

A man with a beard and brown hair, wearing a grey suit, light blue shirt, and a red tie with a small blue pattern, stands in front of a brick building. A decorative black iron gate is visible behind him. The background is partially obscured by a dark red geometric overlay in the top right corner.

# ELON LAW

## AIMING HIGH

John Warren L'13 is the first Elon Law alum to clerk for a U.S. Court of Appeals – and his journey to the Fourth Circuit was anything but ordinary.

*News*

SUMMER 2021

# Bulletin

# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



## A NEW PAGE In Our History

AS MANY OF YOU BY NOW KNOW, I RECENTLY ANNOUNCED that I plan to conclude my service as dean at the end of the year following December’s Commencement for the Class of 2021, Elon Law’s 14<sup>th</sup> graduation. Since I joined the Elon Law community in 2014, we have worked together to revolutionize legal education in a manner that addresses what I call “the dirty little secrets” of law school – it’s too long, it’s too expensive, and it’s too disconnected from the profession.

The results: our highly experiential, 2.5-year program of legal education that includes a full-time residency-in-practice for every student. Through strategic budgeting and an investment in scholarships, we have reduced average student loan debt at graduation by nearly a third. Our excellent ultimate bar passage rates in recent years have driven our post-graduate employment rates that now attain or hover around 90%.

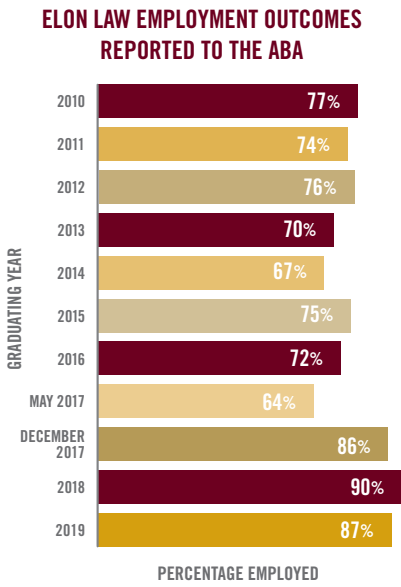
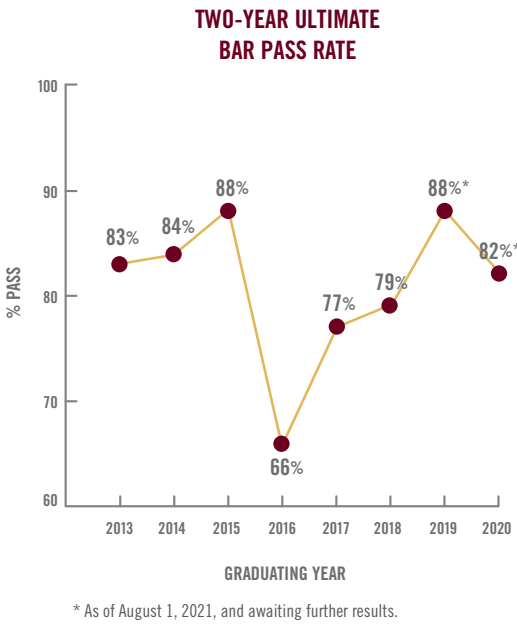
Applications have reached record levels and we enjoy a second consecutive year of full enrollment in our downtown Greensboro law school with the arrival of the Class of 2023. We have increased the diversity of our student body and our faculty to be more representative of the communities our graduates serve while also beginning to develop a strategic plan for inclusive excellence that will promote success for all of our community members.

And with this fall’s anticipated reaccreditation by the American Bar Association, we are well prepared for a new Elon Law dean to lead us toward a post-COVID future with a generation of students adept at technology and digital learning, ready to make contributions that will strengthen the rule of law.

The time is right for me to begin the next chapter of my own career by returning to teaching and scholarship following a sabbatical. It has been my privilege to serve as your dean of Elon Law and to be a part of helping so many of you achieve your goal of joining the legal profession. I couldn’t be prouder of what we have achieved together.

