

# USC MAGAZINE Law

FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF THE USC GOULD SCHOOL OF LAW ISSUE 14 | SPRING/SUMMER 2019

**SCHOOL OF JUSTICE**

Working together for the larger good

USC Gould





**From the very beginning of our school's nearly 120-year history, USC Gould has been driven by the pursuit of academic excellence and guided by a deep commitment to justice.** Today, we stand among the top-ranked law schools in the nation. I am very proud of our upward trajectory, but I am even prouder of the quality of our faculty's work, the talent of our students and the impact we make.

In this issue, we highlight the ways that Gould is not only a school of law, but a school of justice — dedicated to the service and advancement of the public good. For instance, Prof. Clare Pastore leads a practicum where students address issues of civil rights, poverty, disability and access (see p. 8). Prof. Emily Ryo coauthored a widely cited study on immigration detention facilities (see p. 14). I invite you to read more about Gould's on-the-ground work and impact featured in our Clinical Perspectives section, which begins on p. 39.

In 2012, enterprising students launched the OUTLaw scholarship, the first student-run scholarship on USC's campus. Seven years later, we reflect on its meaningful impact on the LGBTQ+ community at Gould and beyond. (see p. 24).

*"Since my arrival as Dean, I have placed a high priority on promoting student support, creating an environment for all students to excel and thrive."*

In addition, our passionate alumni, through their efforts each day, also further the school's legacy of shaping public interest law. Notably, USC Gould alumni have played a central leadership role for 40 years — and counting — at Mental Health Advocacy Services, which has become a valuable resource for those with mental health disabilities (see p. 28). This year, Jenny Farrell (JD 2011) stepped into the role of executive director, carrying on the nearly four-decade work of past leader Jim Preis (JD 1978), who passed away in 2018.

Since my arrival as Dean, I have placed a high priority on promoting student support, creating an environment for all students to excel and thrive. As part of that effort, we established a First Generation Professionals Program, one of the first administratively run support programs of its kind among law schools nationwide. I am excited to share that alumnus John Molina (JD 1989) recently presented the school with a \$3 million gift to endow the four-year-old program as the C. David Molina First Generation Professionals Program, named in honor of Molina's father, as well as to create the John Molina Scholarship Fund, supporting this vital initiative in perpetuity (see p. 23).

At USC Gould, our focus is on redefining the standards of legal education, scholarship and practice. We are doing exactly that, as evidenced by our recent work and accomplishments. And we look forward to what lies ahead.

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

Andrew T. Guzman

*Dean and Carl Mason Franklin Chair in Law*



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Meet the Gould faculty and alumni who are continuing our longstanding tradition of legal service in the public interest.



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# USC<sup>MAGAZINE</sup> Law

**SPRING | SUMMER 2019**

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Gould School of Law

## 2019 U.S. NEWS RANKINGS



**USC Gould School of Law rose to #17 in the latest *U.S. News & World Report* rankings.**

(Gould was the only top-20 law school to move up two spots.)

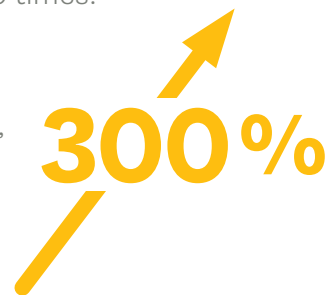


Gould is focused on redefining the standards of legal education, scholarship and practice. The examples below are just a few among the numerous highlights of the school's distinction in the field:



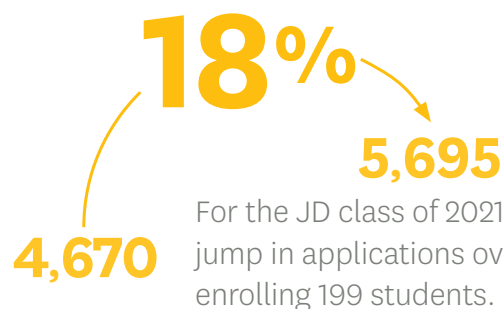
In 2018, the reach of Gould's expertise extended into the national media as faculty were cited or quoted in news outlets more than 400 times.

The Gould Jurist-in-Residence program successfully launched. In addition, the restructured clerkship program led to a 300% increase in clerkships secured since 2015.



**\$3,000,000**

The First Generation Professionals Program received a \$3 million gift from John Molina JD '89. The gift establishes the C. David Molina First Generation Professionals Program, along with the John Molina Scholarship Fund. (see story p. 23)



Our **19%** acceptance rate was the lowest in a decade.



## PROF. GEORGE LEFCOE RETIRES FROM USC GOULD



On April 15, 2019 Prof. George Lefcoe gathered with friends, former students and colleagues to celebrate his retirement, after a 57-year career at the law school. Known for his rigorous, thoughtful and innovative style of teaching, Lefcoe encouraged anyone interested in real estate to participate in site visits. He exuded: “Walking around to use your mind and see what’s there! That’s the essence of a site visit.” 🏠



Top: Prof. Lefcoe with Jaimee Lee (JD 2009), CEO, Jamison Realty; Bottom: Poster depicting Lefcoe's USC Traveling Land Use Seminar trips, which he began in 1990.

## GOULD QUOTABLES



*“Are white people who want to put on blackface going to listen to black people who are injured by their expressive conduct? Are they going to take into consideration people who say, ‘Those images or those words or those costumes wound me, and even if you mean something innocuous by it, it still hurts me and it still offends me. And is that something you’re going to care about?’”*

USC Gould Prof. **JODY ARMOUR**, quoted about the use of blackface to dehumanize and devalue black people in *The Washington Post* on Feb. 16, 2019.



*“Anything that brings attention to the fact that this still exists, and especially gets a high-profile effort to get companies to make the commitment to pay equity, is encouraging.”*

Gould Prof. **ARIELA GROSS** quoted by CNBC on April 1, 2019, on a California-led effort to end the gender pay gap in the state.



*“It’s difficult to find a person described as a professional who is not in some meaningful sense engaged in law. It’s not an accident that people trained in law run the world.”*

Gould Dean **ANDREW GUZMAN**, quoted in *The Wall Street Journal* in a Dec. 20, 2018, story about law schools offering master’s programs for students earning degrees other than a juris doctor.

## DOES PATENT REFORM NEED REFORMING?

Andrei Iancu, under secretary of commerce for intellectual property and director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, was the keynote speaker at the Reforming Patent Reform conference, organized by Gould professors Brian Peck, director of the Center for Transnational Law and Business (CTLB), and Jonathan Barnett, director of the Media, Entertainment and Technology (MET) Law Program.



The conference emphasized the importance of using data and evidence as a basis for patent reform.

“This conference provided a unique venue in which academics, legal practitioners and industry participants engaged in a constructive discussion over the future direction of U.S. patent law and policy,” Barnett said.

The conference emphasized the importance of using data and evidence as a basis for patent reform. Several speakers provided the audience with insights into a rich body of empirical research on some of the core patent and antitrust issues facing technology markets.

One of the six sessions featured Brian Love of Santa Clara University; David Kappos of Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP, who is a past director of the USPTO; Luke L. Dauchot of Kirkland & Ellis LLP; and Duke University’s Arti Rai, former external affairs administrator of the USPTO — who delivered a “report card” on the Patent Trial & Appeal Board, which was established to address a perceived problem of low-quality patents.

Other sessions focused on policy shifts at the Department of Justice’s Antitrust Division, as well as court decisions that have interpreted the meaning of the “fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory” licensing commitment that governs standard-essential patents.

Iancu stressed the importance of innovation and the roles patents play in it.

“In order to ensure that our nation remains at the forefront of technology, I believe we must do at a minimum of three things,” he said. “One, we must inspire people to innovate. Two, we must broaden the opportunities to innovate geographically, demographically and economically. And three, [we must]

provide a reliable and predictable legal framework to incentivize and protect the resulting innovation.”

—Greg Hardesty

Learn more about the Center for Transnational Law and Business: [gould.usc.edu/faculty/centers/ctlb/](http://gould.usc.edu/faculty/centers/ctlb/)

## GOULD PROFESSORS HONORED AT CHAIR INSTALLATION CEREMONY

“The installation of a faculty member is an important event, not just for the life of the law school but the life of the university,” said USC Gould School of Law Dean Andrew T. Guzman at the recent professorship installation ceremony for Prof. Jonathan M. Barnett as the Torrey H. Webb Professor of Law, and David B. Cruz as the Newton Professor of Constitutional Law on March 29.

Barnett, director of the Media, Entertainment and Technology (MET) Law Program, joined USC Gould’s faculty in 2006. A highly regarded scholar in the areas of intellectual property, antitrust and contract law, he has published numerous papers in academic journals. His latest publication addresses patent and antitrust policy in wireless communication markets. “We stand on the shoulders of family and friends, and colleagues who helped us achieve where we got in life,” said Barnett in his acceptance speech. “We never get there on our own.”

Cruz, who joined the Gould School faculty in 1996, called the professorship “a tremendous honor.” A pioneering researcher, Cruz’s scholarship has focused on obstacles facing the LGBTQ+



community. Much of that work, Cruz said, is fueled by personal experience with injustice based on gender norms. “I wanted to affect more people,” Cruz explained after thanking his friends and family. “I realized that lawyers can be honorable and change the world.”

Provost Michael W. Quick offered insight into the significance of professorship. “At the end of the day, universities do a lot of things, but we are in the academic excellence business,” he said. “We are recognized by our creative works, our scholarship, grants and the students we send off into the world to be better than ourselves. One of the great recognitions in the academy is the endowed chair or endowed professorship.”

—Leslie Ridgeway

Prof. Jonathan Barnett, Dean Andrew Guzman and Prof. David Cruz

## A FOCUS ON MODERN-DAY CIVIL RIGHTS

*Attorney and advocate Vanita Gupta joins Q&A spanning her democracy work*

Vanita Gupta, the influential president and CEO of The Leadership Conference

On Feb. 25, she appeared at the USC Gould School of Law, as the featured guest in a talk on “Modern Day Civil Rights in America,” as part of the annual Allen Neiman & Alan Sieroty Lecture. The event featured Gupta in conversation with Prof. Rebecca Brown.

Gupta discussed threats against democracy relating to voting rights

issues and the volatile political climate in America today — but struck a hopeful note as she described how heartened she is by those actively working to reform and restore justice.

Gupta explained that law school and immigration clinic students are “on the front lines of providing assistance. Congress needs to provide the solutions,” she said. “But local communities are filling the void.”

Gupta was asked what she seeks when she’s hiring an attorney to join her organization. “The most important quality I’m looking for is an authentic narrative to tell about their experience,” she said. “There really isn’t one golden path. Above all, find work that is meaningful for you.”

The Neiman Sieroty Lecture Series, endowed by Alan Sieroty JD (JD 1956) and named for Sieroty and his classmate Allen Neiman (JD 1956), focuses on civil liberties issues.

—Anne Bergman

Vanita Gupta, president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, with Prof. Rebecca Brown.



on Civil and Human Rights, frequently testifies before Congress and galvanizes support for issues ranging from criminal justice reform to judicial nominations.



## SAKS INSTITUTE EXPLORES LIVING AND WORKING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS



The ninth annual USC Saks Institute Spring Symposium tackled the subject of working and living with mental illness with three panel discussions, a keynote speech by comedian Maria Bamford, and a discussion between Gould Distinguished Professor and Saks Institute Founder and Faculty Director Elyn Saks and former

NBA player Metta World Peace.

Learning how to balance professional responsibilities with personal needs was a focal point. “For me, work is one of the three pillars of my recovery, along with relationships and treatment,” explained Saks. “(Work) gives me pleasure, self-esteem and sense of giving back. We ought to encourage and incentivize people to work.”

Saks and World Peace emphasized the importance of being open about mental health. “I never wanted people to know I



was seeing a psychologist,” said World Peace. “It was too much pressure. I needed to get comfortable to say it was OK to see a psychologist. In 2010, I started speaking publicly about mental health and my issues.” 🐶

—Leslie Ridgeway

Find out more about the Saks Institute: [gould.usc.edu/centers/saks](http://gould.usc.edu/centers/saks)

*Top left: Comedian Maria Bamford; right: Metta World Peace, New York Times journalist Ben Carey and Prof. Elyn Saks*

## MAKING CONNECTIONS THAT LAST

USC Gould alumni and current students gathered on campus at Town and Gown for the annual Alumni Mentor Lunch.

Keynote speaker Jenny Farrell (JD 2011), who serves as the executive director for Mental Health Advocacy Services, a nonprofit organization that works to protect and advance the legal rights of people with mental disabilities (see p. 28), encouraged the students to help the most vulnerable members of society, regardless of their eventual career path.

Following Farrell’s speech, students were introduced to the Trojan Family and its benefits over lunch. “It was amazing to see how strong the alumni network is at USC, particularly

Gould,” said Gabrielle Barkhordar (JD 2021). “The alumni I spoke with were very interested in helping students navigate the legal profession at this early stage.”

Once a 1L himself at Gould, E. Carlos Dominguez (JD 2005) is now a mentor. “I enjoyed sharing my experiences in government service with the students I met,” he explained. “They blew me away with their level of preparation and maturity.” 🐶

—Jill Barone

*Dean Guzman with keynote speaker Jenny Farrell (JD 2011). For students, the annual mentor lunch is an introduction to the benefits of the Trojan Family.*





## AT 70, MOOT COURT OFFERS HIGH DRAMA

Celebrating its 70th anniversary, the Hale Moot Court Honors Program competition pelted four finalists with rapid-fire questions from a panel of prominent judges. Although the judges felt “that there were only winners,” only one could take home the Edward G. Lewis Prize — and that was Madeleine Eldred, the 2019 Champion (pictured right). 🏆



## A GOLDEN 50

When the students in Professor Scott Bice's Torts class discovered that he was marking 50 years on the Gould faculty, they knew they had to celebrate! They baked cake and cookies, decorated the classroom and snapped photos.

Bice, who earned his JD from Gould in 1968, also served as dean of the law school from 1980 to 2000.

On May 10, he delivered the commencement address at the JD ceremony. “I sat where you now sit about 50 years ago,” he said.

Bice also told the audience of graduates, their friends and families that he'd taught three decades of law students. “A couple of years back, a first-year student introduced herself and said ‘my grandfather took this course from you.’” 🏆



# PERSONAL, PRACTICAL, COMPASSIONATE

By Anne Bergman

Prof. Clare Pastore's winning approach  
to public interest law



Over the course of a career devoted to poverty law and civil rights advocacy, Clare Pastore, a professor of the practice of law at USC Gould, has encountered many types of cases, from unfair driver's license suspensions to welfare cuts to disability discrimination to wage theft to the challenging process of becoming a foster parent. Pastore takes on these cases not just to help the individuals involved, but to solve the underlying, wider problems.

Her approach succeeds. Pastore is considered one of the top public interest attorneys in the country, widely recognized for legislative work and litigation strategies that prevent low-income people from spiraling into crushing poverty.

As she puts it: "How much should someone suffer for a bad choice? Plenty of middle-class kids have a drug problem or an arrest or a teenage pregnancy... but if you're growing up in circumstances where there are no resources, that choice will define and probably derail your life. Get on drugs, leave school, get arrested — those things will irrevocably alter the course of your life, and I don't think that's right."

Pastore's compassionate perspective comes from a personal, practical place. She grew up in a "single-

gender relations on campus, that all made me examine a lot of things. Colgate turned me into a political activist. I think that was certainly not their intent," she says.

