

Winter 2016

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RICHMOND LAW

The University of Richmond School of Law Alumni Magazine • Winter 2016







Supreme empathy

"It's not just the conclusions we draw," Sonia Sotomayor, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, said during a visit to Richmond Law in November, "but how we express ourselves and how we don't deride or diminish or demean someone else's argument in front of us. That's a judge's role: to understand, even when they're not going to agree." Read more on Page 4.

Photograph by Jamie Betts

Q&A with Wendy Perdue, dean



The national media continue to paint legal education with a doom-and-gloom brush. What's the reality for Richmond Law?

The reality for Richmond Law is very positive. Our employment rate is above 90 percent and one of the strongest in the entire mid-Atlantic region. Our July bar-passage rate is almost six percentage points above the state average. And year after year, we're filling our classes with bright, engaged students. This year, we welcomed our largest class ever, with the highest undergraduate GPA in our history.

What are you hearing from alumni and students about their sense of the future?

Our alumni are thriving. They are leaders in the profession — topping lists of “super lawyers,” appointments to the bench, and bar presidents. But beyond that, they are happy in their lives. Earlier this year we surveyed all of our alumni and learned that they have extremely positive outlooks. Their professional lives are flourishing, and they are very optimistic about the future.

Our students reflect that optimism, too. That may be why a recent visit from Justice Sonia Sotomayor resonated so much with them. The justice engaged in a conversation with our students and faculty in November, and her entire time at Richmond Law was

marked by optimism, possibility, and hope. She was an important reminder of the humanity and fundamental goodwill of our judicial leaders.

What are you most energized about in 2016?

Our spectacular students, faculty, and staff. Our faculty continue to shape the debates on critical legal issues. They do it through their scholarship and through their service locally, nationally, and globally. Our staff is amazing as well. They are leaders within the bar and their professional organizations.

Our students continue to surprise and impress me. This fall, two of our student-run journals put on outstanding symposia that attracted leaders and scholars from around the country. And it's not just their academic excellence that is so impressive. Just last week, one of our students who had worked for months on a pro bono criminal appeal won in the Virginia Court of Appeals. These are students with good hearts, looking for opportunities for civic engagement. When I see the work of our students and their passion and engagement, I know that the legal profession will be in good hands.

All in all, we have a vibrant, active, and engaged community, and every day, I am excited to be a part of it.

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Contents

Winter 2016

Features

A place of one's own

2L William Stroud is at the forefront of a group of Richmond Law students representing a pocket of the city's most vulnerable residents.

By Rob Walker



12

Rodriguez more than 40 years later

In 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States held that the U.S. Constitution does not guarantee a right to education. Professor Kimberly Robinson leads a look back at the decision's impact.

By Emily Cherry



8

Talk to me

Our always-uneasy national conversations about race and religion seem to be more difficult than ever. Qasim Rashid, L'12, is working to change that.

By Kim Catley



18

Departments

- 4 For the Record
- 22 Faculty Briefs
- 25 Student News
- 27 Alumni News
- 28 Class Notes

Her beloved world

Sonia Sotomayor, associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, discussed the court, the legal profession, and the value of hard lessons with Richmond Law students.



Supreme Court justices are appropriately tight-lipped about their policy views, but early on in her talk at Richmond Law in November, Sonia Sotomayor made one policy of hers very clear to the first student brave enough to ask her a question: “One of the nice things about asking questions [is] you get a picture with me.”

And so it went. In a wide-ranging and warm discussion, Sotomayor took questions from an audience composed largely of students and talked about the ideas that animate her memoir, *My Beloved World*, in which she recounts her early life, including juvenile diabetes and the death of her father when she was 9 years old, as well as her legal career and ascent to the nation’s highest court.

“It’s hard to accept the gift of being on the court without realizing how fortunate you are,” she said.

The book’s title came late in the process of editing, she said. “It really is my beloved world,” she said. “I treasure every experience I’ve had in life, good and bad.”

Cassie Powell, a dual-degree student from Yorktown, Va., getting her law degree and a master’s in social work, rose to ask Sotomayor about the courts and social change, referring to the *Brown* and *Obergefell* cases. After a quick photo with Powell, Sotomayor talked about the influence of public opinion on the court’s work.

“If we get too far ahead of society, our opinions won’t be valued or followed,” she

said. “If we fall too far behind society, then we suffer the reverse consequence; we become inconsequential, and people begin to think that the court serves no useful purpose in society. I don’t think it means that we have to think about, or should think about, how our opinions will be received as outcome-determining ... but there is nothing wrong in seeing how opinions will be received and trying to explain them in a way that people can understand them.”

Sotomayor is the third of the court’s current associate justices to visit Richmond Law and speak in the Merhige Courtroom in recent years. Stephen Breyer helped dedicate the Mehrige Courtroom in 2011, and Elena Kagan spoke there in 2012. The late Antonin Scalia spoke at Richmond Law as Orator-in-Residence in 2010.

“Catalyst effect”



Virginia's backlog of untested Physical Evidence Recovery Kits — often called “rape kits” in the media — is being addressed thanks in part to the doggedness of a recent Richmond Law graduate.

As a student two years ago, Sarah Rose, L'15, took a summer internship that split her time between the American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia and the Virginia Chapter of the National Organization for Women. As a researcher for NOW, she called crime labs and police departments across Virginia to ask about the status of their PERKs. The issue of analysis backlogs of such kits had arisen nationally, but until then, no one was taking a close look at Virginia.

Her resulting 17-page report became the basis of a presentation to state Sen. Adam Ebbin, who introduced a budget amendment to fund three positions in the Department of Forensic Science to help to analyze the kits.

“Sarah's memo had a catalyst effect,” said Marj Signer, one of Rose's supervisors at NOW. “It got things moving.”

In March 2014, the Virginia General Assembly unanimously passed a bill requiring all law enforcement agencies to submit an inventory of untested, backlogged PERKS, and the governor signed it. In July 2015, the Department of Forensic Science issued a report that recorded 2,369 untested kits across the state. Now defined, the issue can be more effectively addressed.

“Sarah's memo was extremely important in getting a women's rights perspective into this legislation,” Signer said.

Pro bono from the start

The number of 1Ls registering for voluntary community service during orientation rose from 70 in fall 2014 to 95 in fall 2015, according to data from the Carrico Center for Pro Bono Service.

Students volunteered at four local sites: Celebrate! RVA, Fit4Kids, Lewis Ginter Community Kitchen Garden, and Peter Paul Development Center. Read more on Page 26.

ID, please

Imagine that buying a bottle of wine invited questions about your medical history. That purchasing cold medicine meant a discussion about your identity. That a routine traffic stop carried the stress of outing yourself as transgender.

These situations are a reality for many transgender people. Identification documents with a person's correct name and gender marker can ease the pressure, but the process for updating them can be daunting, involving local circuit courts to update birth certificates, further layers at the state and federal levels, and, sometimes, hostile judges who insist on added requirements for transgender clients.

It's no wonder only one-fifth of people presenting a new gender identity have updated all of their IDs and records.

The Trans Law Collaborative — a new partnership between the Harry L. Carrico Center for Pro Bono Service, UR's Common Ground office, Fan Free Clinic, and Virginia Equality Bar — offers legal assistance for transgender people seeking name and gender marker changes and provides training for attorneys and law students.

“We hope to provide this service,” said Tara Casey, Carrico Center director, “so that members of the transgender community can go about their lives with one less hurdle.”

PRACTICE

Opening doors



For the four students who participated in Richmond Law's inaugural D.C. Externship program, experience gained was as important as relationships built.

“It's critically important that we establish more ties with Washington, with the opportunities there for our students,” said Steve Allred, University professor and director of the program.

And if there was one thing those four students did during their semester in Washington, it was establish ties.

Dillon Taylor, L'16, who worked for the House Education and Workforce Committee, summed it up pretty simply: “You just network like crazy.” The work paid off: He secured one of 10 honors attorney positions with the Department of Transportation for the 2016–17 class, a program that regularly receives almost 2,000 applications. The externship “facilitated the ease of the hiring process,” Taylor said.

