## Commencement SPRING 2024

### **Greetings from the President**

n behalf of the University of Florida, our faculty, and the entire university community, congratulations to all of the Doctoral Graduates of 2024.

To earn your doctoral degree from this great university, you've endured many years of late nights, hard work, big debates, rigorous analysis, and painstaking presentation of your findings.

We appreciate your attention to detail and your mindfulness of the big picture, your search for connections and for contradictions, and your small steps toward big leaps. We appreciate your countless hours of focused attention in the classroom, library, lab, field, studio, or clinic.

And now, we get to celebrate together! Alongside your family members, friends, study partners, faculty advisors, and mentors (Albert and Alberta, too), we're honored to join you today.

You're graduating from UF during an amazing period in human history. This era of tech and digital disruption will prize flexibility and

reinvention. We want to keep building a community of lifelong learners who engage in new ideas, welcome complicated truths, and rejoice in the challenges put before us.

Today is just one day that we get to celebrate your success, and we look forward to many more opportunities. You will always have a home here at the University of Florida.

Best wishes and Go Gators!



Ben Sasse

### **University of Florida President**

#### Dr. Ben Sasse

Ben Sasse joined the University of Florida as a professor and 13th president of the 170-year-old institution in February 2023.

A husband, father, historian, Uber driver, and football addict, Ben is committed to guiding Gator Nation through this era of rapid change in the nature of work, technology, and higher education.

As the leader of Florida's flagship land-grant university, Ben has moved swiftly to cultivate fresh leadership, construct a UF-wide strategic planning initiative, and ground UF's priorities in making the highest and best use of public funds. He has sought to establish goals that are critical to Gators and the state: more applied research, more focus on lifelong learning for students, and faster, more nimble engagement with exceptional partners.

Ben believes that Florida is the most dynamic state in the Union — with a diverse economy, fast-growing population, and vast outside investment. He sees UF as uniquely positioned to help Floridians maximize the state's potential as an economic and cultural juggernaut.

Twice elected to the United States Senate and a two-time New York Times national best-selling author, Ben's career has spanned the private and public sectors.

Passionate about education and teaching, Ben taught at Yale University, the University of Texas, and Midland University in his Nebraska hometown. Professor Sasse has won teaching awards and holds a history Ph.D. from Yale, where his dissertation won both the Egleston and Theron Rockwell Field best dissertation prizes.

Ben and his wife, Melissa, have two college-age daughters and a younger son. Ben, Melissa, and Breck live on campus in the Dasburg House with multiple dogs and Breck's lizard, Dart, who is delighted to call humid subtropical Gainesville home.





### Greetings from the Levin College of Law Dean

n behalf of the Levin College of Law community — especially our talented faculty and staff — I congratulate you on this momentous day! You've made it. You've done it. You've earned your place on this stage today.

You have also made the law school a better place for your having been here. In addition to your numerous achievements, you have been steadfastly committed to ensuring that Florida Law is a welcoming community — one that is rich in a variety of backgrounds, thoughts, and aspirations. Each of you, in your own way, has contributed to the cultural fabric of Florida Law. We will continue to nurture and build that culture for years to come.

Today your professional journey takes a new turn, as you embark on your legal careers. You also become part of the most powerful law alumni network in the world — the Gator Law Nation. We are proud to call you one of ours. We trust we have trained you well for the road ahead but don't forget that we will always be here as a resource and touch point for you. We're excited to watch you soar!



**Congratulations!** 

Merritt E. McAlister

### University of Florida Levin College of Law Dean

#### Merritt E. McAlister

Merritt E. McAlister is the Interim Dean and Levin, Mabie & Levin Professor of Law at University of Florida Levin College of Law. Dean McAlister is an award-winning federal courts scholar, who focuses on issues of institutional design in the federal appellate courts. Her work has been published in the *Michigan Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, and in the *Northwestern Law Review*, among others.

Dean McAlister became the interim dean of Florida Law in June 2023. Since that time, she has developed a comprehensive academic success strategy for the College, recruited one of the most talented and diverse entering classes in Florida Law history, and hired one of the nation's leading administrative law scholars to join the Florida Law faculty.

