Message from
Dean Jennifer Rosato Perea

"Each one of us can make a difference. Together we make change."
—Barbara Mikolski

I was incredibly energized and motivated by a University leadership retreat I attended this year, in which NIU President Doug Baker brought 130 of the University leaders together to integrate our efforts towards the keystone goal of student career success and the pillars of thriving communities, ethically inspired leadership, and financial sustainability. At the College of Law, we are leaders in furthering the keystone goal, as everything we do is devoted to ensuring our students can succeed in law school, pass the bar, and be effective, ethical lawyers when they graduate.

This year our tireless faculty and staff have continued to build on the following focused initiatives that, along with the three pillars, further student success: 1) expanding experiential education, including clinics, externships, internships, and pro bono opportunities; 2) building additional accelerated degree programs (as well as joint programs) with other Colleges; and 3) strengthening our academic success program throughout law school.

It is truly an exciting time, with great challenges but also with tremendous opportunities. One of this year’s “pilot projects” is The Chicago Initiative where our admissions team will recruit and matriculate more students in the Chicagoland area. We will be “home-based” in Chicago a few days a week for interviews and presentations and will include alumni later in the recruiting cycle with admitted students, when those efforts matter most.

All the best,
Dean Rosato Perea

Health Law Advocacy Clinic Celebrates Grand Opening

NIU Law officially opened the doors to its new Health Advocacy Clinic this fall located at the Hesed House Community Resource Center in Aurora, IL. Representatives from NIU, the city of Aurora, alumni, students, and faculty celebrated the opening of the new clinic with a dedication ceremony on October 30, 2014.

The new Health Advocacy Clinic is a medical-legal partnership between NIU College of Law, Aunt Martha’s Health Center, and Hesed House Community Resource Center. Hesed House is the second-largest shelter for homeless individuals and their families in Illinois, and the largest such shelter outside of Chicago. Aunt Martha’s Health Center is a health care and social service agency that has earned a national reputation for meeting the needs of children, youth, and families.

The issues facing homeless individuals and families are multifaceted, and increasingly demand an integrated approach. Clinic faculty and law students work collaboratively with medical professionals and social workers to provide free legal, medical, and social services to clients with limited resources from across the region. The Clinic also has formed community partnerships with local legal aid agencies such as Prairie State Legal Services and Administer Justice to ensure that clients have referral sources for those legal needs not directly represented by the Health Advocacy Clinic.
Chelsea Selvey (’17) is the first recipient of the Lenny B. Mandell Scholarship in honor of the former Associate Dean of Student Services and Faculty Advisor for the Moot Court Society. Alumni Bob Meltzer (’85) and Austin Bartlett (’00) gave lead gifts in establishing the scholarship because of “Mandell’s leadership, dedication, perseverance, and personal sacrifice in creating a top-notch Moot Court program.” The scholarship is awarded to a first-year law student who has demonstrated an interest in trial and appellate advocacy.

In his address to the Class of 2014 on May 24, Governor Pat Quinn emphasized the key role of lawyers and legal professionals in shaping policy and action in the political arena by drafting laws. He also lauded the achievements of the College of Law, in particular its devotion to public service and its lawyers, who are committed to improving their communities and maintaining a mission of helping those in need.

Cherilyn Murer (’78) speaks with students after she presented the year’s final Murer Professionalism Series lecture “Creative Use of the Legal Toolbox,” on March 26, 2014 to the first-year class.

Dr. Kenneth C. Chessick (’84) presented, “Professionalism and Ethics in Medicine, Business, and the Law: Are They Different?,” at the Francis X. Riley Lecture on Professionalism on April 4, 2014.

“A Civil Action” attorney Jan R. Schlichtmann gave the Marla Dickerson Lecture on Public Interest on April 16, 2014. Schlichtmann, considered one of the country’s most notable plaintiff attorneys, presented “Change the Thinking That’s Changing the Climate.”

