

STETSON UNIVERSITY

Dean of the College of Law Leadership Profile



College of Law main campus in Gulfport, FL

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This Leadership Profile is intended to provide information about Stetson University and the position of dean of the College of Law. It is designed to assist qualified individuals in assessing their interest.

The Stetson University College of Law

Located in the beautiful Tampa Bay area of Florida, Stetson University College of Law seeks a visionary and innovative dean to join the law school community in its mission to provide future lawyers, judges, and other professionals with the skills and values to improve the legal profession and the world.

Florida's first law school, Stetson University College of Law enjoys national preeminence in trial advocacy, where it has earned a #1 national ranking in *U.S. News & World Report* for 19 of the last 21 years. Stetson is ranked second among law schools for legal writing by *U.S. News & World Report (2019)* and has consistently ranked among the top six legal writing programs since the inception of the Legal Writing rankings. Along with its excellence in advocacy and legal writing, the College of Law boasts a highly successful trial team, moot court, and dispute resolution programs. The College of Law holds regional and national titles in all three fields and was the inaugural recipient of the ABA Competitions Award in 2018.

The College of Law is recognized nationally, and internationally, for leadership in Biodiversity Law, Elder Law, Caribbean Law, Higher Education Law and Policy, International Law, Legal Communication, Social Justice, and Veterans Law. For more than a century, the College of Law has provided the educational foundation for outstanding legal professionals whose contributions to the practice of law has improved the human condition.

An Exceptional Student-Centered Legal Education

Stetson faculty care very deeply about supporting each of the students in their charge. All segments of the College of Law are focused on the student at all times so that the learning process inculcates important values, skills, and practices for the upcoming attorney. These values, skills, and practices include integrity, thorough preparation, listening, and a focused and efficient work ethic. Stetson's student-focused curriculum prepares our graduates to assist clients in problem solving which helps clients achieve their goals. By graduation, students know and understand these qualities which are central to becoming a successful Stetson Lawyer.

Stetson Law, which in 2016 was ranked among the top 20 most diverse law schools and top 25 law schools for Hispanics in the nation, offers each student careful mentoring from exceptional professional faculty, who also serve as trial team and competition coaches. Stetson's faculty members are authors, lawyers, and leaders in their field who have contributed to building the College of Law's global platform. Many are involved nationally and internationally in influential leadership organizations, such as the American Association of Law Schools (AALS), the Legal Writing Institute, the International Bar Association, and many others.

Influencing the Law Community in A Place that Matters

Founded in 1900 in DeLand, Florida, the College of Law relocated to the Tampa/St. Petersburg region in 1954 to take advantage of the tremendous growth and needs there. With state-of-the-art classrooms and courtrooms designed and upgraded with pedagogical effectiveness and student access at their core, the incredible architecture of the main Gulfport campus creates an attractive, historically-compelling home for legal studies. The Dolly & Homer Hand Law Library, which recently celebrated its twentieth anniversary, serves as an advanced legal research center for Stetson faculty and students.

In 2004, Stetson launched the Tampa Law Center at the gateway to downtown Tampa along the Hillsborough River as a developing hub for legal activity in the Tampa Bay area. Select Stetson courses are offered at the Tampa Law Center, which also serves as the Tampa branch of Florida's Second District Court of Appeals.

The greater Tampa Bay area is well positioned for growth, now representing one of the country's 20 fastest growing metro area economies, ranking as one of America's best cities for millennials, and serving a population that is nearly 18% bilingual. In 2018, Tampa was recognized as one of the top 150 expanding metropolitan areas worldwide. The Human Rights Campaign gave the St. Petersburg area its top score (100 out of 100) on the most recent Municipal Equality Index, a reflection of the inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services for LGBTQ people who live and work in the community.

The Unique Position: a leader, an advocate, a visionary

The dean of Stetson's College of Law is primarily responsible for coordinating and implementing a strategic vision in alignment with Stetson University's overall educational mission. The dean has an unusually broad span of leadership and oversight of the college's educational structure, programs and personnel, physical plant, recruitment and admissions, alumni and volunteer networks, and development operations. The dean and college also benefit from the support and resources of Stetson University and its leadership team.

With an annual budget of \$30 million, the College of Law sustains an enrollment close to 900 full and part-time students, 50 full-time and two visiting full-time faculty, and 139 staff. As of the close of Fiscal Year 2018, the College of Law endowment was valued at over \$29 million.

