environmental law and more than 100 law review articles, including one of the first covering how the law should look at climate change, which has been cited across multiple disciplines. She's now working with a co-author on an article about how officials can govern a United States that is warmer by 4 degrees Celsius than the pre-industrial area. She's also chair of the Natural Resources Law Teachers Committee for the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, where she has opportunities to mentor and network with up-and-coming scholars in environmental law and policy.

Craig will teach Water Law and Toxic Torts in the spring of 2022, preceded by Civil Procedure this fall. Water Law will introduce students to the different systems of allocating water in the U.S. Toxic Torts will be structured around four main issues, likely to include the COVID-19 vaccine and possibly the opioid crisis and water crises like the one in Flint, Mich. Civil Procedure will ground students with a broad understanding of how cases get filed and pre-trial motion practice. She particularly enjoys teaching first-year law students.

"It's great watching the comprehension come over their faces," she says. "They know what they're doing before they realize it. It's fun to see the light bulbs go on." ✨



DEEP DIVE INTO FREE SPEECH RIGHTS

Professor Erin Miller brings expertise in First Amendment, criminal procedure and legal theory to USC Gould

By Leslie Ridgeway

Who has the right to free speech? Are there limits on freedom of expression? What is a clear distinction between speech and conduct? How does technology affect freedom of speech? And what does all this mean to an attorney practicing law?

Professor Erin Miller, one of the newest professors to join the Gould School of Law, intends to immerse her students deeply into these issues in the courses she'll teach, including a seminar on Free Speech Theory this fall. She'll also teach a doctrinal course in Criminal Procedure in spring 2022.

Miller, a First Amendment theorist, was a Bigelow Teaching Fellow at the University of Chicago School of Law, and she holds a JD from Yale Law School and a PhD in political theory from Princeton. She relies on her background in political theory to help students understand the deeper principles on which the law rests, as well as to critically think about whether those principles are the right ones.

"Legal education is more than passing the bar exam," she says. "After that you have to go out in the world and practice law, and to do that requires a sensitivity to theory, no matter the field. Students will be better practitioners if they understand the consequences of the law and can think about both what's working and what's not."

For example, in Criminal Procedure, Miller plans a thorough exploration of cases touching on difficult issues from privacy to police brutality to mass incarceration.

"It's hard to do given time constraints, but I want to cover as much detail from the cases, and as much of their context,

as I can so my students understand how high the stakes are in these cases," she says. And in her free speech seminar this semester, Miller is asking each student to write a final paper designed to clarify their own thoughts on free speech: how should speech be protected under the Constitution?

AMPLIFICATION OF SPEECH EMERGES AS RESEARCH THEME

Miller is also keenly interested in the amplification of speech, which has become a theme in her research over the past few years. Her work tackles related issues such as unequal access to amplification opportunities and the potential conflicts that speech amplified to very large audiences creates between individual speakers' interests and democracy. She's also fascinated by the problems presented by social media platforms.

"There are many people talking about how Facebook and Google have too much power, but there is no conceptual framework for understanding what exactly is the problem," she says. "How much power is too much? How is Facebook different from, say, *The New York Times*? Is it just a matter of scale, or is there something more at work?"

Miller was drawn to Gould because of the warmth of the community and the interdisciplinary avenues for research.

"All law schools claim they are interdisciplinary, but here, there are really strong law and history, law and philosophy, law and economics contingents. It's great for students to be able to study law from all these angles." 📌

JEESOO NAM FINDS, AND TEACHES, THE FUN IN TAX LAW

New Gould professor looks forward to helping students understand complex legal concepts



By Leslie Ridgeway

The Internal Revenue code — tedious or interesting? Professor Jeessoo Nam leans toward the latter, and aims to demonstrate to his students the engaging and even amusing aspects of tax law.

For example, Nam, who comes to USC Gould this academic year from New York University, where he was a visiting professor of tax law, will introduce students in both of his classes this coming year to the unforgettable case of *Blackman v. Commissioner* (1987). A rocky marriage breaks up when the husband accuses his wife of cheating, then dumps her clothes on the kitchen stove and sets them on fire, which spreads to and destroys the entire house. The husband ran afoul of the IRS when he tried to claim a nearly \$100,000 loss on his taxes.

“It’s an interesting theoretical and legal question,” says Nam, who will teach Taxation and a seminar on the philosophy of law. “Should Mr. Blackman be able to take a tax deduction given that his malicious acts caused the fire? What is the right approach from the legal perspective and the justice perspective?”

RETURNING TO LA TO “FERTILE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT”

Teaching at USC Gould brings Nam back to Los Angeles, where he was a tax associate at Latham and Watkins LLP for two years after he earned his JD at Yale Law School.

“I’m excited to be in this fertile academic environment, with top-notch faculty at the law school and USC’s philosophy department,” he says. “I’m looking forward to more opportunities for people like me doing interdisciplinary work in law and philosophy. I’ve also heard students are interested in studying tax law. One of the pleasures of teaching tax law is that it’s tremendously useful for lawyers to know.”

Becoming a professor is a long-time career goal for Nam, who finds helping students understand complex laws stimulating.

“It’s exciting to see students’ progress from not knowing about tax law, or how to read the Internal Revenue code, to picking up the materials and learning to approach them from an analytical perspective in one semester,” he says.

Nam hopes to equip students to examine tax law from a base of traditional knowledge.

“One of the principal tasks of the introductory course, Taxation, is to give students the tools to think about the tax law and whether it promotes certain values that might be preferred,” he says. “I want them to think about tax law, in terms of reform, in terms of how it could be.”

Nam’s current research focuses on some less explored areas of tax law, including how to tax the financial consequences of wrongdoing, and how moral wrongdoing figures into the calculus of distributive justice. 🚧

'CITIZEN OF THE WORLD' LANDS AT USC GOULD

Professor D. Daniel Sokol praises rich, diverse faculty, students and LA community

By Leslie Ridgeway

When he was studying at the University of Chicago Law School, Professor D. Daniel Sokol was certain he was not destined for a career in teaching. One of his professors disagreed, and several years later, Sokol was reaching out to Senator and soon-to-be President Barack Obama for a recommendation letter for a teaching position.



“He said when I was his student, ‘You’re going to be a law professor,’ and I said, ‘No, I’m going to make money,’” says Sokol, who comes to the USC Gould School from the University of Florida Levin College of Law. “Two weeks before he formally announced his run for President, I sent him a letter and said, ‘You were right.’ His staff called me two days later and replied, ‘Of course Sen. Obama remembers you and he’s happy to write you a letter.’ I always tell my students about the importance of networking and keeping up your connections.”

It wasn’t one person or experience that attracted Sokol to academia but the opportunity to apply his research and practice in antitrust, corporate governance, technological transformation and global business regulation, all topics of high relevance today for businesses ranging from start-ups to multinational corporations. Underpinning these important subjects is Sokol’s goal to educate lawyers who deliver lasting value to their clients.

“Everyone needs to know how to think creatively and how to dig into detail but they ultimately need to figure out how to identify the risk factors of the companies they represent and the underlying business issues in a deal or a litigation,” he says. “I’m not looking to train a lawyer. I’m looking to train business counselors — highly value-added professionals who cannot be replaced by the increased digitalization of the legal profession and who can justify their premium salaries.”

GOULD SCHOOL, USC OFFER OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLABORATION

Sokol is set to teach classes in law and entrepreneurship, as well as corporations, at the law school, and a marketing class at USC Marshall School of Business. He also will serve as faculty director of the Center for Transnational Law and Business. He is one of the top 10 most cited antitrust professors in the past five years and is hard at work on several research papers including the interface of mergers, antitrust and entrepreneurship; shifts in antitrust law, and a paper on debt and antitrust, building in part on the insights of USC Gould Professor Bob Rasmussen.

USC and the Gould School were his choice in part because of the opportunity to collaborate with well-respected academic leaders in law, business disciplines and economics.

“There’s a real community of scholars here,” Sokol says. “There are faculty committed to a combination of scholarship and teaching. There’s also a really diverse and interesting student body.”

Los Angeles itself is another attraction. Born in Panama, Sokol came to the U.S. when his father left the Panamanian government and took a job at the World Bank. Sokol has taught in Australia, Japan and Israel and pre-pandemic, traveled extensively to work with co-authors around the world, lecture and present his scholarship. He considers himself “a citizen of the world.”

“I’ve always had a global orientation because I’m not from this country,” he says. “L.A. is such a global city with a rich and diverse community. I engage with people from all over the world, and that allows for a more culturally nuanced understanding for law school students. The globalization of the law is very real.”

New Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Envisions a Path to Healing

Nickey Woods brings background in educational psychology to new position

By Leslie Ridgeway

When Nickey Woods was interviewing for the inaugural position of Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the USC Gould School of Law, the words “healing” and “belonging” came up repeatedly as she discussed her goals for solving some of the broadest social justice issues on a smaller scale. For her, that work starts with defining what DEI is.

“If I have to answer that in a sentence, it’s making the invisible visible,” says Woods, who comes to USC Gould from UCLA, where she held the position of Assistant Dean of Diversity, Inclusion and Admissions in the Graduate Division. “There are harms done or hurtful things said not because people are being intentionally cruel or mean. DEI is making the things that are not apparent more obvious, and creating awareness of concepts and ideas we may take for granted.”

She acknowledges that this process can be bumpy, and when she facilitates a DEI training, she assures participants that mistakes will happen on the path to growth and change. She calls it “failing forward” – making mistakes and doing better next time.” She hopes the warmth and enthusiasm she expresses as assistant dean will draw people in to the sometimes difficult work of DEI.

“One of the strengths I bring to this role is the ability to tackle difficult subject matter with sensitivity, honesty and approachability,” she says. “DEI is very heavy work, and I’ve found that approaching my work with a positive attitude, a desire to connect with others and to connect others together, helps people who may be hesitant to lean into DEI.”

ESTABLISHING TRUST AS A FOUNDATION FOR DEI LEARNING AT USC GOULD

Before the academic year started, Woods was working on establishing trust between her office and the USC Gould community. That means developing relationships, demonstrating commitment and drawing on her expertise in educational psychology to help her understand human



behavior, especially how people learn (she earned an EdD from USC Rossier School of Education in 2015). It also means being a lifetime learner herself and reading — a lot.

“I love books — always have,” she says. “I consider myself to be a restless learner. One of the most critical things DEI practitioners can do is engage in learning. I don’t have a law background, so I took a continuing education course on DEI in legal settings.” Her favorite book at this moment is *The Sum of Us* by Heather McGhee. “She writes about how racism hurts everyone, not just people of color, and how all of us can thrive when we unite across racial lines,” Woods says.

In addition to consulting books, Woods reaches out to other DEI practitioners to develop professional connections for best practices and identify experts who can bring their ideas to trainings or seminars on campus. She’ll also be working closely with students, and has four DEI Fellows from USC Gould assisting her in her office. Woods says she plans to schedule meetings or get-togethers with student groups and leadership in the near future. And, she’s working on developing effective assessment tools to ensure that Gould is accountable and on track with its efforts.

Woods also serves as the DEI consultant to the Nickelodeon TV channel, developing diversity-based educational content and materials to support their public affairs department.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE INFORMS WOODS’ APPROACH TO DEI

As she digs deeper into the challenges of DEI work, her own son, a college sophomore, is never far from her mind, as is her own experience as a sixth grader who was encouraged by a teacher to attend an enriched school program. That decision changed her life, and she thinks about all the other lives, especially of underrepresented students, that could be changed by emphasizing DEI and inclusive excellence in education. “I’m thrilled to be in this role at this critical point in time.”

THE IMPORTANCE AND IMPACT OF SCHOLARSHIPS

By Margaret Kean

For Lisa McLean (JD 2001), president of the Black Women Lawyer’s Association of Los Angeles, scholarships are about opening a door for another.

A staff attorney at Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP, McLean explains that she has been able to build a career in an intellectually stimulating environment surrounded by accomplished and supportive colleagues — a setting she also encountered at the USC Gould School of Law.

“It is that similar bond created between students, faculty, staff and alumni that makes USC Gould special and is why I support the school,” she says. “As a student, I imagined a future where I would be able to reach out to others and that day is here. I appreciate the opportunity to continue our tradition of support and generosity.”

Recent graduate David Javidzad (JD 2020) notes how scholarships allow students to fulfill their individual potential and contribute to shaping the world. “Being part of this institution is being part of a family that takes care of its members,” he says.

Over the next three years, USC Gould is focused on — and firmly committed to — broadening the reach and impact of student scholarships. In seeking new and increased support of scholarship funds, the law school hopes to provide its talented, diverse student community with expanded access and engagement opportunities involving:

- Gould’s renowned faculty, featuring prominent scholars and educators who specialize in a wide range of critical areas that span environmental law, constitutional law, antitrust, international law, taxation, IP, entertainment, health care, bankruptcy and corporate law;
- Gould’s experiential legal clinics and practicums, honors programs, law journals, judicial clerkships, public interest

fellowships, professional externships, student support organizations and career development opportunities;

- all aspects of the legal profession; and
- the vibrant, lifelong and global network of the USC Trojan Family.