National media expert Karen Conti presented “Why Lawyers Should Talk to the Media,” on April 17, 2014. Conti shared her extensive experiences as a lawyer and national media correspondent on both television and radio to help prepare attorneys should they ever find themselves in the media spotlight.
Illinois Bar Foundation Names Simmons (’14) Among First Recipients of Fellowship

The Illinois Bar Foundation (IBF), the charitable arm of the Illinois State Bar Association, awarded one of its inaugural Post Graduate Legal Fellowships to recent 2014 graduate Alexis Simmons. She began working at the law school’s Zeke Giorgi Legal clinic in Rockford in August. The foundation launched its Post Graduate Legal Fellowships Program with NIU Law and two other law schools – Loyola University Chicago School of Law and University of Illinois College of Law – to fund public interest jobs for new graduates. IBF contributed $25,000 to each of the three fellowships and the law schools funded the remainder. NIU Law would like to thank everyone who contributed to our 2014-15 IBF Fellowship Gift-Matching Initiative. Through your gracious pledges and gifts, we were able to meet and exceed the $25,000 in contributions necessary to match the IBF’s contribution.

NIU Law Co-Hosts Program with ISBA’s Women in the Law

A panel of distinguished women legal professionals spotlighted “Myra Bradwell: The Practice of Law in the Wake of Her Legacy,” a special event in honor of Women’s History Month held at Northern Illinois University on March 21, 2014. The program was presented by the Illinois State Bar Association’s standing committees on Women and the Law and Racial and Ethnic Minorities and the Law, and co-sponsored by NIU College of Law.
**CONGRATULATIONS**

Kenya Jenkins-Wright ('03)  
Heather Wier Vaught ('05)  
Colleen Boraca,  
Assistant Clinical Professor

**on being named**

**40 Under 40 Attorneys**

by Chicago Daily Law Bulletin

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**ALUMNI COUNCIL**

**Elects New Board**

Incoming Alumni Council President Brent Eames ('09) thanks outgoing President Kenya Jenkins-Wright ('03) for her service during her term.

The new Executive Board was elected in October:

- **Brent Eames ('09)**, President
- **Melinda Rosales-Byerly ('03)**, 1st Vice President
- **Larry Stein ('93)**, 2nd Vice President
- **Laura Alms ('12)**, Secretary

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**Richard Felice ('79) Takes Helm as ISBA President at Annual Meeting**

Richard D. Felice ('79) was installed as President of the Illinois State Bar Association at the organization’s Annual Meeting on June 20 at the Grand Geneva Resort in Lake Geneva, WI. Felice, who became the 138th President, took the helm of the largest bar organization in the state with over 32,000 members.

Rick Felice ('79) is sworn-in as the 138th President of the Illinois State Bar Association by Illinois Supreme Court Justice Robert R. Thomas.

Vincent Cornelius ('89, second from left), is inducted as 2nd Vice President of the ISBA. He is pictured with (from left) Hon. Russell W. Hartigan, 3rd Vice President; Umberto S. Davi, President-Elect; and Paula H. Holderman, Immediate Past President.

Lisa M. Nyuli ('89), James F. McCluskey ('79), Kenya A. Jenkins-Wright ('03), and Sonni C. Williams ('99) were inducted as members of the ISBA Board of Governors during the annual meeting.

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**2014 Award Honorees Embody Spirit of Service**

Distinguished award recipients were honored for their dedication to public service at the 2014 Alumni Council Awards ceremony. They included (seated from left): Hon. James Holderman, Public Service Award; Abel L. Smith III ('89), Distinguished Service Award; Richard D. Felice ('79), Alumnus of the Year. Standing (from left): Romas Mockaitis ('05), Mentor of the Year Award; Blake Cosentino ('03) and Nina Cosentino ('02), Outstanding Service Award; and Norden S. Gilbert, Honorary Alumnus Award. Inset: Lesley Irizarry-Hougan ('04), Young Alumna of the Year and Chris Cosentino ('00), Outstanding Service Award.
Over 100 guests attended the 11th Annual Minority Alumni Reception hosted by Dean Rosato Perea and Vincent Cornelius (‘89) on February 19, 2014. Special presentations honored Chicago’s 21st Ward Alderman Howard B. Brookins Jr. (‘88) with the Excellence in Service and Leadership Award and Professor Leona Green was recognized for her commitment to students, service to NIU Law, and being a champion of diversity.