After graduating from Colgate, Pastore landed a Fulbright teaching grant and spent a year as a teacher in a Paris public school. While in France, she became involved with the disarmament movement, advocating for a freeze on nuclear weapons. In that year, Pastore realized that she couldn't see herself pursuing advocacy work with only an undergraduate degree.

So she returned to the States and pursued a JD at Yale Law School, where she was a senior editor of the *Yale Law Journal*. Pastore split her 1L summer by working for a public interest agency and a refugee organization, both in Los Angeles. Her second summer brought her to Geneva, where she worked for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

After graduating Yale, Pastore returned to the West Coast to clerk for Judge Marilyn Hall Patel, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. Pastore regards Patel — the first woman judge in the history of the district and renowned for her courageous jurisprudence and commitment to civil rights — as a role model.

On the first day of her clerkship, Pastore learned of a new two-year fellowship launched by law firm Skadden Arps to

**“As a teacher, Clare is incredibly smart, clear-thinking and organized. ... She also has vast experience in poverty law and civil rights law. There aren't that many people who are well versed in both of those things.”**

— Scott Altman, Virginia S. and Fred H. Bice Professor of Law

parent, very poor family” in Connecticut, a “really, really wealthy part of the country.” She was fully aware of the disparity. Pastore was also first in her family to attend an elite university, majoring in French literature at Colgate University, a private liberal arts college in upstate New York.

Her status as a college athlete (field hockey team and ice hockey club) at a conservative academic institution in the early 1980s opened her eyes to the inequities in how men and women athletes were treated. “Why do the men get the new uniforms, and we get the old ones? Why do they get this, and we don't get that? And then all of the other aspects of

fund law school graduates and judicial clerks to work full-time for legal and advocacy organizations.

Pastore applied for the fellowship with Los Angeles-based Western Center on Law & Poverty in 1989 and became part of the Skadden Fellowship's first class.

She ended up extending her two-year fellowship to 15 years as a staff attorney at the Western Center. There, she litigated many state and federal cases involving poverty law and disability rights, capturing the attention of Prof. Scott Altman, then an associate dean at Gould.

“My wife, Laura, worked with Clare at the Western Center,” Altman recalls. “One day she heard Clare being interviewed on the local NPR affiliate talking about one of



Prof. Clare Pastore  
at the 2019  
Commencement  
ceremony, with  
colleagues Prof.  
Greg Keating and  
Prof. Emily Ryo

her cases. I sat down to listen to her, and I was mesmerized. She was lucid and persuasive. I told my wife that I had to hire her to teach at the law school.”

Altman reached out to Pastore to teach a poverty law class, which she still teaches more than 20 years later. Four years ago, she and three colleagues wrote a poverty law textbook, now in use at law schools around the country. Years later, her love for France remains relevant—Pastore recently returned from her fourth stint teaching a mini-course on U.S. civil rights law to French law students at a USC partner university in Lyon, France.

“As a teacher, Clare is incredibly smart, clear-thinking and organized,” says Altman. “She also has vast experience in poverty law and civil rights law. There aren’t that many people who are well versed in both of those things.”

In 2000, Pastore, who at the Western Center had done some work with foster care cases, found herself a foster parent, charged with caring for her niece and nephew. “My two daughters were 3 and 5, and my niece and nephew were 12 and 14, so it was a big change for our household,” she says.

As she began enrolling them in school and setting up their health care, Pastore was shocked by the complexities of the tasks. “It was ridiculous how difficult that was,” she recalls. “It required every ounce of my seven years of higher education, and my years of advocacy, just to get their problems solved, and their needs

were not complex. I realized that these experiences weren’t that far away from those of my clients. Since then, my experience as a foster parent has often served as a kind of bridge with clients who have also experienced it.”

Pastore segued to a full-time, newly created position on Gould’s faculty in 2007 after serving a stint at the ACLU of Southern California as senior counsel from 2004 to 2007, and of counsel from 2007 to 2011. As professor of the practice of law, she splits her time between classroom teaching (Civil Procedure, Professional Responsibility, Civil Rights, Suing the Government, and Poverty Law) and the Access to Justice Practicum, in which she and students work with nonprofit advocates on issues of civil rights, poverty, disability and access.

In 2013, Pastore received the Elizabeth Hurlock Beckman Award, a \$25,000 national award recognizing educators “who have inspired their former students to make a significant contribution to society.” She split the award with the Wage Justice Center, on whose board she serves.

In 2016, she oversaw the development of the public interest certificate for students who want to work in the nonprofit or government sectors after graduating from Gould.

Creating the certificate is a continuation of Pastore’s efforts to encourage her students to pursue public-interest careers.

“I came to law school to do public interest — it was already in my mind,” says Matt Sirolly (JD 2005), an attorney at the California Department of Industrial Relations. “Working with her and attending her poverty law class and hearing her own story about her career made

me think more concretely about how the work I could do could be useful.”

For Sirolly, that meant working to protect the basic economic rights of workers in Los Angeles. A few years out of law school, he and fellow Gould alumnus Melvin Yee (JD 2005) founded the Wage Justice Center.

“Early on after we started the Wage Justice Center, Clare expressed an interest in our work,” Sirolly recalls. “She came in and joined the board and played a huge part in helping to bring the organization from this incubated,





half-real thing into being an actual, real, functioning organization. She brought to the board a practical, nitty-gritty focus, combined with an idealism. People are usually practical or idealistic, not both. She merges the two nicely.”

This blend of nitty-gritty focus and idealism fuels Pastore’s decision-making when she’s selecting which cases she and students from the Access to Justice Practicum take on.

They recently teamed up with a coalition of civil rights lawyers to work on addressing the massive numbers of suspended driver’s licenses in California for people too poor to pay the state’s high traffic fines and fees. Over the last five years, the coalition has secured legislation ending suspensions for those too poor to pay

have their own responsibility, and they understand that they are part of a big team seeking change.”

After 10 years of taking on cases, the word is out about Pastore and her team of law students within the nonprofit world, she says. “We’re a free resource — a free lawyer and free students. Now we get more requests for help than we can handle.”

And for the students, it’s an experiential learning opportunity. “It’s a whole process of how do you go from one person’s problem (such as a hefty traffic fine) to discovering whether it’s a widespread problem, to assembling a team, to putting together an advocacy strategy, to filing a case or writing a bill,” she says. “So, it’s a look at how systemic change happens and an opportunity for students to participate in that.”

“Years later, thanks to Clare, I still think about how to practically solve a problem.”

— Jen Flory (JD 2005), policy advocate, Western Center on Law & Poverty

and settled cases with several courts over their policies. Litigation against the DMV is ongoing.

This semester, one group of students wrote a legislative report and testimony supporting a related bill to make traffic school accessible to those who can’t pay their entire fee immediately. Another group is working with the Alliance for Children’s Rights and the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles to draft a complaint and brief for a case to be filed against the state over delays in its administrative hearing system.

Pastore and her students have also partnered on numerous cases with the Alliance for Children’s Rights attacking systemic problems in foster care.

In selecting cases, Pastore keeps a keen eye on ones where “the students can do meaningful work with people that I like and respect and that I think the students will learn from.”

Further, Pastore views her students as colleagues, banding together to not just win one case, but to work on cases that have a wider impact. “The students are not research assistants. They’re not just writing research memos. They need to be drafting the complaint, drafting the brief or drafting the legislation. They each

In the classroom, Pastore emphasizes connections to the real world. “I think students want to connect with: How does some procedural thing I’m learning relate to my interest in justice, civil society, the rule of law or dispute resolution?” she says. “I think they want to understand how those things go together, and I think that as a practitioner I can help them do that.”

Altman says: “Clare is a terrific teacher, but that isn’t the most extraordinary thing about her. Her students admire her so much. Being with her and hearing how she talks about these issues and how they come to life in someone seeking justice through law really inspires them.”

Former student Jen Flory (JD 2005), now a policy advocate at the Western Center, says she was inspired by Pastore’s direct approach. “In class, you’re often reading the cases and the theory. And then Clare would start grilling us, asking us what we were going to do, to get us to think through the process. *What would the demand letter look like? What would our claims be?* We learned to take the theoretical and break it down into practical steps to help the client.

“Years later, thanks to Clare, I still think about how to practically solve a problem.” 📌

# JUSTICE ADVOCATES

*Each spring, Prof. Clare Pastore and her Access to Justice Practicum students work with nonprofit advocates on issues of civil rights, poverty, disability and access. Here is Pastore's account of some of the cases they have taken on.*

## PUNISHMENTS FOR POVERTY

Since 2015, at least one project each year has related to the fines and fees imposed on low-income persons who commit very minor infractions such as failing to stop at a stop sign or littering from a car. California's fines and fees in traffic court are among the nation's highest. Hundreds of thousands of Californians have had driver's licenses suspended and/or collection agency action against them because of these fees. Along with many advocates around the state, we have been involved in litigation, legislative advocacy and on-the-ground research (such as traffic court observation studies) to address these issues.

► *In 2018, we settled Alvarado v. Los Angeles Superior Court, which created a system requiring that the L.A. Superior Court conduct "ability to pay" hearings so as not to impose unpayable fines on the indigent. Sierra Gronewold Villeran (JD 2015) and Allison Fisher (JD 2015) were among the students who worked on Alvarado. They both eventually became attorneys in public defender offices working on related issues. An additional case, Hernandez v. DMV, regarding license suspension is currently on appeal.*

## KEEPING KIDS SAFE

We have worked on four cases over the years with the Alliance for Children's Rights, a Los Angeles nonprofit that represents grandparents and other foster caregivers for children who have been abused or neglected.

► *In 2015, Sam Brown (JD 2015) and I, with the Alliance, filed and later won Compton v. Department of Social Services (CDSS), invalidating an unlawful barrier the state had erected to full benefits for kids who are in foster care and also have significant developmental disabilities.*

► *In 2010, Cristyn Chadwick (JD 2011) and Natalie Quan (JD 2011) worked with me and the Alliance on Gofas v. CDSS, in which we forced the state to resume administrative rehearings after they unlawfully and unilaterally stopped providing them. The case settled for full benefits for our client, restoration of rehearings, and attorney's fees to USC and the Alliance.*

► *In 2009, Meaghan Field (JD 2010), Mike Thompson (JD 2009) and I worked with the Alliance on Harris v. CDSS, in which the Superior Court overturned the state's unlawful policy of denying administrative hearing review of decisions refusing to approve a proposed foster parent's home.*

## FIXING THE SYSTEM

We have also filed amicus briefs in several cases involving systemic issues of justice. These have included a brief on behalf of the nation's leading legal ethics professors urging the Ninth Circuit to uphold sanctions against federal government lawyers who misled the Court (with Aaron Chiu and Annette Wong, both JD 2012), one in the

state Court of Appeal on behalf of tenants on a complex question of rent control law (with Maya Roy and Sarah Truesdell, both JD 2008), and one in the California Supreme Court on meal and rest break requirements for low-income workers (with Daniel Ballon, JD 2009, and Jordan Kwan, JD 2010).



# A Student and His Mentor

Within four years, Omar Nouredin (JD 2014) went from taking Prof. Rebecca Brown's class to co-teaching with her.

By Christina Schweighofer

*Prof. Rebecca Brown confers with Omar Nouredin '14 as they plan their fall semester course.*

**When USC Gould Professor Rebecca Brown asked him last year to co-teach a class with her, Omar Nouredin JD '14 thought, "Oh, my gosh! I get to develop a course with Rebecca Brown?"**

His excitement is understandable; the invitation meant that only four years after being her student he would be Brown's colleague for a class on current constitutional problems last fall. For Nouredin, it was a new milestone in an already fast-paced, high-profile career centered on higher principles and values.

The son of an immigrant from Egypt and an Angeleno, Nouredin grew up in an interracial, interreligious environment (his father's family is Muslim, his mother's family is Roman Catholic), and he attended schools in the United States and the Middle East.

The global upbringing taught him a lesson: What some people hold as absolutely true others do not, but our shared humanity overrides all differences. From there, Nouredin early on derived a purpose for his life: he wanted to use his broad perspective "to help others talk to each other, to bridge divides and create understanding."

Brown, who is the Rader Family Trustee Chair in Law at USC Gould and first taught Nouredin during his 3L year in a seminar called Constitutional Theory, remembers that he displayed "a particularly academic approach to studying the Constitution: very thoughtful, mature and steeped in theory." Clearly showing "a promise for academia," he also impressed her with his active engagement in social justice and the improvement of public discourse. "I gained immense respect for his character," she says.

Nouredin, on the other hand, appreciated Brown's philosophical approach to constitutional law, where



doctrine isn't the end-all but a means that serves a larger purpose. "It was an amazing course," he says.

Nouredin's career since he graduated from USC Gould has taken him to disparate settings. There were stints as an attorney with Manatt, Phelps & Phillips and clerkships for a federal judge for the Central District of California, Virginia Phillips, and for Ninth Circuit Judge and former USC Gould Dean Dorothy Nelson. In between, starting in January 2017, he spent 18 months as vice president of the Muslim Public Affairs Council. Because of the new administration's travel ban targeting several Muslim-majority countries, Nouredin was frequently interviewed on cable news networks such as CNN, always seeking to further understanding.

Brown, who advised him throughout and recommended him for both clerkships, recognized in Nouredin an embodiment of many of the qualities and lessons that she learned from her own mentor, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, for whom she clerked in 1985. Says Brown about her mentee: "Omar has given me a chance to invest in someone who will, I know, pass along to future students the ideas and values that I hold dear. It doesn't get much better than that." 📖

# Prof. Emily Ryo *Leads Study on Detention Facilities*



Prof. Emily Ryo

Allegations of civil and human rights violations are numerous, according to Ryo.

By Gilien Silsby

**Immigration detention facilities that are privately operated or located in remote areas of the country garnered more grievances and held detainees significantly longer than in publicly run facilities, according to a study by USC Gould School of Law Professor Emily Ryo.**

Drawing on government and other records relating to all individuals who were detained by ICE in fiscal year 2015, Ryo found that many complaints were related to lack of access to

counsel or lack of basic case information.

Other grievances centered on difficulties maintaining contacts with family, problems related to the asylum application process, health or medical care, and allegations of misconduct or abuse by ICE officers or by facility officials, according to the report, “The Landscape of Immigration Detention in the United States,” co-written with Ian Peacock of UCLA. The policy report was published by the American Immigration Council. A total of 47,145 complaints were reported to the federal government for 305 sites.

“Allegations of civil and human rights violations in detention facilities are numerous and longstanding,” says Ryo. “Our research highlights key aspects of immigration detention — issues that are likely to be exacerbated if the government further expands detention use.”

Detainees also spent a longer time in detention in privately operated facilities and in remotely located facilities before they were either deported, temporarily released or received the relief they sought, according to the report released by the American Immigration Council.

“Our findings raise important questions about whether certain structural conditions in privately operated facilities and in remotely located facilities may produce longer detention lengths,” says Ryo.

Individuals who were granted relief were held an average of 87 days in privately operated detention facilities compared to 33 days in publicly run facilities, said Ryo, adding that those who were temporarily released spent an average of 65 days in privately operated facilities compared to 21 days in publicly run facilities.

The report, adapted from a study published in the *Southern California Law Review*, draws on government and other records for the 355,729 individuals detained by ICE in fiscal year 2015, the year with the most recent publicly available data.