Every gift makes a difference, notes Karen Wong (JD 1986), chair of USC Gould’s Board of Councilors, whether it’s from fellow alumni, parents or friends of the law school. “It is the cumulative effect of everyone’s willingness to pay it forward that will positively affect future Gould students,” she says. “Establishing a scholarship — whether out of gratitude for the professor who wrote the letter of recommendation for a judicial clerkship, the classmate who helped you and others prepare for an exam, the relationships fostered over the years that resulted in business referrals, or the friendships that have enriched your lives — it is an investment that will yield the same rich experience for others.”

USC Gould’s multi-year priority on student scholarships includes efforts to increase annual support; new endowed funds; new need-based scholarship support, as well as merit scholarships; and scholarships that help the law school attract and retain exceptional first-generation students and diverse students of all backgrounds.

“We want the legal profession to be open to all who have a passion for the law, and we hope to remove the financial obstacles students face in reaching their goals,” says Dean Andrew Guzman. “We are grateful for the meaningful difference that Gould alumni, parents and friends have already made for our students, and we are excited about the future that their generosity makes possible. We look forward to sharing the impact of their philanthropy across our community.”



FULL CIRCLE TO OPPORTUNITY

Rothman Scholarship leads to success for Abraham Tabaie (JD 2008)

By Diane Krieger

Abraham Tabaie (JD 2008) never met Frank Rothman (JD 1951). But when Tabaie recently made partner at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP — the firm Rothman helped build into a powerhouse of the Los Angeles legal community — it was the USC Gould School of Law scholarship bearing the famous sports litigator’s name that helped pave the way.

Tabaie is the fourth recipient of the Rothman Scholarship, which he credits with “every single professional opportunity I’ve had from the very beginning to now.” He is also the first Rothman Scholar to make partner at Skadden.

The scholarship is awarded each year to USC Gould’s top entering student. In addition to a three-year, full tuition benefit, Rothman Scholars receive annual \$2,000 stipends and a locked-in first-year summer internship in Skadden’s Los Angeles office. Launched in 2002, the Rothman Scholars roster now numbers 16 alumni and three current students — each a living legacy to Frank Rothman, who died in 2000.

Tabaie was attending an NYU Law recruitment event in Manhattan when USC Gould offered him the Rothman Scholarship.

“I was grappling with the \$80,000 annual debt I would be taking on,” Tabaie recalls.

The Rothman Scholarship changed everything. Tabaie, now a 38-year-old commercial litigator, graduated debt free. He then met his future wife, Whitney English Tabaie, and encouraged her to get her Master’s in Nutrition, Healthspan,

and Longevity at USC Davis School of Gerontology. She’s now a registered dietitian nutritionist who recently published her first book: *The Plant-Based Baby and Toddler*. They have two young children.

SCHOLARSHIP HELPS MAKE CONNECTIONS

Tabaie was born in Modesto, Calif., and grew up in the Sacramento suburb of Elk Grove. Both his parents worked in public education: his dad, who emigrated from Iran in the 1960s, was a school psychologist in Stockton; his mom taught elementary grades and later became a reading specialist.

Tabaie graduated *summa cum laude* from UCLA in 2005, majoring in political science and history. His parents had paid for college, but private law school was not in their budget. Tabaie’s younger sister, Mary, was starting college that same year. Not only did the full-ride Rothman Scholarship eliminate debt, but the guaranteed first-year summer internship at Skadden took much of the usual pressure off the law school experience.

“It freed me to just enjoy law school, take the classes and soak it all in without having that overwhelming sense of dread about getting a good job,” Tabaie says. He graduated Order of the Coif, was articles editor on *Southern California Law Review*, and was president of the Middle Eastern and North African Law Student Association.

After graduating, Tabaie clerked for U.S. District Court Judge George H. King (JD 1974) in Los Angeles before joining Skadden as an associate in 2009. In 2011, he clerked again for U.S. Ninth Circuit Court Judge Barry G. Silverman in Phoenix, Ariz. Tabaie can draw a direct connection to both clerkships from introductions by a Skadden partner and USC professors.

At Skadden, Tabaie specializes in high stakes fraud and breach of contract cases, trade secret disputes and privacy litigation.

Since making partner, he’s relocated to Palo Alto, where he heads up attorney development for the growing litigation department, a role that enables him to mentor young attorneys and form a living link with Frank Rothman’s legacy. 🍷

SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT: WILLIAM CHOI, JD 1985

Gould alum reflects on ‘life-changing’ decision and rewarding practice with nonprofits

By Ben Dimapindan

Raissa and William Choi's generosity established a new scholarship for first generation students pursuing an advanced degree.

William Choi (JD 1985) calls going to law school at USC Gould “life-changing.” The experience gave him vital skills he uses to this day, from how to analyze problems to adapting to new challenges, as well as giving him lifelong friends.

None of these things would have been possible without the help of a full-tuition scholarship supporting his studies. “I may or may not have gone to law school, if not for the scholarship from USC Gould. I often think about that,” says Choi, partner and co-founder of the Los Angeles-based firm, Rodriguez, Horii, Choi & Cafferata, LLP, where he represents nonprofit organizations.

This past year, Choi and his wife, Raissa, decided to give back by making a generous contribution to establish a new scholarship that will benefit USC Gould students who self-identify as the first in their family to graduate from college and pursue an advanced degree.

“That’s really been a goal for me — to make it possible for somebody else in my circumstances, to be able to go to Gould and get the benefits of law school that I’ve gotten,” Choi says.

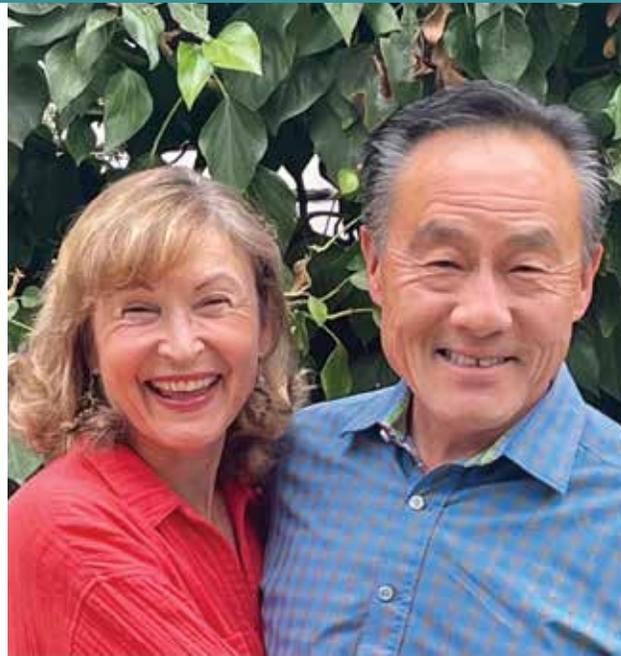
Coming from an immigrant family, the importance of education and going to college were drilled into him, Choi says. His family moved from South Korea to California, first settling in Compton, then Garden Grove, and then San Diego.

Choi studied accounting at San Jose State University, where undergraduate tuition cost around \$200 a year, and “even then I got financial aid for tuition, books and living expenses, which was invaluable for me.”

PURSUING A PATH IN LAW

As a student at USC Gould, Choi appreciated the camaraderie with his classmates, many of whom he keeps in touch. “My class of ’85 was exceptionally good, and it was easy to become good friends and bond with them.”

After law school, Choi joined Latham & Watkins LLP. “Starting at a big law firm was really formative in many ways ... the diversity of people in terms of the personalities and practice areas [was] a great way to learn.”



His initial plan was to become a corporate tax lawyer, but he pursued other opportunities abroad, practicing international law with a Korean law firm in Seoul, and later moving to a U.S. firm with a Hong Kong office.

Around that time, Choi and his wife started a family and returned to the U.S. His mentor from Latham, Albert Rodriguez — the firm’s first Hispanic partner — was starting his own firm and recruited Choi and fellow Latham alum, Dwayne Horii, to join in 1996. Together, they started what became Rodriguez, Horii, Choi & Cafferata, LLP.

Today, Choi specializes in working with nonprofit organizations on a wide range of tax issues and corporate governance matters.

“The work itself is very rewarding,” he says. “The missions of the nonprofits are diverse; it could be civil rights, environmental, religious ... but they all do interesting stuff, and it’s a real privilege to work with them.”

PASSING ON INSIGHTS

Choi recognizes now the trajectory of his career path didn’t go as he had imagined, but he’s certainly happy with the outcome.

“Don’t think that whatever you’re doing in the first couple of years is what you’re going to be doing for the next 40 years,” he says. “I’m very glad I was open to pursuing a small firm path and a practice area that, coming out of law school, I would never have considered. But as it turned out, it was perfect for me and who I am — and I really enjoy it.” 📌

Rosalie & Harold Rae Brown Charitable Foundation Trustees Meet Scholarship Recipients



Above: Front, from left: Blair Tucker, Christen Richardson, Ron Mandell, Omar Abdelhamid
Back, from left: Jeremy Lawrence, Dean Guzman, Tya Roberts, Leon Janks

In September, Ron Mandell (JD 1967) and Leon Janks, two trustees of the Rosalie & Harold Rae Brown Charitable Foundation visited with Dean Andrew Guzman and five of the six students whose scholarships are supported by the foundation's 2020 endowment gift. The students shared their career aspirations with the trustees, providing an opportunity to see the direct effect of the scholarships.

"After being invited to join such an impressive institution I was excited and hopeful. However, I was nervous about the costs of law school. This fear was exacerbated by the fact that I was making the decision to leave my job and return to school; and, I was making that decision during a pandemic. But when the financial aid office contacted me to share the news I had received the Rosalie & Harold Brown Endowed Scholarship, all those worries washed away, and I knew I was making the right choice." —Jeremy Lawrence, JD Candidate 2023, University of California, Santa Barbara, Philosophy 2016

"I chose USC Gould because of the people. I knew this was a community where I could succeed. Law school was an easy choice; I've always felt called to a career in public service where I could leave the world a better place than I found it." —Christen Richardson, JD Candidate 2024, University of Michigan, Masters of Public Policy 2021, Michigan State University, College of Business 2016

"As a lawyer, particularly in the field of sports and entertainment, I aspire to represent athletes and aid in advancing their careers as well as the social justice initiatives that they champion. I chose to attend USC Gould because of its excellent entertainment law program, including the Media and Entertainment Law certification." —Blair Tucker, JD Candidate 2024, University of California, Los Angeles, Economics 2021

"My family and I are incredibly thankful for the generosity of this scholarship. This award means less debt and financial burden in the pursuit of my dream; that means so much to me. I decided to transition from a career in the health care industry to a career in law because of the broadened application in which a lawyer can actually contribute to systemic change." —Omar Abdelhamid, JD Candidate 2024, Rutgers University, School of Pharmacy 2021

"Once I decided that I wanted to pursue law, USC Gould was always my first choice. As an undergraduate at USC, I saw firsthand the opportunities and doors USC opened for its students, and I knew they would continue to grant me access once in law school. In addition, the smaller class size and location in Los Angeles, where I intend on practicing, were also influential factors in my decision." —Mya Roberts, JD Candidate 2024, University of Southern California, African American Studies 2021

USC GOULD RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT TO SUPPORT LATINO STUDENTS

Alums Liz and Steve Atlee realize goal of giving back to help law students

By Larissa Puro

Elizabeth Atlee
and Steve Atlee

For USC Gould alumni Elizabeth E. Atlee (JD 1993), and Steve Atlee (JD 1990), giving back has always been a shared goal. The couple achieved that aim in a personally meaningful way in March 2021 by establishing the Elizabeth and Steve Atlee Endowed Scholarship, an endowed fund that supports Latino students at USC Gould.



Liz, the senior vice president, deputy general counsel and chief ethics and compliance officer at commercial real estate firm CBRE, comes from a line of lawyers in both Mexico and the U.S. — “It’s kind of the family business,” she says.

In 2019 she was recognized as one of the 50 Most Powerful Latinas by the Association of Latino Professionals for America in collaboration with *Fortune* magazine. She also received the professional achievement award from the Mexican American Bar Foundation the same year. In addition, she is a member of USC Gould’s Board of Councilors.

“As a Latina lawyer, I thought a great way to give back would be to give to USC, and give someone else an opportunity who may or may not have had the support to go to USC,” she says. “There are a lot of students who are first-gen coming into USC law school who have the wherewithal to get through high school, and then college.

Having an opportunity to go to law school and not going because you can’t afford it is a tragedy.”

