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Litigation Center at Golden Gate University  
School of Law

Centers, Clinics, & Programs

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7-2020

## **The Exhibit, the Litigation Center Newsletter - Summer 2020**

Golden Gate University School of Law

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# THE EXHIBIT

Golden Gate University School of Law's Litigation Center Newsletter

## ZOOM SUMMER TRIAL AND EVIDENCE PROGRAM IS A SUCCESS!



### Congratulations Summer Litigation Class of 2020

Another summer at GGU comes to a close and another batch of future litigators are propelled into their second year of law school ready to take on the courtroom. This year's Program was unconventional as the students were tasked with learning trial skills via Zoom due to the coronavirus pandemic. Despite that hurdle, the students rose to the challenge and excelled. Twenty-five students participated in this summer's challenging nine-week, eleven-unit program. The biggest STEP class yet! They came out on the other side as stronger students, litigators, and people for doing so.

A summer in the Program begins with an intense 40 hours of instruction and advocacy practice called "Immersion Week." After just one week of intensive practice, the students are tasked with trying an entire jury trial with a partner. In the following eight weeks, students practice and develop their trial skills in order to build a solid foundation in litigation.

This year's Program featured a cadre of nine professors led by GGU Litigation Center Director Rachel Brockl. Instructors included criminal defense attorneys, Steve Whitworth and David Vogelstein, performance coach, Harriet Schiffer Scott, and many visiting professors from around the country. The program also featured local judges, and guest speakers from top Bay Area litigation law firms, local district attorney's offices and public defender's offices. It was a summer to remember!

### Upcoming Fall Events

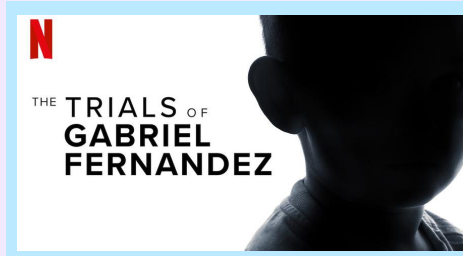
This fall, the Litigation Center is proud to present a two-part series with the litigating attorneys from Netflix's *Making a Murderer* and *The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez*.

**Part One: The Defense Attorneys from *Making a Murderer* - Jerry Buting & Dean Strang**



Thursday, September 17 4:00-6:00 pm

**Part Two: The District Attorney from *The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez* - Jon Hatami**



Monday, October 12 4:30-6:30 pm

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## Save the Date

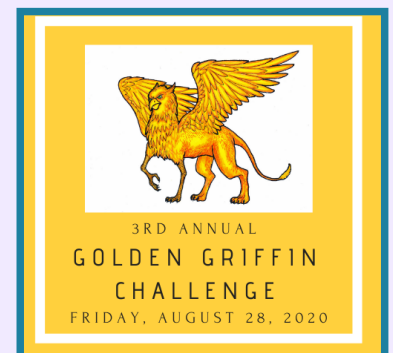
OCTOBER 23-25, 2020



Volunteers are needed to help with our 9th Annual *In Vino Veritas* Mock Trial Competition. We need trial attorneys and judges to judge and evaluate our competition, and we need student volunteers to act as bailiffs and timekeepers. Trials will tentatively run as follows:

**Friday 10:00 am-1:00 pm & 3:00-6:00 pm**  
**Saturday 10:00 am-1:00 pm & 3:00-6:00 pm**  
**Sunday 10:00 am-1:00 pm**

Those interested in volunteering should email the Litigation Center at: [invino@ggu.edu](mailto:invino@ggu.edu)