*"Allegations of civil and human rights violations in detention facilities are numerous and longstanding," says Emily Ryo, professor at USC Gould.*

Other findings include:

- ICE relied on 638 sites scattered throughout the United States to detain individuals, often moving them from one facility to another.
- About 67 percent of detained individuals were held in privately operated facilities, and 64 percent were confined in a remotely located facility.
- More than 48,800 detention facility-related grievances were reported by detainees and community members.
- Nearly half of detainees — 48 percent — were confined at least once in a facility that was located more than 60 miles away from the nearest immigration attorney providing low- or no-cost removal defense services.
- The majority — 60 percent — of adults who were detained were transferred at least once during their detention, leading to confinement in multiple locations.

Ryo's research focuses on immigration, criminal justice, legal attitudes and legal noncompliance, and procedural justice. She approaches issues through innovative interdisciplinary lenses, using diverse quantitative and qualitative methods. As an empirical legal scholar, she has published widely in both leading sociology and law journals. She has been awarded the 2017 Andrew Carnegie Fellowship to support her scholarship. 📖

Read Prof. Ryo's full study:

<https://southerncalifornialawreview.com/2018/11/04/a-national-study-of-immigration-detention-in-the-united-states-article-by-emily-ryo-ian-peacock/>

# Scholarship & Research

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

## **Dorothy S. Lund**

Nonvoting Shares and Efficient Corporate Governance  
*Stanford Law Review* (March 2019)

## **Michael Simkovic**

Limited Liability and the Known Unknown  
*Duke Law Journal* (November 2018)

## **Franita Tolson**

The Spectrum of Congressional Authority over Elections  
*Boston University Law Review* (March 2019)

## **Lisa Klerman**

Recipient of the 2018 L. Randolph Lowry Award from the Southern California Mediation Association for excellence in ADR Education.

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



Prof. Lisa Klerman, honored by the SCMA

# A PASSION FOR PRO BONO WORK

*Trial attorney preaches the value of giving back*

By Greg Hardesty

**At a retreat in November 2018 for leaders of the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA), the recently installed president of the board of directors of the nonprofit explained why he's so committed to pro bono work.**



*James Burgess JD '90 is serving a two-year term as the president of the board of directors at the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles.*

James M. Burgess (JD 1990) told his colleagues that in 1994, when he was 32, he found out he was adopted.

"After I told the story, I said, 'I know that the circumstances of our birth shouldn't necessarily decide our future,'" says Burgess, a commercial litigation trial lawyer and partner in the Century City office of Sheppard Mullin.

"I was given the benefit of being placed with some great people who gave me enormous opportunities," Burgess says. "And I feel like I should pay that back by helping other people who are less fortunate and who may, through circumstance of birth, not have enjoyed some of the advantages I had."

Burgess, elected to the two-year term at LAFLA on July 1, 2018, spent two years at USC Gould after attending law school at George Washington University. When the woman

he eventually would marry accepted a job in California, Burgess followed her.

"I was the last transfer student to be accepted into USC that year [1988], and I was very grateful that they gave me that opportunity," he says. "It was the time when I probably performed the best as a student. I just loved my time there."

Raised in a Notre Dame family, Burgess recalls how big of a deal it was when he announced he was becoming a Trojan.

"For my mom," he says, "it was like, 'You can turn your back on the church, but don't turn your back on Notre Dame.'"

Burgess says being raised Catholic — specifically, with the view of putting faith into action — also explains his passion for pro bono work.

And he cites a third reason for providing free legal services to L.A. County's most vulnerable residents.

"I'm politically more on the conservative side," Burgess says, "and don't always think the government is the solution to every problem. And I feel like since I have that view, then I have a responsibility to do something about it myself. I need to be involved."

There's another USC connection concerning LAFLA and Burgess' appointment.

LAFLA, the largest and oldest provider of free legal services to vulnerable, low income individuals in L.A. County, originated from a clinic in a law school building on USC's campus in 1929.

"We're trying to get participation up to 30 hours per attorney per year," Burgess says of pro bono work in his office, where 92 lawyers work. "One of our goals at LAFLA is to make it much easier for attorneys to plug into the foundation and offer their services for people in need of such things as domestic violence restraining orders and eviction defense."

Adds Burgess, a father of four daughters: "I've always been a person who advocates for other people, even going back to high school. I've always said I'm a better advocate for other people than I am for myself." 📌



# CARIBBEAN DREAM

*Michelle Brathwaite (JD 1998) advocates for human rights in her role with the United Nations*

By Carren Jao

**If Michelle Brathwaite JD '98 has learned anything it is that “you can never anticipate where life will take you.”** Raised in Barbados, Brathwaite found herself attending an international school in New Mexico by age 16, going to college in Massachusetts, pursuing law in California, moving to Canada and eventually returning to Barbados as a United Nations national human rights adviser.

Her legal career has been a journey, where threads seemingly lost resurface, such as her interest in social justice. Despite an early inclination to issues of equality, especially when it comes to race and gender politics, Brathwaite went down the corporate path after law school. With the recent economic downturn, however, she was laid off from her position at legal recruiting firm Major, Lindsey & Africa. Then, one day, a friend serendipitously sent her a job posting for a U.N. position in Barbados.

*Michelle Brathwaite JD '98 works with 10 East Caribbean governments to fulfill their obligations to the international human rights community.*

Brathwaite has now come full circle, living in Barbados and working with 10 East Caribbean governments to fulfill their obligations to the international human rights community. Her background gives a deeper understanding of the cultural dynamics at play in the region she covers — its resource limitations, as well as its views on an international human rights framework that many perceive as being based on Western cultural norms and values. But it is her Trojan education that has helped her become more effective at the tasks before her. “My USC education has informed the work that I do today,” she says. “I honed my writing skills and learned to conduct workshops at law school and in my early days in a large firm.”

Nowadays, Brathwaite frequently finds herself traveling and meeting with East Caribbean officials. It may sound glamorous, but her work is one that takes patience and fortitude. Brathwaite’s role is that of an enabler, so these developing governments can pass laws and adopt policies that address human rights issues such as domestic violence, disability and discrimination. It isn’t her job to make changes, merely to enable policymakers to enact change.

One of the most satisfying parts of her work is conducting a workshop on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. “When I run that workshop with officials, I almost always see in their faces that their perspective has completely changed,” says Brathwaite. She’s already held these workshops in Barbados, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, and Trinidad and Tobago. One workshop was so effective that officials unanimously agreed to support government initiatives to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

“But they still have yet to do it,” says Brathwaite with a sheepish laugh. “It’s all a process,” she says, and she will be there to assist them every step of the way. 🚶‍♀️



# FOCUSED ON HOPE

*Wende Nichols-Julien (JD 2009), CEO of CASA-LA, works to improve the lives of foster children in L.A. County.*

By Jill Barone

*At the USC Gould Alumni Association's Graduating Student Reception, Wende Nichols-Julien JD '09, center, gave advice to the newest alumni.*

**Wendelyn (Wende) Nichols-Julien (JD '09) does not do anything in a halfhearted way.**

As the CEO of Court Appointed Special Advocates of Los Angeles (CASA-LA), an attorney, a facilitator and a mother of four, Nichols-Julien is a passionate leader.

Originally from Flagstaff, Ariz., Nichols-Julien comes from a family dedicated to social service, and it was obvious she would follow in their footsteps. However, she did not take the typical path to law school. When she began at Gould, she already had a family and had spent nine years working as a community organizer.

"I was not the typical young law school student," Nichols-Julien says. "However, Gould offered an excellent education and provided a different perspective to my work. My time there was invaluable; I learned so much that I still use in my current role. Additionally, I had the opportunity to connect with brilliant lawyers, many of whom support my work today and vice versa."

During her 1L year, Nichols-Julien was seated with a public interest attorney at the Alumni Mentor Lunch who recommended that she gain experience at a firm and then move on to the nonprofit world. She took this advice to heart and began working as an associate at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP after graduation.

Although she learned much from her time at Manatt, her passion for public interest work led her to an executive director role at the California Conference for Equality and Justice (CCEJ). There she oversaw education and conflict resolution programs that served more than 7,000 people annually before moving on to CASA-LA.

"CASA is the perfect blend of my personal and professional interests," Nichols-Julien says enthusiastically. "I have worked my entire life to help children thrive in adverse situations. The opportunity to work with youth who have experienced neglect and help to make a positive change in



their lives is so rewarding. There's also the legal component of this work that both appeals to me and capitalizes on my education and past experience."

CASA-LA is a nonprofit organization completely serviced by volunteers, who are responsible for all direct work with abused or neglected children. These children have been placed into foster care under the protection of the Children's Court. Each volunteer works closely with a child, helping to comfort them through emotional trauma and transition, making sure they receive necessary health care, attending school meetings and court appointments and much more.

"Our volunteers are the most loving, energetic and diverse group of people," Nichols-Julien says. "They spend at least 15 hours per month on behalf of the children with no reward except for the knowledge that they are making a difference in a child's life."

Nichols-Julien's motivation to help children goes beyond her day-to-day work. She adopted her daughter at age 6 after she had spent four years in foster care. Her daughter is now 16, and Nichols-Julien remains determined to protect other children who are experiencing what her daughter did. Additionally, CASA's location in the Children's Courthouse makes it easy to stay motivated.

As Nichols-Julien says: "We are focused on hope." 🏠



# A NEW PRECEDENT

*Maria Hall (JD 2003) thinks law needs an urgent care system.*

By Julie Riggott

*"Building a more collaborative profession, that's a huge goal of mine," says Maria Hall JD '03 who is co-president of the L.A. chapter of the National Lawyers Guild and vice president of the board of the Mexican American Bar Foundation.*

**Maria Hall (JD 2003) aims to improve access to justice not just one case at a time, but by changing the system.**

"Law is based on precedent," she says. "Well, who's the one making the precedent? We are. So if we decide we want to do things in a better way that helps more people, we can do that."

Hall keeps her skills sharp with housing, employment and civil rights cases in her private practice, but she's working to change the system through the Los Angeles Incubator Consortium.

As attorney development director, she coaches a dozen Incubator lawyers each year: new solos who are both entrepreneurial and team-spirited, united in their desire to serve communities that have historically lacked access to justice.

Hall pairs Incubator attorneys with mentors and legal aid organizations seeking help for low-income clients. At the same time, they attend business management, marketing and substantive law workshops to give them tools to run financially viable practices.

Now in its fifth year, the Incubator has launched 52 diverse solo law practices throughout L.A. County. Its lawyers have collectively donated more than 5,500 pro bono hours to legal services organizations.

Hall says she is trying to systematize a way to get people in need paired with attorneys they can afford. "I think of my work as urgent care," she says.

"There's the emergency room, which might be compared to legal aid or the court's self-help services," she explains. "Then there are high-priced specialists for those who can afford them. But there's not really an equivalent to an urgent care system in law, where people can go when something serious is wrong and they need someone with expertise to do triage, explain the process and direct them to help."

Hall enrolled at USC Gould with an interest in environmental justice. As an Irmas Fellow, she worked at Communities for a Better Environment, which sued industrial facilities polluting low-income neighborhoods

in Southeast Los Angeles. During those two years, she saw all kinds of other community legal needs: illegal evictions, police misconduct, immigration scams.

The takeaway was transformative: "I realized that lawyers can have a huge impact on helping people who don't have money, but it's up to us to find ways to provide legal services in a way that is economically viable for both the attorney and the client."

"Building a more collaborative profession, that's a huge goal of mine," says Hall who is co-president of the L.A. chapter of the National Lawyers Guild and vice president of the board of the Mexican American Bar Foundation.

This year, Hall and Incubator alumni attorneys launched a new nonprofit, Lawyers and Communities Together (Lawyers ACT). With their first grant, they started a legal triage project in Wilmington. The attorneys give know-your-rights workshops and then provide one-hour "limited scope" advice sessions in 16 areas of law for those facing urgent legal matters. Participants leave with options and concrete next steps. "I'm excited that it's working, and now more social service agencies are asking about this 'new model!'"

Most of all, Hall, who earned the USC Latino Law Students Association Inspirational Alumnus Award in 2017, wants new lawyers to know that they can make a living while following their heart. "With a law degree, especially from USC, you can find a job that you want to do. You don't need to be hired by somebody; you can hang up your shingle," she says. "Stay true to yourself. Never stop soul searching and thinking about what makes you happy. And you really can earn a living by doing that. I promise." 📌



# A Pathway Into Practice for Lawyer-Immigrants

A small-but-impactful transfer program lets a few outstanding international LLM students enter the JD track. Meet three alumni who took the journey.

By Diane Krieger

**Little did German lawyer Peter Steinwachs imagine he'd one day be an American Big Law corporate attorney, let alone a go-to guy for legal advice on managing the world's second-largest university endowment.**

Born in Köln, raised near Frankfurt and educated at the University of Mainz, the 43-year-old Steinwachs is today associate general counsel with Yale University's Investments Office, the team looking after the Ivy bastion's nearly \$30 billion portfolio. Previously, he was a corporate associate with Cravath, Swaine & Moore in New York and London.

How did this happen?

Simple. Steinwachs (LLM 2008, JD 2010), is a USC Gould double-alum—and the first person to go through the school's elite LLM to JD transfer program.

Introduced in 2007, the pathway lets a few exceptional international students move into the JD program and finish in as little as two years. They do so by taking their 1L classes out of sequence and transferring up to 30 units of upper-division LLM coursework. Most years only one or two LLM students are admitted, though 20 or more apply, according to USC Gould Associate Dean and Chief Program Officer Deborah Call.

*In December 2018, Jonathan Jimenez (LLM 2016, JD 2018), pictured center, celebrated passing the arduous California bar exam with his classmates.*







*Steinwachs, pictured with former Gould Dean Robert Rasmussen, was the 2008 LLM student commencement speaker.*

Steinwachs hadn't planned to practice law outside his native Germany, but he married an American, and when his wife needed to spend a year in California to advance her career, he decided to use the professional hiatus to deepen his legal education. Once he began the LLM program at USC Gould, he was hooked.

However, he discovered that foundational courses like constitutional and criminal law, contracts and torts were open only to JD students. When Steinwachs and two like-minded international students asked for more options, the Gould administration responded by rolling out the LLM-to-JD transfer program. A week after receiving his master of laws degree, Steinwachs applied to the JD program. In June, he was admitted as a transfer student. "When I got the decision, I was over the moon," he recalls.

While Gould has since created foundational courses which enroll LLM students only, a truncated JD track, he says, "is great for folks like me, who feel that just one year of LLM instruction isn't enough and have this unsatisfied hunger to learn more about American law." And it allows students like Steinwachs to enroll alongside the JDs.

Jonathan Jimenez (LLM 2016, JD 2018) was already a rising young lawyer in Bogotá, Colombia, when his career took an unexpected American turn. The Cartagena native first visited California in 2012 at his mother's invitation. She had come for a job some years earlier, remarried and laid down roots in California. Jimenez liked what he saw so much that he decided to stay. He found a job in the health insurance industry, and over the next three years worked his way up from file clerk to analyst and licensed broker. But something was missing: "I thought: 'I am a lawyer, not an insurance broker.' I felt I had to go back to law school."

A year of postgraduate study would be enough, Jimenez had reckoned. He'd received an excellent legal education

**"I absolutely loved [the LLM program]. After a few months, I started to look for ways to extend the experience. There was so much more I wanted to learn."**

— Peter Steinwachs (LLM 2008, JD 2010), associate general counsel, Yale University Investments Office

"I absolutely loved it," says Steinwachs, who was Class of 2008's LLM Commencement speaker. "After a few months, I started to look for ways to extend the experience. There was so much more I wanted to learn."

