

2026



Gulfport, FL



SAPLA 2026



Tropical & Topical

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Conference Locations, Parking, and Wi-Fi

Conference Location

Location: Stetson University College of Law
Address: 1401 61st St S, Gulfport, FL 33707

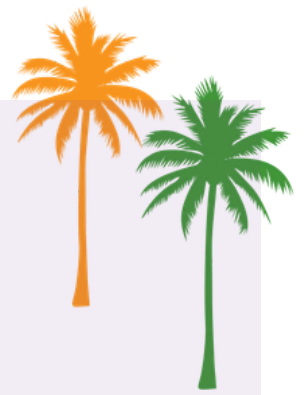
Wi-Fi Connect: Stetson Network
 Password: No password needed

Parking: Parking is available in the lots along 15th Ave South as well as the lot south of the Law Library.

Map: Linked [HERE](#) and below



WELCOME



Welcome and thank you for joining us at SAPLA 2026: Tropical & Topical—Calibrating the Now Generation. We are delighted to bring together pre-law advisors, law school admissions professionals, and legal education partners who share a commitment to helping students successfully navigate the path to law school. As legal education, admissions practices, and student needs continue to evolve, opportunities to learn from one another, exchange ideas, and strengthen our professional community have never been more important.

SAPLA exists to foster collaboration, professional development, and meaningful connections among those who guide, support, and recruit future law students. Through conferences, workshops, and year-round engagement, our members share best practices and develop innovative approaches that strengthen both the pre-law advising and law school admissions professions. We are grateful to our Board of Directors, presenters, exhibitors, and law school partners whose dedication and support make this conference possible. We extend a special thank you to our host institution, **Stetson University College of Law, our Platinum Sponsors—7Sage, Ave Maria School of Law, Barry University School of Law, JD-Next, LSAC, LSAT Demon, and TestMasters, and all of our Gold and Silver Sponsors** for their partnership, generosity, and commitment to SAPLA. Your support plays a vital role in bringing our community together and advancing the future of pre-law advising and legal education.

Our hope is that you leave this conference with fresh perspectives, practical strategies, and a stronger professional network. Take advantage of the opportunity to connect with colleagues, engage in thoughtful discussions, and explore new ideas that will benefit both your work and the students you serve. Thank you for being part of the SAPLA community. We wish you an engaging, rewarding, and inspiring conference experience.

Patrice Barley, SAPLA President-Elect
Carol Riddock, SAPLA Vice-President
2026 SAPLA Conference Co-Chairs





Conference Schedule

Wednesday, June 24

Stetson University College of Law



Time	Event	Room
2:30 PM	Conference Registration	Lobby
4:00 PM	<p style="text-align: center;">Opening Plenary</p> <p>Session Title: LSAC Updates and Trends</p> <p>An overview of news you can use from LSAC including current application cycle data and updates on any changes occurring at LSAC. The session will allow for ample time for Q&A to make sure the SAPLA advising community's questions and concerns can be heard.</p> <p>Presenter: Katya Valasek, Director of Pre-Law Advising, LSAC</p>	The Great Hall
5:00 PM	<p style="text-align: center;">Law School Admissions Q&A Panel</p> <p>Join law school admissions professionals from a variety of institutions for a candid discussion. This interactive panel will explore current trends in law school admissions, evolving application review practices, scholarship considerations, and much more. Panelists will share insights into what admissions committees seek in applicants, common challenges faced by prospective law students, and best practices that advisors can use to support students from exploration through matriculation. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage directly with admissions representatives.</p> <p>The goal of this session is to provide pre-law advisors with up-to-date information on law school admissions trends, application review practices, scholarship considerations, and effective advising strategies to support students throughout the law school application process.</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darren Kettles, Director of Admissions and Recruitment, Stetson University College of Law • Roxanna Cruz, Associate Dean of Admissions, Ave Maria School of Law • Nicole Perez, Assistant Director of Law School Admissions, St. Thomas University College of Law 	F & R Courtroom
6:00 PM – 6:30 PM	<p>Law School Tour (Optional)</p> <p>Participate in a student-led tour of Stetson University College of Law.</p>	Lobby
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM	<p>Welcome Reception hosted by Stetson University College of Law</p> <p>Enjoy light refreshments while networking with colleagues, law school representatives, and conference sponsors.</p>	The Trophy Room



