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## Dean's Report, 2017

Peter B. Rutledge

*The University of Georgia School of Law*

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# 2017 DEAN'S REPORT



Photo at top of page: The Georgia Supreme Court heard two cases at the law school during October. All nine justices took the time to pose with a few of our students who were able to attend the oral arguments.

## FROM PETER B. "BO" RUTLEDGE, DEAN & HERMAN E. TALMADGE CHAIR OF LAW

### Who is the University of Georgia School of Law?

We are the first-year student who hopes to specialize in family law so that she can join her mother's practice in rural Georgia. And the Ivy League graduate who worked as a paralegal in a New York law firm and aspires to make a national impact on the business world as a transactional attorney. We are the first-generation college graduate coming to law school with the hopes of returning to a company he knows from his experience on the front line with a new role as a lawyer. And the captain in the U.S. Army who has chosen to pursue a law degree so he can help others who have served their country.

The University of Georgia School of Law is as diverse as these current and prospective students – and the 189 members of the Class of 2020 we welcomed this fall. But we are strongly united in our commitment to excellence – which is evident in our students, who are pursuing such worthy ambitions, and our faculty, staff and engaged stakeholders who support them every step along the way.

Together, we will build upon our law school's rich tradition of making a lasting and real impact on our state and society. We will fulfill the promise made by three simple words – **Prepare. Connect. Lead.**

### Preparing the next generation of lawyers and leaders.

As law schools across the nation are reducing or eliminating experiential learning programs as a way to lower costs, we have built strategic partnerships that allow us to maintain our commitment to these unparalleled opportunities for real-world experience through 16 separate programs.

- Launched in 2016 through the generosity of alumnus Marlan B. Wilbanks (J.D.'86), the **Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation Clinic** has already assisted clients in over 50 cases. This clinic has become a reliable voice for survivors of child sexual abuse, an invaluable resource for lawyers throughout the state and a platform for national dialogue on a critical social issue.
- In the last academic year, our **Appellate Litigation Clinic** students appeared before the Fourth, Eleventh and D.C. Circuit Courts, winning a *habeas* case in the Fourth Circuit. In each case, third-year students wrote briefs, advised clients and made arguments before the appellate panels.
- Thanks to the generosity of several alumni and friends including James E. "Jim" Butler Jr. (J.D.'77), who wanted to honor his father – a former fighter pilot in the U.S. Navy – we announced the creation of a new **Veterans Legal Services Clinic** earlier this year. The clinic will primarily focus on assisting veterans with claims before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. It will also provide financial support to several veterans now studying at our law school.



In addition to funding the Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation Clinic Marlan Wilbanks (J.D.'86) also supports the Aubrey and Marilyn Motz Scholarship Fund in honor of his mother and stepfather. Current Motz Scholars include first-year student Raneem Ashrawi (left) and second-year student Kristin Williams.



Third-year students Maggie Sparks (left), Lauren Lutton (center) and Taryn Winston finished as finalists in the Region 5 contest of the National Moot Court Competition, qualifying for the national championship tier of the tournament to be held next year.

Our **nationally recognized advocacy program** continues to enjoy incredible success while preparing students for any setting that requires effective communication or negotiation skills. Teams recently won the Billings, Exum & Frye National Moot Court Competition and took second place at the national Emory Civil Rights and Liberties Moot Court Competition. Our students are also preparing for the National Moot Court championship after finishing as finalists (and best oralist) in the regional competition.

Of course, inherent in first-rate preparation is our ability to attract and retain world-class legal scholars. The men and women who teach our students today are true legal leaders whose accomplishments outside the classroom include dialogues with national policymakers, publications in flagship law journals, speaking invitations at prestigious universities and appearances in national and international media outlets. To share only a few examples:

- Hosch Associate Professor **Mehrsa Baradaran**, who received national acclaim for her 2015 book *How the Other Half Banks*, released a new book this fall titled *The Color of Money: Black Banking and the Racial Wealth Gap*, which will continue to shape debate about the future of the American banking system.
- **Diane Marie Amann**, who holds the Woodruff Chair in International Law, received prestigious research appointments at the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation's Center for Advanced Genocide Research and the University of Oxford.
- Brumby Distinguished Professor in First Amendment Law **Sonja R. West** received the 2017 Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Stonecipher Award, which recognizes the best media law and policy article published during the previous year.