Before joining the Florida Law community, Dean McAlister was a partner in the national appellate practice at King & Spalding in Atlanta. Before that, she served as law clerk to Justice John Paul Stevens of the Supreme Court of the United States and Judge R. Lanier Anderson III on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit. Dean McAlister earned her bachelor's degree magna cum laude from Rice University and her J.D. summa cum laude from the University of Georgia School of Law, where she was the First Honors Graduate and the Executive Article Editor of the *Georgia Law Review*.



### **Commencement Agenda**

#### Friday, May 17, 2024, 12:00 p.m., the Exactech Arena at the Stephen C. O'Connell Center

#### Processional

Welcome & Introduction of Platform Party	Interim Dean Merritt E. McAlister
Student Remarks	Ava C. Dubose (JD 24)
Introduction of Keynote Speaker	Interim Dean Merritt E. McAlister
Keynote Address	The Honorable Allison J. Riggs (JD 09)
Conferral of Degrees	Interim Dean Merritt E. McAlister UF Board of Trustees Member Danaya Wright

#### **Presentation of Graduates**

- Doctor of Juridical Science in Taxation
- Master of Laws in International Taxation
- Master of Laws in Taxation
- Juris Doctor

Closing Remarks ...... Interim Dean Merritt E. McAlister

#### Alma Mater

Recessional



#### NORTH CAROLINA SUPREME COURT JUSTICE ALLISON RIGGS (JD 09)

Justice Allison Riggs was honored to be appointed by Governor Roy Cooper to serve on the North Carolina Supreme Court in September of 2023. She previously served on the North Carolina Court of Appeals. Since her appointment, she has been campaigning at full speed to run in November 2024 for a full term on the court.

Justice Riggs spent her entire career fighting for equal justice under the law for every person, regardless of wealth or skin color. Prior to her appointment to the North Carolina Court of Appeals and then the North Carolina Supreme Court, she served as Co-Executive Director for Programs and Chief Counsel for Voting Rights at the Southern Coalition for Social Justice ("SCSJ") in Durham. During her 14 years of practice at SCSJ, she had the privilege of advocating for those who had been marginalized and lacked access to legal resources. She not only represented grassroots organizations in courtrooms, arguing before the U.S. Supreme Court in multiple benchmark redistricting cases; she also worked with these groups to ensure they had the communications, organizing, and research tools needed to advocate for structural change even outside the courtroom. In her civil rights practice, Justice Riggs fought gerrymandering and voter suppression, environmental injustice, and worked with partners on criminal justice reform.

Justice Riggs' passion for justice led her to transition from working in front of the bench to working behind it because she knows that the promise of equal justice under law requires electing judges whose first commitment is to the United States and North Carolina constitutions and to doing right by the people of this state. She appreciates the history of her appointment: she is the youngest woman to ever serve on the NC Supreme Court and the only woman of child-bearing age on the entire appellate judiciary.

Her time on the Court of Appeals proved she can be effective, even when significantly outnumbered politically. Then-Judge Riggs drafted nearly 50 opinions in her time on the Court of Appeals. She delivered just results in cases ranging from interpreting public records laws to ensuring that victims of child sex abuse could seek accountability for all who harmed them.



Justice Riggs approaches all the cases that have and will come before her with thoughtfulness, compassion, and a commitment to the rule of law. As a justice, her guiding principles are integrity, transparency, consistency, and empathy. Justice Riggs knows that a legal system that creates unnecessary hurdles or wrongfully cuts off access for injured people is a system that will not garner trust or respect. She takes seriously her role in making sure our judicial system is accessible and well understood by all North Carolinians. Justice Riggs earned her Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, and Juris Doctor from the University of Florida. In addition to her practice and her service on the bench, she has devoted herself to serving the community and her profession through associations ranging from the North Carolina Bar Association to the American Constitution Society.



