Who is the University of Georgia School of Law?

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

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

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

Preparing the next generation of lawyers and leaders.

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

- Launched in 2016 through the generosity of alumnus Marlan B. Wilbanks (J.D.’86), the Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation Clinic has already assisted clients in over 50 cases. This clinic has become a reliable voice for survivors of child sexual abuse, an invaluable resource for lawyers throughout the state and a platform for national dialogue on a critical social issue.

- In the last academic year, our Appellate Litigation Clinic students appeared before the Fourth, Eleventh and D.C. Circuit Courts, winning a habeas case in the Fourth Circuit. In each case, third-year students wrote briefs, advised clients and made arguments before the appellate panels.

- Thanks to the generosity of several alumni and friends including James E. “Jim” Butler Jr. (J.D.’77), who wanted to honor his father – a former fighter pilot in the U.S. Navy – we announced the creation of a new Veterans Legal Services Clinic earlier this year. The clinic will primarily focus on assisting veterans with claims before the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. It will also provide financial support to several veterans now studying at our law school.
Assistant Professor Nathan S. Chapman was honored as the recipient of the inaugural Harold Berman Prize, which was presented by the Association of American Law Schools Section on Law and Religion to recognize untenured scholars on the tenure track for excellent scholarship. We welcomed two new members to our faculty this fall — Husch Professor Christopher M. Brumer who is teaching a variety of business law courses including an exciting new corporate skills course titled “Deals” and Assistant Professor Sandra G. “Sandy” Mayson whose areas of expertise are criminal law and criminal justice reform. We are also pleased to recognize the promotion of Kathleen A. “Kate” Doty to director of the Dean Rusk International Law Center.

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

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

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

Assistant Professor Nathan S. Chapman was honored as the recipient of the inaugural Harold Berman Prize, which was presented by the Association of American Law Schools Section on Law and Religion to recognize untenured scholars on the tenure track for excellent scholarship. We welcomed two new members to our faculty this fall — Husch Professor Christopher M. Brumer who is teaching a variety of business law courses including an exciting new corporate skills course titled “Deals” and Assistant Professor Sandra G. “Sandy” Mayson whose areas of expertise are criminal law and criminal justice reform. We are also pleased to recognize the promotion of Kathleen A. “Kate” Doty to director of the Dean Rusk International Law Center.

Connecting students, scholarships and stakeholders.

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

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

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

- This summer, I accompanied three Alston Distinguished Law Fellows to Washington, D.C., where they visited with graduates, attended a session of the U.S. Supreme Court and enjoyed a private meeting with Justice Clarence Thomas. This program has grown with the addition of a Russell Distinguished Law Fellowship, which was created by the Richard B. Russell Foundation Board to support an academically talented student from rural Georgia who plans to pursue a career in public service.
- The new EdBenfield Scholarship, presented in memory of Judge B. Avant EdBenfield (J.D.’48), recognizes students who are the first in their family to attend college or have a demonstrated connection with the Savannah/Statesboro area. The inaugural scholarship has been awarded to Grace G. Shepherd, a third-year student who plans to join a firm in Savannah following graduation.
- Roughly 15 percent of each entering class are female, including all of the law school’s new graduates, and the Pin Point Scholarship, the Parker Multiplier Scholarship and the Stacey Godfrey Evans Scholarship help these students achieve their dreams of becoming lawyers. The inaugural recipients have already enjoyed great success in the law school’s advocacy program, and one of them, who recently passed the bar, is already on his way to a successful career.
- Graduates and friends including Kathelen V. Amos (J.D.’91), James B. “Jim” Borders (J.D.’88), B. Lynn Chastain (J.D.’84), Michael L. Goldberg (J.D.’97), Kay and John R. Parker Jr., Phaedra Parks (J.D.’98), William P. “Billy” Payne (J.D.’73), Robert J. “Bobby” Soper (J.D.’97), Aravind K. Siva (J.D.M.L.’02) and Shyamali M. (L.M.L.’89) Subramaniam and Susan C. Waltman as well as the law firm Blasingame, Burch, Garard, & Ashley, P.C., have all recently contributed to scholarships that are affording our students the opportunity to realize their goals of attending law school and eventually launching their own successful careers.

Producing leaders who are making an impact.

Our law school enjoys a rich tradition of graduates who have gone on to be leaders in business, the nonprofit sector, government and their communities. A few highlights include:

- Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves (J.D.’06), now vice chancellor on the Delaware Court of Chancery, arguably the most important business court in the country. Taught and mentored by Silbery Professor in Corporate and Business Law Larry D. Thompson during her time in law school, she is now a mentor herself to a current third-year student who has also hired as an extern.
- Jurists from Georgia’s Western Judicial Circuit including Regina M. Quic (J.D.’87), Robin K. Shearer (J.D.’87), Ethenyl N. Simpson (J.D.’90) and Susan P. Tate (J.D.’75). These alumnae and others visited the law school as part of our Georgia Women in Law Lead initiative that celebrates the achievement of women in law, business and public service.