Andy Flavin, L'16, already had a post-graduate job secured in the environmental and natural resources group of Troutman Sanders. But he wanted to use his experience at the Department of Energy to learn more about “energy regulation, get more ‘practical’ experience outside of the classroom, and get a snapshot of life as a federal energy lawyer,” he said.

Jonathan Mark, L'16, spent his time at the Federal Communications Commission in the policy division of the media bureau. Troy Jenkins, L'16, spent his externship at the Securities Exchange Commission in the Office of the Investor Advocate.

“I can't stress enough how important the hands-on practical experience really is,” Jenkins said.

MEDIA

Expert opinion



What does it take to be a good source for news media?

Ask Ann Hodges, who teaches labor unemployment law. She has contributed to *The New York Times* — for which she wrote a series on the National Labor Relations Act — the *Chicago Tribune*, and CNN. For years, she has also hosted radio call-in shows.

A good media contributor, Hodges said, is more concerned with informing audiences than being quoted.

“There’s a lot of misinformation out there,” she said. “I feel like it’s a little bit of a duty to speak out on these things.”

Ask Carl Tobias, who teaches torts, products liability, and constitutional law. He has contributed to *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *Politico*. His editorials about federal judicial selection were cited by Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont.

“It’s important to be able to explain technical, legal ideas in ways that people understand,” Tobias said.

Ask Andy Spalding, who teaches international business, anti-corruption law, and contracts at Richmond. He has contributed to *The Economist* and *The Wall Street Journal*, which published a story on his research in India.

Spalding said contributing to the media allowed him to circulate his research among an educated but non-academic readership.

“You have to think about issues in ways that are both intellectually sophisticated and relevant for an educated, non-academic public,” he said. “You have to have something to say, and you have to know how to say it.”

—Damian Hondares, '17



Bridge to Practice offers its first award for a fellowship abroad

“I’ve always been interested in international human rights law,” said Alex Lydon, L’15. Her internship at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague has put her off to a good start toward a career in the field. Richmond Law awarded its first international Bridge to Practice Fellowship to Lydon to help make that internship possible.

Lydon knew she would need extensive internship experience to secure a position in the competitive field of international human rights law. She consulted with international law professor Chiara Giorgetti, who pointed her in the direction of the tribunals. And it just so happened that the former Yugoslavia was hiring.

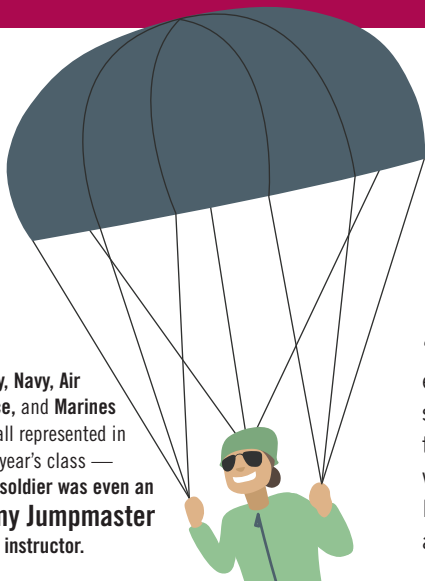
It was a week before the July bar exam when Lydon heard she’d been hired for the internship. She had three weeks to finish preparing for the exam, take the test, and then get ready for a trans-Atlantic move before the internship started in August 2015.

The criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia was in its final stages, and her work focused on the case of Ratko Mladic, a Bosnian Serb military leader. She spent her days helping lawyers prepare for cross examination, checking citations, and helping prepare the final trial brief.

“One of the biggest challenges for me is learning this entire conflict,” Lydon said at the time. The tribunal prosecutes a complex series of war crimes conducted in the Balkans during the 1990s, and Lydon spent a large portion of her five-month internship learning about the background and nuances of mass crimes and genocide prosecutions.

The hard work was worth the effort.

“I see really horrible things every single day,” Lydon said, “and it just gives me more information to put Mladic away and to help bring justice to the victims of all the families there. It’s really rewarding.”



Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines are all represented in this year's class — one soldier was even an **Army Jumpmaster** lead instructor.

OK, so which 1L ran with the bulls?

"There will be a quiz," Michelle Rahman, Richmond Law's director of admissions, warns each fall in her annual address to entering students. The subject of the quiz will be the students themselves. Rahman lays its groundwork by describing them in aggregate and thorough individual details, but she names no names. The students — most of them 1Ls, with a few advanced-standing students, exchange students, and the inaugural LLM class sprinkled in among them — know their charge: figuring out who's who as they begin their Richmond Law education together.

One student, gravely ill, was granted a wish by A Special Wish Foundation. Her wish was not to go to Disney World, but rather to meet Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg — and she did.

The youngest is **19**

The eldest is **54**

Turkish
Shanghainese
Hungarian
Japanese

Tagalog
Urdu
Gujarati
Dutch
Uzbek
Farsi
Greek
Arabic
German
Polish
Pashto
Italian

Portuguese
Spanish

The class of '18 speaks **25 different languages**. There are **five Eagle Scouts** and **two former butchers** (and no, both are NOT male). There are **trumpeters**, **competitive horseback riders**, **SCUBA divers**, and **several former construction workers**.



175 students
from 31 states, D.C., and 6 foreign countries

Graduates of **101** colleges and universities

18 students are the first in their families to earn a degree.

3.52 median GPA (the highest in our history)

51% of students are from out of state

Rodriguez

MORE THAN 40 YEARS LATER

Headlines quickly follow major Supreme Court decisions and then fade, but the impacts of these decisions often play out for decades or longer. Such has been the case with the Burger court's 1973 Rodriguez decision, whose effect remains strong in today's debates over the funding of the nation's public schools.

BY EMILY CHERRY

In 1973, the Supreme Court of the United States held that the U.S. Constitution does not guarantee a right to education. Richmond Law faculty and students continue to explore the ramifications of *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, a case brought by Mexican-American parents who challenged funding disparities in a neighboring school district.

At the 2015 Allen Chair Symposium, *The University of Richmond Law Review* brought together leading scholars to discuss and debate issues of education

equality in the U.S. In his introductory remarks, University President Ronald Crutcher provided some context: "As a society, through our laws and policies, we have decided that some school inequality is acceptable — or, at least, that we will look the other way when it happens. These historical and collective decisions have profound repercussions, not just for access to higher education, but for employment, housing, criminal justice, and health care."

Q&A

Symposium organizer and Richmond Law professor Kimberly Robinson is co-editor, with Charles Ogletree, of The Enduring Legacy of Rodriguez: Creating New Pathways to Equal Education.

What made you and professor Charles Ogletree decide to take on this project of co-editing a book about the enduring legacy of Rodriguez?

The issue the plaintiffs brought to the court's attention remains an issue today. There were substantial funding disparities between districts, and these funding disparities caused disparities in educational opportunity. What we wanted to do was focus on how Rodriguez closed the federal courthouse door to addressing these disparities, but also get scholars and advocates to think about new law and policy solutions that could close the educational opportunity gap.

Why are these issues of education inequality so important for students in the United States?

Closing the educational opportunity gap will be essential for the United States to remain competitive internationally. The labor market has become an international one. We have people who have more exposure to a variety of fields such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) classes coming to this country because we don't adequately train enough students in those disciplines yet to fill the jobs that we have. So if we're going to remain competitive, we are going to have to ensure that we effectively educate all children for tomorrow's workforce.

What's particularly important about that is that for the first time, in fall 2014, the public school population became majority minority. If we fail to educate our "minority" students well, our country will fail because they are now the majority of our public school students. We need to embrace and build on the strengths of that diversity rather than continue to allow race, class, and ZIP code to limit children's educational opportunities.

Tell us about your new approach to federal-level educational reform that you outline in the book.

I analyze the balance of federal and state power over education and how our longstanding approach to this balance really limits what the federal government can do in education. So many feel that this is appropriate because there is not a federal constitutional power given to Congress over education. And the 10th Amendment reserves to the states everything not given to Congress. Therefore, we have a long history in the United States that says states and localities should run education, and the federal government should have a limited role, if any.

I argue that this approach prevents us from taking full advantage of the strengths of federal education policymaking. State efforts to address inequality have been inadequate and ineffective. We need targeted federal support and intervention to ensure equal access to an excellent education for all children.

