

# \$3 million gift

## TRANSFORMING FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT EXPERIENCES

The School of Law is continuing to transform the legal education experience for many of its first-generation college graduates thanks to a \$3 million gift – the largest outright donation in the school’s history.

The First-Start Scholars Program, created by a lead gift from 1982 alumna Kathelen V. Amos and the Daniel P. Amos Family Foundation, awards students a scholarship as well as a professional development stipend.

“This program is a transformational commitment to first-generation college graduates,” Dean Peter B. “Bo” Rutledge said. “At its core, these scholarships provide financial assistance. Beyond that tuition aid, they also will give additional support in vital areas such as financial planning advice, network development and acquisition of business attire and bar preparation classes.”

The law school in recent years has placed a strong emphasis on assisting its students who are the first in their families to attend college. With this gift, more than \$5 million has been given to the School of Law to assist this cohort throughout their legal education.

“In recent years we have gained a better understanding of the significant number of law school students who are also first generation college graduates. I am proud of the inclusiveness represented in the fact that this cohort constitutes 10 to 15% of each law school class – a number that is rising,” Kathelen Amos said. “Dan and I were moved to establish the First-Start Scholars Program because this diverse group of young men and women have faced significant obstacles to arrive at the law school. As a flagship university, and specifically a top value in legal education, the UGA School of Law should be the place where talented students of all backgrounds find a level playing field on which they pursue their dreams.”

Concurrent with the creation of the First-Start Scholars Program, the law school has hired an adviser to work exclusively with first-generation students as they embark on their three years of law school.

Additionally, current law students and first-generation college graduates Tyler C. Mathis and Sharod J. McClendon have established the School of Law’s First-Generation Student Association. Mathis is the recipient of the Stacey Godfrey Evans Scholarship, which is awarded to first-generation college graduates, and McClendon is a Benham Scholar, a program that benefits individuals who hail from or show a demonstrated intent to practice in legally underserved communities.

The student group serves as a unifying force around the academic, emotional, financial and social issues relevant to first-generation graduates – a complement to the First-Start Scholars Program.

“We also want to celebrate being first-generation college students,” Mathis said. “You’re blazing a trail. You’re the first in your family to attend college or law school and you’re making it easier for those who come behind you.”



Top: First-generation college graduates and current law students Sharod McClendon (left) and Tyler Mathis created the School of Law’s First-Generation Student Association. Above: Kathelen (J.D. ’82) and Dan Amos. Photo by Ian McFarlane.

With continued support from law school graduates and the legal community, the School of Law aspires to offer financial aid to 100 percent of its first-generation college graduates, Rutledge said.

“Scholarships like these ease the burden of a obtaining a legal education – a foundation that will launch our hard-working students into careers with impact,” he said. “Thanks to this generous gift from Kathelen and the Daniel P. Amos Family Foundation, these students will go from scholarship recipients at one of the nation’s top law schools to graduates and practicing lawyers who will serve and become leaders in their communities, both near and far.”

**The First-Start Scholars Program will transform the School of Law’s commitment to first-generation college graduates.**

COMMITTED TO

# PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEGAL LEADERS

#1 Best Value Law School  
—*National Jurist 2018*

95%

Approximate passage rate for graduates who sat for the bar within 12 months of graduation

27th

—*U.S. News & World Report 2019/20*

A

Best Schools for Practical Training  
—*PreLaw 2019*

1st School of Law graduates lead the number of lawyers who made partner at large and midsize firms in Atlanta  
—*Daily Report 2019*

18th For placing 2018 graduates into full-time, long-term law jobs that require bar passage and are not funded by law schools  
—*Law.com 2019*

9th 2017–18 Moot Court Rankings  
—*PreLaw 2018*

19th Among international law programs  
—*U.S. News & World Report 2019/20*

13th For placing 2018 graduates into federal clerkships  
—*Law.com 2019*

75+

Survivors of child sexual abuse the Wilbanks CEASE Clinic has directly assisted

28 First-generation college graduates and veterans in the Class of 2021

68% Class of 2021 students receiving merit scholarships

\$54M+

and counting raised as part of the Commit to Georgia Campaign (July 1, 2012–June 30, 2020). Approximately 90% of commitments have gone toward enhancing student experience, particularly through scholarships and fellowships



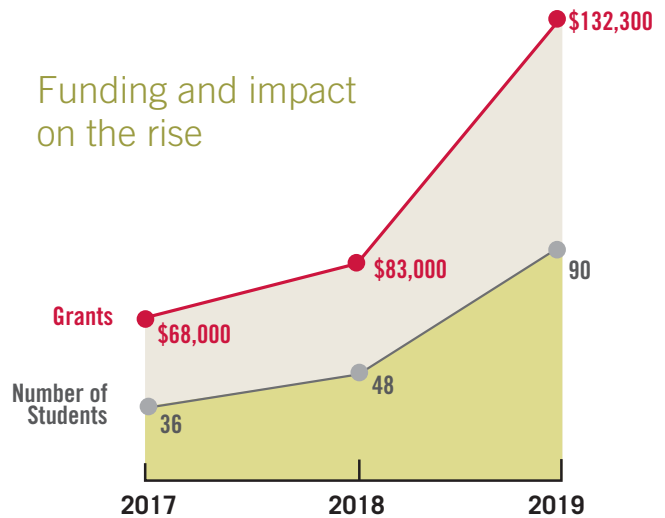
## Record number of students receive summer fellowships

For the third year in a row, a record number of law students was able to perform legal work in summer government, judicial and public interest fellowships around the globe due to increased support from a variety of sources. This past summer, approximately 90 – the most School of Law students ever – benefited from roughly \$132,000 in fellowships and grants from 13 funding sources, which represented another high.

“It was incredibly rewarding to be able to provide funding for so many deserving students who wanted to gain legal experience while helping others,” Associate Dean for Clinical Programs and Experiential Learning Eleanor “Ellie” Crosby Lanier said. “I am amazed at the breadth of the placements the students secured and am thankful we were able to find funding for all eligible applicants.”

A rising third-year student said his fellowship would allow him to pursue a career in public interest environmental law. “This Fellowship will significantly relieve my financial burden for the summer, which will allow me to focus on keeping our country healthy and pollution-free [at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance], rather than worrying about how I will make ends meet,” he said.

Serving state and society is an important part of being a lawyer, according to Dean Peter B. “Bo” Rutledge. “This summer our students were exposed to



real-world legal work and challenges relating to a variety of interests and causes, and they will return to the law school this fall with fresh perspectives that will shape their future careers as lawyers. I am grateful to our alumni and alumnae and other supporters for allowing this record number of students to supplement their first-rate legal training in the classroom with hands-on experience, both of which contribute to the school’s vision of being the best return on investment in legal education today.”

Five new monetary sources helped bolster the funding for fellowships by approximately \$50,000 over last year’s high of \$83,000. Among the new initiatives supporting summer public interest work is the Be Kind Fund, in memory of Georgia Supreme Court Chief Justice P. Harris Hines.

## Distinguished Law Fellowships named for Edge, Henson and Rees

In 2016, the School of Law established the Distinguished Law Fellows program as a result of a \$2 million founding gift from The John N. Goddard Foundation. These annual fellowships offer law students the opportunity to receive an unparalleled educational experience including domestic and international externships, guided research experiences, opportunities to meet some of the country’s top legal leaders and a full-tuition scholarship.

Since its establishment, the program has expanded and this past academic year saw the creation of new Distinguished Law Fellowships named in honor of Robert G. Edge, Kenneth M. Henson and John Bartow Rees Jr.

The **Robert G. Edge Distinguished Law Fellowship** is funded by The John N. Goddard Foundation in recognition of Edge, who is a longtime Goddard family friend as well as legal counsel for the Goddard Foundation. He is also senior counsel at the Atlanta office of Alston & Bird.

Edge was instrumental in the creation of the school’s first Distinguished Law Fellowships named in memory of Philip H. Alston Jr., which were funded by the initial gift from the Goddard Foundation. The trustees of the foundation are almost entirely children or grandchildren of Elkin Goddard Alston and Philip H. Alston Jr., a UGA alumnus and lawyer who co-founded the University of Georgia Foundation.

Through outright and planned contributions from Kenneth Henson and his wife, Sue – who are both deceased – as well as anonymous gifts made in 2018, the

**Kenneth M. Henson Distinguished Law Fellowship** will honor the late lawyer, who was a 1947 graduate of the School of Law. A Henson Fellow will be named this fall.

Kenneth Henson was an active alumnus and served on the law school’s Board of Visitors, and he was awarded the Distinguished Service Scroll in 1978. Two Henson children – Kenneth Marshall Henson Jr. and Carlton Monroe Henson II – and three grandchildren – Catherine Henson Curlet, Susie Henson Marshall and Kenneth Marshall Henson III – followed in Kenneth’s footsteps and attended the School of Law.

Additionally, thanks to a group of anonymous donors, the first **John B. Rees Jr. Distinguished Law Fellows** will begin their studies this fall. Named in memory of a longtime faculty member, this fellowship was established as a lasting tribute to Rees’ many contributions to the law school as well as his intellect and unwavering dedication to fairness.

Rees, who joined the law school’s faculty in 1959, held the Law School Association Professorship at the time of his retirement in 2002. During his tenure, Rees served as assistant dean from 1964 to 1969, led the facilities committee that oversaw the design and construction of the law school’s 1967 Hirsch Hall expansion and generously endowed the John B. Rees Jr. Law Library Book Fund.