WELCOME TO THE BAXTER OFFICE  
LITIGATION CENTER DIRECTOR & PROFESSOR  
RACHEL BROCKL

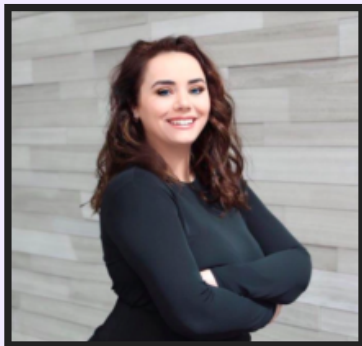


We are thrilled to announce that Professor Brockl will continue to lead the Litigation Center as she moves into the Director position after solely heading the Center as Interim Director since March. Over these past four months, Professor Brockl has taken on the daunting task of transforming the 1st STEP Trial & Evidence Program into online instruction, founded the 1st STEP Mentorship Program this summer, procured several high profile speakers for the fall semester - the defense attorneys who tried the Steven Avery case and the lead Deputy District Attorney on the Gabriel Fernandez case, and she helped to develop two new fall courses - Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault in Criminal Law Practice and Overcoming Civil Litigation Obstacles.

For the future of the Center, Professor Brockl plans to continue making opportunities for students to get involved and grow, whether by offering enhanced curriculum, cutting edge topics for speaker series, networking events, resume reviews, self-care check-ins, and more. Professor Brockl is also ecstatic to have a bright young woman, Clodagh Mauchline, joining the Litigation Center as the new Baxter Fellow and she looks forward to accomplishing these goals through this collaborative partnership.



2020 JUDGE LEE D. BAXTER FELLOW IN  
LITIGATION - CLODAGH MAUCLINE



Clodagh Mauchline, a recent alum of Golden Gate University, joins the GGU Litigation Center this August as the newest Baxter Fellow in Litigation. Clodagh was the first person in her family to receive a college degree, and to go on to law school. While a student at GGU, Clodagh interned at the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, GGU's Pro Bono Tax Clinic, and the Bar Association of San Francisco. During her time at the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, Clodagh conducted preliminary hearings, drafted and filed motions, and helped negotiate offers for clients at pre-trial conferences.

When she wasn't working in the clinic, Clodagh was putting in work as co-captain of the GGU National Mock Trial Team. She competed in four national competitions during her time at GGU. She competed at the MLK Civil Rights Trial Competition, the Capitol City Challenge in Washington D.C., the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice Competition, and the Texas Young Lawyers Association Competition. Clodagh was also an active member of multiple student organizations at GGU, including being the treasurer for both the Society of Litigators and the Youth and Family Law Society. She has served as a Teaching Assistant in Trial Advocacy, Evidence, and the 1st STEP program for two years. Clodagh was the 2020 recipient of the International Academy of Trial Lawyers Award for Most Outstanding Litigator.

As a graduate of the 2018 1st STEP class, Clodagh is looking forward to being a part of the Litigation Center team and providing opportunities to law students to teach them trial skills, confidence in the courtroom, and public speaking abilities. Clodagh will use her experiences to help organize the National Trial Team and the upcoming In Vino Veritas competition, as well as assist with the Center's Seminar Series, 1st STEP, and the Litigation Lunchtime Lecture Series.

## FALL TWO-PART SEMINAR SERIES

# "True Crime Netflix Series: The Impacts of Litigation as Home Entertainment"



Join us on **Thursday, September 17, 2020 from 4:00 - 6:00pm** as the Litigation Center virtually hosts both defense attorneys from the real life Netflix crime series "Making a Murderer". Professor Rachel Brockl will moderate this panel and ask about what really happened behind the scenes with Steven Avery and Brendan Dassey. The interview will include discussion topics on criminal justice reform and the current state of the case.



On **Monday, October 12, 2020, from 4:30 - 6:30pm**, the Litigation Center welcomes lead LA Deputy District Attorney Jon Hatami for an exclusive virtual interview. Mr. Hatami prosecuted the child abuse case that was featured on Netflix as "The Trials of Gabriel Fernandez". It is rare that the death penalty be requested for defendants in crimes of child abuse or that social workers be charged in connection to child abuse cases. However, Mr. Hatami will walk us through why he made these choices, what is being done about the failures of child protective serves in LA County, and how he handles sensitive cases like these.