What do you think are the strengths of federal policymaking?

First, prioritizing equity as a goal in education. The federal government has a much stronger track record than state and local governments do. It took the federal government to hand down the *Brown v. Board* decision and then put federal money behind enforcing it. It took the federal government to require equality for women and girls in education. It took the federal government to require disabled children to get an equal education. So there's a long history there of the federal government saying equality is one of our bedrock national principles, and when the states don't honor it, we will demand it.

The federal government is also really good at providing research and technical assistance to help states and localities adopt equitable principles for schools. They also

EXCERPTS FROM THE 2015 ALLEN CHAIR SYMPOSIUM

"There are some charter schools that are doing truly innovative things, and we are learning from and seeing their successes. One of my favorites is the Teacher Equity Project in Manhattan, which has said, 'We're going to do something revolutionary. We're going to educate students in trailers, but we're going to pay every teacher \$150,000 starting salary. And we're therefore going to attract the best teachers.' Teachers flocked to this school from different states who applied, and [the project] had [its] pick of the litter, and [it] chose excellent teachers, and the results are quite telling. ... It works to have excellent teachers and to pay them well and to treat them like professionals."

— Jerusha Conner, associate professor, Villanova University

"A high school laboratory science course was required to graduate from high school in New York state, but 13 high schools in New York City had no science lab. In Kansas, the school districts with the most minority students, the most low-income students, and the most students with disabilities were actually getting the least per-pupil funding from the state. In South Carolina, in eight rural, mostly minority districts, teacher turnover rates exceeded 20 percent each and every year, and graduation rates ranged between 33 percent and 57 percent. Given these kinds of facts, it's not the least bit surprising that right now, there are 14 states defending themselves in cases claiming that their school finance systems are unconstitutional under their own state constitutions. These facts, these inequities and inadequacies underlay the poor outcomes that we see because they really restrict the opportunities."

— Molly Hunter, director for education justice, Education Law Center

have a greater ability to distribute financial assistance to help pay for changes that are needed to create equitable schools. Although the track record is more mixed, the federal government has the capacity to hold states accountable for providing equal educational opportunity.

Do you think states and the general public are ready for that level of federal intervention?

Different states partner with the federal government at different levels. Virginia has a long, proud history of saying no to the federal government when we don't like what the federal government wants us to do. However, this also can leave the commonwealth without the support that the federal government can offer to help the children of the commonwealth who really aren't so concerned about our history of saying no to the federal government and really just want a great education.

When lots of people think of federal educational reform, they think of No Child Left Behind. Where does that factor into this discussion?

No Child Left Behind is a heavily criticized statute because it was seen as punishing schools when they were failing rather than helping them, but I think the statute gets far too little credit for what it accomplished. First, it required schools and districts to disaggregate test scores by race, disability, English language learner status, and poverty, so you could no longer show a school is high achieving just because "on average" students were doing well. That helped identify who was being left behind. Second, so often we allow schools to fail year after year and do nothing. No Child Left Behind said that's just not acceptable anymore. So it required schools and districts to take a variety of interventions if students were not making adequate yearly progress on state standards.

The challenge with that was that the interventions were seen as punishments rather than needed interventions. Also, all states and localities did not possess the capacity and understanding of how to reform failing schools.

What do you see as the path forward for disparities in educational opportunities?

First, people need to know disparities exist and understand their impact. When I teach classes about this issue, so many of my students say, "I didn't know." We need a public campaign to help people understand that we are not giving all children equal access to a great education. Then, the question is what to do about it, and that's going to be multi-layered. There will need to be federal support for reform, as well as state and local reforms, and the smartest way to go about this is to draw upon what each level of government does well. The feds are very good about prioritizing equity and providing financial, research, and technical assistance. When challenged to do so, some states are effective at coming up with approaches that work for that state. We don't need a top-down approach that says, "Here's the goal, and here's the one way to get there." Instead, we still need the laboratories of the states to figure out how to get there, but we need a federal push to say we must get there. Our nation cannot prosper unless we get there. Our democracy cannot prosper unless we get there.

And then, finally, it will take local will, influence, and commitment to make equity a reality. It will require some uncomfortable conversations, including an acknowledgment that, too often, we have not wanted to invest in other people's children. We must replace this with a new commitment to invest in all children.





“Restorative justice in education is a movement, it’s a philosophy, and it’s a set of practices. And the intent of restorative practices in education is to really help move the system away from an exclusionary and punitive model to a relational model — to the idea [that] how we influence each other, how we matter to each other, how we are in fact interdependent with one another in a school, on a campus, becomes the basis for which we attempt to impact students rather than using fear as a way to motivate change.”

— Marilyn Armour, professor, University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work



“Our kids are hearing the message loud and clear when we don’t prepare them in school, when we don’t offer them schools that send them the message that we expect them to succeed, that we love them, that we believe in them, that we will teach them and will be ready for them. They get the message that we don’t believe in them, that we’re not ready for them, and that there is no value in civic engagement, that there is no point in participating productively in their communities. That is exactly the wrong message that we are sending to our kids in school. That is exactly contrary to our vision for what public education is supposed to be.”

— Catherine Lhamon, assistant secretary, U.S. Department of Education for Civil Rights