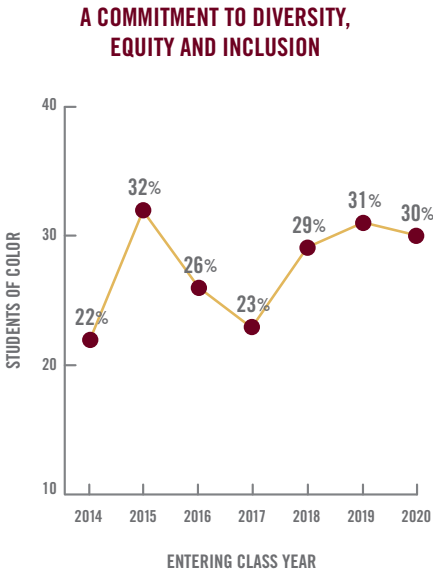
**Luke Bierman**  
Dean and Professor of Law

A STRATEGIC PRIORITY TO REDUCE DEBT	GRADUATING CLASS	AVERAGE DEBT PER ELON LAW STUDENT AT GRADUATION	AVERAGE DEBT PER LOAN TAKEN AT GRADUATION
	2014	\$115,000	\$132,444
	2015	\$107,000	\$128,407
	2016	\$139,400	\$153,347
	MAY 2017	\$122,315	\$135,740
	DECEMBER 2017	\$113,338	\$123,339
	2018	\$ 93,004	\$107,800
	2019	\$106,832	\$120,327
	2020	\$100,975	\$111,991



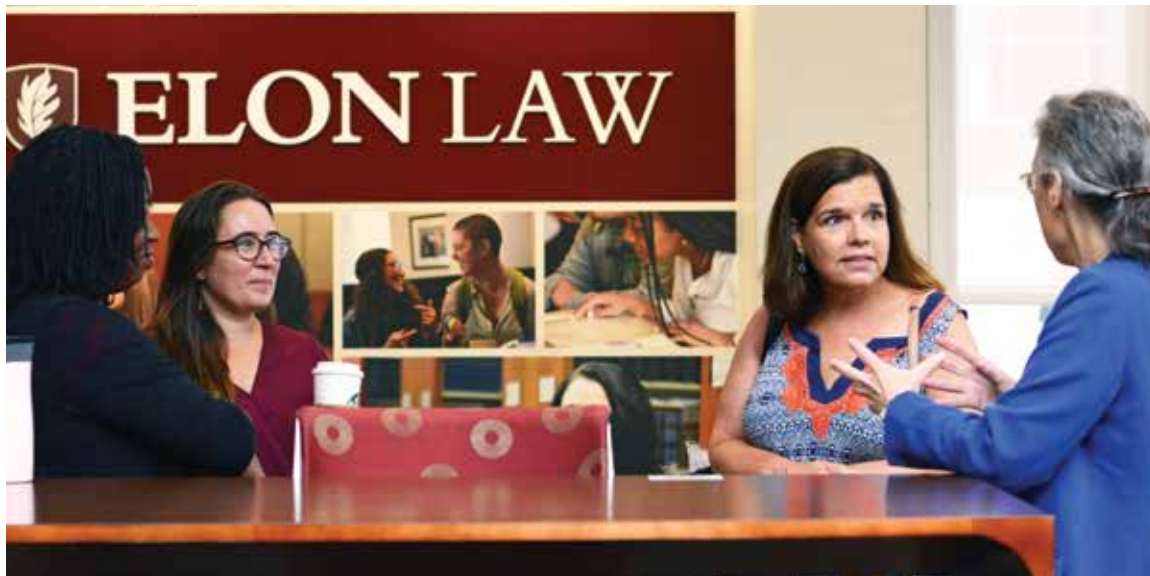
### IMPROVING ACADEMIC METRICS

ENTERING CLASS YEAR	LSAT MEDIAN	UGPA MEDIAN
2011	153	3.2
2012	155	3.16
2013	150	3.01
2014	148	3.03
2015	147	3.13
2016	148	3.24
2017	148	3.23
2018	150	3.26
2019	149	3.19
2020	150	3.3
2021	152	3.31



# LAW NEWS & NOTES

## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



## ELON LAW HOSTS HYBRID LEGAL WRITING CONFERENCE

Dozens of legal writing and legal research experts from North and South Carolina gathered June 24 at Elon Law for the 2021 Carolinas Colloquium, a biennial event hosted on a rotating basis by law schools across the region.

Nearly half attended in person, with others opting to participate via Zoom sessions that streamed in real time. The colloquium featured presentations on topics ranging from digital grading to seeking real-time formative assessments to teaching professionalism as a key element of legal communication.

"It was wonderful to see so many colleagues and exchange so many great ideas about teaching legal research and legal writing," said Sue Liemer, Elon Law's associate dean for academic affairs. "Bringing our community together again after such a difficult year of teaching, and to have some of those difficult conversations that we can't necessarily have so productively in other spaces, was important."

