



ELON LAW

SUMMER 2017

Alumni News Bulletin



Message from Dean Luke Bierman

What most impresses me about our alumni body is the passion so many of you feel about our law school. You give back your time and your talents. You make gifts that support cultural programs and scholarships. You advise current students and offer sage counsel to administrators on important issues confronting the legal profession.

Alumni involvement at Elon Law is more important than ever before. Across the United States, the number of applicants to law school is at its lowest level since the early 1970s – about half a century! It is vital that you share with others the value Elon Law has provided you, whether through your job placements, your professional networks, or the lifelong mentors you have met through our faculty and staff.

Bar passage is likewise a challenge, and we can't thank you enough for the time many of you have shared in recent months as you've mentored recent graduates studying for the exam. You also have reached out to the Elon Law Alumni Council to offer suggestions based on your own experiences with the bar. This input has led to fulsome improvements in the way we communicate with students and the types of programs we coordinate.

Then there is job placement. Elon Law boasts of a vibrant alumni network that continues to thrive as a resource for graduates. You help our students secure career opportunities in law firms, government agencies, nonprofits, and corporations. New graduates are optimistic about their futures due in no small part to the advocates they have in our alumni community.

In the pages ahead, you will learn about the positive directions at Elon Law. New faculty are leading our LMC and residency programs, and our first December graduation ceremony will feature an address by North Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice Mark Martin. Take a moment to read about our May graduation program and remarks delivered by Robert Grey Jr., a former president of the American Bar Association who welcomed the class when it entered school in 2014.

In closing, I ask that you stay connected to Elon Law. Perhaps you'll volunteer as a judge for October's eighth Billings, Exum & Frye National Moot Court Competition. Maybe we'll see you during a guest classroom visit. Regardless, let us know of your professional achievements so that we can share word within the school itself. There's no better way to encourage today's law students than to inspire their minds with success stories from those who came before them.

Luke Bierman
Dean and Professor of Law

Alumni Council President Message

Greetings, everyone, and please join me in extending to our ranks a warm welcome to the Class of May 2017!

As we enjoy these delightful summer months, I hope you'll take a moment to reflect on the importance of the Elon Law Alumni Association. Our association is a wonderful opportunity to support current law students and to network with alumni in your region and practice areas. I've gotten to know many of you through the association, and there are many more of you whom I hope to meet over the next year. For those of you who already take part in the association, thank you! For those who have yet to reconnect with Elon Law, I look forward to hearing from you.

We are a small but tenacious network of alumni committed to using our Elon Law education to improve the lives of our clients and communities. We likewise can help each other with advice, connections, and experience - all important ways to help our careers grow. We celebrate our classmates' successes as well as help others find fulfillment in their chosen fields of practice. Alumni organizations keep a school strong, and they add value to our degrees. This is just one reason why the association wants

to know what you are doing with your Elon Law degree. The more we stay in touch, the more we can help each other achieve new heights in our professional and personal lives.

Please let us know what you are doing, and what the Elon Law Alumni Association can do for you. We are still growing, and by getting involved today, you can help us grow in all the right directions. Make the Elon Law Alumni Association a strong, diverse, vibrant group that reflects our pride in Elon Law! If you have suggestions or comments, contact me at adavis46@elon.edu.

Andrea Davis L'11

*Associate Attorney, Brock & Scott PLLC
President, Elon Law Alumni Council*



ELON LAW

BILLINGS, EXUM & FRYE
NATIONAL
MOOT COURT
COMPETITION

The Billings, Exum & Frye National Moot Court Competition returns to Elon Law from October 19-21 as we move one of our school's most high-profile events to the fall season. Look soon for an email invitation from Senior Associate Dean Alan Woodlief to judge oral arguments.

Thirty-four teams from across the United States took part in the spring program. Steadfast support of alumni is crucial to the success of the competition and is appreciated by students, faculty and staff alike.

We hope to see you in October!

Alumni honored for professional achievements & service

The Elon Law Alumni Association honored four graduates this spring with awards for distinguished professional accomplishments and service to Elon Law. The alumni were recognized during an April 22 ceremony at the Greensboro Marriott Downtown as part of Elon Law Alumni Reunion Weekend.



Kristin Thompson Seum L'13
(honored in absentia)
Leary F. Davis Service and Leadership in the Community Award

As a health policy advisor employed by Rep. Morgan Griffith (R-Va.), Kristin Seum assisted the House Energy & Commerce Committee in Washington, D.C., with health care legislation. Her work follows success in advising members of Congress on issues affecting the Department of Veterans Affairs, which led to the hiring of additional doctors and expanded health care choices for rural veterans. Seum was an advocate in launching Elon Law's DC Alumni Chapter.

