



# Northern Illinois University

## College of Law *Update*

December 7, 2023

Cassandra L. Hill  
Dean & Professor

# ABA Site Team Visit: October 1-4, 2023



# College of Law Priorities



- ❑ Strengthen the COL Profile and Footprint
- ❑ Ensure Diversity, Equity & Inclusion In Action
- ❑ Expand Admissions & Enrollment Targets
- ❑ Continue Student Success in Academics & Develop New Employment Opportunities
- ❑ Enhance Alumni Engagement & Community Partnerships
- ❑ Increase Resources—Revenue & Relationships

# Social Media Profile and Hashtags



**#NIULaw**

**#NIULawHasItAll**

**#NIULawIs4You**

**#niulawproud**



# Recent Accolades



- **2023:** Ranked **#13** in the nation for law schools that add the most value to the ultimate bar passage and over-perform predicted expectations on the bar.
- **2023:** Ranked **#3** for **Criminal Law** according to preLaw Magazine.
- **2023:** Ranked **#12** for **Public Service** according to preLaw Magazine.



# Faculty Accomplishments



## Prof. McConkie Weighs In on Rittenhouse Verdict on Chicago Tonight

November 24, 2021

NIU Law Professor Dan McConkie was featured on WTTW's Chicago Tonight on Monday, November 22 to weigh in on the impact of the Rittenhouse verdict.

[READ MORE](#)



## Professor Boraca Honored for Contributions Improving Access to Justice

July 21, 2021

Professor Colleen Boraca is the 2021 recipient of the Chicago Bar Foundation's Jay Leonard Schragger Award of Excellence. The Award was established to recognize exemplary

[READ MORE](#)



## Professor Bernick Cited in Opinion by U.S. Supreme Court Justice Gorsuch

November 8, 2022

In an opinion, 21-972 Buffington v. McDonough (11/07/22) (supremecourt.gov), arguing that the Court should have heard a case about a federal agency's denial of disability benefits

[READ MORE](#)

# Diversity Initiatives: Diversity Awareness



**Provided Diversity Workshop  
Open to All Faculty and Staff**

# Diversity Initiatives: Building Community



**Second Annual Building Community Program  
with First-Year Minority Students**



# Race and the Law Conversations



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
College of Law

U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN  
**SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

## "EXAMINING THE CASE FOR REPARATIONS"

Tuesday, August 31 | 6-7 p.m. CST

Register via Zoom:  
[go.niu.edu/reparations](https://go.niu.edu/reparations)

Moderated by Dean Cassandra L. Hill

Race and the Law Conversations  
presented by the NIU College of Law



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
College of Law

**Toi W. Hutchinson ('14)**  
Sr. Advisor to Governor Pritzker  
for Cannabis Control

## "CANNABIS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE"

Tuesday, November 16 | 6-7 p.m. CST

Register via Zoom: [go.niu.edu/cannabisjustice](https://go.niu.edu/cannabisjustice)

Moderated by Prof. Wendy Vaughn

1 hr Illinois MCLE  
(pending approval)

Race and the Law Conversations



# Diversity Scholars Program



- Received grant for \$142,000
- Launched November 6, 2023
- Enrolled: 30 students
- Partner schools include:
  - Northern Illinois University
  - Northeastern Illinois University
  - Aurora University
  - Chicago State University
  - Jackson State University
  - Bennett College



# Enrollment Comparisons

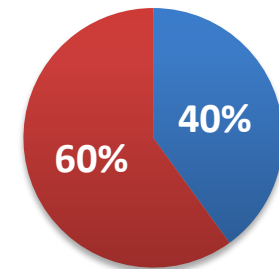
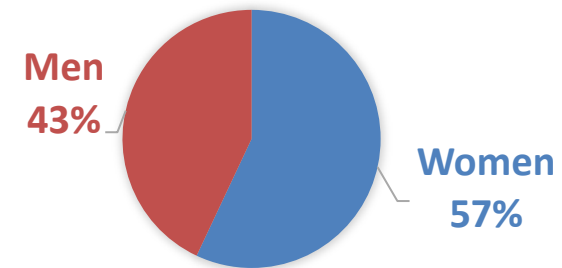


	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Enrollment</b>	92	91	119	121	120	119	106
<b>Women</b>	40%	47%	49%	47%	50%	56%	57%
<b>Minority</b>	30%	25%	23%	24%	33%	32%	40%