NIU Law hosted alumni and guests to be admitted to the Bar of the United States Supreme Court on May 19, 2014. The amazing day started at the Supreme Court Building with a private continental breakfast for the group. The swearing-in ceremony was conducted by Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr., and alumnus Matt Pfeiffer (‘00) served as the Movant by making the motion for the group to be admitted to the Bar of the United States Supreme Court.

Hon. Melissa Olivero (‘97) Receives Outstanding Alumni Award for the College of Law

Hon. Melissa M. Olivero, an Administrative Law Judge for the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) received the College of Law Outstanding Alumni Award from the NIU Alumni Association on April 25, 2014. Judge Olivero has served with the NLRB's Division of Judges since September 2013. She transferred from a similar position with the Social Security Administration. One of only 40 such judges in the country, she has authority to docket, hear, settle, and decide unfair labor practice cases nationwide.
2014 Snapshots

Il Supreme Court Justice Anne Burke talks with NIU law students after oral arguments in Chicago on January 22.

Minority Alumni Reception in Chicago on February 19 with Kenneth Wright ('98), April Morgan ('08), and Katie Haskins Becker ('11).

5K Dean’s Team Brian Moore ('92), Dean Rosato Perea, Prof. Cordes, Kate Guensburg ('14), and Prof. Jones on April 12.

2014 Professor the Year David Taylor with students on April 28.

Golf Outing on June 7 with 1st place team: Jason Hiland, Riley Oncken ('04), Grant Goltz, and Dr. Jason Friedrichs.

NIU Day at Cellular Field on July 19 with Dean Rosato Perea, Kenya Jenkins-Wright ('03), Ald. Bob Fioretti ('78), and Hon. Bill Haddad.

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Homecoming at the NIU Law Tailgating Tent on October 11.

Health Advocacy Clinic dedication began with visit from NIU President Baker and Trustee Chair John Butler on October 30.

Casino Night at NIU Law on October 10.

Legal Prep Academy from Chicago visits NIU Law and participates in Mock Trial on November 11.

IL Reception in Rockford, IL with Chief Judge Joseph McGraw at the Zeke Giorgi Legal Clinic on August 13.

Courtroom as Classroom with Judge Ruben Castillo hosting law students from Agen, France on September 3.

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Alumni on the Move

1978
James Glasgow received an award from the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women’s Network for his work to protect victims of domestic violence.
Robert Handley was elected to the ISBA Assembly.
Dean Maragos was elected to the Board of Directors of the Hellenic Bar Association of Illinois.
Cherilyn Murer was appointed to the National Readmission Prevention Collaborative.
Hon. John A. Wasilewski (ret.) was elected to the ISBA Assembly.

1979
George Huff was honored at a ceremony on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, recognizing his distinguished career at The Administrative Office of the United States Courts.
James McCluskey was elected Secretary of the ISBA Board of Governors.
Hon. Joseph R. Waldeck retired from the 19th Judicial Circuit and joined Schiller, DuCanto & Fleck LLP as a partner.

1981
Kathleen Zellner was named Person of the Year by The Chicago Lawyer.

1982
Ron Wittmeyer was elected 1st Vice President of the Northwest Suburban Bar Association.

1983
Hon. Francis M. Martinez was appointed associate judge in the Illinois 17th Judicial Circuit.

1985
Hon. Phil Nicolosi was appointed associate judge in the Illinois 17th Judicial Circuit.
David Olson was ranked in the 2014 Chambers USA directory for excellence in the practice area of Labor & Employment: Employee Benefits & Compensation.

