

Yale Law Report

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF YALE LAW SCHOOL
SUMMER 2026

Alumni Contribute to
Communities in Connecticut

Commencement 2026

Palliative Care Law

MEETING *the* MOMENT

Cristina
Rodríguez
Leads the
Law School



Yale Law Report

SUMMER 2026

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COVER PHOTO: Cristina Rodríguez became the 18th dean of Yale Law School in February. Read about her journey to the role and her plans for her deanship on page 32. Photo by Mara Lavitt.



Students attend the diploma ceremony at the Lanman Center on May 18.

Photo by Mara Lavitt



Dean Cristina M. Rodríguez (far left) listened to the Mattatuck Drum Band on Beinecke Plaza during the Commencement Procession.

Dear Graduates and Friends of Yale Law School:

It is an honor to write to you in my capacity as the new dean of Yale Law School. I have loved this school from the moment I entered the Sterling Law Building and sat in my first small group class. Though my career has taken me a variety of places, I have always felt most at home at 127 Wall Street, whether as a student, an alum, or a member of the faculty.

The values I came to prize at the Law School form the core of my deanship: nurturing an environment where free inquiry and pathbreaking scholarship flourish, cultivating the rule of law and commitment to public service, and broadening access to legal education.

In my first months as dean, I have been privileged to hear from so many of you about what makes the Law School special and vital. At regional alumni events and through hundreds of conversations, you have shared with me your love of the school and how it has shaped your lives, and you have offered great wisdom for how to navigate the years ahead. I will never forget the vibrant event in New York City in April, when four former deans and more than 400 alumni and guests collectively celebrated the School's bright future.

I also have delighted in the intellectual life of the school, introducing learned lectures, welcoming participants from around the country for urgent and dynamic conferences, and watching students and faculty alike debate the pressing issues of our day. And I rejoiced in celebrating our remarkable graduates at my first Commencement as dean, which included a meaningful passing of the torch (or, rather, our two maces) from former dean Heather K. Gerken.

Despite this moment of rapid change and uncertainty, I have never felt more grounded, and I am proud and excited to serve the Law School precisely because of the challenges our society and legal institutions face. I draw great inspiration from our alumni community and the creative and important work you do across so many domains. You are critical to sustaining our mission and to showing our students the way. I look forward to what we will accomplish together.

With best wishes for a meaningful and restful summer,

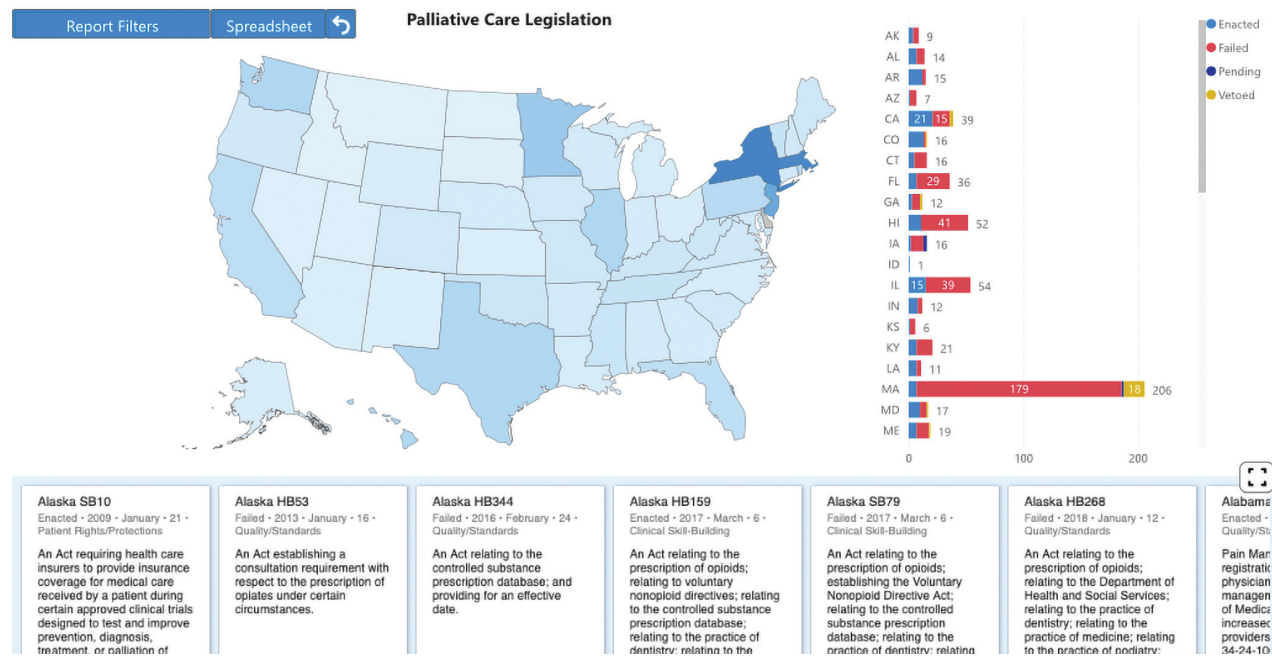
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cristina Rodriguez".

Cristina M. Rodríguez
Sol & Lillian Goldman Dean and Professor of Law

Palliative Care Law and Policy GPS

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The Palliative Care Law and Policy GPS is a regularly updated and publicly accessible database tracking legislation on palliative care and improvements in the care of people with serious illness across the 50 states. It is a joint collaboration between the Solomon Center for Health Law and Policy at Yale Law School and the Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC).



Solomon Center Drives Palliative Care Reforms

Law and policy for those with serious illnesses

The Solomon Center for Health Law and Policy at Yale Law School has established the country's first comprehensive interdisciplinary initiative dedicated to palliative medical care, law, and policy — a pathbreaking effort that is already shaping reforms for patients of all ages.

The fast growth of the palliative care field, which aims to reduce the symptoms and stress of serious illness, has created a pressing demand for policy guidance. Little regulation exists at the federal level, leaving a complex array of state and local laws and policies.

Drawing from its deep health law and policy expertise, the Solomon Center is working in areas ranging from pediatric palliative care, to clinical workforce needs, to improving health outcomes for Native American communities, incarcerated patients, and other vulnerable populations.

The work is supported by a first-of-its-kind open-access research platform for palliative care policy across the states, developed by the Center, in collaboration with partners at Yale School of Medicine, Yale School of Public Health, Yale School of Nursing, and Mount Sinai's nationally renowned Center to Advance Palliative Care.

"Palliative care is mostly not end-of-life care; it's essential medical care for those living with chronic illness across the life spectrum," said Abbe R. Gluck '00, the Alfred M. Rankin Professor of Law and Solomon Center faculty director. "Our work is equipping state, local, and Native American lawmakers, medical professionals, and advocates with the legal and policy tools they need to rapidly adopt and assess impactful reforms."

The Center's leadership is highly visible in Connecticut, where the General Assembly has established a working group to recommend statewide reforms to improve pediatric palliative care. Seeing an opportunity to support policymakers, the Center launched an ambitious research effort to help reframe the state's approach to pediatric palliative care. The working group highlighted the Center's research in its interim report to the legislature in March 2025, and soon after awarded the Center a seat on its advisory committee.

Last year, the Center also officially launched the Palliative Care Law and Policy GPS, a first-of-its-kind, publicly accessible database of state and local proposed and enacted legislation related to palliative care. It currently holds 15 years of data covering all 50 states and is open to any researcher. The Center is adding an AI element to the platform to make its contents even more efficient and accessible.

The Center also operates the Palliative Care Medical-Legal Partnership with the Yale School of Medicine and Yale New Haven Hospital. Solomon Center students and faculty work closely with the hospital's palliative care team to address critical needs of patients toward the end of their lives, including housing, guardianship, and benefits.

As for the next step in this project, "We are just getting started," said Jeremy Pilaar '18, the Center's executive director. "We will keep doing all we can to advance reforms and innovations that support patients and families when they need it most."

"Palliative care is mostly not end-of-life care; it's essential medical care for those living with chronic illness across the life spectrum. Our work is equipping state, local, and Native American lawmakers, medical professionals, and advocates with the legal and policy tools they need to rapidly adopt and assess impactful reforms." ABBE R. GLUCK '00

SCHOOL NEWS



(top) Lecturer in Law Bruce Swartz '79 (left), who formerly supervised the Justice Department's global rule of law programs, was one of the organizers of the series; (bottom) The series was moderated by Harold Hongju Koh, Sterling Professor of International Law.

Speaker Series Examines Challenges to the Rule of Law

Experts discuss the current legal landscape

From the plaintiff in one of the term's biggest Supreme Court cases to international law experts, an array of speakers shared their insights on the rule of law as part of The Tsai Leadership Program last fall. The series was co-sponsored by the Peter Gruber Rule of Law Clinic and the Ludwig Program in Public Sector Leadership.

Over six lunchtime sessions, the "Introduction to the Rule of Law" series offered students a variety of frameworks for considering recent challenges to the rule of law in the United States and abroad, said Clinical Lecturer in Law Sonia Mittal '13. Mittal co-organized the series along with Rule of Law Clinic instructors Harold Hongju Koh, Sterling Professor of International Law, and Bruce Swartz '79, lecturer in law and Aharon Barak Rule of Law Fellow.

"These are challenges that all three of us have considered as attorneys for the government and as scholars, and we wanted to join our law school colleagues in helping students make sense of this very complex time," said Mittal, who is a former federal prosecutor.

Each session was moderated by Koh, who served as legal adviser to the State Department from 2009 to 2013 and senior political appointee in that office in 2021.

"Recent times have confirmed that lawyers need to understand what the 'rule of law' is that they will swear to uphold," Koh said. "But most law schools never provide background or debate about just what it means, especially in turbulent times. This series was intended to fill that critical gap."

The interdisciplinary series combined discussions by leading legal scholars with insights from practitioners and public servants. Topics included separation of powers, structural constraints on presidential power, rights and national security, due process and habeas corpus, the independence of rule of law institutions, and rule of law as a global concept.

Mittal said the series sought to feature speakers with a broad range of scholarly perspectives and professional experiences.

While the series was open to all students, Mittal said it was particularly geared to first-term students who are not yet eligible to take upper-level courses or join clinics.

"I wanted to be part of creating a space for the sustained, constructive dialogue that is essential to the health and durability of our democratic system." MADELINE BABIN '26



Rebecca Slaughter '07, the former Federal Trade Commissioner whose suit challenging her dismissal was argued before the Supreme Court, spoke to one of the sessions via Zoom.

"We felt an obligation to help situate this moment for all of our students, but in particular those who have just joined the Law School," Mittal said. "Sometimes when you read your very first cases, it can be hard to see connections between them and what you're reading about in the news. We wanted to help our newest students make some of those connections."

Madeline Babin '26, who was a student director in the Peter Gruber Rule of Law Clinic, was gratified by the popularity of the series. "We had an average of 120 to 150 students register for each event, which to me reflected the need and the appetite for this kind of dialogue," she said, continuing, "I wanted to be part of creating a space for the sustained, constructive dialogue that is essential to the health and durability of our democratic system."

Students and Faculty Consider Lawful Peace in Ukraine after War's Fourth Year

Faculty and students marked the fourth anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine War in writing and in conversation in February. Sterling Professor of International Law Harold Hongju Koh and students in the Peter Gruber Rule of Law Clinic wrote a two-part series published in *Just Security*, “Toward a Just and Lawful Peace in Ukraine.” The series looked at the progress made under international law so far and urged that frozen Russian central bank assets be used to finance reconstruction in Ukraine. Koh and Oona Hathaway ’97, the Gerard C. and Bernice Latrobe Smith Professor of International Law, also took part in a virtual panel on the war organized by the American Society for International Law.



Professor Jack Balkin leading an AI and Policy class

Prompted by AI, School Takes Long View of Law and Technology

Like the railroad, telephone, mass electrification, radio, and the internet before it, artificial intelligence has pushed the law to change. At Yale Law School, a reading group last fall considered AI as one in a long line of technologies that have shaped the law throughout history. Meanwhile, a library speaker series highlighted the latest scholarship on AI and the law.

Students in the “Technology Law: From Accidents to AI” reading group looked all the way back to the first U.S. copyright act in 1790.

“In each circumstance, the law and the regulatory state adapted to deal with the new circumstance, telling us a lot about the law’s capacity to address technological change,” said Isaac May ’24, who ran the reading group along with Associate Research Scholar in Law Mikey McGovern. Jack M. Balkin, Knight Professor of Constitutional Law and the First Amendment, supervised the group.

Shah Khan, a second-year student in the reading group, came to law school with an appreciation for how AI models work technically after studying statis-

tics and data science as an undergraduate. But the release of ChatGPT in 2022 raised new questions for Khan about AI and the law.

“These generative AI models consume huge amounts of copyrighted data — was that fair use?” Khan asked. “What would happen if the model defamed someone? Could a model even defame someone?”

A speaker series this fall at the Lillian Goldman Law Library explored questions like these through talks by leading scholars. Nicholas Mignanelli, former assistant director for reference at the library and a lecturer in legal research, said the series offered a critical alternative to hype from tech vendors and even some scholars who have pushed for law schools to quickly adopt AI research tools.

“Unfortunately, concerns about the ethical, social, environmental, and economic implications of large language models have received little attention in the discourse surrounding the use of generative AI in law,” he said.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

New Clinics Build on Tradition of Environmental Protection

The Goldman Sonnenfeldt Environmental Protection Clinic (EPC) was founded by Dan Esty '86, Hillhouse Professor at Yale University, in 1995. For more than 30 years it has been Yale Law School's home for students looking for firsthand experience in environmental law and policy. The clinic is winding down this year, but it is not the end of clinical experience in environmental law at Yale Law School. The Environmental Justice Law and Advocacy Clinic, led by Clinical Associate Professor of Law Stephanie Safdi '13, is giving a new generation of students practice in representing clients solving environmental problems.

In addition, a new course being launched through the Law, Environment, and Animals Program will offer students opportunities to collaborate with leading environmental and animal protection organizations to advance policy and accountability at the intersection of climate change and industrial animal agriculture.

Since environmental issues require legal, technical, scientific, and policy expertise, the EPC was designed to be interdisciplinary. The clinic was initially housed at the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy (YCELP), a joint organization of Yale Law School and Yale School of the Environment. Esty envisioned a clinic in which students would use a variety of lawyering tools, including policy analysis and interdisciplinary research.

"Good science, good analysis, good data, good economics, and good law," Esty said. "All of that came together in this clinic."

By 2013, the clinic had grown to include a full-time director. Josh Galperin, now a professor at Pace University, was first in the role. Doug Kysar, Joseph M. Field '55 Professor of Law, became faculty director.

Though Safdi was not in the Environmental Protection Clinic while studying here, she observed its influence.

"It's exposed many generations of students to partner organizations that work in this space, to diverse theories of change, and to creative modalities for advancing environmental protection and sustainability," Safdi said. "And, importantly, it's held space for environmental students at Yale Law School."

Safdi, who was a joint-degree student at Yale's environment and law schools, credits the Law School's clinical program with her desire to lead her own clinic.

As a student, she worked with the Lowenstein International Human Rights Clinic on projects that brought together her overlapping interests in human rights, the environment, and sustainable development — issues that she now pursues in the Environmental Justice Law and Advocacy Clinic.