Conference Schedule

Thursday, June 25

Stetson University College of Law



Time	Event	Room
7:30 AM - 9:00 AM	<p align="center">Conference Registration at 7:30 AM Continental Breakfast at 8:00 AM Sponsored by JD-Next</p>	The Great Hall
9:00 AM - 9:50 AM	<p align="center">Plenary Session</p> <p>Session Title: The Future of Law School Loans: How to Guide Your Students with Confidence</p> <p>Presenter: Teria Thornton, J.D., AFC, CDP, AccessLex, Pre-Law and Diversity Initiatives Director</p>	The Great Hall
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #1</p> <p>Session Title: Beyond GPA and LSAT: Preparing Pre-Law Students for a Practice-Ready Future</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carson Sadro, Associate Director, Center for Advocacy Education, Stetson University College of Law • Elizabeth Boals, Associate Professor of Law, Perry Nichols Advocacy Chair, and Director of the Center for Advocacy Education, Stetson University College of Law 	F & R Courtroom
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #2</p> <p>Session Title: Work It: The Experience Gap in Law School Applicants and 1Ls (and How Advisors Can Help Fix It)</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leslie Greenwood, Assistant Dean of Admissions, University of Florida: Fredric G. Levin College of Law • Robert Birrenkott, Associate Dean for Career & Professional Development, University of North Carolina School of Law 	Eleazer Courtroom
11:00 AM - 11:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #1</p> <p>Session Title: AALS at SAPLA: An Open Discussion about Changes in the Path to Law School with the Pre-Law Education and Admission to Law School Section of AALS</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew Dillard, Director of Admissions & Professorial Lecturer in Law, The George Washington University Law School • Maya Russell, M.A., J.D., Pre-Law Advisor and PLANC Chair, Furman University 	F & R Courtroom



Conference Schedule

Thursday, June 25

Stetson University College of Law



Time	Event	Room
11:00 AM - 11:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #2</p> <p>Session Title: 1L Reality Check: What Pre-Law Advisors Need to Know Before Their Students Arrive on Campus</p> <p>Presenter: Don Macaulay, Director of Organizational Partnerships, Aspen Publishing</p>	Eleazer Courtroom
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	<p align="center">Lunch & Learn sponsored by 7Sage</p> <p>Session Title: Three Topics Shaping Conversations Among Law School Deans</p> <p>Special Guest: Dean D. Benjamin Barros, Stetson University College of Law</p>	The Great Hall
1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #1</p> <p>Session Title: Changing Tides: Insights from the 2025–2026 Applicant Cycle and Preparing Prospective Students for What's Next</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Xavier Brown, Assistant Dean of Admissions and Strategic Initiatives, University of Georgia School of Law Karen Britton, Ed.D., Vice Dean of Admissions and Career & Professional Development, University of South Carolina 	F & R Courtroom
1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #2</p> <p>Session Title: Objection to Burnout: Sustaining Yourself in Pre-Law Advising</p> <p>Presenter: LeeAnn Madison, Pre-Law Advisor, The University of Alabama</p>	Eleazer Courtroom
1:10 PM - 2:00 PM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session # 3</p> <p>Session Title: Overcoming Test Anxiety: Building Resilience for the LSAT and Beyond</p> <p>Presenter: Alex Jacobs, 7Sage, Head of Marketing</p>	Courtroom 109



Conference Schedule

Thursday, June 25

Stetson University College of Law



Time	Event	Room
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	<p align="center">Kona Ice Networking Break</p> <p align="center">Enjoy cool refreshments and connect with fellow attendees.</p>	Horseshoe
2:30 PM - 4:00 PM	<p align="center">Law School Fair</p> <p align="center">Meet admissions representatives from law schools across the country and learn more about their programs, admissions processes, and opportunities.</p>	TheTrophy Room
5:00 PM - 6:30 PM	<p align="center">LSAT Game Night sponsored by TestMasters</p> <p align="center">Join fellow pre-law advisors for an evening of networking, games, and conversation.</p>	AC Hotel St Pete Downtown
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM	<p align="center">Evening Reception sponsored by LSAC</p> <p align="center">Open to all conference attendees.</p>	AC Hotel St Pete Downtown





