“Our vision is to become Michigan’s preeminent law school preparing diverse lawyer leaders to serve diverse communities in Michigan and beyond!”

— Linda Sheryl Greene
Dean and MSU Foundation Professor of Law
It is a pleasure to present my second annual report as Dean of Michigan State University College of Law. Since January 1, 2020, when we became a full constituent college of Michigan State University, we have been building on the promise that inspired that transition. We have successfully completed the American Bar Association accreditation review, and the American Association of Law Schools renewed our membership. Our 2022 incoming class was one of the most diverse in a quarter century, and our 2023 entering class will be another class of opportunity. We expect students from 32 states + Washington, D.C., many of whom are first generation college students and who will be the first lawyers in their families. We have launched our new pathway pipeline program which will light the road to our law school for young people in elementary and high school. It is never too early to reach out to talented young people and
introduce them to the opportunities law provides to make people’s dreams come true. We will complete our Phase 2 strategic plan which will map the overall future for the College of Law over the next 10 years. We look forward to sharing the ambitious plan with you this fall.

This report summarizes the College of Law’s accomplishments from July 2022-June 2023. These accomplishments are the result of collaboration among our faculty, staff, and students. We also owe a debt of gratitude to former President Samuel Stanley and to Interim President Teresa Woodruff and Interim Provost Thomas Jeitschko. I also want to thank our supportive alumni, our generous donors, and the many employers who value our talented graduates. As you read these many accomplishments, I know that you will share my fervent conviction that the best is yet to come for MSU College of Law.
The class of 2025 is one of the most inclusive and diverse in our history and we are poised this fall to bring in an ever more inclusive class – one that we’re calling our “Class of Opportunity.” These are first-generation college students, first-generation lawyers, veterans, groups under-represented in law, and so many more. By preparing this new generation of lawyers, we can offer the services necessary to those in need while providing new pathways to success.

Foundations Week 2022 marked the official launch of the Dean’s Fellows Program for 23 exemplary incoming students. We designed this program to bring together students from the class of 2025 who have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement and a special interest in one of four important areas: Leadership, Transactional Law, Public Service, and Civil Rights/Social Justice.

We remain firmly on track and committed to the inclusivity that will prove so important to so many people around the country and the world. It is a great challenge but one we are anxious to accept.
MSU College of Law is pleased to launch the Pathway Scholars Program (PSP) this fall – a program designed to prepare students for successful admission to law school, success in law school, and entry into the legal profession. This 24-month program is supported by a grant from the AccessLex Institute Diversity Pipeline Intervention Grant Program combined with MSU Law’s own investment. It is open to college students and recent graduates who plan to attend law school in the fall of 2025 and offers students numerous important opportunities. They include participating in a four-week summer immersion program; exploring the role lawyers play in society and the advancement of social justice; gaining insight on applying to and financing law school; and being a part of a transformative educational experience at no cost.
Our faculty is comprised of leading scholars at the forefront of many of the most important teaching and scholarship about law in society.

SEEKING WAYS TO PREVENT EATING DISORDERS
Professor Nancy Costello, director of the MSU College of Law First Amendment Clinic, led a legal research team for a project spearheaded by the Harvard University-based Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders.

The program was launched in 2009 and is based at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Professor Costello is a collaborative member on the project with the goal of building a transdisciplinary training initiative that will generate professionals with the depth and range of expertise and skills needed to take on the challenge of eating disorders prevention.

PROFESSOR GROSSO ELECTED TO AMERICAN LAW INSTITUTE
In July 2021, the prestigious American Law Institute elected Professor Catherine Grosso as a new member, recognizing her scholarship in the role of race and other extralegal factors in criminal investigations, trials, and the administration of capital punishment. She teaches criminal procedure, capital punishment law, and a seminar on criminal juries.

CELEBRATING WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH AT THE WHITE HOUSE
Professor Veronica Thronson, who leads our Immigration Law Clinic, was a special guest at an invitation-only event at the White House. She participated in this year’s celebration of Women’s History Month hosted by First Lady Jill Biden.