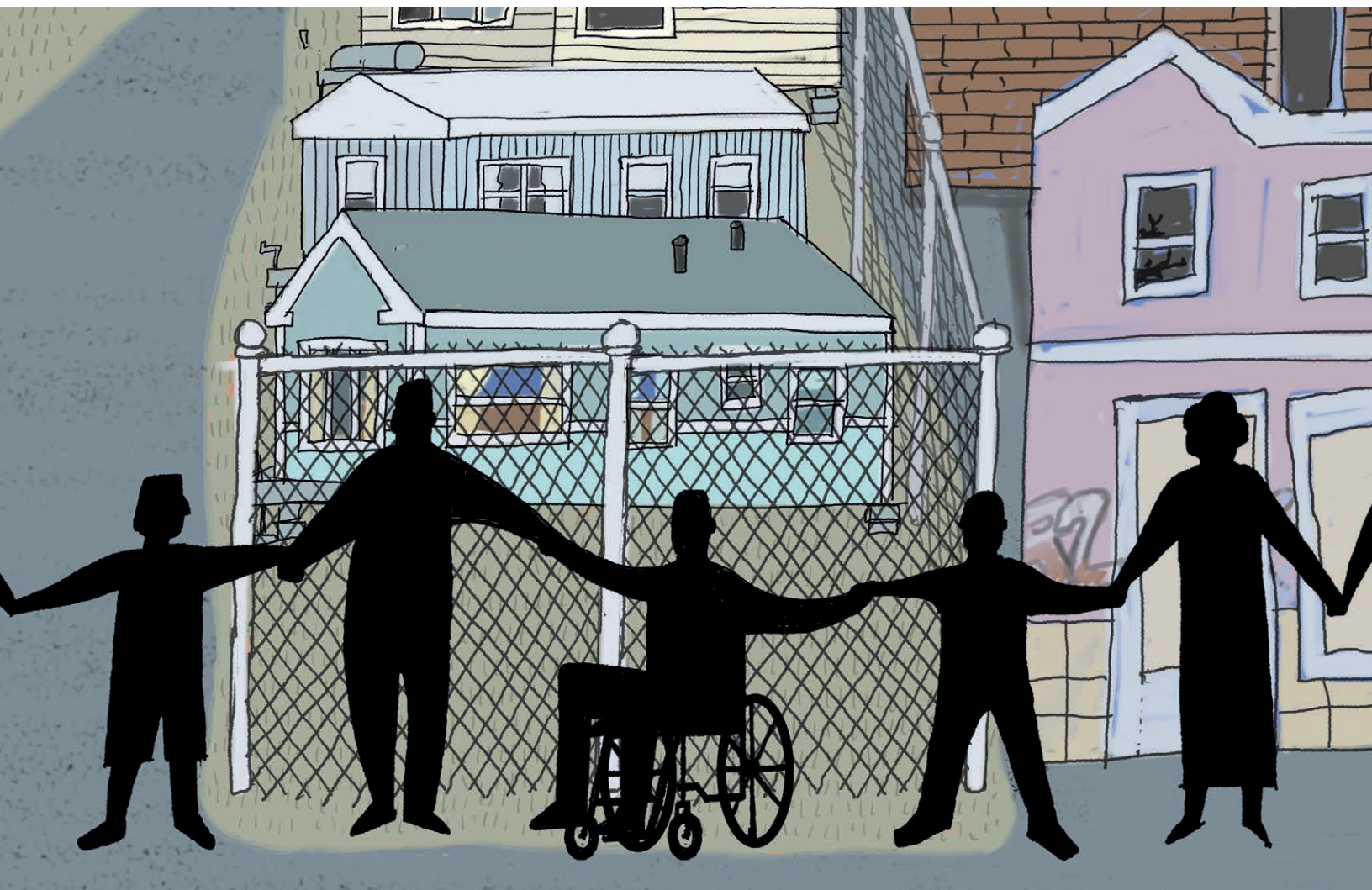


“Multiple empirical studies demonstrate that, for the most part, we don’t see a huge range in terms of misbehavior. So we have multiple studies that document that even though African-American students are not overacting in schools ... they’re still being disproportionately disciplined in terms of the numbers and also with severity. So what is going on? And I think this is a very complicated question, especially if you believe, like I do, that most public educators are acting in good faith. They don’t go into the system to try to discriminate. They don’t go into the system to try to make the lives of the students miserable. So what is going on here? ... Many researchers are tending to agree now that one of the driving factors of that is something that’s called implicit bias.”

— Jason Nance, associate professor of law, University of Florida Levin College of Law



A PLACE OF



ONE'S OWN

2L William Stroud is at the forefront of a group of Richmond Law students representing a pocket of the city's most vulnerable residents.

BY ROB WALKER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ROBERT MEGANCK

South of the James River in Richmond, along a dilapidated commercial and industrial strip that borders Jefferson Davis Highway, a handful of mobile home parks is home to hundreds of families, most of them poor, many of them Hispanic. The residential cohort also includes some older people, often with disabilities, who have been there for decades.

In 2014, the city of Richmond began an aggressive building code enforcement program that threatened mass condemnations, evictions, and displacement of the people in these communities. Already some residents have been evicted.

Soon several nonprofit legal and social service organizations coalesced around the residents and began working with park owners and the city to address the violations and head off further evictions. They formed the Mobile Home Park Coalition.

“Unfortunately, the city continued its code enforcement campaign, and the [Legal Aid] Justice Center finally filed suit against the city,” according to John Moeser, senior fellow at the University’s Bonner Center for Civic Engagement and an expert on Richmond housing history and law. At a coalition meeting, Moeser met second-year Richmond Law student William Stroud, who had volunteered to assist the coalition by providing information about renters’ rights and consumer protection to park residents, many of whom own the structures but rent space on mobile home park land. Stroud also advised tenants about the value of residents’ associations and how to create them.

Moeser was impressed.

“William is a quick study, very bright and a self-starter,” he said. “He is passionate about his work since it aligns so well with his strong commitment to social justice.”

Stroud’s role in the mobile home park project seems almost inevitable. When professor Carol Brown encountered him in her first-year property law survey class, she was struck by his unusual interest in subject matter that leaves a lot of students “glassy eyed.”

“He was smart and engaged and interested in property law where a lot of students are not so

interested,” Brown said. As the semester unfolded, Brown learned that Stroud’s curiosity stemmed from his family background. His father works in the oil and gas industry in Louisiana, and dinner table conversations at home in Shreveport often touched on esoteric subjects like mineral and property rights and how their acquisition and use affected people and communities.

“It was something refreshing and positive,” Brown said. “I enjoyed having him in class, and when we had informal conversations about his father’s work and what we were studying, there were a lot of intersections.”

Stroud also was well aware of the social justice component of the law. Robert Stroud, his father, volunteers at CASA, the Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children Network, which recruits, trains, and supports citizen-volunteers to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children. The volunteers work through the courts.

“I grew up with all of that in the back of my mind,” Stroud said. He spent a year after graduating from the University of Mississippi working for law firms and for U.S. Sen. David Vitter, R-La., doing constituency work, fielding phone calls, gathering information, and fixing problems for people. His curiosity extends to theory and “anything written down. Law school is the best place to learn about that.”

Last summer, Brown asked Stroud to work as her research assistant on a housing law casebook she was writing.

“I put him to work pretty hard,” she said.

To round out his summer, he applied for an internship with the Virginia Housing Coalition and went to work there, too.

Soon, he and two other Richmond Law students were working with organizations including the housing coalition, the Legal Aid Justice Center, and the Virginia Poverty Law Center on a case that touches on many contemporary issues. They found themselves in a whole new world.

“People had described the mobile home parks as ‘third world’ in Richmond,” Stroud said. “That is an unpleasant image, so you think the worst, but what I focused on when I went there was the quality of life

despite the difficult conditions. These were families. They were being told one thing by the city, another by the landlords, and something else by the nonprofits. The language barrier is a problem, and many of them have immigration issues. Still, they maintain a positive attitude. All they want to do is make a living and provide for their families and to live in safe and affordable housing.”

Jessi Wright of Richmond and Charlie Ansley of Atlanta, also second-year law students, were awarded Richmond Law summer fellowships and landed internships with the Legal Aid Justice Center, and they, too, started working on these issues.

deeply for these residents, and I hope for a positive resolution to the case.”

Wright, although she grew up in South Richmond and taught English as a second language before entering law school, still found the level of poverty in the mobile home parks to be shocking, and the residents to be “particularly vulnerable to the code enforcement raids,” she said. “If they lost access to their mobile home, there was nowhere else for them to turn.”

Digging into the case pitting government against poor residents was a powerful experience, as was helping develop the relationship between the residents and the lawyers at LAJC.

“The time I spent sitting on couches with clients, talking about their children’s homework and husbands’ work, proved to be invaluable to me. Getting to know immigrant clients who face challenges daily that I did not know existed solidified my decision to become an immigration attorney and fueled my drive to get there.”

During their internships, the LAJC helped organize neighborhood associations, assisted residents with communication with city authorities, facilitated meetings between residents and representatives of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, sought bank loans to fund necessary improvements, and eventually filed suit in federal court alleging discrimination by the city against the Latino residents.

Ansley described his internship as “invaluable experience.” The mobile home park case stood out for the extraordinary interaction with clients.

“I found them to be incredibly gracious and welcoming, and I admired the closeness among neighbors,” he said.

The internship, Ansley said, “was the perfect way to conclude the 1L year. I was able to try out many different practice areas and employ diverse first-year law school concepts such as equal protection, landlord-tenant relations, and even contract law.” Equally valuable, “I spent a great deal of time outside the office visiting residents in their neighborhoods and in their homes. I have come to care

“Almost every day of my 10-week internship, I visited the mobile home parks, knocking on doors, and tracking down clients,” Wright said. “As a Spanish-speaker, I had to translate documents and aid residents with English-only transactions with the city. The time I spent sitting on couches with clients, talking about their children’s homework and husbands’ work, proved to be invaluable to me. Getting to know immigrant clients who face challenges daily that I did not know existed solidified my decision to become an immigration attorney and fueled my drive to get there.”

At the end of the summer, Wright said, she enjoyed hearing from colleagues about the briefs they edited and networking events they attended during their associateships at law firms.

“While I am positive that my peers learned important skills and grew as lawyers, I would not trade my atypical experience with these clients for anything.”

All three of the students draw praise for their work and their commitment to social justice, a theme in U.S. legal philosophy that dates back to Thomas



Paine. Those who work with the students applaud their analytical competence, their creativity, passion, and commitment to social justice.

As a law student, Christie Marra, L'91, was beginning to wonder what she would do with her degree.

"I didn't think I wanted to work for a law firm," she said. "I thought maybe this was not for me."

A friend suggested she look into the Law School's externship program, "and I ended up doing a clinical at Central Virginia Legal Aid Society. I kind of never left. I guess I'm sort of the poster child for that sort of education."