Conference Schedule

Friday, June 26

Stetson University College of Law



Time	Event	Room
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	<p align="center">Breakfast Sponsored by JD-Next</p>	The Great Hall
9:00 AM - 9:50 AM	<p align="center">Plenary Session</p> <p>Session Title: NALP Update</p> <p>Presenter: Karen Britton, Ed.D., Vice Dean of Admissions and Career & Professional Development, University of South Carolina,</p>	The Great Hall
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #1</p> <p>Session Title: Designing the Future: Understanding the Role of AI in Law Admissions Prompts</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Katrin Hussmann Schroll, JD, Associate Dean of Enrollment Management, Integrated Marketing and Data Analytics, University of Miami School of Law; • Cristy De Freitas, Director, Enrollment Operations, University of Miami School of Law 	F & R Courtroom
10:00 AM - 10:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #2</p> <p>Session Title: Understanding and Supporting Underrepresented Law School Applicants: Insights and Best Practices</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teria Thornton, J.D., AFC, CDP, Pre-Law and Diversity Initiatives Director, AccessLex • Baylee Jenkins, AccessLex, Senior Research Analyst 	Eleazer Courtroom
11:00 AM - 11:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #1</p> <p>Session Title: Catching the Wave of Pre-law Societies from a Centralized Advising Center</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Megan Crowe, Career Liaison, Florida State University • Sarah Barnard, JD, LLM, Pre-Law Advisor, Vanderbilt University • Debra Armstrong-Wright, J.D., M.Ed., Department of Political Science: Professor of Practice, Auburn University 	Eleazer Courtroom



Conference Schedule

Friday, June 26

Stetson University College of Law



Time	Event	Room
11:00 AM - 11:50 AM	<p align="center">Concurrent Breakout Session #2</p> <p>Session Title: Leverage the LSAT to be a Marketable Applicant</p> <p>Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billy Harrison, Head of Academic Support, LSAT Demon • Leslie Blodgett, Head of Admissions Consulting, LSAT Demon • Damon Alvarez, Head of Partnerships, LSAT Demon 	F & R Courtroom
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM	<p align="center">Lunch with SAPLA Board Members</p>	The Great Hall
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	<p align="center">Student Law Fair (USF)</p> <p>Student law fair at USF Tampa (law schools and exhibitors)</p>	The Great Hall



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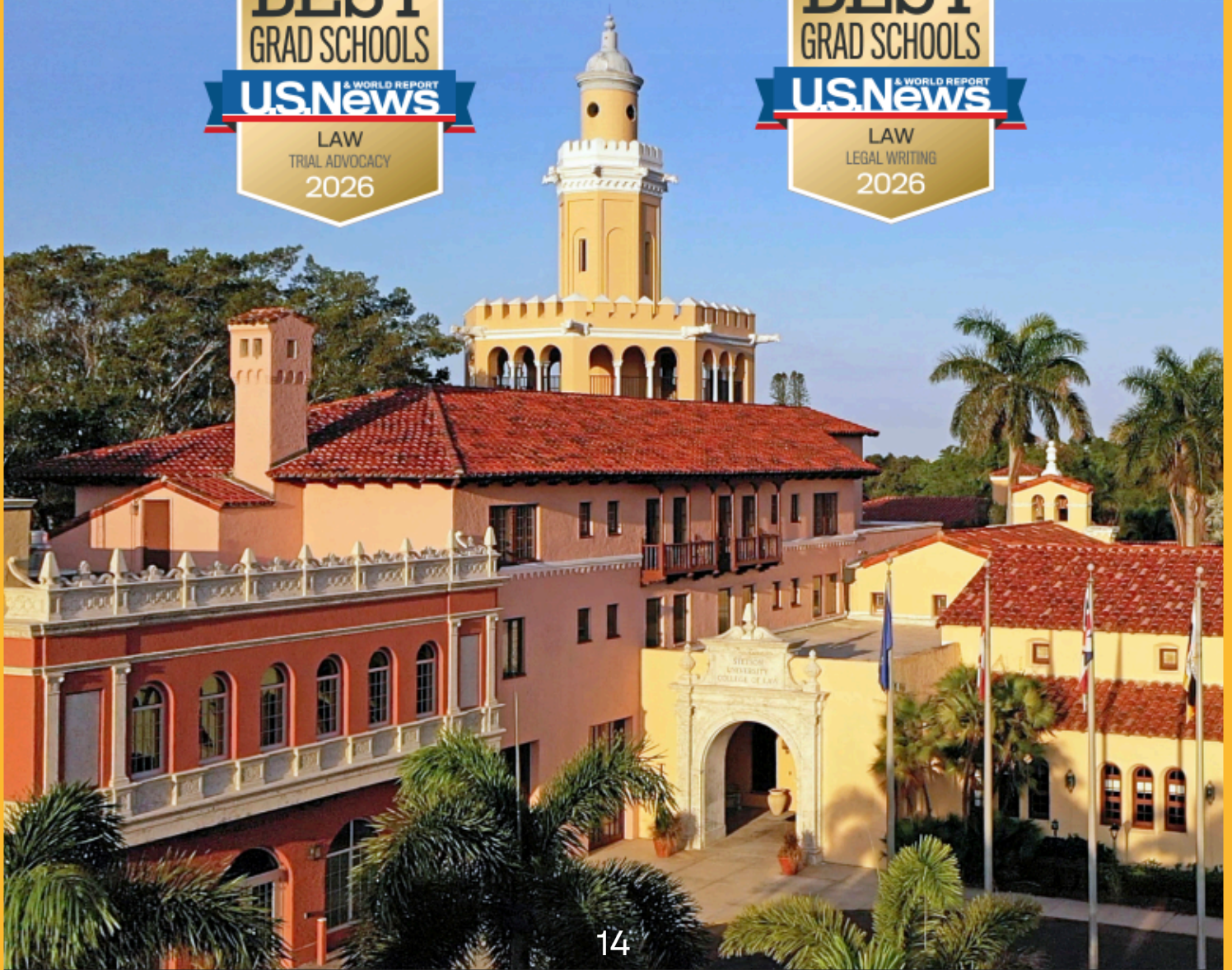