**To RSVP and get the Zoom information for either event, please email the Baxter Fellow at [baxterfellow@ggu.edu](mailto:baxterfellow@ggu.edu)**



## JOIN SOCIETY OF LITIGATORS!

**First General Meeting - Thursday, August 27 - 5:00 p.m.**

The Society of Litigators (SOL) is excited to begin another year of training and mentoring future litigators on how to become effective advocates for their clients. SOL is a student-run organization that works together with the Litigation Center to create events and workshops that benefit future litigators and help teach essential courtroom skills. The outgoing President, Christina Evangelista (2020 graduate), passed the torch to Keenan Webb (3L) who will lead the organization during the 2020-2021 school year. Keenan's goal for this year is to provide trial skills training to all who have an interest in litigation at GGU: "Although we will be remote this fall, we hope to engage those curious about litigation and ignite the spark that hopefully guides students towards STEP, mock trial, and a career in the courtroom, equipped with an excellent foundation."

Throughout the year, SOL works with the Litigation Center to put on weekly workshops called the "Lunchtime Litigation Series." These workshops are fun and relaxed environments that focus on developing practical litigation skills, networking with Bay Area litigators, and expanding students' interests in litigation. All students are welcome to join! SOL's biggest event is the annual Bernie L. Segal Cross and Close Competition held early in the spring semester. It is for 1Ls only and gives students the opportunity to get a taste of what the Litigation Center has to offer. If you are interested in joining or participating in SOL events or meetings, email [sol@umail.ggu.edu](mailto:sol@umail.ggu.edu).



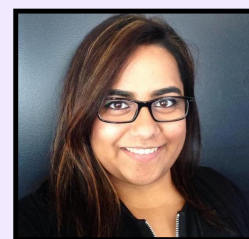
**President**  
Keenan Webb



**Vice President**  
Olivia Wheat



**Secretary**  
Mahtab Hajibabaei



**Advertising Chair**  
Vidhi Bhatia

# Student Reflections: 2020 1st STEP Visiting Professors

"Over the summer, STEP students heard guest lectures from five talented and esteemed attorneys. Professor Curtis Briggs was one such attorney and he was a pleasure to learn from. Professor Briggs's guest lecture was on the topic of expert witnesses. Although a complex subject, he framed the discussion well and explained his ideas in easy to understand terms. Professor Briggs described how expert witnesses must provide a perspective to the jury that they would not be able to develop on their own. According to Professor Briggs, the experts' testimony helps a jury develop an understanding of the facts of a case, and then form an opinion based on reliable methods and approaches consistently applied to those facts. Expert witnesses play a crucial role in any case whether it's criminal or civil. An expert witness has a strong influence on the jury and, therefore, must be qualified as an expert in a specific field before they may testify as to their professional opinion in front of the jury. The process of qualifying a witness as an expert allows the opposing party to cross-examine the witness on their qualifications. Professor Briggs taught us valuable lessons on the benefits of expert witness testimony and the significance of the qualifying process. His guest lecture made the subject matter most interesting." - *Antonia Bird*



Antonia Bird  
2L

"Professor Alvarez was a great mentor and professor throughout the 1st STEP Program Immersion Week. Her passion as a Deputy Public Defender was incredibly evident. Professor Alvarez shared her experiences with us and gave us great insight to prepare for our future as litigators. Her feedback and tips were highly valuable and assisted me throughout the Program. I feel more prepared for what is to come my way in the future because of her." - *Stephanie Andersen*



Stephanie Andersen  
2L



## 1st STEP Mentorship Program Victory

This summer, Professor Brockl spearheaded the 1st STEP Mentorship Program, which is comprised of STEP graduates and GGU alumni to offer STEP students additional resources, support, and comfort in times of stress. Mentors connected with their STEP mentees virtually prior to the start of the summer program and offered assistance throughout the summer. We received overwhelming positive feedback about the useful guidance by our mentors and we have already received numerous statements of interest from students who would like to step into the shoes of 1st STEP mentors next year. The Litigation Center would like to send a huge **THANK YOU** to all of our mentors for their support of our litigation students this summer and for making this new and innovative program a success!