THE FREEDOM TO ENJOY LAW SCHOOL

Liz hopes the fund will lift that burden for students. “If it even gives someone the room to relax a little bit about funding, enough to pay attention, to be present and to enjoy the learning part of it — I would love that.”

Steve, who works as the deputy general counsel at Caltech, can speak directly to the impact a scholarship can have.

In his senior year at Yale University, where the Atlees met as undergraduates, Steve was weighing his post-graduation options: investment banking, consulting or law school — and wasn’t sure which path to take.

“When I got my acceptance from USC — and was also very thrilled to win a scholarship — that was really one of the best days of my life,” he says. He remembers reading and re-reading the acceptance letter in disbelief. “It was one of those moments where in an instant you know what you’re doing.”

The full merit scholarship inspired him to one day pay it forward when he could. “When Liz had this suggestion I just welcomed it; I thought it was a great idea.”

SUPPORTING LATINOS IN LAW

Elevating the Latino voice — particularly for Latinas and especially in the United States — is important for Liz. She makes time to advocate for the professional development of Latinos through CBRE’s employee network group HOLA (Hispanics Organized to Leverage our Advantage) and serves on the firm’s executive inclusion council. She also serves as treasurer on the board of Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE), a non-partisan organization that teaches Latinas how to use their voices to speak up for issues important to the community.

In California, Latinos make up 36 percent of the California adult population, but only 7 percent of the state’s licensed, active attorneys, according to the State Bar of California’s 2021 diversity report. 🏳️‍🌈

Record-setting JD Admissions Trajectory Continues with USC Gould Class of 2024

By Leslie Ridgeway

Dean Andrew Guzman welcomes the JD Class of 2024.

The USC Gould School of Law recently welcomed the JD Class of 2024 — an accomplished cohort which set new academic milestones and is one of the most diverse classes to date.

For the third year in a row, the incoming class has set the mark for the highest percentage of women in an entering 1L class, reaching a new high with 62%. With a median LSAT of 168 and GPA of 3.82, the class of 2024 has the strongest median LSAT at Gould, and the most robust combined numerical profile in the school's history. This year's class also represents the lowest acceptance rate ever at Gould at 13%.

"This is a unique, and perhaps extraordinary, time to be studying law... and a challenging one," said Dean Andrew Guzman at the 1L orientation. "But it's also a moment of great opportunity."

"I am optimistic because as big as our challenges are, we are producing lawyers who are capable of solving them," he added.

PROFESSIONAL PATHS TO GOULD

Impressive backgrounds distinguish Gould's newest 212 JD students. Among this year's class is an actor who appeared on the television show *Scandal* and is a best-selling science-fiction author, a digital producer at NBC and Telemundo in Miami, and several with professional experience in the tech space including Google, Spotify and Survey Monkey.

Others worked in the areas of education reform or social entrepreneurship, including one who founded a nonprofit dedicated to tackling the global water crisis. In addition, social justice and public interest are strongly valued in this class, as one student gave back to the community via a Fulbright scholarship in Taiwan, while another interned for the UN International Tribunal in Tanzania.

Entrepreneurs are also represented among the incoming class, including one who founded a highly rated online



fashion company and another who helped launch a sportswear company for Muslim women. Several come from exceptional sports backgrounds: one student is a 2018 national kickboxing champion, another completed the 2,000-plus-mile Pacific Cup sailing race from San Francisco to Hawaii, and another played tennis professionally.

WIDE-RANGING BACKGROUNDS

This year's class is the law school's most diverse to date — 50% self-identify as a member of a minority group, 14% are members of the LGBTQ community, and 23% are first in their family to earn a college degree or pursue a graduate degree.

Members of the Class of 2024 arrive at Gould from all across the country — 43% are from outside California totaling 31 states — and from around the world. It's also a multidisciplinary cohort, having majored in 40 different areas of study as undergraduates, with nearly 10% earning degrees in STEM fields.

During his welcome to the newest JD class, David Kirschner, associate dean for admissions and financial aid, underscored the importance of connections as the group embarks on their first year of law school, and after graduation.

"Many of you come to USC having heard of this vast, powerful Trojan alumni network," he said. "As you will soon learn, it's all true. USC graduates are proud of their experiences and their connection to the law school ... These important connections begin today, with the people sitting around you." 🍷

WHY A CLERKSHIP?

Ask the USC Gould Board of Councilors Clerkship Committee

The Board of Councilors Clerkship Committee, chaired by David Walsh (JD 1985), encourages USC Gould students to pursue clerkships by sharing their first-hand knowledge of the benefits of clerking, actively mentoring student candidates, and reaching out to underrepresented students through collaborations with both the federal courts and UCLA's and UCI's schools of law. They work closely with Faculty Clerkship Program Chairs professors Sam Erman and Rebecca Lonergan in supporting USC Gould students through the application process.

The committee hosts an annual Fall Clerkship Reception, to introduce students to the clerkship process, and, in the spring, the Honorable Howard B. Turrentine Reception honoring successful clerkship candidates. The committee's focus is on the consistent value of clerkships in building excellent lawyers. "I have met many people who, looking back, regret that they did not pursue a clerkship," says USC Dean Andrew Guzman, "but I have never met anyone who regrets that they clerked. It will be one of the best years of your legal career."

For more information on clerkships, contact USC Gould Career Services at careers@law.usc.edu.



Dave Walsh (JD 1985)
Chair; Of Counsel, *Paul Hastings LLP*



Mike Kelley (JD 1976)
Judge, *Los Angeles Superior Court*



Andrea Ayvazian (JD 2006)
Assistant Director, Career Services Office,
USC Gould



John Major (JD 2010)
Litigator; *Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP*



Kai Bartolomeo (JD 2008)
Senior Counsel, *Paramount Pictures*



Lauren McGrory Johnson (JD 2009)
Counsel, *Hueston Hennigan LLP*



Maggie Buckles (JD 2014)
Associate, *Morrison & Foerster LLP*



Omar Nouredin (JD 2014)
Litigator; *Munger, Tolles & Olson LLP*;
Lecturer in Law, *USC Gould*



Matt Cave (JD 2011)
Partner; *Kibler, Fowler & Cave LLP*



Alex Porter (JD 2008)
Assistant U.S. Attorney, *United States Attorney's Office*



Victor Elias (JD 2008)
Attorney, *California Department of Justice*



Karen Wong (JD 1986)
ex-officio; retired from *Milbank LLP*

BOARD OF COUNCILORS WELCOMES FOUR NEW MEMBERS FOR 2020-21

The USC Gould School of Law values the leadership provided by its Board of Councilors, a group of prestigious professional, business and community leaders who provide counsel to USC Gould's deans and faculty, as well as USC President Carol Folt and USC's provost. Appointed by the president to serve three-year terms that may be renewed once, the Board of Councilors champions the outstanding research, education and public service programs at USC Gould, serves as ambassadors for the school and helps the school to obtain financial support, including individual gifts and gifts from corporations and foundations.

THIS PAST ACADEMIC YEAR, THE BOARD OF COUNCILORS WELCOMED FOUR NEW MEMBERS:



ELIZABETH ATLEE (JD 1990) is senior vice president and chief ethics and compliance officer at CBRE Group, Inc. in Los Angeles. In addition to the Board of Councilors, she is a member of Gould's First Generation Professional Committee and the Latino Growth Initiative. She also is a board member of Hispanas Organized for Political Equity (HOPE). She earned her bachelor's degree from Yale University. Her husband, Steven, is also a USC Gould alumnus, and also earned his JD in 1990. He is deputy general counsel at Caltech.



NORMAN A. BARKER (JD 1972) is principal of AllianceBernstein, a global investment group based in Washington, D.C. At USC, he is a member of USC Associates (Chairman level), and supports students with the Barker Family Scholarship, as well as an endowment to the USC Gould Dean's Fund. He hosts an annual reception for the dean for Washington D.C.-based alumni and admitted students each spring, and helps to recruit students after the reception. Outside of USC, he is on the Board of Trustees of Eckerd College; Board of Directors, Barracuda Re, Children's National Medical Center's captive insurance company (Cayman Islands); St. Francis Episcopal Church; Metropolitan Club and Congressional Country Club. He is married to Kathryn (Kathy) Barker.



HON. ELLEN N. BIBEN (JD 1992) is an administrative judge and acting justice in the Supreme Court of New York County. She was appointed a judge in the Court of Claims in 2015 and subsequently designated an acting Supreme Court justice, assigned to the Supreme Court's criminal term. During her career, she has served as executive director of the New York State Joint Commission on Public Ethics, New York state inspector general, and an assistant district attorney. She earned a bachelor's degree from Wesleyan University. Her husband, Matthew, is a litigation partner at Debevoise & Plimpton LLP.

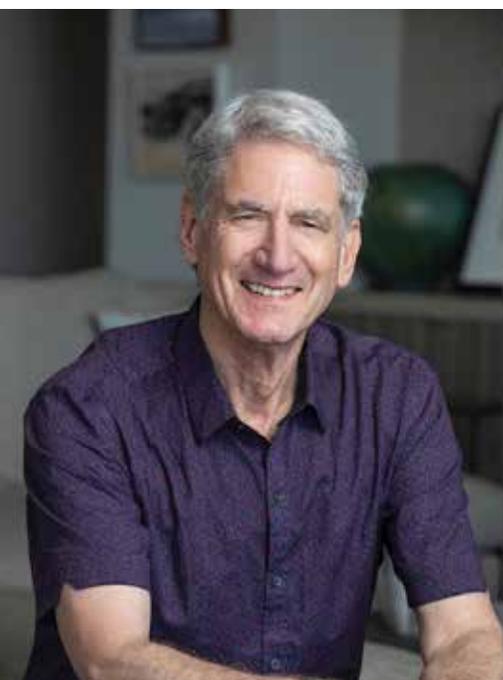


C. THOMAS (TOM) HOPKINS (JD 1993) is partner in charge at Cooley LLP in Santa Monica, a Silicon Valley-based law firm that works with clients on corporate deals and IPOs, intellectual property matters, and major litigation. He joined Cooley in 2013 from Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton in Santa Barbara. He earned a bachelor's degree from American University. His wife is Sandy Kaneoka.

Other members of the 2020-21 Board of Councilors include: Chair Karen Wong; Amy Alderfer; Brian E. Cabrera, Richard Chernick, Hon. Candace D. Cooper; Kenneth M. Doran; Mark Easton; Max Factor III; Larry S. Flax; Stanley P. Gold; Samuel Goldberg; Karen Grant-Selma; Jefferson W. Gross; Andrew T. Guzman; Laurie F. Hasencamp; John M. Iino; Edward G. Lewis; Bruce E. Karatz; Michael C. Kelley; Thomas F. Larkins; Michele Mulrooney, Charles T. Munger; Arsine Phillips; Daniel Prince; Stephen P. Rader; Bruce M. Ramer; Robert S. Roth; Bruce H. Rothman; Kathryn A. Sanders Platnick; Michael J. Schroeder; Robert L. Skinner; Jeffrey H. Smulyan; Glenn A. Sonnenberg; David M. Walsh; Mark S. Wapnick and Daron Watts.

Effecting Change Through Civic Engagement

Professor of Lawyering Skills Emeritus and former Associate Dean Rob Saltzman influences through civilian oversight



Rob Saltzman

By Christina Schweighofer

When Professor Emeritus Rob Saltzman was asked last year to join the Community Advisory Board, tasked with rethinking public safety processes at the university, he agreed right away. As a retired long-time Associate Dean and Dean of Students at the law school, he cares deeply about USC. “USC was my professional home until I retired in 2015,” he says. And as a former two-term Los Angeles police commissioner, he felt qualified.

His willingness to serve was also in character. Service is what Saltzman does.

Saltzman’s most high-profile civic engagement was his almost 10-year run on the Los Angeles Police Commission. In this role, he made headlines when he voted against the re-appointment of then-LAPD Chief Charlie Beck whom he faulted with not being transparent in his interactions with the commission. “If you think that something is not right, you should try to make it right,” Saltzman says. “Otherwise, what’s the point of civilian oversight?”

Saltzman, who graduated from Dartmouth College and Harvard Law School, spent 28 years at USC Gould. He taught Legal Writing during the 1980-81 school year, left to work in L.A. County government and returned as the associate dean in 1988. At the law school, he found a mentor in then-Dean Scott Bice, who “stood up for what’s right and modeled integrity.” As associate dean, Saltzman

helped to diversify the student body, and established the Academic Success Program to assist students in improving their performance in law school.

The list of institutions and causes that have benefited from Saltzman’s civic engagement is long. A gay man, Saltzman says that his interest in public service is rooted in effecting change for people who have been disadvantaged, mistreated or not treated equally. “It is about trying to make things better for the underdog,” he says.