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## HONORS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

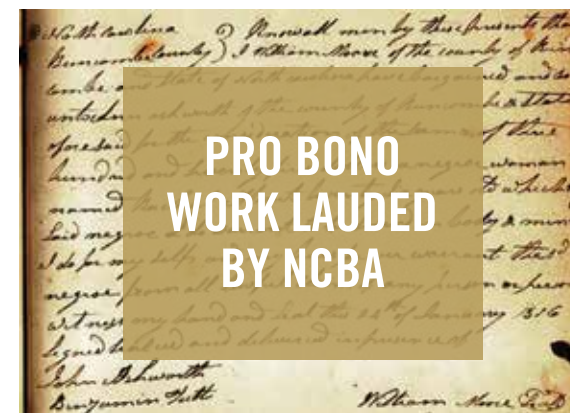
### Legal writing, trial advocacy shine in U.S. News rankings

Elon Law's reputation for the strength of its legal writing and trial advocacy programs earned the school its highest marks to date in specialty rankings of an annual guide published by U.S. News & World Report.

U.S. News' 2022 Best Graduate Schools guidebook reflects Elon Law's emphasis on learning by doing and its strategic investment in legal writing faculty and resources. Elon Law's ranking for legal writing (tied at #34) places it in the top 20% of law schools. And its ranking for trial advocacy (tied at #79) places the school in the Top 100 of law schools for the first time ever.



### PRO BONO WORK LAUDED BY NCBA



The People Not Property Project earned Elon Law the North Carolina Bar Association's 2021 Law School Pro Bono Award. The award recognizes student volunteers who have spent many dozens of hours over the past two years transcribing pre-Civil War bills of sale from the Guilford County Register of Deeds Office as part of a larger effort to build a searchable database of digitized records tied to North Carolina's history of slavery.

### GBA Foundation supports Elon Law scholarship fund

The Greensboro Bar Association Foundation, Inc. has made a gift to the Elon Law Annual Scholarship Fund, which supports students and assists Elon Law in recruiting and retaining the next generation of lawyer leaders. The GBA Foundation has been a longtime supporter of Elon University School of Law including past gifts in support of the school's expansive print and digital collections and the law school's initial construction.

## HONORS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



### Elon Law students selected for prestigious NCBA program

Four students are taking part this summer in a North Carolina Bar Association program established to promote diversity and inclusion in the legal profession by placing some of the state's most promising first-year law students into top internships. Emmanuel Agyemang-Dua, Vanessa Garcia, Victoria Waddell and Faisal Suman (pictured above from left) accepted invitations to work for firms and corporations that participate in the NCBA's Minorities in the Profession 1L Summer Associate Program, which is coordinated through its Minorities in the Profession Committee. It is the fifth year in a row that at least three Elon Law students have secured such placements.



### A Celebration of Wayne Goke's Career

Elon Law's faculty & staff celebrated in May the pending retirement of maintenance mechanic Wayne Goke. Dozens of colleagues and family gathered on the E-Lawn for a catered lunch and presentation of a resolution recognizing his many contributions to the law school since 2006. While Goke officially retired at the end of June, he will continue to assist with special projects at the law school.

## ALUMNI IN ACTION

# U.S. Marine Corps honors Elon Law graduate

**A**n Elon Law graduate earned a top award from the U.S. Marine Corps for his lead role last year in the prosecution of complex cases that in several instances involved military personnel accused of crimes such as manslaughter and sexual assault.

Major Nathan Campbell Thomas L'15 — described by his commanding officer as a remarkable leader and extraordinarily talented litigator — was named Trial Counsel of the Year for 2020 by the Judge Advocate Division of the United States Marine Corps.

Stationed at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, Thomas was recognized for “professionalism, dedication, and litigation skills that resulted in successful outcomes at all levels of disposition, from complex felony contested trials to boards of inquiry and administrative hearings.”

Among the cases Thomas was assigned: the prosecution of two Marines and a Navy corpsman accused of manslaughter in the New Year's Day 2019 death of an American contractor in Iraq.

“The people who have won this award? I never felt like I measured up to them!” Thomas said. “I'm also humbled and certainly very thankful and appreciative of the Marines who have assisted me. All of our administrative support comes from enlisted Marines who just happen to be



Major Nathan Campbell Thomas L'15

assigned to legal services. I feel very blessed and very flattered.”

Thomas was commissioned as a second lieutenant upon his 2007 graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy. In 2012, he was accepted into a legal education program that takes officers with fleet experience and develops them into lawyers. While at Elon Law, he reported for duty at Camp Lejeune each summer to begin learning the protocols that define his responsibilities as a military lawyer.