The dean of the College of Law reports to Stetson University's Executive Vice President and Provost (EVPP), and is a member of the EVPP's leadership team. In the current administrative structure, direct reports to this position include multiple associate deans and assistant deans, student support services, College of Law admissions, Bar Prep services, College of Law registrar, and multiple center directors. The dean works closely with the four deans on Stetson's DeLand campus (Arts and Sciences, Business, Library, and Music), as well as with additional key staff in Stetson University's development, facilities, student success, finance and risk management, human resources, information technology, and marketing and communications areas.

Preferred Qualifications and Characteristics

The next dean of the College of Law will demonstrate significant successful leadership experience, a commitment to the College of Law's mission and values, familiarity with legal education, and the ability to cultivate productive relationships in support of the college's strategic priorities. A law degree, record of scholarly achievement, and leadership in the field that warrants appointment at the rank of Professor of Law with tenure is required.

Candidates will demonstrate the following qualifications:

- Collaborative and inclusive leadership style
- Strong budgetary and financial skills
- Ability to articulate the case for Stetson's College of Law to a broad range of audiences
- Enthusiasm and talent for fund raising
- Vision for the future of legal education

Candidates will embody the following personal characteristics:

- Student-centered approach to education
- Well-developed communication and listening skills

- Ability to inspire and bring people together around mutually agreed upon goals
- Ability to make decisions based on thoughtful consideration of input

Candidates will embrace the following core values of the college and university:

- A commitment to diversity and inclusion
- Value for all people, regardless of difference
- Fostering a deeply intertwined and caring community
- Excellence in teaching; participation in scholarship; interest in service to the college, university, and community

Leadership Opportunities and Challenges

Since its inception, Stetson University's College of Law has stood on the leading edge of innovation in legal education, teaching its first trial advocacy course in 1902 and opening the first legal clinic in Florida in 1938. Today, the college embraces this blending of skills, doctrine, and professionalism as the foundation for a rigorous educational experience that both serves the community and produces responsible lawyers dedicated to a better society.

Mission, Vision, and Values of the College of Law

Stetson University College of Law provides a dynamic and supportive scholarly community in which students learn, in and outside the classroom and by example and experience, to become outstanding lawyers and leaders who serve the profession and society. Stetson University College of Law strives to be a diverse and selective law school whose faculty and students will have a meaningful and far-reaching impact on the law, the profession and society.

At its core, Stetson University College of Law is committed to providing students with a transformative educational experience; instilling professionalism, ethics, civility, mutual respect, and integrity; developing a vibrant and dynamic intellectual community; and promoting access to justice.

Stetson's new dean of the College of Law will embrace the mission, vision, and values of the institution and engage the faculty, staff, and students in a collaborative approach to solving complex challenges faced in legal education today.

The dean will be expected to support an environment that is energized by a rigorous academic experience, and that strives to create a diverse student body, faculty, and staff that reflects the breadth of backgrounds and experiences represented in the population.

Resources and Relationships

Stetson University is in the final year of its \$150 million Beyond Success—Significance Campaign, a highly successful effort that has brought the university closer to its alumni and secured multiple high impact, transformative gifts. The College of Law and the next dean have a unique opportunity to build on this success and design a dedicated fund-raising effort for the college that will engage its Board of Overseers, alumni, and donors in raising funds for its specific needs, particularly the college’s scholarship program. The college maintains robust relationships with alumni through a comprehensive alumni chapter program, as well as frequent on-campus events.

The Florida Bar

The college and its faculty and staff work closely with the broader legal community through its Board of Overseers, key partnerships with the Florida Bar, and numerous local bar associations and Inns of Court. The next dean of the College of Law will continue to foster a strong relationship with the Florida Bar leadership as a significant number of College of Law graduates practice in Florida. The dean will need to represent constituencies in working with the bar leadership on issues facing future Florida lawyers, including the justice gap, professionalism, practice management, legal technology, reciprocity, the judiciary, bar passage, experiential learning, and more.