Two of Saltzman’s current obligations tie back to his experience in public safety as a police commissioner. The Community Advisory Board for the USC Department of Public Safety (DPS) evaluates how DPS, or a possible alternative, should respond to non-violent incidents like mental health calls or locked doors. Saltzman said that his LAPD background “will prove helpful as we take apart the Department of Public Safety and put it back together in a different way.” He also serves on the Factual Analysis Citizen Consulting Team (FACCT), created by L.A. District Attorney George Gascon to re-examine uses-of deadly-force by police in L.A. County.

Last year, Saltzman was appointed to the newly implemented L.A. County Probation Oversight Commission, where he chairs a subcommittee charged with reforming the juvenile probation facilities.

Wende Julien (JD 2009), the commission’s executive director, says she and Saltzman meet at least weekly to share research and keep each other updated on issues related to probation oversight. Her appreciation for Saltzman’s contribution is evident: “Rob is thorough, well-prepared and empathetic,” she says. “He wants the absolute best for the youth and adults involved in this, and his focus is on moving toward a more just society.”



YOUR GATEWAY TO NETWORK AND MENTOR

*“A mentor
is someone
who allows
you to see the
hope inside
yourself.”*

—OPRAH WINFREY

USC Gould is excited to announce the launch of **Gould Gateway**, a new professional networking and mentorship platform specially designed for the USC Gould community. Alumni can offer mentorship support and advice to current students, link to other law school alumni and build the Trojan Network.

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USCGould

The Value of Mentorship

Jean Murrell Adams (JD 1986) and her mentee Tara Doss (JD 2003) share a passion for helping others to succeed

By Christina Schweighofer

Jean Murrell Adams (this page) and Tara Doss (next page) got to know each other after Doss' godfather struck up a conversation with Adams in a Los Angeles cafe and told her about Doss' job search.

When Jean Murrell Adams (JD 1986) decided to hire Tara Doss (JD 2003), she understood the risk involved. Her niche law firm, Adams ESQ, was barely one year old, and Doss had only just graduated from law school. "I knew that Tara was smart because she went to USC," Adams said, "but I saw it as a big responsibility to train, mentor and mold this young attorney into the kind of attorney that I was still aspiring to be."

Fast forward to now, and the mentor-mentee alums share a passion for their field of law, which is special education, and for helping other lawyers and especially women of color to succeed. Doss, who serves as an administrative law judge in Los Angeles, says, "My experience with Jean and the support that she gave me put a bug in my ear: the importance of mentoring others."

Doss' path to Adams ESQ, though short, was anything but linear. Drawn to public interest law even as a student, she interviewed with various nonprofit organizations but soon felt frustrated. "The pay was so low," she said. "It was \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year. And I had student loans. How was I going to make a living?"

Enter Doss' godfather, who struck up a conversation with Adams in a cafe in Los Angeles after noticing a stack of legal books on her table. Hearing about Adams' new law firm, which represents low-income families of children with special needs, he mentioned Doss and her job hunt. Phone numbers were exchanged, Doss called Adams, and an interview was scheduled.

Adams recalls feeling so impressed by Doss' poise and demeanor that she immediately wanted to add her to her team. Doss' enthusiasm was just as big. The work she would be doing served the public interest, and Adams, who represents clients at no up-front cost, offered better pay than the nonprofit organizations Doss had previously considered. "It was a great





opportunity to serve a population that is disadvantaged while making a livable wage,” Doss says, adding that working for a woman of color who is also a USC alum was a “double bonus.”

For Adams, who was head of litigation at DreamWorks before starting her own law firm, offering employees a livable salary is a priority. She bristles at the notion that

a blend of skills training and encouragement to trust her own ability, combined with the assurance that Adams had her back.

A passionate mentor in her own right, Doss has been passing on what she learned through the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles, the Black Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles,

the USC mentorship program, the USC Gould mentor program and a newly established program for African American students at the law school. She remembers the anxiety she sometimes felt as a fresh attorney. “Being a young lawyer is hard,” she says, “and the first time you’re out there handling your own case by yourself is scary. But a good mentor gives you confidence.”

“My experience with Jean and the support that she gave me put a bug in my ear: the importance of mentoring others.” —Tara Doss (JD 2003)

public-interest work should be synonymous with lower pay. “We’re lawyers, and we have to understand our value, especially as women lawyers of color,” she says. “We can do good things for people and do well financially at the same time.”

Doss worked at Adams ESQ for almost two years before moving on to other law firms. She stayed in special education law, representing first school children and their families, and then school districts. The pivot grew out of a desire, she says, “to help not just one child but an entire classroom or district.” From there, becoming a judge in special education in 2017 felt like “a natural next step.”

Doss sees her work at Adams ESQ as foundational for her career. “I wouldn’t be where I am today if it weren’t for Jean giving a baby lawyer an opportunity and setting the tone,” she says. She recalls Adams’ mentoring style as

Adams’ advice for young lawyers in need of a guide relates directly to Doss’ service. She recommends finding affinity groups and people with shared interests, be it women lawyers, environmental lawyers, public service lawyers. “This allows for some structure around the mentorship,” she says.

Her own desire to help young attorneys on their journey grew out of her experience as a minority student who lacked access to mentors, and out of her early career. As she made her way from clerking for a judge to big law firms and finally to Sony and DreamWorks, she learned the importance of having a guide. “You need somebody to give you that memo: This is how you do it. This is what you avoid. This is how you write to be persuasive. And this is how you advocate for your client. We’re not born with that skill. Somebody teaches us.”

A Far Greater Gift

For Daron Watts (JD 1994), mentorship is a deep-rooted passion

By Julie Riggott

Daron Watts

On the bookshelf in Daron Watts' (JD 1994) home office in Washington, D.C. are four signed USC footballs. The former Sidley Austin LLP partner and founder of The Watts Group — a boutique firm at the intersection of law, policy and politics — is a huge Trojan football fan and longtime Cardinal and Gold supporter.

After graduation, he bought season tickets, often commuting to games from Washington, D.C., where he relocated in 2010 to found and co-lead Sidley Austin's Government Strategies practice.

Watts is just as big a fan of USC Gould.

"USC was always amongst my top choices for law school, and then once I discovered the special nature of the Trojan family and how things are done at USC law school — it's very top-level intellectual performance but in an atmosphere that's quite collegial — that put USC tops on my list," says Watts. "It's still part of the reason that I love the place. I'm sure that's a big part of why I continue to give back in these small ways, helping anybody I can in the Trojan family."

As a 2L Watts was inspired by the alumni who came to campus for fireside chats on how to succeed in law school, interviews and callbacks. Soon after he joined Sidley Austin, he returned to do the same thing and recruit for the firm.

"Mentoring is the key to success," says Watts, who serves on the law school's Board of Councilors. "You can be as smart as you want, but you need help from others to make the most of your opportunities and develop a successful career."



TRUSTED ADVISOR

Born in Chicago and raised in St. Louis, Mo., Watts was inspired to pursue law by his father's business lawyer. "My father was in the inaugural class of African American McDonald's franchise operators, back in 1971 I think it was, and he thought his lawyer walked on water. I wanted to be a trusted advisor like that."

One of Watts' mentors, an alumnus and partner at Skadden Arps LLP, guided him from law school until he started his own practice. "Understanding how these relationships work, I did a lot of mentoring for USC students and alumni who joined my firm. And I always say, 'Please pay that forward.'"

In D.C., Watts attends admitted-student receptions and responds when Career Services calls about students interested in relocating. Pre-COVID, he would return to campus for receptions for admitted students from diverse backgrounds.

"Our profession is one that still needs to improve in terms of diversity," says Watts. "So, as an African American man myself, I've always made it an interest to help be a catalyst for that type of change."

"[Law firms] are trying to recruit and retain and promote diversity; God bless them for that. But I always say, make a promise that you're going to mentor these students and help them succeed. That's a far greater gift than \$15,000." 🍷

Answering the Role Call

LaVonda Reed (JD 1997) inspires as first African American dean of Georgia State University College of Law

By Julie Riggott

LaVonda Reed | **LaVonda Reed (JD 1997), the first African American to be named dean of Georgia State University College of Law, was attracted to teaching at a young age. Her mom, who taught middle school and high school mathematics, was her role model.**

“As a little girl, I played school all the time,” Reed says, “kind of mimicking what I saw my mom do.” She set up her dolls at the kitchen table and made worksheets for each of them, which she filled out and then graded.

At the USC Gould School of Law, that love of teaching grew. After four years in banking, she was immersed in an academic environment again, and got a taste of teaching as a legal writing instructor in her 2L and 3L years. After practicing communications and corporate law with the international firm of Paul Hastings LLP, she answered the call to academia, joining the faculty at the Louis D. Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville and later, the Syracuse University College of Law.

Today, in her new role, she is inspiring others. “It’s definitely a huge honor and responsibility,” she says from Atlanta, where she lives with her 16-year-old daughter. “I realized I am a role model for our students who maybe have never seen anyone who looks like them doing this, so I take it very seriously.”

While Georgia State graduates more African Americans each year than any other college or university in the country, diversity still tops its priorities. “Diversity, inclusion and access is ingrained in all that we do at the university,” Reed says. “We would like to see our student body at the College of Law more closely reflect the population of the university at large.”

Specifically, she has made financial considerations a priority — fundraising for scholarships, keeping tuition affordable, helping students get jobs. “The American Bar Association has been looking at student debt loads by race,” Reed says, “and we know that underrepresented minority



students disproportionately take on more educational debt. Many of them want to go into public interest to change or help the communities that they come from. If they’re saddled with debt, they often don’t have the luxury or freedom of doing that.”

Reed, who will also advance Georgia State’s initiative to diversify the faculty, had plenty of experience in her previous role as associate provost for faculty affairs at Syracuse, where she was responsible for the university’s 1,700 faculty members. She implemented multiple initiatives related to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility and created two centers, one for teaching excellence and another for faculty leadership and professional development.

“USC Gould has been extremely impactful on my career and serves as a model of sorts,” Reed says. “I had grown up in a military family and had lived all around the world, so when I was looking at law schools, I wanted a school that was relatively small, and very diverse. USC really fit the bill, and I thrived in the environment. It also gave me a vision of what a diverse law school could look like and how diverse the profession actually is in some parts of the country.” 📌

Trojan Family

Japanese LLM alumni support new students with guidance, activities

By Carren Jao

In the Land of the Rising Sun, the Trojan spirit is alive and well thanks to a self-starting group of Japanese Gould Master of Laws alumni. Theirs are often the first faces many newly accepted LLM students from Japan see and interact with before stepping onto the USC campus. The group took shape in 2011, after USC closed its Tokyo office, and alumni realized new and prospective students needed guidance and wisdom.

Hirooka, now a partner at one of the largest law firms in Japan, Anderson Mori & Tomotsune, learned the basics of setting up the sessions after volunteering to help send off a group of new LLM and MBA students in 2010.

Hirooka connected with Japanese alumni including Kazuki Inoue (LLM 2010), a Japanese government official with the Legislative Bureau of the House of Representatives; Takashi Yoneyama (LLM 2009), a partner in one of the five largest firms in the country,

“...‘It would be nice to have some kind of gathering to send off new students, so we could share our experience — how to survive in law school, but also to welcome newly accepted students.’” — Kenji Hirooka (LLM 2004)

“Somebody said ‘It would be nice to have some kind of gathering to send off new students, so we could share our experience — how to survive in law school, but also to welcome newly accepted students.’ And so we did it,” says Kenji Hirooka (LLM 2004).

The alums fielded questions about where to live, activities in Los Angeles and favorite professors, much like older siblings dispensing advice. “One of the attributes of USC that we promote to our students is the Trojan Family, so it’s wonderful to see the USC values really embodied in our Japanese alumni community,” says Sarah Gruzaz, director of the Graduate & International Programs (G&IP) at USC Gould School of Law.

TMI Associates; Yuichi Kono (LLM 2009), an attorney with Marubeni Corporation; and Hiro Takahashi (LLM 2015), a partner at Vasco Da Gama offices, a legal accounting firm.

Together, the alums comprise a core team that organizes at least two events each year: a year-end reunion for Gould alumni following an annual G&IP information session open to all prospective Gould candidates in Japan, and a send-off party for all accepted Gould LLM students.

SHARED PLANNING AND HOSTING DUTIES BUILD COMMUNITY

Given the group’s collective busy schedules, their consistency is something of a miracle. Their secret is a

Values



Top photo, from left: Kazuki Inoue, Class of 2010 social chair, Keisuke Masuda, Student Bar Association representative for the Class of 2012 and Kei Sato, currently a member of the Japanese Legislature's House of Councillors and Parliamentary Vice Minister of METI, former Class of 2011 social chair. Inset, Hiro Takahashi.

community-centric mindset in which planning and hosting are shared. “It’s nice to keep in touch and allow friendships to expand, but at the same time, it had to be sustainable. It shouldn’t be something that one person shoulders,” says Hirooka.