"I was able to bond with my mentor, Annissa, over being the being the first in our families to attend law school. She gave me great advice about STEP, my legal courses, and just taking the time to stop and take care of my mental health. I have to say that having someone who has gone through 1st STEP and can sympathize, but also advocate for the program, is amazing. Thank you for providing this unique program!" - *Daniela Chacon, 2L*

"I was nervous about the transition of STEP being held over zoom. However, Jessica made sure that I knew I could reach out if I had questions, needed help, or just needed someone to talk to. She was very responsive, and we virtually met and talked throughout the semester. Although Jessica was a TA, studying for the bar, and raising her daughter, she always made time when I needed something. I am appreciative for both her work as my mentor and the positive energy that she brought to STEP for all participants." - *Sydney Mastey, 2L*



"Having Samantha Gatton as my mentor made successfully completing STEP that much more possible. She reached out to me constantly throughout the Program and provided advice, positive feedback, and guidance. She was an invaluable voice of confidence and knowledge whenever I needed it, and took time from her own BAR Prep studies to remain available whenever I had questions or needed to run ideas by someone. I know that my success in STEP was a direct result of having Samantha as my mentor, support, and friend." - *Jose Padron-Lemus, 2L*

# JOIN GGU'S NATIONAL TRIAL TEAM

**THE 3RD ANNUAL GOLDEN GRIFFIN CHALLENGE IS HERE!**

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2020**



Do you want to compete with the GGU National Trial Team? Then join the 3rd annual GOLDEN GRIFFIN CHALLENGE on Friday, August 28th, which will be conducted virtually this year. Choose a partner and prepare to conduct a cross examination and a closing argument for 10 minutes divided between you. The fact pattern and rules will be released on Friday, August 21st. Four top teams will compete in a final round for a chance to win the coveted *Golden Griffy* and a \$500 prize! A virtual reception will follow to announce the winners and to congratulate all competitors. Invitations to the 2020-2021 National Trial Team will be sent out after the reception, and orientation will take place the following day on August 29th. Learn more and sign up on the GGU Litigation Center TWEN page.

The GGU National Trial Team is already preparing for another exciting year of competitions! Last year, the Team competed in over eight mock trial competitions, coming in as semi-finalists in Stetson's National Pretrial Competition, and second place in the San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association Competition. This year's coaching staff and faculty are looking forward to another great season of success and accomplishments.



*"I can't express how honored and excited I am to serve as a Mock Trial Captain for the National Trial Team. This year is going to be quite different – having to effectively advocate over an internet connection from our respective homes. GGU's Litigation students this summer showed that whether in the courtroom or on the computer screen we're more than prepared to engage in trial advocacy regardless of the medium. Go Griffins!"*

**- Keenan Webb, Mock Trial Co-Chair**



*"I am so looking forward to the opportunity to be a Mock Trial Captain for the National Mock Trial Team in this unpredictable year. It's our time to shine! GGU students have a legacy of being adaptive, dynamic, and creative – these three characteristics drive us to success in the Mock Trial arena. Over the past two years, I have seen students from all walks of life bring their unique styles and perspectives into the courtroom to learn, grow, and achieve more than they ever thought possible. I am so proud of everyone's hard work, proud to be a part of this rewarding experience and look forward to litigating side by side with all of you this season!"*

**- Olivia Wheat, Mock Trial Co-Chair**



*"The National Trial Team provided me with experiences I never thought I would have while in law school. I got to travel across the country, compete against some of the most prestigious universities, brought home a first-place trophy, and most importantly gained invaluable mentors that I now consider great friends. As a new mock trial coach, I am excited to provide the support that my coaches have provided for me. I look forward to helping build-up every student I work with and ensuring their success and improvement each competition. Although not by any means easy, mock trial had a huge influence in making me the litigator I am and I look forward to pushing our GGU students to be the most effective litigators they can be."*