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11.6:1
Student to Faculty Ratio

90%
Employment placement*
Class of 2025

87.3%
July 2025
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*Percent of class employed in all sectors or pursuing an advanced degree 10 months after graduation

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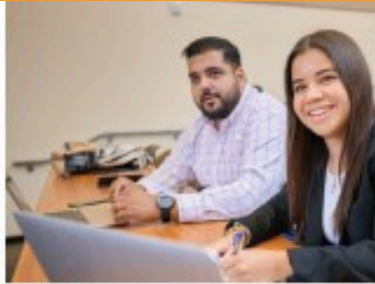


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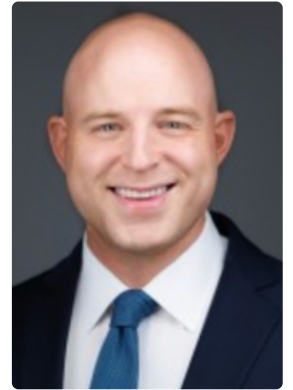


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Damon Alvarez
Head of Partnerships, LSAT Demon



Debra Armstrong-Wright
J.D., M.Ed., Department of Political Science: Professor of Practice,
Auburn University



Debra Armstrong-Wright is a Professor of Practice in the Department of Political Science at Auburn University. After receiving her JD from The University of Alabama School of Law, she practiced law in Arkansas for several years and then accepted a position at Auburn University as the Executive Director, Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity. She then worked in the Office of the General Counsel for two years before assuming an adjunct teaching position in the Department of Political Science. In 2018, she accepted the position of Pre-Law Advisor. In her current role, she serves as the sole pre-law advisor for the entire student body at Auburn, teaches health law, a mock trial competition course, and developed an internship course for law and justice majors. She coaches, advises, and travels with the Mock Trial Competition Team at Auburn. She is also the faculty advisor to the 550-member pre-law society at Auburn.



Sarah Barnard
JD, LL.M., Pre-Law Advisor, Vanderbilt University



Sarah Barnard serves as Vanderbilt University's Pre-Law Advisor and serves undergraduate students and recent undergraduate alumni (>2 years since graduation) in Pre-Law Advising. Sarah has over 15 years of experience in various industries, including legal recruitment, talent acquisition, human resources, and was previously a practicing attorney. She earned a Bachelor's in history from The University of Texas, an LL.M. in taxation from Boston University School of Law, and a J.D. from Boston College Law School.



D. Benjamin Barros
 Dean and Professor of Law
 Stetson University College of Law



Dean D. Benjamin Barros came to Stetson Law from the University of Toledo College of Law, where he served as Dean from 2015 through 2023. A nationally recognized property law scholar, he has taught and written extensively on Property Law and Theory, Property Law Reform, Regulatory Takings, and the Philosophy of Science. He brings a broad set of experience in the academy and in practice to Stetson Law. He is the author of a prominent casebook on property law with Aspen Publishers and was the founding editor of the Journal of Law, Property, and Society.

Prior to his time as Dean of the University of Toledo College of Law, Dean Barros was the associate dean of academic affairs and professor of law at Widener University School of Law in Harrisburg, PA. His passion for improving legal education and, by extension, the legal profession itself, is evident in the leadership roles he has held within professional organizations. Dean Barros served twice on the American Association of Law Schools (AALS) Executive Committee and was one of the youngest educators to serve in such a role when he was first appointed. He also served as chair of the AALS Property Section and is a past president of the Association for Law, Property, and Society.

Before becoming an educator, Dean Barros worked as a litigator at the New York City law firms of Latham & Watkins LLP and Debevoise & Plimpton. After he graduated from law school, he clerked for Judge Milton Pollack of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Dean Barros earned his JD from Fordham University School of Law (1996). He was an editorial board member on the Fordham Law Review and a member of Order of the Coif. He earned his bachelor’s degree in philosophy from Colgate University (1991) and a master’s degree in philosophy from the University of Maryland (2013).



