



Sturm College of Law
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Denver Law Fund

Impact Report 2024



The Denver Law Fund backs the Sturm College of Law's most important strategic initiatives. Whether it is launching innovative new programs or supporting experiential learning, this fund allows the law school to be creative in providing an outstanding legal education and offering critically important opportunities for our students and community.

From annual gifts that make an immediate impact to endowed gifts that last for generations, contributions to the Denver Law Fund serve as an investment in preparing ethical lawyers to meet the needs of a changing society.

2024 Impact

By the Numbers

\$500,000+
Total contributions

280+
Donors





Innovative Programs

From its inception, the Sturm College of Law has focused on making legal education more accessible to the nation's finest future lawyers. In 1895, just three years after the law school's founding, we launched the first part-time JD program between Chicago and Los Angeles.

In fall 2018, capitalizing on developments in educational technology, we converted our long-standing program of evening part-time legal education into a new Professional Part-Time JD Program, taught on eight alternating weekends with the remaining instruction provided through online asynchronous lectures, interactive exercises, discussion boards and assessments. Our innovative and nationally recognized model has expanded access to students from Colorado Springs to Fort Collins and to students from as far away as Utah, Texas, and Illinois.

Innovation that is undertaken with such boldness requires outstanding, dedicated, and technology-proficient faculty. Professor Roberto Corrada, the Mulligan Burleson Chair in Modern Learning, is a nationally recognized expert in administrative law, workplace law, and sports law who has been featured in a book

entitled "What the Best Law Teachers Do." For many years, he has taught administrative law based on the novel "Jurassic Park," through a simulated approach to learning in which students, working in teams, take on the roles of regulating the highly challenging (and dangerous!) hazards of dinosaurs through rulemaking, legislation, and adjudication.



Recently, Professor Corrada has adapted this highly innovative approach for students in our Professional Part-Time JD Program. Feedback from students has been exceptionally positive.

The simulation was one of the best learning experiences I've had, offering a blend of critical skills like research, synthesis, drafting, communication, and real-world competencies such as collaboration, time management, and empathy. Unlike traditional law-school exams, which focus on recall, this experience mirrors the complexities of legal practice and helps develop strengths and weaknesses vital for professional growth. Professor Corrada effectively combined technology, resources, and team collaboration tools to enhance learning. His approach to diversifying the learning platform should be a model for other classes. Leading discussions with my team also offered a unique perspective and was an invaluable experience.

Professor David Thomson, the John C. Dwan Professor for Online Learning, has likewise vaulted the Sturm College of Law into a leadership role in technology-enhanced legal education. A nationally respected expert in hybrid and online learning and a long-standing pillar of our Lawyering Process faculty, Professor Thomson has adapted his rigorous approach to training outstanding legal writers to our Professional Part-Time JD Program, blending innovation with his enduring commitment to training students in writing, legal analysis, and legal professionalism. In recent years, Professor Thomson has also organized and hosted a prominent conference at the Sturm College of Law that has attracted some of the nation's leading legal educators, law school administrators, and technology vendors to discuss issues relating to hybrid and online pedagogy.



Student Testimonial



Nick McGraw (3L)

As a 37-year-old father of two, the availability of a hybrid/online model for law school was the primary reason I decided to attend the University of Denver Sturm College of Law. The hybrid/online model in the part-time program at the Sturm College of Law makes it so that students like me do not have to choose between providing for their family and advancing their careers. Being able to attend school remotely or on my days off has provided access to a level of education that I previously thought inaccessible at this point in my life. This increased accessibility has also shown my sons that a college education is not some monster to be afraid of. Instead, they see continuing their education after high school as more and more achievable. The flexibility that such a program provides single handedly made a lifelong dream achievable for me and has helped me show my sons that it is never too late to achieve your dreams.



Denver Law Fund *Areas of Support*

Experiential Learning

Among the nation's roughly 200 law schools, the Sturm College of Law is preeminent in its commitment to experiential learning – to learning that meaningfully engages students with real-world legal issues, clients, and employers. Fittingly, in each of the past seven years, preLaw magazine has recognized the Sturm College of Law with an A+ grade in its annual survey of best law schools for practical training.

