

## **Alumni Association Board of Directors**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, January 20, 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; 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; Michael Goldstein, Esq. '06; Jennifer Gray, Esq. '06; George Haddad, Esq. '15; Adele Lerman Janow, Esq. '90; Sameera Ansari Kalra, Esq. '09; Michael Kremen, Esq. '08; Hon. Carole Levy '83 (Dir. Em.); Caesar Lopez, Esq. '12; Benjamin Lowenthal, Esq. '14; Joseph Mazel, Esq. '97; Mark Meeker, Esq. '09; Joseph Moravec, Esq. '17; Gail Mulligan, Esq. '09; John Mulligan, Esq. '88; Susan Mulliken, Esq. '11; Diana Neeves, Esq. '16; Jacqueline Parker, Esq. '95; Nicholas Pasalides, Esq. '11; Raymond Perez, Esq. '00; Thomas Persico, Esq. '18; Christopher Psihoules, Esq. '12; Leanne Shofi, Esq. '94;
- Excused:** James Lenihan, Esq. '91; Joseph Martin, Esq. '91 (Dir. Em.); Andrew Teodorescu, Esq. '13
- Unexcused:** Rebecca Gigliotti, Esq. '18; Judson Siebert, Esq. '85;
- Added attendees:** Dean Horace Anderson; Arianne Andrusco, Director of Development and Alumni Relations; Angela D'Agostino, Dean of Students; Jill Backer, Assistant Dean of Career and Professional Development; Lori Kanner, Development Officer; Danielle Kocal, Director of Academic Success

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

**MEETING QUORUM:** Quorum met at 6:30 p.m. with 24 Directors in attendance (Zoom/Telephonic)

#### **I. Welcome and Introductory Remarks**

Mark Meeker

- Congratulations to Michael Goldstein for having his letter to the editor published in the Wall Street Journal – *How to Address the Doctor Shortage*
- Happy January birthdays
- Excel spreadsheet distributed to Board contains tabs regarding:
  - 2020-21 Academic Year Attendance
  - Contact info
  - Committees
  - Contribution tracker

## II. Board Membership

Lisa Gladwell

- 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. November 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Leanne Shofi

- Approved via email on November 13, 2020 by 18 Directors
- Posted to the PLS web site: <https://law.pace.edu/alumni/alumni-association>

## IV. Career Development

Jill Backer

- Update on employment and career placements
- Email was sent today to approximately 300 employers hoping they will hire for summer, the pandemic is affecting this summer's employment opportunities more than last summer
  - 8 employers so far have responded, hopefully we will cultivate some more
  - Anyone you know who is seeking a summer law clerk, please contact Jill
- Class of 2020 doing well under the pandemic and Bar circumstances, about 78% employed
- Approximately 20 graduates who have passed the Bar are still seeking positions, and graduates who did not pass the Bar are also seeking opportunities
- Office is very busy
- The potential for offering course credit in connection with opportunities in the private sector was discussed, and will be further considered and discussed
- Jill will distribute information and guidance regarding virtual internships; one benefit of the pandemic is that students can work remotely in an internship anywhere in the country

## V. Dean's Update

Dean Anderson

- Recapping the Fall semester – worked hard to convert classes to remote and then hybrid, and preparing students for the Bar – alumni were a huge help supporting the students – one of the great things about this law school is its work ethic to get through a difficult situation and do great work
- Admissions report on behalf of Cathy Alexander: the school has been recruiting for a January 2021 start, and is having a very good year– this was the largest January class since the half-year January start program was begun - usually the program sees incoming students in the high 20s, but this January 39 students are in the program, and they have strong LSATs and GPAs; all indications are that recruiting for the Fall will be strong, applications are up 30% and the staff is working overtime to attract applicants
- Staff have been reconfiguring the campus to focus the law school on one part of the campus and improve the school's budget by sharing portions of the campus with the University – the law school is selling 3 houses on Crane Avenue (previously used to house various clinics which have moved or will move), making buildings available to the University which will help defray costs
- The Law School will work with the University Provost to potentially bring other graduate programs onto the campus, creating synergies and potentially dual-degree programs
- Patricia Bisesto mentioned, as the parent of a 1L, that the faculty and staff have just been terrific
- The Board and other Alumni are encouraged to speak with the Dean regarding any ideas to strengthen the school and community

## **VI. Dean of Students**

Angie D'Agostino

- It has been a journey, nothing could have prepared the staff and faculty for what the school has gone through during the last 10 months of the pandemic, but the community really came together
- Taking the lead on COVID, Angie has worked very closely with University partners across every discipline to ensure that the law students are supported by the University, particularly because law students are distinct from the undergraduate population in demographics, etc., and have different needs
- The School has used the Doubletree Hotel for quarantines, and currently 6 students are in quarantine there
- Students are rapid tested before entering residence halls, and must submit a negative PCR test; every resident is tested every week, and students must comply or they will have to leave campus for safety reasons; the current 54 residents are far fewer than usual, translating to a large hit in revenue
- Over 50 programs were offered last year via Zoom, including weekly programs to keep students engaged, and money was raised through Zoom programming to help needy community members
- The PLEAS fund continues to help students most affected by the pandemic
- Angie's goal is to ensure that students make it through this challenging time, and the alumni community is thanked for its support
- The School is committed to a center for wellness on the campus; it has identified the space, and is working to find ways to fund a nurse's station to provide healthcare on site, a meditation room, and a lactation room
- Legal writing faculty have been moved to the library, creating a Center for Legal Writing in the library
- The School is looking into various ways to create an attractive and more functional outdoor space for the community.