Thomas today lives with his wife, Wendy, in Emerald Isle, North Carolina, where he enjoys biking, motorcycling, and surf fishing when not at work. ■

## EYES ON THE PRIZE



By Eric Townsend

**T**HE STORY OF THE FIRST ELON LAW ALUMNUS TO CLERK FOR A U.S. COURT OF APPEALS judge is one of perseverance and networking with a sprinkle of serendipity. Or, as John Warren L'13 will tell you, “Everything just fell into place.”

Warren is in the final weeks of a yearlong clerkship with Judge A. Marvin Quattlebaum, Jr. of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit out of South Carolina. Much of his work has been remote because of the COVID-19 pandemic—but that hasn't made it any less fascinating.

He's had his hand in researching and drafting opinions on a variety of complex legal issues: Criminal. Civil. Bankruptcy. Administrative. Immigration. Even election law.

“During law school, I knew that I wanted to clerk for a Fourth Circuit judge, and I hoped to find a clerkship immediately following graduation,” Warren said. “Even though I was unsuccessful at first, I never gave up, and the journey to achieve this clerkship has been the most rewarding experience of my life.”

Let's rewind to 2013. Warren, a symposium editor for the *Elon Law Review* and two-time regional semifinalist in the ABA National Appellate Advocacy Competition, had been told the value of clerkships from mentors at the law firm where he worked while an undergraduate at the University of South Carolina.

As winter gave way to spring, Warren blanketed South Carolina with applications to federal and state appellate judges. “It was less about finding a good job after a clerkship than it was about developing relationships and skills,” he said. “I never had a desire to funnel into ‘Big Law.’”

Securing a position for two years with the Hon. John W. Kittredge of the Supreme Court of South Carolina whetted Warren's appetite for a subsequent federal clerkship. When no offers materialized, Warren returned to the same Columbia firm where he worked prior to Elon Law.

Here's where things get interesting.

In private practice, Warren often served as co-counsel in civil litigation with South Carolina attorney Donald Coggins Jr. In 2016, Coggins was nominated by President Barack Obama for a seat on the bench of the U.S. District Court. Though the nomination expired with the change of administrations, Coggins was unanimously confirmed after being renominated by President Donald Trump.

Coggins needed a clerk. Warren had never lost his interest in a federal clerkship. Less than a month later, Warren had moved from Columbia to Spartanburg to join Coggins. He served as a clerk for Coggins for more than two years until another opportunity opened in South Carolina with Quattlebaum.

Warren's approach to his clerkship was guided by a career goal of concentrating on federal whistleblower litigation. “The knowledge you gain about the judges, courthouse staff, court rules, and the nuances of the docket are invaluable,” he said.

“Everything just fell into place, and it fell into place almost five years into being a lawyer. Short of clerking at the Supreme Court, it's a pinnacle achievement.”

Indeed, those experiences put Warren in a position of strength to, say, sue doctors who are defrauding Medicare and keep a portion of the money the government recovers.

They also put Warren in a good position to serve as federal postconviction counsel for inmates in South Carolina facing execution, which is a practice area he may also resume from his previous stint in private practice.

“Working there every day, getting to know the people, there's a certain comfort level that comes with being in federal court,” Warren said. “Everything just fell into place, and it fell into place almost five years into being a lawyer. Short of clerking at the Supreme Court, it's a pinnacle achievement.”

Those who know Warren praise the skills he brings to clerking and his ability to work with people of various backgrounds and ideologies. Bill Nettles served as U.S. Attorney for the District of South Carolina from 2010-2016 and runs the practice Warren is preparing to join.

His experience clerking is part of what makes Warren a good addition to the firm, Nettles said.

“Because John has clerked in both state and two levels of federal court, he's received exposure that is way beyond the years he's been practicing,” he said. “John's also seen a lot of lawyering, both really good and really bad. That will help him to be able to formulate the type of lawyer he wants to be.”

And that, Warren said, is the biggest benefit to serving as a law clerk: developing the skills and knowledge to help future clients.

“When you meet with a client, you're usually meeting with them on the worst day of their life,” Warren said. “I always found it rewarding to take some of that burden off the client's shoulder. That's the toughest responsibility for lawyers, shouldering that weight and assuring them that everything that can be done is being done.” ■

# A Mentor for Teens *at a* Crossroads

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Story and photo  
By Raini Singleton L'22

**A**N ELON LAW GRADUATE HAS INSPIRED DOZENS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS over the past decade to pursue a college education through free workshops and professional development programs hosted by his own nonprofit agency.

