



SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

May 22, 2023

Dear SCU Community,

I hope this message finds you well, and that you are basking in the glow of a luminous graduation ceremony and celebratory weekend!

I write to share my deepest gratitude to so many members of our law school community whose unflagging dedication and volunteer spirit contributed to a triumphant graduation week culminating in our Commencement ceremony in the Leavey Center. Your terrific work to lift up our beloved graduating students is awe-inspiring.



As you know, our graduation celebration kicked off with a series of smaller events and special recognition ceremonies. Throughout the week, we celebrated with graduates and their families at the BLSA, First-generation, International & LL.M., Center for Social Justice, and High-Tech Law Institute brunches and dinners. I am grateful to Judge Risë Pichon, Devin Kinyon, Sarah Brockmeyer, Vangie Abriel, Caitlin Jachimowicz, Brian Love, Eric Goldman, Debbie Snyder, Nicole Maxwell, Noelia McKeever, Joanna Padua, and Dorice McDonnell for orchestrating these moving events. Special thanks go to our faculty and alumni, who shared eloquent and inspiring remarks at these celebrations, including Eric Wright, John Bates Jr. (J.D. '74), Keith Wattley (J.D. '99), and Ram Fletcher ('01, J.D. '05).

On Commencement eve, we gathered in the Mission Church for our Liturgy, during which Fr. Robert Scholla, S.J. shared a beautiful homily reflecting on the importance of service to others as an expression of God's love. We then held a special reception in the Mission Gardens to honor 12 student leaders who have exemplified the highest standards of academic excellence and commitment to justice throughout their law school careers. I am thankful to Noelia McKeever for planning the liturgy and all of our awards events with her usual expertise, grace, and attention to detail.

I am also grateful for the strong showing of support for our students that resulted in a truly remarkable Commencement ceremony on Saturday. We shifted to a new venue at the urging of our graduates and their families, knowing that transitioning to a new venue would inevitably present pros and cons, complexities and challenges. But our entire team—staff, faculty, students, alumni, and university partners—rose to the challenge, producing a beautiful and powerful ceremony that our graduates and their loved ones are raving about.

We welcomed over 2,500 guests to the commencement celebration, and they all left beaming with joy and pride. Leading our efforts was the amazing Nicole Maxwell and her entire team. I know Nicole has already offered her thanks, especially to Rianna Mendoza of Law Student Services, who ran the entire show, from soup to nuts, and from bagpipes to Buckey Bronco—using her impressive executive skills, enormous talent, and remarkable grace to create an exceptionally uplifting ceremony. Please allow me to add my thanks to Nicole, Rianna, and each and every one of the members of our law school team who gave so much time and talent in service to our graduates:

Janelle Atangan	Kerrie Bindi	Robert Boyd	Sarah Brockmeyer
Andrew Corrales	Tracy Cox	Brandon Cross	Lisa Foo
Izzy Garcia	Lexi Gomez	Lily Huynh	Christina Johnson
Jake Kalauokalani	Tyler Kirby	Justin Lee	Cecilia Macedo
Jennifer Machado	Jake Malae	Noelia McKeever	Lisa McMahan
Rianna Mendoza	Mike Morales	Nicole Morales	Leah Nakasaki-Peterson
Filip Orth	Victoria Reyes	Annemarie Scott	Britton Sessions
Marjorie Short	Lisa Swenson	Thi Tran	Sandra Vega
Annie Warr	Sheli Whiting		

Tremendous thanks go as well to Professor Phil Jimenez, who gifted us with his glorious voice to record our students' names, with the perfect pronunciation and the deepest love. We are so grateful to Phil for spending hours in a studio to make that moment special!

I also want to thank each and every member of our faculty and administrative team who joined us on Saturday, including:

Former Deans Lisa Kloppenberg (who, as Acting President, served as the first female lay President of the University), Don Polden, and Anna Han;

Tyler Ochoa and Mary Procacchio-Flowers, who were selected by our students as Faculty Members of the year and led our recessionary; and

Evangeline Abriel	Marshall Anstandig	David W. Ball	Gary Benton
Sean Bland	Liza-Jane Capatos	Colleen Chien	Dan Dow
Hon. Micael Estremera	James Gibbons-Shapiro	Dorothy Glancy	David Greenspan

Sue Guan Deep Gulasekaram Marina Hsieh Jeff Hyman

Brad Joondeph Paige Kaneb Teresa Kopriva Kerry Macintosh

Sandee Magliozzi Nicole Maxwell Fiona McKenna Deborah Moss-West

Michelle Oberman Hon. Armando Pastran Jr. Hon. Lori Pegg Hon. Cindi Rosse

Margaret Russell Hon. Gregory Saldivar Cathy Sandoval Britton Schwartz

Nicholas Serafin David Sloss Debbie Snyder Nima Sohi

Hon. Rodney Stafford Linda Starr Kent Streseman Eric Wright

Hon. Glenn Yabuno David Yosifon Emily Yu

I am immensely grateful to each of you for joining the ceremony—your prideful presence meant the world to our graduates and their families!

Let's also express our collective gratitude to Teresa Kopriva, who worked wonderfully with all of our special guests, including President Julie Sullivan, Provost Kate Morris, Vice President for University Relations Jim Lyons, prominent alums Risë Pichon, Howard Charney, Zoe Lofgren, John Ottoboni, Molly McDonald, Andy Kryder, Omar Habbas, Margarita Chavez Tatro, Erica Riel-Carden, and our terrific commencement speaker, Tricia Montalvo Timm.

Our appreciation extends as well to our University friends who provided great support and encouragement, particularly Molly McDonald and Lisa McMahan in the President's Office, and our colleagues in Campus Safety Services and Parking and Transportation. We also thank Robert Boyd, our current staff member and Santa Clara Law alum, for his ethereal bagpipe recessional.

And of course, we are so thankful that Bucky Bronco joined us to "horse around" with our graduates, "take the reins" off the celebration, and "stir up" even more excitement!

Thank you—one and all! In true Santa Clara Law fashion, we all came together to make the entire commencement weekend a beacon of our love for our students and for each other!

I am grateful, proud, and honored to be a part of this beloved community.

With warm regards and tremendous gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael". The lettering is cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'M'.

Michael J. Kaufman (He/Him/His)
Dean and Professor of Law
Santa Clara University School of Law
mjkaufman@scu.edu