An agreed-upon rotation system designated two graduating generations to be in charge of planning the events each year and passing on the responsibilities to the succeeding class the next year. This system also helps alumni from different graduation years communicate and get to know each other.

This year, the 2009 and 2015 LLM classes are at the helm. Since the pandemic interrupted their original plans, the more collegial in-person events will likely be replaced with online Q&As, says Takahashi, in charge of organizing this year’s iteration.

Despite the uncertainty, the group maintains its enthusiasm, thanks to what they themselves experienced at USC, Hirooka says. “I just had a very good experience at USC, especially with the people who were able to communicate, were so friendly and supportive. When I traveled to take some courses, the G&IP office tried to adjust class schedules or really took the extra step for me to achieve my goals.”

“WORK HARD, ENJOY HARD”

Some of the lessons don’t involve books and the classroom. Yoneyama says that he learned other ways of thinking by playing the Monopoly board game with fellow LLM students during breaks — a lesson he applies today in international transactions. “I learned that if you want to win this board game, you should focus on your benefit, but also the other party’s advantage.”

For Hirooka, his Gould education widened his worldview, while strengthening his writing, logical thinking and negotiation skills. “I grew up in Japan and I didn’t live in other countries before I went to USC.”

Kono says that Gould and USC open the door to worldwide friendships. “People don’t know the University of Tokyo, how big that is, but they know USC, even just because of football. It makes it easier to communicate, to establish common ground.”

If there’s anything these alums want new LLM students to know, it’s “Work hard and enjoy hard. Everybody studies hard because they are students, but also enjoy the sports, the culture, the weather,” says Kono. Inoue adds that he often pushed himself to try difficult courses even though his grades weren’t always stellar in the end. He invites new students to find similar courage. “Each person has only one life, and it’s your only chance to do your best and challenge yourself.” 🍷

HELPING DEMOCRACY ACHIEVE ITS POTENTIAL

Professor Franita Tolson testifies before Congress on elections issues

By Diane Krieger

Franita Tolson

USC Gould constitutional law expert Franita Tolson provided expert testimony to Congress three times in a span of 10 weeks, providing key insights on voting rights, voting access and election law to federal officials.

Most recently, Tolson testified before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee — Subcommittee on The Constitution, at a Sept. 22 hearing on “Restoring the Voting Rights Act: Combating Discriminatory Abuses.” Her presentation on Capitol Hill focused on Congress’ broad authority to enact the practice-based preclearance provision of the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021.

“The hearing highlighted the need for an updated and modernized Voting Rights Act as minority communities face unprecedented threats to their right to vote,” she said. “States like Georgia and Texas have passed restrictive voting laws this year and, in a recent case, the Supreme Court narrowly interpreted a key provision of the Voting Rights Act. It is clear that Congress must act.”

OFFERING SCHOLARLY INSIGHTS TO THE HOUSE

Tolson, vice dean for faculty and academic affairs at USC Gould, testified in early July on the Elections Clause of Article I, Section 4 of the Constitution before the U.S. House Committee on House Administration. On July 27, she was called to testify at a hearing of the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties. The representatives asked her about congressional authority to enact practice-based coverage, which would codify federal oversight of any changes to certain kinds of election rules.

An earlier invitation to testify had come in 2019. Then, as now, two bills focused on voting rights, access and protections were being advanced in the House — H.R. 1 and H.R. 4. The former (also known as the For the People Act) would expand voting rights, stiffen campaign finance laws, re-enfranchise people with felony convictions, ban partisan gerrymandering and create new ethics rules for elected officials.



The latter (also known as the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act) would fix the Voting Rights Act of 1965, key portions of which were struck down in the 2013 Supreme Court decision, *Shelby County v. Holder*.

Neither bill had cleared the partisan-divided Senate in 2019. And with the filibuster rule in place, Tolson doesn’t expect H.R. 1 or H.R. 4 to make it through this year, either.

“But we have to try,” she says. “These issues are in flux. Our democracy hasn’t reached its full potential. Congress is essentially staking out its position and saying to the court: ‘This is how we are interpreting our powers. These are the problems as we see them.’ I think that dialogue is important, even if the law doesn’t pass.”



Professor Elyn Saks Honored by Harvard Medical School

Saks awarded David Mahoney Prize for raising awareness about brain science, disease

By Yulia Nakagome

Elyn Saks

Professor Elyn Saks was honored this year with the Mahoney Neuroscience Institute of Harvard Medical School's David Mahoney Prize, awarded in the past to a former American president, scientists, an actor and prominent journalists.

The prize honors individuals who have significantly increased public awareness about brain science and disorders of the nervous system.

"I feel enormously honored and grateful," Saks said of the honor. "Totally unexpected — it came out of the blue — but it was a wonderful act of recognition and kindness."

The prize aligns with Saks' efforts to reduce the stigma of psychiatric disease, advocate for patients and families and improve policy and treatment for individuals with brain disease.

"I think it's honoring things I try to do. I told my story about my own struggles with schizophrenia," she said. "For me it was a relief that people know; it's so much better to be open and talk about how you're feeling and give and get support."

The prize was first presented in 1995 to Ronald and Nancy Reagan for their openness regarding the former President's fight against Alzheimer's disease. Others honored with the prize include journalists Mike Wallace and William Safire, actor Alan Alda, and leading scientists including Steven Hyman, former director of the National Institutes of Mental Health, Kay Redfield Jamison of Johns Hopkins University, and James Watson of Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

Saks recognizes she is in a more privileged position than others when it comes to being open about mental illness.

"I have a tenured position, but for others, coming forward may have a negative impact on work life and/or personal life," she said.

Saks is currently working on a sequel to her memoir, "The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness."

"It's on coming out with mental health, including tips and challenges," she said. 🍷

EXPLORING THE MIGRANT EXPERIENCE

New research by Professor Emily Ryo aimed at guiding immigration law, policy



By Matthew Kredell

Emily Ryo

When Professor Emily Ryo was 11, she and her sister were separated from their parents for two years when their parents immigrated to the U.S. from South Korea. The experience influenced Ryo's scholarly research toward immigration law and policy.

"My main motivation going to law school was to see if I could help my family," Ryo says. "I went on to get a PhD because I wanted to explore the migrant experience, not just for people living in the U.S. but for people living abroad dreaming of coming to the U.S. and establishing new lives here."

This year, Ryo published two research studies aimed at affecting immigration policy. "The Unintended Consequences of US Immigration Enforcement Policies" was published in May in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. In July, the *UCLA Law Review* published "Children in Custody: A Study of Detained Migrant Children in the United States."

RESEARCH EXAMINES HOW MIGRANT CHILDREN FARE IN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM

The latter study in *UCLA Law Review* presents the first systematic empirical investigation of children in the custody of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Reed Humphrey, a research associate at USC Gould, worked with Ryo on the paper.

Unaccompanied minors traveling to the U.S. enter the ORR's custody at the U.S. border. Analyzing data on all migrant children in ORR custody between November 2017 and August 2019, Ryo and Humphrey found that these children are in the most vulnerable positions in their own countries.

"I think this study gives us a lot of food for thought in terms of considering what is in the best interests of these children, many of whom win asylum cases and end up settling permanently in the United States," Ryo said.

Ryo accessed ORR shelters as a volunteer attorney and saw firsthand the effects of the Trump administration's family separation policy.

"Visiting those facilities really had a tremendous impact on my desire and interest to find out more about who these children were and what happened to them after they entered the system," Ryo said.

PUNITIVE IMMIGRATION POLICIES AND "UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES"

Ryo's research published in *PNAS* analyzes the effects of U.S. deterrence policies on individuals' migration intentions and attitudes toward the U.S. immigration system.

Working in collaboration with the Latin American Public Opinion Project at Vanderbilt University, Ryo obtained survey results from more than 6,000 individuals in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, the four countries with the largest unauthorized flow of immigrants into the United States.

The study found that punitive policies didn't change people's desires and willingness to try to enter the U.S., and that immigration detention may foster beliefs that the U.S. immigration system isn't fair.

"The reason the article is titled 'the unintended consequences' is that these harsh punitive policies don't have the effect that our policymakers want," Ryo said. "Instead, they have the unintended consequence of spreading a deep distrust of our country abroad."

Ryo's studies could guide long-term solutions to the ongoing immigration crisis.

"I'm hoping my studies help educate lawmakers in what direction they ought to be going and also what issues are at stake in terms of the kind of care we should be providing, especially to these vulnerable populations," she said. 📌

“Buy, Borrow, Die” Gains New Life

Media amplification renews interest in Professor Ed McCaffery’s phrase and tax website

By Matthew Kredell

Ed McCaffery

More than two decades ago, Professor Ed McCaffery came up with a phrase to explain how the rich use the American tax system to their advantage: “Buy, borrow, die.” After being dismissed by academics and tax professionals who felt it was overly simplistic, the phrase caught on in 2021, cycling through the news media and re-energizing McCaffery’s efforts to gain attention for tax inequality.

In June, *ProPublica* cited McCaffery’s work in an article using newly-obtained IRS data demonstrating how the rich pay far less in income taxes than working class Americans. Coverage followed in *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*, and “Buy, borrow, die” resonated on social media.

“To me, it’s hugely exciting to see something take off that I’ve been working on for so long and met some resistance from the establishment,” McCaffery says. “But I think the bigger story is that people are raising alarms about inequality and about the rich getting richer.”

ORIGIN OF “BUY, BORROW, DIE”

McCaffery came up with “Buy, borrow, die” in the mid-1990s to help students understand how the wealthy avoid paying taxes.

“The public thinks the rich get away with paying no taxes because they have expensive lawyers and accountants that regular people can’t get who are working their magic,” McCaffery said. “That’s not the case. The rich aren’t paying taxes because of perfectly legal reasons.”

Here’s how:

Buy: An asset that will increase in value without producing income.

Borrow: Money to live off based on this appreciating asset.

Die: Avoid the 20% capital gains tax for selling an asset by holding the asset until death, when the asset can be sold off tax free by children or spouses.



Assets that aren’t sold or producing cash aren’t taxed no matter how much they increase in value. Borrowed money also isn’t taxed, and the interest rate is typically much less than the income tax rate.

McCaffery first wrote about the phenomenon in his 2002 book “Fair Not Flat: How to Make the Tax System Better and Simpler,” (University of Chicago Press) in which he argued for replacing the American income tax system with a progressive spending tax.

CREATING THE PEOPLE’S TAX PAGE

During the 2016 Presidential election, with the uproar over Trump’s taxes, McCaffery created the People’s Tax Page to explain the issue. On the theory that videos can reach a wider audience, he invited USC Gould student Michael Greenwade (JD 2019) and recent USC School of Cinematic Arts graduate Maddie Rodriguez to help. USC Gould students Vivian Liu and Rae Williams currently work on the People’s Tax Page.

Greenwade, now a tax attorney in Beverly Hills, got his sons involved in some of the videos demonstrating how “Buy, borrow, die” works. 🔪

HONORING THE MEMORY, LEGACY OF PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER D. STONE, RENOWNED ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLAR

Author of *Should Trees Have Standing?* remembered for far-reaching ideas, sense of justice, generosity to peers

By USC Gould Law Magazine editorial staff

Professor Christopher D. Stone, 83, J. Thomas McCarthy Trustee Chair in Law, Emeritus, passed away May 14, 2021. Widely known and admired as an innovator and authority on environmental law, Professor Stone is credited as a founder of modern environmental advocacy who argued that the natural environment had legal rights. He was a member of the USC Law School (later the Gould School) faculty from 1965 until his retirement in 2013.

Stone was respected in academia for his interdisciplinary research and scholarship in topics spanning legal philosophy, corporate crime, alternative energy policy, climate change, biodiversity, ocean policy and trade law. He was best remembered for far-reaching ideas and his sense of justice, exemplified in a 1972 *Southern California Law Review* article, “Should Trees Have Standing?” that argued that as corporations and ships, among other things, were sometimes considered by the law to have rights, the environment merited the same recognition. The article was expanded into a book, *Should Trees Have Standing?: And Other Essays on Law, Morals & the Environment*, published in 1996.

