



## SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

March 7, 2023

Dear Friends,

Our extraordinary Center for Social Justice and Public Service held its extremely successful and joyous annual Benefit for Justice Celebration and Auction last Friday evening. The Benefit brought together Santa Clara Law students, staff-educators, faculty, and alumni to lift up the social justice work being done at the law school and to raise funds for the Center's vital summer stipend program.



Special thanks to the Honorable Shelyna Brown, who delivered a powerful and inspiring keynote address. A 1996 graduate of our law school who served for more than a decade as a revered judge on the Superior Court of Santa Clara County and who has won numerous public service awards, Judge Brown eloquently expressed the overriding importance of public interest work and advised the students to stay true to their fundamental values and their unique purpose. In that spirit, three of our students—Kyle Calzia, Isabel Harris, and Jason Cowan—spoke beautifully at the event about their summer public interest work, expressing their gratitude for the service opportunities made possible by the funds raised.

As our incredible students and Judge Brown suggested, Santa Clara Law's steadfast dedication to social justice and public interest is needed now more than ever. There is a wide justice gap in California and throughout the country. A staggering 85% of the people who encountered serious legal problems in areas of basic human need like health, housing, or employment reported that they received no adequate legal representation. At the same time, although about 25% of law students begin their legal education seeking to practice public interest law, only 13% of those students graduate from law school still aspiring to do so. This public interest career "drift" is caused primarily by the lack of financial support for public interest jobs, which in turn means that most of the people who need legal services do not receive them.

Under the remarkable leadership of Faculty Director Vangie Abriel and Director Caitlin Jachimowicz, our Center for Social Justice works hard to close that justice gap. The Center provides a pathway of practice, education, counseling, advocacy, and resources for students who are called to pursue a rewarding career in public service law. The Center's Benefit raises funds to support students who will use their Santa Clara legal education to represent the members of our human family whose legal needs would otherwise go unmet.

I am so grateful to our student leaders who organized this wonderful event, particularly Benefit Chair Alicia Hacker, as well as Alexia Torres, Annaliese Parker, Jason Cowan, Eamon Condon, Garrett Clark, Chelsey Jordan, Molly Karasick, Kumail Aslam, and our musicians, Eamon Condon, and Gavin Partington.

Great thanks also go to our wonderful community partners and event sponsors: the Jachimowicz Law Group and Hoge Fenton. And of course let's express our gratitude to Kerrie Bindi and Shannon Wang for their great administrative support, to our alumni, faculty, students, and staff-educators who donated fantastic auction items, and to Professor David Yosifon, who led the auction with great humor and panache! It was a wonderful event for Santa Clara Law and for the future of justice!

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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