James "Jim" R. Grant L'12
George R. Johnson Professional Achievement Award

Jim Grant made national news in 2016 when, as an assistant appellate defender for the North Carolina Office of the Appellate Defender, he successfully persuaded the North Carolina Supreme Court to strike down as unconstitutional part of the state's criminal cyberbullying statute. The case was one of only two in the nation examining the intersection of online bullying and the First Amendment.

Adrianne Edmonds Poe L'11
Distinguished Service to Elon Law School Award

Adrianne Edmonds Poe has been a longtime supporter of Elon Law, serving on the school's Alumni Council as chair of the Development Committee. As an attorney with the Greensboro firm of Richard I. Shope, she handles everything from appellate cases involving complex business disputes to residential real estate closings for first-time home buyers.

Angelique Ryan L'16 (honored in absentia)
Young Alumni Award

Angelique Ryan has leveraged her experience working in Elon Law's Humanitarian Immigration Law Clinic to serve her nation as a refugee officer with the Department of Homeland Security. While a student, Ryan also worked as a legal extern in the Guilford County Public Defender's Office; served as president of the Elon Law Democrats; served as vice president of the Immigration Law Society; and volunteered as an Honor Council Defender.



Professor honored for international law work

The American Bar Association's Section of International Law has awarded Professor Henry Gabriel its 2017 Leonard J. Theberge Award for Private International Law. The award recognizes his scholarship and contributions to the field of international law. A life member of the Uniform Law Commission, Gabriel has served that organization for 25 years. He also serves as a U.S. delegate to the U.N. Commission on International Trade Law.



New leader for LMC program



Professor Sue Liemer, a nationally recognized expert in legal writing, has joined our faculty as director of the school's Legal Method & Communication Program. Liemer

will lead efforts to further develop and implement an integrated, immersive, and iterative writing and research curriculum coordinated with professors teaching doctrinal courses. She takes over for Professor Catherine Wasson, who is developing an upper-level writing program.

Alumnus elected to NCBA leadership post

Damon Duncan '06 L'09 joined the North Carolina Bar Association Board of Governors when he was elected to his post in June during the NCBA's annual meeting. A bankruptcy attorney from Greensboro, Duncan is a member of the Elon Law Alumni Council. He has served as secretary of the North Carolina Bar Association's Bankruptcy Section, marketing chair of the North Carolina Bar Association Continuing Legal Education Section, public relations chair of the Greensboro Bar Association, and chair of the NCBA's Law Practice Management and Technology section.

Accolades for pro bono project

The North Carolina Bar Association honored Elon Law with an annual award that recognizes student pro bono projects benefiting low-income residents throughout the state. The Elon Law Pro Bono Board, in coordination with our Humanitarian Immigration Law Clinic, received the 2017 Law Student Group Pro Bono Award for its Country Conditions Project, which helps lawyers representing clients seeking asylum before the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Retired U.S. senator and current NATO Ambassador talks leadership

In an April visit to Elon Law for a Distinguished Leadership Lecture, Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas called for renewed pride in the United States as part of a larger strategy to address social and economic woes that have led to today's political climate. She also praised Elon Law. "What impressed me about Elon Law is that it's trying to be something different and is giving students an experience," said Hutchison, who called the law school's new residency program "visionary."

By Sarah Mulnick '17

Until recently, there was only one state in the Union where all 16- and 17-year-olds were required to be tried as adults in the criminal justice system: North Carolina. Fighting to end the practice altogether in the country and erase that distinction in his home state was Ricky Watson Jr. L'11.

The Elon Law alumnus joined the Southern Coalition for Social Justice last year as co-director of its Youth Justice Project. In his role, Watson helped lead “raise the age” efforts that included legislative advocacy and hosting educational sessions to educate the community on how North Carolina criminalized its youth and why the nearly 100-year-old law should change.

When North Carolina lawmakers passed the state budget in June, Watson and other criminal justice reform advocates from the Outer Banks to the Blue Ridge Parkway claimed partial victory: Starting in 2019, 16- and 17-year-olds charged with misdemeanors and low-level, non-violent felonies in North Carolina will have their cases adjudicated in the juvenile justice system.

“I’m big on advocating and fighting for the ‘little guy,’ a person that maybe people have given up on,” says the Greensboro native. “I can get behind that at any point.”

Since graduating from Elon Law, Watson has worked for the Guilford County Public Defender’s Office and the Social Security Administration. Both positions connected him to underserved populations with limited access to legal resources. Making a move to the Youth Justice Project was a natural next step in the evolution of a career focused on social justice and public service.