Crossroads: Pathways to Success, co-founded more than a decade ago by Gerard Truesdale L' Dec.'17, also helps young men identify potential career paths. The organization sponsors field trips to local colleges, classes on etiquette, community service projects, and interview preparation courses.

"Crossroads has opened up eyes to seeing more about what they can do with their lives," Truesdale said. "Students learn to how they can use their strengths to excel in school, or college, or whatever they choose to do after high school."

Truesdale and childhood friend Arturo Mckie established Crossroads in 2009 while Truesdale was enrolled in graduate studies at North Carolina Central University. Students attend twice-monthly Saturday workshops

hosted by the nonprofit inside Providence Baptist Church in Greensboro.

Truesdale said he's proud of the 100% college acceptance rate for those inspired to pursue a college degree because of Crossroads.

Steven Thomas attended Crossroads in 2011 when he was a student at Dudley High School in a predominantly Black neighborhood in Greensboro.

"It's important to have a guy that looks like you and is close to your age, and to see him doing certain things," Thomas said. "Sometimes, with your parents, things get really redundant. Getting advice from a person with a different point of view is important. Some kids really need that."

Other participants also credit Truesdale for positively impacting young lives.

"There are a lot of people who don't have mentors, or they don't get the kind of stuff we get to do for free," said K.J. Zellous, a Crossroads participant and student at Grimsley High School. "It's good to have



Gerard Truesdale L' Dec.'17

someone to talk to and also have other young people your age to get their opinions. I feel like my voice is heard."

Truesdale balances his role at Crossroads with his work in cybersecurity at Cockerham & Associates in North Carolina, and his legal position with the Alabama-based Morton Law Firm. The Greensboro native –Truesdale graduated from Grimsley High School before attending Morehouse College for undergraduate studies – said he finds fulfillment in working in information technology while practicing law in criminal defense, and family and juvenile law.

Truesdale didn't always see himself as a lawyer. Advice and guidance from attorneys he got to know helped Truesdale better appreciate the benefits a law

degree would afford Crossroads.

"While I was in law school, I had a couple of Saturday workshops that focused on juvenile justice," he said. "I realized that being an attorney...opened up so many doors in terms of my interests and what I knew what I could do with my career, from reform of the juvenile criminal system to helping out guys in Alabama who don't have a positive male figure in their lives."

Truesdale said businesses have opened their doors to allow tours of their facilities, sponsors have hosted lunches for students, and word of mouth has grown participation.

"The students receive a very well-rounded experience that includes breaking bread together, and there's even a recreation component," said John Rich, director of advancement at

“  
Crossroads has opened  
up eyes to seeing more  
about what they can  
do with their lives.”

Crossroads. "The results speak very well of the program: Crossroads graduates are college-ready, and well-rounded young men, most of whom will become leaders in various occupations and undertakings."

Crossroads is now looking to develop new opportunities and programs, possibly within the Guilford County Schools system via a life skills program for middle and high schools. Those who know Truesdale say he's set for success.

"If I were recruiting a leader for any organization, I would seek five things: absolute integrity, energy and work ethic, smarts, good people skills, and a sense of life and professional purpose," Rich said. "That's Gerard. He ticks all the boxes. He's a good teacher, and an even better role model." ■

## HOW TO BE A BETTER ALLY



**M**orolake (Laké) Laosebikan-Buggs joined the Elon Law community earlier this year as the university's inaugural director of inclusive excellence for graduate and professional education.

The position offers critical assistance to Elon Law's strategic commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion and antiracism as well as collective institutional support of the university's growing population of graduate and professional students.

She sat down recently for a conversation on diversity, equity, and inclusion – and how everyone plays an important role in making the law a more just profession.

### What are some of your early observations about the status of equity and inclusion in the legal academy and the legal profession?

Seeing the ABA make strong statements regarding law schools needing diverse student bodies, faculties, and staff, tells me that the legal profession is aware of the issues. I love seeing an institution like Elon creating positions like mine to ask critical questions.

There's an acknowledgement that this is a field that has an underrepresentation of people of color, and an underrepresentation of women. And while our numbers – let's be honest, they're outstanding, with regard to 30% students of color at Elon Law – we must continue to strengthen our diversity with faculty and staff.