Versed in the German and Japanese legal systems, he wanted to dive into the American common law tradition.

in Colombia. But as he started to eye the California bar, Jimenez encountered "so many topics — topics I wasn't even aware of. I still felt I had a lot to learn when I finished the LLM." Through the LLM to JD transfer program, he could feed a budding passion for real estate law sparked by two courses with Professor George Lefcoe. "That was amazing, life-changing," Jimenez says. "It had



Mingmei Zhu (LLM 2016, JD 2018) is charting a U.S.-based career in litigation.

such a big impact on me.” He enrolled in every real estate course USC Gould offered and never missed a meeting of Gould’s Real Estate Law Society. He was also a leader in the Latino Law Student Association and a law clerk with Bet Tzedek and the Meyer Law Organization.

In December 2018, Jimenez, 33, graduated with his JD, joined the real estate and land use group of Perkins Coie in Los Angeles and celebrated passing the arduous California bar exam.

It wasn’t all smooth sailing, though. Jimenez found the JD program “extremely challenging. Legal writing was the worst. I still have nightmares about it,” he says, with a laugh.

Transfer classmate Mingmei Zhu (LLM 2016, JD 2018) also worried about her language skills, despite having won a national English competition her junior year at China’s Central South University in Changsha,

Hunan Province. “It was really stressful in the beginning,” says Zhu, of her LLM-to-JD transition. “I was always afraid of making mistakes. In the JD program, they are mostly native English-speakers and they spoke very fast. I have an accent, and I was afraid that they would laugh at me. However, all my classmates and professors were really nice and encouraged me to speak.”

So the 25-year-old untied her tongue. She volunteered as a law clerk with the L.A. County D.A.’s office, worked as a judicial extern for Judge Victoria Chaney and tackled teaching and research assistantships with USC Gould Professor Jonathan Barnett and Foreign & International Law Senior Librarian Paul Moorman. “I’m not worried about my accent anymore,” says Zhu. Instead, she’s charting a career as a litigator.

The 1L curriculum is a steep climb for any student, notes Call, “and international LLM students have their own unique set of challenges.” Fortunately, transfer applicants can lean on the Graduate & International Programs (G&IP) office for help. G&IP services for these students include career counseling, mock admission interviews, resumé and personal statement reviews, and guidance on which LLM courses will and won’t transfer.

Even after graduating, Zhu leans on G&IP in times of stress. In September, she became an associate with Matthiesen, Wickert & Lehrer, focusing in product liability and insurance litigation. As winter enveloped the sleepy Hartford, Wisc., headquarters of her new employer, Zhu longed for a friend.

“I was new here, and I didn’t know anyone,” she says. “The weather was very cold, and I was struggling with all of it.” So she speed-dialed G&IP Director Sarah Hall Gruzas (JD 2010).

“I just called to talk, and Sarah was willing to listen and give me advice,” Zhu says. “They’re always there to help.” 📞



# First Gen Family

Gould alumnus John Molina (JD 1989) endows First Generation Professionals Program, named after Molina's father

By Leslie Ridgeway

**In March, USC Gould alumnus John Molina '89 made a substantial contribution to the advancement of Gould's First Generation Professionals (FGP) program, one of the first administratively run support programs of its kind among law schools nationwide.** He presented the school with a \$3 million gift to endow the four-year-old program as the C. David Molina First Generation Professionals Program — named in honor of Molina's father — and the creation of the John Molina Scholarship Fund, supporting this vital effort in perpetuity.

Following the announcement, Molina engaged in a Q&A with Dean Andrew Guzman as part of a "Conversations with the Dean" event, discussing his education and work experience, why first generation programs are important, and his latest venture, Pacific6 Enterprises, which focuses on projects that positively affect people and communities, socially and economically. Below is an excerpt from their talk.

**Q:** What motivates you to contribute to this first generation program, and where did that come from?

**A:** It comes from my family. My father was the first one in my family who was sent to a professional school, and he always taught us that when you are in a position to help others, you should. I think it is something we overlook, being able not only to get into a good school, but then, how are you going to get through? If it's a first time for you, and then all of a sudden you have an opportunity to be in a professional school where the competition is light years above your experience, you need that additional help. And I think those students who get through that have such a great life experience that they deserve every opportunity to make it work.



**Q:** What would your advice be to first generation students?

**A:** When you have those moments of doubt like all students do, remember that you've got into law school at USC. When I got to USC there were students from UCLA, Harvard, Yale — I felt pretty intimidated. I remember the third day of my class in torts. I sat in the back and just prayed I wouldn't be called on. Of course the third day, I got called on. And so I started my reasoning as to the case, and before I got a few sentences out of my mouth, 15 hands shot up. I thought, "Wait a minute, you don't know what I'm going to say, and you're already ready to argue against me?" And so I kept my mouth shut the rest of the semester. My advice is to remind yourself that you're here for a reason, because the folks in admissions see something in you that you might not even see in yourself. That's pretty special. 🍷

# Allied in the Fight for Equality

Gould alumni reflect on highpoints, challenges and opportunities as OUTLaw scholarship reaches a milestone

By Christina Schweighofer

**In 2012, OUTLaw students at USC Gould made history when they created a fund to endow the first student-run scholarship on campus.**

Designed to benefit LGBTQ+ students and students working towards LGBTQ+ equality through the law, the scholarship immediately drew support from law school alumni and the larger community; OUTLaw students along with Gould's Development and Alumni Relations team have so far raised more than \$200,000 for the endowment. Fifty years after the Stonewall Riots launched the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement, with much to celebrate given the progress made but with the understanding that more work lies ahead, USC Gould alumni reflect on milestones, challenges and their support for OUTLaw.

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## CHANGE FROM THE INSIDE OUT

SETH LEVY (JD 2001)

When Seth Levy JD '01 first heard about plans for an endowed OUTLaw scholarship, he knew he would support the project. Aside from benefitting individual students who face disadvantages and often lack parental support, it carried an innate long-term promise: to ensure, in his words, "a pipeline of lawyers who are going to change the profession from the inside out."

But there was another reason Levy decided to back the student-run initiative. A partner at Nixon Peabody and current chairman and CEO of the It Gets Better

Project, he remembers USC as a welcoming place for LGBTQ+ people from day one. "It was a comfortable, supportive environment," he says.

More than a decade after his graduation, the creation of the OUTLaw scholarship provided Levy with a "relevant opportunity to give back" and to promote USC as a center for LGBTQ+ support. Already instrumental in setting up the scholarship, Levy more recently made a pledge — it is the largest individual gift to date — that pushed the fund to the \$200,000 mark.

Levy lauded USC Gould for its support of the student-run endeavor. "Students are only there for three years, and the consistency of the scholarship is only possible because it is institutionalized at the law school," he says.

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## SENDING A MESSAGE

JOHN HEILMAN (JD 1982, MPA 2007, MRED 2009)

John Heilman JD '82, MPA '07, MRED '09 knows from personal experience what a difference a scholarship can make. Coming from a single-parent home and lacking resources of his own, he worked during law school but still considered dropping out because of the financial pressure. In the end, a scholarship from the Irmas family — longtime supporters of USC and USC Gould — allowed him to complete his studies.





***“OUTLaw has united a community far bigger than USC Gould around a single cause.”***

—Elliot Rozenberg (JD 2013), left, pictured with Seth Levy (JD 2001)

Heilman has used his law degree to advocate and fight for gay rights. Actively involved in the incorporation of the City of West Hollywood in 1984, he has since then served on the city council and is currently in his ninth term as mayor. He was instrumental in creating the domestic partnership registration program for city employees. Heilman is on the board of OutRight Action International, an organization that works on advancing LGBTQ+ rights globally, and his leadership on the issue of AIDS earned him the 1990 U.S. Conference of Mayors Award.

An award-winning lecturer at USC Gould, Heilman thinks the OUTLaw scholarship sends a signal. “It shows how welcoming the law school is for the LGBTQ+ community. It helps us attract not only great LGBTQ+ students, but students who want to study at a school which is diverse, inclusive and on the cutting edge of legal education.”

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### **UNITING A COMMUNITY**

ELLIOT ROZENBERG (JD 2013)

Elliot Rozenberg JD '13 feels a sense of awe when he reflects on the growth of the OUTLaw scholarship fund. “It is incredible to think that in just seven years this organization has raised over \$200,000,” he says. What’s more, the endeavor has united a

community far bigger than USC Gould around a single cause.

Rozenberg, who is senior commercial counsel at e-commerce company FabFitFun, had the idea for a scholarship fund in 2011 while working on what was back then a small annual OUTLaw endeavor to raise a few thousand dollars that were spent right away on one-time grants for students. Rozenberg says that he wanted to create “something bigger and more impactful, something to help more people afford law school and take the civil rights jobs that often don’t pay as much.”

The OUTLaw scholarship immediately drew the support of organizations like the Los Angeles LGBT Bar Association. Law firms from the area see the value in sponsoring the fundraiser in April and bring along lawyers and non-lawyers from USC and other schools. “That’s one big difference between this scholarship and a lot of others,” Rozenberg says about OUTLaw’s broad appeal.

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### **THE NEED FOR STRAIGHT ALLIES**

LAURIE HASENCAMP (JD 1985)

With less than 5 percent of the U.S. adult population self-identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, the community needs allies. One such ally is Laurie Hasencamp JD '85, a member of the USC Gould

**Nearly 100 supporters attended the 2019 OutLaw reception in April, and more than triple the funds were raised from 2018. The reception also featured keynote speaker Mariah Paris Balenciaga, pictured here with Ryan Guiboa (JD 2012) and Alex Menenberg.**



Board of Councilors and a longtime LGBTQ+ rights advocate. Hasencamp has battled LGBTQ+ discrimination for nearly 20 years. In addition to volunteering at a number of LGBTQ+ nonprofits, she is also a current board member of Equality California, a former board member for Lambda Legal and a former acting director of strategic education and initiatives at the Williams Institute.

“In many states, it’s okay to fire someone or make other adverse decisions based on their sexual orientation or gender expression and I want to work against that,” she says. “It should be looked at as something that is not even up for debate.”

A recipient of several awards recognizing her work as an ally, including the 2017 Ally Leadership Award from Equality California, she points out that allies sometimes find it emotionally easier than LGBTQ+ people to fight against discrimination because it doesn’t affect them personally in the same way.

Hasencamp, a retired attorney who practiced at Latham & Watkins and Irell & Manella, encourages law firms to be very visible in their support of LGBTQ+ efforts like the OUTLaw scholarship, not least because it will help them attract clients who value diversity and the best and brightest lawyers, as well as show support for their LGBTQ+ attorneys and staff. “It’s important for LGBTQ+ students, who are often at the top of the class, to understand that a law firm is going to be welcoming and supportive,” she says.

## **WORKPLACE IMPACT**

**JOHN IINO (JD 1987)**

John Iino JD ’87 knows something about diversity and inclusion. As chief diversity officer at Reed Smith, he leads the global firm’s inclusion efforts. “Study after study shows that diverse teams lead to better performance and results,” he says. “Diversity of experience, thought and background — whether it be race, ethnicity, geography, gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation, ability, religion, age, social or economic background, or military service — all are critical ingredients to successful outcomes for our personnel and our clients.”

As chair of Gould’s Board of Councilors, he believes OUTLaw scholarships “send a strong and important message to the legal industry — that USC Gould believes in, supports and sponsors opportunities for students of diverse backgrounds. Students are encouraged to bring their authentic selves to the community.”

Leading Reed Smith’s diversity and inclusion efforts, Iino has seen the firm reap rewards in recruiting, retaining, supporting and promoting their talent pool. In addition, for the sixth consecutive year, the Human Rights Campaign has acknowledged the firm’s institutional progress on LGBTQ+ causes with a perfect score on their Corporate Equality Index.

“That’s really important to us,” he says. “We want to do more than just pay lip service to these efforts. I want to ensure that we devote resources and support from the leadership level.”





***“What’s most important now is that people who are living their true selves be out and open and public and let people know that we aren’t going anywhere.”***

—Sam Fein, JD Class of 2020

## **ARC OF CHANGE**

**KAREN LASH (JD 1987)**

Karen Lash JD '87 tracks the arc of change for LGBTQ+ people by looking at the Department of Justice, where she worked for six years as a President Obama appointee. The official DOJ policy when she graduated was: “No gay or lesbian attorneys allowed.”

She recalls: “I couldn’t get a job with the Justice Department.”

One and a half decades later, when John Ashcroft and Alberto Gonzales served as attorneys general, the DOJ Pride employee resource organization was tolerated but with constraints on how it could advertise and where it could meet. Under the leadership of U.S. Attorneys General Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch, the Justice Department fully celebrated and endorsed DOJ Pride.

Lash, who worked in the Office for Access to Justice starting in 2010 and served as executive director of the White House Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable, considers the six years at the DOJ her proudest professional achievement. One of her bosses, Associate Attorney General Tony West, played a pivotal role in the process that resulted in Holder and Obama withdrawing their support for the Defense of Marriage Act (the federal law that defined marriage as the union of one man and one woman). In 2013, the Supreme Court decided in *United States v. Windsor* that the federal government cannot discriminate against married lesbian and gay couples.

“It was exhilarating to work in that Justice Department,” Lash says. “I could not be legally married with a kid but for my bosses West and Holder.”

## **A NEW GENERATION**

**SAM FEIN, JD CLASS OF 2020**

Third-year student Sam Fein, the outgoing chair of the OUTLaw student group at USC Gould, is well aware of the responsibility that comes with the scholarship. “I was lucky enough to be the recipient [in 2017],” he says, “and by organizing the big reception this year, I was able to pay it forward and help a future student pursue a legal degree.”

LGBTQ+ rights may have advanced significantly even in the short time of the scholarship’s existence, but there is still much work ahead. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 does not include protection of people identifying as LGBTQ+. So far only 21 states and the District of Columbia prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and a federal Equality Act introduced in Congress in 2017 is unlikely to pass the Senate.

Seeing himself as “part of a generation where a lot of the heavy lifting was done by the people before us,” Fein believes the main task for his peer group is to be visible. “What’s most important now is that people who are living their true selves be out and open and public and let people know that we aren’t going anywhere.” 🏳️

# Legal Rights...

USC Gould alumni have played a key role at Mental Health Advocacy Services for the past 40 years and will continue to lead it into the future.

By Julie Riggott

**In 1977, at a time when it was not only uncommon but also unpopular to consider the legal rights of people with mental disabilities, Mental Health Advocacy Services was founded to protect and advance those rights.** In 1979, a USC Gould student who had volunteered during those early years became executive director of the nonprofit immediately after earning his juris doctor. That alumnus was Jim Preis (JD 1979).

With Preis at the helm, MHAS helped turn the tide for those with mental disabilities, working to

Preis' legacy is a guiding light for Farrell as she leads MHAS through this transition. Former director of external relations at the L.A. Center for Law and Justice, another legal aid agency, Farrell worked with pro bono attorneys, raised the profile of legal aid in L.A. and fundraised — all things she will do at MHAS.

"I see MHAS as remaining that beacon organization that's committed to those core values that Jim stood for," she says. "We have unique training and expertise around mental health law and the rights and benefits to which those dealing with severe mental illness are

**Mental illness "is something that affects all of us.... So it's great to have a place like MHAS looking out for people."** — Prof. Elyn Saks, director of the Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy and Ethics at USC Gould

challenge the associated stigma and establishing MHAS as the go-to legal resource for those with mental health disabilities. For four decades, MHAS achieved milestone after milestone with advocacy, education and impact legislation.