- Our inaugural EdBenfield Jurist in Residence Lisa Godfrey Wood (J.D.’80), who is a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia. Of special note, this program has also welcomed David B. Sentelle, senior judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to the classroom. We are excited to announce Bernice B. Donald of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hold this position this coming spring.

As our students look to the future, many have set their sights on leadership through public service. We were proud to award a record number of public interest fellowship grants that afforded 46 students the opportunity to spend the summer of 2017 in seven states plus the District of Columbia as well as three foreign countries. Work placements included nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations; local, state and federal government agencies; state and federal prosecutor’s offices and criminal defense practices.

- Graduates and friends including Kathelen V. Amos (J.D.’91), James B. “Jim” Borders (J.D.’88), B. Lynn Chastain (J.D.’84), Michael L. Goldberg (J.D.’97), Kay and John R. Parker Jr., Phaedra Parks (J.D.’98), William P. “Billy” Payne (J.D.’73), Robert J. “Bobby” Soper (J.D.’97), Aravind K. Siva (J.D.M.L.’02) and Shyamali M. (L.M.L.’89) Subramaniam and Susan C. Waltman as well as the law firm Blasingame, Burch, Garard, & Ashley, P.C., have all recently contributed to scholarships that are affording our students the opportunity to realize their goals of attending law school and eventually launching their own successful careers.

- Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves (J.D.’06), now vice chancellor on the Delaware Court of Chancery, arguably the most important business court in the country. Taught and mentored by Silbery Professor in Corporate and Business Law Larry D. Thompson during her time in law school, she is now a mentor herself to a current third-year student who has also hired as an extern.
- Jurists from Georgia’s Western Judicial Circuit including Regina M. Quic (J.D.’87), Robin K. Shearer (J.D.’87), Ethenyl N. Simpson (J.D.’90) and Susan P. Tate (J.D.’75). These alumnae and others visited the law school as part of our Georgia Women in Law Lead initiative that celebrates the achievement of women in law, business and public service.

- Our inaugural EdBenfield Jurist in Residence Lisa Godfrey Wood (J.D.’80), who is a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia. Of special note, this program has also welcomed David B. Sentelle, senior judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to the classroom. We are excited to announce Bernice B. Donald of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hold this position this coming spring.

As our students look to the future, many have set their sights on leadership through public service. We were proud to award a record number of public interest fellowship grants that afforded 46 students the opportunity to spend the summer of 2017 in seven states plus the District of Columbia as well as three foreign countries. Work placements included nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations; local, state and federal government agencies; state and federal prosecutor’s offices and criminal defense practices.

- Graduates and friends including Kathelen V. Amos (J.D.’91), James B. “Jim” Borders (J.D.’88), B. Lynn Chastain (J.D.’84), Michael L. Goldberg (J.D.’97), Kay and John R. Parker Jr., Phaedra Parks (J.D.’98), William P. “Billy” Payne (J.D.’73), Robert J. “Bobby” Soper (J.D.’97), Aravind K. Siva (J.D.M.L.’02) and Shyamali M. (L.M.L.’89) Subramaniam and Susan C. Waltman as well as the law firm Blasingame, Burch, Garard, & Ashley, P.C., have all recently contributed to scholarships that are affording our students the opportunity to realize their goals of attending law school and eventually launching their own successful careers.

- Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves (J.D.’06), now vice chancellor on the Delaware Court of Chancery, arguably the most important business court in the country. Taught and mentored by Silbery Professor in Corporate and Business Law Larry D. Thompson during her time in law school, she is now a mentor herself to a current third-year student who has also hired as an extern.
- Jurists from Georgia’s Western Judicial Circuit including Regina M. Quic (J.D.’87), Robin K. Shearer (J.D.’87), Ethenyl N. Simpson (J.D.’90) and Susan P. Tate (J.D.’75). These alumnae and others visited the law school as part of our Georgia Women in Law Lead initiative that celebrates the achievement of women in law, business and public service.

- Our inaugural EdBenfield Jurist in Residence Lisa Godfrey Wood (J.D.’80), who is a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia. Of special note, this program has also welcomed David B. Sentelle, senior judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to the classroom. We are excited to announce Bernice B. Donald of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit will hold this position this coming spring.

As our students look to the future, many have set their sights on leadership through public service. We were proud to award a record number of public interest fellowship grants that afforded 46 students the opportunity to spend the summer of 2017 in seven states plus the District of Columbia as well as three foreign countries. Work placements included nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations; local, state and federal government agencies; state and federal prosecutor’s offices and criminal defense practices.
YOU are the University of Georgia School of Law.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sibley Professor
Larry Thompson

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

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