

# PACE UNIVERSITY

Elisabeth Haub School of Law

## Alumni Association Board of Directors

### MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

6:15 p.m. networking, 6:30 p.m. meeting start

Zoom video conference

**Present:** Patricia Bisesto, Esq. '92; Michael Calandra, Jr., Esq. '05; Aharon Diaz, Jr., Esq. '12; Jeremy Farrington, Esq. '11; Hon. Sandra Forster '79; Stephen Forte, Esq. '08; Michael Frankel, Esq. '03; James Garvey III, Esq. '80; Michael Gilberg, Esq. '07; Lisa Gladwell, Esq. '10; George Haddad, Esq. '15; Jasmine L. Hosein, Esq. '12; Sameera Ansari Kalra, Esq. '09; James Lenihan, Esq. '91; Caesar Lopez, Esq. '12; Benjamin Lowenthal, Esq. '14; Andrea Madrid, Esq. '12; Joseph Mazel, Esq. '97; Mark Meeker, Esq. '09; Gail Mulligan, Esq. '09; Susan Mulliken, Esq. '11; Diana Neeves, Esq. '16; Jacqueline Parker, Esq. '95; Patrick J. Paul, Esq. '16; Thomas Persico, Esq. '18; Judson Siebert, Esq. '85; Leanne M. Shofi, Esq. '94; Andrew Teodorescu, Esq. '13

**Excused:** Michael Goldstein, Esq. '06; Jennifer Gray, Esq. '06; Adele Lerman Janow, Esq. '90; Michael Kremen, Esq. '08; Hon. Carole Levy '83 (Dir. Em.); Joseph Martin, Esq. '91 (Dir. Em.); John Mulligan, Esq. '88; Raymond Perez, Esq. '00; Christopher Psihoules, Esq. '12

**Unexcused:** Rebecca Gigliotti, Esq. '18; Nicholas Pasalides, Esq. '11

**Added attendees:** Arianne Andrusco, Director of Development and Alumni Relations; Angela D'Agostino, Dean of Students; Kapila Juthani, Assistant Dean; Lori Kanner, Development Officer; Danielle Kocal, Director of Academic Success; Rachel Silva, Assistant Dean for External Affairs

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:30 p.m.

**MEETING QUORUM:** Quorum met at 6:30 p.m. with 28 Directors in attendance (Zoom/Telephonic)

#### I. Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Andrew Teodorescu

1. Congratulations to the new Board Members and Officers
2. Welcome guests: Kapila Juthani, Assistant Dean; Prof. Danielle Kocal; Rachel Silva, Assistant Dean of External Affairs
3. 2021-22 officers:
  - o Vice President Lisa Gladwell
  - o Secretary Leanne Shofi
  - o Treasurer Gail Mulligan
4. Excel spreadsheet pages distributed to the Board:
  - o 2021-22 School Year Attendance
  - o Contact info
  - o Committees

- Contributions

## II. Board Membership

Andrew Teodorescu

- Reminder of the Board's attendance policy:
  - 2 unexcused absences in a school year triggers a conditional suspension letter, then
  - Attend the next meeting and plead your case to get voted back on

## III. April 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Leanne Shofi

- Approved via email on April 28, 2021 by 18 Directors
- Posted to the PLS web site: <https://law.pace.edu/alumni/alumni-association>

## IV. External Affairs

Rachel Silva, Assistant Dean for External Affairs

1. Rachel is replacing Rex Bossert, who is still working for Pace in the capacity of Media Relations
2. Rachel oversees Marketing, Communications, Branding, Events, and related areas, and some future changes in those areas will likely be noted
3. Grateful to join a law school and Alumni Association that is so well-established
4. Open to ideas for, so please feel free to reach out

## V. External Affairs

Danielle Kocal, Director of Academic Success

- Results have not come out yet from the July Bar Exam, it was remote, hopefully on track for in-person in February but hard to predict
- Class of 2020 was the first fully remote class
- Alumni mentor program was well-received
- Provided resources to students to keep mental health in check, including yoga, weekly meditation, online social events, cocktails and jeopardy
- Bar grants were provided to 16 students in financial need, almost all who
  - Would like to start the Bar grant program earlier this year, with applications in January if possible