Robert Birrenkott

Associate Dean for Career & Professional Development
 University of North Carolina School of Law



Rob is the Associate Dean for Careers and Professional Development and oversees all aspects of the Career Development Office. He received a B.A. from the University of Tampa and his J.D. from the University of Florida Levin College of Law (where he served as the assistant dean for career services). He is a past president of the Eighth Judicial Circuit Bar Association, past vice president of the North Carolina Bar Association, served as a member of The Florida Bar Membership Outreach Committee, and recognized as one of “The Gainesville Sun’s 40 Under 40” and a recipient of the UNC Employee Forum Community Award.



Leslie Blodgett

Head of Admissions Consulting, LSAT Demon



Leslie Blodgett is LSAT Demon's Head of Admissions Consulting and Master Writing Tutor. She has worked with law school applicants since 2019.



Elizabeth Boals

Associate Professor of Law, Perry Nichols Advocacy Chair, and Director of the Center for Advocacy Education, Stetson University College of Law



Liz Boals teaches Evidence, Criminal Law, and a variety of Advocacy courses and serves as the Perry Nichols Advocacy Chair.

Prior to her appointment at Stetson University College of Law in 2020, Professor Boals taught at American University Washington College of Law (AUWCL) for 15 years. At AUWCL, she served in administrative positions, including as the Assistant Dean of Part-time and Online Education, Director of the Criminal Justice Practice and Policy Institute, and Associate Director of the Weinstein Trial Advocacy Program.

Professor Boals has published a variety of advocacy case files and books on criminal procedure and expert testimony. She is the recipient of multiple teaching and community leadership awards and is a long-time member of the National Institute of Trial Advocacy (NITA) teaching faculty. Professor Boals lectures frequently both domestically and abroad on topics related to expert witness testimony, eye-witness identification, and trial skills.

Before transitioning to a full-time teaching position, Professor Boals was a labor and employment litigation attorney for the U.S. Department of Commerce and in private practice. Professor Boals began her legal career as a public defender in the Office of the Public Defender in Alexandria, Virginia, handling a felony caseload from trials in Circuit Court through appeals to the Virginia Court of Appeals.



Karen Britton

Vice Dean, Admissions and Career & Professional Development
University of South Carolina School of Law



Karen Reagan Britton has been with the University of South Carolina School of Law since May 2016 and she is currently the Vice Dean for Admissions and Career & Professional Development there. Before joining USC Law, Britton was the senior administrator for student recruitment, admissions, strategic enrollment planning, diversity recruitment, scholarships, financial aid, employment services, and student career development at the University of Tennessee College of Law. During this time, Britton completed her doctorate and served in various volunteer roles with the National Association for Law Placement (NALP) and with the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), culminating in her service as NALP President. Prior to her work in legal education, Britton spent a decade at a large Nashville law firm, where her responsibilities included law student recruitment, attorney hiring and client development. She is a frequent speaker at professional conferences on topics at the intersection of admissions and career issues for prospective law students. Britton earned doctoral, master's, and bachelor's degrees from the University of Tennessee. Her dissertation explored factors influencing first job choice of private practice among graduates of public law schools in the southeastern United States.

Xavier Brown

Assistant Dean of Admissions and Strategic Initiatives,
University of Georgia School of Law



Xavier R. Brown serves as the assistant dean for admissions and strategic initiatives at the University of Georgia School of Law. In this role, he oversees all aspects of the admissions process for the Juris Doctor and Master's in the Study of Law programs, including strategic enrollment planning, application review, scholarship administration, and recruitment strategy.

He collaborates with faculty, staff, students, and alumni on initiatives that promote academic success, strengthen community engagement, and enhance recruitment efforts. He also directs the School of Law's Summer Academic Success Program, an intensive pre-matriculation program designed to provide incoming students with a strong foundation for the challenges of legal education.

Since joining the Office of Admissions in 2017, Brown has played a vital role in advancing the law school's national recruitment efforts and implementing innovative enrollment strategies. His leadership has been instrumental in enrolling classes that are academically distinguished and aligned with the school's mission and values.

Brown earned his bachelor's degree summa cum laude in political science from Georgia Southern University and his Juris Doctor from the University of Georgia.



Megan Crowe
Career Liaison, Florida State University



Megan Crowe is a Pre-Law Coordinator at Florida State University, where she leads comprehensive advising and programming to support undergraduate students pursuing legal careers. With over seven years of experience, she provides strategic guidance on academic planning, LSAT preparation, and the law school application process, helping students navigate each step with confidence and clarity.