**- Roxana Araujo, National Trial Team Coach**

## Mock Trial & Advanced Mock Trial Competition

**MOCK TRIAL TEAM PRACTICE - BY INVITATION ONLY  
MON/THUR 6-9:00 PM, & SAT 9-12:00 PM**



# FALL 2020 LITIGATION COURSES

## Overcoming Civil Litigation Obstacles

MONDAY AFTERNOON

*Louie Castoria*



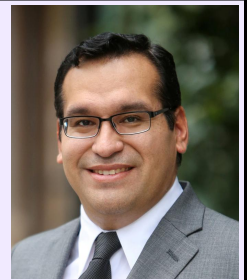
Using actual trial court case examples and milestone appellate decisions, students will apply creative strategies in role-playing exercises and written work assignments often assigned to associate attorneys: opinion letters, motions, reports to clients, and appellate briefs. Guest lecturers will provide diverse perspectives on how a recently-admitted lawyer can make a difference. Corequisite: Evidence.

**\*\*New Course Offering\*\***

## Trial Advocacy

MONDAY EVENING

*Judge Torpoco*



This course is taught by a local practicing judge. Throughout the semester, students will learn the basic skills needed by every lawyer going to court: conducting a direct examination, introducing documents and physical evidence, cross examining witnesses, making and answering objections, and preparing opening statements and closing arguments. The final examination for this course is a full trial. Pre/co-requisite: Evidence.

## Evidence in the Courtroom

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON

*David Vogelstein*



A course designed to help you master the California rules of evidence. Practical work will propel victory at trial with both judge and jury. You will use the evidence code, brain cognition theory, hands-on practice, research, and experiential and spontaneous problem-solving skills during actual trial situations to ensure that your story prevails. Prerequisite: Evidence and Trial Advocacy.

## Introduction to Expert Witnesses

WEDNESDAY EVENING

*Curtis Briggs*



The Expert Witness course introduces you to hiring, deposing, and obtaining trial testimony from an expert in a real case. During class, you will prepare your witness to give a deposition, practice voir dire, and prepare a cross examination for the opposing expert. This course counts toward completion of the Experiential Learning Requirement. Prerequisites: Evidence and Trial Advocacy.

## Introduction to Jury Selection

WEDNESDAY EVENING

*Alex Jakle*

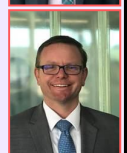


You've lived with the case for years, immersed in every little detail. But now it's time for trial: what will a jury think? This course will teach you how to think through your case like a juror and prepare it for a lay audience, how to write and conduct effective voir dire to identify (and strike) problematic or biased jurors, and how to strategically select the best jury you can.

## Advanced Trial Advocacy

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

*Brian Feinberg &  
Ryan Wagner*



This course is intended for students interested in pursuing careers in litigation and provides advanced practical techniques while promoting mastery in the courtroom. Utilizing case strategies, students will present simulated trials while effectually utilizing technology. Students will examine expert witnesses, learn witness control, and writing assignments will focus on advanced procedural and evidentiary issues. Prerequisite: Trial Advocacy or STEP or permission of the professor.

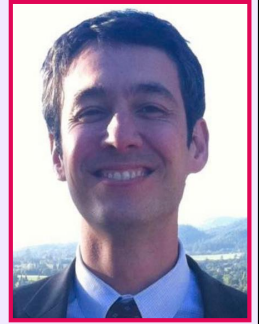
# FALL 2020 LITIGATION COURSES

## Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault in Criminal Law Practice

THURSDAY AFTERNOON  
Will Morehead

Any successful prosecutor or defense attorney will need to know how to handle sensitive cases, including those involving sexual assault or domestic violence. This course will examine these types of cases from start to finish, including investigation, the filing of criminal charges, trial, and sentencing, as well as the complex social issues and public interest surrounding these cases. Prerequisite: Evidence.