“I am quite seriously proposing that we give legal rights to forests, oceans, rivers and other so-called ‘natural objects’ in the environment — indeed, to the natural environment as a whole,” he wrote in the law review article. U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas cited Stone’s research in a dissent against a 4-3 SCOTUS decision in 1972 that the Sierra Club had no standing to sue the Walt Disney Company, then planning to build a resort on public land in the

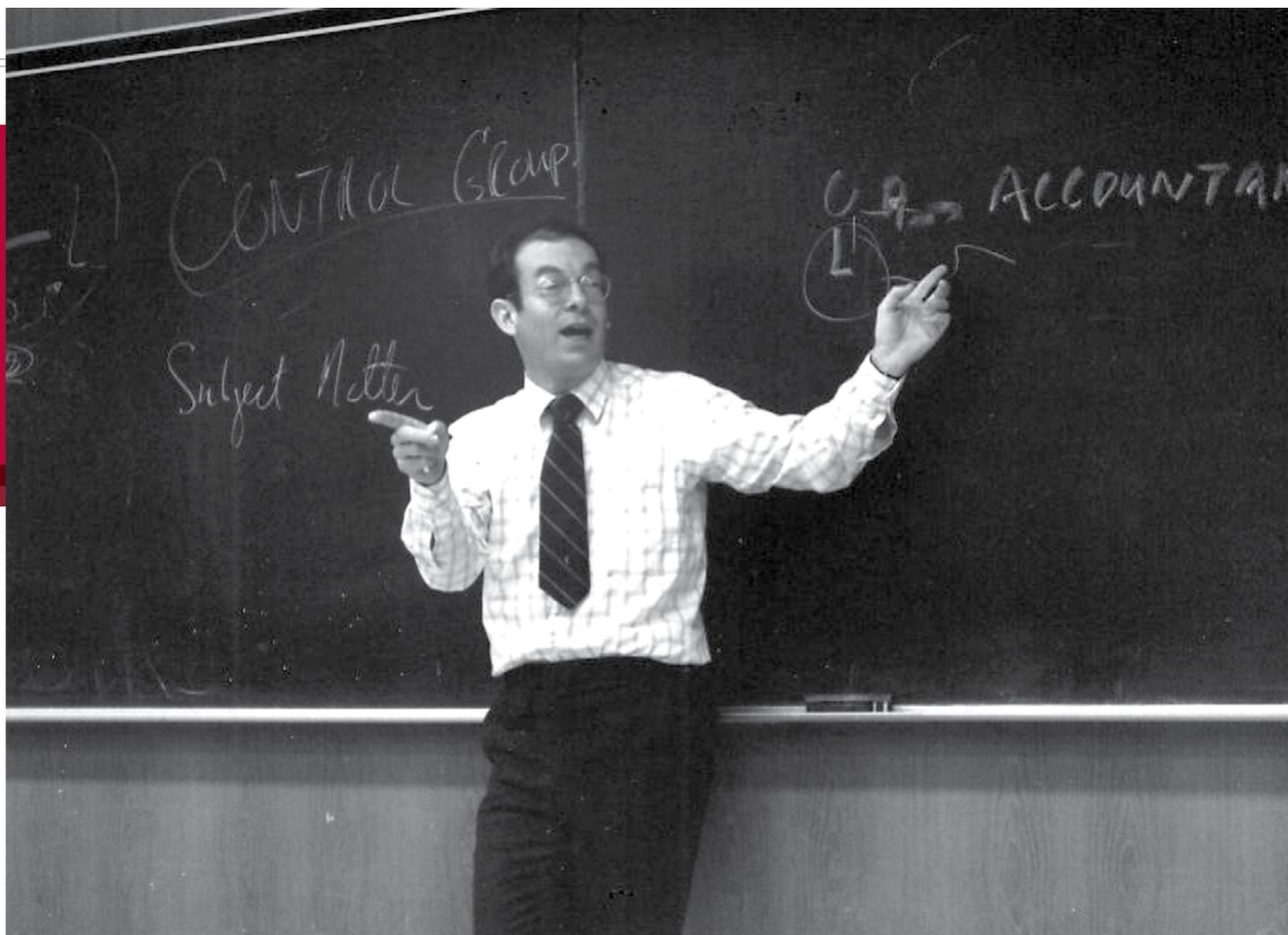
Sierra Nevada. Obituaries in *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* referenced the article, and quoted scholars in environmental law, including Professor Robin Craig, who recently joined the USC Gould School faculty, on the article’s enduring influence.

“What he was basically asking was how should the natural environment be represented in court,” said Craig in the *Washington Post*. “Did it have a right to be there on its own merits, so to speak, or was this really all about humans? It was an important question, and it’s a question that hasn’t gone away.”

In addition to his strengths as a researcher and writer, Stone was unselfish in his support of fellow faculty who often sought his thoughts on their research.

“Chris was undoubtedly a gifted scholar, yet he was equally generous in sharing those gifts to elevate the work of his peers,” said Gould Dean Andrew Guzman. “He was an important mentor to many Gould faculty, often taking the time to delve deeply into his colleagues’ work with probing questions and then drawing thoughtful connections to current events issues or scholarly work in other disciplines. And, he did all of this with a genuine charm and warmth — as well as a unique sense of humor — that endeared him to countless colleagues.”

Stone earned his JD from Yale Law and graduated *magna cum laude* with a degree in philosophy from Harvard University. He went on to become a fellow in law and economics at the University of Chicago and practiced law at Cravath, Swaine and Moore LLP in New York, before joining USC Gould in 1965. His father was the influential and acclaimed journalist, I. F.



“Chris was undoubtedly a gifted scholar, yet he was equally generous in sharing those gifts to elevate the work of his peers.” — Dean Andrew Guzman

Stone. He is survived by his wife, Ann Pope Stone; two children, Carey Stone and Jessica Stone; a sister, Celia Stone Gilbert; and two grandchildren.

As an educator, Stone was instrumental in shaping the law school into what it is today. He was among the cohort of faculty in the 1960s who pioneered the innovative course, Law, Language and Ethics, which cemented USC Gould among the first law schools to incorporate an interdisciplinary approach to the study of law.

Inside the classroom, Stone was committed to the growth and success of his students, challenging them with high expectations while making himself available and accessible to any student needing his guidance.

In recognition of his extraordinary contributions, USC honored Chris in 2014 with the Faculty Lifetime Achievement Award, given to a very select number of retired faculty at the annual Academic Honors Convocation.

In addition to *Should Trees Have Standing?* Stone wrote or co-wrote five other books including *The Gnat is Older than Man: Global Environment and Human Agenda*, (Princeton University Press, 1993) and *Where the Law Ends: The Social Control of Corporate Behavior* (Harper & Row, 1975), as well as numerous articles and book chapters. 📖

GUIDING THE FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Q&A with Henna Pithia (JD 2015), visiting clinical assistant professor of law

By Natalie Pesqueira

Henna Pithia (JD 2015), visiting clinical assistant professor of law, has joined the USC Gould School of Law this academic year to supervise the International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC) during IHRC Founding Director Hannah Garry's Fulbright grant-funded research semester in Norway. Pithia was a student attorney in the IHRC and, after graduation, named the clinic's first teaching fellow. She has since worked as an asylum officer for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, and later, worked in Southern California and Canada with immigration firms focused on employment and family-based immigration processes.



Henna Pithia

How do you feel returning to the IHRC having previously worked with the clinic as a student? What are your goals for this position?

I'm really excited to come back to the clinic this year. My previous experience as an asylum officer and attorney working on employment and family-based immigration matters has provided me with the knowledge-base to help students work through complex human rights matters with the clinic. For example, my extensive work with the U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is particularly helpful when it comes to guiding students in their anti-trafficking work and projects surrounding the

Afghan Evacuation. I'm really looking forward to continuing the clinic's important work and thinking about additional avenues for advocacy.

What are some of your favorite projects that you've worked on with the IHRC? Do you have any other favorite projects that you worked on outside of USC?

My favorite projects with the clinic were those that allowed me to directly represent survivors of human rights abuses.

As a student attorney, I represented a survivor of human trafficking in her application for T non-immigrant status (an immigration benefit provided to survivors of human trafficking). Over the academic year, I met with this client each week to learn about her life and pathway to the United States. Each interview lasted at least an hour and by the end of the academic year I felt like I knew the client better than I knew most of my friends. The relationship was meaningful to me, but even more meaningful to my client: it was one of the first times that she felt somebody was listening to her story and her voice. She said it was empowering and helped her heal, somewhat, from her previous trauma. Playing that crucial role in her life was an unforgettable part of my clinical experience. Seeing her finally be granted T non-immigrant status, which afforded her a pathway to citizenship, was even better!

How did your time at USC Gould and the IHRC prepare you for your career?

The clinic was instrumental in teaching me how to be an effective attorney. Under the supervision of Professor Hannah Garry, I learned some of the most important advocacy skills including being accountable for my work product, maintaining communication with my clients, and critically thinking about my client's legal strategy over time. I've continued to use these skills throughout my practice over the past five years and they have served me well. I hope to share these best practices with current clinic students so that they are well equipped for their future practice as attorneys.

What advice do you have for students interested in pursuing a career in human rights?

This career path is one of the most rewarding. Every day we get to do work that has a domestic and international scope, and has a lasting impact over time. I would highly encourage those who are interested in pursuing a career in human rights to participate in things like the clinic where you're actually applying your knowledge of human rights law to real experiences. ✍️

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.



Marcela Prieto

PRIETO WINS OUTSTANDING DISSERTATION AWARD

Study of the morality in war takes top honor

By Jim Lee

Assistant Professor of Law Marcela Prieto, who joined USC Gould's faculty last year, recently

earned New York University's Outstanding Dissertation Prize Competition in the Social Sciences category, for her JSD research. Her dissertation, "The Laws of War: The Fragility in Regulating Killing," is a study of the morality of war — specifically, the legal privilege of killing in combat and the possible justification of that privilege. Her research will also be the basis of a book that is forthcoming from Oxford University Press. Prieto talks about her interest in the topic and the impact she hopes her research will make.

What are the main takeaways you would like people to have from this study?

The book aims to provide a moral justification for the legal privilege of combatants to kill each other during battle. Under the legal framework, combatants are legally equal (they can target each other) regardless of whether they're fighting for a just or unjust war. Yet, most philosophers (known as revisionists) think that this symmetry is not true of morality: unjust combatants who kill just combatants are engaged in what is the equivalent of murdering the innocent. This poses a problem for the justification of our laws: how can we justify the laws of war if they permit what is equivalent to murdering the innocent at a massive scale? The book provides a pluralist justification for this permission, and in doing so, it is forced to contest the analogy that revisionists draw, at the level of morality, between murdering the innocent and what unjust combatants do.

I hope that people would be left with the idea that while the laws of war are a significant human achievement, the regulation of war itself is morally fraught, since it tends to entrench war. Thus, in a way, the fact that we have to have laws of war at all should also be a cause for sorrow. Additionally, I hope that the book provides a compelling account as to why even a just war is a moral tragedy in many ways, and why the pull of pacifism is strong.

How did you develop an interest in this topic?

In Chile, I worked prosecuting crimes against humanity committed during the dictatorship. In the course of this work, I learned more about the Geneva Conventions, and later my interest in the regulation of war grew. Eventually, I started reading accounts of the morality of war, and I wanted to provide an account about the relationship between law and morality.

What impact do you hope your research will have?

I hope the book will have an impact in the philosophical discussion and provide a compelling middle ground between the revisionist account (which is the predominant view) and the orthodox account of the morality of war. I would also hope that some of the conclusions I draw about the necessity to change our laws of war will be persuasive. In particular, I argue that combatants should have a legal right to refuse to participate in a grievously unjust war, and that our laws of war should incorporate an obligation to minimize military casualties, to the extent possible. 🛠️

Editor's Note: An earlier, unedited version of the news story about Marcela Prieto's appointment to USC Gould was mistakenly published in the Spring/Summer 2021 issue of USC Law Magazine. The USC Law Magazine editors apologize for this error. It has been corrected on the web version, which may be viewed online at: <https://gould.usc.edu/about/news/?id=4875>

Scholarship & Research

A selection of recent scholarly work and honors of USC Gould faculty

SELECT RECENT PUBLICATIONS

JONATHAN BARNETT

“Patent Groupthink Unravels”

Harvard Journal of Law & Technology (2021)

JORDAN BARRY (with J. W. Hatfield and S. D. Kominers)

“To Thine Own Self Be True? Personalized Law and Regulatory Avoidance”

William & Mary Law Review (2021)

ALEXANDER CAPRON (co-author with J. Veale, N. Nassiri, G. Danovitch, H. A. Gritsch, M. Cooper, R. Redfield, P. Kennealey, S. Kapur)

“Voucher-Based Kidney Donation and Redemption for Future Transplant”

JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) Surgery (2021)

ROBIN CRAIG (co-author with B. Cosens, J. B. Ruhl, N. Soininen, L. Gunderson, A. Belinskij, T. Blenckner, A. Camacho, B. C. Chaffin, H. Doremus, R. Glicksman, A. Heiskanen, R. Larson, J. Similä)

“Governing complexity: Integrating science, governance, and law to manage accelerating change in the globalized commons”

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (2021)

SAM ERMAN

“Truer U.S. History: Race, Borders, and Status Manipulation”

Yale Law Journal (2021)

NIELS FRENZEN (co-author with M. Grassini, S. Terp, B. Fischer, S. Ahmed, M. Ross, E. Burner, P. Parmar)

“Characteristics of Deaths Among Individuals in US Immigration and Customs Enforcement Detention Facilities, 2011-2018”

JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) Network Open (2021)

ERIK HOVENKAMP

“The Antitrust Duty to Deal in the Age of Big Tech”

Yale Law Journal (Forthcoming)

FELIPE JIMÉNEZ

“Some Doubts about Folk Jurisprudence: The Case of Proximate Cause”

University of Chicago Law Review Online (2021)

DOROTHY S. LUND (with A. Brav and E. Rock)

“Validation Capital”

Texas Law Review (2021)

THOMAS D. LYON (with K. McWilliams, S. Williams, S. Stolzenberg, A. D. Evans)

“Don’t Know Responding in Young Maltreated Children: The Effects of Wh- Questions Type and Enhanced Interview Instructions”

Law & Human Behavior (2021)

ROBERT K. RASMUSSEN

COVID-19 Debt and Bankruptcy Infrastructure

Yale Law Review Forum (Forthcoming)

EMILY RYO (with R. Humphrey)

Children in Custody: A Study of Detained Migrant Children in the United States

UCLA Law Review (2021)

MICHAEL SIMKOVIC (with M. Furth)

“Proportional Contracts”

Iowa Law Review (2021)

D. DANIEL SOKOL (with F. Zhu)

“Harming Competition and Consumers under the Guise of Protecting Privacy: An Analysis of Apple’s iOS 14 Policy Updates”

Cornell Law Review (Forthcoming)

To view the full list of articles, awards and presentations, visit: gould.usc.edu/faculty/scholarship

AWARDS & NOTES

The USC Academic Senate presented **PROFESSOR JODY ARMOUR** with the 2021 Walter Wolf Award for Defense of Academic Freedom and Faculty Rights. Armour is the sixth recipient to ever receive the honor. The award is given to a USC faculty member for their defense and advocacy of academic freedom or other manifestations of social conscience, through distinguished faculty service, teaching, scholarship or activity as a public intellectual.