Megan oversees the FSU Pre-Law Presidents' Council, a collaborative initiative representing 16 student organizations, where she works to strengthen connections, expand resources, and enhance opportunities that promote student success across campus.

Roxanna Cruz
Associate Dean of Admissions, Ave Maria School of Law



Associate Dean of Admissions, Financial Aid, and Housing, Roxanna Cruz, is an accomplished, results-driven enrollment professional with over 20 years of working in higher education. Her extensive experience in developing and implementing comprehensive plans to recruit and retain talented and diverse individuals has been proven through her track record of consistently meeting and exceeding university and law school enrollment goals. Roxanna's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion through her leadership is evident in her ability to not only help shape a class that is reflective of the world, but also in recruiting, developing, mentoring, and leading high-functioning diverse teams.

Dean Cruz re-entered law school admissions with her arrival at Ave Maria School in January 2023. Prior to this role, Dean Cruz held the position of Associate Vice President of Enrollment at Barry University in Miami Shores, where she oversaw all undergraduate, graduate & professional enrollment. Roxanna also served as the Assistant Dean of Admissions at Barry University School of Law, Associate Director of Recruitment & Marketing at FIU Law, and as Director of Student Recruitment at Miami Law.

Dean Cruz holds a Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Leadership from St. Thomas University and a Master of Business Administration in Management at Nova Southeastern University. As a first-generation college graduate, she takes pride in her accomplishments and her professional development in enrollment management. Dean Cruz's creativity, adaptability, innovative thinking, and passion for access to higher education have provided successful outcomes in many aspects of her work. In addition, she considers her most prominent role to date as that of wife and mother of four children.



Cristy De Freitas,
Director, Enrollment Operations,
University of Miami School of Law



Cristy De Freitas is the Director of the DataHub at the University of Miami School of Law, where she leads the data, communications, and enrollment systems behind the admissions process. She built and deployed a custom AI agent for editorial review, leads a team that works with AI daily, and is optimizing the school's web content for AI-powered search. Her background spans IT, enrollment, and marketing, with expertise in cloud software, data governance, and enrollment analytics. She holds a M.S. in Organizational Leadership from the University of Miami Herbert Business School and a B.S. in Public Relations and Business Administration from the University of Miami.



Matthew Dillard
Director of Admissions & Professorial Lecturer in Law,
The George Washington University Law School



Matthew has been the Director of Admissions at GW Law since 2019. Before his current role, Matthew advised students in various capacities in the law school's Admissions and Dean of Students offices for over a decade. He has served the legal education community in numerous capacities, including through service on the Law School Admission Council's Schools & Candidates Standing Committee, the Misconduct & Irregularities Subcommittee, and the Newcomers Working Group. He also served as the law school representative on the Board of the Northeastern Association of Pre-Law Advisors. At GW Law, Matthew has served as the sole staff member of the Dean's Strategic Planning Committee and on the Dean's Staff Service Committee. A first-generation student, Matthew was drawn to work in admissions because it combines his interests in counseling students individually and assembling classes that will broaden legal representation through a range of experiences, backgrounds, and interests. Matthew graduated from Vassar College and GW Law and is a member of the GW Lambda Law Alumni Association. His favorite spots in DC include The Phillips Collection art museum and Hillwood Museum and Gardens.



Leslie Greenwood
 Assistant Dean of Admissions,
 University of Florida: Fredric G. Levin College of Law



Leslie Greenwood is the Assistant Dean for Admissions at the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where she oversees J.D. admissions, recruitment, marketing, and enrollment strategy. Prior to joining UF Law, she served as Director of Admissions at the University of Miami School of Law and held several admissions and student affairs positions at St. John’s University School of Law in New York, including Dean of Students.

Before transitioning to legal education, she practiced entertainment litigation with Loeb & Loeb LLP in New York. As a first-generation college and law student, Dean Greenwood is particularly interested in law school admissions and helping aspiring lawyers develop the experiences and professional skills needed to thrive in legal education and the legal profession. She earned her J.D. from the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law and graduated with distinction from Cornell University with a B.S. in Policy Analysis and Management.

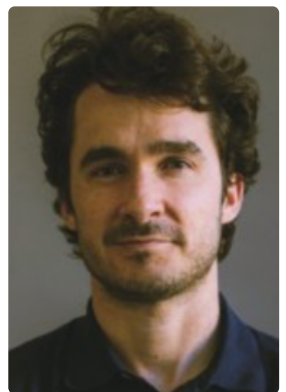


Billy Harrison
 Head of Academic Support, LSAT Demon



Billy Harrison is a teacher and the Head of Academic Support at LSAT Demon. He has taught the test since 2024.