## VI. Dean's Update

Angie D'Agostino o/b/o Dean Anderson

- Law school is fully vaccinated (97.1%, the rest with exemptions)
- Weekly COVID testing is required to be on campus
- Angie has been unofficially knighted as the "COVID Czar," and it is great to hear students in the hallways again, and to re-orient 2Ls and 3Ls to in-person learning
- Law School is still ranked #1 in Environmental Law and in the top 25% of Advocacy programs
- Working on providing more accelerated "3 for 3" advanced degree programs, and the JD/MBA program is currently being revamped
- Received a number of gifts from Alumni, thank you
- About 30 students still participate by in classes by Zoom, for medical and personal reasons
- Masks are required for everyone on campus regardless of vaccination status
- The Law School has 3 hearing impaired students, which is very difficult given the mask mandate, but the school is working hard to provide accommodations and Michael Gilberg offered his services as he is very familiar with providing such accommodations
- Recent graduate successes: Natalie Pagano, Esq. '19, has joined as new Director of Student Services and Campus Affairs, replacing Patrick O'Connor, also an alum

## VII. Dean of Students

Angie D'Agostino, Dean of Students

1. Retention was difficult given the circumstances of the pandemic, and students who did not stay did so for personal reasons related to the pandemic
2. Thank you for donations to the PLEAS fund - last year, over \$76,000 was raised which was critically needed by students
  - Students' need for assistance remains, so please consider giving again to the PLEAS fund
  - Student recipients have been so grateful for the assistance allowing them the opportunity to continue their education
3. Another initiative is a food pantry to assist those students who are food poor – one food closet will be in Dannat Hall and one in Aloysia Hall, for non-perishable goods
4. Facilities Update:
  - The Law School is working with the University on capital projects
  - E-House is empty, the building will be renovated for meeting space
  - The education house, built in 1894, has been renovated and will be the University's Registrar's office
  - Three buildings on Crane Avenue will be sold, along with the tennis court
  - The Good Counsel properties were sold, with demolition to begin in October for new buildings (assisted living, memory care, independent living, townhouses), but the Church and Mapleton Center will remain untouched
5. The new website domain for the SBA is HaublawSBA.com, created by SBA President Madison Shaff
6. There were 273 students in the 2021 entering class, and the number of part-time FLEX students was doubled from last year
7. Mental health and wellness is an important policy driving several projects, particularly due to COVID.
  - Prospective students are specifically looking mental health and wellness resources.
  - A wellness room was created, as well as a relaxation room, with a capital request (\$1.6M) in to the University for a health and wellness center to be created; ideally, there will be a nurse and counselor on staff for the students.
  - Naming opportunities will be available for the new wellness center.

## **VIII. Career Development**

Kapila Juthani, Assistant Dean for Career Development

1. Kapila was previously a career counselor and taught legal skills at Pace, and took over role as Assistant Dean for Career Development this past summer
2. Employment and bar pass numbers were required to be reported in April, but the numbers were not “apples to apples” due to COVID and classes not taking the Bar until July
3. Class of 2020: by June, 88.6% employed, 38 students in government (most DA office), 11 clerkships, most at firms, 20 in business and industry roles, 8 in nonprofit public interest positions; 88% is in line with pre-COVID years, those were the June numbers but the numbers were lower when reported in April
4. In April, the Class of 2021 was at an 81% employment rate, but making the apples to apples comparison the number went up to 89% in June 2021, which is in line with past years and other law schools
5. Working with the Class of 2021, about 68% employed, exactly in line with where the school was with Class of 2019, pre-pandemic
6. Working closely with students on summer employment for 2Ls, a great recruiting year for large law firms, happy to take advantage of strong market conditions
7. Class of 2021, things are changing every day, hopeful that good news continues
8. Just started working with 1Ls, individual meetings to work on resumes, interview prep, networking skills, and to get them started thinking about their summer job search

9. Also planning programming to prepare students for careers, including practice area programs
10. If you have resources for students or would like to be a resource, please reach out to Kapila
11. Office is available to assist alumni throughout their careers

## **IX. Admissions**

Lori Kanner o/b/o Cathy Alexander

1. Incoming class – so far, admissions have been really strong, applications up by 6% compared to last Fall, allowing better selectivity
2. Part-time program applicants doubled from last year
3. Largest incoming class in 15 years, with higher LSATs and GPA scores
4. Cathy will likely be interested in reaching out to alumni to see if they are interested in reaching out to admitted students to assist with their decisions
5. The mental health and wellness initiatives previously discussed are an important consideration for graduate students
6. 90+ current students have disability accommodations.
7. Class of 2021 demographic breakdown will be distributed.