# Our Students – Class of 2026



106 STUDENTS



■ Minority  
■ Caucasion/White

# Our Students – Class of 2026

## Educational Background



67

Colleges and  
Universities

34

Majors

8+

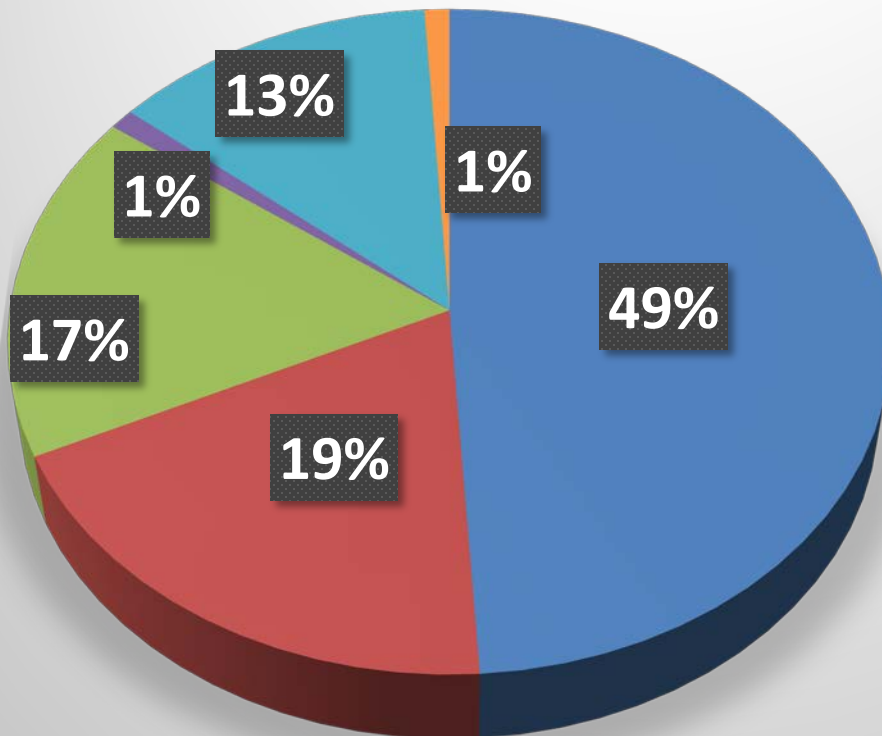
Languages Spoken

# Outcomes – Job Placements

92% Reported Employed



## Class of 2022



- Law Firms
- Government
- Public Interest
- Education
- Business
- Judicial Clerkships

# Clinics

- Criminal Defense Clinic (Rockford)
- Prisoners' Rights Project (Rockford)
- Civil Justice Clinic (Rockford)
- Health Law Advocacy Clinic (Aurora)
- Business Law Innovation Clinic (DeKalb)



## Experiential Learning



# Business Law Innovation Clinic



- Hosted Launch Reception in September 2022 & raised \$30,000.
- BLIC students attended the ABA Business Law Section Spring Meeting
- BLIC was honored by Bloomberg Law as one of six "top scoring programs" in the category of "Innovation and Business"





# New Clinical Law Center



Reception area, interview rooms, and large classroom.

# New Student Organization Space



# Alumni Highlights



**Judge Colleen Lawless ('09)** was appointed a federal judge in 2023.

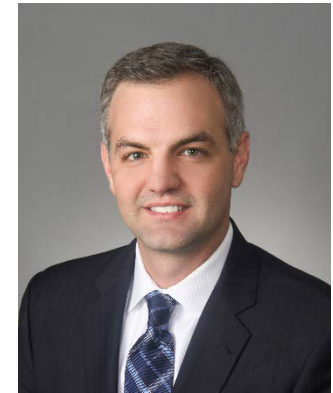


**Brigadier General Jackie Thompson ('97)** was appointed to his position in 2021.



**Sonni Williams ('99)** is President-elect of the Illinois State Bar Association.

**Judge Eugene Doherty ('89)** was appointed to the Illinois Appellate Court in 2022.



**Kenya Jenkins-Wright ('03)** is President of the Chicago Bar Foundation.

**Andrew Lothson ('08)** was named a Top 40 under 40 attorney.

# Alumni in the Judiciary



The College of Law now has 150 current and retired judges.



# Alumni Visits & Engagement



- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- DC
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Iowa
- Minnesota
- Texas
- Wisconsin



# Support for *Faculty Awards*



**Professor Laurel Rigertas  
Lenny and Stacey Mandell  
Faculty Excellence Award**  
Accomplishments in teaching  
and service.



**Professor Sarah Fox  
Board of Visitors  
Faculty Excellence in Scholarship Award**  
Accomplishments in scholarship and  
research.

# Support for *Student Scholarships*



**Casimere Street ('26)**  
Board of Visitors  
Student Excellence  
Scholarship

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Save the Date!**



**50**  
**YEARS**  
1974-2024



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**College of Law**

**Anniversary Gala**  
**November 2, 2024**



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# Questions?