Alex Jacobs
 7Sage, Head of Marketing



Alex Jacobs holds a bachelor’s in theatre from Northwestern University and a master’s in social work (with a focus on adult mental health) from the University of Southern California. He has many years of experience in test prep and has tutored a variety of standardized tests. Previously, Alex served as a staff writer at MasterClass, where he contributed to courses taught by Martin Scorsese, Stephen King, Serena Williams, and Doris Kearns Goodwin, among others. He also worked as an actor, screenwriter, and mental health counselor. Drawing on his diverse background, Alex brings an engaging, empathetic, and holistic approach to teaching. In his free time he loves playing tennis, singing karaoke, and revising his bio for the 7Sage website.



Baylee Jenkins

AccessLex, Senior Research Analyst



Baylee is a member of the Evaluation Team at AccessLex Institute, where she has spent the past four years supporting the administration and evaluation of pathway programs within the LexScholars Initiative. In her role, she collaborates to adapt programs to better meet participant needs, helping to strengthen opportunities for underrepresented aspiring lawyers on their path to law school and beyond. Baylee earned her master’s degree in Experimental Psychology, with a specialization in psychology and the law, from The University of Alabama in Huntsville in 2020. She also holds a Bachelor of Science from Florida Southern College.



Darren Kettles

Director of Admissions

Stetson University College of Law



Mr. Kettles holds a BA in Communications and an MA in Liberal Studies and English from Rollins College. He completed Collegiate Enrollment Management Training at the University of Southern California’s Rossier School of Education. Currently, he serves as a board member and Communications Director at the Southern Association of Pre-Law Advisors (SAPLA), representing law schools for several years. Darren chairs the LSAC Subcommittee on Misconduct and Irregularities in the Admissions Process and has been a member for a decade. He’s a frequent presenter at LSAC’s Newcomers Conferences and serves on various educational committees. With a passion for promoting law school access, Darren directs recruiting efforts toward underrepresented students and is an LGBTQ+ Advisory and Alumni Boards member at Stetson Law. Prior to law school admissions, he worked in undergraduate admissions and financial aid at Full Sail University and taught homeless adults in the Florida Public School System. Additionally, Darren served at Covenant House Florida, educating runaway and homeless teens. During college, he worked as a concierge at Walt Disney World. Outside of his professional life, Darren enjoys swimming, hiking, kayaking, island living, and seeking global adventures.



Don Macaulay

Director of Organizational Partnerships, Aspen Publishing



I started my career as an associate at Rogers & Wells in New York City (now Clifford Chance), doing antitrust and securities litigation work. What I discovered pretty quickly was that my real passion wasn't practicing law. It was helping people get there, and succeed once they did. Over the next two decades, I built two legal education businesses from scratch.

One became the largest independent legal education bookstore in the United States. The other, Law Preview, grew into the recognized national leader in law school prep before being acquired by BARBRI in 2012. I spent the next nine years on BARBRI's Executive Leadership Team, building on that platform to reach tens of thousands of law students across the country.

I also founded the Pipeline to Practice Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to improving diversity in the legal profession, because the work is not done until the pipeline actually reaches everyone. Today, I serve as Director of Organizational Partnerships at Aspen Publishing, where I work with law schools nationwide on JD-Next, a first-of-its-kind assessment and academic support tool that is changing how schools identify and support student potential from day one.

If there's a through line in all of it, it's this: I believe people are capable of far more than they imagine, and I've built my entire career around helping them see that.



LeeAnn Madison

Pre-Law Advisor, The University of Alabama



LeeAnn Madison serves as one of two, professional Pre-Law Advisors at The University of Alabama, where she advises approximately 1,300 pre-law students across all academic disciplines while also assisting with general academic advising for all majors in the Barefield College of Arts and Sciences. In her role, she provides guidance on academic planning, law school admissions, LSAT preparation, and professional development while assisting with coordination of law school collaborative events and mentoring initiatives. LeeAnn is passionate about student success, advisor well-being, and creating supportive pathways for future legal professionals. Her professional interests include mentorship, academic success planning, and recognizing then addressing burnout within the advising profession.



Nicole Perez

Assistant Director of Law School Admissions,
St. Thomas University College of Law



Nicole Perez, J.D., Assistant Director of Admissions at St. Thomas University College of Law, earned her J.D. from the University of Miami School of Law and her B.S. in Criminal Justice from Florida International University. At STU Law, Nicole oversees JD student recruitment initiatives, including new student events/campus visits, applicant engagement, and admissions travel. Born and raised in Miami, Florida, Nicole draws upon her experience as a first-generation college and law school graduate, together with her work in admissions, to guide students through the law school admissions process. Prior to joining St. Thomas, Nicole worked for an employment law firm but ultimately realized her passion was better aligned with higher education and working directly with students.



