

# ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



LATEST NEWS

DEC. 2023



## Note from Vice Dean Jerry Dickinson

Greetings from Pitt Law! This is my first occasion to communicate with you as Vice Dean. While many of you are students or colleagues of mine, I thought I'd take this opportunity to introduce myself a bit more.

I'm one of only a few full-time Pitt Law faculty born and raised in Pittsburgh. I grew up in a large foster home of eleven children in Shaler Township and graduated from Shaler High School. After more than a decade traveling and living in multiple cities and countries across the nation and the world, I returned to the Commonwealth to practice law at Reed Smith LLP in Pittsburgh. I then served as a law clerk for Chief Judge Ted McKee on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia and joined the Pitt Law faculty in 2017. I also ran for the U.S. Congress. Today, my wife, Emily Dickinson (not the poet!) and our two daughters, Aria, and Nyla, live in Regent Square. I still travel to Shaler Township to visit my father (born and raised in McKeesport) in the same ol' post-war suburban ranch house I grew up in, mostly to watch Steelers games!

I've found my hometown connection to be a rich asset for Pitt Law students who learn the law in the classroom and pursue a career practicing law. I frequently bring my pro bono experiences at Reed Smith into the classroom. For example, I teach my 1L Property students how defending indigent tenants in eviction proceedings or fair housing disputes works in the Court of Common Pleas. Sometimes I discuss my experience running for U.S. Congress when teaching campaign finance laws and First Amendment principles in 1L Constitutional Law.

I also love to mentor and guide students who desire to practice law in Pittsburgh after graduation. I often introduce Pitt Law students to my former colleagues downtown, to judges I've argued before, to lawyers I've worked with and against, or to legislators I've met on the campaign trail. I'm always heartened by how excited Pitt Law students are to seize the opportunity to network and connect with our city and region's wonderful lawyers, judges, and legislators.

On a personal level, I love convincing non-native law students to stay in the region after graduation. The city's affordability, and Primanti Bros and PNC Park are an easy sell! As for the Western Pennsylvania students, I've enjoyed the countless conversations sharing stories about our experiences growing up in the region and how wonderful a place it is to raise a family.

All that said, I suspect we have many more things in common. Please don't hesitate to reach out anytime. I enjoy speaking with alumni and look forward to many more conversations about Pitt Law!



**Frank Salpietro (JD '86) Elected CEO/Managing Shareholder of Rothman Gordon**

Rothman Gordon is a Pittsburgh-based law firm that was established in 1954. Salpietro centers his practice on civil litigation and class action lawsuits. He received his BA in Political Science from Emory University, and graduated magna cum laude from Pitt Law.

[Read more](#)



**Regina Wilson (JD '07) Featured in Pittsburgh Business Times 20 People to Know in Law**

The president-elect of the Allegheny County Bar Association has taken her impressive career to new heights, including a firmwide position at K&L Gates LLP, consulting lawyers across its international offices on conflict of interest and business objectives.

[Read more](#)



**Brett Anthony (JD '13) Recognized by Marquis Who's Who**

Brett Anthony (JD '13) was included in the latest Marquis Who's Who. He's grateful to have made great connections at Pitt Law with Prof. Alan Meisel, Interim Dean Mary Crossley, former Dean of Students Kevin Deasy, and Allie Linsenmeyer. He looks forward to the next chapter in his career, aiming to design a healthcare, pharmaceutical, and clinical trials consulting department that will serve community hospitals and clinics.

[Read more](#)



**Paul C. Neimeyer (JD '91) Named Chief Legal Officer of OU Health**

As Chief Legal Officer at OU Health, Neimeyer will oversee all aspects of legal strategy, legal counsel, risk, compliance, and contracting, and will serve as corporate secretary to the OU Health Board of Directors.

[Read more](#)



### Professor Ben Bratman Launches New Course

Prof. Bratman's new course, "Welcome to Applied Improv for Lawyers," was highlighted in PittWire. The course brings improvisational skills and persuasive storytelling into the classroom to help law students advocate effectively for future clients.

[Read more](#)



### Thank you to our 2023 Pitt Law Homecoming Reception Sponsors

Pitt Law's Homecoming reception was held on October 13, 2023, in the Barco Law Building lobby. It was a huge success, with over 130 in attendance. Thank you to our bar sponsor, [Kontos, Mengine, Killion, & Hassen](#), and to our band sponsor, [McClelland Legal Search](#)!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Join the University of Pittsburgh Law Alumni Association on **Tuesday, January 23**, for an in-person CLE program titled State of Student Loans. The event will be held from noon-1 p.m. [More information and Register here](#)

## FACULTY NEWS

**Professor Sheila Velez Martinez** received the [2023 Atlantic Coast Conference UNITE Award](#).

**Vice Dean Jerry Dickinson** wrote an [op-ed](#) for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette about the privilege that PA voters have in voting judges in or out.

**Professor Zhoayi Li** published an article entitled "[Technology Governance Under Corporate Law](#)" which looks at how technology influences corporate law, how laws should deal with changes, what AI directors are responsible for and who should be accountable in complex situations.

**Professor John Linarelli** was appointed as an incoming Editorial Board member of the Journal of World Investment and Trade.

**Professor Vivian Curran's** publication, "[The International Legal Order and the Rule of Law](#)," in the Southern California Review of Law and Social Justice (forthcoming), addresses whether

international law today can institute the rule of law. It explores arguments surrounding the UN Charter's Article 2 prohibition against humanitarian intervention, the issue of whether war is inevitable, and whether war can be moral.

**Professor Tomar Pierson-Brown** was appointed Director of the Health Law Program at Pitt Law. Her research examines the law, policy, and community engagement strategies to realize health justice for system-involved youth and youth with disabilities.

**Professor Deborah Brake** and the Pitt Law Review [published a Festschrift issue](#) (Vol. 84, No. 2) in honor of Rhonda Wasserman. Brake writes, "This festschrift issue of the University of Pittsburgh Law Review is dedicated to the scholarship of Rhonda Wasserman. It is celebratory in tone but also substantive and weighty in its contribution to legal scholarship. "

**Professors Stephanie Dangel** and **Michael Madison** published an article in the University of Missouri-Kansas City Law Review titled "[Innovators, Esq: Training the Next Generation of Lawyer Social Entrepreneurs.](#)" The article calls on law schools to teach students the ins & outs of the law and equip them with the skills to become social entrepreneurs.

## CLASS NOTES

Pitt Law welcomes news and updates and encourages you to inform us of your personal and professional accomplishments by submitting a Class Note!

<https://www.law.pitt.edu/alumni/reconnect/note>

**Deja Bryant (JD '22)** was selected for the National Black Lawyers Association's Top 40 Under 40 Black Lawyers in PA.

**Jeffrey Getty (JD '96)** published his first book "The Descent is the Real Climb: Unexpected Truths About Successful Business Transitions".

**Melinda Ghilardi (JD '83)** was recently included in the 2024 edition of Best Lawyers in America® for Insurance Law, Personal Injury Litigation – Plaintiffs, and Product Liability Litigation – Plaintiffs.

**Brandon Moore (JD '12)** has been elected to the partnership at McGuireWoods.

**Joshua Sallmen (JD '18)** was honored as part of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's Pittsburgh's 50 Finest Class of 2023.

**Chief Justice Debra McCloskey Todd (JD '82)** was honored as a 2023 Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania (DDPA) inductee.

**Shaheen Wallace (JD '14)** became a member of the Allegheny County Academy of Trial Lawyers.

**Jeff Westerman (JD '80)** was selected to serve as lawyer representative to the U.S. Circuit Judicial Conference.