## **X. Alumni & Development Update**

Lori Kanner / Arianne Andrusco

- Over 12 free CLEs have been provided to alumni on a number of topics
- Reunion:
  - Virtual on November 5, 2021
  - Free CLE on the positives of COVID, plus a seminar on global warming and a seminar by Prof. Gershman
- Meet the Judges will be from October 4-7 at different time slots
- Recent gifts include several new endowed scholarships and gifts for clinical programs, including a Disability Rights Clinic and an Investor Rights Clinic
- Grow NYC allowed the school to hire a fellow in Food Law
- Giving Tuesday is approaching, would love members assist with getting the word out, hoping to focus on advocacy programs – let Lori or Arianne know if you can help get the word out

## **XI. Committee Reports**

Mike Frankel

1. Nominating Committee – last year everything went smoothly
  - Returning Board members:
    - Michael A. Calandra Jr.
    - Hon. Sandra A. Forster
    - Michael A. Frankel
    - Michael G. Gilberg
    - Lisa E. Gladwell
    - Michael T. Goldstein
    - Jennifer L. Gray
    - Caesar Lopez
    - Mark Meeker
    - Raymond Perez
    - Leanne M. Shofi
  - New Board members:
    - Aharon V. Diaz, Jr.
    - Jasmine L. Hosein
    - Andrea Madrid
    - Patrick J. Paul
  - Timeline for nominees for the 2021-2022 school year: Slate of nominees to be provided to the Board no later than fourth meeting of the year, which is in April; if anyone has any resumes or knows of anyone with interest, please reach out to Mike; vetting process begins at the start of the new year

2. Social Committee Jeremy Farrington
- Upcoming P.L.A.N. events: Oct. 6 at 6:30 and Nov. 17, both virtual
  - June 2021 P.L.A.N. virtual event was a success - it combined the annual meeting with a social gathering and included a toast to Mark Meeker as he stepped down as President
  - Still waiting to schedule 2022 meeting in conjunction with the NYSBA, which might be in-person
3. Judicial Committee Andrew Teodorescu o/b/o Mike Kremen
- Supreme Court admissions – goal is a maximum group of 12 to go through the SCOTUS admissions process, but that has been closed due to the pandemic
  - Joe Mazel spoke with Mike Kremen and the admissions office at SCOTUS and confirmed that the Court is still closed to anyone other than counsel arguing, but that the Court hopes to begin accepting ceremony date requests for “small group admissions” in January 2022 with the actual admission ceremonies occurring during the Court’s October 2022 term
  - Generally, we have always selected “small group admissions” (1-12 people), versus larger group admissions (13-50 people), as we have had challenges filling all 12 slots in the past, and the larger group admissions do not include an opportunity to hear oral argument and are not conducting admissions ceremonies until the October 2023 term at the earliest
4. Fundraising Committee Gail Mulligan
- Alumni account balance from May 2021 was \$5,521, comprised almost entirely of contributions by the Board members
  - Members are required to contribute to the alumni fund, and such contributions are separate from any other contributions to the law school
  - Please consider fundraising and programming initiatives for this year; last year the Pass the Bar initiative was specifically adopted and a letter was drafted to share with alumni – please send ideas to Gail before the next Board meeting
5. By-laws Committee Mark Meeker
- Mark and Andrew (former Chair) will discuss ideas, and if anyone has suggestions for amendments to the by-laws please reach out to Mark

## **XII. Special Committee Reports**

1. Diversity Committee George Haddad
- On October 26, 2021, from 1:15-2:00 EST, via Zoom, there will be a student panel on Diversity, Equity - everyone is encouraged to join, and the Panel coincides with Social Justice Week at the University
2. Student Engagement Andrew Teodorescu o/b/o Mike Kremen
- To the extent that anyone is interested in getting involved in the Committee, please reach out to Andrew

## **XIII. Adjournment**

Executive Committee

- Motion: Leanne Shofi
- Second: Patricia Bisesto
- Time: 7:53 p.m.