Maya Russell

Furman University, Greenville, SC
Pre-Law Advisor



Maya Russell serves as SAPLA's President-Elect and as PLANC's Chair-Elect. She is the Pre-Law Advisor at Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. Maya received her J.D. from UNC Law, M.A. from Montana, and B.A. from NYU. Prior to joining Furman, Maya served as an attorney for the United States District Court for the Districts of Wyoming and South Carolina. Maya is licensed to practice law in Washington State, Colorado, and Wyoming. She met her husband, Brook Russell (a statistician at Clemson University), in her home town of Perth, Western Australia.



Carson Sadro

Associate Director, Center for Advocacy Education,
Stetson University College of Law



Carson Sadro earned her Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of South Florida, and her Juris Doctor from the University of South Carolina. As a member of South Carolina’s nationally ranked Trial Advocacy Program, Ms. Sadro was a National Trial Competition Regional Champion and competitor at Baylor Law School’s prestigious Top Gun Competition. She also served as the Associate Editor-in-Chief for the ABA Real Property, Trust & Estate Law Journal and as a legal intern for the Special Victim’s Unit at the South Carolina Attorney General’s Office.

Following graduation, Ms. Sadro served as an Assistant State Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit, covering Duval, Clay, and Nassau Counties. As a prosecutor, Ms. Sadro was appointed to the Community Problem Response Unit and worked in conjunction with the Gang Unit to address violent crimes involving firearms and gangs. She subsequently returned to Tampa, Florida and transitioned into civil litigation, practicing at a respected local commercial litigation firm, with a particular focus on complex business disputes in state and federal courts.

Ms. Sadro is licensed to practice in Florida and the United States District Courts for the Middle and Southern Districts of Florida. Ms. Sadro joined Stetson’s Trial Team as a Coach in 2023 and later joined Stetson Law School as the Associate Director of the Center for Advocacy Education in 2025.



Katrin Hussmann Schroll

JD, Associate Dean of Enrollment Management, Integrated
Marketing and Data Analytics, University of Miami School of Law



Katrin Hussmann Schroll is the Associate Dean of Enrollment Management, Integrated Marketing, and Data Analytics at the University of Miami School of Law, where she leads admissions, communications, and data strategy. A licensed attorney and member of the Maryland State Bar and American Bar Associations, she is an active leader in legal education. She serves on the Law School Admission Council's Board of Trustees, chairs its Product Strategy and Innovation Committee, sits on Aspen Publishing's JD-Next Advisory Board, and is a member of the ABA Section of Legal Education's Advisory Group on Data Collection. Previously, she served as Assistant Dean at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. She holds a J.D. from Maryland Carey Law and a B.A. in Economics from Florida International University.



Teria Thornton
AccessLex Institute
Pre-Law and Diversity Initiatives Director



Teria has over a decade of experience working in the higher education field. Her involvement includes positions in financial aid, training, and enrollment services. She received her J.D. from the University of Cincinnati College of Law, a M.A. in Public Policy and Management from The Ohio State University, and her B.A. in Political Science from Fisk University. She also is an Accredited Financial Counselor and a Certified Diversity Professional.



Katherine Valasek
Law School Admissions Council
Director of Prelaw Advising



Katherine “Katya” Valasek is director of prelaw advising at the LSAC where she works with prelaw advisors across the country. She regularly presents to prelaw advisors and prospective law students at events both virtually and in-person, including LSAC’s monthly prelaw advising webinars.

Katya also attends and presents at all regional APLA conferences and PLANC. She can be found in the Resource Center at all in-person LSAC Forums behind the LawHub table. At the digital LSAC Forums she can be found in the live workshops answering attendee questions as they roll in. Katya, along with Kyle, write the two monthly newsletters that go out to the prelaw advising community. Katya is co-host and producer of I Am the Law, a podcast about law jobs and is still getting used to being recognized at LSAC forums and other events.

Katya joined LSAC in November 2020 after almost a decade in law school admissions at Seton Hall Law. Before joining Seton Hall, she worked as a legal recruiter in New York and New Jersey. Valasek holds a bachelor’s degree from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, and earned her law degree from Michigan State University College of Law in East Lansing, MI. Katya sat for and passed the bar exam in both MI and NJ.

Katya is a trustee on the boards of the Midland School in Branchburg, NJ and the Hunterdon Art Museum in Clinton, NJ. In her free time, she can be found at the Jersey Shore, out to brunch with friends, listening to a true crime podcast, being tortured by her cat Jamie, or watching Dateline and Hallmark movies. But most of the time you can find her extra early for a flight in Newark Airport.



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