Impact Beyond

Stetson Law benefits from an exceptionally strong faculty whose individual and collective accomplishments have led to the college's outstanding reputation and consistently high rankings in a number of areas. Stetson’s law faculty are influential scholars and leaders, serving in prominent positions within the academy and the profession. Through their efforts, as well as their pro bono and philanthropic activities, Stetson faculty make significant contributions to the profession locally, nationally and globally. Many of the College of Law faculty innovations in legal education have resulted in the various Centers and Institutes, advanced degree programs, and ground-breaking faculty projects. The faculty seek a dean who will support and advocate for their research endeavors and who facilitates their work on faculty-driven initiatives. The dean is expected to help them build on their achievements and enhance the college's national reputation as a modern law school with innovative technology, a distinguished faculty, a service-oriented student body, and a vibrant community.

About Stetson University

Under the leadership of [President Wendy Libby](#), Stetson University has experienced a remarkable renaissance at a time when American liberal education has been under scrutiny and national demographic trends have not favored private, tuition-dependent institutions. The last nine years under President Libby's leadership have seen many changes to the university that have strengthened the mission and financial position while challenging the status quo and advancing the university's commitment to academic excellence and student success. These changes include synthesizing multiple campuses under the One Stetson model, expanding interdisciplinary programming, integrating technology, and increasing and diversifying enrollment. The dean must continue to lead change that advances the college's vision and strategic priorities, while leveraging change to make the college and university stronger.

Ranked #5 in the South, Stetson University is a top tier regional comprehensive university with a longstanding commitment to excellence in liberal arts undergraduate education, outstanding professional graduate programs, and diversity and inclusion. Stetson University is actively engaged in implementing a visionary strategic plan that has led to increased enrollment, a successful capital campaign, exciting new programs and a more diverse student body, faculty and staff. The dean of the College of Law faces a unique opportunity to capitalize on this success, partner with Stetson's other colleges and programs, and build on its active role and prominence in the Tampa Bay metro area, state, and nation.

The College of Law has contributed significantly to the university's remarkable success. Not only has the college weathered the added challenges facing law schools over the last decade, it has grown stronger through collaborative exploration and adoption of creative solutions and new programs. That the university and its College of Law have thrived is a testament to the commitment of the entire Stetson community to its values, to a vision for academic excellence, and to student success.

University Vision

Stetson's vision is to build on its core values and tradition of academic rigor and professional excellence to take "Success to Significance" to a new level. Stetson University will be known for success in preparing and inspiring high-achieving students to be difference-makers. Stetson's students and alumni will excel as ethical professionals and responsible citizens who demonstrate leadership as engaged global citizens tackling complex challenges and bringing about real-world change. Stetson works to develop sustainable solutions that create a more just and healthy society.

Academic Excellence

As Florida's oldest private university with the state's first law school and a long history of commitment to academic excellence, Stetson is a model for private undergraduate liberal arts education and outstanding, nationally-recognized graduate and professional programs. Commonly held values across the university include both a dedication to the teacher-scholar-citizen model, as well as the belief that scholarship is the foundation for strong teaching.

Community

Stetson University is a deeply intertwined community where members genuinely care for each other and develop strong personal bonds. Stetson University aspires to "Be a Diverse Community of Inclusive Excellence" with a commitment to diversity that extends throughout the educational programs and creates an inclusive environment that encourages open, honest discourse on a broad array of topics. University leadership has emphasized that every member of the community is responsible for valuing of all voices, classes, religions, sexual orientations, backgrounds, genders, races, and thought in the work of the college and university. The university has established structures for discussing systems, policies, or activities that hamper the goals of a diverse, inclusive community. The dean will play a leadership role in ensuring the college holds true to these values and that all feel they have a role and voice in success.

Operations

Stetson University's multiple campuses spread across the state offer both advantages and challenges. Because of the physical distance between Stetson Law's campus and the main campus in DeLand, the dean's role encapsulates broad leadership responsibility for personnel, campus operations and programs. Effective communication, coordination, planning, and decision-making systems must be streamlined and tuned constantly to keep the law community informed, engaged, and part of the university's collective vision and vice versa. Technology offers interesting opportunities for expanding faculty collaboration, interdisciplinary programs, and joint degrees. In this complex environment, the dean must work effectively with colleagues and administrators within centralized and decentralized systems and structures to make the most efficient use of resources, while maximizing investment in academic quality and student success.