Our students are talking about issues of racism, inclusivity, and micro-aggressions here in the law school and in the profession as a whole. Those things are real. Representation is a great start but we need to continue to think about how our policies, processes, and procedures affect our underrepresented communities here at Elon.

### You've said that DEI is something we should all strive to promote and that it isn't limited only to those with job titles that include the term. Can you elaborate?

Each of us has some form of ordinary privilege, and that's good news, because that means almost all of us have more influence than we may realize. I am cisgendered, married, Christian. These are identities I don't have to hide or worry about. It is ordinary privilege. Ordinary privilege blends in with the norms and people around us, and so it is easily forgotten.

Research repeatedly confirms that those with ordinary privilege have the power to speak up on behalf of those without it, and they have particularly effective influence when they do. For many of us looking for an opportunity to fight bigotry and bias in the workplace or in our broader culture, we may be missing the opportunity that is staring back at us in the mirror: using the ordinary nature of who we are as a source of extraordinary power.

### How might Elon Law evolve over the next five years with a stronger and more strategic approach to DEI?

As law school applications go up, we're going to continue to be challenged by diverse students who have not always been considered as a part of our processes. We hope to convene a group of students, faculty and staff to devise and articulate a law school DEI Strategic Plan, which will give more measurable goals to our efforts in student and faculty recruitment, retention, pipeline programs, and other areas intended to collectively strengthen the law school.

My vision for the law school is that we become a national model of inclusive excellence, demonstrating the ways in which legal education, law schools and the communities they serve can work together proactively to share resources, talents, and solve problems by advancing and infusing the tenets of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all levels of our work.

### Any advice for those who'd like to incorporate DEI into their own work and relationships?

First, just be a better ally. We all have to step up to ensure our organizations are more equitable and more inclusive of everyone.

Second, start learning what people who lack ordinary privilege encounter as challenges. Educate yourself and practice getting and receiving feedback from folks who don't look like you. Sometimes we're afraid to ask because we don't want to say the wrong thing. But practice soliciting and receiving that feedback.

Third, look for opportunities to speak and act. Confronting people is one of the many ways we can use our ordinary privilege, but it is not the only way! Ask questions, raise issues, and add perspectives in discussions here at the law school or at your firm. Introduce data, invite people to share their perspective in conversations, and create buzz around ideas. Amplify the views of people not being heard at meetings and bring people back into conversations when they're being interrupted or shut down.

Finally, be thoughtful about the moments when you may speak for, but over, the communities you're trying to represent. Right or wrong, we tend to center ourselves in conversations, even if it's by accident. As an ally, you have to back up and let people speak for themselves, but then speak when you know that's not being heard.

There are no quick fixes, but if you want some ideas on how you can personally or professionally make a difference, just let me know. That's exactly why I'm here. When you feel prepared to step up as a champion or an ally, I will be standing right there with you.

## FAMILIAR FACE JOINS ELON LAW ADMINISTRATION

Dean Luke Bierman has named **Professor Sue Liemer**, director of the Legal Method & Communication Program since arriving at Elon Law in 2017, the law school's next associate dean for academic affairs.

Liemer served from 1998-2000 as president of the Association of Legal Writing Directors and served a four-year term on the Board of Directors of the Legal Writing Institute. She also created and co-edited the Legal Writing Professors' Blog, which has twice been listed in the ABA Journal's top law blogs.



Associate Dean Sue Liemer

Her scholarship includes book chapters, law journal articles, and book reviews on legal writing education and the administration of legal writing programs. She has also written law journal articles on the legal rights of artists and occasionally teaches Art Law.

Liemer succeeds Professor Enrique Armijo, who concluded five years of service as associate dean. In his work, Armijo guided the transition of Elon Law's academic program to 2.5 years, welcomed several new faculty members to the law school, and ensured that the reaccreditation process moved forward with full explanation of Elon Law's unique program of legal education.

Most recently, Armijo oversaw Elon Law's success in ensuring that students remained on track for graduation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. His achievements were concurrent with a promotion to full professor and an invitation to join the ranks of the American Law Institute while maintaining an ambitious record of teaching and scholarship.

With Liemer appointed to the administrative role of associate dean, Assistant Professor Caroleen Dineen will serve as interim director of the Legal Method & Communication Program. Dineen directed the legal writing program for first-year students at Florida A&M University College of Law before joining the Elon Law faculty in 2020.

## FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS



The Association of Legal Writing Directors presented **Assistant Professor Tiffany Atkins L'11** with its 2021 Outstanding Service Award in recognition of her work co-chairing the organization's Biennial Leadership Academy Subcommittee. Initially selected two years ago to co-chair the same subcommittee, Atkins readily agreed to stay in her role through 2021 after the first Biennial Leadership Academy she helped organize was canceled due to COVID-19.

**Professor Andrew J. Haile** has been promoted to full professor by the Elon University Board of Trustees. Haile joined the Elon Law faculty full-time in June 2008 after practicing law with Brooks, Pierce, McLendon, Humphrey & Leonard, L.L.P. He served from 2013-2016 as associate dean for academic affairs and twice took part in the law school's Strategic Planning Committee, co-chairing the committee from 2018-2019. Haile is a member of Elon Law's Antiracism Working Group.



**Assistant Professor Taleed El-Sabawi** has joined the Addiction & Public Policy Initiative at the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University Law Center. As the institute's inaugural Research Scholar, in addition to her continued teaching at Elon Law, El-Sabawi will engage in projects focused on translating research into actionable public policy, conducting research and contributing to the addiction policy scholarship landscape.

Elon Law has welcomed **Chrystal Clodomir** and **Srikanth Reddy** as visiting assistant professors of legal writing for 2021-2022. Clodomir currently manages a solo practice in Greensboro where she represents parents and children in a variety of family and education matters. Reddy comes to Elon Law with experience as a staff attorney for both the U.S. Courts of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and for the Seventh Circuit, and as an attorney-advisor with the U.S. Department of Labor Benefits Review Board. Clodomir and Reddy join Assistant Professor Tammi Etheridge as new faculty in the upcoming year.



# A Changing of the Guard on the N.C. Business Court

By Eric Townsend

**A**N ESTEEMED JURIST AND LONGTIME FRIEND OF ELON LAW is stepping away later this year from the North Carolina Business Court – but not before he had an opportunity to swear in his successor in a private ceremony for the new judge and her husband.

The Hon. James L. Gale administered the oath of office on May 6, 2021, to the Hon. Julianna Earp, appointed this spring by Gov. Roy Cooper to serve as the first woman judge of the North Carolina Business Court.

The brief yet historic session inside Elon Law’s Robert E. Long Courtroom took just minutes as Earp placed her left hand on a Bible held by her husband, Steve, raised her right hand, and recited her oath.

“What a personal treasure it is, not just a privilege, that when I asked who she wanted to have swear her in, she said ‘you,’” Gale remarked prior to administering the oath. “We’ve been good friends for many years and I hope — frankly, my prayer — is that years from now, you will look back on this day as a celebration, as the beginning of a stage in life that is so very meaningful. You get a chance to do something for the public good every day.”

Earp, newly robed following her oath and invited by Gale to address the court from the bench, praised her predecessor’s contributions to the North Carolina Business Court.

“Judge Gale, you have been my mentor and my guide through this process, and you’ve been my friend for as long as I can remember,” Earp said. “You have given your talents and dedication to this court for more than a decade. The people of this state should be very grateful.”

With chambers adjacent to Elon Law, Gale has authored more than 200 opinions in cases argued before him since joining the court in 2011. He served as Chief Judge for three years, and in 2016 was named Senior Business Court Judge, a position created by the North Carolina General Assembly. Gale’s counsel has been sought by the American College of Business Court Judges, the American Bar Association’s Business Law section, The Sedona

Conference, and the North Carolina Conference of Superior Court Judges.

He has provided invaluable assistance to states including Wyoming, Wisconsin, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, with the nations of Haiti and Bahrain likewise seeking his knowledge and guidance with the creation and consideration of specialized business courts.

Gale is an Alabama native and graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law. He clerked for the Hon. Franklin T. Dupree, Jr. of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina before joining the firm of Smith Moore Leatherwood, the predecessor of today’s Fox Rothschild. While there he served as managing partner of the firm’s Raleigh and Tampa offices.

Though Gale officially concludes his service to the North Carolina Business Court at the end of September, he may continue to preside over a small number of complex cases as an emergency judge with an office maintained at Elon Law. Gale credits his professional success to unwavering support from his wife, Darlene, and their two sons.

Elon Law Dean Luke Bierman said that Gale exemplifies the qualities of leadership, fairness, humility, and professionalism taught at Elon Law. Gale’s role as an internship and residency host to students over the past decade has been vital, Bierman added, with many alumni having learned from his mentoring.