PROFESSOR PRESENTS PAPER AT HARVARD LAW SCHOOL PRIVATE LAW WORKSHOP
Calling it “a highlight of my career,” Professor David Blankfein-Tabachnick presented a paper on the relationship between the principles of the renowned legal and political philosopher John Rawls and private law. The paper was titled “Taxing the Tort/Crime Divide” and was well received at the workshop, one of the most prestigious in the country. “It was a wonderful opportunity to show the world the work being done at MSU,” he said.
INDIGENOUS LAW AND POLICY

The issues facing indigenous peoples in Michigan, around the country, and around the world have grown in notoriety and scope. MSU College of Law is a nationally recognized defender of these rights, especially for Native Americans.

The Indigenous Law and Policy Center, under the direction of Professor Wenona Singel, is a nationally recognized center of excellence. It is one of the few indigenous law certificate programs in the United States.

This year, the Center hosted a conversation with Bryan Newland, the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs for the U.S. Department of Interior. An enrolled member of the Bay Mills Indian Community and the 14th Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, he is a Michigan State University alumnus and one of the first graduates of MSU’s College of Law’s Indigenous Law Certificate Program in 2007.

As well, MSU Indian Law Clinic, led by Professor Kate Fort, received a $200,000 grant from the Henry Luce Foundation to fund a Tribal Appellate Clerk Project for the next 18 months. Under the program, the Clinic will assign students to client tribal appellate courts to assist with research, memo writing, bench briefs, and draft opinions.

The grant also allowed the Indian Law Clinic to hire Saza Osawa (Makah), who was the head of the Office of Reservation Attorney for the Tulalip Tribes, as Indian Law Clinic Fellow. The Tulalip Tribes operate one of the largest and busiest tribal courts in the country, providing the Clinic a base in the Pacific Northwest to continue working with tribes there as well as across the country.

The College of Law’s Commitment to Indigenous Law and Policy was made clear on June 15, 2023 when the Supreme Court, in the case of Brackeen v. Haaland argued by Professor Fort, ruled 7-2 in favor of the Indian Child Welfare Act. It left in force a federal law governing the placement of Native American children in foster or adoptive home. It is a ruling that will resonate for years.
MSU COLLEGE OF LAW: A LEADER IN ETHICS
Since April 2021, I have co-lead the Deans’ Ethics Leadership Team. In addition, our faculty, including Associate Professor Jennifer Carter-Johnson and Assistant Professor Justin Simard have provided campus-wide faculty leadership. This spring, Professor Carter-Johnson and Professor Simard participated as moderators at a campus leadership retreat and I joined a panel on women, deans, and philanthropy at the Women’s Philanthropy Institute sponsored by MSU University Advancement.

SIXTH CIRCUIT APPELLATE ADVOCACY EVENT
MSU College of Law and the Western District of Michigan Chapter of the Federal Bar Association co-hosted the “Sixth Circuit Appellate Advocacy from the Judges and the Pros.” It featured Senior Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit David McKeague and circuit judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit Judge Joan Larsen. It was open to students, faculty, and staff who had the opportunity to connect with renowned judges and advocates.

COMMENCEMENT FEATURES CHIEF JUDGE SEAN F. COX
In May, we welcomed as our Commencement Speaker the Honorable Judge Sean F. Cox, who serves as Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. A native of Detroit, Judge Cox earned his bachelor of general studies from the University of Michigan and his Juris Doctor from what was then the Detroit College of Law, now the Michigan State College of Law.

MICHIGAN STATE SUPREME COURT JUSTICES VISIT
The Michigan Law Review invited three Michigan Supreme Court Justices to speak at the College of Law before approximately 50 MSU Law students. Chief Justice Elizabeth Clement, ’02; Justice Elizabeth Welch, and Justice Megan Cavanagh spoke about career paths and how proper guidance and advice can help find success in the legal field.
LEADING THE CONVERSATION ON DIVERSITY

I was proud and honored to be invited to speak at two important events on the subject of diversity:

In October, I joined a panel of Michigan deans speaking at the National Association of Women Judges Annual Conference in Detroit. The subject was “Building Pathways to the Legal Profession and the Judiciary.” The College of Law was also pleased to host a reception for the women judges in Detroit.

In December, I spoke at the Leon Higginbotham Lecture at the University of Pennsylvania on the topic titled, “The Future of Diversity in Higher Education,” and traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa, for the conference “Reckoning With the Past, Constitutional Transformation and Ubuntu” at the University of Johannesburg. I spoke on “Diversity and the Judiciary in the United States and South Africa.”