In October, after a seven-month battle with cancer, Preis passed away. But another USC Gould graduate was hired to carry on the mission. Jenny Farrell (JD 2011) began as executive director on Jan. 2.

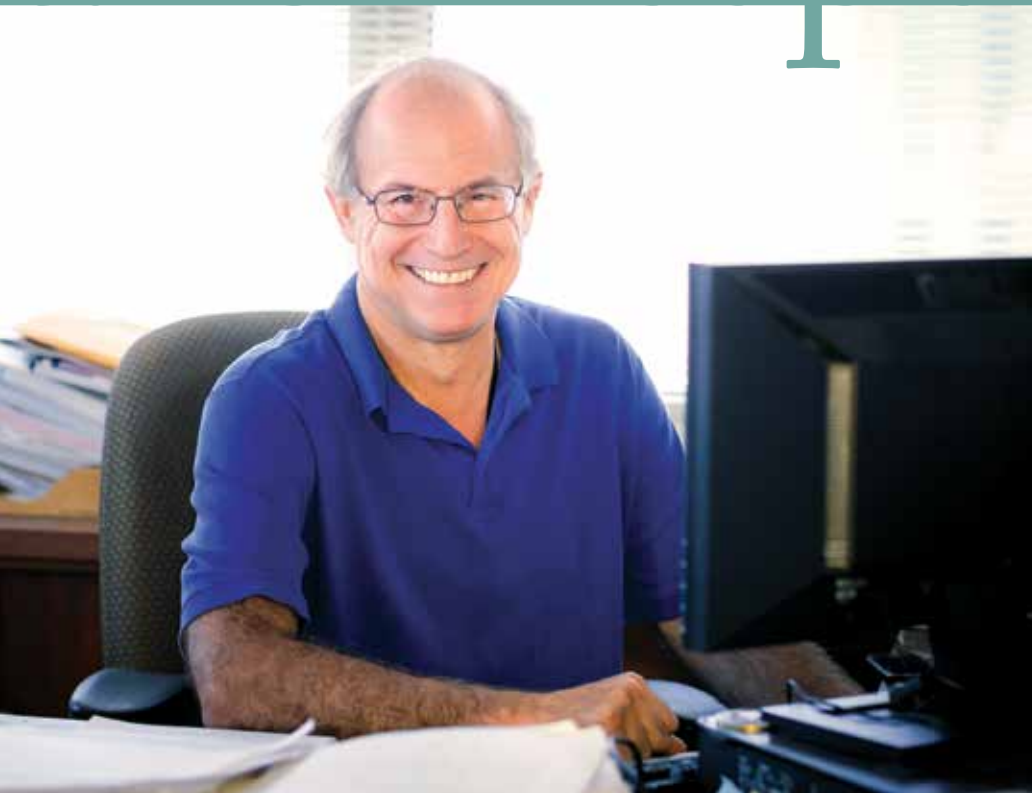
"Jim leaves quite a legacy to follow," Farrell says. "Jim was a larger-than-life figure in the mental health advocacy world. He stood for some core fundamental values — for respecting everyone's right, regardless of their mental ability, to make their own legal and health choices."

entitled. We know how to best work with those clients in a trauma-informed and holistic way to get them those rights and benefits and how to best work with the agencies that provide those services and benefits."

MHAS has advocated for children and adults, gaining access to mental health services, government benefits, special education and fair housing, while fighting discrimination. It has championed the rights of underrepresented groups such as foster children, abused and neglected children, minors in juvenile hall, low-income individuals, individuals experiencing homelessness, veterans and immigrants in detention facilities.

MHAS also serves as a resource to the community by providing training and technical assistance to attorneys, mental health professionals, nonprofit

# and Respect



Jim Preis (JD 1978) joined Mental Health Advocacy Services in 1979. He led the organization until his death in 2018. See “In Memoriam,” on p. 31 to read more about Preis.

housing developers, local governments, consumer and family member groups, and other advocates.

Its impact litigation has shaped historic change with cases that initiated community-based services as an alternative to hospitals, ended arbitrary discontinuation of disability benefits, and mandated assessment and services for special education students, among other achievements.

Elyn Saks, director of the Saks Institute for Mental Health Law, Policy and Ethics at USC Gould, says that MHAS has been a blessing, and not many states have anything like it. “Given a city of this size and diversity, there’s huge need. The statistics show one in four adults at one time in their life will face a major mental illness. This is something that affects all of us, whether we know it in this moment or not,” Saks says. “So it’s great to have a place like MHAS looking out for people.”

Preis invited Saks, who is also Orrin B. Evans Distinguished Professor of Law, to join the MHAS

Board before he knew she was a patient as well as a lawyer for patients. Saks eventually opened up about her own struggles in her memoir, *The Center Cannot Hold: My Journey Through Madness*. They co-taught courses on mental health law at Gould, and Preis co-authored a textbook on the subject. “He’s a gifted teacher, and the students loved having him as a professor,” Saks says. “It was a huge loss for the patients and consumers who were helped by what he did at his organization and a loss for the students who got the benefit of working with someone who’s so impassioned and knowledgeable.”

## CONTINUING A LEGACY

Preis’ legacy and the critical efforts of MHAS are work that many other USC Gould alumni have supported over the agency’s life. Pam Marx (JD 1978) was an intern with Preis during the early years of MHAS (many other Gould interns have followed). She returned more than 20 years ago, after a career at a law firm and as in-house counsel for a national media and communications company, and is now MHAS’ directing attorney.

“It is always a wonderful experience to be able to tell a client that his subsidized housing voucher has been reinstated or that she has been approved for SSI benefits,” says Marx, who was honored in 2012 by USC Gould as PILF Public Interest Attorney of the Year. “But MHAS, like most legal services agencies, can provide representation to only a fraction of the clients who need legal assistance. What continues to move me in our work at MHAS is how all of our staff strive to serve with meaningful and thoughtful consult even those clients for whom we provide only brief assistance.”





“[Jim Preis] stood for some core fundamental values — for respecting everyone’s right, regardless of their mental ability, to make their own legal and health choices.”

— Jenny Farrell (JD 2011), executive director, Mental Health Advocacy Services, pictured above

Both Marx and Farrell pointed out that when you call MHAS, a person answers the phone; it’s one example of how they listen to and respect each individual. “Leaving a message and not getting a call

back can be really frustrating for you or me,” Farrell explains, “but imagine if you’re struggling with severe mental illness and you’re in anguish or in crisis and you leave that message that doesn’t get a return call. That could be the difference between getting the help you need and deciding to give up.”

Farrell brings the compassion and enthusiasm that continuing Preis’ strides will require. As a child of small-town lawyers in Southern California, she learned early on about access to justice. “I always wanted to be a change maker and be part of a greater social justice movement,” she says. As a Gould student, she worked with the Post-Conviction Justice Project earning parole release for two women who had each been in prison for more than 20 years. She was named Public Interest Student of the Year and won the Mason Brown Award for

showing promise in public interest and trial work.

Nicolas Muñoz (JD 2018) is another USC graduate who went to law school with public service in mind and ended up at MHAS, which he discovered as a student. As an Irmas Legal Fellow, he is focusing on special education, an area that personally affected his own family.

“It breaks my heart but reminds me of how important our work is when I go to an IEP [Individualized Education Program] meeting at a school and a parent tells me, ‘That meeting was a complete 180 from what I’m used to. I was able to talk today,’” says Muñoz, who researched supported decision making as an alternative to conservatorship with Prof. Saks when he was a Saks Scholar at Gould.

“Parents come to you with open arms and say, ‘Please help me.’ It’s difficult to ignore the gravity of the services when you can have somebody saying that to you.” 📞

Those interested in making a contribution to the Jim Preis Memorial Fund may visit <http://mbas-la.org/donate/>.

**PAUL HENRY ABRAM (JD 1967)** passed away on Oct. 19, 2018, at the age of 77.

Abram joined the Air Force after high school and was stationed on the island of Crete as a spy for the National Security Agency (NSA). He later covered the Cuban Missile Crisis as a spy for NSA. In 1963, he was honorably discharged from the Air Force and attended USC Gould where he graduated in 1967.

Abram practiced law in California and Oregon from 1967 until 2004. While director of litigation for Inland Counties Legal Services from 1977 to 1980, he was named national director of the Migrant Farmworker Program by the National Legal Services Corp. in Washington, D.C. He successfully handled numerous lawsuits that gained decent housing for farmworkers.

Abram retired from law in 2004 to focus on writing and photography. In 2012, he published his first book, *Love Poems With an Attitude. Trona. Bloody Trona: A Revolution in Microcosm* followed in 2013.

Abram is survived by his wife, Marcia.

**RONALD BAKAL (JD 1970)** passed away on Aug. 4, 2018, at the age of 72.

Bakal was an attorney for 47 years in Beverly Hills and Palm Desert. He used the power of litigation to “fight for the little guys” against larger businesses and the government.

Bakal was a lover of sports, art and travel. He is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren and sister.

**CRAIG BIDDLE (LLB 1956)** passed away on Sept. 23, 2018, at the age of 87. Biddle pushed through state laws requiring breathalyzers for suspected drunk drivers and smog checks for all cars while representing Riverside from 1964 until 1974.

A passionate French horn player, Biddle spent three summers at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan and intended to spend his life as a musician. However, after enrolling at Occidental College, he discovered a lifelong interest in the law and sold his horn to pay for the first semester of law school at USC.

After graduating, he moved from South Pasadena to Riverside where he became a deputy district attorney. He served there four years, before moving to the other side of the courtroom as a public defender. The experience gave him an interest in becoming district attorney. To gain name recognition for that campaign, he ran for State Assembly as a Republican and won.

Biddle was Assembly majority leader from 1969 to 1971, then resigned to run for Senate. After one term representing

the Riverside area in the Senate, he lost by 0.2 percent after President Richard Nixon’s resignation.

After leaving office, Biddle started a law firm in Sacramento, then retired in 1995. He served occasionally as a lobbyist and adviser until shortly before his death.

Former lecturer in law **ALEX POLSKY**, who taught at Gould from 2002 to 2014, passed away on Feb. 23, 2019. A fixture in Southern California ADR and legal circles, Polsky resolved thousands of disputes in his nearly three decades as a neutral and ADR pioneer.

**JIM PREIS (JD 1978)**, a Los Angeles lawyer, USC Gould lecturer and activist who fought for the rights of the mentally ill and disabled for decades, died on Oct. 12, 2018, at age 66.

An Angeleno, Preis earned his undergraduate degree in philosophy at Stanford and his JD from Gould in 1978. A year later, Preis took over as the head of Mental Health Advocacy Services (MHAS) and continued to lead the L.A. nonprofit, which provides free legal services to people with mental disabilities, until early in 2018. (See p. 28)

With MHAS, Preis litigated several major cases on behalf of people with mental disabilities, lectured on mental health advocacy issues, and authored books, law review articles and professional articles on legal issues affecting people with mental disabilities.

He co-wrote the textbook “The Essentials of California Mental Health Law” and lectured on the topic. Preis is survived by his children, both lawyers, and his wife, whom he married in 1981.

**Nathaniel Alfredo Putera Lubis**, better known as “Alfredo,” an LLM student, passed away on March 13, 2019, during spring recess while visiting his home in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Alfredo was 26 years old, with plans to return to Indonesia and work as an attorney focusing on technology after completing his LLM degree in May. He graduated from law school at the University of Indonesia in 2015, and then worked in litigation at a law firm in Indonesia before coming to USC.

Those who knew him at Gould attest to his very warm and easy-going nature. Alfredo loved music, cooking, soccer and trying new restaurants. His friends remember him as a cheerful person, who was always happy and was still exploring his passions. As an example of his broad interests, Alfredo took classes in drumming and tennis at USC.



# UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

Gould students inspired by alumni engagement and catalyzed by their scholarship support

By Stephanie Lertzman

**"The thought of going to law school thousands of miles away from my family in Michigan came with many worries. The idea that a donor believed in me before I even set foot on USC's campus meant the world to me," recalls Shelby Palmer, a 3L who earned her bachelor's degree at Spelman College. Palmer is a recipient of Gould's Crispus Attucks Wright Law Scholarship Endowment.**

"The financial impact is invaluable, and it has made my Gould degree attainable," she says. This September, Palmer will be a first-year associate in the litigation department at Katten Muchin Rosenman pursuing entertainment

law, an interest she developed through prior internships at Starz, Mattel and USC Gould's Intellectual Property and Technology Law Clinic.

A scholarship's impact, along with the sense of community that emanates from it, can provide immeasurable benefits. "It is easy to think scholarships only help students from a financial standpoint, but it means so much more than that," Palmer says, mentioning the special bond among students and donors. "Connecting with scholarship benefactors and families, whether by phone, email or in person is both humbling and rewarding."

Crispus Attucks Wright (LLB 1938) was a civil law attorney in South-Central Los Angeles for 50 years. He endowed the scholarship to provide financial support for academically qualified and financially deserving African American students and others interested in practicing law in under represented communities.

For Palmer, meeting Wright's family at the annual Scholarship Donor Appreciation Luncheon was a highlight of her experience. "It really made the scholarship personal. Learning this scholarship honors a trailblazing African-American gives me a bonus source of inspiration and gratitude for those who have come before me."

With this vote of confidence, scholarships often give students the courage, curiosity and freedom to develop their legal interests and find new ones. "Receiving the Judge Dickran Tevrizian Scholarship Endowment [at Gould] has truly meant the world to me," says Ryan Montag, a 2L, who entered Gould with a bachelor's degree from USC Thornton's Music Industry program, intending to become an entertainment attorney. While actively pursuing a Media and Entertainment Law Certificate at Gould, in addition to his JD, Montag's recent participation in the Hale Moot Court piqued a new interest in litigation, inspiring a shift he intends to explore.

"I decided to make a somewhat drastic change in an effort to broaden my horizons. I am extremely excited to say that I will be working in the U.S. Coast Guard JAG

Turn **OPPORTUNITY**  
into **IMPACT**

**95%**

of Gould law students receive some  
form of scholarship support

**\$31,500**

Average scholarship award

\*Does not cover the cost of living expenses and books

**The passion and potential of our students know no  
limits. And neither does our dedication to them.**

Join us in supporting tomorrow's pioneers,  
problem-solvers and leaders. All levels of  
support are welcome.

<https://gould.usc.edu/alumni/giving/scholarships>





*From left to right:  
Anthony P. Martin,  
Shelby Palmer  
(JD 2019), Jo Anne  
W. McKenzie,  
2L Michael Ball and  
3L Aaron Morris,  
photographed at the  
annual scholarship  
luncheon*

program this summer. I cannot wait to see what sort of unique challenges JAG attorneys face, and I hope to learn a great deal both personally and professionally from the experience.”

Such exploration of a wide range of professional opportunities is a hallmark of USC Gould. “Today’s evolving legal market requires us to provide students with a strong theoretical foundation and dynamic experiential learning opportunities,” says Dean Andrew T. Guzman. “Our focus is on preparing students to begin their careers with enthusiasm, clear direction and adaptability that come from taking advantage of every possible opportunity, not limited or stifled by finances, as they pursue a legal education.”

“I quite simply wouldn’t be at Gould without Judge Tevrizian’s generosity,” says Montag.

