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Summer Public Interest Funding Grows with New Marquee Fellowship

2010 graduates create largest annual public interest fellowship award

Dear alumni, alumnae and friends,

As we know, summer public interest fellowships provide important hands-on learning opportunities for law students. At the University of Georgia School of Law, financial support for these experiences has been on an upward trajectory since 2017. In fact, over the last five years, there has been a roughly 450% increase in support. I am delighted to announce today that this growth continues with the establishment of the Bool Simkins Summer Fellowship for Public Interest Fund.

Created by married 2010 graduates Kevin Murphy and Elizabeth (Freeman) Murphy

– in honor of Elizabeth’s grandmother, Annie Bool, and great aunt, Mary Simkins – the Bool Simkins Summer Fellowship will be the law school’s largest annual public interest fellowship award. It will support a top performing student with a full summer public interest/pro bono placement after completing his or her second year of law school.

I would like to thank Kevin and Elizabeth for this leadership gift that invests in the success of the school’s growing portfolio of public interest fellowship funding. Not only will the annual award amount be the largest for a fellowship offered by our law school but the timing of the award is significant. This fellowship structure speaks to the law school’s desire to have our students follow their dreams for serving state and society, while minimizing financial concerns. It also contributes to our vision of being the best return on investment in legal education.

The Murphys said that through volunteering, mentoring and praying, Annie Bool and Mary Simkins have been examples to them as to how to show up and never stop working to improve our communities. Mary Simkins passed away in 2019 but Annie Bool is now 96 years old and continues to be a pillar of her hometown of Erie, Pennsylvania, where she encourages anyone and everyone to vote, get educated and pray for the U.S.A. The Murphys said they are grateful to the law school for the opportunity to provide this fellowship as a way to commemorate Annie Bool's and Mary Simkins’s commitment to public service.

Traditionally, the law school awards fellowship funding in the middle of each spring semester for the upcoming summer. The Bool Simkins Summer Fellowship will depart from this model as the selection process will take place approximately eight months earlier – which is prior to the start of a student’s second year of law school – when students are typically seeking future paid summer positions in law firms or other organizations.

Assistant Dean for Career Development Tony Waller believes this timing will allow students to more fully explore summer work that speaks to their passions and contributes to society in a different way, knowing that significant financial support is available for a position that typically would provide little or no financial compensation.

The ideal Bool Simkins Summer Fellowship placement would allow students to work with and represent people who are marginalized within society for economic or social reasons. The position would also have the potential for post-graduate employment.

I want to thank Kevin and Elizabeth again for this incredibly significant gift, which represents the heart of two individuals who have meant so much to them and creates a fund that will significantly impact future students and their passions for public service work. Go Dawgs!

Peter B. "Bo" Rutledge
Dean & Talmadge Chair of Law

2010 graduate Elizabeth (Freeman) Murphy (center) is pictured above with her grandmother, Annie Bool (left), and her great aunt, Mary Simkins, the namesakes of the Bool Simkins Summer Fellowship for Public Interest Fund established by Elizabeth and her husband, Kevin (J.D.'10). The Bool Simkins Summer Fellowship will be the law school's largest annual public interest fellowship award and will support a top performing student with a full summer public interest/pro bono placement after completing his or her second year of law school. This photo was taken during the 2010 School of Law pre-graduation reception.

*Your continued support is an important part of the School of Law's success.
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