Today, Marra is an attorney with the Virginia Poverty Law Center. Last summer, VPLC shared an intern with the Virginia Housing Coalition — William Stroud. He started with issues related to housing trust funds and got involved with the Mobile Home Park Coalition.

"He thinks broadly about issues and understands how to develop his theories," Marra said. "And he's a great organizer. We asked him to put

talked her through things, getting information, dealing with a lot of obstacles. She was committed and professional."

Wright also recalled that case as one "that will stay with me, probably for life."

As a law student at the University of Virginia, Storey interned with the Legal Aid Justice Center in Charlottesville.

"That was, for me, the most valuable part of law school," he said. "The clinical setting is what I found most useful and rewarding. I loved it, and I still love it."

To broaden his understanding of property law, Stroud plans to work this summer with a firm that represents developers.

"A lot of what's going on now with affordable housing, such as mixed-income housing and inclusive communities, has private developers' involvement," Stroud said. "I want to learn more about that."

"When I came to law school, I anticipated going to class and having the professor ask me a question, and

"You learn why a certain law, on its face, might seem like a great idea, but then you see its impact, and you realize it might not be working."

together the agenda for a board meeting, and he presented us with an educational piece. Since no good deed goes unpunished, his next assignment was a strategic plan."

Phil Storey, an attorney in the immigrant advocacy program at the Legal Aid Justice Center in Richmond, is grateful to Richmond Law for providing talent like Wright, Ansley, and Stroud to financially strapped social justice operations.

"Law students understand what's at stake, and they are interested in how the law applies to the problems we're addressing," he said. "They enable us to do more research, more follow-up. They expand our reach."

He was struck by Wright's ability to deal with clients on a personal basis. He recalled a case in which she was the link with a family living in dire conditions. They filed a tenants' assertion against the landlord, who failed to upgrade power to the trailer where they were living.

"These people worked hard, but they had very little," he said. "Jessi tracked [the wife] down and

then I'd have to go do research to find the answer. This experience has shown me a lot more. You learn why a certain law, on its face, might seem like a great idea, but then you see its impact and you realize it might not be working. Now when I read case law, I visualize hypotheticals and imagine how it might work in the field. It's probably influenced the direction my career will take. Property law is connected in some way with almost every part of the law."

Brown said Stroud's work with these lawyers and clients is invaluable. "What he was thinking about with me — looking from an advanced property perspective — and what he was dealing with in terms of housing affordability, issues of market rate housing, discrimination issues has allowed him to explore the area in depth from the theoretical, doctrinal side as well as the practical lawyering side. ...

"He has found a unique opportunity to bridge the two — research and field work — the best of both worlds." ■



TALK TO ME

Qasim Rashid, L'12, is working to change national conversations about race, religion, and education with a radically simple approach: finding ways to hear one another better.

BY KIM CATLEY

The day before I called Qasim Rashid, L'12, from my office on Richmond's campus, a man named Christopher Harper-Mercer walked onto another campus, Umpqua Community College in Oregon, and opened fire on his writing class. He fatally shot a professor and eight students and injured nine others before turning the gun on himself. Media speculated on a hodgepodge of possible explanations and motives: the infamy of similar mass shooters, his own isolation, and racial and religious hatred.

Rashid and I planned to talk about the power of human connection to reduce cultural misunderstanding and the violence that can result from it — violence like what happened in Oregon just the day before. Our timing felt off. But was there a less volatile time this year to talk with him?

In January 2015, two brothers belonging to al-Qaida forced their way into the Paris offices of the satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo*, killing 11. In June, a 21-year-old hoping to incite a race war killed nine people in a Charleston, S.C., church. A former journalist shot and killed a cameraman and news reporter on live TV in August after alleging racial discrimination. Before the year was out, Parisians were yet again under attack as ISIS launched a coordinated series of mass shootings and suicide bombings that left more than 120 dead. A week later,

a married couple committed to violent jihad killed 14 at a community center in San Bernardino, Calif. Throughout the year, Black Lives Matter protestors marched in more and more streets as more and more videos emerged from cell phones and patrol car cameras showing troubling encounters with police that ended in civilians' deaths.

Barely a day passed in 2015 without a mass shooting or act of terrorism. This doesn't even include everyday violence that often goes undetected, like domestic violence and child abuse. Qasim Rashid sees it too. He knows the predictable rhetoric from all sides by heart: Keep the victims and families in your thoughts and prayers. This isn't the time for politicizing; it's the time for grieving. This isn't the time for standing by; this is the time for action. We need stricter gun laws; we need to arm more people. We need stronger NSA surveillance; we need police body cameras. More training for officers. Better access to mental health care. Tighter immigration laws; more spaces for refugees.

He has an unlikely suggestion, particularly for a lawyer: What if, instead of looking to legislation and regulation for answers, we focus on finding better ways to talk with one another across our differences — about our life experiences and our fears — and how could that happen? What would that mean?

“The law should be the baseline and reflect that people have reformed,” he said. “If you expect to enforce morality by a law, you’re in for a rude awakening.”

His ideas are taking shape in a book, *Talk to Me: Changing the Narrative on Race, Religion, and Education*. It got its start on Kickstarter, to which he turned to test the notion of writing a book that could guide people through conversations across differences.

“Kickstarter is such a great idea because it allows you to see if an idea has attractive value to it,” Rashid said. “If it does, you move forward. If it doesn’t, then you re-evaluate.”

As it turns out, people thought Rashid might be onto something. Nearly 350 people contributed more than \$20,000 to turn his idea into reality. As he prepares to release *Talk to Me* this spring, Rashid said he hopes the larger public reflects his sample population of Kickstarter backers and can start to have these much-needed conversations.

“I write in this book that nations don’t go to war because they were too civil with one another or because they had too much dialogue,” he said. “War begins when communication ends. The way to end that war and that fear is to maintain dialogue even when it’s difficult. When you’re speaking to one another, you’re not killing one another, and that, in and of itself, is a victory.”

ABANDONING THE RHETORIC

Rashid’s hopes for changing that narrative begin at the most basic level: Give people a platform to make a broader range of voices heard. Of particular concern to him is the way that violent actions by individuals can cast collective suspicion on entire groups of people.

“Until you also complement legislation with ongoing dialogue and education, where you allow the people who’ve been discriminated and persecuted against to write their narrative and express their point of view, and to be respected and embraced, the law’s going to be meaningless.”

A Muslim American, Rashid says he has personally seen what happens when members of a group are collectively marginalized. He describes a post-9/11 America where, on more than one occasion, he had to prove to police he wasn’t a terrorist or endured excessive searches and interrogations while traveling. A frequent voice on Muslim issues in the media, he also speaks of readers sending hate mail his way in response to articles they’ve read online that mention him.

In *Talk to Me*, Rashid tries to give a platform

to voices like his: susceptible to marginalization, but eager for constructive dialogue that focuses on building common ground. These stories, he said, are often overlooked by the media, and consequently, the people who tell them don’t have a public voice. They get drowned out by, and hence are represented by, the fringes.

There’s the professor who’s an Orthodox Jew, who describes growing up in Philadelphia, hearing anti-Semitic comments and being beat up for being Jewish. He now sees connections between anti-Muslim threats of today and the anti-Jewish sentiments his parents experienced in pre-Holocaust Germany.

Another is an accomplished attorney of Pakistani background. She describes going to court and having the judge and opposing counsel assume she’s the client, and she shares other obstacles she faced to become successful.

Rashid doesn’t retell these stories on their behalf. Rather, attorneys, CEOs, activists, scholars, and pastors tell their own stories just as they remember them. Giving these stories a platform, Rashid said, may bring awareness and understanding, particularly about the struggles minorities are facing.

“Women, people of color, people of minority states are all too often disenfranchised, ignored, and kicked to the curb,” Rashid said. “They’re not given the platform they deserve but are so critical to us as a nation. The whole argument is, ‘Talk to me about this. Let’s have a conversation. Let’s have a dialogue.’ That’s how we’re going to overcome the racism, the misogyny.”

Rashid isn’t under the illusion that these conversations are easy. We all have our comfort zones that, consciously or subconsciously, we don’t try to escape. Talking to people who agree with you is easy.