As Watson sees it, North Carolina’s “school-to-prison pipeline” pushes teens into prison rather than remediation programs in public schools or local communities. Even those charged with crimes that may later be dismissed often encounter obstacles to finishing high school, applying to college, and securing employment.

Watson is in favor of allowing all youth to remain in the more rehabilitative juvenile system, regardless of the alleged offense, because he

“

I’m big on advocating and fighting for the ‘little guy,’ a person that maybe people have given up on.”



believes that youth and the community have more to gain from the developmentally appropriate programming present in juvenile court. As such, there is more work to be done.

“I was representing kids who had been funneled from the classroom into the prison system for what were often minor behavioral issues,” Watson says. “The majority of the cases that I handled were incidents of youthful behavior that most kids grow out of with time. Seeing that firsthand sparked an interest in figuring out how to help alleviate young people from all the collateral consequences of being in the system.”

Elon Law Professor Catherine Dunham saw Watson thrive as a law student as he found his passion for helping underserved populations. At

the same time, Dunham says, an innate humility led Watson to forge strong relationships with those around him, something that makes him a perfect candidate to work at the Southern Coalition for Social Justice.

“Ricky was a really good colleague to fellow students—he was supportive, humble in his accomplishments, always genuinely happy for the success of his peers,” Dunham says. “A student like that leaves an impression. He really has the character to work with social justice.”

Matthew Krueger-Andes L'11 met Watson on the first day of law school, and the two have remained friends since that day. “Ricky’s job now reinforces that he has a really good heart,” says Krueger-Andes, an associate at Smith Moore

Leatherwood in Charlotte. “It’s easy to see when you talk to him.”

Watson remains hopeful for additional changes in the way North Carolina treats juvenile offenders. Legislation to “raise the age” found strong support in Raleigh, much like it did earlier this year when New York lawmakers ended the practice there of automatically trying 16- and 17-year-olds in adult court.

“I’m proud of all of the hard work advocates across the state have done to see this finally happen,” Watson said of the recent changes. “Even though we’ve raised the age, we still have a lot of work to do improving our juvenile justice system. We’ve got to continue this work to ensure the most positive outcomes for all youth here in North Carolina. I’m looking forward to the challenge.”

'You are responsible for being a role model'

Elon Law celebrated its final springtime Commencement with remarks by a former president of the American Bar Association who reminded graduates about their future roles as lawyers.

"We all bring value to society, and lawyers must be on the forefront of making sure that all rights, all privileges, are protected," said Robert Grey Jr.,



retired senior counsel at Hunton & Williams in Virginia. "That is your job. To guard against injustice."

The Class of May 2017 received degrees on May 20, in an evening ceremony inside Alumni Gym on Elon University's main campus. Graduates were reminded that lawyers possess a unique responsibility and their "reputation is gold."

"You are responsible for being a role model, not just for those behind you, but everyone around you," Grey said.

"Everyone that you see. Everyone that you meet. You have to speak truth. You have to be honest. And you have to have integrity, because you took an oath."

Grey was the first African American to be an officer of the American Bar Association when he served as chair of the association's House of Delegates. He was then elected president of the ABA in 2004, only the second African American to do so in the history of the organization.