In a short time, Safdi's clinic has developed a substantial caseload. Some of the clinic's first cases continued work that Safdi started at Stanford. In one, the clinic represents a community organization suing to stop the expansion of California State Route 99 through South Fresno as part of a project to widen the highway through the state's Central Valley.

The clinic is also representing Lowell, Massachusetts, residents fighting a data center encroaching on their neighborhood. The residents won the state's first data center moratorium. The clinic further filed a lawsuit against state regulators, which residents say worked secretly to bypass the regulatory process. (Read more on page 17.)

Today, former EPC students can be found in government, at leading environmental advocacy organizations, and at law schools and universities around the country. Kysar said that, when environmental issues make it easy to be pessimistic, the work of former students "give me a sense of hope whatever else reason and evidence might be telling me about the state of the planet."



Dan Esty '86 and Stephanie Safdi '13

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson Speaks on Supreme Court's Emergency Docket

Lecture Series Explores Foundations of American Legal Thought

The Foundations of American Legal Thought course and corresponding lecture series returned to Yale Law School for the spring 2026 term, featuring speakers who examined canonical authors and movements in American legal theory past and present. The program is directed by Samuel Moyn, Kent Professor of Law and History at Yale University.

Speakers included:

Scott Shapiro '90:

"Formalism Versus Realism"

William N. Eskridge '78:

"From Legal Realism to Legal Process"

Randall Kennedy '82 and

Touré Reed: "Race and Class"

Keith Whittington:

"The Past, Present, and Future of Originalisms"

Reva Siegel:

"*Dobbs* and Democracy"



Justice Jackson and Dean Rodríguez in conversation at Battell Chapel in April

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown

Jackson spoke to a capacity crowd of Yale Law School students, faculty, and staff on April 13 at Yale's Battell Chapel.

Jackson delivered the 2025–26 Thomas Lecture, "Equity and Exigency: A First-Principles Solution for the Supreme Court's Emergency Docket."

Jackson's lecture focused on the evolution of the emergency docket, sometimes known as the shadow docket, where petitioners seek immediate relief from the Court. The topic, she said, "has recently burst into the public zeitgeist, generating a substantial amount of controversy."

When she was a Supreme Court clerk for Justice Stephen Breyer, Jackson said the emergency docket consisted mainly of capital cases. In recent years, the Court has shown a willingness to grant emergency motions in cases brought by the government, often before lower courts have fully considered the case on the merits and made a ruling.

Jackson discussed her concerns about the emergency docket, calling it a "procedural outlier" in a system where the core objective is to ensure that all litigants receive equal treatment. "If we are not careful, the emergency docket can and will become an end run around the standard review process, a special avenue that certain privileged litigants can utilize selectively," she said.

"I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I would like to be a catalyst for change," Jackson concluded. "My hope is that this speech opens up a conversation and that you and all of us will carefully examine the operation of the Supreme Court's emergency docket and suggest reforms with an eye toward ensuring equal justice under the law."

Following her lecture, Jackson joined Yale Law School Dean Cristina M. Rodríguez '00 for a conversation about her life and professional journey, public service, and work on the Court.

"I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I would like to be a catalyst for change..."

KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

*“...My hope is that
this speech opens up
a conversation.”*



PROGRAMS

Law Students Visit from South America

Ten students from law schools in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile completed a three-week visit to Yale Law School in January as part of the Owen M. Fiss Latin American Linkage exchange program.

The academic program of the visiting students consisted of personal research, observing classes, and meeting individually and as a group with Yale faculty and student leaders.

Additionally, Carlos Rosenkrantz '87 LLM, '89 JSD, of Argentina's Supreme Court came to New Haven to pay a personal visit to Professor Fiss. Rosenkrantz spent an hour discussing his vision of the judge's role in turbulent times with the students.

Linkage students (below) at a Yale basketball game and (right) in New York



Students meet with Professor Gideon Yaffe

The group also got a taste of student life at Yale, attending a wide assortment of cultural and sports events, from the Yale Philharmonia to a performance at the University Theatre, women's and men's basketball and hockey games, and the Leitner Family Observatory.

Their experience was made even richer by living with the Yale Law School students who will visit their countries during Yale's summer recess. The hosts benefited from the sunshine, energy, guarana, and hierba maté the guests brought from the southern hemisphere.

JUSTICE COLLABORATORY

Publications Call for Local Control of Public Safety, Solidarity in Communities

A report co-authored by the Justice Collaboratory calls on cities to protect local control of public safety.

"The People's Safety Report," published jointly by the Center for Policing Equity, details how local and state leaders can use political and legal recourse when the federal government encroaches on local safety matters. It was one of two publications this term from the scholarly collaborative, which includes members at Yale Law School.

"As we have seen in Chicago and Minneapolis, local authorities are not powerless against the federal government's incursion," Justice Collaboratory Executive Director Caroline Nobo said. "We hope this will serve as a guide for local leaders across the country seeking to protect communities and the Constitution."

The report includes recommendations in three areas: enacting legislation to combat the federal use of enforcement conducted by masked, unidentifiable individuals and related strategies; keeping communities informed, maintaining clear guidance, and protecting against abuses; and preventing the erosion of the rule of law.

The Justice Collaboratory also had another installment of its series The Notebook. The digital publication, first launched in 2024, lies between academic journal and popular magazine. Centered on the theme of solidarities, the latest issue includes art, social science, and stories. Contributions from researchers and New Haven community members explore the connections people build, the collective actions they take, and the communities they nurture.

LEADERSHIP

Program Offers Students Immersive Trips, Speaker Series

The Tsai Leadership Program at Yale Law School hosted its annual trips for students in the Chae Initiative in Private Sector Leadership and Carol and Gene Ludwig Program in Public Sector Leadership, offering them the opportunity to connect with alumni and expand their views on the possibilities of a Law School degree.

In January, students in the Chae Initiative traveled to New York City, where they met with alumni from top companies.

“The Chae immersive trip offered such a unique opportunity to engage with Yale Law School alumni who are leading the way in scaling hugely successful businesses across the private sector,” said Ashley Mehra ’26.

That same month, students in the Ludwig Program visited Washington, D.C., to meet with leaders in federal, state, and local government.



Ludwig Program fellows in Washington, D.C.



The Chae Initiative fellows in New York City

“Before the Ludwig Program, I felt as if I needed to have everything planned out. The program has introduced me to so many impressive alumni who didn’t have everything figured out when they graduated,” said Hannah Terrapin ’26. “They’ve taught me that, as the world shifts around us, Yale Law School prepares us to shift with it. Remembering your core values and serving where you are needed will always keep you on the right path.”

In March, former President of Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) Noah Bookbinder visited the Law School for a wide-ranging conversation in which he shared lessons learned during his work to promote government accountability.

The discussion was moderated by Dean Cristina M. Rodríguez ’00, who has known Bookbinder since they were students at Yale College. In her introduction, she described him as “a model of the leadership the Tsai program is designed to empower.”



Noah Bookbinder visited the Law School.

Liman Center Names New Fellows

The Arthur Liman Center for Public Interest Law announced its newest cohort of law fellows for 2026–27, who will be working to lessen the challenges of accessing the legal system and vindicating rights. Since its inception in 1997, the Liman Center has supported more than 220 graduates of Yale Law School for these yearlong fellowships. The 10 new fellows will focus on issues related to workers' safety, immigration law, reproductive rights, and states' efforts to protect their residents.

In addition, three current fellows will have extensions to continue their efforts on behalf of tenants, LGBTQ+ youth, and national parks.

The Budget Lab's Executive Director and Co-Founder Martha Gimbel gave a testimony in March before the Senate Subcommittee on Fiscal Responsibility and Economic Growth on the Congressional Budget Office's report on the Budget and Economic Outlook over the next ten years.

"As we would all agree, forecasting is an inherently uncertain art," said Gimbel. "But the act of forecasting gives us a chance to examine where we are, where we could be going, and what that means for policymakers and citizens in the meantime."

FINANCIAL POLICY

Budget Lab Reflects on One Year of Tariff Analysis

On April 2, 2025, the Trump administration announced the most sweeping tariff increases since Smoot-Hawley. At the time, The Budget Lab projected that the resulting suite of tariff policies would increase consumer prices by 2.3%, costing the average American household \$3,800 per year.

Looking back after a year of higher tariffs, The Budget Lab aimed to reexamine this estimate of the effect of tariffs on prices. The 2.3% estimate reported last year is large relative to more recent numbers released by academics, policy analysts, and their own, more up-to-date analysis. It is possible this is because not enough time has passed yet for the full burden of tariffs to manifest in the economy. However, if one had assumed that the full impact of tariffs would occur within one year and appear entirely as higher prices rather than through some other mechanism (say, via reduced nominal incomes), then the 2.3% estimate implies almost 80% of inflation over the past year is due to tariffs, according to The Budget Lab.

This presented The Budget Lab with an opportunity to reflect on what they got right and wrong in the modeling of tariffs over the last year. They still believe their current-policy approach has value. It is the same framework CBO uses for budget projections, a

framework designed not to be an unconditional forecast of the future but instead a basis on which the public and policymakers can evaluate the relative merits of different policy choices. Over the past year, they have made substantial improvements to both their effective tariff rate calculations and their economic models. The Budget Lab plans to continue to refine their estimates as new data, new research, and new policy developments warrant.

GHJP

Response to UN Request for Input on Violence and Discrimination Facing LBQ Women

In late 2025, the United Nations Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity requested input on violence and discrimination facing LBQ women. Requesting input from civil society, governments, and IGO and regional agencies is a part of the independent expert's process of assembling the research to undergird their expert analysis of forms of abuses, barriers to remedies, and ways forward for LBQ women to enjoy their full range of rights. This input will become a thematic report presented at the 62nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

GHJP used public health data, alongside critical race theory, queer and trans theories, disability justice theory, and feminist theory to inform a presentation of an intersectional approach to understanding violence and discrimination related to gender and sexuality, focusing on Black LBQ people in the context of health justice.



Scholars Illuminate Stakes of Supreme Court Drug Patent Liability Case

The U.S. Supreme Court has turned a spotlight on generic drug competition by agreeing to hear *Hikma Pharmaceuticals USA Inc. v. Amarin Pharma, Inc.* The dispute relates to a practice known as “skinny labeling,” a pathway Congress created under the Hatch-Waxman Act of 1984 that allows generic drug manufacturers to seek FDA approval for unpatented drug uses of brand-name drugs.

Research by scholars at the Solomon Center for Health Law and Policy suggests that allowing these claims to proceed could discourage timely generic competition by increasing the risk of liability for generic manufacturers marketing products with skinny labels. This could in turn reduce access to generic drugs, which play a major role in the U.S. health care system: prescription drug prices often fall 80% or more after a generic enters the market, while the substitution of branded drugs with generics has saved the health care system approximately \$1.67 trillion over a recent 10-year span.

In an empirical study published this past March, 2024–25 Solomon Center Student Research Fellow Therese J. Ziaks, Solomon Center Distinguished Visitor Aaron S. Kesselheim, and their colleagues examined whether the use of the skinny labeling pathway changed after the 2021 decision in *GlaxoSmithKline v. Teva*. The authors found that while 43% of susceptible brand-name drugs had skinny-labeled generic prescriptions from 2015 to 2019, that figure dropped to 20% in 2023.

In further articles, including one published last September with 2025–26 Solomon Center Student



Research Fellow Jin K. Park, Kesselheim, and S. Sean Tu explained that expansive interpretations of inducement liability undermine the congressional compromises embedded in the Hatch-Waxman Act, which sought to balance the need to protect valid patents with the benefits of generic drugs entering the market in a timely fashion. They showed that skinny labeling is not a loophole but a carefully designed policy tool that has delivered major benefits to patients and the health system while preserving incentives for innovation.

Schell Center's Human Rights Workshop Hosted Event on Chile

On Feb. 19, Dan Israel '23 LLM described Chile's political trajectory from dictatorship to constitutional experimentation to the election of a right-wing president. The arc of Chile's recent history, Israel concluded, illustrates both the fragility and resilience of democratic systems. Constitutional reform can serve as a vehicle for change, but it also demands political compromise and broad-based legitimacy.



Chilean President José Antonio Kast speaks at press conference in Ecuador in December 2025.

SFALP Advocates for Consumers and Gig Workers

In December, the San Francisco Affirmative Litigation Project (SFALP) along with San Francisco City Attorney David Chiu filed a first-of-its-kind lawsuit against some of the country's largest manufacturers of ultraprocessed foods on Dec. 2, alleging they knowingly engineered and marketed addictive products to children while obscuring health risks from the public. In March, SFALP helped secure a \$4.5 million settlement with gig staffing company WorkWhile over the alleged misclassification of delivery drivers as independent contractors instead of employees.

CLINIC ROUNDUP

Clinic Sues Government for Revoking Immigrant Airport Workers' Security Clearances



SEIU members at a press conference in March

The Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic is suing the Trump administration on behalf of immigrant workers forced out of their jobs at Boston's Logan Airport after losing their security clearances.

The lawsuit, filed in federal court against U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), argues that the agency has violated its own regulations, federal statute, and the Constitution's due process protections by revoking the clearances. According to the federal lawsuit, the agency put thousands of workers at risk of losing their jobs at airports nationwide when it revoked security clearances for legal immigrants at Logan.

"Simply put: CBP has concocted new and illegal ways of punishing immigrants by shutting authorized workers out of union jobs they've held for years," clinic member Marisa Houlahan '27 said.

The plaintiffs are an airport workers' union and four former members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). One plaintiff, Saint Paul Paul, recalled getting a letter from the agency that called him an "unacceptable risk."

"I think this language is an excuse so the government can discriminate against immigrants like me," Paul said.

In other work this year, clinic students testified before Connecticut state lawmakers that automated hiring systems carry potential risks and could perpetuate discrimination.

The testimony, on behalf of client Connecticut AFL-CIO, was in support of a bill that would regulate the use of automated employment-related decisions and artificial intelligence technologies by technology deployers and employers in the state.

CLINIC ROUNDUP

MFIA Clinic Files Lawsuit, Briefs and Gives Testimony

The Media Freedom and Information Access (MFIA) Clinic at Yale Law School, together with co-counsel, filed a lawsuit on March 23 on behalf of four Voice of America journalists and two press freedom organizations against the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), Acting CEO Michael Rigas, and Kari Lake, who was removed from leadership of USAGM by court order earlier that month. The lawsuit alleges that Kari Lake and other officials have engaged in censorship at Voice of America and used the news group to distribute political propaganda in violation of the law.

In February, the clinic testified before the Vermont House Judiciary Committee in support of House Bill 572, legislation that would restore meaningful public access to criminal court records in Vermont. Anna Selbrede '26, a student director of the clinic, testified based on research conducted on behalf of the New England First Amendment Coalition examining Vermont's restrictions on electronic access to criminal case records.

In March, the clinic filed an amicus brief on behalf of the Pentagon Press Association, arguing that a policy restricting access to the building violated the First Amendment by burdening routine newsgathering, granting officials sweeping discretion, and engaging in viewpoint-based retaliation against journalists. Later that month, the clinic welcomed a federal court ruling striking down key provisions of a Pentagon policy that restricted journalists' access to the building, saying the policy threatened the public's access to independent reporting on national security and military affairs.