1987
Keith Grant was installed as President of the Lake County Bar Association and elected President of the Illinois Public Defender Association.

1989
Lisa M. Nyuli was elected Treasurer of the ISBA Board of Governors.

1991
Alice Sackett Henrikson was installed as director on the Kane County Bar Association Board of Managers.

1992
Brian A. Schroeder joined Schiller DuCanto & Fleck LLP as a partner.

1993
Hon. Martin Mengarelli was appointed associate judge in the Illinois 3rd Judicial Circuit.

1994
Russ Slifer was named the regional director for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in Denver, CO.

1995
Robin Belleau was named Executive Director of the Illinois Lawyers’ Assistance Program.
Rich Lenkov was named one of the “50 Most Influential People in Workers’ Compensation.” He also co-hosts Legal Face-Off, a WGN podcast.
Lisa Schultz was named partner at Collins & Henderson in Beloit, WI.

1999
Karl Kelz opened the Kelz Law Office, LLC in Medford, WI. after serving 10 years as Taylor County DA.
Sonni C. Williams was elected to the ISBA Board of Governors.

2000
Matt Pfeiffer was installed as a member of the DuPage County Bar Association Board of Directors.

2003
Kenya A. Jenkins-Wright was elected to the ISBA Assembly.

2004
Ryan Lipinski is the Compliance Officer for Cook County Health and Hospitals System.

2005
Bob Morgan was named to the 3rd Annual Jewish “36 Under 36” List.
Amanda Reese became a partner at Michael, Best & Friedrich in Madison, WI.

2006
Jonathon Hoag made partner with SmithAmundsen LLC in St. Charles, IL.

2007
Kevin McHugh was named a 2014 member of the Top 100 National Trial Lawyers.

2009
Rocio S. Becerril’s Chicago-based immigration law firm, The Law Office of RSB, expanded services into the western suburbs of Warrenville, IL.
Joseph Hylak-Reinholtz joined the health care law practice group at Much Shelist in Chicago, IL.

2010
Stephanie Hilton was appointed State’s Attorney for Hancock County, IL.

2011
Katie Haskins Becker was installed as secretary of the DuPage Association of Women Lawyers and member of DuPage County Bar Association Board of Directors.
Kristen Shaffer joined the firm of Shuttleworth & Ingersoll in Cedar Rapids, IA.

2012
Emmet C. Fairfield is a judicial law clerk for Justice Lisa Holder White of the Illinois Appellate Court, 4th District.
2015 Calendar of Events

February
25 Minority Reception, 5:30-7:30 p.m., TBA

March
27 Riley Lecture, 3:00 p.m., DeKalb, IL
27 PILS Auction, 5:00 - 10:00 p.m., DeKalb, IL

April
11 5K, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., DeKalb, IL
17 Law Review Symposium, on Marijuana Legalization, 9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., DeKalb, IL
24 Faculty Symposium, on Undocumented Minors, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., DeKalb, IL

May
23 Commencement, 2:00 p.m.

June
6 NIU Law Golf Outing

The Chicago Initiative

As part of our ongoing commitment to prospective Chicago-based students, NIU Law has spearheaded a new program, The Chicago Initiative. Based at our new office located at 73 W. Monroe, the law school now offers its various admission programs in Chicago. The Chicago Initiative, designed for prospective law students currently going to college or working in the city, offers regularly scheduled Information Sessions on NIU Law’s curriculum, clinics, and career opportunities. Prospective applicants seeking admission to the Fall 2015 entering class can also participate in the Admission Interview Program.

We believe that The Chicago Initiative will encourage more Chicago-based students to take a closer look at NIU Law, by making it more attractive for those that live and/or work in the heart of Chicago’s Loop to learn more about the unique value proposition of the NIU Law experience.