PREPARING OUR LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

Hala Jarbou, U.S. District Court Chief Judge for the Western District of Michigan, was featured as one of the three judges who presided over the 1L Final Oral Arguments last April at MSU College of Law. Oral arguments are one of many competitions that are offered at the college and allow students to showcase their skills and knowledge within a courtroom setting in front of peers and faculty.

Judge Jarbou was nominated by former President Donald Trump in March of 2020 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate on September 10, 2020. In 2022, Jarbou became chief judge of the court. Previously, she was a judge on the 6th Circuit Court in Michigan from 2015 to 2020, appointed by former Governor Rick Snyder.

EXPUNGEMENT FAIR PROVES A GREAT SUCCESS

The College of Law’s first-ever Expungement Fair, an event created by students to help people gain eligibility to remove certain offenses from the permanent record, was held in January and drew more than 200 people. It was a dramatic and exciting opportunity for students to develop their law skills and the turnout was far more than anyone expected. Plans are in the works to hold a second event in academic year 2023-2024.
Our students continue to demonstrate their excellence, fortitude, and scholarship as they look to a world that, in many ways, will be vastly changed from when they entered law school. But they will be ready as the College of Law will help them look ahead, ask tough questions, develop thorough answers, and take what they learned here to make the world a better, most compassionate place.

GENDER AND SEXUALITY MOOT COURT A SUCCESS

In March, MSU College of Law co-hosted its Second Annual Gender and Sexuality Moot Court Competition with 20 law colleges from around the country taking part in the virtual event. Teams prepared a written brief and each team participated in three preliminary rounds of arguments before the field was narrowed to eight teams. MSU Law is one of only two ABA-approved law schools to offer a moot court opportunity for students interested in Gender, Sexuality, and the Law. Several other Gender and Sexuality Moot Court teams also enjoyed success this academic year.

More Moot Court Successes

Semifinalists of the prestigious 73rd annual National Moot Court Competition in New York City. It was MSU’s best showing there in more than 20 years.

Second-place oralist at Houston Law’s National Moot Court Championship.

Winners of the Burton D. Wechsler National First Amendment Moot Court in Washington, D.C.

Finished in the top 10 in the Billings, Exum & Frye National Moot Court Competition in Constitutional Law in Greensboro, N.C.

Placed second for a brief at the virtual E. Earle Zehmer National Moot Court Competition in Workers’ Compensation Law.

Congratulations to all of the competitors and thank you to Professors Jennifer Copland, Heather Johnson, and Nancy Costello, and coach David Sheafer for their strong guidance.
Students from the College of Law went to Cass Technical High School in Detroit April 18 to engage young people in conversations about race, policing, and the Fourth Amendment as part of “Know Your Rights Day”

**“KNOW YOUR RIGHTS DAY” AT CASS TECH A GREAT LEARNING EXPERIENCE**

The Dean and more than 40 volunteer students, faculty, and staff traveled to Cass Technical High School in Detroit to engage young people in conversations about race, policing, and the Fourth Amendment when dealing with law enforcement. It was a learning experience not only for the high school students but for the College of Law students as well. “It felt good to know we were giving them information that they can use in their day-to-day lives,” said Brittany Macaddino, ’23. This event has been held several times over the years, both in person and virtually, and plans are in the works to continue it this academic year.

**CITING SLAVERY PROJECT CONTINUES IMPORTANT WORK**

MSU College of Law professor Justin Simard, along with his student research team, hosted an open house. During the event, they highlighted their work and findings surrounding courts citing slave cases during their own hearings and how it impacts the legal field. This project has provided opportunities for MSU Law students to engage in this scholarly work to help reshape the way people address the legacy of slavery in the legal system. As part of the Citing Slavery Project’s Educational Outreach initiative, MSU Law hosted Ferndale High School students in April. The visit included a tour of the law school, a glimpse at the study of law, and the history of the Citing Slavery Project.

**JAPAN SUMMER PROGRAM CONTINUES TO ENJOY SUCCESS**

In May, I joined students participating in the Japan summer program at Doshisha University Law School in Kyoto, Japan. Professor Frank Ravitch began teaching a summer program at Doshisha University Law School in 2009 and has continued it every summer since. Over 25 students from MSU College of Law and other law schools attended the 2023 summer program.