**\*\*New Course Offering\*\***



## Evidence

THURSDAY EVENING  
Judge Steckler

This course is taught by a local practicing judge. This required bar course is a survey of the principles of law and rules governing the admissibility of proof at criminal or civil trials, including direct and cross-examination of witnesses, impeachment of credibility, expert testimony, hearsay, privileged communication, and documentary proof. Prerequisite: Civil Procedure I and corequisite: Civil Procedure II.



## Mock Trial & Advanced Mock Trial - Competition

TEAM PRACTICES

MON/THUR - 6:00-9:00 PM & SATURDAY - 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

INVITATION ONLY

The National Mock Trial Team competes on a local and national level in mock trial competitions across the country. The Team is invite only based on your performance in the Annual Golden Griffin Challenge, an intra-school mock trial competition open to all upper-classmen who have taken evidence and have taken or are currently taking Trial Advocacy.

## Professional Presentation & Persuasion

THURSDAY AFTERNOON  
Harriet Schiffer Scott

Whether you are in the courtroom, or working with colleagues or clients, as a lawyer you must communicate and present your ideas in a compelling manner moving others to action. This class will prepare you to excel in the courtroom, eliminate nervous ties, and to think on your feet and capture the attention of all your listeners.



## Introduction to Written Discovery

THURSDAY EVENING  
Erik Faussner

Learn the secrets, shortcuts and pitfalls from an experienced litigator. Gain hands-on experience and outsmart your opponents while avoiding discovery sanctions. You will practice draft and defend written discovery, in addition to other written assignments, in-class exercises, and a final presentation exercise.





# Corner of Gratitude

## GGU Graduates Reflect on the Significance of the Litigation Center

"The Litigation Center played a huge role in preparing me for the future. The Center served as a place to go and to feel part of something, while surrounded by people with similar goals. It meant camaraderie. It meant having a place to go to receive answers to questions, which in turn prepared me to ask questions in the workplace. It meant the availability of receiving as much feedback as your psyche could tolerate, which prepared me to understand the importance of criticism in the workplace. It meant having a place to go to work through what you were trying to achieve which in turn prepared me to have confidence in what I was doing in the workplace. It offered courses with specific, pinpointed purposes to train you in an area such as voir dire, expert witnesses, and depositions. I was given the opportunity to be a teaching assistant for the courses which reinforced my knowledge, and gave me an understanding to implement as a litigator. Because the Litigation Center also ran mock trial it meant the ability to learn through practical experience with incredibly skilled educators and mentors. I would not have the confidence I have if it were not for GGU's Litigation Center, including the intensive Summer Trial and Evidence Program, mock trial, and all of the seminars presented. Thank you, I look forward to paying it forward."



**Samantha Gatton**

"Being part of the Litigation Center while I was a student at GGU was extremely rewarding. I initially signed up for STEP because I was afraid of public speaking and wanted to grow my confidence before I faced the real world. My confidence grew immensely over the 1L summer during the Program, and continued to grow each year that I came back as a teaching assistant. I think being a teaching assistant was my favorite part. It allowed me to break down the topics so they were more relatable to student. It helped them grasp the difficult concepts we learned through the Program. Seeing their passion and eagerness to learn always renewed my drive to be an attorney. Following STEP, I had the confidence to compete in four mock trial competitions. Being part of the National Trial Team allowed me a safe space to test out my litigation skills, and let me see how the Federal Rules of Evidence applied in real time. I was a board member for the Society of Litigators. This enabled me to mentor and teach the 1Ls and future STEP students some trial basics and techniques before entering the STEP program."