The law school's Externship Program, directed by Associate Dean Alexi Freeman, permits students to earn academic credit under the guidance of law faculty and supervising employers. The program is among the nation's largest, most innovative, and most respected. Each year, more than 600 students at the Sturm College of Law undertake externships with nearly 400 different organizations, including the Colorado Attorney General's Office, the Office of the Colorado State Public Defender, the Wilderness Society, and the Colorado Water Trust. Over 90% of students at the Sturm College of Law complete at least one externship placement prior to graduation, with over one-quarter of recent graduates securing their postgraduate jobs in a manner directly arising from their prior externship(s).



Alexi Freeman

Associate Dean and Director of Externships
and Social Justice Initiatives

By providing opportunities for students to work under externship faculty and practicing attorneys while engaging in guided reflection about the legal profession, their legal careers, and their priorities and values as future lawyers, the program beneficially shapes the professional identities of law students and provides them with real-world training in legal ethics, professionalism, and cross-cultural understanding. Yet externship placements with non-profit organizations and governmental entities are typically unpaid, making it difficult for students to pursue them while managing the other costs of legal education and of living in the Denver metropolitan area. Support from the Denver Law Fund has permitted us to provide stipends to outstanding and deserving students who pursue summer externships – expanding both our commitment to experiential learning and the public good.

Students Benefitting from the Stipends

Summer 2024

45

Awardees

12

Students worked in nonprofits

14

Students worked in the
judicial sector

19

Students worked in government
(federal, state, or local)

Denver Law Fund Areas of Support

Interdisciplinary Research

The Sturm College of Law has a long and distinguished tradition of interdisciplinary research. In the 1960s, alongside Berkeley, Northwestern, and the University of Wisconsin, the University of Denver co-founded the Law and Society Movement, which first incorporated the study of social science into the study of law. In recent years, the Sturm College of Law has hired a number of outstanding new faculty members with interdisciplinary expertise who focus on some of the grand challenges facing our nation and world.

Professor Govind Persad joined the Sturm College of Law in 2018, having previously served on the faculty of the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health. An expert in

health law, health care affordability, and bioethics, Professor Persad leverages his joint training in law and philosophy to address emerging problems at the intersection of health law and policy, including fairness in the allocation of scarce vaccines and therapeutics. His recent publications include articles in the *Michigan Law Review*, *Iowa Law Review*, and *Emory Law Journal*, as well as prominent peer-reviewed medical and scientific journals, including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Science*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and the *Lancet*. Professor Persad is also a frequent media commentator on health law and policy, with recent op-eds in *The Washington Post*, *New York Times*, and *The Boston Globe*. His research has most recently been supported by a Greenwall Foundation Faculty Scholars Award.





Professor Zahra Takhshid joined the Sturm College of Law in 2021 from Harvard Law School, where she served as the Lewis Fellow for Law Teaching and Lecturer on Law and as an affiliate with the

Program in Islamic Law. An expert in the legal regulation of new technologies, she uses doctrines and theories from the realms of contract and tort law to resolve challenges with emerging technological developments in social media, artificial intelligence, and the quantum internet. In recognition of her expertise in law and technology, she has been recognized as a National Science Foundation (NSF) Quantum Fellow at the Center for Quantum Networks of the University of Arizona, in partnership with Yale Law School's Information Society Project. Professor Takhshid's research has been published or is forthcoming in the *Georgetown Law Journal*, *Texas Law Review*, *Minnesota Law Review Online*, and the *Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law*, among others.

The Denver Law Fund provides vital support for faculty research through faculty development funds and summer research grants. In recent years, such support has helped us to recruit and retain outstanding faculty colleagues, advance cutting-edge interdisciplinary research, and elevate the visibility, stature, and impact of the Sturm College of Law.







Donor Testimonials

"I personally know how many students have been helped by that fund."

– Judge Alfred Harrell, JD'71

"How can I not support the Denver Law Fund? The better the law school does, the better our diploma looks."

– Chuck Turner, JD'71

"We as community members and graduates of the law school have a critical responsibility to make sure that students have the same opportunity we did to learn how to be lawyers."

– Connie Talmage, JD'78

"The University of Denver supported my legal education that led to a very rewarding legal career. Now I feel that it's important to pay it forward for others."

– Fay Matsukage, JD'79

Thank you for Supporting the Denver Law Fund

THE
DENVER DIFFERENCE
WHAT DU CAN DO

For more information visit: denverdifference.org