Procedure for Candidacy

Inquiries, nominations and applications are invited. Review of applications will begin immediately, and will continue until the position is filled. For fullest consideration, applicant materials should be received by November 1, 2018. Candidates should provide, as three separate documents, a *curriculum vitae*, a letter of application that addresses the responsibilities and requirements described in the Leadership Profile, and the names and contact information of five references. References will not be contacted without prior knowledge and approval of candidates. These materials should be sent electronically via e-mail to the Stetson University's consultants, Lucy A. Leske or Veena Abraham, Esq. at StetsonLaw@wittkieffer.com. Documents that must be mailed may be sent to Witt/Kieffer, 2015 Spring Road, Oak Brook, IL 60523.

Stetson University, an Equal Opportunity Employer, affirms the values and goals of diversity and strongly encourages the applications of all candidates, including women and candidates from historically under-represented groups.

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Stetson University documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.

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Summary Information about the College of Law

Rankings, Awards, and Recognitions

- Currently ranked #1 for trial advocacy nationally by U.S. News & World Report
- Currently ranked #2 for legal writing nationally by U.S. News & World Report
- Ranked #3 in 2016-2017 Top Moot Court Programs and sixth best moot court of this decade by National Jurist
- Received the American Bar Association's 2016 *Distinguished Achievement in Environmental Law and Policy Award* for the Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy
- National leader in biodiversity law, Caribbean law, legal communication, social justice and Veterans law
- 2018 Diversity Matters award in the southern region from LSAC for "excellence in hosting pipeline programs that promote access to justice and the legal profession"
- Top 20 most diverse law schools in the nation (2016, *preLaw Magazine*) and top 25 law schools for Hispanics (multiple years, *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*)

College of Law students and alumni

- Average enrollment ~900 in J.D, LL.M, and M.J. degrees
- Current student population includes 28% minority; 52% female; 8% veteran students
- Over 50 student organizations, several of which support diversity and the practice of law, including the Black Law Student Association, the Florida Association for Women Lawyers, the Asian American Law Student Association, the Hispanic Bar Association, and The Pillars (with a focus on cultural understanding and community service)
- Dorm rooms in Gulfport, as well as Stetson-owned apartments and auxiliary homes near campus, are available for residential living on or very near the Gulfport campus (includes married couples, domestic partners, and families with children)
- 11,000 living alumni, with 80 percent of those alumni residing in Florida
- Graduates of Stetson Law practice in 48 states, the District of Columbia, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and 55 foreign countries

Stetson Law by the numbers

- Average LSAT of entering class: 155 at the 50th percentile
- Students receiving scholarship: 90%
- Tuition (2018-19) for full-time students: \$43,384
- College of Law endowment of approximately \$29MM; University endowment of approximately \$240MM
- College of Law annual budget of approximately \$30MM

Faculty, student, and academic resources

- 50 full-time faculty, two visiting full-time faculty, and 50 adjunct professors in specialized areas
- Home to four academic journals: Stetson Law Review, Journal for International Aging Law and Policy, Journal for International Wildlife Law and Policy, and Stetson Journal of Advocacy and the Law
- More than 350 clinic and externship opportunities offering opportunities for students to gain real world experience in a particular area of law while learning through the context of client representation or shadowing an attorney in the field
- Expert staff who guide and support students in bar preparation, counseling, registration, financial aid, and many other areas

Programs and Conferences

- J.D. certificates of concentration in advocacy, elder law, environmental law, international law, and social justice
- LL.M. degrees in Advocacy, Elder Law and International Law
- M.J. degrees in International and Comparative Business; Aging, Law and Policy; and Healthcare Compliance (all three started in fall 2018)
- Direct admissions articulations that include 3+3 Bachelor/J.D. with USF and 4+3 Bachelor/J.D. dual admission programs with Stetson University (undergraduate), Eckerd, USF, and University of Western Florida
- Dual and joint degree options include J.D./LL.M. in Advocacy and J.D./M.B.A.
- Thriving international programming, including exchange options with international partner institutions for joint degrees as well as study abroad programs
- Centers for Excellence in Advocacy, Elder Law, Higher Education Law and Policy, and International Law
- Host to numerous annual conferences, including in 2018 the 20th Annual Conference on Special Needs Planning and Special Needs Trusts, and the 40th Annual National Conference on Law and Higher Education

More information about the College of Law and Stetson University may be found at <https://www.stetson.edu/law/about/home/profile.php>

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