

College of Law Video

The formula for building a great law school is really pretty simple. You've got to have great faculty, you've got to have great students, you've got to have the resources ...if a student wants to come here and become a great lawyer we'll provide the educational foundation for that to happen. Our democracy depends upon the population's confidence in our system of justice and that's why it's so important here at the law school that we do our job at the highest possible level.

I'm a skills professor, so my mission is to teach these students the skills they need to be successful as lawyers and we also teach them the importance of public service and community service and giving back to the community. I think that the people that graduate from this law school understand the importance of being a complete citizen which means that they will be good lawyers.

Lawyers are communicators first and foremost, and if you are a trial lawyer you need to be persuasive, you need to be able to move people, whether it is a jury or judge.

I think Florida Tomorrow is a place where every individual in the state of Florida, whether they can afford a lawyer or not, will get the best legal representation that's possible. I think that the University of Florida Levin College of Law is providing the underlying values that will make that possible.

One of the great things about this law school is our tradition of preparing leaders for the profession, leaders for the workplace and we're nationally known for the quality of our programs. Our graduate tax program has been ranked consistently as one of the top two in the nation. Our Children and Family Law is indisputably one of the top three in the nation.

My work is focused primarily on children: children's rights, protection of children from abuse and all kinds of issues having to do with children and the law. Our mission at the Center on Children and Families is to train a new generation of advocates for children, who will be competent in all the domains that are important to children.

We have a significant number of children who are living in poverty, who are living in circumstances of abuse and neglect. We try to act as a voice for children, for families. This is at the core of where the law connects with people.

When I think about Florida Tomorrow I think about a place where the environment is friendly for children... a world that really nurtures children so that every child has an equal opportunity to grow into a healthy strong adult.

I see Florida Tomorrow as being a place that we will have integrated the well being of children across many disciplines and provide the kind of support for those children to thrive.

Because we're a part of a great university, we can collaborate and work with other academic programs to provide law students with the broader perspective that will help make them extraordinary advocates and extraordinary problem solvers. For example, we have a nationally prominent Environmental Law and Land Use Program.

Environmental and land use law are two closely related fields that encompass ... areas like toxic and hazardous substances, growth management and zoning, air pollution control law, endangered species and protection of wildlife and biodiversity. So Florida Tomorrow, where we consider those interests and we actually take steps and make the sometimes difficult decisions that we have to, to protect them, would be a sustainable future.

We already have an excellent law school but we've done it with really a fairly limited base of state support. The real margin of excellence for us is what our alumni and friends have provided for us through the years. Our ability to deliver the best possible program really depends on getting the resources through this campaign to be able to be as good as we can be. When I think about Florida Tomorrow I think about claiming this great tradition and then projecting it into the future through the kind of student we prepare to go out there and be that leader in our community and be that leader in the state and the nation.