Montag attributes his scholarship as a key factor in his personal and professional development. “I am tremendously grateful to attend Gould with the peace of mind that I can continue to learn and grow at one of the nation’s top legal institutions without the fear of debt looming over me,” he remarks. “Knowing I didn’t have to cut corners in my legal education due to financial concerns gives me confidence I will become the best lawyer I can be, to make a positive difference in the world.”

Dean Guzman describes scholarship support as playing a vital role — even the tipping point — in attracting and retaining the highest quality of students. “We want our students to focus on their rigorous academic coursework and compete for job opportunities by devoting time to internships, clerkships, research and immersive experiences such as law journals, clinics and moot court. Scholarships help make all of that possible.”

“Whether an endowed scholarship in perpetuity or an immediate-use scholarship gift,” he added, “the support is

incredibly important, deeply impactful to our students and very much appreciated.”

Alumni annual donors Steve Mindel (JD 1985) and Nancy Mindel (BS 1983/JD 1986) feel fortunate to have graduated from USC Gould. “The friends we have made through our connection to USC Gould have been invaluable,” the Mindels say. Steve, a certified family law specialist and the managing partner of FMBK, shares that their family’s philosophy is about paying it forward. “It makes us feel good to know we are a part of the success of the next generation of Gould lawyers.”

The students’ collective talents and drive are paramount. “It is not important to us to know the recipients of our gift. We trust the leadership at Gould to select the appropriate, highly motivated students who are in need of a scholarship,” says Steve. The Mindels enjoy interacting with students at Law Leadership Society events, mentoring opportunities and other occasions during the year. “We are continually impressed with the high quality of the students and the lawyers who graduate from USC Gould.”

Dean Guzman commends the Trojan Family commitment. “I am personally grateful for the continued generosity and scholarship support from our alumni, donors and friends,” he says. “These acts of kindness transform law school applicants into law students, who go on to become the attorneys, advocates and leaders who shape our world.”

Palmer echoes the dean’s vision. “There are countless laws, regulations and statutes affecting just about every area of our lives. There is always something to be passionate about, and I am excited to see how my interests and expertise will evolve over time.” 🍷

# Honor Roll

**Sarah Z. Alkayed (JD 2011)** joined the Los Angeles office of Carlton Fields as an associate in the firm's National Trial Practice's Business Litigation section. Alkayed represents businesses and individuals in federal and state courts in commercial litigation, including contract disputes, fraud claims, insurance, construction and real estate matters.



**David M. Almaraz (JD 1998)** joined Alpert, Barr & Grant as partner. Almaraz's practice focuses on litigating matters involving real estate, business and trade secret laws.

**Amy Anker (JD 2008)** was elevated to partner at Ervin Cohen & Jessup LLP. Anker focuses her practice on real estate acquisitions, dispositions and financing involving all types of commercial properties, including multifamily, office, industrial, shopping center, retail and mixed-use developments.

**Sunita Bali (JD 2010)** was elected to partner in the San Francisco office of Perkins Coie. Bali has substantial experience litigating cases in California state and federal courts and has represented technology, food and retail clients in consumer class action disputes and other commercial litigation matters.



Congresswoman **Nanette Barragan (JD 2005)** received the 2019 Benito Juarez Attorney of the Year Award at the Mexican American Bar Association's 59th Annual Gala in February.

**Paolo Beconcini (LLM 2018)** was highlighted in the *World Trademark Review* (WTR) 1000. Beconcini leads a China-based team from Squire Patton Boggs' Los Angeles office. The WTR 1000 shines a spotlight on firms and individuals that are deemed outstanding in this area of practice.



In January 2019, Gov. Jerry Brown appointed the **Hon. Clifford T. Blakely Jr. (JD 1995)** to the Alameda County Superior Court bench. Judge Blakely served as an Alameda County Deputy Public Defender since 2014. He was in private practice from 2007 to 2014, and previously served as a Deputy Public Defender in the Alameda County Public Defender's Office from 1996 to 2007.

**Eric Cheng (JD 2010)** is serving as Assistant United States Attorney in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California. Cheng was previously a partner at Kirkland & Ellis in the Bay Area.



**Alexander DeGood (JD 2006)** was elected partner in the Los Angeles office of Cox, Castle & Nicholson LLP. DeGood joined the firm's land use practice group in 2013 and handles zoning matters, environmental compliance and litigation, with a focus on California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance.

**E. Carlos Dominguez (JD 2005)** received the California Attorney General award in January for his contributions to the Los Angeles community, including his dedication to providing legal assistance to victims of domestic violence through the Domestic Violence Project.

**H. Ronald Domnitz (JD 1967)** retired from the Assigned Judges Program (Superior Court) after 11 years of service in addition to his 24 years on the bench in San Diego. He will serve as a family law mediator and privately compensated judge with the National Conflict Resolution Center.

The *Los Angeles Business Journal* named **Amber Finch (JD 2002)** one of the 2019 Most Influential Minority Attorneys in Los Angeles. Finch is a partner in Reed Smith's Los Angeles office, where she is also the diversity chair. A member of the firm's Insurance Recovery Group, Finch helps clients negotiate better insurance coverage on the front end, tender and collect on insurance claims and litigate insurance cases. In addition, Gould's Black Law Students Association honored Finch for her "unwavering support" at their annual gala.



**Fernando Gaytan (JD 2002)** was promoted to deputy director of the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA). In this role, Gaytan will work closely with the executive director to provide strategic leadership and management of the organization, including program planning,

development, budget and financial oversight. Gaytan was the managing attorney of the Housing and Communities Workgroup since 2014.

**Lisa Gilford (JD 1993)** was named one of the 2019 Most Influential Minority Attorneys in Los Angeles by the *Los Angeles Business Journal*. Gilford, who recently joined the Los Angeles office of Sidley Austin LLP as a partner, focuses her practice on class actions, products liability law and jury trials. She represents several major members of the automotive, pharmaceutical, communications, oil and gas, aerospace and chemical manufacturing industries.

**Julia A. Gowin (JD 2004)** joined the Los Angeles office of Lathrop Gage LLP as a partner. Gowin focuses her practice on all aspects of complex civil litigation, including product liability, premises liability, toxic and mass torts, and environmental law. She has over a decade of experience in the areas of asbestos and silica defense, and she currently acts as national coordinating counsel in cosmetic talc litigation.



**Steffi Gascon Hafen (JD 2010)** was elected to partner at the Los Angeles and Orange County offices of Snell & Wilmer. Hafen is a certified specialist in estate planning and trust and probate law and is a member of the firm's Private Client Services and General Federal Tax practice groups.

**Derek Lazzaro (JD 2009)** was promoted to chief information officer at Lewis Brisbois. During 2018, Lazzaro served as Deputy CIO at the firm. He is currently a planning commissioner for the City of Palos Verdes Estates and a member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Working Group on Technology and Innovation.

**Bob Martin (JD 1969)** became the 56th president of the American Rose Society in October 2018. Founded in 1892, the American Rose Society is an educational, nonprofit organization that exists to promote the culture, preservation and appreciation of the rose and to improve its standard of excellence for all people, through education and research.

**Amy Proctor (JD 2011)** was elected to partner at Irell & Manella LLP. Proctor helps clients manage and resolve patent infringement disputes across a broad range of technologies, including computer architecture, signal transmission, renewable energy and pharmaceuticals.

**Peter K. Rosen (JD 1978)** joined JAMS in Los Angeles as an arbitrator, mediator, special master and neutral evaluator in a variety of practice areas, including business/commercial, construction, cybersecurity and privacy, entertainment and sports, insurance, international, natural/mass disaster relief, professional liability and securities.



**Carolina Schwalbach (JD 2011)** was elected to partner in the Los Angeles office of Carothers DiSante & Freudenberger LLP. Schwalbach practices employment litigation, defending employers against a wide scope of claims before California state and federal courts and administrative agencies.



**Christopher Stark (JD 2001)** was elected partner in the Los Angeles office of Cox, Castle & Nicholson LLP. As a transactional attorney in the firm's joint venture team, Stark leverages more than two decades of experience to champion acquisitions, dispositions and sophisticated development work for institutional developers and homebuilders.

**Steve Werth (JD 1999)** has been elevated to senior counsel at SulmeyerKupetz. Werth, who has been with the firm for 10 years, will continue his representation of debtors, creditors, trustees and asset purchasers in Chapter 11 bankruptcy cases and out-of-court restructurings.



**Carolyn Woodson (JD 2006)** was elected partner in the Los Angeles office of Jones Day. Woodson is an experienced litigator who represents clients in high-stakes litigation pending in federal and state courts and ADR forums.



# 2019 Commencement

Graduates, friends and family gathered to celebrate

**The years sure flew by fast.**

That was the commonly shared sentiment among the nearly 725 degree recipients at the May 10 Commencement ceremonies held at the University Village.

This year's guest commencement speaker had a familiar face, Prof. Scott Bice. Bice, who earned his JD from Gould in 1968, served as dean of the law school from 1980 to 2000. The Commencement ceremony also featured remarks from the president of the third-year law class, Tiffany Yadegar, as well as remarks from Janet Shamilian the Student Bar Association president.

Nina Hachigian, deputy mayor of International Affairs for the City of Los Angeles and former U.S. Ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations spoke

at the Graduate and International Program (G&IP) ceremony. The student speaker was Purita Angela Sandalo-Parayno.

Dean Andrew Guzman used the inscription at the base of the Tommy Trojan statue on campus as inspiration for his address to the graduates, encouraging them to exhibit the five traits of a Trojan: "Faithful. Scholarly. Skillful. Courageous. Ambitious."

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*Below: For the second time, Gould held Commencement ceremonies at the University Village.*

*Center right: Prof. Scott Bice, who gave the JD address, celebrates with Dean Guzman and Gould grads; Tiffany Yadegar and Janet Shamilian (holding scrolls) were the JD student speakers, while Purita Angela Sandalo-Parayno spoke at the G&IP ceremony.*









# FROM LAW GRADS TO LAWYERS

Recent Gould alumni reunite to celebrate passing the bar exam

By Anne Bergman

**For members of the USC Gould School of Law's Class of 2018, the best possible reunion was to be formally sworn into the California and federal bars with their classmates.** Together, they celebrated passing the notoriously challenging California bar exam.

In a ceremony held in December, Dean Andrew Guzman welcomed the recent graduates, their families and friends back to campus for the annual year-end

The Hon. Jean Rosenbluth (JD 1993), magistrate judge in the United States District Court for the Central District of California and the Hon. Michael J. Raphael, associate justice from the California Court of Appeal.

Klerman said: "Being sworn into the federal bar by Judge Rosenbluth, a former colleague, was a wonderful bonus."

While the exam is considered one of the toughest in the nation, the recent Gould graduates who passed



*For Jonathan Acheampong Frimpong JD '18 (left, center) the ceremony "was a priceless moment for all of us." Being sworn into the federal bar by Judge Rosenbluth JD '93, a former colleague, "was a wonderful bonus" for Prof. Dan Klerman (right).*

ritual. From here on, they are official members of the legal profession.

"Passing the bar is no easy task. Each of you has not only proven that you possess a thorough knowledge and understanding of the law, but also the self-discipline and motivation to become attorneys," said Dean Guzman in his opening remarks.

And as if the evening wasn't memorable enough, Prof. Dan Klerman, the Edward G. Lewis Chair in Law and History, who passed the California bar this summer, was also sworn in alongside Gould graduates.

Klerman said that he took the exam so he could "be both a better teacher and a better scholar" by being able to take depositions, write or respond to some motions, and perhaps try a case.



the bar attributed their success to the preparation they received from the law school.

For Jonathan Acheampong Frimpong (JD 2018), who is from Ghana, preparation for the exam included courses "tailored to meet the needs of students with English as a second language."

Frimpong, now a junior associate at Dapeer Rosenblit & Litvak in Los Angeles, took advantage of Gould's faculty expertise and accessibility. "I was that kid with all those questions in class and during office hours, and the professors patiently explained the materials and answered all my questions," he said.

The ceremony "was a priceless moment for all of us," said Frimpong. "The look on my friends' faces said it all. They were all glowing, which I believe was a reflection of the joy we felt inside." 📖





# CLINICAL PERSPECTIVES 2019

**USC**Gould  
School of Law



# TWO BROTHERS, REUNITED

## Immigration Clinic helps Cameroonian client win asylum

By Anne Bergman

*Clinton (left photo, at left) and Gerard Tibuck were reunited thanks to the work of law student Kate Kafka (right) and the USC Gould School's Immigration Clinic.*

**C**linton and Gerard Tibuck had a lot to celebrate at Thanksgiving this year, as they reunited at Dulles Airport in November after more than three years apart.

The Cameroonian brothers had been separated since 2015, when Gerard fled Cameroon, eventually settling in Maryland after he was briefly detained and released on bail.

Clinton had remained with their family — father, mother and two younger siblings — in Cameroon, where he was a university student. Eventually Clinton was arrested by the police and tortured for peacefully protesting abuses experienced by Cameroon's minority Anglophone community. His father got him released but when the police sought Clinton again, they ended up arresting the father because Clinton had escaped. When his father, who

had lung cancer, died of injuries sustained during his arrest, Clinton knew it was time to flee Cameroon and follow his brother to the United States.

He headed to neighboring Nigeria, where he ended up on a boat to South America. In Panama, Clinton's passport was stolen, but he didn't let that deter him from heading north. When he arrived at the U.S./Mexico border, he presented himself for asylum, received a number on the list of asylum-seeking migrants and ended up at the ICE detention center in Irvine.

Shortly thereafter, in mid-October, 2L law student Kate Kafka took the reins as the lead attorney of Clinton's case, under the supervision of Prof. Jean Reisz, co-director of Gould's Immigration Clinic. It was Kafka's first Immigration Clinic case.

"The first time we met was at his first hearing. I was alone in the courtroom," Kafka recalls, noting that she felt an affinity for Clinton, as they are the same age and even shared the same college major, English.

"I remember thinking, 'Is this young lady going to represent me?'" Clinton says with a laugh. "But as soon as she stood up in court, I knew she was going to do it. I only had confidence in her."

The admiration was mutual, as Kafka recounts how Clinton's good memory and ability to clearly articulate his story served him well in the courtroom. "He was a great witness, so earnest and respectful. His answers were perfect," she says.

Before her court appearance, Kafka, who estimates she spent 40 hours a week for three weeks working on Clinton's case, had researched the tumultuous history of Cameroon in order to present a full picture of the injustices and patterns of abuse to the judge. "It lends credibility to an asylum case when the first-hand narrative fits with current events in the country," Kafka says. "He's lucky he got out when he did."

Reisz and Prof. Niels Frenzen, with whom she co-directs the Immigration Clinic, were with Kafka every step of the way.

"Because Clinton was detained, Kate had to work with tight litigation deadlines and did so with impressive professionalism," says Reisz. "After a particularly stressful filing, Kate surprised me by saying that she now knew she wanted to do litigation. Kate was especially prepared and competent and conducted the entire hearing on her own and better than most immigration attorneys."

Throughout, Kafka kept in touch with Clinton's brother Gerard, who was nervous about his own case getting denied for fear of how it could negatively impact Clinton's case. "Gerard called me right after he won asylum," Kafka says.

All that was left was to wait for the outcome of Clinton's case. "Before we got the decision I was so nervous. I didn't sleep," says Kafka. "I was so worried about what would happen to him if we didn't win. I could see that being in the detention center was weighing on him."