## **VII. Academic Success**

Danielle Kocal

- Fall Bar Exam – Bar is usually in July, in May it was changed to September and then it was changed to October, on-line, and half the normal exam; these difficult circumstances yielded a lower than usual 65% pass rate for first-time takers, affected in part by students taking non-NY Bars they had not expected to sit for initially; students who were already struggling really struggled as the Bar went online
- Alumni Mentor Program – worked well for students who were responsive to their mentors – if interested in mentoring, please let Danielle know
- Current students are now prepping for a fully online exam and a full bar exam, so there should be fewer surprises this year

## **VIII. Development & Alumni Relations**

Lori Kanner

- Planning a virtual 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Law Leadership event for this year, March 25, 2021, the main fundraising event for the law school, which will honor Virginia Wong '93, posthumous honorees, CLE, and the first ever rising star awards (for alumni leaders who graduated in the last 15 years)
- Thousands of alumni have engaged through the alumni programming that has been online since March
- Raised half a million dollars from 300+ donors, the increase in donors is likely due to increased outreach
- Successfully completed a challenge grant, raising \$10K for PLEAS and Environmental Law Clinic, match fundraisers are very effective so if you have an idea for a match challenge fundraiser, please bring it to Lori's attention

- Just notified of a \$100K PLAN gift from an alumnus
- Have received tremendous feedback from the Board's support of quarantined students in Dannat Hall

## IX. Committee Reports

### 1. Nominating Committee

Mike Frankel

- April 14, 2021 is the next Board Meeting, will present a slate to the Board prior to that; 8 individuals are interested, 3 are definite, we may have a slate up to 10 - if anyone knows of alumni who might be interested, please let Mike know as the slate will be finalized this month
- To those 12 Board members' whose terms are expiring, please let Mike know if you are interested in renewing or not renewing
- During the April 14, 2021 Board meeting the Board will vote on the slate of nominees

### 2. Social Committee

Jeremy Farrington

- PLAN's Quarterly Networking Event #39 is scheduled for Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom, RSVP will be circulated (January is usually the large NYC PLAN event, which unfortunately cannot be held live due to the pandemic)
- Alumni Matt Donovan has been contacted to see if he wants to play a few songs

### 3. Judicial Committee

Mike Kremen

- Work on the Spring hybrid CLE/Networking program with Judges is on-going
- Board members should have seen an e-mail in December asking for help sponsoring or finding sponsors for the program, so that the event can be free for alumni and students
  - We have not made much progress in that regard
  - If you have an idea on how we can make this event worth spending university resources (Zoom accounts, staff time, etc.), please share with our committee
  - Goal in sponsorship is in the \$2,500 range, but it could be lower or higher - Pat Bisesto committed to a \$500 sponsorship
- We previously set March 23, 2021 as the date, but because the Law Leadership Program is scheduled for March 25, 2021 the program will likely move to early April

### 4. Fundraising Committee

Gail Mulligan

- Board member contributions – spreadsheet shows contributions to date, received \$2,325 for this year, rollover of \$5,550, pledged gift cards to students quarantined (\$360), total \$7,415 – if anything seems incorrect on the spreadsheet, please let Gail or Lori know – a gentle reminder to Board Members that have not yet contributed to please contribute
- Update on the Fundraising Letter for the Pass the Bar Initiative – Letter was finalized in November, thank you if you shared with others, please try to share as appropriate including on social media, fundraising is still needed for the project

### 5. By-laws Committee

Sameera Kalra (for Andrew Teodorescu)

- Recap of committee meeting that discussed improvements to the by-laws
- Discussion of potential change to member absence policy – Board Members should strive to attend every meeting, but the decision was made to not change the current policy at this time

## **X. Special Committees**

- **Committee for Student Engagement** Mike Kremen
  - Final name pending
  - Inspired by our Board's assistance of the quarantined dorm students, the idea is to work with Admissions, Career Development, and Student Life to find opportunities for the Board to more regularly engage with future alumni (mock interviews, mentoring, etc., to help students and the law school succeed)
  - If anyone else would like to Chair or get involved in this Committee, please let Mike know
- **Diversity and Inclusion Committee** George Haddad
  - Tasked with helping identify the Board's / Law School's strengths, issues, and opportunities regarding D&I
  - Develop strategies and plans to improve the D&I of the Board / Law School
  - Implement those strategies and plans
  - Reaching out to staff and leaders to ask how the Board can help with D&I
  - Pat Bisesto: reached out to Prof. Atwell who is on the Diversity Committee for the Law School, who said she would be happy to assist; perhaps guest speakers from the field could be brought in to speak at events
  - If interested in getting involved, please let Pat and/or George know

## **XI. New Business**

- The next Board meeting is Wednesday, April 14, 2021
- Mark's second two-year term as President ends this Summer, and he will not seek another term as President - if anyone is interested in filling that role, please consider and speak with others so that the important role can be filled

## **XII. Adjournment**

Executive Committee

- Motion: Mike Kremen
- Second: Sandra Forster
- Time: 7:32 p.m.