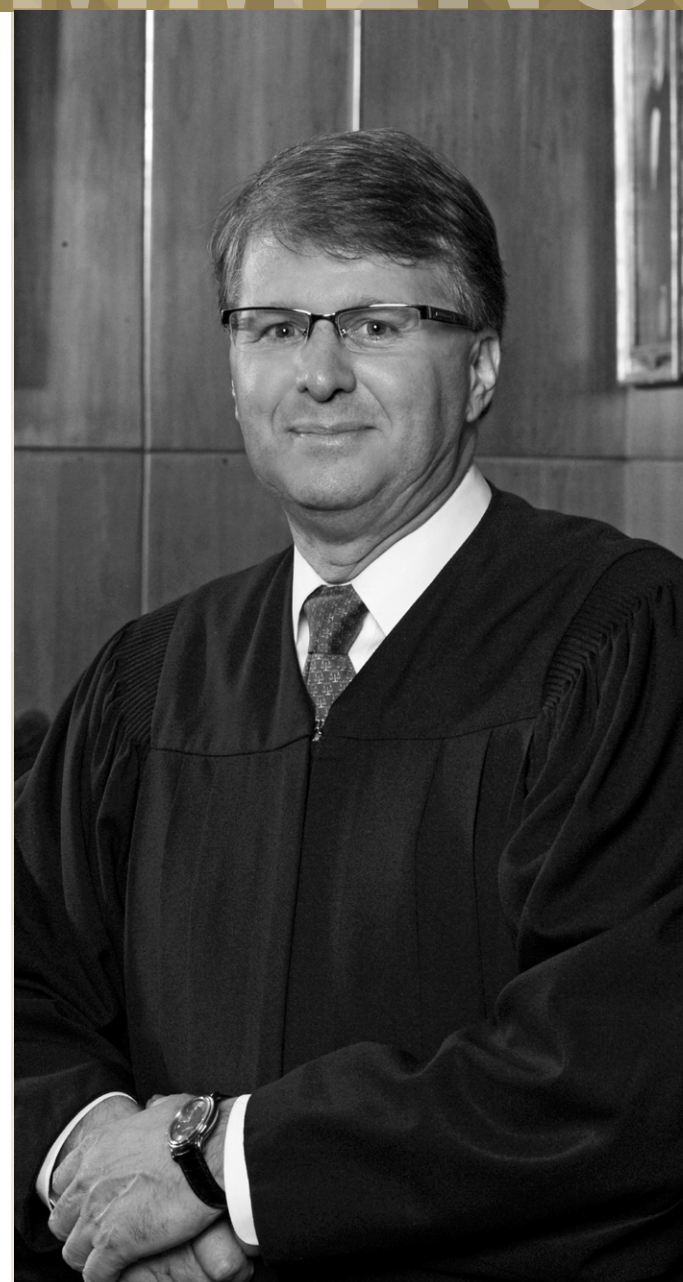
Grey serves today as president of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity and as a member of the Board of Directors for the Legal Services Corporation, the nation's largest provider of civil legal assistance to the poor. He previously visited campus in August 2014 to deliver a Convocation address to the same class just days after beginning their studies.

Ragan Riddle honored with Elon Law's top leadership award

An Elon Law graduate in the Class of May 2017 known for "all of the time, heart, and soul she has put into this law school" was honored at her Commencement with the school's most prestigious student award.

Ragan Hope Riddle received the David Gergen Award for Leadership & Professionalism, which recognizes an Elon Law graduate in each graduating class whose professional life and contributions have embodied the highest levels of selfless leadership and service.

An accomplished Elon Law



N.C.'s top jurist to deliver December Commencement address

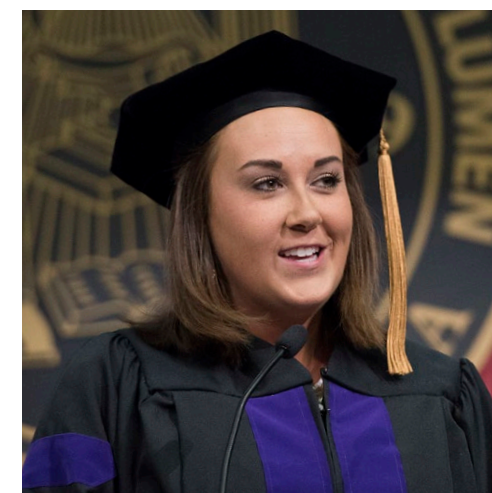
Supreme Court of North Carolina Chief Justice Mark Martin will deliver Elon Law's Commencement address on Dec. 16, 2017, as the university graduates its first class enrolled in the school's 2.5-year program.

Martin, the state's 28th chief justice, is the only active jurist on the North Carolina Supreme Court whose legal career includes service on the state's Court of Appeals and Superior Court. His distinguished career has focused on making improvements to the rule of law and the administration of justice, themes that have been emphasized to the first class enrolled in the new curriculum.

Commencement takes place at 11 a.m. on Elon's main campus.

Leadership Fellow, she served as editor-in-chief of the Elon Law Review, as treasurer of the Women's Law Association, as president of the Federalist Society, and as a representative with the Student Bar Association, among other activities.

After taking the bar exam, Riddle will return to the North Carolina Supreme Court as a clerk for the Hon. Paul Newby, the same justice with whom she interned in 2015.



2009

A.T. Debnam L'09 was named to the 2017 North Carolina Super Lawyers Rising Stars list. Each year no more than 2.5% of the lawyers in the state are selected by the research team at Super Lawyers to receive this honor.

2010

Jenny Sweet L'10 has joined the Soule Employment Law Firm in Raleigh, N.C.



Justin Ervin L'10 married Matthew Antonio Bosch on May 6, 2017. Justin is an attorney with Johnson, Peddrick & McDonald PLLC. Matthew Antonio is the director of the Gender and LGBTQIA Center at Elon University.

Adam W. Arthur L'10 was appointed by NCBA President Caryn McNeill to lead North Carolina's largest pro bono project, the 4ALL Statewide Service Day. He also was recognized for his legal work in Business North Carolina's Legal Elite edition and as North Carolina Super Lawyer.