“There’s nothing courageous about that,” he said. “The hard part is when I like blue, and you like red. Now you have to look beyond just the beliefs and look at the person as a whole package.”

“That’s when you need to realize that the differences you have are part of you, but they don’t define you, and you have a significantly greater number of similarities that you can agree upon. What’s critical is that you find what you do agree on. Once you recognize that, you have a much stronger anchor — and that’s what takes work.”

He’s also quick to point out that these difficult conversations might, in fact, already be happening — they just don’t generate the attention and news coverage.

“You don’t see a *New York Times* headline that says, ‘Jews, Muslims, and Christians hold hands

KEEP TALKING

While Qasim Rashid hopes readers will use *Talk to Me* to guide conversations in their daily lives, he’s also ready to continue the dialogue on social media. Find out more at qasimrashid.com.

and sing *Kumbaya*,” he said. “Getting your voice out there can be very difficult. People don’t necessarily want to listen to you. It doesn’t mean that you should give up. Maintaining consistency, even when you feel like your voice isn’t being heard, is critical.”

CONVERSATIONS WE NEED TO HAVE

About a year ago, Rashid was speaking at a conservative church in Ohio. Afterward, a congregant approached him. The man hadn’t wanted to attend the event, but his pastor had convinced him to show up. He arrived with every intention of cursing out Rashid. He said he felt Muslims like Rashid were responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks. The man had joined the military soon after with the goal of revenge against Muslims, he said.

But he told Rashid he’d had an insight after listening to Rashid speak. For the first time, he realized he hadn’t ever actually met a Muslim. He said

“War begins when communication ends. The way to end that war and that fear is to maintain dialogue even when it’s difficult. When you’re speaking to one another, you’re not killing one another and that, in and of itself, is a victory.”

he hated something he didn’t understand. Rashid encouraged the man to spend more time studying. In the year since, the two have developed what Rashid describes as a genuine friendship based on mutual respect.

In *Talk to Me*, Rashid outlines five conversations we’re not having — conversations like the one he had with the Ohio churchgoer.

“I start with the concept of parenting,” he said. “Unless we invest heavily in how we parent our children, the rest of it falls apart. By having strong parenting, we can encourage strong interracial and interfaith relations and develop strong leaders.”

From there, he offers suggestions about how to talk about race and faith and how to overcome the obstacles that hinder dialogue across differences.

He also asks readers to consider what makes a leader — is it merely the person with the most followers, or are there qualities that separate a true leader, regardless of the number of people in his or her camp?

Finally, Rashid encourages readers to consider their lasting legacy.

“They say that every person dies twice,” he said. “Once when they stop breathing, and then when someone says their name for the last time.

“Without sounding morbid, I present it in a manner that says, ‘We have people who have different races, different religions, different backgrounds, but who died doing what they loved and were equally beloved by all.’ And that’s the worldview we should have. When it is our time to go, we should go in a manner where we bless humanity with a wonderful example of what it means to be a good human being.”

Rashid’s ideas make change sound simple. But

as we see over and over, where does the rhetoric of change end and the reality of it begin? Could his framework for dialogue really help us talk to a person of a different faith or race? Are we capable of stepping out of our comfort zones enough to really get to know one another and understand the struggles we all face?

“Rather than trying to convince the other person why they’re wrong, instead recognize what differences you have and focus on where you share the similarities,” Rashid said. “That enables you to humanize the other person. It allows you to appreciate differences and understand what their journey was, what their struggle was, and why they hold the position that they have. And that’s really, I think, the ultimate victory.” ■

FACULTY BRIEFS

Faculty achievements, publications, and appearances

Azizah Al-Hibri was interviewed by MSNBC to share her reflections following September 11.

The University of Virginia Press will publish *Law and Law Books in Early Virginia*, with contributions from **Hamilton Bryson** and **John Pagan**.

The Metropolitan Richmond Women's Bar Association honored **Tara Casey** with the 2015 Woman of Achievement Award. *Virginia Business Magazine* named her to the Legal Elite Class of 2015



in the category of Legal Services/Pro Bono. Chief Justice Donald Lemons appointed Casey to serve on the Virginia Access to Justice Commission. She joined author John Grisham to film a public service announcement for the Virginia Legal Aid Center.

Dale Cecka contributed to *Feminist Judgments: Rewritten Opinions of the United States*



Supreme Court, and spoke on a panel about the book at the Joint Scholars and Scholarship Workshop on Feminist Jurisprudence at Fordham University School of Law. Cecka presented her paper "Underserved Children Are Not Served by Family Court" at the Mid-Atlantic People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference at the American University School of Law and

also presented "From Law Review to Op Ed: What's Next?" at the Poverty Law: Academic Activism Conference at Seattle University School of Law.

University of Colorado Law Review published "The Problems Inherent in Litigating Employer



Free Exercise Rights" by **Henry Chambers**. Another article, "Reading Explicit

Expansions of Title VII Narrowly," appears in *Boston University Law Review*. In October, Chambers moderated "Criminal Investigations in the 21st Century" at the Richmond Bar Association Bench-Bar Conference.

Christopher Corts and **Laura Webb** presented "The Science of Persuasion: How Cognitive Science Can Improve the Way We Write" at the Frank Dunham Federal Criminal Defense Conference in Charlottesville. He moderated a panel discussion at Richmond Law, "Law, Faith, Justice."

Chris Cotropia received the University of Richmond's Distinguished Educator Award for 2015. His article "Is Patent Claim Interpretation Deference or Correction Driven?" was published in *Brigham Young University Law Review*, and his co-written article "Unpacking Patent Assertion Entities" was published in *Minnesota Law Review*. He presented "Higher Education and the DMCA" at the

Conference on Empirical Research on Copyright Issues at Chicago-Kent College of Law; "Physicalism and Patent Theory" at the Patent Disclosure Symposium at Vanderbilt University Law School; "Heterogeneity Among Patent Owners in Litigation" at the 10th Annual Conference on Empirical Legal Studies at Washington University School of Law; and "Empirical Analysis of Patent Validity" at Northwestern University School of Law.

Joel Eisen will publish his article "FERC's Expansive Authority to Transform the Electric Grid"



in *UC Davis Law Review*. He was a co-author of an amicus brief on the Supreme

Court's recent FERC case and was interviewed by numerous media outlets on the subject.

Jessica Erickson co-planned the third annual Workshop for Corporate and Securities Litigation at Boston University School of Law.

Jim Gibson presented "Relying on Reputation" as part of the Chapman Dialogue Lecture Series at the Fowler School of Law and moderated the panel "Innovation in Addressing School Inequality" at the *University of Richmond Law Review* Allen Chair Symposium. He was quoted in news articles in *The New York Times* and *The Atlantic*. Gibson's article "Death Penalty Drugs and the International Moral

Marketplace,” co-written with **Corinna Lain**, was published by *Georgetown Law Journal*.

Chiara Giorgetti recently became co-director of studies for the American branch of the International Law Association; co-chair of the academic council of the Institute for Transnational Arbitration; member of the executive board for the International Law Student Association; and co-chair of the South-East Interest Group. Her article “International Decisions: The Yukos Arbitrations” and her book review of Robert Kolb’s *The International Court of Justice* were published by the *American Journal of International Law*.



Meredith Harbach is the treasurer of the Association of American Law Schools Section on Children and the Law. In June, she offered public comment at the Virginia Board of Health on



proposed amendments to the Regulations for Licensure of Abortion Facilities. She participated in panels on gender in legal education at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools conference and on school discipline at the *University of Richmond Law Review* Allen Chair Symposium.

Ann Hodges participated in a Supreme Court preview with the American Constitution Society. She published an issue brief, “*Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*,” on the ACS blog and a post on SCOTUSblog. *The Washington Times* published her

op-ed “The Supreme Court Should Leave Well Enough Alone.” She hosted a panel discussion, “Law, Faith, Justice,” at Richmond Law.

Joyce Janto presented “Workplace Privacy: A Reality or an Oxymoron” at the Virginia Library Association/Virginia Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting.

Kat Klepfer presented at a National Business Institute CLE program called “Find it Free and Fast on the Net: Strategies for Legal Research on the Web.”