The Hon. James L. Gale and the Hon. Julianna Earp

“It is impossible to capture in words the breadth and depth of Judge Gale’s contributions to North Carolina jurisprudence,” Bierman said, “and it is equally impossible to describe the legacy he leaves in our law school. We do, however, take comfort knowing that he will remain a presence in the Elon Law community and that the North Carolina Business Court will continue to thrive with Judge Earp’s appointment to the bench.” ■

# CLASS NOTES



Meredith Clark L'11



Jessica Yañez L'11



Chris Genheimer L'15



Mike Casterlow L'Dec.'17

## 2009

**A.T. Debnam L'09** has become a partner at Smith Debnam Narron Drake Saintising & Myers LLP in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she is a Board Certified Family Law Specialist.

## 2010

**Adam Arthur L'10** is now a managing principal at Arthur & Kirkman PLLC in Greensboro. He was recently certified as a family financial mediator by the N.C. Dispute Resolution Commission.

## 2011

**Meredith Clark L'11** and her husband, Ryan, welcomed a son, Bennett, in February 2021. Clark is an associate attorney with Motley Rice LLC in Mount Pleasant, S.C.

**Jessica Yañez L'11** joined McKinney Immigration Law in June 2021 where she is an North Carolina Certified Specialist in Immigration Law.

**Manisha Patel L'11** was recognized at the 2021 North Carolina Advocates for Justice Virtual Annual Convention for service as chair of the Family Law Section.

## 2012

**Crystal Mann L'12** and her husband, Matthew, welcomed a daughter, Olive, in January 2021. Mann is an attorney with The Law Firm of Charles M. Slade, Jr.

**Nicole Catton Mueller L'12** serves in Greensboro as a senior staff attorney for Legal Aid of North Carolina.

## 2013

**Matthew Wilcut L'13** has formed a new law firm with partners in Florida and Maryland. The firm, Sutton Snipes, specializes in veterans law. Wilcut has been

awarded the Kirk Warner Award for Distinguished Service to the Military and Veterans by the North Carolina Bar Association Military & Veterans Law Section.

## 2014

**David Lambert L'14**, the solid waste director for Moore County in North Carolina, has joined the board of directors of the Carolina Recycling Association. The CRA's mission "is to conserve resources by advancing recycling and waste reduction throughout the Carolinas."

## 2015

**Chris Genheimer L'15** has been named a director at Carruthers & Roth, P.A., in Greensboro. Genheimer is a member of the firm's business, tax and estate planning.

## 2016

**Daniel Lawall L'16** has joined the Otter Products' legal team as director of privacy where he is responsible for data privacy protection and compliance matters.

**Elizabeth Leo L'16** recently joined the Litigation Practice Group at the Hartford, Conn., office of Halloran Sage. Leo's practice is focused on tort claims, including motor vehicle and uninsured/underinsured motorist claims as well as professional and products liability.

## 2017

**Mike Casterlow L'Dec.'17** joined The Elderlaw Firm in Greensboro in June as lead estate administration attorney.

**Caitlin Mitchell L'Dec.'17** laterally transferred to Nexsen Pruet's Raleigh office in March where she litigates complex business, product liability, and employment matters and appeals.

## 2018

**Elizabeth Ray L'18** was a 2021 honoree on the list of North Carolina Lawyers Weekly Rising Stars. Ray is a litigation attorney for Crumley Roberts, LLP in Greensboro.

## 2019

**Haley Lohr L'19** is starting in August at Hedrick Gardner in North Carolina. After completing a Higher Education Law Fellowship with the University of North Carolina System.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Paula Marie Booth L'Dec.'17**  
Lewisville, N.C., 3/17/21.



## Fall 2021 Calendar

**September 18:** Friends & Family Day

**September 24:** Elon Law Review Symposium: "Reparations: Restorative Justice for Racial Disparities." More information at [law.elon.edu/lawreview](http://law.elon.edu/lawreview).

**October 20-23:** 12<sup>th</sup> Billings, Exum & Frye National Moot Court Competition (virtual event)

**December 11:** Commencement for the Class of 2021

*Lauren Jones of St. Louis, Mo., and Nadia Moore of Durham, N.C., pose together August 4 on the first day of Orientation for the Class of 2023, the largest to enroll in the history of Elon Law.*

**Stay Connected!** We welcome your questions and ideas at [lawalumni@elon.edu](mailto:lawalumni@elon.edu). Also connect with us, and each other, at [LifeLongElon.com](http://LifeLongElon.com), and be sure to contact us at [lawcareers@elon.edu](mailto:lawcareers@elon.edu) for help with hiring Elon Law graduates.



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