While in Japan, I had the opportunity to visit Chuo University in the city of Hachioji, where I spent time teaching over 30 years ago. I was able to meet with Professor Nobuyuki Sato, Professor of Comparative Constitutional Law and Vice President of the University. He is in charge of educational development, social and public relations, and sustainable development. He was also my first Japanese research assistant when I initially taught at Chuo and gave me the opportunity to present Fair Affirmative Action cases for his class while in attendance.

**MICHIGAN ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFERS ADVICE IN TOWN HALL**

Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel held a town hall style “Social Justice Conversation” before an audience of more than 50 students in the MSU Moot Courtroom. During the 45-minute Q&A session, law students asked questions ranging from LGBTQ and transgender rights to federal overreach to crime and police responsibility. She spoke about the numerous issues the state dealt with after the 2020 Presidential election, ranging from alleged voter fraud to absentee ballot confusion to ongoing legal battles from supporters of former President Donald Trump.
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Rory Wheeler, ’25, received the Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Native American Congressional Internship. The program provides American Indian and Alaska Native students with the opportunity to gain practical experience with the federal legislative process to understand first-hand the government-to-government relationship between Tribes and the federal government.

Nicholas Langenberg, ’25, pictured above, was crowned as the top oralist and placed first in writing the best brief. 1Ls presented their final oral arguments before 6th Circuit Court of Appeals Judge David McKeague, U.S. District Court Chief Judge for the Western District of Michigan Hala Jarbou, and Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Brock Swartzle.

Breanna Bollig, ’23, was the recipient of a 2023 Equal Justice Works Design-Your-Own Fellowship, one of the most prestigious and competitive postgraduate legal fellowships in the country. Breanna will be working with the California Tribal Families Coalition over the course of two years on a project empowering tribes and tribal families to provide trauma-informed education advocacy for tribal children in California’s child welfare system.

Taylor Mills, ’23, won the Carolyn Stell Award from Mid-Michigan Chapter of the Women Lawyers Association of Michigan. This scholarship provides financial assistance to deserving female law school students, enabling them to apply, study for, and pass the Michigan Bar Examination, and to gain admission to the State Bar of Michigan.
WHO WE ARE: LEADING THE CONVERSATION

DEAN’S SPEAKERS SERIES: 2022-23
ETHICS, LAW, AND SOCIETY

For our second annual Dean’s Speakers Series, I was thrilled and honored that the Michigan State College of Law was able to welcome four distinguished legal thinkers. These speakers’ whose diversity and experience offered our audiences a well-rounded and educational view of the ethics of law and its impact on society.

Our first guest speaker was Professor Anita L. Allen, the Henry A. Silverman Professor of Law from the University of Pennsylvania Carey Law School. Her topic was “Reimagining Ethics in Legal Education” and how ethics, philosophy, and privacy all intersect in teaching the law.

Our next guest speaker was Bernadette Atuahene, James E. Jones Jr. Professor of Law at the University of Wisconsin Law School. She spoke on “Law, Ethics and Predatory Governments.”

The series continued with Professor Myles Lynk, the Peter Kiewet Foundation of Law, Emeritus, at Arizona State University and the former senior assistant disciplinary counsel for the Washington, D.C. Office of Disciplinary Counsel. His topic was “The Divided Self: Ethical Tensions in Lawyering.”

Our final speaker in the series was Trisha Rich, a partner at Holland & Knight in Chicago. She spoke on the subject of “Ethics and the Global Law Firm” and how lawyers can and must find ways to overcome ethical lapses to provide the best service possible.

DEAN’S SPEAKER SERIES 2023-24
Preparations are well under way for the third year of our Dean’s Speaker Series this fall: Artificial Intelligence, Law, and Society.
NEW FACULTY AT MSU COLLEGE OF LAW

Two new members will join us for the 2023-24 academic year. Each bring a new and important area of scholarship to our students.

Professor Stephen Wilks returns to the MSU College of Law (where he taught from 2019-21) after teaching last fall at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. He will teach contracts, business enterprises, and sales and leases. He has also taught at Case Western University School of Law in Ohio, Valparaiso University Law School in Indiana, and Lincoln Memorial University Duncan School of Law in Tennessee. He earned his J.D. from Queen’s University in Canada and his Master of Laws and Ph.D. from the Osgoode Hall Law School at Toronto’s York University.