"When the judge said I was granted asylum, I couldn't believe it," Clinton admits.

"When I called Gerard right after we won asylum for Clinton, he cried and yelped," Kafka says. "You could tell

**"When I called Gerard right after we won asylum for Clinton, he cried and yelped. You could tell he was dancing around the room. Even I got emotional. It was the best experience of my life."**

he was dancing around the room. Even I got emotional. It was the best experience of my life."

Clinton was released later that night. Volunteers from Friends of Orange County Detainees (FOCD) provided Clinton with a place to stay, and through connections with the Orange County airport, got him on a flight to Dulles to reunite with his brother. "Because the FOCD had a connection with the airport, they were able to get him on a flight. Otherwise he would have had to take a bus across the country," Kafka explains.

For Kafka, winning her first case gave her a boost of confidence. She'll be working for a big law firm in San Francisco this summer and wants to continue doing pro bono immigration work. "Coming to law school was always about helping people," she says. "To know that I made a tangible difference in someone's life really locked me in and convinced me that I'd made the right choice."

Meanwhile, Clinton is living with Gerard and adjusting to Maryland weather and work as a landscaper. He acknowledges softly that "everything's good," but admits to being troubled by thoughts of his mother and two younger siblings who remain in Cameroon.

Yet he allows himself aspirations. "I want to be a lawyer. But I want to practice criminal law, not immigration law," Clinton says with a laugh. 🍷





# THE LEGAL RULES OF THE GAME

USC Cinematic Arts student game developer gains creative stimulation from Intellectual Property and Technology Law Clinic

By Carren Jao

Imagine being able to travel in time to see how choices you made about the environment have impacted your world. That's the idea behind "Plasticity," a video game dreamed up by a USC Cinematic Arts student and currently under development by a multi-school team. With branded single-use plastics as the game's focus, intellectual property issues are a key part of its development. Enter the USC Gould School of Law's Intellectual Property and Technology Law Clinic (IPTLC).

While Interactive Media and Games Division student Aimee Zhang (2019) works to finish the game along with a 32-person team of students from various USC schools and Art Center College of Design, IPTLC participants Christine Cheung (JD 2020) and Austin Stenberg (JD 2019) are helping Zhang navigate the complex world of intellectual property rights.

"They've really given me more confidence in how copyright and fair use operate, especially within the context of a video game," says Zhang.

The USC Gould School of Law's Intellectual Property and Technology Law Clinic, directed by Prof. Jef Pearlman, gives 2L and 3L students two semesters of real-world experience preparing them for their legal profession after graduation. Participating students tackle most everything, from drafting contracts to advising award-winning filmmakers, game designers and entrepreneurs, among others.

Participating in the law clinic is a win for Zhang, but also for Stenberg and Cheung, who will walk away with valuable experience relevant to their careers.

**"Projects like this give our law students and students from other schools something they're unlikely to find in their other classes — the real-world experience of lawyers and clients working together toward a common goal."**

"While a bit of a generalization, a lot of the legal positions that law students hold during their first- or second-year summers are less hands on," Stenberg says. "Oftentimes, law students are relegated to a more behind-the-scenes role, with the practicing attorneys understandably engaging in more face time with the clients. The frequent one-on-one communication that we have with clients is an incredible opportunity to develop our client relations and rapport-building skills, a special opportunity that most law students never get to have."



From left: Game developer and USC Cinematic Arts student Aimee Zhang with IPTLC Director Prof. Jef Pearlman and IPTLC participants Austin Stenberg and Christine Cheung

Zhang came up with the game's concept with fellow student Michelle Olson (2020) in January 2018. It places players in the year 2140 in a world overrun with plastic, leaving lifeless cities, flooded towns and widespread debris. "Our goal is to create a game that encourages others to be more sustainable," says Zhang. "We want players to say, 'I feel empowered to make a change. I feel introspective and reflective about my personal relationship to plastic. I made a mistake, but I can fix it.'" In the game, players are tasked with solving puzzles by creating solutions. Players then return to the same area 10 years later to see the impact of their choices.

Zhang says working with the law students in the clinic has improved her game. Because of the game's focus on single-use plastics, she needed to be really careful about how objects within the game appear — the shape, color, design and branding of packaging — but now she has gained the confidence to actually leave things in.

"Initially when I didn't have access to legal expertise, I self-censored content out of fear of facing a lawsuit or legal trouble," says Zhang, who aims to release the game by June. "Now I feel I have a better understanding of what my limits are, of what I can and cannot do."

Pearlman noted the value of this project not only for law students, but other schools at USC.

"Projects like this give our law students and students from other schools something they're unlikely to find in their other classes — the real-world experience of lawyers and clients working together toward a common goal," he says. "Our partnerships with the USC School of Cinematic Arts and its Interactive Media and Games Division are examples of the types of representation we do, inside and outside the school, giving our students hands-on opportunities to tackle challenges they'll face in their careers." 🚧



# ‘NO’ TO LAUTENBERG

Thanks in part to four hard-working IHRC students, an unprecedented blanket rejection of 87 Iranian refugees is overturned on summary judgment

By Diane Krieger

**L**ast year, Behrouz G. was a man without a country. He couldn't come to the United States. He couldn't stay in Austria. And he couldn't go back to Iran.

Targeted for his Christian faith, the Iranian shopkeeper had been repeatedly intimidated by government agents who would barge into his establishment, destroy religious symbols and serve him with trumped-up citations. As the harassment escalated, Behrouz entered the Lautenberg-Specter program aimed at religious-minority resettlement in the United States.

It isn't every day students bring an expedited class action lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Homeland Security — let alone prevail.

"This work came about because we were in Beirut," notes Prof. Hannah Garry, director of the USC Gould International Human Rights Clinic.

Had she and her students not been on the ground with the International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) when the Lautenberg mass denials came down, they wouldn't have been asked to join the legal fight.

The nine-day IHRC field experience that took them to Beirut was a pilot project that Garry means to repeat every spring semester going forward. Her goal: to expose students to major refugee intake centers in host countries like Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Greece and Uganda. Funded by alumnus Barry McCabe (JD 1977), the trips will give USC Gould students the chance to interview and provide legal aid to people in desperate need.

"It's an important focus of the clinic to bring students to those places and provide critical legal representation," Garry says.

Behrouz had every reason to be optimistic: In recent years, Lautenberg applicants enjoyed near-100-percent success in qualifying for refugee status, said Prof. Hannah Garry, who recently led a team of law students participating in Gould's International Human Rights Clinic to advocate for him in federal court.

Earlier, Behrouz had obtained a special visa and traveled to Vienna, where his claim was to be processed. (The Lautenberg-Specter program is run in partnership with the Austrian government.) But months passed, and he didn't get the go-ahead. Then one day last spring, he received a "notice of ineligibility" from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

No explanation was offered. His claim had been "denied as a matter of discretion."

## LIVING IN LIMBO

Requests for clarification went unanswered, but Behrouz learned through his contacts within the New York-based International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) that all 87 Iranians in his cohort had received the same notice.

Such a mass denial was unprecedented, according to the *LA Times*, and placed the Lautenberg applicants in a precarious position: all faced imminent deportation to Iran, where they could expect even greater persecution as declared asylum seekers.

DHS's opaque language blocked legal recourse.

"If you don't know why you're being denied, you can't appeal the decision," says 3L USC law student Ashley De Vance (JD 2019).

## SKYPING FROM BEIRUT TO VIENNA

De Vance was one of four USC Gould IHRC students who sprang into action on behalf of the Lautenberg applicants. She and classmates Matt Saria (JD 2019), Bettina Tiangco (JD 2019) and Natalia DaSilva (JD 2019) were all in Beirut on a nine-day field experience (see info box) at the time. They were interviewing Syrian refugees seeking UN resettlement when their host agency, IRAP, got wind of the Lautenberg mass denials. Behrouz's case was assigned to the USC team; the next day they conducted an hours-long interview with him from Beirut via Skype. Back in Los Angeles, De Vance and Saria raced to help IRAP bring



# MASS DENIALS

*Law students Ashley De Vance and Matt Saria in Beirut with the International Human Rights Clinic*

motions for class certification and summary judgment in U.S. District Court, funneling legal research to the pro-bono litigation team at Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher.

The outcome was a big win.

In May, Judge Beth Labson Freeman in the Northern District of California granted class certification for all 87 denied Iranian refugees. In July, she ordered DHS to immediately re-open each Lautenberg case and fully explain any future denials.

"I am so proud of the students' hard work and zealous advocacy," says Garry, who launched the IHRC in 2010. "This is a huge victory."

USC Gould alumnus Barry McCabe (JD 1977) is equally proud of the IHRC students and supports the clinic's efforts. "It's very important to look at the humanitarian side of the law," he says. "This project is helping refugees and providing law students with a real-world learning experience. I think this is an extremely worthwhile effort. I know our law students will be enriched by their experience with the refugees, and that is very rewarding for me."

## HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES

Saria and De Vance say their experiences through IHRC have ignited a passion for human rights law.

"That year gave me such exposure to all the ways you can work in that space," Saria says. "You don't need to be a full-time human rights lawyer to do it."

His primary area of practice, when he joins the Los Angeles office of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher next summer, will be real estate law, with emphasis on land use.

De Vance will join the Los Angeles offices of Alston & Bird when she graduates. With certificates in international law and business law, she'll start in the firm's business litigation branch.



But thanks to Garry's rigorous training and close ties to the human rights community, Saria and De Vance have the tools to make lifelong contributions in refugee advocacy — which, Garry emphasizes, is critically important at this moment.

## 'HAVING A LAWYER IS EVERYTHING'

"We've got the largest refugee crisis in world history," Garry says. "There are literally millions of people with no advocate. And having a lawyer is everything. Studies show asylum seekers who have representation are so much more successful at getting protection from persecution than those who don't. We need as many lawyers as we can get."

For De Vance, the Lautenberg victory feels bittersweet.

"It was really exciting, but also really sad," De Vance says. "This is a drop in the bucket. Yes, the mass denials were overturned, but refugees are being denied every day. There's so much more work that needs to be done."

Behrouz's case is still pending. He remains in Vienna. 🚩



# FOR MAXIMUM SECURITY INMATES, USC'S POST-CONVICTION JUSTICE PROJECT SPARKS HOPE

By Gilien Silsby

**T**he inmates at the maximum-security Pelican Bay State Prison in Northern California sat in a circle in the enormous gym, their hair graying at the temples and a decades-old refrain echoing through their heads: No optimism. No chance to go home. Most had been incarcerated for more than half their lives, sentenced to die in prison for crimes committed as juveniles or young adults.

But on a day last month, the men thought about second chances. They listened and took notes as a group of people dedicated to reforming the juvenile justice system spoke to them about the difficult path to release through parole.

Made up of USC law students, formerly incarcerated advocates and three human rights and legal professionals, the team was there to educate the prisoners about new laws that could lead to their freedom.

"We are really excited to meet you today, and to help you get home," said Prof. Heidi Rummel, director of the USC Gould School of Law's Post-Conviction Justice Project (PCJP), which has co-sponsored or written nearly every juvenile justice bill in California since 2012. "We are going to help you with the parole process because it can be a steep hill to climb," Rummel, a former federal prosecutor, told the men. "The goal is to show the board who you are now. You need to search within yourself to find your story."

The men's once-stoic expressions turned to smiles and optimism. Even though some of the men aren't eligible for parole for 10 or 15 years, they can now dream of freedom.

## CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPTIMISM

Rummel and her Post-Conviction Justice Project students have made it their mission to hold parole workshops at every prison in California that houses juvenile offenders sentenced to life without parole.

They have teamed up with Elizabeth Calvin, senior advocate at Human Rights Watch, who teaches with Rummel at USC Gould.

So far, they have visited 19 prisons in the past year, holding workshops and offering counsel to 211 of the state's 257 juvenile offenders originally sentenced to life without parole (LWOP). On the Pelican Bay prison visit, they were joined by Scott Budnick, producer of *The Hangover* franchise and founder of the nonprofit Anti-Recidivism Coalition, which employs former youth offenders in Hollywood and elsewhere.

USC Gould and Human Rights Watch began their prison workshops after writing a slew of juvenile justice bills, including the recently passed California SB 394, which gives juveniles sentenced to life without parole a meaningful opportunity for release through the youth offender parole process.

Calvin bestowed on each of the men a piece of paper with a first-time-ever parole eligibility date — something that had not existed before SB 394 took effect in 2018. "On Dec. 31, 2017, the system showed LWOP after your name," Calvin said. "Now there is a date. This is significant. This is your future."

Many juvenile LWOP prisoners are not prepared for parole-board hearings because they had no hope of release and very few opportunities for rehabilitative programming. By offering the workshops and one-on-one legal sessions with the law students, Rummel and her team hope to fill the gap.

There to support them in their efforts were former juvenile LWOP clients, who have been released through the parole process. They shared their stories and offered advice. "You have got to be authentic and real," said Jawad James, who was resentenced and paroled in July. "The board can see through lies and manipulation. You need to dig deep inside yourself and explain how you have reformed."



*The USC Gould School's Post-Conviction Justice Project has been holding parole workshops at all California prisons that house juvenile offenders sentenced to life without parole.*  
(PHOTO BY BRIAN FRANK)

### COUNSELING FROM EXPERIENCE

The next day, the team gathered for a second Pelican Bay workshop with men sentenced to more than 50 years for crimes they committed as young adults. A presentation from a 3L USC law student moved some inmates to tears. Kyla\* told the crowd that she believes in second chances. But she also warned the men not to expect forgiveness from their victims.

Kyla should know. In 2007, her brother was murdered in an abandoned house after selling marijuana. "You can hear the shake in my voice because it still hurts," she said. "Now I fight for people who committed crimes very similar to the crime that killed my brother. It's important to understand the victim."

She then told the second part of her story. "During my first year of law school, my 17-year-old sister committed a crime identical to the crime that killed my brother. She is now serving 20 years in prison. So I've been on both sides."

She encouraged the men to keep working on themselves and prepare for their hearings. "Even though I've lived with the pain, I believe in second chances. Don't think all victims feel the same way about

you. I believe in all of you. If you do the work and make a change, you deserve to go home."

When she finished speaking, every man in the room rose for a standing ovation.

"It's really brave of her to share her story," said Rummel, who has co-directed USC Gould's PCJP for the past decade. "I am repeatedly inspired by my students and the men we are helping."

### CHANGING TIMES, CHANGING LIVES

After a full weekend of workshops that included small and large groups, as well as visits to men in solitary confinement, the law students met privately with inmates to provide legal advice about the parole process. Whether their hearing is in two months or two decades away, getting ready for parole is an important challenge, said Rummel.

Rummel and the students outlined a step-by-step explanation of the parole hearing, including three main questions that will be asked: What did you do? Why did you do it? How have you changed?

"The questions are simple, but the answers are difficult," Rummel told the prisoners. "And your answer to the change question must reflect real change. We know that many of you have had little access to rehabilitative programs or positive influences as LWOP inmates. But times are changing, and it is up to you to dig in and do the work."

If the Pelican Bay visit by Rummel and her team opened the door to a future for dozens of men, then participation in the Post-Conviction Justice Project also motivated the students as they look ahead.

"The project has given me an opportunity to meet many inspiring individuals who have maintained hope when it seemed impossible," said Peraya Siri Wong, a 3L USC law student. "Going into some of the darkest prisons and finding bright spirits has been an incredibly meaningful part of my law school experience, and it has motivated me to continue to pursue this kind of work."

