



# SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

February 13, 2024

Dear Friends,

Last Friday evening, the School of Law held its awe-inspiring annual Diversity & Inclusion Celebration. It is hard to imagine a more wonderful event—one that honors the great work that we all do together to make our law school and the communities that we serve more just and equitable.



On behalf of our entire law school community, I want to thank our administrative team for working so hard to put the event together, especially Noelia McKeever and Ash Farrington. Great thanks also go to our sponsors, donors, students, faculty, staff educators, university partners, and alumni for not only supporting our celebration itself but for doing all of the important work that we celebrated!

Working together, we have built a proud tradition of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in our law school and beyond. We have become one of the most diverse law schools in the country, (57% of our students identify as students of color and 26% as first-gen students) and our diversity is, and always will be, one of our greatest distinctive strengths.

Our commitment to an inclusive learning environment is intentional, comprehensive, loud, and proud. It is driven by the strong leadership of our:



- prior deans: including former university acting president Lisa Kloppenberg, Anna Han, Don Polden, Mack Player, and Gerald Uelman;
- inaugural School of Law Senior Director of Inclusive Excellence, Dori Pina;

- university's Vice President for Inclusive Excellence, Sha' Duncan Smith;
- dedicated faculty members, extraordinary clinical programs and centers, supportive student services team, vibrant student organizations, and our network of community partners—like the Marines, our title sponsor for the event, who were powerfully represented by Major Janae Lawson, United States Marine Corp;
- our engaged and generous alumni, so many of whom came “home” to celebrate with us on Friday evening, including **Judge Risë Pichon J.D. '76, Howard Charney J.D. '77, Dorian Daley J.D. '86, Andy Kryder J.D./MBA '77, David Tsai J.D. '06, and Devika Sagar J.D. '21,** and
- all of our many benefactors, who have supported the ***Thurgood Marshall Civil Rights Scholarship Fund***, which provides invaluable help to our law students committed to equality, inclusivity, and social justice.



Thanks to the hard work of the Diversity and Inclusion Celebration Planning Committee and the generosity of our sponsors, over **50 students** have received these scholarships, enabling them to pursue careers that empower them to do well and do good.

Friday evening, we honored and lifted up leaders in our law school community who are champions for diversity, equity, and inclusion: **Carlos Rosario, J.D. '11**, who has devoted his entire professional life to service, working to open doors and creating opportunities for students of color to attend law school and thrive in the legal profession; and the Elevate Community Center and its founder, **Sharine Xuan J.D. '21**, who provide pro bono and low cost legal and financial services, particularly in the areas of domestic violence, small business development, and criminal records relief. Congratulations and great thanks to Carlos and Elevate!



As we all know too well, the work of inclusive excellence is not easy. We do this work in an era of destructive, affective polarization, and against a wave of attacks on the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In the face of this wave, our law school steadfastly reaffirms the moral, spiritual, educational, economic, social, and political value of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Inspired by our Jesuit, Catholic

missions and tradition, we believe that each one of us is created in the image and likeness of the divine with infinite dignity and worth. We are called now, more than ever, by our shared mission to go beyond performative gestures and to take effective concrete action to uproot the myriad structures that generate all forms of human subjugation and oppression.

As I shared Friday evening, the renowned author, Audre Lorde began each one of her inspiring public appearances by stating proudly: "I am a Black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet doing my work, coming to ask you if you're doing yours." She brilliantly reminds us: "It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

I am incredibly honored to be a member of the Santa Clara Law community, which recognizes, accepts, and celebrates our differences, helps to shape leaders like Carlos and Sharine, and lifts them up as exemplars of our enduring commitment to do the hard work of inclusive excellence—together and with moral courage.

With warm regards and tremendous 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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