Bloomberg Business interviewed **Corinna Lain** for an article on the Supreme Court’s *Glossip* ruling, and Cass R. Sunstein cited her *Stanford Law Review* article on *Engel v. Vitale* in a Bloomberg View article on same-sex marriage. Bloomberg Law interviewed her about the Supreme Court’s oral arguments in *Hurst v. Florida*, a death penalty case. She delivered her paper “Disowning Death” at the annual meeting of the Criminal Justice Section of the American Bar Association.

Governor Terry McAuliffe appointed **Julie McConnell**, director of the Children’s Defense Clinic, to the Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice. She and **Mary Kelly Tate** presented on Richmond Law’s Clinical Technology Initiative at the Association of American Law Schools’ 38th Annual Conference on Clinical Legal Education.



Gary McDowell’s 1992 article on Thomas Rutherford’s *Institutes of Natural Law*

was cited in Justice Thomas’ opinion in *Zivotofsky v. Kerry*.

FACULTY PROFILE

Law and *littérature*

Allison Tait



Law school, said Allison Tait, “was never in the original plan.”

As a doctoral student in French literature at Yale University, “I didn’t see it,” she said. “I had no desire to go to law school, ever.”

But her dissertation research on 17th-century dramatist Pierre Corneille raised questions about how marriages were represented in literature, how households are organized, and rights within marriages.

“I came to a realization that this all had to do with marriage contracts” and the law, she said. She completed the doctorate and thought about law school for several years while she worked in development at the University of Colorado and Yale, learning about trusts and estates. She eventually re-enrolled at Yale, in its law school.

After a clerkship with a judge on the Connecticut Supreme Court, work as postdoctoral scholar for the Yale Women Faculty Forum, and an associate-in-law post at Columbia Law School, she joined the Richmond Law faculty this summer.

Her areas of expertise: trusts and estates, family law, tax exempt organizations, legal history, and property.

Tait’s interest in research fits naturally with the law professor’s role, and her background in the humanities “gives you good things as a teacher,” she said. “It gives you a real sensitivity to the story behind cases, not just the facts. And it is useful from a cultural, historical perspective. It enables you to understand the biases that are in the courts, how the courts are informed by cultural norms and ideas of what things should be.”

Family law is a lively field today, Tait said. There are noteworthy debates in the public media, government, and legal forums about what counts as family, about the rights of spouses and children, and about regulation of trusts, charities, and giving, all of which may connect to families.

“It’s helpful in teaching what’s already a fun class to be able to talk about the stories behind the cases,” she said. “That makes them more accessible and enables us to get to the heart of what’s going on.”

—Rob Walker

Shari Motro participated in a panel discussion, “Law, Faith, Justice,” at Richmond Law. Her article “How to Write a Law Article that Reads like a Good Story” was featured on TaxProf Blog.



Kristen Osenga participated on a panel on mobile tech at the IP Platform conference at the George Mason University School of Law. *The Washington Times* published her op-ed on patent reform.

Wendy Perdue’s review of Carel Stolker’s *Rethinking the Law School*, “Law, Universities, and the Challenge of Moving a Graveyard,” was published by the *University of Richmond Law Review*. She participated in the panel “Deans Workshop: Is the Perfect Storm Abating?” at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools conference.

Jack Preis launched an online publication, *Remedies eJournal*, with Douglass Laycock of the University of Virginia School of Law, and he also serves as chair of the Association of American



Law Schools section on remedies. His op-ed on the Magna Carta appeared in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Emmy Reeves participated on the panel “Innovations in Academic Support” at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools conference.

Kimberly Robinson participated in a talk at Harvard Law School with Charles Ogletree on their

book, *The Enduring Legacy of Rodriguez*. She participated in three panels at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools conference: “New Legal Avenues for Advancing Equal Educational Opportunity”; “International Comparative Inequality”; and “The Individuals with Disabilities Act at 40.”

Noah Sachs delivered testimony to the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee about how



the government administers regulations regarding health, safety, and the environment. His

article “Credit Default: The Limits of Energy Efficiency Markets in Climate Change Law” is forthcoming in *Illinois Law Review*.

Tamar Schwarz co-led a leadership roundtable at the Association of Legal Writing Directors 2015 Biennial Conference.



Virginia Lawyer published an article by **Roger Skalbeck**, “Benefits and Risks of Legal Research Technologies.”

Andy Spalding was quoted by various media outlets — including the *Los Angeles Times*, Al Jazeera, the Associated Press, and *USA Today* — on FIFA’s corruption scandal. He participated in an international law panel at the Southeastern Association of Law Schools conference.

Mary Kelly Tate participated in a panel, “Emerging Coalitions: Challenging the Structures of Inequality,” at the University of

Tennessee College of Law. She joined U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott, D-Va., in two panel discussions on criminal justice reform in Richmond and Norfolk.

Carl Tobias published articles in five journals in 2015 on judicial selection, court vacancies, and marriage equality cases. Numerous news outlets quoted him, including ABC Australia, the *Financial Times*, *The New York Times*, Bloomberg Business, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.

Peter Swisher’s insurance law article “Wagering on the Lives of Strangers: The Insurable Interest Requirement in the Life Insurance Secondary Market” appeared in *Tort Trial & Insurance Practice Law Journal*.



Kevin Walsh led a CLE at Richmond Law, “Personal Foundations of Professional Excellence in the Law: Some Insights from John Marshall, Military Officer.”

Stage fright for 3L fundraisers

This may not go over well. Eric Postow, L'16, is thinking it. You can see it in his eyes. You can see it in the space between his rubbing hands. He's been preparing for six months. The National is coming alive — the bands are rehearsing; the art is being set up.

It's Sept. 5, and Postow is attempting to make the vision of himself and his friend, Charlie Calton, L'16, come true.

The duo met at the beginning of their Richmond Law School career. They started their own nonprofit, Students Live Benefit Concerts. This event, RVA's Rockin' Art Fest, was their third — and most ambitious — attempt to raise money for local charities using local bands. It also turned out to be their least successful.

"Financially, we didn't do well," Postow said, "but I think there are more interesting ways of dissecting what happened."

The night before the big show, Postow received a Twitter notification. One of the bands was pulling out, and he had no time to replace it.

The next day, the band's lead singer showed up anyway and played by himself on stage. He wanted to keep his promise to Postow, Calton, and the cause, even if his band wouldn't.

"He sat there and just did his thing — with no band backing him up," Postow said. "People came, clapped, said 'Oh, he's good,' but no one understands that what he did took a lot of



KATIE MCBRIDE

guts, and it wasn't easy. He's 18 or 19, and what a grown-up move, what a professional move."

Postow stood backstage when Big Mama Shakes, another band playing that night, was about to perform and looked out from behind the curtains to see only a small crowd. This band was meant to be the biggest draw, but fewer people meant less money raised for Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN) and Beds for Kids.

"So they performed their set, and they come up and they just nailed it," Postow said. "And after they said 'Um, we're waiving [our fee]. We don't want to take it.

We're renegeing on the contract.' They didn't have to do that. So again, character — displayed that night. What an amazing thing."

Postow is happy with how the night turned out, in spite of any shortcomings. He's confident that he'll put the lessons he's learned to good use for better results.

"When you put yourself into something and make it personal, it's crazy what will happen to you, which I think is a cool lesson from law school," Postow said.

—Tracy Akers, '16



1Ls spruced up the gardens at the home of America's fourth and most famous chief justice.

The chief's garden

Just a month after Constitution Day, 15 first-year law students plucked out weeds, planted perennials, and painted benches to spruce up the gardens at the Richmond home of John Marshall, America's fourth chief justice.

The law students were part of the larger HandsOn Greater Richmond's day of service Oct. 17. More than 1,000 people volunteered at 60 sites throughout the city.

"I thought this project would be a perfect fit for the law school," said Tara Casey, director of Richmond's Harry L. Carrico Center for Pro Bono Service. "Our first-year curricula is chock full of Marshall Court opinions, so visiting the home of the man behind such historic cases will be wonderful for students to contextualize their learning."

The School of Law has seen a growing interest in giving back to the community over the five years since it began offering incoming students the chance to get to know Richmond through service projects during orientation.