Teaching Gender Identity Law, a panel moderated by **PROFESSOR DAVID CRUZ**, was among the more than 60 workshops offered this year at the Lavender Law conference and career fair in July in Los Angeles. Cruz proposed the panel to Lavender Law organizers in hopes of encouraging more law schools to meet student demand for more systematic teaching of transgender law.

PROFESSOR THOMAS LYON, director of the USC Child Interviewing Lab, received a \$250,000 grant from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services to continue conducting forensic interviews for the Los Angeles County Dependency courts.

PROFESSOR ELYN SAKS was awarded the 2021 Pardes Humanitarian Prize in Mental Health by the Brain and Behavior Foundation for her advocacy for mental health. The foundation recognized Saks' pioneering contributions to the understanding of mental illness through her work as a legal advocate, volunteer, therapist, educator and author.

ARIELA GROSS SELECTED AS HARVARD RADCLIFFE INSTITUTE FELLOW

Gross will work on new book about slavery during her fellowship year

By Yulia Nakagome

Professor Ariela Gross was selected as a Joy Foundation Fellow by the Harvard Radcliffe Institute for the 2021-22 Academic year.

Gross' project will take the form of a book, tentatively titled *The Time of Slavery: History, Memory, Politics and The Constitution*. The book will explore the way the history and memory of slavery are echoed in modern law, culture and politics in debates about reparations, affirmative action and other forms of redress.

"There is no more pressing issue right now than how to reckon with the legacies of slavery in the United States," Gross said. "Slavery is the touchstone for every discussion about Blackness, and the stories we tell about slavery justify policies and politics in the present."

Gross was selected from more than 1,300 applicants to join a cohort of more than 50 fellows that includes faculty from Harvard University, University of Texas, Rutgers University, University of Houston and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as well as authors, journalists, artists and scientists.

"I'm thrilled to be joining such an amazing group of scholars from such a wide range of fields for a year of reading, writing, and talking about the most important issues that face all of us today," she said.

Radcliffe Dean Tomiko Brown-Nagin acknowledged the societal challenges the fellows will tackle in their work.

"Some of these challenges are new, others are merely new to the spotlight — deep and longstanding issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic and its far-reaching consequences," Brown-Nagin said on the Radcliffe website. "Our newest class of fellows will reckon with this moment and its meaning, and they will push the limits of knowledge and practice across the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities." ✍️



Key Cases Spotlighted at Supreme Court Preview

Professor Rebecca Brown moderates discussion with long-time USC law professor, current UC Berkeley Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky



By Matthew Kredell

Professor Rebecca Brown and Berkeley Law Dean Erwin Chemerinsky discussed an overview of what to expect from the U.S. Supreme Court this term.

The USC Gould School of Law brought back the popular Supreme Court Preview in late September, with nationally recognized constitutional law theorist, Professor Rebecca Brown, moderating a virtual conversation with UC Berkeley Law Dean and former Gould professor Erwin Chemerinsky in a discussion about the upcoming U.S. Supreme Court term.

USC Gould Dean Andrew Guzman gave an overview of what to expect from the court and previewed notable cases, which include issues related to freedom of religion, abortion and gun rights. “Needless to say, the docket for the Supreme Court this term is not lacking in interesting cases,” he said.

Brown, who clerked for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, led off with the dynamics of the court, which tilted further rightward with the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and the appointment of Justice Amy Coney Barrett.

“So for the first time in our lifetime, there seems to be a solid 6-3 conservative majority, and the question really is, how will that make the decisions of the court look different from what we’ve experienced in the past,” Brown commented.

Given the ideological makeup of the justices, Chemerinsky expects to see some significant decisions this term, which begins Oct. 4.

“In the areas where conservatives really care, I think that the conservative majority is going to change the law and change the law dramatically,” Chemerinsky said.

The law professors highlighted some of the cases with the greatest potential impact, including *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s*

Health Organization, which looks at whether all pre-viability prohibitions on elective abortions are unconstitutional; *Carson v. Makin*, on whether denying government aid to religious schools violates religious rights; and *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*, on whether New York’s denial of applications for concealed-carry licenses for self-defense violates the Second Amendment.

Dobbs, set for argument on Dec. 1, has the potential to overturn landmark abortion cases *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992).

The case challenges a Mississippi law banning abortions after the 15th week of pregnancy. Chemerinsky noted that *Roe* established that states can’t prohibit abortion prior to viability, considered about the 24th week of pregnancy.

“The fact that the Supreme Court took this to me is a very ominous sign with regard to abortion rights,” Chemerinsky said. “And I don’t think the court can avoid hearing the issue of whether to overrule *Roe* or *Casey*.”

Brown said she believes that, despite the conservative majority, the direction of the court will depend on how many of the justices in that majority will choose to follow a minimalist approach — nudging the law in one direction, but preserving its core because it is precedent — and how many will embrace a maximalist approach — looking to overrule laws they disagree with and issuing new constitutional rules.

“I hold out some hope that those in the new center will sprinkle this newfound power they clearly have with a dose of humility and respect for an institution, such that change can be considered carefully, perhaps incrementally,” Brown said. 🍷



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“USC Gould had always been a dream law school for me. I vividly remember reading my acceptance letter; I could not believe it when I was not only accepted, but offered a scholarship.”

HOLLY KAY FENA (JD 2022)



“ I will never forget the day I received my USC Gould acceptance package in the mail. I was overcome with emotion and felt privileged to have the opportunity to learn among some of the most brilliant minds. At Gould, I am surrounded by such intelligent, compassionate, and strong students, who have become my second family. I attended USC for undergrad as well, and always felt a strong connection to the Trojan Family, but the Gould community is special in its own way. I immediately bonded with the diverse students and built lifelong bonds.”

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“Thank you for making a real difference in the legal world by assisting first generation students like me to afford and succeed in law school. The funds I have received truly mean so much to me, and I am even more motivated to work hard with the knowledge that someone is looking out for me and hoping for my success.”

ANDREW JAMES (JD 2023)



“I truly cannot express how grateful I am for all you have done for me, as none of this would have been possible without your support. I promise to make a positive impact on a student’s life, just as you have made an impact on mine.”

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“I am so privileged and honored to have the opportunity to attend such an elite law school, and your generosity in funding this scholarship is what makes it all possible.

I am the child of immigrants and eldest of three children. I am also the first in my family to graduate from a four-year university and attend graduate school. I grew up on free and reduced lunch programs in a low-income area. By all odds, graduate school and a professional career — and in a field as prestigious as the legal profession!

— were highly unlikely. In fact, without the benefit of generational wealth or a financial safety net to fall back upon, I was seriously concerned about my financial ability to commit to law school. Yet here I am, able to thrive at USC, by the grace of your generosity.”

REBECCA LEI (JD 2022)

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“Gould was a dream school for me. I felt an incredible sense of pride when I first received my acceptance letter and couldn’t wait to share the news with my mom. However, we knew whether I’d be able to attend entirely depended on my scholarship offer. To my great surprise, USC offered me almost double what any other school had previously offered. Your kindness made attending my dream school a no-brainer.”

TAYLOR THOMSON (JD 2023)

Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP	\$1,000-\$4,999	Sklar Kirsh LLP
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Womble Bond Dickinson LLP	Barbara M. Rubin A Professional Corporation	



Scott Adamson (JD 1988) joined Arent Fox LLP as a partner in the firm's Los Angeles corporate and securities practice.

Ashleigh Aitken (JD 2002) announced her candidacy for mayor of Anaheim, Calif. Aitken is a former federal prosecutor, and is of counsel at Aitken Aitken Cohn.

Christopher Aitken (JD 1996) a partner with Aitken, Aitken, and Cohn, led a case to settle for over \$11 million, which involved the California GOP and a man paralyzed in a 2016 car crash.



Jeffrey Baglio (JD 1993), managing partner of DLA Piper's San Diego offices, was named a 2021 BTI M&A Client Service All-Star by BTI Consulting Group.



Matthew Benedetto (JD 2007) joined the board of Los Angeles-based legal aid organization Bet Tzedek.

Hon. Timothy M. Casserly (JD 1981) joined Judicate West as a neutral.



Jessica Chu (JD 2013) was named partner at Allen Matkins' Los Angeles office, where she is a member of the firm's Corporate, Tax, and Joint Ventures groups.

Gary Davidson (JD 1986), a partner at Miami-based global law firm Diaz Reus, is the new chair of the International Litigation and Arbitration Certification Committee of the Florida Bar.



Mandana Dayani (BA 2003, JD 2007) was named COO of Archewell, a cultural change organization founded by the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

Samantha Delbick (JD 2020) was named Deputy City Attorney in the criminal branch at the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office.

Samuel Djanhanbani (MBT 2014, JD 2020) co-authored LA Lawyer's May 2021 cover story, "Taxing the Terminator."



E. Carlos Dominguez (JD 2005) was appointed to serve as a judge in the Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles.

Alex Dumas (JD 2015) was named director, employment and litigation at Sony Music Entertainment in New York. Dumas is a member of the USC Gould Alumni Association's New York committee.



Amber Finch (JD 2002) was elected to the American College of Coverage Counsel, described as "an invitation-only organization of senior lawyers dedicated to advancing the efficient resolution of insurance coverage disputes and enhancing the quality of the practice of insurance law."

A partner in insurance & risk management at Reed Smith LLP, Finch also received Corporate Counsel's 2021 Women, Influence and Power in Law Award for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Champion—Law Firm.

Mark Foster (BA 1995, JD 1995), a partner in the Orange County office of Snell and Wilmer LLP, was named in The Best Lawyers in America 2022.

Katie Garcia (JD 2020) was one of 16 fellows selected for the 2021 Law Program of the Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics (FASPE).



Nicole Gates (JD 2013) was promoted to Senior Corporate Counsel at Dr. Seuss Enterprises, LP. Gates is a member of the USC Gould Alumni Association's San Diego committee.

Daniel Glassman (JD 1995) joined K&L Gates LLP's Orange County office as partner. He is a member of the firm's Complex Commercial Litigation and Disputes practice group.

Justin Goldstein (JD 1998) partner and chair of Sklar Kirsh's Litigation Practice Group, was named to the *Los Angeles Times*' LA500, which recognizes "the most influential, most powerful, and most impactful business professionals in the region."

Jorge Gonzalez (JD 1981) joined the faculty at People's College of Law in Los Angeles, teaching criminal law.



Elizabeth Gonzalez (BA 1999, JD 2009) testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on student loan bankruptcy reform. In addition to her role as directing attorney for the Consumer Unit at the Public Law Center, Gonzalez is a lecturer at the law school, teaching consumer law.

Daniel Guggenheim (JD 2004) was named a 2021 “Commercial Real Estate Visionary” in the *Los Angeles Times* B2B Publishing’s “Los Angeles & Orange Counties Commercial Real Estate: Trends, Updates and Visionaries” magazine.

Lisa Harrington (JD 1993), co-chair of the USC Gould Alumni Association’s Orange County committee, was named chief legal officer at Viant Technology in Irvine, Calif.