### **Doctor of Juridical Science in Taxation**

The S.J.D. degree is an advanced degree for students who have already attained a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree, or in the case of international students, attained an equivalent law degree from a university outside the United States. The S.J.D. degree is awarded to students who complete the College's requirements, which include writing a monograph of publishable quality. Students are recommended for the degree by the faculty of the Levin College of Law.

Maha Abdullah Alshalan

Jonathan Jairzinha Brathwaite

**Eduardo Simoes Fleury** 

### Master of Laws in International Taxation

The LL.M. in International Taxation degree is awarded to students who complete Levin College of Law requirements (including a substantial research paper and a minimum of 13 credits in international taxation courses) and have earned a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree, or in the case of international students, a law degree from a university outside the United States. Students are recommended for the degree by the faculty of the Levin College of Law. A student who obtains the LL.M. in Taxation degree is not eligible to obtain the LL.M. in International Taxation degree.

Philips Timilehin Adekemi Giordi André Candia Heredia Salini Chekuri Sebastian Mario Jose de la Bouillerie Gabriel Hercos Da Cunha Juan Israel Huaman Ivan Martin Jimenez Velazquez Omar Oquendo Claudio Isabella Kotzias Pimentel Khadijah M. Wright Chengxi Ying Jinyan Zhang

### Master of Laws in Taxation

The LL.M. in Taxation degree is awarded to students who complete Levin College of Law requirements (including a substantial research paper) and have earned a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree, or in the case of international students, a law degree from a university outside the United States. Students are recommended for the degree by the faculty of the Levin College of Law. A student who obtains the LL.M. in International Taxation degree is not eligible to obtain the LL.M. in Taxation degree.

**Mason Alexander Arterbury Gregory William Baker** Anusha Mahesh Barigela George Pasquale Bournazian Jacob Tyler Buck Joseph Cali **David Minkyung Choo Mary Eloise Coleman** Amber McCarthy Dorsch **Caroline Melissa Dozier** Yessenia Marilyn Escobedo Irina S. Ewing Peter Matthew Farrell Justin Brock Ford William Wingfield Fox **Christopher John Gero Prado** Kadeem Hall

Alexandra F. Hammock Chandler W. Harr **Slade James Heggen Havley Claire Hodson Blaze Shaun Jefferv** Lakshmi Ratna Kancherla Abigail Mackenzie Kern Seoran Kim **Houston Kimbrough** Samuel Robert Knell Anthony Anatoly Levitskiy Lennox Brian Mark Bravden McNearv Jennifer Ruth Meiselman Titus Colton T. Meister Michael Chalmers Middleton II

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### Juris Doctor

The Juris Doctor degree is awarded to students who have earned at least a baccalaureate degree, who have completed a three-year course study at the Levin College of Law, and who are recommended by its faculty. The degree is awarded with Honors to those with a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.3 (on a four point scale), with High Honors to those with a GPA of at least 3.7 and with Highest Honors to those with a GPA of at least a 3.9.

Ariana Adams

Jeremy David Arnall Jonathan Frederick Aylstock Steffi Briana Baer Michaelina Mei Barker Benjamin Miles Bartlett Jeremiah Bryce Baxter Owen Drew Beylus Jaxon Beau Blair Kaley Michelle Bonett Aslan Justus Boss-Shelby Luke T. Boyett Madelyn Eleanor Brenner Alice Rachel Bronson Brittany Taylor Brown Dylan Charles Brown Kyle D. Brumbaugh Samuel Ross Budnyk Mitchell W. Buehler Emily Bumbulis Joseph Burkart Aidan Matthew Bursten Chamoya Annipha Cameron James Gerod Hanley Cannon Greta C. Carter Torryn A. Carter Samuel Zi Chan