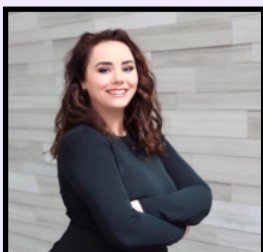
**Lauren Hauck**

"There have been countless people who have invested in me at the Litigation Center, from coaches to Baxter Fellows to faculty. The only way I can think of properly thanking them is not only by continuing to grow as an advocate and future litigator, but by also turning around and providing others the same type of support and guidance I was given. Not only do I have the foundational skills to be in a courtroom, but I am also a confident and passionate advocate. And I know that is because of the amazing people in the Litigation Center. It made every sacrifice, every effort, every late-night Bart ride with my daughter, Evelyn, completely and entirely worth it. I wouldn't trade it for the world. My sincerest gratitude to all of you."



**Jessica Juarez**

"The Litigation Center is an incredible resource for students at GGU. Getting involved with the Center is the best decision I have made thus far in my legal career. During my time as a student, my first interaction with the Litigation Center was through the 1st STEP Program. Going into the Program, I did not know if I wanted to (or even had the ability to) be a litigator. After completing the Program, armed with the tools and knowledge instilled in me by the incredible professors of the Litigation Center, I knew that litigation was the right path for me. Following my participation in the program, I became a board member for Society of Litigators, competed as a member of the national trial team, and eventually was given the privilege of becoming captain of the national trial team. None of this would have been possible without the support of the Litigation Center. The Center places a huge focus on learning foundational trial skills to the point where these skills become second nature. The Litigation Center prepares students to be able to walk into internships and post-graduate positions with extensive trial skills, confidence, and a competitive edge. I hope more students take advantage of the incredible opportunities that the Litigation Center has to offer by getting involved."



**Clodagh Mauchline**

AWARDS CEREMONY RAFFLE WINNERS



Bar Exam Pep Talk with 1st Time Bar Passers (Jason Schmaltz, Christine De Leo, Nicholas Bilof, Mackenzie Parker, Holly Graves)

Samantha Gatton

Resume Overhaul by Professor Brockl with free Professional Editor to Review

Samantha Gatton  
William Lippincott

Virtual Coffee Meeting/Happy Hour with Prof. Nanda on Lawyering and Social Justice

Jose Padron-Lemus  
Jessica Juarez  
Mahtab Hajibabaei



Virtual Texas Hold’Em Poker Game with Faculty (Professors: Brockl, Faussner, Williams, Devoy; Baxter Fellow Clo Mauchline)

Keenan Webb  
Jose Padron-Lemus  
Keydon Levy  
Lauren Hauck

Virtual Coffee Meeting/Happy Hour with Prof. Yates on Progressive Changes in the Law

Vidhi Bhatia  
Jose Padron-Lemus  
William Lippincott  
Rebekah Didlake

Virtual Coffee Meeting/Happy Hour with Prof. Scott on Anything Under the Sun

Ashley Lotti  
Keenan Webb  
William Lippincott  
Jessica Juarez  
Jose Padron-Lemus  
Lauren Hauck



A Supplement/Hornbook of Student’s Choice (Up to \$100 value; provided/shipped by Heather Varanini)

Rebekah Didlake

Virtual Tea Time with Prof. McKenna and Starbucks Giftcard

Vidhi Bhatia

Bottle of Wine

Jose Padron-Lemus

SPECIAL THANKS!



We would like to extend a special thank you to **Roxana Araujo** and **Mateo Jenkins** for all the hard work they have done in order to support the Litigation Center!



**Roxana** served the Litigation Center over the past year as the Baxter Graduate Fellow in Litigation. Thank you for all the hard work you have done. We will miss you as Baxter Fellow, but we are so excited to have you as a new member of the coaching staff of GGU’s National Trial Team!



The Litigation Center is incredibly grateful to **Mateo** for all of his hard work. Mateo serves as an integral part of the backbone to the Litigation Center, and without his support the Center would be unable to run events and operate as smoothly as it does. Thank you, Mateo!