



SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

August 22, 2023

Dear Friends,

In the spirit of gratitude and loving kindness, we welcomed 248 remarkably talented and diverse new 1Ls into the Santa Clara Law community, including 36 students who comprise the inaugural class of our innovative hybrid part-time Flex JD program. True to its mission, our new Flex JD program has brought to our law school community extraordinary working professionals from all walks of life, all parts of the country, and every stage of their careers, who would not otherwise have been able to pursue a law degree.



We are also blessed that our incoming class includes an unprecedented number of first generation students (27%); the first cadre of students enrolled in our new, pathbreaking Public Interest JD; another growing cohort of sensational Tech Edge JD students; and a terrific group of international students who have joined us under the auspices of our renowned Center for Global Law and Policy.

Among the suite of academic support initiatives that we have launched this year, we are excited to introduce all 1L students to a [new Critical Lawyering Skills \(CLS\) course](#) that will help them build the fundamental academic skills necessary for success in law school. We are also excited to be [partnering with Themis Bar Review](#) to provide all of our students with bar preparation and professional preparedness resources that will ensure their success throughout their law school journey.

During our annual Convocation ceremony and Breaking Bread dinner, our wonderful alumna, Stephanie Burns, J.D '95 eloquently offered words of advice and inspiration to our new students, as she shared the professional path to her current position of Senior Vice President and General Counsel of Sony Entertainment Interactive (PlayStation). We are grateful to Stephanie for her example of professional excellence, and we also extend great thanks to our University President, Julie Sullivan for welcoming our

students to the university; to Judge Risë Pichon '73, J.D. '76, for administering the Oath of Professionalism; to our dedicated Student Bar Association co-presidents, Nicole Poirot and Julianna Major for showering our new students with support; and to Father Robert Scholla S.J. for beautifully blessing our gathering in the school's Jesuit, Catholic tradition.

Throughout our Breaking Bread dinner, prominent members of our alumni family and our student leaders shared stories and wise counsel with our incoming students, who began to form life-long bonds with their new classmates and our supportive faculty and administrative team.

The Convocation and Breaking Bread dinner were the culmination of a magnificent week of orientation programs. Tremendous thanks go to all of our educators—faculty and staff— for surrounding our new students (days, nights, and weekends) with Bronco spirit and support. I know that behind every successful program is a team that has worked tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to make sure that everything runs smoothly. We could not have welcomed our incoming students so well without the incredible hard work and enthusiasm of our CLS student mentors and our amazing teams from Administrative Services, OABS, Law Student Services, External Relations and Development, Law Technology, Facilities, Admissions, ExPro, our centers and clinics, and our SCU campus partners. On behalf of our entire Santa Clara Law community, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

As our newest students have quickly realized, we are not just a law school. We are a transformative learning community built on an ethic of loving kindness. In our community, we understand that loving kindness is not weakness; it is fortitude. We have tremendous faith that our new students will join with our continuing students and our alumni in using their Santa Clara Law education to serve their clients and their communities with loving kindness. They will use their formidable talents to overcome the serious ongoing challenges to democracy and the rule of law that we are facing, and build a more just, humane, and sustainable world for us all.

As a blessed and beloved law school community, we have so much to be grateful for, and so much to look forward to in the year ahead.

With warm regards and immense 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