### Juris Doctor, continued

**Cheng-Chi Kirin Chang Reagan Keane Chapman Aleksandre Chitaia** Laura Chiu Justin A. Clark **Rachel Elaine Coers Rachel F. Cohen Christian Andrew Collazo** Serina Grace Combs Tyler R. Conti Anna Cook James E. Cory Hannah Culbertson **Christina S. Dalton** Dana G. Dammar Niva Nicole Davis Scott Alexander Davis Silas Daniel DiTocco **Andrew Ross Diamond** Jesse Daniel Dieterle **Garrett Tillman Dodd** Julia Marye Dorney **Colson Tyre Douglas Kristin Rollins Driver** Ava Charlotte DuBose **Rachel Marie Duckworth Karissa Dzurik** Logan Laury Edwards Josiah H. Elsaghir **Madison Errichetti** Jacob S. Etling Hakeem U. Everett Autumn Skye Finke lan J. M. Finley **Mckenzie Leigh Fischer** Mark Anthony Freeman Jr. **Stephanie Galvis** Andrés J. García **Summer Ember Garrison** Trace E. Gerber **Kaitlin Ann Gibbs** Alexandra D. Giraldo **Carlos Jonathan Giron** Connor Stewart Glendinning Frank Alejandro Gonzalez **Rene Alan Gonzalez Corey John Granko Catherine Ward Grimley Rachel Michelle Grimley** Logan Scott Grutchfield Jacob Anthony Guariglia Alexandra Guerra Luke Silverman Haber Sienna Alexis Hagan Gavin Hallisev **Gabriel Maximilian Hament** Zoë Isabella Hamstreet Samuel A. Hanna II Maryssa Savannah-Lynn Hardy **David Heeren** Paula Isabel Hernandez Garaycoa Lauren Elizabeth Hogan Amy C. Hogue Nina Raquel Hylton-Campbell Joseph P. lanno **Daniella Cristina Infantino** Julia Rose Ingram Michael Jason Israel James Kris Ivanov Joshua M. Jacobs Natasha Nicole Jairam Sarah Kate Janetzke

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### **Dean's Leadership Awards**

Dean's Leadership Awards recognize outstanding service to the University of Florida Levin College of Law community. Among other things, awardees have launched important new initiatives, led multiple student organizations, provided outstanding mentorship to other students, and improved connections between the college and other communities at the university and beyond.

Dylan Brown Colson Douglas Ava C. DuBose\* Mark Freeman Andres Garcia Catherine Grimley Luke Haber Alexandra Hammock Maryssa Hardy Amy Hogue Julia Ingram Jeffrey Katz Sonia Khan Hanna Perry Brandon Smith Katelynd Todd

\*2024 Courage and Commitment Award

### Levin Ambassadors

The Levin Ambassadors program at the Levin College of Law engages exemplary students for assistance throughout the year as ambassadors of the law school. Students selected to be a part of the program represent the College of Law during new student orientation, commencement, admissions student recruitment efforts, and other events and opportunities throughout the academic year.

Steffi Baer Mitchell Buehler Andres Garcia Maryssa Hardy

Julia Ingram Adreanne Martinez Kelsey Peña Eliza Sweeney Kelly Tackett Analise Walker Allison Wehle

### **Pro Bono Recognition**

The Pro Bono Project at the University of Florida Levin College of Law seeks to help students develop an awareness of their future ethical and professional responsibilities as lawyers. Students are recognized for providing an exceptional number of hours to provide law-related services to organizations with limited resources, including legal aid organizations, non-profit organizations, and governmental agencies.

#### **Excellence Award**<sup>†</sup>

Steffi Baer\*\* Madelyn Brenner **Mitchell Buehler Emily Bumbulis** Greta Carter Samuel Chan Cheng-Chi Chang **Hannah Culbertson Autumn Finke Summer Garrison Carlos Giron** Jacob Guariglia Sienna Hagan Paula Hernandez Garaycoa **Daniella Infantino** Sonia Khan **Nicole La Roque** Victoria Lageyre

**Benjamin Lima Kelsey McClellan Jisung Moon Eric Pardo Shelby Parent Anthony Pascucci Matthew Pearl Kelsey Peña Justin Pokotylo Mary Rosado KaDee Ru Katie Stephens** Julia Van de Bogart **Daniel Villa Eliiah Villafane** Gravson Wallace **Allison Wehle** 