- Assistant Professor **Nathan S. Chapman** was honored as the recipient of the inaugural Harold Berman Prize, which was presented by the Association of American Law Schools Section on Law and Religion to recognize untenured scholars on the tenure track for excellent scholarship.

We welcomed two new members to our faculty this fall — Hosch Professor **Christopher M. Bruner** who is teaching a variety of business law courses including an exciting new corporate skills course titled “Deals” and Assistant Professor **Sandra G. “Sandy” Mayson** whose areas of expertise are criminal law and criminal justice reform. We are also pleased to recognize the promotion of **Kathleen A. “Kate” Doty** to director of the Dean Rusk International Law Center.

### Connecting students, scholarships and stakeholders.

Our commitment to student success goes far beyond the classroom. Part of that is providing opportunities to connect students with legal leaders, friends and other key stakeholders who support our mission.

In its second year, the law school's **Mentorship Program** is making an undeniable impact by connecting entering students to a four-person mentorship team, including a graduate or professional mentor. As they begin to navigate the challenging experience of law school, our students have a network they can rely upon – one that knows firsthand just how difficult law school can be. For example, one mentor took his mentee to the theater to celebrate their birthdays and the securing of an internship. And this year's Homecoming saw countless pairs of mentors and mentees enjoying barbecue and the UGA football game. It has been amazing to see the relationships that have developed – some of which may even result in jobs upon graduation.

Another way we continue to build connections is through the student scholarships made possible by donors who are not only investing in the law school but in the future of the legal profession.

- This summer, I accompanied three **Alston Distinguished Law Fellows** to Washington, D.C., where they visited with graduates, attended a session of the U.S. Supreme Court and enjoyed a private meeting with Justice Clarence Thomas. This program has grown with the addition of a **Russell Distinguished Law Fellowship**, which was created by the Richard B. Russell Foundation Board to support an academically talented student from rural Georgia who plans to pursue a career in public service.
- The new **Edenfield Scholarship**, presented in memory of Judge B. Avant Edenfield (J.D.'58), recognizes students who are the first in their family to attend college or have a demonstrated connection with the Savannah/Statesboro area. The inaugural scholarship has been awarded to Gracie G. Shepherd, a third-year student who plans to join a firm in Savannah following graduation.

- Roughly 15 percent of each entering class are first-generation college graduates, and the **Pin Point Scholarship**, the **Parker Multiplier Scholarship** and the **Stacey Godfrey Evans Scholarship** help these students achieve their dreams of becoming lawyers. The inaugural recipients have already enjoyed great success in the law school's advocacy program, and one of them, who recently passed the bar, is already on his way to a successful career.

- Graduates and friends including **Kathelen V. Amos (J.D.'82)**, **James R. “Jim” Borders (J.D.'88)**, **B. Lynn Chastain (J.D.'84)**, **Michael L. Goldberg (J.D.'97)**, **Kay and John R. Parker Jr., Phaedra Parks (J.D.'98)**, **William P. “Billy” Payne (J.D.'73)**, **Robert J. “Bobby” Soper (J.D.'97)**, **Aravinth I. “Siva” (LL.M.'88) and Shiyami M. (LL.M.'89) Subramaniam** and **Susan C. Waltman** as well as the law firm **Blasingame, Burch, Garrard, & Ashley, P.C.**, have all recently created or contributed to scholarships that are affording our students the opportunity to realize their goals of attending law school and eventually launching their own successful careers.



Phaedra Parks (J.D.'98) (left) with her scholar, first-year student Amber Greenaway.