Earlier in the fall semester, nearly 100 1Ls signed up for optional service opportunities, which required adding another site to accommodate the interest.

"I believe community service engagement is absolutely essential to law school education," said Cassie Powell, a third-year law student who helped with one of the projects during orientation. "It is part of the ethical obligation of an attorney to give back to his or her community, and starting that early in one's legal career fosters that community commitment."

Law Review launches online edition

With the click of a few buttons, students launched an online edition of the *University of Richmond Law Review* that features a book review from Dean Wendy Perdue and an analysis of firm acquisition.

"Many of the top law reviews around the country are utilizing online companions to their print editions," said Thomas DiStanislao, L'16, editor-in-chief. The web edition, available at lawreview.richmond.edu, complements the printed review, which published its 50th volume since former Dean William Muse introduced the review in 1958 with the modest hope that it would "be of some value to lawyers of Virginia."

The goal of the online edition is twofold, according to Carter Nichols, L'16, online editor, who pitched the idea last spring and worked throughout the summer to bring the concept to life.

"On the one hand, it's about bringing *Richmond Law Review* up to date and putting us on a national stage," he said. "It's also meant to provide an outlet for Richmond faculty, Richmond students, and area practitioners to share their scholarship with the world."

DiStanislao agreed, saying that access to information has always been imperative to sound legal practice. With the launch of the online edition, they hope to add to the scholarship for which the *University of Richmond Law Review* has become known.

Saving Sweet Briar

Problems come in all kinds of forms: telephone calls, official envelopes, or interruptions to regularly scheduled programs.

On March 3, 2015, the bearer of bad news for Nancyellen Keane, L'82, was an email, and it zinged through the ether of the Internet to land in her inbox without warning around lunchtime.

This time, the problem was very personal: The board of directors at Sweet Briar College, her undergraduate alma mater, announced that the school would close.

"I was totally shocked," Keane remembered. Five hours later, the intellectual property and commercial regulation lawyer was on the phone doing what she does best: solving problems.

Within days, hundreds of alumnae from the historic women's college launched Saving Sweet Briar Inc., a campaign to block their alma mater's closure. The group retained Keane's firm, Troutman Sanders, to mount litigation against the college.

"It was a very emotional connection," said Keane, who joined the litigation team. "It was by chance that I was in that position."

Keane wasn't the courtroom litigator in the case, but she "saw all sides" of the action "and had a hand in a lot of it," including the decision to recruit the late J. Rodney Johnson, an authority on trusts and Keane's former professor at Richmond, to be the lead author of a key amicus brief to the Virginia Supreme Court.

On June 20, an agreement to keep the college open was settled,



and soon after, Keane's alma mater shocked her once more when its new president, Phillip Stone, asked her to join his team as vice president for administration and general counsel for the institution. She happily accepted.

Today, Keane spends one day a week in Richmond at Troutman Sanders and four days on campus, where she described herself as "in the belly of the beast" while she learns the increasingly complex landscape of higher education laws and regulations.

"It's always good as a lawyer to do new things," she said.

Keane said both her time at Richmond and her career since have equipped her for this new role.

Fresh out of the classroom, Keane was an assistant attorney general, working in the evol-

ing field of what was then called "computer law." The area of practice was so new that when she departed for the private sector, a request for updated technology was met by the question: "What would a lawyer need a computer for?"

Keane honed her client service, crisis management, and problem-solving skills as in-house counsel for several companies before joining Troutman 17 years ago.

The prospect of Keane's alma mater shuttering was a fight she was ready for, and while that crisis is resolved, her goals for the moment are clear: "We're trying," she said, "to keep our eyes focused on the road ahead."

—Sarah Vogelsong

CLASS NOTES

Class news, alumni profiles, and events

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1970s

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1980s

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At Fall Gathering, from left: Cynthia Marshall; Bubba Marshall, L'65; Harry Shaia, L'53; Lisa Allen, 1L; Russell Bowles, L'86; Brewster Rawls, L'84; Fleet Kirk, R'75 and L'84; and Frank DeGaetani, B'71 and L'83.

Animal advocate

Elly Pepper, L'10



Simplicity — it's the peaceful world that Elly Pepper, L'10, finds whenever she ventures outside.

The environment was integral to her life as a young child, growing up in Maine just outside of Acadia National Park. In high school, Pepper wandered the Appalachian Trail, parting through the trees and climbing along, with everything she could possibly need right on her back. She sported one T-shirt for the two-month-long hike, finding her

clear and crisp love for a simple life spent outside.

These outdoor adventures, from tide pools and hiking trips to island explorations, brought Pepper to the career in which she is deeply invested today. Pepper is a legislative wildlife advocate for the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, D.C.

"I work on the local level, working on prohibiting different types of traps used in Maine," she said. "The state level involves doing litigation in improving state regulations — I helped draft the resolution banning the sale of ivory in California.

"At the federal level, we put pressure on the government concerning wildlife, and on the international level, I work on prevention of international trade of endangered species, banning the trade of wildlife parts such as [the parts of] polar bears."

Pepper said she's wanted to work for NRDC since she was a teenager, making her decision to pursue environmental law as natural as her love for the outdoors.

"I always knew it was something I wanted to do ... and I didn't know what I was getting into," she said. "Now I do litigation, but it's focused on policy. I think it's important for law students to know that you don't have to be in a firm. You can use your degree to advocate for policy, for really anything."

She noted that she wasn't great at science — making a career of studying animals in the field not the best option for satisfying her passion. With a quick laugh and a moment of reflection she said, "In law school, I did feel a little pressure, self-imposed pressure, too, I'm sure, to work at a firm and pay off my debt, but I think that if you do work hard enough, there are other options. ... I think you should follow your passion and get creative."

—Tracy Akers, '16

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Sean Kumar, L'05; Ann Burks, L'84; Ariana Woodson, 1L; Mihir Elchuri, L'13; Rosanne Ibanez, L'12; Andrew Tarne, L'13; Natalie Nguyen; Joyce Ballato, GB'87; Carole Yeatts, W'90; Mike Ballato, L'80; and Andre Keels, 1L.

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Diplomacy for Dublin

Eugene Efimov, '06 and L'14



At 15, Eugene Efimov arrived in the United States as an immigrant from Lithuania. One of the first places he visited was the United Nations world headquarters in New York City.

Now, he works there, where he's finishing his second contract with the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations. His daily routine involves the train commute into headquarters, followed by a flurry of meetings to attend, summarize, and report

back recommendations to the Irish foreign service.

As part of the connective tissue between Dublin and the United Nations, he works hand-in-hand with the government of Ireland and its delegations to articulate their positions and evaluate where they can agree or disagree on certain topics. Ultimately, he helps guide them by providing information and advice on developing issues.

The work, Efimov said, is not very different from the legal profession — in this case, his client is the Irish government and the people of Ireland. It's also the work he's focused on making his career.

As an undergraduate at Richmond, he studied international studies with a focus on modern Europe. After Richmond, he earned a Master of Laws from Tilburg University in the Netherlands. Between the graduate program and law school, he landed a traineeship with the European Union Delegation to the United Nations, where he experienced firsthand the work of the disarmament and legal affairs committees of the U.N. General Assembly.

What drew him back to Richmond was the realization that many of the skills he wanted to sharpen are essential ones for lawyers.

"Much of international relations is controlled through legal instruments," Efimov said. "That's what made the decision to go to law school at Richmond so potent in my mind."

The summer of 2012, before he entered Richmond Law, he landed an internship with the Rule of Law Unit at the Secretary General's office. Later that September, as he was beginning law school classes, his mind was in New York, where a high-level meeting between prime ministers and presidents convened on the rule of law in advance of the opening session of the U.N. General Assembly.

"I saw the law as an instrument for becoming good in this field of international relations," Efimov said. "It requires clarity in writing and reasoning — as an avenue for growing a successful career."

He also is quick to point out how fortunate he's been to work with the supervisors he has had — to represent these governments at this level of responsibility and to enjoy the intellectual stimulation that comes with understanding the various positions of different governments.

"There's a certain process that goes into instituting change that's global in nature and transcending," he said. "What some people may see as a challenge, I actually love."

—Paul Brockwell Jr.

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