Mary Harokopus joins us after her most recent stint as visiting Associate Professor of Law at Mercer University School of Law in Texas. She will teach research, writing, and advocacy. She earned her Master’s in Science in Engineering from the University of Michigan and her J.D. from the MSU College of Law. She has been an associate professor at the University of North Texas at Dallas College of Law. She has also worked as an engineer at Ford Motor Company’s Environmental Compliance Group and, after moving to Texas, she opened her own law firm and was an adjunct teaching legal writing.
NEW STAFF LEADERS

I am pleased to note six important additions to our staff leadership. They joined us in the 2022-23 academic year.

Kimberly Wilkes was appointed Director of Admissions and Financial Aid last fall, overseeing and implementing all aspects of admissions from recruitment to application processing. Having earned her BA and MA from MSU, she fosters an MSU Law community built on collaboration and inclusivity. She has been a member of the MSU Law family since 2012.

Audra Foster is our Director of Pipeline Programming and leads the development and implementation of the program as part of the College’s commitment to expanding access to students who historically have been underrepresented in the legal profession. She previously served twenty-five years in academic administration and student services roles. There, she designed and implemented programs for academic success and career development including programs focused on historically underrepresented students who had not previously considered a career in law.

Jacqueline Kontry, an attorney and long-time development professional, was appointed Senior Director of Development in January. She is developing and implementing a campaign strategy for the MSU campaign, focusing on engaging diverse alumni and securing major gifts for the law college’s strategic priorities. Jacqueline came from the University of Illinois Chicago School of Law where she served as Associate Director of Development and Assistant Director of Individual Giving.

Genevieve Fischere joined the College of Law on April 12 as our new Assistant Director of Admissions. Genevieve is an East Lansing native and joins us from the Michigan Department of Insurance and Financial Services where she was an administrative law specialist for the Office of General Counsel – Enforcement. She is passionate about the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion and expanding pathways to education.

Kelly Melle joined on April 18 as my new executive staff assistant. Kelly came to the College of Law from the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) Bureau of Health Care Services where she served most recently as Communications and Litigation Specialist. Prior to that, she held many roles throughout the Department of Corrections since 1999, including Michigan Prison Re-Entry Initiative Departmental Analyst, Executive Secretary and Litigation Coordinator in the Health Care Services, and Secretary at the Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility.

Alana Glass joined us very recently, June 26, as our new Assistant Dean of Career Service. Alana brings years of law school career service experience, deep connections to the Michigan legal, business, and philanthropic communities, and a shared commitment to diversifying the legal profession. She comes to us from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan where she was the Director of Project Play, a youth sports initiative working to build a Southeast Michigan community where all children have equitable access to physical activity.
IN SUMMARY
Now that you have reviewed the report, you know why I am so excited to begin my third year as Dean of this Law School. We are recruiting amazing students and beginning to reach into high schools and elementary schools to be sure that the pathway to legal education is well lit. We have amazing faculty who are nationally and internationally recognized for their work in subjects from intellectual property, administrative law, freedom of speech, Indigenous law and policy, and criminal law. After the interruption of Covid, we are reconstructing our legal community with in-person programs for our students that engage distinguished federal and state judges, as well as private and public sector lawyers.

Our students are growing into lawyer leaders. They continue to excel in advocacy; hosting the second annual gender and sexuality moot court competition in which 20 colleges from around the country participated; succeeding in National moot court competitions in New York City, Washington, D.C., Greensboro, North Carolina; and winning prizes in virtual competitions as well. A number of our students received nationally coveted Honors. The students are concerned about social justice, organizing an expungement fair that provided services to people who needed to remove offenses from their permanent records, and also teaching high school students in inner-city Detroit about race, policing, and the Fourth Amendment. They met with the Michigan Attorney General to discuss social justice and the practice of public law. We continue to lead conversations that include our faculty, staff, and students on issues of major import. This past year we focused on Ethics, Law, and Society during the Dean’s Speaker Series. We turn to the topic of Artificial Intelligence, Law, and Society next fall. You can expect to learn about both ChatGPT, as well as algorithmic bias during this upcoming series. We hope you will join us for those conversations. With your support and your involvement, the best is yet to come for MSU law.

Please join us on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook to follow our programs and stay updated on our successes.

Warmly,

LINDA SHERYL GREENE
Dean and MSU Foundation Professor of Law
“I’m honored because I’m a proud graduate of this great law school and have tremendous respect for MSU’s record of producing excellent lawyers who lead, change, and transform lives.”

— Judge Sean F. Cox,
Chief Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan