



# SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

March 21, 2023

Dear Friends,

In this season of Ramadan and Lent, leading to Eid al-Fitr, Passover, and Easter, our law school community is answering the call to be “contemplatives in action”—to emerge from deep reflection to take concrete steps for the common good. We have been, and will continue to be, guided in our efforts by the examples of selfless almsgiving set by so many of our alumni, faculty, staff-educators, students, and community partners. In today's message, I wish to draw your attention to just a few of our heroic leaders who have devoted their time, talent, and tenacity to the pursuit of racial, immigration, gender, and economic justice.



**First, the remarkable Thiadora (Dori) Pina, who was recently appointed as our senior director for diversity, equity, and inclusion, will lead Santa Clara Law—one of the most diverse law schools in the country**—as we implement our plan to increase the enrollment, retention, success, and belonging of underrepresented students, staff-educators, and faculty. In 2022, the law school enrolled an exceptionally diverse and talented class of students, 57% of whom identified as persons of color and 22% as first-generation students. With Dori's strong leadership, we will all work together with intentionality to go beyond performative gestures and take concrete comprehensive action to achieve our strategic objective of making our law school community even more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

**Second, members of our faculty, administrative team, and students gave up their spring break to travel to the southern border to participate in the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project in Tucson and the Kino Border Initiative in Mexico.** Our extraordinary students—Mahlieli Bothi, Jonathan Cineas, Samantha Enriquez, Cassandra Mariscal, Michelle Ramirez, Yun Sun, Swathi Sreeragarajan, and Josephine Velazquez — accompanied clients experiencing trauma, engaged in case rounds with Florence staff, observed Know Your Rights and detainee counseling presentations, toured the border wall, addressed persistent policy challenges, witnessed removal proceedings in Immigration Court, and completed important policy and representation projects. Tremendous thanks go to Evangeline Abriel, Britton Schwartz, Lynette Parker, and Caitlin Jachimowicz who worked so hard to make this transformative service-learning experience possible.

**Third, this evening we will present to the incredible [Tara Berta the 2023 Katharine and George Alexander Law Prize](#).** Thanks to the vision and generosity of Suzi and Chip Alexander and the entire Alexander Family, the law school is able to award this prestigious prize each year to a member of the community who carries on the legacy of Katharine and George Alexander’s commitment to justice and service to humanity. Great thanks to this year’s Alexander Prize Selection Committee, including co-chairs, Deborah Moss-West and Sue Guan, and members Scott Mauer, Lynette Parker, Francisco Rivera Juaristi, and Teresa Kopriva. Their wise selection allows us to honor Tara Berta’s extraordinary and selfless work, providing direct legal services and policy changes on behalf of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking survivors, and their children.

**Fourth, on Wednesday, March 29, Santa Clara Law will host Matthew Desmond, professor of sociology at Princeton University, McArthur Genius Award winner, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Evicted*, to discuss his widely-acclaimed new book, *Poverty, By America*, [in which he presents a powerful argument about why poverty persists in America](#).** In his momentous book, Matt challenges us to move out of our comfort zone and consider our complicity in the persistence of the nation’s extraordinary levels of poverty. He shows us that: “Poverty isn’t simply the condition of not having enough money. It’s the condition of not having enough choice and being taken advantage of because of that.” We hope that all members of our community within and surrounding the University can join us for this important discussion. The event is free and open to the public. [Visit the event page for more information and to register.](#)

Over the course of the year, Santa Clara Law has presented prominent authors for book discussions and Q&As with our community, as we work together—inspired by leaders like Matt Desmond, Tara Berta, Dori Pina, and our faculty and students who participated in the border project—to design solutions to our most complex social problems and build a more just, humane, and sustainable world.

With warm regards and great gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael J. Kaufman (He/Him/His)  
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