2011

Jen Hoverstad L'11 welcomed a daughter, Halle Wilson Hoverstad, on April 10, 2017. Jen is a brand manager for Counter Culture Coffee in North Carolina.

Samantha Gilman '08 L'11 has joined Manatt Health, a division of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips LLP as a manager in its Washington, D.C. office, after spending two years as a senior associate at Avalere Health. She received the Elon University Young Alumna of the Year Award in 2016.

Barbara Cini L'11 and her husband, Lee Morse, welcomed a son, Parker Brooks Morse, on Feb. 7, 2017. Barbara had recently been honored by Super Lawyers and has since joined Elon University as assistant director of planned giving.



Manisha Patel L'11 was recently appointed vice president of the

North Carolina Association of Women Attorneys. She has been involved with the Piedmont Triad Women Attorneys, a local chapter of the NCAWA, and currently serves as president.

2013

Erin Milligan L'13 recently took a position at Bloomberg BNA as the product marketing manager for Bloomberg Law.

Kelsey (Roth) Doren L'13 married **Joe Doren L'13** on May 21, 2017. Kelsey is public defender for the Kentucky Department of Public Advocacy. Joe is an associate attorney with Frost Brown Todd LLC in Louisville.

2015

Daniel Watts L'15 joined the Whiteman Law Firm in Raleigh, N.C., in October 2016.

Wendy Batten L'15 and her husband, **Burke Batten L'15**, welcomed a daughter, Charlotte "Pippa" Batten, on Dec. 30, 2016. Wendy and Burke are with the firm Batten & Batten LLC in Richmond Hill, Ga.

Sarah Kettles L'15 has been elected by her colleagues to serve as the president of the Family Law Section of the Greensboro Bar Association. Sarah practices with Kirkman Attorneys at Law.

Mitch Montgomery L'15 is now serving as an AmeriCorps attorney with Project Citizenship where he works with clients to help resolve legal issues that arise during the naturalization process. He helps recruit and train pro bono attorneys from Boston law firms to volunteer at Project Citizenship workshops.

2016

Katie Hynes DiFerdinando L'16 married Joe DiFerdinando on April 29, 2017.



'SOARING' TO NEW HEIGHTS

Since graduating from Elon Law, **Monique Johnson L'12** has established a career as a motivational speaker who shares life stories with audiences of all ages. She is also a published author. Johnson's first book, "Soaring," went on sale in May. In it she outlines seven principles to finding success – for instance, dealing with naysayers and the importance of giving – inspired by her diastrophic dysplasia, a rare form of dwarfism, and scoliosis of the spine. Johnson, who today lives in High Point, N.C., took a moment from her busy schedule this spring to answer questions about her book.

What inspired you to write "Soaring" and are there specific lessons you hope readers take from the book?

I have had the opportunity to speak all over the country to college students, business executives, athletes, religious conferences, and more. I can always count on the following

question being asked: "Monique, where do you get your joy from? How are you enjoying life with so many challenges?" Their questions pushed me to want to share success principles that derived from my unique life experiences. I think readers will appreciate the struggle and uniqueness of my circumstance but ultimately understand that life is meant to be enjoyed.

How did your Elon Law education shape the wisdom and experiences you share in the book?

I entered Elon Law with a bit of a skewed mindset. Sure, I had a desire to help others, but I also had a huge desire to make money and prove to those who doubted me that I was capable of excelling in the legal field. Law school is an experience that reshapes your thinking and challenges your outlook on life and society. My study of the law gave me a deeper view of the plight of others and the complications of our system, and it gave me the skills needed to overcome challenges.

Where do you see yourself in the years ahead as you continue on your professional journey?

For some reason, people continue to be shocked that a wheelchair-riding individual can travel. Hopping on airplanes and meeting people across this great nation is what I love to do. I will continue to push the limits on where I go, both here and abroad, and continue to document the impact my story is making on the lives of others. Hopefully, in the coming years, I will secure my own location to continue mentoring and tutoring the students that I empower and advise.



"Soaring" is available for purchase online at www.made2soar.com.

Turn Yourself In!

Share your professional
achievements & family news
at law.elon.edu/classnotes/!

Pedro Mantilla L'14



Elon Law aspires to be the preeminent school for engaged and experiential learning in law. Beginning with the Class of December 2017, all students complete a full-time, course-connected residency-in-practice as part of their studies. With better preparation and stronger professional partnerships at an exceptional value, Elon Law is leading the national conversation about the future of American legal education.

Stay Connected!

We welcome your questions and ideas at lawalumni@elon.edu.



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