After visiting a client in solitary confinement and advising several others, third-year law student Maggie Mendez was ready to return to her law school classes. She said goodbye to the clients, hoping she had provided some spark of hope. "I truly feel honored to be part of PCJP and to work with the clients," said Mendez, who is planning to be a public defender after graduating in May. "Our work is providing real change and hope for these individuals." 🗡️

*\*Last name not included for purposes of privacy*





# TEAMWORK, TRUST AND PERSONAL DISPUTES

In a collaboration with the LAFD, the Mediation Clinic helps resolve conflicts between firefighters

By Christina Schweighofer

*From left: Jim Sullivan (MDR 2018), Maureen Maloney (LLM in ADR 2018) Fire Battalion Chief Linda Cessor and Alex Vazquez-Sherman of the Los Angeles Fire Department*

**L**ooking to address personal conflicts in the workforce without disciplinary action, the Los Angeles Fire Department in 2016 turned to USC Gould's Mediation Clinic.

"Mediation is a trend nationwide," says Cynthia Hernandez (JD 2000), chief special investigator at the LAFD Professional Standards Division, a civilian role in the department. "We want to resolve issues with members, especially if they work in the same office or station, and try to repair the relationship. That's where USC comes in, to help disputing parties come to some resolution."

The timing was ideal, since Gould was just getting ready to greet its inaugural class of students in the Judge Judith O. Hollinger Program in Alternative Dispute Resolution. With the collaboration now well underway,

the USC mediators and the representatives of the Fire Department agree on its efficacy.

They are also aware of the singular character of mediations within fire departments, where the often dangerous, stressful nature of the work and shared living quarters make it crucial that people work together well. "Teamwork and trust are essential for success," says Battalion Chief Linda Cessor, who ran the program before Hernandez. She adds that firefighters "will always put their personal feelings aside to ensure the safety of the citizens they serve." With the mediation program, firefighters now have "an avenue to address their own well-being in addition to meeting the high demands of the job."

USC Gould graduates Maureen Maloney (LLM in ADR 2018) and Jim Sullivan (MDR 2018) recently helped resolve two LAFD conflicts for the Mediation Clinic.

Maloney credits a pre-mediation briefing by Cessor and Fire Special Investigator Alexandra Vazquez-Sherman on the organizational structure of the LAFD with helping her resolve a dispute between two female firefighters.

Comparing her LAFD experience with previous small claims mediations, she spoke of “a very different dynamic.”

“This clearly isn’t about money,” Maloney says. “It’s about repairing or even restoring a relationship. Because in many cases firefighters not only work

facilitating between them. “Every mediation has given me something of value,” Sullivan says, “things I have taken into my personal and professional life.”

According to Cessor, the LAFD explored “a number of options” before settling on USC Gould for a mediation collaboration. “It was determined that the law school’s Mediation Clinic could provide a professional, collaborative and beneficial relationship with the LAFD,” she says. Cessor and Vazquez-Sherman report that the LAFD mediations conducted so far “have received extremely positive

**“We want to resolve issues with members, especially if they work in the same office or station, and try to repair the relationship. That’s where USC comes in, to help disputing parties come to some resolution.”**

together, they live together.” She expects the mediations to create a ripple effect where the larger organization benefits as much as the participants.

Sullivan recalls that one of his LAFD mediations — involving two male firefighters of similar tenure but very different rank — allowed both parties to be candid about their experience of the dividing issue. What he saw was “two guys, both close to 60, opening up in a way that men of that generation and in that line of work just don’t do.”

With Sullivan’s support, the two parties settled the dispute and even reconciled. Sullivan attributes the expediency of the process to a few factors. The mediation was voluntary and confidential, and each party entered it, as Sullivan says, “already committed to settling so they could put the dispute behind them and get back to being firefighters.”

Maloney and Sullivan — she is a licensed attorney and business consultant to financial service firms, he a commercial real estate broker transitioning into mediation services — agree that mediations are life-changing not just for the parties but also for the person

feedback regarding the expertise and professionalism of the mediators.”

Hernandez calls the program “amazing,” crediting Assistant Chief Stephen Gutierrez, commander of the Division of Professional Standards, with ensuring that the department reaches out to members and continues to identify cases that qualify for mediation.

Professor Lisa Klerman, the director of USC Gould’s Mediation Clinic, is excited about partnering with the LAFD to help resolve their workplace disputes. “Our Advanced Mediation Clinic at USC has developed an expertise in resolving employment disputes and has a robust caseload that it handles with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Department of Fair Employment and Housing, so the LAFD program is a natural fit,” she says. 📌

To learn more about USC Gould’s Judge Judith O. Hollinger Program in Alternative Dispute Resolution, email us at [adr@law.usc.edu](mailto:adr@law.usc.edu) or sign up to receive program news.



# MEET THE LAWYER-TURNED-PROFESSOR BEHIND GOULD'S SMALL BUSINESS CLINIC

Prof. Michael Chasalow and the SBC have helped nearly 3,000 clients

By Joanna Clay

In law school, classwork is largely theoretical, which students will apply when they graduate and go off to a firm.

But Prof. Michael Chasalow thought, what if you could approach teaching the other way around? Take real-world experiences and make them an academic exercise?

That's what led him to start USC Gould's Small Business Clinic a decade ago. It's a competitive year-long program. Only a couple students get in a semester, and although he oversees it as the practicing attorney on each case, students really lead the charge — each assigned to clients who likely couldn't afford legal help otherwise.

For the most part, it's helping small businesses start — such as creating an LLC — and protecting founders from personal liability. The clinic has launched a vegan ice cream company and helped two beekeepers partner up — including combining their bees.

Chasalow, who cut his teeth in big firms, was happiest working with small businesses, counseling investors working with start-ups from roughly 1999 to 2008. On top of his Juris Doctor degree, he also has an MBA.

"It's really hard to be with people who are starting a business and not be caught up in the enthusiasm," he says.

"There's so much possibility and so much excitement. People just find it incredibly rewarding."

## A SAFE PLACE TO LEARN

Since its inception, the clinic has helped nearly 3,000 clients — most of whom would not be able to afford the services of a law firm — receive free services valued at up to \$25,000. Roughly half its clients are women and people of color.

They handle every facet of a client's project — explaining paperwork and legal implications to meeting deadlines, Chasalow says. He's there for feedback and guidance.

It feels like a safe place to learn, students say. Graduating and jumping into a big firm — where one mistake could cost your job — can be dizzying for some students. In the clinic, Chasalow trains students to be detail-oriented and to respond to crises directly.

"I always say to people: It's not about whether or not you mess up; it's what you do about what you messed up," he says. "It's a really hard thing to learn."

And he's honest. He might tell a clinic participant, "Look, if you were on the job, you'd be getting yelled at."

Lauren Stadler (JD 2011), who practices at a public real estate company in L.A., said the ability to learn by doing in the clinic was huge.

"It mentally prepared me, and it also made me more confident in what I was doing," says Stadler, whose clients included a Downtown L.A. peanut brittle maker and a life coach. "A lot of people entering their first job haven't had any experience doing any of the work they'd be doing every single day of their careers."



Shortly after Gould, Stadler was reminded of her time at the clinic during a trip to Napa. She was in a Dean & DeLuca, the gourmet grocer, when there it was — her client's artisanal peanut brittle.

Eight years later, she still calls Chasalow for advice, whether it's asking him what it's like to go in-house or getting tips on juggling motherhood with her career. Chasalow has triplets. She and her husband recently met with him for drinks.

Wenger, is also a USC student. She's seen Chasalow step in to offer his expertise, like when he reached out to colleagues who were well-versed in tax regulations to address her concerns.

"He totally goes above and beyond his job description," Wenger said.

For Chasalow, teaching became his calling sort of unexpectedly. He taught his first classes roughly 20 years ago, first at Whittier Law School and then at USC.

**"It's really hard to be with people who are starting a business and not be caught up in the enthusiasm. There's so much possibility and so much excitement. People just find it incredibly rewarding."**

*Small business owner (and USC student) Erica Wenger, left, works with Gould student Katy Neubauer through the Small Business Clinic. Wenger's company, Mahkana, helps nonprofits raise money by selling specialty beaded bracelets.*  
(USC PHOTO/GUS RUELAS)

"He cares for his students, not just on a professional level, but as people," she says. "He tries to be there for you in all aspects of your life."

Although many of his students, like Stadler, go on to work with corporations or firms, those experiences with small businesses or "mom and pops" come in handy. For example, that student who helped the beekeeper went on to work with a company that deals in agricultural products.

"She called me up and said, 'I worked on a bee acquisition.' Of course it was millions of dollars, but she said, 'I was the only one who had bee experience,'" Chasalow says.

#### **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND**

The clinic, and the chance to do hands-on legal work and impact the community, has been a big draw to prospective law students. It was meeting Chasalow during a USC visit, and hearing about his clinic, that solidified Katy Neubauer's (JD 2019) decision to study at Gould.

She's now counseling Mahkana, a bracelet company that raises money for nonprofits. It's already leading in the cause-marketing space. The founder, Erica



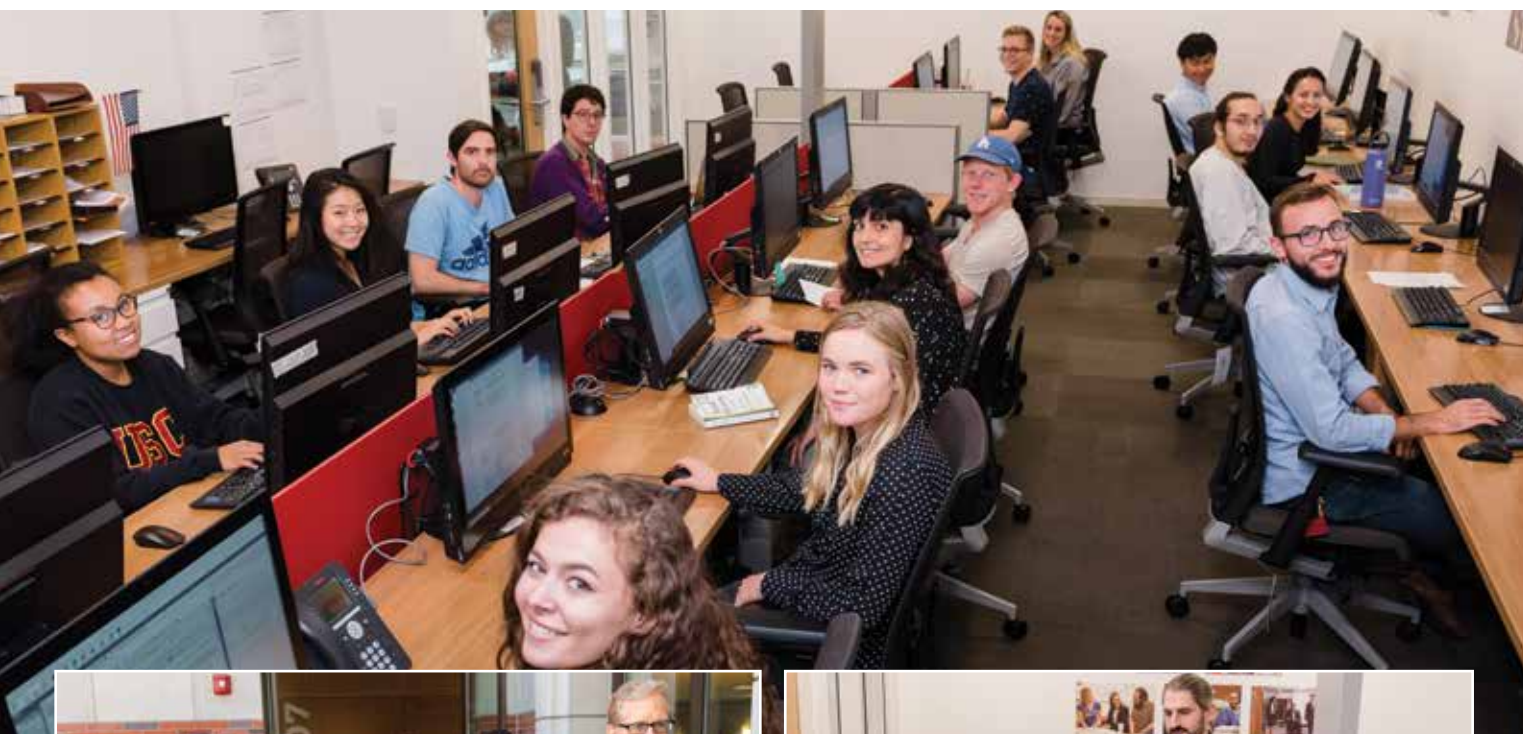
"My wife started pointing out when I wasn't teaching, I wasn't as happy," he said. "Being able to explain things more clearly to students is a really rewarding activity for me — that I'm making what's foggy a little bit clearer.

"Maybe that's a simple career goal but that feels really good to me." 🍷

*This article originally appeared on USC News.*

# HOME SWEET CLINIC HOME

USC Gould's law clinics found a new home this year in Verna and Peter Dauterive Hall — giving students, alumni, faculty and staff a first look at the clinics' brand new space and a chance to reflect on the work they have been doing. Dean Andrew Guzman praised the space as “a functional, modern and comfortable space for our clinics to operate.” Clinical faculty directors then joined him for a ceremonial ribbon cutting. “I think I speak for all when I say that we look forward to the great work that will continue to come from our law clinics,” the Dean said.







# What Will Your Trojan Legacy Be?

From donor-advised funds to lead trusts to gifts of cash, stock and other assets, there are numerous ways to leave a legacy. A pioneer in family law, Sorrell Trope (BA 1947, JD 1949) considers his education at USC as “the nesting ground” from which his celebrated 68-year career grew. Sorrell and his wife, Linda, have stayed involved with the law school for decades through Legion Lex, the Hale Moot Court Honors Program competition, and his membership on the USC Gould Board of Councilors. They have also supported a public interest fellowship through annual gifts and their estate plans. Read more about Sorrell’s story at [gould.giftplans.org](http://gould.giftplans.org).

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](mailto:mkean@law.usc.edu). You may also visit us online at [www.uscgould.giftplans.org](http://www.uscgould.giftplans.org).

**“I would not have been where I am had I gone any place else to law school. It did well by me, and I hope I’ve done well by it.”**

SORRELL TROPE (JD 1949)

**USC Gould**  
School of Law





## calendar

### **FALL JUDICIAL CLERKSHIP RECEPTION**

October 15, 2019  
*Town & Gown*

### **USC GOULD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ANNUAL TAILGATE**

October 19, 2019  
*TBD*

### **GOULD REUNION WEEKEND 2019 CLASSES OF 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009 AND 2014**

November 1-2, 2019  
*University Club*

### **SAKS INSTITUTE FALL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE**

November 12, 2019  
*USC Gould School of Law*

### **CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION (CLE)**

#### **2019 INSTITUTE ON ENTERTAINMENT LAW AND BUSINESS**

October 26, 2019  
*USC—University Park Campus*

#### **45TH ANNUAL TRUST AND ESTATE CONFERENCE**

November 22, 2019  
*The Westin Bonaventure Hotel*

#### **2019 INSTITUTE FOR CORPORATE COUNSEL**

December 4, 2019  
*The California Club*

#### **2020 TAX INSTITUTE**

January 27-29, 2020  
*Millennium Biltmore Hotel*

***For details about these events and others,  
please visit: [gould.usc.edu/events](http://gould.usc.edu/events)***