Also in March, the clinic filed an amicus brief on behalf of a group of First Amendment scholars urging the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit to unseal parts of Special Counsel Jack Smith's final report prepared in the criminal prosecution of President Donald Trump over his mishandling of classified documents. The brief argues that U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon violated settled law in declaring that Volume II of Special Counsel Smith's report is not a "judicial record" subject to disclosure.



Anna Selbrede '26 testified before the Vermont House Judiciary Committee



Rule of Law Clinic Files Briefs on Birthright Citizenship and Anthropic

Represented by Yale Law School's Peter Gruber Rule of Law Clinic and the Wiggin and Dana law firm, the Society for the Rule of Law Institute and a group of 28 former Republican appointed and elected officials filed an amicus brief on Feb. 26 urging the Supreme Court to reject President Trump's attempt to deny birthright citizenship to certain persons born in the United States based on their parents' immigration status.

The brief argued that the President's order violated the separation of powers by attempting illegal lawmaking through a radical reinterpretation of the 14th Amendment, a century of Supreme Court precedent, and two independent congressional enactments.

In a separate matter, the clinic and the Farella Braun + Martel law firm represented a group of 16 former senior U.S. national security officials in filing an amicus brief on March 13 urging the district court in the Northern District of California to reject the Pentagon's attempt to punish the artificial intelligence company Anthropic for its independent business decisions by designating it as a supply chain risk.

Vermont Supreme Court Sides with Housing Clinic on Foreclosure Rules

The Vermont Supreme Court affirmed its decision that mortgage servicers in the state must show that they have a legal right to foreclose at the start of foreclosure proceedings, a ruling that incorporates points made by Yale Law School's Housing Clinic. According to the clinic, which filed an amicus brief in the case, the decision prevents mortgage providers from filing first and papering over their poor recordkeeping later. The clinic represented amici Vermont Legal Aid and the National Consumer Law Center.

Suit over Denial of Benefits for Agent Orange Birth Defects

At a press conference at Yale Law School on April 27, Ron and Michele Christoforo announced the filing of a federal lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut challenging a denial of benefits as unconstitutional sex discrimination. The Christoforos are represented by the Veterans Legal Services Clinic.

Ron Christoforo served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam and was exposed to Agent Orange. His daughter Michele was born with achondroplasia, a form of dwarfism linked to that exposure. Under federal law, the Department of Veterans Affairs provides benefits to children born with dwarfism to mothers who served in Vietnam. Because it was Michele's father who served, she is ineligible for benefits.

CLINIC ROUNDUP

Students' Catch Forces State Supreme Court to Reckon with AI Errors

When Housing Clinic students spotted what appeared to be AI hallucinations in a brief filed by their opponents this spring, their cases took a historic turn. It was the first time the Connecticut Supreme Court was forced to consider what happens when artificial intelligence use by lawyers goes wrong.

The two eviction cases that raised questions about AI were already a milestone for the state's highest court. These cases were the first the court had heard concerning municipal fair rent commissions, which in Connecticut hear complaints from tenants about rent increases and living conditions. In both *TOV Realty, LLC v. Suarez* and *Kosel Equity LLC v. MacGregor*, landlords sought to evict renters who were challenging their rent increases through their respective cities' commissions. The clinic argued in two amicus briefs that evicting the tenants before the commissions ruled on these complaints would undermine tenants' rights statewide. The brief was filed behalf of a coalition of

organizations that regularly represent clients before fair rent commissions.

However, it was what students noticed in a brief filed by plaintiffs — two large, out-of-state landlords who were pursuing evictions — that ultimately brought wider attention to the cases. The clinic found errors in one plaintiff's brief, including a phrase quoted in a citation that does not appear in the cited case “nor has any other court ever written this phrase,” the clinic wrote in its own brief.

The court then ordered the landlord's counsel to explain the errors, making this “the first time the state's highest court was forced to reckon with what appeared to be AI hallucinations and potential sanctions,” Law 360 reported. The Connecticut Law Tribune, Hartford Courant, and Hearst Newspapers also covered the story.

The plaintiff acknowledged the errors, saying that lawyers had not properly proofed the citations.



(from left) Housing Clinic students Dylan Shapiro '26, Uma Menon '27, Grady Martin '28, and Galen Fastie '26 at the Connecticut Supreme Court

VISITING THE LAW SCHOOL



Douglas G. Baird, the Harry A. Bigelow Distinguished Service Professor of Law at the University of Chicago Law School, gave the Judge Ralph K. Winter Lecture on Corporate Law and Governance on April 6. His lecture was titled “Two Stories of Corporate Governance.”



On March 23, **Daniel Boyarin**, the Hermann P. and Sophia Taubman Emeritus Professor of Talmudic Culture at the University of California Berkeley, gave the Robert M. Cover Lecture, titled “Halakha and Aggada: After ‘Nomos and Narrative.’”

CLINIC ROUNDUP

Clinics Sue for Veteran Access to Infertility Treatment

Yale Law School third-year students Indu Paley and Liz Beling presented argument before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit in February on behalf of veterans and service members who cannot access in-vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment for infertility.

Beling and Paley were members of the Law School's Veterans Legal Services Clinic and Gender and Reproductive Justice Clinic, respectively. The clinics represent the National Organization for Women-New York City (NOW-NYC) in its suit against the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which argues that the agencies' IVF restrictions are unconstitutional and discriminatory under federal law.

Service members and veterans experience infertility at higher rates than the general population, according to NOW-NYC. But DoD and VA require military families to prove that their infertility is linked to a specific injury or illness incurred during military service, an onerous task since the causes of infertility are understudied and often unexplained.

"IVF stands alone as one of the only medically necessary procedures for which DoD imposes a service connection requirement," said Tobey Phillips '27, an Army veteran and student in the Veterans Legal Services Clinic.

"VA singles out IVF as the only form of healthcare with extra restrictions for veterans who otherwise receive all healthcare from VA. These discriminatory rules cost many military families the chance to have children," Phillips added.

NOW-NYC contends that the VA and DoD policies are especially harmful for female service members and veterans. "VA estimates that female veterans suffer from infertility at four times the national average and more than 10 times the rate of male veterans," said Sonia Ossorio, president of NOW-NYC. "The cause of female infertility is also over 14 times more likely to be unexplained than in men, making it more challenging to connect to military service."

EJLA Clinic Advocates Against Data Center Expansion in Massachusetts City

A coalition of Lowell, Massachusetts, residents represented by the Environmental Justice Law and Advocacy Clinic has earned a major legislative victory in its struggle to secure protections against the impacts of commercial data centers on its community. On March 10, the Lowell City Council adopted a temporary moratorium on new construction and

development of data centers in the city. The community group Honest Future for Lowell championed the measure, which was adopted into law in the spring by a 10-0 vote.

The moratorium, the first of its kind in Massachusetts, went into effect immediately, halting any new data center development in Lowell for one year.

This moratorium vote comes amid mounting controversy about data center development in Lowell and throughout the country. A decade ago, the Markley Group converted a former Prince Pasta factory in Lowell's Sacred Heart neighborhood, a state-designated Environmental Justice community, into the city's first major data center. Unlike data centers proliferating across rural America, this one sits beside residential homes, a park and ballfield, a public preschool, and other community facilities.

"While the temporary moratorium doesn't fix the current issues, it prevents them from getting worse by pausing the company's efforts to expand its footprint into other properties it has acquired quietly throughout the years," said Jacob Fortes, a member of Honest Future for Lowell. His house is approximately 80 feet from the nearest diesel generator at the data center.



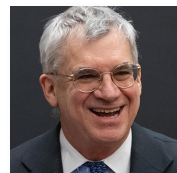
Lowell, Massachusetts

"While the temporary moratorium doesn't fix the current issues, it prevents them from getting worse by pausing the company's efforts to expand its footprint." JACOB FORTES

Baird, Dubal, and Lerner photos by Harold Shapiro; Lowell photo by Adobe Stock



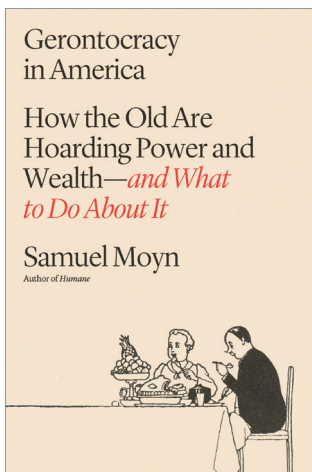
Employment and labor law professor **Veena Dubal** gave the spring 2026 Gruber Distinguished Lecture in Global Justice on March 2, titled "Contemporary Challenges in Higher Education." Dubal is a professor of law at the University of California Irvine School of Law.



Josh Lerner, the Jacob H. Schiff Professor of Investment Banking at Harvard Business School, delivered the John R. Raben/Sullivan & Cromwell Fellowship Lecture titled "The Government as Investor in an Era of Great Power Competition" on Feb. 9.



Older Americans are predominant in politics, the judiciary, and as voters.



Samuel Moyn
**Gerontocracy in America:
How the Old Are Hoarding
Power and Wealth —
and What to Do About It**
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2026

The Power of Age

Challenging America's Gerontocracy



The 2024 presidential campaign cast a harsh spotlight on President Joe Biden's age and mental acuity as well as the erratic behavior of his successor, Donald Trump. Both men were the oldest presidents to take office, and the campaign highlighted the political consequences of aging leadership to millions of Americans. But Biden and Trump are just the tip of the aging iceberg, writes Kent Professor of Law and History Samuel Moyn in his new book.

In "Gerontocracy in America: How the Old Are Hoarding Power and Wealth and What to Do About It," Moyn examines the nation's age divide and how it curtails opportunities for the young.

Aging politicians aren't limited to the White House, Moyn writes. The median age is over 60 for members of Congress and 68 for federal judges. But the problems of gerontocracy extend beyond politicians and the judiciary.

Senior voters turn out in much higher numbers for elections, especially local and off-cycle ones, and disproportionately finance political campaigns. Moyn cites data showing that older Americans hold the biggest bank accounts and stock portfolios, hoard jobs by delaying retirement, and live in the choicest real estate. They enjoy the most government benefits by a vast degree, Moyn says, and benefit from a favorable tax code.

“If Americans deserve a society that is oriented to innovation and problem-solving, and equips and launches the young into the prime of life, the country is heading in the wrong direction.” SAMUEL MOYN

The result is a society that privileges many older Americans to the detriment of all, including many senior citizens themselves, according to Moyn.

“If Americans deserve a society that is oriented to innovation and problem-solving, and equips and launches the young into the prime of life, the country is heading in the wrong direction,” he writes.

Moyn delves into the problems caused by aging politicians, not least of which is when one dies in office. But the bigger issue is the mismatch between aging leaders and the constituents they serve, he says.

“Our leaders, people are now told every day, are supposed to ‘look like America,’” he writes. “But after so much hard if unfinished work to remedy exclusion by gender and race, our government looks least like America in failing to provide younger representation.”

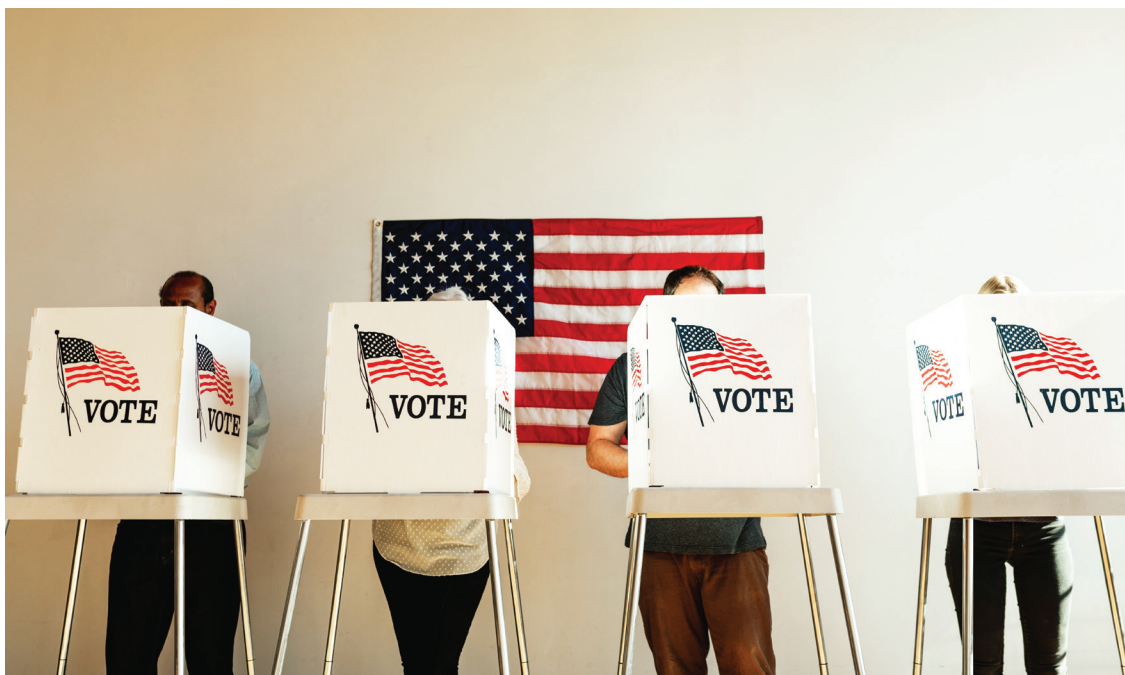
Representation matters, according to Moyn, if we want citizens to identify with and have confidence in their government.

Even worse than the gerontocracy of politicians is the gerontocracy of the electorate, Moyn writes. The much larger number of older voters has transformed the policymaking process, with the rise of a “gray lobby” and organizations like the AARP. The elderly’s priorities take precedence over the needs of the young, who lack comparable advocacy groups.

Moyn also examines how older Americans disproportionately benefit from the current tax system. He urges age-related tax breaks to be revisited so that they promote intergenerational justice rather than supercharging privilege. “Just because you are old gives you no special right to be rich and untaxed, no matter the form of income,” he writes.

Throughout “Gerontocracy in America,” Moyn offers solutions for these problems, including age limits for political office and campaign finance reform to prevent seniors from “spending their way to a compliant political order.” He describes election reform proposals such as overweighting the votes of the young. He also supports mandatory retirement ages in the private sector.

Moyn seeks to advance what he calls “intergenerational equity” with his book. “While gerontocracy is hardly the only source of our difficulties, no one interested in how injustice and social strains are shaped and reproduced in America today should ignore how deep it goes,” he states. “In the end, taking it seriously is essential for treating everyone appropriately and fairly.”



“Just because you are old gives you no special right to be rich and untaxed, no matter the form of income.” SAMUEL MOYN



Julian E. Zelizer, ed.
The Presidency of Joseph R. Biden: A First Historical Assessment
 Princeton University Press, 2026

Biden's Legacy

Witt Writes Chapter on Biden and the Supreme Court



Professor John Fabian Witt '99 contributed a chapter to “The Presidency of Joseph R. Biden: A First Historical Assessment.” The book, edited by political historian Julian E. Zelizer, provides insights into how Biden fits within the broader historical forces shaping the U.S. in the 21st century. Essays assess major issues

of his presidency, including education, reproductive rights, the economy, labor relations, climate policy, race, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and the culture wars.

The chapter by Witt, “Antagonists and Enablers: The Tragic Dance of Biden and the Supremes,” focuses on Biden's unsuccessful 2024 proposal for U.S. Supreme Court reforms. Deemed “dead on arrival” by the Republican-controlled House, the proposal included term limits, an enforceable code of ethics for justices, and a constitutional amendment making clear that presidents are not immune from crimes committed while in office. The last item was a bid to reverse the Court's decision, issued just two weeks before, that established broad presidential immunity.

At the time, Witt recounts, Biden's proposed reforms were read by sympathetic observers as a sign of antagonism between the president and the court. Witt doesn't dispute this interpretation but says that focusing on the clash between the president and the court obscures a related story: “The two institutions have been mutually enabling as well as adversarial,” he writes.

In addition to Witt, contributors include Noah A. Rosenblum '17, associate professor of law at New York University.

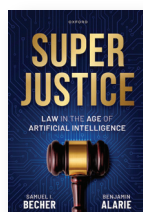
SURVEY OF BOOKS

Here's just a sampling of the many other books recently written or edited by our alumni, faculty, staff, and students. We welcome your submissions. Please contact us: lawreport@yale.edu.



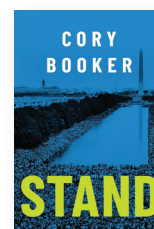
Omer Aziz
Shadows of the Republic: The Rebirth of Fascism in America and How to Defeat It for Good
 Broadleaf Books, 2026

What is driving the rise of fascism, and how can we stop it? Aziz '17 sets out to answer that question in a book that serves as a definitive narrative of American fascism and provides a way forward to restore the country's democracy.



Samuel I. Becher and Benjamin Alarie
Superjustice: Law in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
 Oxford University Press, 2026

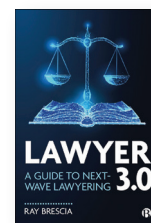
AI can be a tool for good, Becher '03 LLM, '05 JSD and Alarie '03 LLM assert in their new book, which proposes harnessing the power of technology to broaden access to justice and improve the legal system.



Cory Booker
Stand

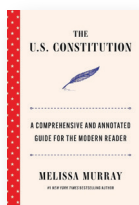
St. Martin's Press, 2026

Sen. Booker '97 uses examples from America's past and the political present to remind readers of the foundational virtues that solidified the nation and inspired its citizens. He argues that our principles are not luxuries: they are strategic keys to survival and success.



Ray Brescia
Lawyer 3.0: A Guide to Next-Wave Lawyering
 Bristol University Press, 2025

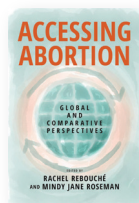
As AI and other innovations disrupt the legal profession, Brescia '92 offers historical context for how lawyering has been shaped by emerging technologies — specifically at the end of the 19th century — and illustrates for readers how 21st-century technology will ultimately improve access to legal services.



Melissa Murray
**The U.S. Constitution:
 A Comprehensive and
 Annotated Guide for the
 Modern Reader**

37 Ink, 2026

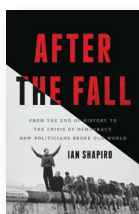
Using her legal expertise and experience as a political commentator, Murray '02 offers an accessible and modern guide on how to read and understand the U.S. Constitution while also providing historical context and current relevance for each amendment.



Rachel Rebouché and
 Mindy Jane Roseman, eds.
**Accessing Abortion:
 Global and Comparative
 Perspectives**

NYU Press, 2026

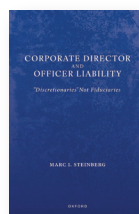
In "Accessing Abortion," co-edited by Roseman, the director of International Law Programs and director of the Gruber Program for Global Justice and Women's Rights at Yale Law School, experts comparatively analyze countries with permissive abortion laws, highlight social action on both sides of the argument, and contextualize these developments on the international and transnational levels.



Ian Shapiro
**After the Fall:
 From the End of History
 to the Crisis of Democracy,
 How Politicians
 Broke Our World**

Basic Books, 2026

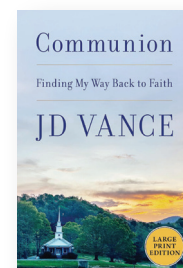
Political scientist Shapiro '87 looks at the past 40 years, beginning with the fall of the Berlin Wall, to analyze the current political climate. He argues that the lack of confidence in institutions and the support for anti-system candidates created a vacuum that let in the pessimism of today.



Marc I. Steinberg
**Corporate Director and
 Officer Liability:
 "Discretionaries" Not
 Fiduciaries**

Oxford University Press, 2025

Steinberg '77 LLM argues that corporate directors and officers should be termed "discretionaries" as opposed to fiduciaries to protect them from undue liability. He touches on the duty of care, the business judgment rule, exculpation statutes, the duty of good faith, interested director transactions, derivative litigation, mergers and acquisitions, and closely held corporations.



JD Vance
**Communion:
 Finding My Way
 Back to Faith**

Harper, 2026

In his follow-up to "Hillbilly Elegy," Vice President Vance '13 explores his relationship with his Christian faith and the role it plays in his life as a public servant, with particular attention to his conversion to Catholicism.

ALSO OF NOTE

Gregory S. Alexander,
 Lior Jacob Strahilevitz '99,
 and David N. Schleicher
**Dukeminier &
 Krier's Property**
 Aspen Publishing, 2026

Roy K. Altman '07
**Israel on Trial:
 Examining the
 History, the Evidence,
 and the Law**
 Advantage Books, 2026

Manuel Cabranes
 Foreword by
 José A. Cabranes '65
**From Puerto Rico to
 New York: Fragments
 from a Life of Service**
 October Works, 2026

Evan J. Criddle '03 and
 Evan Fox-Decent
**Mandatory Cooperation
 Under International Law**
 Cambridge University Press,
 2026

Cynthia H. Cwik '87,
 Christopher A. Suarez '11,
 and Lucy L. Thomson, eds.
**Artificial Intelligence:
 Legal Issues, Policy, and
 Practical Strategies**
 American Bar
 Association, 2026

Lanny J. Davis '70
**Finding the Third Way:
 Lessons in the
 Politics of Civility from
 My Journey Through
 History**
 RealClear Publishing, 2026

Patrick Radden Keefe '05
**London Falling:
 A Mysterious Death
 in a Gilded City
 and a Family's Search
 for Truth**
 Doubleday, 2026

Jack Petranker '70
**One with the World:
 A Path to Living
 with Presence and
 Appreciation**
 Dharma Publishing, 2026

Ken Stern '88
**Healthy to 100:
 How Strong Social Ties
 Lead to Long Lives**
 PublicAffairs, 2025

OUR FACULTY



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From Energy Bills to Electric Grids

Joshua Macey '17 is a professor of law at Yale Law School.

Joshua Macey, who received tenure in January 2026, teaches and writes about bankruptcy, environmental law, energy law, and the regulation of financial institutions. His latest work focuses on the fragility of the nation's electric grid and offers strategies to improve grid reliability and accelerate the transition to new sources of energy.

In the Q&A below, Macey discusses improving the reliability of the U.S. power grid and how to keep up with demand from data centers.

Yale Law Report: In your “Energy Law” course, you show students your own electric bill and go over it line by line. What kind of information can you glean about energy policy from a household electric bill?

Joshua Macey: When you read your utility bill carefully, you see that the way we design rates doesn't provide strong incentives to reduce consumption. Ratepayers also typically have very little choice in picking their supplier, and they are paying for a lot of state policies, some of which have little connection to electricity rates. I want them to understand how pricing decisions influence and distort utility investment, how the decision to grant a firm a legal right to a monopoly leads to perverse governance and regulatory incentives, and how challenging it is to change that system.

The U.S. electric grid is under strain, with extreme weather and blackouts on the rise. One of your recent papers argues that a primary cause of our unreliable grid is a failure of grid governance. Can you explain?

The U.S. grid infrastructure is under strain for a lot of reasons, but governance is a big one, in my opinion. We have designed these semiprivate self-regulatory organizations to administer wholesale electricity markets, plan transmission investment, and make sure we build enough supply to meet future demand. These



One of many data centers increasing demand on the electric grid

entities are largely governed by incumbent utilities that owned or operated grid infrastructure for most of the 20th century, and they have strong financial reasons to resist reforms that would expose their existing assets to competition from independent power producers. As we struggle to get new resources online, we should at least be aware that many institutions that develop market rules are governed by entities that can boost their profits by limiting competition.

Power grids in many states are also struggling to keep up with demand from data centers, and costs are soaring. What can lawmakers and regulators do to help solve this issue?

First, you should make it easier to build and permit infrastructure. Second, you should allow data centers to bring their own generation when they are able to. But a lot of the most important reforms involve connecting to the grid and making sure enough supply enters the market.

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Yale Journal on Regulation

Claire Priest '01 in “Before Hernando de Soto’s ‘The Other Path’: The Emergence of Property Rights as a Housing Solution in the Shadow of the Cuban Revolution,” *Yale Journal on Regulation*, Vol. 42, Issue 3, 2025:

“With the Cold War as a backdrop, conferring formal property rights to squatters, combined with self-building, was a conservative solution to the global housing crisis in contrast to more expensive social welfare programs and building public housing.”

“I want [students] to understand how pricing decisions influence and distort utility investment, how the decision to grant a firm a legal right to a monopoly leads to perverse governance and regulatory incentives, and how challenging it is to change that system.” JOSHUA MACEY '17

THE
**GEORGETOWN
LAW JOURNAL**

Oona A. Hathaway '97, Cindy Garay '26, and Kevin Zhang '25 in "The World Court's Enforcement Dilemma — And How to Solve It," *Georgetown Law Journal*, Vol. 144, 2025:

"Even though only the parties to a case are bound to comply with the Court's decisions, the obligation to comply is owed not just to the other parties to the case but also to the broader international community, for the obligation is, at least in part, an obligation to uphold the functioning and efficacy of a principal alternative to the use of force."

MACEY Q&A (CONTINUED)

One good idea is to do something called the connect and manage approach to interconnecting to the grid. Typically, before connecting to the grid, transmission operators conduct a lengthy study to determine whether the new generating unit will cause stability or reliability issues. If so, the transmission owner upgrades its transmission network to make sure the unit can connect to the market. Instead of doing that, we should let resources connect more

quickly so long as they accept the risk that they can be forced to shut down if or when they contribute to voltage or frequency issues.

Similarly, when deciding how to move through the connection queue, we should auction off interconnection positions instead of moving sequentially. Finally, we need to really think about how to allow more competitive processes for identifying where to build transmission and generation, and who can build it.

ECONOMIC POLICY

Conference Delves into Law and the Abundance Movement



Panelists at the Law of Abundance Conference in January

The Law of Abundance Conference brought scholars to the Yale campus on Jan. 23 and 24 to discuss new legal scholarship and opportunities on abundance and state capacity.

The conference, hosted by the Tobin Center for Economic Policy at Yale University and the Niskanen Center, was organized by University of Michigan Law

School Professor Nick Bagley and Professor Zachary Liscow '15 of Yale Law School. Bagley is an expert on the procedural hurdles that administrative law imposes on government effectiveness, and Liscow is a leader in understanding how the legal landscape makes it challenging for the U.S. to build infrastructure.

Scholars across the legal field have been calling for reforms relating to state capacity and abundance, and this conference provided a timely opportunity for these experts to discuss how the government can more effectively meet the needs of its people.

"The abundance movement has clearly struck a chord, and now we are combining high-level frameworks with concrete analysis of how law works on the ground to chart a path forward," said Liscow.

The conference was made possible with support from the Hewlett Foundation, the Tobin Center, and Yale Law School.



CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Professor Miriam Gohara Travels to India to Collaborate with Death Penalty Clinic

Miriam Gohara, clinical professor of law at Yale Law School, traveled to New Delhi, India, in February to consult with colleagues at the NALSAR University of Law on their work involving capital punishment litigation and research.



Gohara, the Law School's deputy dean for experiential education, was invited by the university to serve as a panelist and expert for a three-day, closed-door consultation on mitigation and sentencing in death penalty cases in India, held by the university's Square Circle

Clinic for the purpose of developing a handbook on death penalty mitigation.

Gohara founded and directs the Peter Gruber Challenging Mass Incarceration Clinic (CMIC) at the Law School, which offers students hands-on experience in representing clients facing federal and state sentencing or post-conviction hearings as well as a seminar where they can explore alternative approaches to punishment to combat inflated prison populations in the United States. During the consultation, the Square Circle Clinic drew on CMIC's mitigation model in considering the types of evidence to present in reducing death sentences and in capital trials with the hopes that death will not be imposed in the first place.

The Square Circle Clinic is a criminal justice research and legal aid center at the NALSAR University of Law — and the only one of its kind in India. Its mission is to generate critical perspectives on the Indian criminal justice system through pro bono legal representation to death row prisoners across India as well as empirical and doctrinal research on the death penalty, prevention of torture, legal aid, sentencing, mental health and criminal justice, and forensics.

"Indian capital defense lawyers and mitigation specialists are forging practices to save lives and setting professional standards, just as American death penalty lawyers did in the 1990s and early aughts," said Gohara. "I was honored to learn from them and be able to share American capital defense experiences with Indian colleagues."



APPOINTMENTS

Henry E. Smith '96 to Join Yale Law School Faculty

Henry E. Smith '96 joined the Yale Law School faculty as professor of law on July 1, 2026.

Smith was Fessenden Professor of Law at Harvard Law School where he taught since 2009 and where he directed the Project on the Foundations of Private Law. His teaching and scholarship focus on the law and economics of property, intellectual property, equity, restitution, and remedies, with a focus on how property-related institutions lower information costs and constrain strategic behavior.

Smith is the co-editor most recently of "Reinach and the Foundations of Private Law" (Cambridge, 2025) and "Interstitial Private Law" (Oxford, 2024). Some of his articles include "Property as the Law of Things," "Introduction: Traditional Knowledge and Property in Moral Communities," and "The Equity in Corporate Law" with Andrew S. Gold. Since 2014, he has been the lead Reporter for the American Law Institute's Restatement (Fourth) of Property.

This appointment marks a return to the Yale Law School faculty, which Smith joined in 2002 before being named Fred A. Johnston Professor of Property and Environmental Law in 2006. While at the Law School he served on numerous faculty committees and taught courses including "Property," "Introduction to Intellectual Property," "Patent Law," and "Remedies."



On X
Zachary Liscow
@ZLiscow

Feb. 10, 2026:

"NEW PAPER! (w/ Fox & Love):
How to tax business?"

1. Corporations are now taxed more efficiently than ever.
 2. Partnerships hold >\$30T in assets, yet audit rates for large ones have collapsed to 0.27% because of complexity.
- Time to shift back to corporate taxation?"

New Podcast with Professor John Morley Examines the Coming Legal Industry Shakeup

Professor John D. Morley '06 has a new podcast that looks at the forces that are remaking the legal industry. "New Law Order" is a series co-hosted by Morley and TalksOnLaw founder Joel Cohen. The podcast examines the technologies, business models, and incentives that are driving changes in legal services.

On each episode of the podcast, Morley and Cohen talk with managing partners, founders, and others actively changing the practice of law. Guests include Jeffrey Toobin (legal analyst and author), Brad Karp (former Paul Weiss chairman), John Quinn (founder, Quinn Emanuel), Chris Bogart (CEO, Burford Capital), Michael Gerstenzang (managing partner, Cleary Gottlieb), and Yale Law School's Scott Shapiro (Charles F. Southmayd Professor of Law).





Journal of Free Speech Law

Robert C. Post '77 in "The Enigma of *Gitlow*: Positivism, Liberty, Democracy, and Freedom of Speech," *Journal of Free Speech Law*, Vol. 6, 2025:

"So far from viewing the scope of constitutionally protected liberty as a 'fact' determined by the historical data of history and tradition, all Justices in the 1920s understood liberty interests to be defined by values they perceived as immanent in the Constitution."



Professor Claudia Flores spoke at the U.N. General Assembly.

Women's Rights Advocates Want Action, Professor Claudia Flores Tells UN

On the opening day of the United Nations' largest annual forum on gender equality, Clinical Professor of Law Claudia Flores said there is a persistent gap between the expectations of women's advocacy groups and states' fulfillment of their obligations.

Flores delivered her remarks at United Nations Headquarters on March 9, International Women's Day, at the opening of the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Speaking as chair of the U.N.'s Working Group on Discrimination Against Women and Girls, she helped set the tone for the 10-day conference of member states, civil society, and the United Nations.

The focus of this year's forum was "Rights, Justice, Action." Speakers stressed the need for stronger action to ensure women and girls can fully access justice and equal rights worldwide. Flores pointed to the frustra-

tion of advocates with the continuing lack of implementation of commitments to women's rights.

"This observation is sobering," Flores said. "But we have the knowledge, the tools, and the experience needed to move forward. The task before us is to translate that knowledge into action."

The group's most recent thematic report examines the gendered dimensions of care and support systems and highlights the direct connection between rights in the care sector and access to justice.

This was Flores's second time speaking at the U.N. on behalf of the working group in less than a year. In the fall, she spoke on the anniversary of a landmark women's rights convention. In June, she presented the working group's thematic report to the U.N. Human Rights Council.

Judicial Opinions Are Vastly Overrated

Justin Driver is the Robert R. Slaughter Professor of Law at Yale Law School.



Professor Justin Driver's recent article "*The Insignificance of Judicial Opinions*," published in the *California Law Review*, challenges academia's received wisdom regarding the centrality of judicial opinions and argues that bottom-line decisions loom much larger than is commonly understood.

The reasoning behind an opinion "forms the indispensable object of examination," Driver writes, and is scrutinized by law students, lawyers, jurists, and academics for decades, and from every conceivable angle. But Driver says that for both the public and the legal community, "judicial rationales matter far, far less than is commonly asserted."

Though comparatively brief at 18 pages long, the article has garnered attention from publications like *The New York Times*, as well as praise from people such as University of Chicago professor William Baude '07 and attorney and podcast host Sarah Isgur of *Advisory Opinions*. In this Q&A, Driver discusses some of the article's central arguments.

Yale Law Report: Your essay argues that what courts do matters more than the underlying judicial opinions. Why does the legal community focus so much on judicial opinions themselves?

Justin Driver: I contend that the Supreme Court's bottom-line decisions are dramatically more important than the reasoning contained in the accompanying opinions. That's true in determining not merely how the public receives judicial decisions, I claim, but—more controversially— even in shaping whether the legal community extols or excoriates various decisions. Judicial opinions that can be viewed as shoddily reasoned, that is, are nevertheless venerated in constitutional classrooms.

Judicial opinions form the central object of scrutiny in contemporary American law schools. That is true for lots of reasons, not least because lawyers dispute the meaning of judicial opinions all day, every day. But we should eliminate the pretense that those disputes are driven in any material way by the intrinsic quality of the contested opinions.

What are the consequences in your view to valorizing judicial opinions?

Law professors should stop insisting to their students that decisions' underlying rationales determine

whether an outcome is accepted or rejected, either in the court of public opinion or even among legal sophisticates. For example, *Griswold v. Connecticut*'s rationale is quite literally a punchline at the Supreme Court. Indeed, Justice Thomas posted a sign in his chambers that admonishes, "Please don't emanate in the penumbras." That sign, of course, takes a swipe at a familiar line from Justice Douglas's *Griswold* opinion: "[S]pecific guarantees in the Bill of Rights have penumbras, formed by emanations from those guarantees that help give them life and substance." Nevertheless, *Griswold*'s outcome is beyond dispute in American constitutional law, as Supreme Court nominees from across the ideological spectrum have repeatedly pledged allegiance to *Griswold*'s bottom line.

Relatedly, many law professors assert that *Roe v. Wade* would have been more broadly accepted if only the Court had relied upon the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause. That argument, though, severely strains credulity and misapprehends the nature of objections to abortion. The Court's subsequent decision in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, moreover, can be understood as hanging its hat on equal protection. I'm confident that precisely no one changed his or her mind about abortion's constitutionality due to that shift in rationale.

In a similar vein, I suggest that *Brown v. Board of Education*'s revered position in our constitutional order is in no way owed to Chief Justice Warren's opinion for the Court. Going further, the Supreme Court's broad destruction of Jim Crow in the 1950s occurred on what nowadays might be termed the "shadow docket," in that the Court issued decisions containing no reasoning whatsoever. Should we really deem Jim Crow's dismantlement an ill-gotten gain? Count me skeptical.

How do you approach teaching your students about judicial opinions?

Students hoping to avoid reading judicial opinions closely in my classes will be severely, bitterly disappointed. One of the skills that I can provide to my students is the ability to read judicial opinions with care, subtlety, and precision. That skill will, I hope, stand them in good stead whether they choose to practice law or to pursue another field.

H A R V A R D
L A W R E V I E W

E. Garrett West '18 in
"Tort Stories After *Bivens*,"
Harvard Law Review,
Vol. 138, Issue 5, March 2025:

"The law of the past becomes the law of the present not just because it is from the past, but because it was made (or becomes) binding or because it is instructive. So why should we imitate the lost 19th-century model of officer accountability? Which aspects of the 19th-century model should we imitate? Which should we ignore?"

INDIGENOUS RIGHTS

Professor Gerald Torres Moderates UN Panel on Indigenous Issues



(from left) Q'apaj Conde, Charles Sams, Elisa Marchi, Professor Gerald Torres, Luisa Castaneda-Quintana, Bouba Aeisatu, Pallab Chakma, and David Cordero-Heredia

During the 25th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on April 24, held at the U.N. Headquarters in New York, Professor of Law Gerald Torres '77 moderated an event featuring panelists from North and South America, Africa, and Asia.



The event, titled "Implementing Article 32 of UNDRIP: Indigenous Self-Determination Through Indigenous-Led Initiatives, Co-Management and Co-Stewardship of Natural Resources, and the Emerging Rights of Nature Framework," was presented by the Yale Center for Environmental Justice (YCEJ), the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program of the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, and the Indigenous NGO Land Is Life.

"Discussions like the one we had are essential for continued progress towards achievement of the promise of the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Having the indigenous people speak for themselves is critical," said Torres.

In addition to the event in New York, YCEJ hosted a live viewing event at the Yale Native American Cultural Center, which was organized by James D. Diamond, visiting lecturer in law and visiting clinical lecturer in law at Yale Law School. Diamond is also senior counselor for Indigenous programs at YCEJ and worked with the event's co-sponsors to coordinate Yale's participation in the panel.

Panelists included Bouba Aeisatu, founder and CEO of Forum des femmes Autochtones du Cameroun; Luisa Castaneda Quintana, executive director of Land Is Life; Pallab Chakma, secretary general of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact; Q'apaj Conde, programme management officer with the United Nations Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; David Cordero-Heredia, visiting fellow at the Yale School of the Environment; Elisa Marchi, program manager of the Indigenous Rights & Protected Areas Initiative and professor of practice of the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program at the University of Arizona; and Charles Sams, director of Indigenous programs at YCEJ and an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

The faculty of Yale Law School at a retreat in May, hosted for the first time by Dean Cristina M. Rodríguez



Faculty group photo by Harold Shapiro

Faculty Out and About

Yale Law School's faculty are busy outside of their teaching activities every term with lectures, podcasts, and more. Here are a few of the appearances of the faculty in recent months.



On Nov. 13, 2025, **Oona Hathaway '97** gave a Nuremberg Academy Talk titled "War Unbound."



The USC Gould Center for Law, History, and Culture 23rd Annual Distinguished Lecture in Law and Humanities featured **Reva Siegel**, who presented "We the People: Constitutional Memory and Counter-Memory in Forging Freedom."



Douglas Kysar delivered a lecture titled "Systems So Perfect: Alternative Proteins and the Dream of Abundance" on the Kent Ridge campus of the National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law, on Jan. 29, 2026.



Laura Weinrib, Justin Driver, and John Goldberg after a Harvard Law School Rappaport Forum on Oct. 29 in which Driver discussed *Mahmoud v. Taylor*



James Forman Jr. '92 gave two Tanner Lectures on April 15 and 16 at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University on the topic "University Admissions and the American Dream: Who Gets In — and Why It Matters."



Yale Journal on Regulation

Carol M. Rose in "Advanced Capitalism and Advanced Democracy: Of Modules, Marshmallows, and (Maybe) Monarchs," *Yale Journal on Regulation*, Vol. 42, 2025:

"Fundamental to contract and property, which George [Priest] described as forming the bedrock of capitalism, is the counterintuitive ability of participants to exercise a modicum of self-restraint, in what Tocqueville called 'self-interest rightly understood' (SIRU). The article tracks permutations of the SIRU puzzle in various guises, including the famous Marshmallow Test of young children, as well as in other theoretical work on property."

HONORS

Faculty Receive Accolades



Ahmad

Professor Muneer I. Ahmad was awarded the Tapping Reeve Legal Educator Award by the Connecticut Bar Association (CBA). Ahmad, the Sol Goldman Clinical Professor of Law and co-director of the Worker and Immigrant Rights Advocacy Clinic, received the award on March 12, 2026, as part of the CBA's annual awards ceremony.



Amar

Professor Akhil Reed Amar '84 was awarded the 2026 Abraham Lincoln Institute Book Award for "Born Equal: Remaking America's Constitution, 1840-1920" at the 29th Annual Abraham Lincoln Institute Symposium on March 21.



Calabresi

Professor Guido Calabresi '58 received the 2026 Henry M. Phillips Prize in Jurisprudence from the American Philosophical Society at its April meeting. Established in 1888, the Henry M. Phillips Prize in Jurisprudence is awarded in recognition of outstanding lifetime contributions to the field of jurisprudence and important publications that illustrate that accomplishment.



Driver

Professor Justin Driver received a 2026 Guggenheim Fellowship for his work on constitutional law. As established in 1925 by founder Sen. Simon Guggenheim, each fellow receives a monetary stipend to pursue independent work at the highest level under "the freest possible conditions."

Professor William Eskridge Jr. '78 and his co-author of a foundational casebook in legal education have been recognized by the Association of American Law Schools for their groundbreaking scholarly contributions. The association's Section on Legislation and Law of the Political Process honored Eskridge, the Alexander M. Bickel Professor of Public Law at Yale Law School, together with the late Philip P. Frickey, with its Scholarly Achievement Award.



Eskridge



Gluck

Professor Abbe R. Gluck '00 was named chair of the board of directors of the Fund for Modern Courts, succeeding William C. Silverman as of January, the organization announced on Dec. 12.



Gerken

Professor Heather K. Gerken was named one of Time magazine's 100 most influential people of 2026.



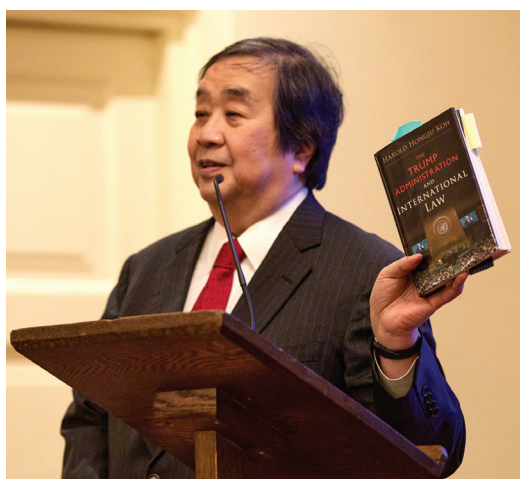
Parrillo

Professor Nicholas Parrillo '04 was ranked No. 33 in Rob Willey and Melanie Knapp's "Top 100 Legal Scholars of 2025" citation rankings.

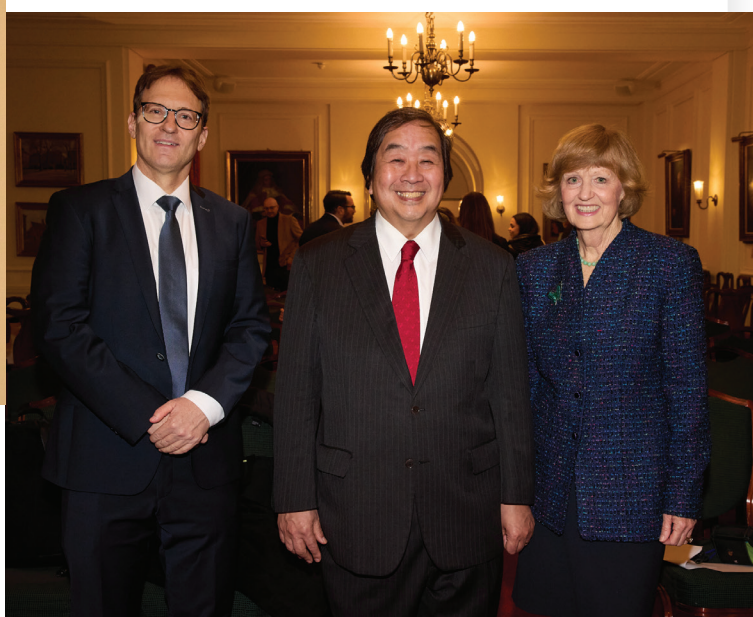
Dean Cristina Rodríguez '00 will receive the Hispanic National Bar Foundation's 2026 Academic Leadership Award on July 23.



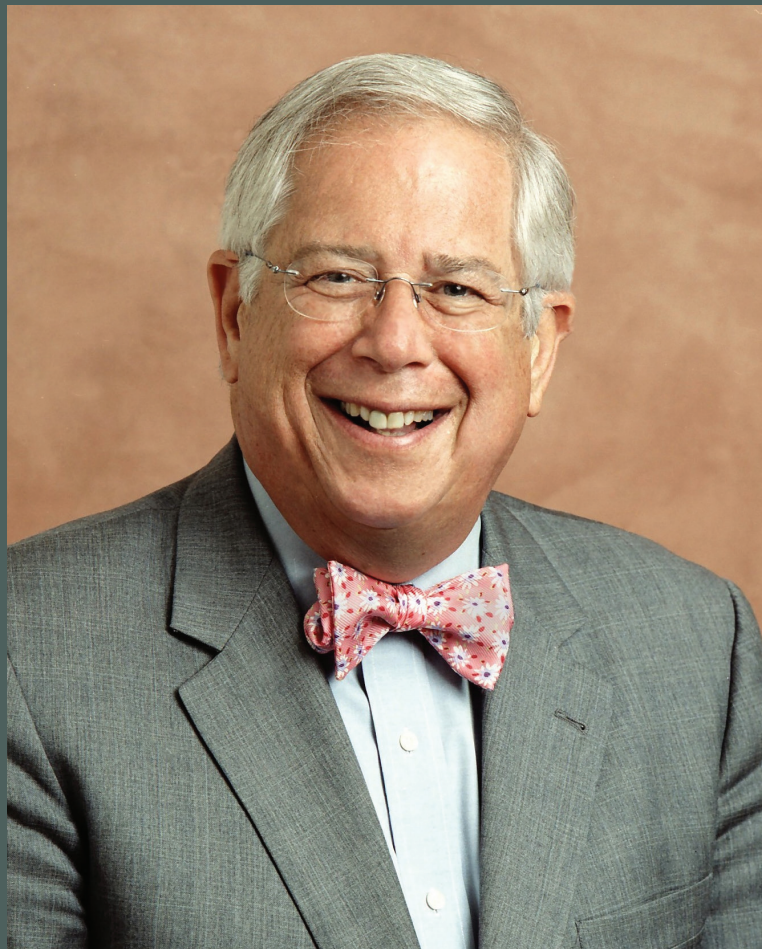
Rodríguez



Harold Hongju Koh gave a Lecture in Transnational Justice titled "How America's President Became a National Security Threat" at the Center for Transnational Legal Studies in London in February.



Lawrence Fox, Founder of Ethics Bureau at Yale, Dies at 82



Lawrence Fox died Feb. 20, 2026, from complications with Parkinson's disease at the age of 82. He spent 45 years at Drinker Biddle before retiring from the firm in 2017.

Fox was born and raised in Philadelphia, where he attended Cheltenham High School and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania for both his undergraduate and law degrees.

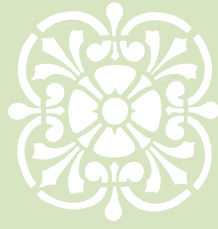
A 2021 recipient of the ABA Medal, Fox held leadership positions on the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Ethics and Professional Responsibility and the Commission on the Evaluation of the Rules of Professional Conduct over the course of his career.

Fox also taught law school courses on professional responsibility for three decades at prestigious institutions, including Harvard and Yale. While at Yale, Fox served as a visiting lecturer and founded the Ethics Bureau at Yale.

His reputation in the ethics field extended internationally as well, as the United States State Department sent him to Argentina and China to help shape legal ethics codes internationally.

Fox was also well known for his pro bono work on behalf of the poor and those sentenced to death row. He worked alongside Kenneth Frazier to help exonerate James Willie Cochran, who had been sentenced to death row in Alabama, in 1997; he also secured clemency for another death row inmate, Tommy Lee Waldrup, in Georgia in 2014. Fox also played a role in *Baby Neal v. Casey*, which targeted deficiencies in the adoption and foster care processes facilitated by Pennsylvania's Department of Human Services.

Fox is survived by his wife, Paulette; his sister, Caren Fires; his children, Emily and Anthony; and his four grandchildren.



*Leading the Law School
in an Era of
Innovation and Impact*

MEETING *the* MOMENT

By Erin Shanley





“If you had told me when I was 18 that I would end up spending the majority of my adult life at Yale, I might have thought that was strange,” Cristina Rodríguez said with a laugh as she sat in the Law School’s dean’s office. “But I think it makes sense, because this university enabled me to become the scholar and lawyer I am today.” 🍷



(clockwise from top left) Rodríguez attending a conference at Yale Law School in January; addressing alumni at an event in New York City; in conversation with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson; speaking at a Tsai Leadership event



Rodríguez had taken the helm as Yale Law School's 18th dean just a month before, but her new office was filled with a sense of calm. Her journey through Yale began almost 35 years ago when she arrived at Yale College in 1991 from San Antonio, Texas, where she grew up in a tight-knit family that argued over politics and world affairs at the dinner table. A committed and successful high school debater, she was determined to make it to the Northeast — the setting of the novels she loved most as a child. She studied history at Yale and then at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, after which she returned to Yale to earn her J.D. in 2000. After clerking, launching her teaching career, and performing a stint in public service, she joined the Law School faculty in 2013 and was named the Leighton Homer Surbeck Professor of Law in 2014.

"It's incredibly meaningful, as someone who went both to Yale College and Yale Law School, to have this role within the Law School and the University system," said Rodríguez. "Yale Law School made me the scholar that I am, and so to now have the chance to help shape this institution for new generations of students and future lawyers, leaders, and scholars is a real gift. It feels like the culmination of a lifetime of work and learning."

Leading the Law School at a time when higher education institutions are under pressure and the rule of law feels fragile is undoubtedly a daunting task. But Rodríguez is ready for the challenge. In addition to her vital scholarly career and government experience, she already has been closely involved in nurturing the intellectual life of the School and enhancing the student experience. She has served as deputy dean, chair of the hiring committee, faculty co-director of the Ludwig Program in Public Sector Leadership, co-founder and director of the Public Law Workshop, and co-director of the School's Global Constitutionalism Seminar, as well as co-chair of Yale's University Committee on Institutional Voice.





“My primary objective is to sustain Yale Law School as the vibrant intellectual and academic institution it has always been, but to push us all to think about the kind of law school we should be, given our present moment and the demands of the future.”

CRISTINA RODRÍGUEZ

“I love this school, and interacting with all of its facets has been enlivening — from alums, to students, to my colleagues whom I’ve known for a long time and who are dear to me, to staff who really keep the Law School running,” she said. “Being at Yale Law School and working closely with and for each of these constituencies is really special.”

A PLACE FOR IDEAS & PATHBREAKING SCHOLARSHIP

Rodríguez aims to bolster the Law School as an institution for innovative scholarship, exploration of ideas, and the production of knowledge.

“My primary objective is to sustain Yale Law School as the vibrant intellectual and academic institution it has always been, but to push us all to think about the kind of law school we should be, given our present moment and the demands of the future,” said Rodríguez.

Rodríguez said faculty hiring will play a critical role in sustaining and adapting the Law School’s singular academic environment and will be one of her highest priorities as dean. She emphasized that academic hiring decisions will be a collective, faculty-wide effort to nurture the path-breaking and influential scholarship that has become a hallmark of the Law School.

“Maintaining our tradition of interdisciplinary study will be really important,” said Rodríguez. “We need to encompass diverse fields and methodologies and sustain work that is timeless and poses challenging new questions.”

Rodríguez said her own experience with faculty mentors during her time as a law student played an important role in shaping her career and scholarly pursuits, and she hopes to foster an academic community that continues to nurture those bonds for generations to come.

“My professors at the Law School showed me the virtue and beauty of the life of the mind and helped me to see that I could be a legal scholar who played a role in the world at large,” said Rodríguez. “This sort of mentorship should be a defining feature of the Law School.”



Rodríguez co-organized the American Bar Foundation's Northeast Roundtable on "The Future of Latinos in the United States: Law, Opportunity, and Mobility," on April 8–9, 2017.

OPEN EARS & OPEN MINDS

Rodríguez has spent the early months of her deanship diving into the intricacies of how the Law School functions and listening to the ideas and perspectives of the broader community to help shape the Law School's future. So far, promoting community; grappling with how AI will change teaching, learning, and the legal profession; cultivating commitment to core principles of the rule of law; and expanding access to legal education have emerged as key objectives.

Rodríguez is also looking forward to engaging with and drawing ideas from the alumni community.

"We have a unique intellectual community here made up of the most creative and ambitious students, and a group of scholars who are testing the limits of their fields and producing challenging and potentially field-altering ideas," she said. "I think that combination helps to produce an alumni community full of leading thinkers, lawyers, entrepreneurs, and public servants. Our alumni work across so many different social domains, are leaders at what they do, and are participating in important transformations, as well as in defending the basic principles of the rule of law that the Law School is all about."

"We have a unique intellectual community here made up of the most creative and ambitious students, and a group of scholars who are testing the limits of their fields and producing challenging and potentially field-altering ideas."

CRISTINA RODRÍGUEZ



(from top) Rodríguez with Reva Siegel, Heather K. Gerken, and Noah Bookbinder

COMMITMENT TO THE RULE OF LAW & PUBLIC SERVICE

A leading scholar of constitutional, administrative, and immigration law, Rodríguez's commitment to the rule of law and public service has been a throughline of her career in academia and the federal government.

Since graduating from the Law School, Rodríguez's positions have included clerking for Justice Sandra Day O'Connor of the U.S. Supreme Court, teaching as a member of the NYU School of Law faculty, serving as deputy assistant attorney general in the Office of Legal Counsel at the U.S. Department of Justice, and co-chairing the bipartisan Presidential Commission on the Supreme Court of the United States.

Much of her work has focused on presidential power and the structures and functions of the executive branch. Her book "The President and Immigration Law" (with Adam Cox) charts the long history of presidential influence over immigration policymaking and analyzes its implications for the separation of powers and the rights and status of noncitizens in the American polity. Her recent scholarship also includes a series of empirically informed papers on accountability and policymaking within administrative agencies and their relationship to democratic governance, set against the backdrop of monumental changes in administrative law. In all of her work, she explores how institutions channel conflict and pluralism, enabling us to live in disagreement.

Her scholarly and professional background, Rodríguez said, will inform how she approaches the demands of the present moment as a leader in higher education.

"The moment demands a university and a profession that are alive to the challenges of today's world," she said, noting specifically the erosion of democratic norms and the instability and fragility of many of our legal and governing institutions, as well as the rapid pace of technological change. Rodríguez is committed to thinking intentionally and creatively about how the Law School will rise to these challenges.

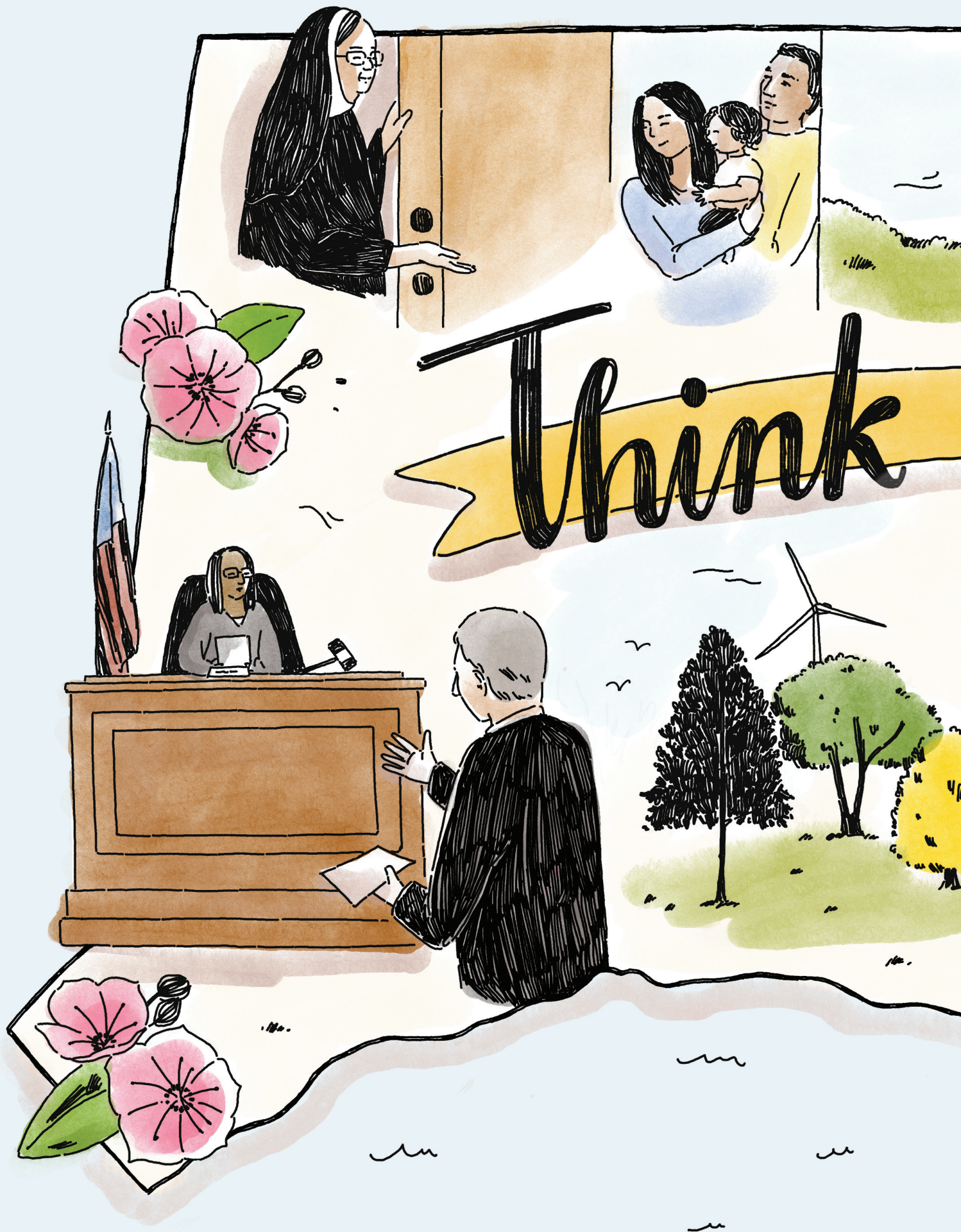
"I believe in the importance of the university; I believe in the importance of scholarship and teaching; and I believe in the talent, vision, and commitment of our students, faculty, and alums," she emphasized. "To have the chance to lead Yale Law School in this moment of change and uncertainty is an honor and challenge of a lifetime." 🗨️



Rodríguez meets with Veena Dubal (left) before the 2026 Gruber Distinguished Lecture in Global Justice on March 2.

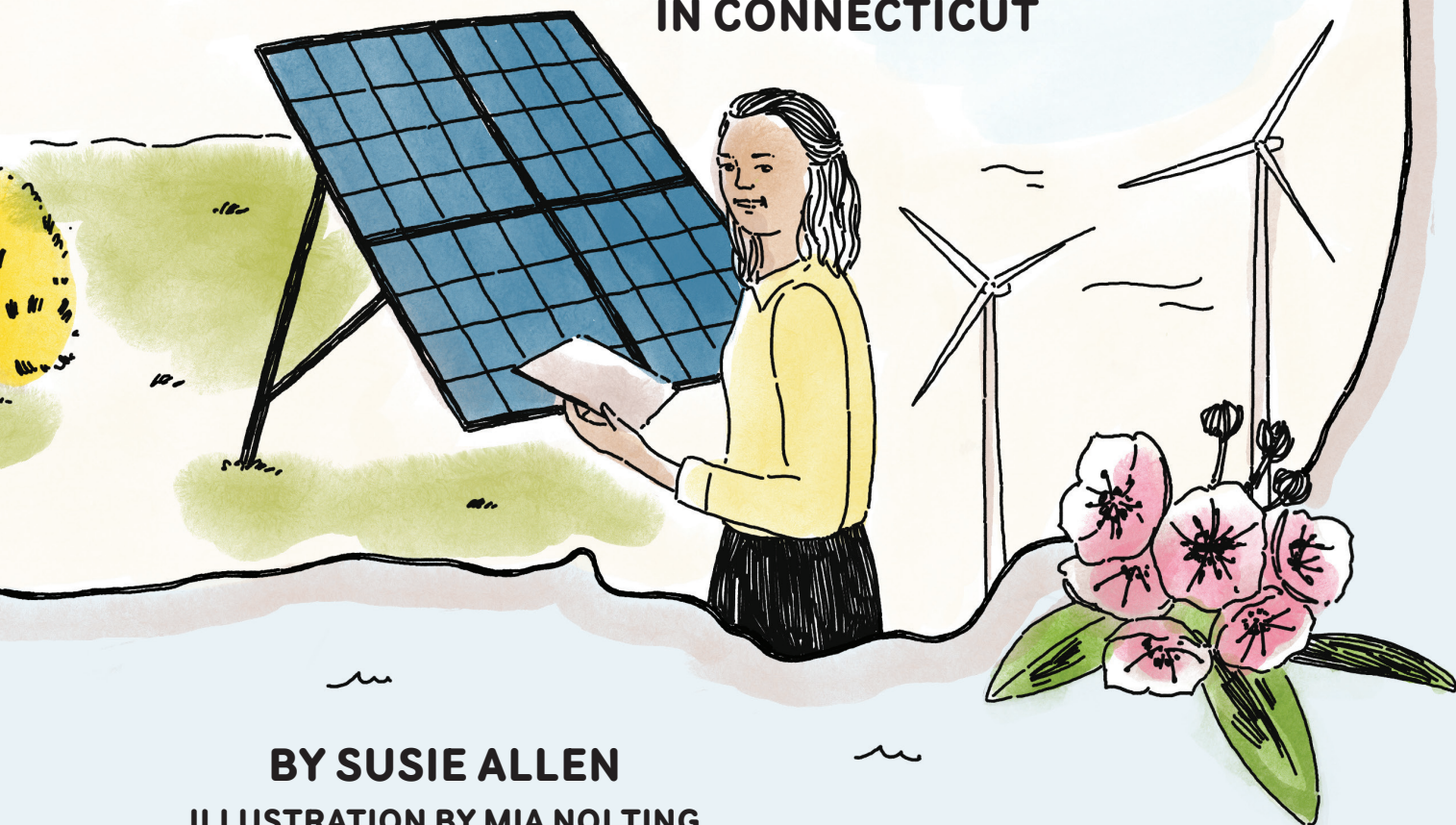
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CRISTINA RODRÍGUEZ





HOW FOUR ALUMNI CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITIES IN CONNECTICUT



BY SUSIE ALLEN
ILLUSTRATION BY MIA NOLTING



Growing up in New Haven, Andrew Giering '11 always had the dream — nurtured by movies and F. Scott Fitzgerald novels — of living in New York City. After graduating from Yale Law School, he got his wish, spending nearly four years as an associate at Sullivan & Cromwell's Manhattan office.

But as he considered his next steps, Giering felt the pull of home. In Connecticut, as compared to New York, “the bar is a lot smaller,” he said. “That makes it a lot easier to build a reputation, to maintain a reputation, and to have a rewarding practice where you have actually attained familiarity with your adversaries, with your judges, and, for people in the corporate world, with your clients.”

Plus, “I love New Haven,” said Giering, now a federal public defender in the District of Connecticut. “I think it's lived up to its moniker as the greatest small city in America. I'm a total fanboy and booster for it.”

Giering is one of several alums whose lives and careers have brought them to or kept them in Connecticut. Their work is varied — **Skylar Albertson '18** practices at a small firm, **Sister Mary Ellen Burns '89** leads a nonprofit, and **Katie Scharf Dykes '06** serves in government — but all are committed to strengthening their state and the New Haven community.

“I've now lived in Connecticut longer than anywhere else,” said Dykes, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. “There's a good reason for that. This is a great state and a place we can really be proud of.”

For Giering, a third-generation New Haven resident, attending Yale Law School was a bridge across the town-gown divide. His grandfather, a stonemason, worked on many campus buildings in the 1930s and '40s, and his father once worked as a lab technician at the university. “Townies are very critical of Yale,” Giering said, “but I also think townies are very in awe of Yale.” He was no exception.

Fortunately, the Law School lived up to his expectations: “The professors are extraordinary,” he said. “There's no comparison.” Sterling Professor of International Law Harold Hongju Koh — a fellow New Haven native — became “a great mentor. I just had a lot of respect and appreciation for him.”

Giering's local knowledge serves him well in his public defense work today. “So much of our job is telling our clients' stories and knowing their histories. It's important to know the geography and know the territory,” he said. “I've written sentencing memos explaining what it was like for my client to grow up in the Church Street South housing projects across from the train station, or the Father Panik housing projects in Bridgeport in the '70s. Having that local background knowledge in my head is a benefit to me.”



Andrew Giering



New Haven County Courthouse
on Elm Street

NOTE In June 2026, Katie Scharf Dykes '06, one of the alumni featured in this article, announced that she will step down from her position as commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

"So much of our job is telling our clients' stories and knowing their histories.
It's important to know the geography and know the territory.
Having that local background knowledge in my head is a benefit to me."

ANDREW GIERING '11

Giering makes an effort to serve his hometown and home state outside of work, too. He's served on the boards of Artspace New Haven and the Connecticut Arts Alliance and is currently president of the New Haven Free Public Library's board of directors. The library is "a bastion of freedom of speech and expression and ideas, and it's such an important community gathering space," he said. "I'm honored to have

the opportunity to help protect that institution. The library does a lot of great work for the city of New Haven and its people."

His nonprofit involvement also provides a respite from the demands of his job, "so that I'm not only thinking about criminal

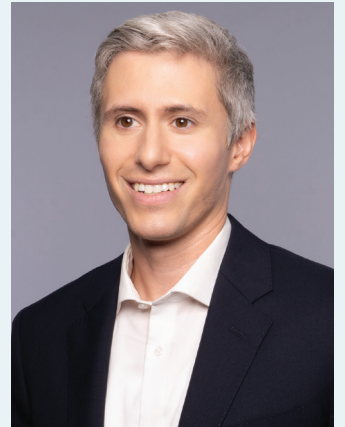
defense all of the time. Being active in the community and volunteering is a big balm to me."

Skylar Albertson never imagined when he was applying to law school that he would find a career and a home in the New Haven area. His plan was to return to the Bronx Defenders, the organization he had worked for after college and that sparked his interest in a legal career.

But when his now-wife was admitted to the Ph.D. program at the Yale School of the Environment, Albertson started looking for opportunities in Connecticut. The path was winding—he spent a year traveling the country as a Liman Fellow for the Bail Project, then clerked for judges including the Honorable Guido Calabresi '58 of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit. Eventually, Albertson found his way to Koskoff Koskoff & Bieder, a plaintiff's law firm with offices in Bridgeport and New Haven.

He'd learned of Koskoff through the Criminal Justice Advocacy Clinic, and he knew that a fellow alum of the clinic, Katie Mesner-Hage '13, had been hired there. The firm had also been in the news for its work representing families of Sandy Hook victims in a lawsuit against the gun manufacturer Remington. That case resulted in a \$73 million settlement.

Albertson was first hired as a Theodore I. Koskoff Trial Advocacy Fellow. Almost immediately, he started to feel he was in the right place. "Within the first two or three months that I was here, I took my first deposition of an expert witness in a medical malpractice case. I argued my first discovery



Skylar Albertson



New Haven Free Public Library

"[The New Haven area has] great green spaces, it's got great food,
it has different neighborhoods that have their own identities, which is fun.
Connecticut has a lot to offer."

SKYLAR ALBERTSON '18



motion on a novel issue of Connecticut discovery law,” he recalled. “I was given a lot of responsibility, but also a lot of guidance and mentorship from the attorneys here.”

Today, he is one of the lawyers representing victims of the Highland Park, Illinois, mass shooting and their families in a lawsuit against Smith & Wesson. The majority of Koskoff’s work is in Connecticut, but because of the firm’s success with the Sandy Hook litigation, the firm has had the opportunity to represent other communities affected by mass shootings.

Albertson’s other cases are lower-profile but equally impactful. “All of the firm’s work is very meaningful,” he said. Helping clients secure some compensation for harm done to them, whether from medical malpractice, dangerous products, or negligence, has “the potential to help address the very difficult situation that somebody was in.”

Albertson is grateful not only for the work he gets to do but also for the chance to put down roots. The New Haven area has “great green spaces, it’s got great food, it has different neighborhoods that have their own identities, which is fun,” he said. “Connecticut has a lot to offer.”

For Sister Mary Ellen Burns, making an impact on the New Haven community was not a choice but a calling.

As a nun, “I chose not to have a whole lot of control over where I was going to live,” she said. Burns’s work, too, was chosen for her by her superiors. She was aghast when the idea of law school was first proposed to her — she had been teaching for seven years, work she enjoyed. In retrospect, however, she’s grateful: Though she liked teaching, she realizes now she wasn’t truly passionate about it. By contrast, she said, “advocating for my clients is something I can be passionate about.”

At Law School, it took time for Burns to find her confidence. “It was so darn hard initially,” she remembers. Taking part in the housing clinic gave her the sense of concreteness — and of mission — that she sought.

It also helped her on the job market. “I am quite sure that being a woman religious in a habit did not hurt my law school application at all,” she said, but it created a challenge when she was applying for jobs at legal services organizations in New York City. “Being able to talk about having represented people in housing court, having participated on the litigation team for a federal court case — I have to say, that gave me credibility in the legal services world.”

Burns ultimately spent nearly 20 years as a legal aid attorney in New York City. In 2008, she came back to New Haven. Her religious order, the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, had undergone an evaluation of its work and decided to focus more on immigration-related issues.

Suddenly, Burns was the director of the nonprofit Apostle Immigrant Services and an immigration attorney, “legal work for which I had virtually no background.” She gradually got herself up to speed with the help of “a very generous community” of fellow nonprofit immigration lawyers.

Burns knew the challenge of learning an entirely new area of law would be well worth it. One of the few immigration-related cases she worked on before starting Apostle Immigrant Services had resulted in her client and his spouse receiving green cards. At the time, she considered that victory “the best thing I’d ever done as a lawyer.” She’d spent much of her energy in New York trying to prevent her clients from getting evicted from their homes. With this case, “I was trying to keep my client from being evicted from a country, from a life. What it meant for him to be able to get that magic card was immense.”

“The victories are often a little bit harder won. But that makes them all the better. Every time we help a client get citizenship, it’s got a little bit more resonance.”

SISTER MARY ELLEN BURNS ’89



Sister Mary Ellen Burns (far right)

**“It’s a really beautiful and terrific place for a lot of reasons,
including the resources that Yale has, the size, and the consequential nature
of what we do here in Connecticut.
It’s just been an extraordinary place for me to be able to serve.”**

KATIE SCHARF DYKES ’06

The landscape for Burns’s clients and American immigrants everywhere has changed rapidly since 2025. But despite the challenging conditions, she’s buoyed by the impact her organization’s work can have.

“The victories are often a little bit harder won and take forever to get, in comparison to a year and a half ago,” she said. “But that makes them all the better. It is not a great time, in one sense, to be doing this work. But the rewards ... have a little bit more of a punch to them. Every time we help a client get citizenship, it’s got a little bit more resonance.”

And she’s thankful to be working in New Haven, where the city government has made welcoming immigrants an explicit commitment and priority. “It’s a good place to do what we’re doing,” she said.

Growing up in West Virginia, Katie Scharf Dykes remembers talking about energy and the environment around the dinner table — topics that are all but inescapable in the Mountain State, known for both its spectacular natural beauty and its oil, gas, and coal industries.

Dykes is still thinking and talking about energy and environmental issues today, now from the vantage point of the Nutmeg State. In her role as Connecticut’s energy and environmental protection commissioner, she is charged with protecting the state’s natural resources and improving its energy systems.

Serving in government wasn’t always Dykes’s plan. She double-majored in history and environmental studies at Yale, then enrolled in a history Ph.D. program, thinking she’d become an academic. But after her first year of graduate school, she realized that “while I loved researching and writing about history ... I really wanted to be able to stay involved in policy work in a more direct way.” That desire led her to Yale Law School and roles at the U.S. Department of Energy and the White House Council on Environmental Policy under President Obama.

When she left Washington, D.C., Dykes was intrigued by the possibilities of working for a state government. “We talk about states as the laboratories of democracy,” she said. She’s found that Connecticut, in particular, lives up to that reputation. “It’s small enough that you can bring people together pretty quickly ... and build really strong

and authentic relationships with folks and work together on a problem,” she said. “But it’s also big enough that when we implement or develop an approach here in this state, it can become a model for other states or for federal policy.”

Connecticut, for example, had the first statewide program to develop microgrids, localized energy systems that allow critical services to continue functioning during power outages. Other states, Dykes said, are now following its lead. “These types of programs emerge from responding to real-world challenges and crises that do occur,” she said.

In developing novel policy approaches, Dykes often finds herself leaning on skills she learned at Law School. “I was spending time with and developed friendships with people that came from very different political backgrounds, and I really enjoyed that,” she said. “I think that’s something I’m drawing on every day in my job. Especially at the state level, we’ve got a lot of day-to-day responsibilities that we can’t succeed on if we can’t work on a bipartisan basis [and] build constructive relationships with folks from across the the political spectrum.”

Dykes is invigorated by the challenges and opportunities her state faces today. “There’s been more policy stability here at the state level than we’ve seen at the federal government in recent years,” she explained. For that reason, “we’re able to continue to make the critical investments and do all the planning that’s necessary to help keep our community safe in Connecticut as extreme weather events” — including storms, wildfires, and drought — “are impacting us.”

And she’s eager to inspire others to consider state services, especially in Connecticut. “It’s a really beautiful and terrific place for a lot of reasons, including the resources that Yale has, the size, and the consequential nature of what we do here in Connecticut,” she said. “It’s just been an extraordinary place for me to be able to serve.” 🌱



Katie Scharf Dykes

COMMENCEMENT 2026

Celebrating the Class of 2026

Rising to the Challenge

BY ERIN SHANLEY

PHOTOS BY MARA LAVITT



Under dazzlingly sunny skies,
Yale Law School Commencement honored
241 degree candidates in New Haven.



The Yale Law School community came together on May 18 to celebrate the Class of 2026 with friends and family during a Commencement ceremony in New Haven. Remarks from this year's speakers touched on the current political climate and reminded graduates of their responsibility to uphold the rule of law.

The day kicked off with a procession of the graduates from Sterling Law Building to Beinecke Plaza led by the Mattatuck Drum Band, the oldest fife and drum band in the U.S.

The procession continued to Old Campus, where the University's 325th Commencement ceremony was held under bright skies. Deans from each school presented their graduate candidates to Yale University President Maurie McInnis and honorary degrees were conferred.

The University-wide Commencement was immediately followed by a diploma ceremony for the Law School in the Lanman Center of Yale's Payne Whitney Gymnasium.





“I urge you to avoid the temptation to look at whatever group or institution you oppose and see that thing as a monolith.”

NICHOLAS R. PARRILLO '04

This year's Commencement started with a presentation of the maces from former dean and Sterling Professor Emeritus of Law Heather K. Gerken to Sol and Lillian Goldman Dean and Professor of Law Cristina M. Rodríguez '00, who became dean on Feb. 1.

“These maces are fit for a school — and a profession — like ours,” said Gerken. “They are meant to slip into the hands of someone who works rather than someone who rules. They are meant for a school that trains you to serve as the voice of others rather than pronouncing from on high. These maces are simple — humble, even — which means they are the right symbols for a school that teaches our students to be humble about their beliefs, to be righteous but never self-righteous.”

In her opening remarks to the graduates and their families, Dean Rodríguez highlighted the turbulent environment into which students are graduating, emphasizing the importance of using their Law School degree to meet the challenges of the moment and lead the world toward a better place.