#### **Outstanding Achievement Award**<sup>††</sup>

**Michaelina Barker** Aslan Boss-Shelbv\*\*\* **Dylan Brown** Samuel Budnyk **Chamoya Cameron** Laura Chiu **Rachel Cohen Christian Collazo Christina Dalton Niya Davis** Jesse Dieterle **Kristin Driver** Ava C. DuBose **Rachel Duckworth Josiah Elsaghir** Mark Freeman **Rene Gonzalez** Joshua Jacobs

**Mary Johns Beniamin Kelsky** Jung Moon Lee Noah Mandel **Adreanne Martinez Connor McGuinness Nathaniel Otto** Abolade Oyetunji Victoria Pawelska Victoria Puerto John Scoggin Laura Sikes (Ricks) **Robert Skrob** Lisa Valdes Marc Warren **Brian Whetzel** Parker Wilkson

### **Book Awards**

Created to honor scholastic achievement, CALI Excellence for the Future Awards are bestowed at the discretion of professors to recognize the highest performing student in each course at the University of Florida Levin College of Law. Listed below are the names of graduates receiving at least one CALI Excellence for the Future Award during their tenure to date.

#### Jeremy Arnall

**Owen Beylus** Luke Boyett **Devin Branch** Anna Braswell **Madelyn Brenner Dylan Brown Brittany Brown Kyle Brumbaugh** Samuel Budnyk **Mitchell Buehler Emily Bumbulis** Samuel Chan Cheng-Chi (Kirin) Chang Reagan Chapman Laura Chiu **Rachel Coers** Mary Coleman **Christina Dalton Niya Davis** Scott Davis Jesse Dieterle **Garrett Dodd Kristin Driver Karissa Dzurik Josiah Elsaghir** Madison Errichetti **Autumn Finke Ian Finley Gus Formato** Summer Garrison **Kaitlin Gibbs** 

**Alexandra Giraldo Carlos Giron** Rene Gonzalez **Corey Granko Rachel Grimley Catherine Grimley** Jacob Guariglia Luke Haber **Gavin Hallisey** Samuel Hanna **Ally Hicks** Laurence Howard Juan Israel Huaman **Nina Hylton** Julia Ingram Joshua Jacobs Sarah Janetzke Kendall Jensen Sarah Jones **Hope Jones** Victoria Kass **Jeffrey Katz Eliot Kersgaard** Sonia Khan Samuel Knell Amanda Kohls Nicole La Roque Victoria Lageyre Julia Lagnese **Phillip Latham Emily Lethbridge Benjamin Lima** 

**Bennett May Kelsey McClellan Mayme-Elizabeth Medlock Romy Miller Milind Mishra** Musa Musri Alex Noon Pelumi Okeowo **Omar Oquendo Claudio Nina Palmer Eric Pardo Anthony Pascucci** Victoria Pawelska **Matthew Pearl Bryce Peterson Nicole Pomerantz Pressly Pratt Christopher Radcliffe** Hamza Rashid **Alfonso Rodriguez Mary Rosado** KaDee Ru **Remedy Ryan Daniel Saathoff** Sabrina Saint-Marc Kira Schwabe (Hettinger) John Scoggin **Cara Shelhamer Olivia Sica Angela Silva Julian Spiro** William Stearns

**Keegan Stinnett Aaron Stone Samuel Sturgis Kelly Tackett Kimberly Taulbee George Alexander Reilly Katelynd Todd Zachary Torres Diego Triana James Uhrig Lisa Valdes** Julia Van de Bogart Jean Vardaramatos Jordan Wade **Analise Walker Grayson Wallace** Tasha Wallace **Allison Wehle Zoe Weiser-Dalton Miriam Wentzel** Leah West **Brian Whetzel Mason Whisnant Parker Wilkson Alexandra Williams Daniel Woodruff** 



### **Congratulations, Graduates!**



### **Juris Doctor**



# Master of Laws in Taxation

International Students and Faculty Who Teach International Tax in the Graduate Tax Program



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Christopher Summerlin, Ph.D. Dean of Students