Dale Hughes (J.D.'86) (left) with the Hughes-Green Family Scholar, second-year student Gary McGinty.



Dan and Kathelen (J.D.'82) Amos with third-year student Marcol Harvey (center).



Delaware Court of Chancery Vice Chancellor Tamika Montgomery-Reeves (J.D.'06) taught at the law school earlier this fall. She is pictured with Dean Bo Rutledge (left), Sibley Professor Larry Thompson (left center), Hosch Professor Emeritus Tom Eaton and Associate Dean Usha Rodrigues (right).

initiative that celebrates the achievement of women in law, business and public service.

- Our inaugural Edenfield Jurist in Residence **Lisa Godbey Wood (J.D.'90)**, who is a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia. Of special note, this program has also welcomed David B. Sentelle, senior judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to the classroom. We are excited to announce Bernice B. Donald of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit will hold this position this coming spring.

As our students look to the future, many have set their sights on leadership through public service. We were proud to award a record number of **public interest fellowship grants** that afforded 36 students the opportunity to spend the summer of 2017 in seven states plus the District of Columbia as well as three foreign countries. Work placements included nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations; local, state and federal government agencies; state and federal prosecutor's offices and criminal defense practices.

2018  
Distinguished  
Service  
Scroll Award  
Recipients

**YOU** are the University of Georgia School of Law.

Our unwavering focus on offering first-rate preparation both within and outside of the classroom, on creating opportunities to establish meaningful connections and on building the skills needed to have an impact on our state and society is paying off.

- We are consistently ranked as **one of the nation's top law schools** as well as **one of the nation's top returns on investment in legal education**.
- Our law school has had the **highest bar passage rate in Georgia** on the July exam for the past four years.
- Our **employed-at-10 month rate (a key national benchmark for all law schools) is among the highest in the nation** and leads all Georgia law schools.

None of this success would be possible without the support of our alumni and alumnae, donors and friends who are willing to invest their time and their resources. I want to especially thank our alumni/alumnae leaders – **Kathelen Amos**, who chairs our Board of Visitors; **J. Anderson “Andy” Davis (J.D.’84)**, president of the Law School Association; and **Catherine H. Curlet (J.D.’11)**, president of the Young Alumni/ Alumnae Committee – for their unflinching commitment over the past year.

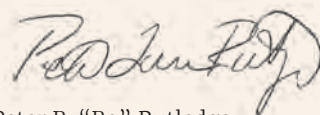
We hope you will join these leaders and others in the law school community for Alumni/Alumnae Weekend on March 23 and 24, during which we will honor **Larry Thompson, Don L. Waters (J.D.’78)** and **Sally Q. Yates (J.D.’86)** with Distinguished Service Scroll Awards.

In closing, I want to express our sincere gratitude to all of those who have donated or pledged to donate to the Commit to Georgia Campaign. Spearheaded by the University of Georgia, the campaign will allow us to continue to prepare our students for the workplace, recruit and retain thought leaders on our faculty, expand experiential learning opportunities and offer scholarships that for many students will mean the difference between attending law school or abandoning that dream.

I also want to thank those of you who choose to employ our students as interns, externs or employees after graduation. Employment at great law firms, thriving companies, leading nonprofits and various government agencies attests to their success.

It is hard to put into just a few pages all that we have to be proud of at the University of Georgia School of Law. I hope that these highlights illustrate what we are doing to live up to our motto – **Prepare. Connect. Lead.** – and that you will help us fulfill that promise by staying engaged and informed about your law school.

I wish you and your family a happy holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year.



Peter B. “Bo” Rutledge  
Dean & Herman E. Talmadge Chair of Law



Sibley Professor  
Larry Thompson



Waters Capital Partners  
CEO Don Waters (J.D.’78)



Georgetown Law  
Distinguished Lecturer  
from Government  
Sally Yates (J.D.’86)

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