“Even as we need lawyers and leaders who can keep up with the fast-moving challenges facing our nation and our world, we also need lawyers who are wise enough to be calm in the storm, who have equanimity in a restless and churning world,” she said.

Rodríguez also urged graduates to fiercely protect the rule of law as they go forth in their careers.

“We need you to be stewards of the rule of law,” she said. “As a protective force against arbitrary treatment. As a force that holds people with power accountable. That ensures equal treatment of all people, even and especially those who are unpopular or marginalized. As a force necessary to our liberal democracy and to mediating political conflict.”

Rodríguez continued, “It is not self-executing, and its preservation does not depend on courts alone or even primarily. It depends on you acting with integrity, honesty, and restraint, no matter your chosen field or pursuit.”

Nicholas R. Parrillo '04, the William K. Townsend Professor of Law, served as this year's faculty speaker and faculty marshal, elected by the graduates. In his address, he encouraged graduates to let themselves create space for free and open exchange of ideas when





HEAR FROM OUR GRADS

"I'm looking forward to spending a year after graduation as a Robina Fellow, serving as a foreign law clerk at the Constitutional Court of South Africa in Johannesburg."

Tasneem Hussain '26 LLM



"Courses in international business transactions and federal tax law changed the way I think about markets, incentives, and the economy as a whole, and they were indispensable to my intellectual growth here at Yale."

Dezzie B. Ligon III '26



"I am so grateful to my professors for instilling in me a love of learning about the law, encouraging me in my own research and writing, and challenging me to grow and think critically about legal issues."

Madison Rinder '26



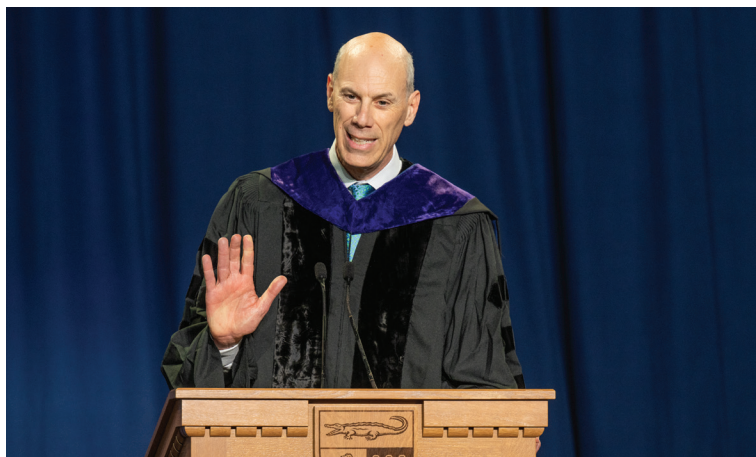
"At Yale Law School, I learned that I should not shy away from having and promoting big ideas."

Florian Kriener '26 LLM



"My time at YLS has been some of the best years of my life. I'm so grateful to be surrounded by such brilliant, kind, and multitiered classmates and now lifelong friends."

Catey Vera '26



“Let it be said that you were the kind of lawyer
and the kind of person that your law school and your
community could be proud of.”

JAMES E. BOASBERG '90



working in groups and to refrain from being a polarizing force as stewards of the law.

“I urge you to avoid the temptation to look at whatever group or institution you oppose and see that thing as a monolith,” he said. “A government agency contains different offices with different points of view. An industry contains different companies that have different investments. A political movement is a coalition of subgroups that have different preferences.”

To accomplish this, Parrillo implored graduates to see issues from an opponent’s point of view.

“Be alert to the possibility of some unexpected ally from among your opponents — if not in all things, then in one narrow thing, on which you happen to find agreement,” Parrillo said. He continued, “If you would know the world, you must know [your opponents]. And knowing the world is the precondition for any rational effort to change it.”

Judge James E. Boasberg '90, who serves as the chief judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, addressed the graduates as this year’s guest speaker with three pieces of advice: prioritize the mission of an organization when choosing a job, embrace opportunities to take career risks, and live a well-rounded life.

“I know you will live up to your achievement as Yale Law School graduates every day,” Boasberg said in his closing remarks. “Take a job where the mission matters, don’t be afraid to take risks in your career, lead a life of balance, and always remember the support of this community and the friends you have made here. Thirty-six years from now, let it be said that you were the kind of lawyer and the kind of person that your law school and your community could be proud of.”

A reception in the Baker Hall Courtyard for graduates, families, and friends capped off the day’s festivities.

This year’s Commencement honored 241 degree candidates, comprising 207 J.D., 29 LL.M., and five J.S.D. candidates. Additionally, the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences awarded two Ph.D. in law degrees. 🍷



Dean Rodríguez

Alumni Meet the New Dean

Cristina M. Rodríguez '00 began her tenure as Yale Law School dean in Feb. 2026, and some of the first items on her calendar were regional alumni events. Dean Rodríguez started on the East Coast but will continue to travel the country and abroad to meet alumni face to face.

In her remarks to alumni, Rodríguez highlighted her decanal priorities — including faculty scholarship, instilling integrity, and broadening access — and expressed her gratitude to the community.

“To everyone here tonight: thank you,” said Rodríguez in New York City. “Thank you for sustaining this community across generations. Thank you for representing this school so magnificently in so many fields of endeavor. Thank you for your example, your friendship, your counsel, and your generosity.”



Richard Wang '23, Clare Elizondo '23,
Andrew Granato '24

Throughout the year and in cities across the country, alumni gather for events organized by Yale Law School's Office of Alumni Engagement and Development. Here is a sampling of the events that have taken place over the past six months. Go to law.yale.edu/alumni-events to see upcoming regional events.

NEW YORK

On March 31, 2026, 400 alumni and guests gathered at 583Park for a “Forging a Bright Future” event. Attendees were treated to remarks by four former deans (Heather K. Gerken, **Robert C. Post ’77**, **Anthony Kronman ’75**, and **Guido Calabresi ’58**) and Dean **Cristina M. Rodríguez ’00**.



Brian Butler, Bonnie Baker ’95, and Cornelius Grealy ’84



George Wang ’20, Sydney Daniels ’24, and Christine Kwon ’17 reconnect in New York



Art Ochoa ’95 and Daniele Worth-Ochoa



Deans past and present: (left to right) Robert C. Post ’77, Anthony Kronman ’75, Cristina M. Rodríguez ’00, Guido Calabresi ’58, and Heather K. Gerken

MIAMI

Roger Barnett '89 and Sloan Barnett hosted an event at their home in Coconut Grove on Feb. 19 at which Rodríguez gave remarks. The gathering gave alumni the chance to reconnect and engage in a picturesque, waterfront setting.



Jasmine Ryle, Chiyel Hayles '17 JD/MBA, Cristina M. Rodríguez '00, Aaron Voloj Dessauer '11



Guillermo Gleizer '86, Anne Rosenfeld, Manuela Borso, and Richard Rosenfeld



Katie Mollison '14, Julia Holt '10, and Sybil Barkett



Mark Kerr '00 and Monica Lee



Guests enjoy the open-air setting at the home of Roger Barnett '89

PHILADELPHIA



(left) The panelists at the Philadelphia event

Alumni and friends came together at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia on April 30. The evening included a panel conversation on defending the rule of law with Mary J. Hahn '01, Jeannie S. Rhee '97, second-year student Harry Seavey, Bruce Swartz '79, and moderator Richard Lucas '90.



Elizabeth Clarke '23, Ricky Zacharias '19, and Bina Peltz '19



The Yale Campaign is For Humanity. *What are you for?*



Yale Law School concluded the eight-year For Humanity Campaign — the most successful fundraising and engagement effort in the school's history — on June 30, 2026. The Law School far exceeded its initial goal, raising more than \$468 million to strengthen the school's position as a leader in legal education. The Campaign's success is a testament to the strength and engagement of Yale Law School's faculty; the outstanding support of the Law School's alumni, donors, and friends; and the leadership and generosity of volunteers.

"Through the remarkable power of philanthropy, we are developing critical thinkers, forging new knowledge, and generating groundbreaking ideas that dramatically amplify Yale Law School's positive impact in the world," said Dean Cristina M. Rodríguez '00. "Equally remarkable and uplifting has been the exceptional commitment and generosity of our community."

The success of a fundraising campaign isn't measured by its big number but by its tangible impact: Thanks to its collective efforts, the Law School has strengthened student financial aid and expanded access to a Law School education. Gifts supported increased endowment for faculty positions and experiential learning that crosses disciplines and expands knowledge. New initiatives are being created that drive learning, foster creativity and innovation, enrich the student experience, and serve the broader community. The Campaign propelled the shared priorities and inspired transformation across our campus and around the world.

"This Campaign turned ambitious priorities into reality," says Kristen Rozansky, associate dean for alumni engagement and development, "and that is, truly, the power of Yale Law School."

The Campaign also strengthened alumni connections and engaged the Law School's community worldwide.

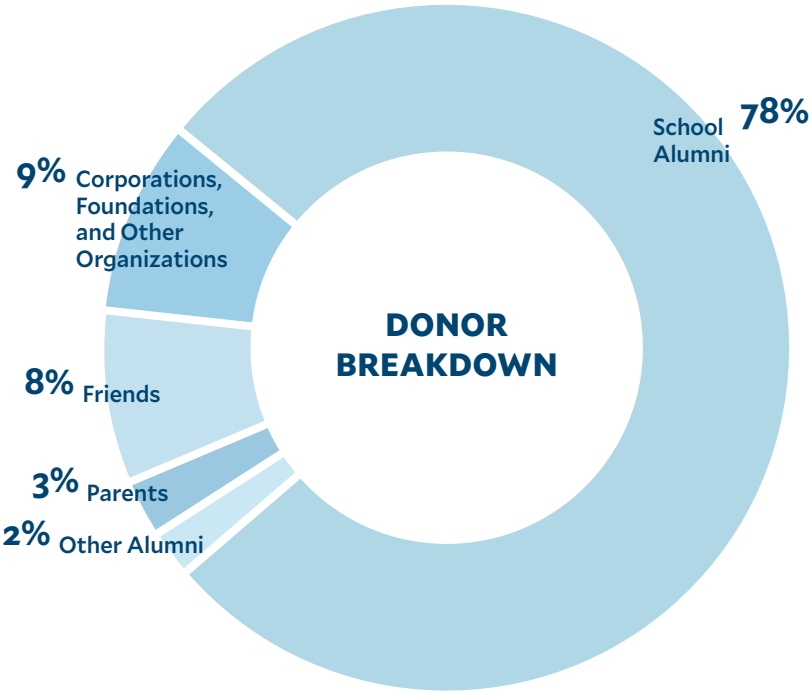
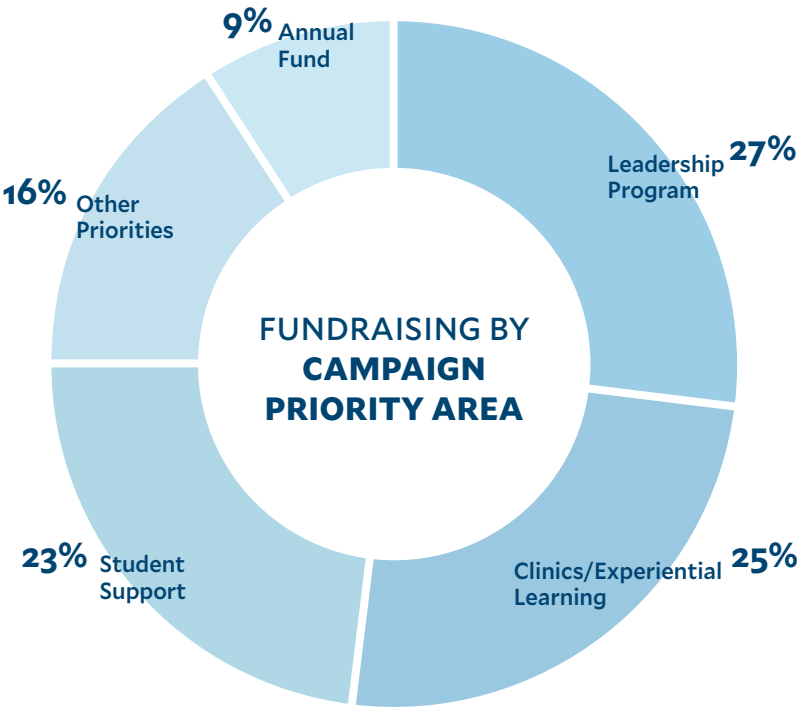
"It was incredibly inspiring to be a part of this Campaign, and to see the spirit of Yale Law School alumni and the philanthropy of donors eager to play a role in the important work the school is doing," noted Fund Board Chair Jody Yetzer '97. "More than 900 volunteers, including our Fund Board and Yale Law School Association Executive Committee members, led Campaign efforts and were our ambassadors, our advocates, and our biggest supporters. The value of their leadership cannot be overstated."

Give today
at law.yale.edu/giving.

FOR HUMANITY BY THE NUMBERS

RAISED THROUGH MAY 2026

\$468.4M



\$300M
Original
Law School
Goal

\$44.8M
Planned gift
fundraising

12
Number of Gifts
and Commitments
of \$10M+

Data as of May 31, 2026

Your Voice Matters

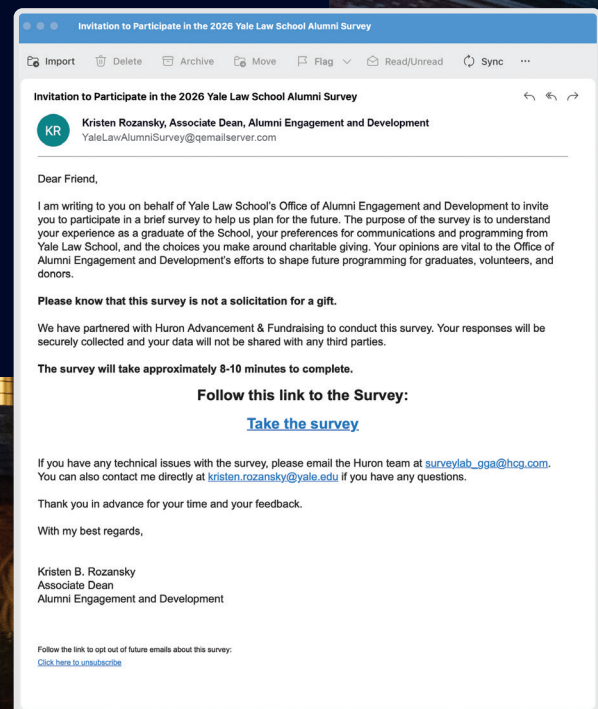
ALUMNI SURVEY LAUNCHING JULY 9

We want to hear from you!

Yale Law School's biennial alumni survey is launching July 9 and will run through early August. Your feedback helps the Alumni Engagement and Development team understand alumni interests, experiences, and priorities over time, building on surveys conducted in 2022 and 2024. The results directly inform alumni programming, communications, engagement opportunities, and philanthropic initiatives across the Yale Law School community.

The survey takes 8–10 minutes to complete, and every response matters. Watch your inbox for an email from **Kristen Rozansky**, associate dean for engagement and development, and sent from YaleLawAlumniSurvey@qemailserver.com, inviting you to participate.

Thank you for sharing your perspective and helping to shape the future of Yale Law School alumni engagement.



Yale Law Report

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