Janet E. Hong (JD 2002) was named president-elect of the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles (WLALA).



Linda Hoos (JD 2001) joined the USC Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity and Title IX as the associate vice president for EEO-TIX and deputy Title IX coordinator.

Lindsay Hutner (JD 2005) was the subject of a Q&A in a Law.com article titled “How I Made Partner: ‘I Accepted That When I Was Truly Myself, I Was the Best I Could Be.’”

Robbin Itkin (JD 1984) was recognized as a visionary in “Business of Law: Trends, Updates & Visionaries,” a special feature published by *Los Angeles Times* B2B Publishing.



Joseph Jeong (LLM 2018) associate regional director of Dispute Resolution Services at the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA), has joined USC Gould as a lecturer in law.

Grace E. King (JD 2014) was promoted to assistant general counsel, data security and privacy at Deloitte LLP.

Deborah Klein (JD 1985); Jeanne Newman (JD 1980); Robert Schwartz (JD 1984); P.J. Shapiro (JD 1999); Fred Toczek (JD 1989); David Weber (JD 1986); and Susan Zuckerman Williams (JD 1986) were named to *The Hollywood Reporter*’s “Power Lawyers 2021: Hollywood’s Top 100 Attorneys.”

Vallery Lomas (BA 2007, JD 2010) published her debut cookbook, *Life Is What You Bake It* (Clarkson Potter), in September. Lomas is the host of Food Network’s Vallery Bakes Your Questions.

Juanita E. Mantz (JD 2002) released her new book, *Portrait of a Deputy Public Defender (or how I became a punk rock lawyer)* (Bamboo Dart Press) in August 2021.

Gabriel Morgan (JD 2008), a restructuring partner at Weil, Gotshal and Manges LLP, has relocated to the firm’s restructuring team in Houston.

Lauren Moritz (JD 2019) joined the Los Angeles office of RMO, LLP as an attorney.

Chelsea Norell (JD 2011), assistant United States attorney, was the lead prosecutor in the drug trafficking trial against Ed Buck, which resulted in guilty verdicts on all nine counts.

Eric Pelletier (JD/GCRT 2016) was named vice president at Credit Suisse.

William Peterson (JD 1975), was included in the 2021 Mountain States Super Lawyers. Peterson is a partner in the Reno, Nev. office of Snell & Wilmer LLP and specializes in commercial, administrative, and personal injury litigation.



Brenda Radmacher (JD/MA 1996) joined the Los Angeles litigation practice group of Akerman LLP. Radmacher has expertise in construction law, with a focus on landowners, developers, general contractors, and design professionals.



Brandon Reilly (JD 2011), a partner in privacy and data security in the Orange County office of Manatt, Phelps and Phillips LLP, was named to the *Daily Journal*’s 2021 “Top 40 Under 40.”

Reginald Roberts (JD 2000) and **Justin Sanders (JD 2000)**, partners at Sanders Roberts LLP, were named to the *Los Angeles Business Journal*’s 2021 Leaders of Influence: Litigators and Trial Lawyers.

Scott Shaw (JD 2002) joined Merchant & Gould as managing partner of the firm’s new Los Angeles office. Shaw’s practice focuses on IP litigation.

Matthew Strugar (JD 2004) was a guest of **Maria Hall (JD 2003)** on the “Lawyers Guild Radio Show” on KPFK FM where he discussed his work to decriminalize same-sex activity in numerous states.

Meeghan H. Tirtasaputra (JD 2018) joined the Los Angeles office of Fox Rothschild LLP as an associate in the litigation department.

Sam Yebri (JD 2006) a partner with Merino Yebri, LLP, announced his candidacy for Los Angeles City Council.

Phillip Younglove’s (JD 2015) article, “The Reasonable Demand: How to Avoid the Pesky ‘Unable to Accept or Reject’ Letter” was published in *The Gavel and Plaintiff Magazine*. He is a partner at Younglove Law Group in Newport Beach.



CAROL SPERRY MOSS (JD 1976), 91, passed away on April 24, 2021.

The daughter of noted engineer Albert Sperry and abstract expressionist artist Vicci Sperry, Sperry Moss was born in Chicago in 1922. She graduated from the University of Chicago at 18 and went on to work as a reporter for Radio

International, based in Amsterdam.

When she returned to the U.S., she met and married Conrad Jacobs Moss, who later became associate justice, California Court of Appeal. The couple had four children before Moss's sudden death. Sperry Moss later earned her law degree from USC.

She is remembered as an environmental activist and community volunteer. Sperry Moss was a member of the first board of the Santa Mountains Conservancy; the host of a weekly meditation group for 30 years; and the founder of the Malibu Community Resources Assistance Team (CART) to combat homelessness, which she started when she was 85 years old. She received numerous accolades for her community service.

She leaves behind her children, Brian, Diane, and John; and several grandchildren. She was predeceased by her daughter, Katherine.



WILLIAM DALESSI (JD 1948), 98, passed away on May 24.

Dalessi was born in 1922 in Santa Maria, Calif. He served in the U. S. Army Air Corps during World War II, flying B-17s in Germany and France. The GI benefits he received from his service allowed him to attend law school at USC.

He eventually settled in Long Beach and formed a law firm with George Deukmejian, who would later become governor of California. Dalessi ran Deukmejian's successful campaign for re-election to the state Senate in 1976.

Dalessi was involved in local government as well, serving on the Long Beach City Council from 1957 to 1960 and as a member of the Marina Advisory Board. He may be best remembered as the founder of the Long Beach

Congressional Cup Match Race, part of the World Match Racing Tour professional sailing series.

He is survived by his wife Margo and his children, Pamela Thompson and William B. Dalessi. He was predeceased by his son Theodore Dalessi.

A chair was donated in his name at USC Gould. Professor Gregory Keating currently holds the William T. Dalessi Professor of Law and Philosophy.

LEI LEI WANG-EKVALL (JD 1992) passed away on June 27 after suffering a stroke.

Wang-Ekval earned an undergraduate degree in information and computer science from the University of California, Irvine, in 1988 and a law degree from USC Gould four years later. She went on to clerk for United States Bankruptcy Court judges the Hon. Alan M. Ahart, William J. Lasarow, Kathleen T. Lax, Kathleen P. March, and Vincent P. Zurzolo.

A leader in the Southern California legal community, Wang-Ekval held positions in numerous organizations, including president of the Orange County Asian American Bar Association, president of the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum, president of the Orange County Bar Association, president of Community Legal Aid SoCal, and board member and president of the Orange County Bar Association Charitable Fund.

Her history of community service and outstanding legal work earned her numerous accolades. She received the Orange County Bankruptcy Forum's 2015 Hon. Peter M. Elliott Memorial Award for excellence in the field; she was named Attorney of the Year by the Orange County Women Lawyers Association in 2019, and she was selected as a Southern California Super Lawyer.

Known for her adventurer's spirit, she traveled extensively with her family, even diving with great white sharks, scuba diving, and going on safari. At the time of her passing, Wang-Ekval was a partner at Smiley Wang-Ekval LLP, where her practice focused on insolvency and bankruptcy-related matters.

She leaves behind a host of family and dear friends and colleagues.

BYRON RICHARD “DICK” MARSH (JD 1952) 93, died of natural causes on July 2.

Born in Los Angeles, Marsh was raised in San Marino, Calif., and graduated from UCLA before attending USC law school. He served as a judge advocate officer in the U.S. Air Force and later was a partner at Knapp, Marsh, Jones, and Doran LLP and general counsel for the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts. He loved travel, opera, reading, UCLA football, and dogs.

Marsh is remembered by his son David, daughter Diane (George), and granddaughters Katherine and Megan.

ROSALYN “ROZ” MITCHELL (JD 1994), of Frisco, Tex. passed away on July 27.



RONALD SUPANCIC (JD 1968), 82, passed away on Aug. 20 after a six-year battle with myelodysplastic syndrome, a precursor to acute myelodysplastic leukemia.

Born in San Francisco, Supancic relocated with his family to Puget Sound in Washington. He joined the U.S. Navy when he was 17. Following his service, he moved to

Los Angeles and enrolled at Los Angeles City College, where he met his wife, Terrie Frost.

Supancic attended film school at UCLA and worked nights as a writer at Litton Industries. At the suggestion of his mentor, Supancic pursued a law degree, enrolling in night classes at USC while working full time in the aerospace industry.

After graduation, Supancic worked for Spray, Gould, and Bowers LLP, Paramount Pictures and Gabler, Domke, Berglund, Thatcher and Riddle, where he practiced family law and became one of the first certified family law specialists in California. He then returned to the Navy as a reservist, earning the rank of Lieutenant Commander.



REMEMBERING TEGAN AMENDOLARE, USC GOULD CAREER SERVICES OFFICE

TEGAN AMENDOLARE, a long-time and beloved staff member of the USC Gould School of Law, passed away in May.

For 20 years, Amendolare was a proud and devoted member of the Trojan Family. She first worked for five years as a special events logistics coordinator at the USC Marshall School of Business before joining Gould's Career Services Office as the program logistics coordinator in 2006. In her role in the CSO, Amendolare enthusiastically supported the office's myriad constituents. She was always eager to step up to do whatever was needed to ensure that problems were solved and that events were administered in a professional, efficient manner.

She was known throughout Gould as thoroughly dedicated to the law school and exceedingly authentic. Since July 2019, she was a well-respected leader on the Gould Staff Council, serving as a positive and impactful voice on behalf of all staff, including during the critical remote year.

Born on the East Coast, Amendolare moved to California and enrolled in business administration courses at Santa Monica College. She was also an active member and soprano soloist at St. Monica Catholic Church. She loved pop culture, musical theater, cooking, and of course, her family.

She leaves behind her parents, brother, sister, brother-in-law and niece, as well as her admiring CSO colleagues and many dear friends across USC. 🍷



HISTORIC COMMENCEMENT IN THE COLISEUM

For the first time in 70 years, USC's commencement was celebrated in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. USC Gould School of Law graduates from the Class of 2021 and the Class of 2020 were among nearly 15,000 fellow graduating Trojans, who participated in 14 total commencement ceremonies held over seven days. USC Gould's in-person commencement took place May 16. With COVID-19 policies in place, graduates and their families were socially distanced on the field and in the stands. The special ceremony at the Coliseum featured remarks by journalist and author Bina Venkataraman, President Carol Folt and Dean Andrew Guzman, among others. A separate virtual celebration, hosted by Dean Guzman, took place on May 13 to honor Gould's JD and masters graduates.





“I am pleased, and inspired, to support a prestigious educational institution that helped me financially five decades ago.”

— ALEX ALONZO (JD 1974)

Alex Alonzo (JD 1974) owes a debt of gratitude to the alumni who came before him and whose generosity opened the door to a first-rate legal education at USC Gould. Law school changed the trajectory of his life. It elevated his mind and set him on a path to professional success. The tax and accounting practice he launched shortly after graduation is still going strong today. He even credits law school for helping with his side venture in real estate investing.

Alex remains close to USC Gould. He is the proud father of a Gould alum — his daughter Alexis (JD 2006), who met her husband, Chris Nilsen (JD 2007) at the

school. He also gives to Gould. He recently decided to build on a lifetime of giving by making a major pledge through his estate to the Dean’s Strategic Fund. It is his way of giving back. He explains: “Your generosity can make a difference in the life of others who follow in your steps.” He plans to add to his legacy in the years ahead.

From donor-advised funds to lead trusts to gifts of cash, stock and other assets, there are numerous ways to leave a legacy. To create your own Trojan legacy, contact Margaret Anne Kean in the USC Gould Development and Alumni Relations office at (213) 821-6342 or mkean@law.usc.edu, or go to www.uscgould.giftplans.org

USC Gould
School of Law

USC Law Magazine
University of Southern California
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calendar

**WEST COAST BANKRUPTCY
CONFERENCE AT USC**

February 3–4, 2022
All day event
Musick Law School

ANNUAL MENTOR LUNCHEON

February 24, 2022
12 p.m.–2 p.m.
Town and Gown

**HALE MOOT COURT HONORS PROGRAM
FINAL ROUND COMPETITION**

March 4, 2022
2 p.m.–4 p.m.
USC Eileen Norris Cinema Theatre

**USC/JAMS 6TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
ARBITRATION SYMPOSIUM**

March 17, 2022
All day event
Musick Law School (partial webcast)

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

2022 TAX INSTITUTE

January 24–26, 2022
Millennium Biltmore Hotel
(in-person with virtual broadcast)

**2022 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
INSTITUTE**

March 21–22, 2022
Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows
(in-person with virtual broadcast)

**2022 REAL ESTATE LAW AND
BUSINESS FORUM**

April 7, 2022
Jonathan Club (in-person with
virtual broadcast)

For details about these events and others, please visit: gould.usc.edu/events.