

Saturday

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Stetson University - College of Law

Admitted Student Open House Live Stream

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[Captioner standing by]

[The webinar will begin shortly, please remain on the line.]

[The broadcast is now starting. All attendees are in listen-only mode.]

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Good morning, everyone, my name is Karla Davis-Jamison and I'm the Assistant Dean for Strategic Enrollment Management, Admissions here at Stetson Law.

On behalf of myself, Darren Kettles, Carmen Johnson and the entire Admissions Team, I want to thank you for joining us this morning for this special live stream event.

We are pleased that you set aside time to meet with us today. While we are not able to meet with you on campus, we hope this live stream gives

you a better sense of the Stetson community.

I'm joined today by two of our esteemed law faculty Professors, Professor Kristen David Adams and Professor Louis Virelli, III.

Professor Kristen David Adams teaches Commercial Transactions, Dispute Resolution Board, Homeless Advocacy Externship, International Sales Law and Arbitration, Law through the Lens of Poetry, Payment Systems, and Property.

Professor Adams serves as one of the Directors for the Dispute Resolution Board and runs the Homeless Advocacy Externship Board.

She has taught at Stetson Law for the last 20 years and she served as Interim Dean. She regularly teaches first year. And Professor Adam's topic this morning will be the "The 1L Experience."

Professor Louis Virelli, III graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. He teaches courses in Administrative Law, Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law and Separation of Powers.

Professor Virelli has received the Dickerson-Brown Excellence Award for Faculty Scholarship. He coaches one of Stetson's Moot Court Teams and is Faculty Advisor to the Stetson Chapter to the American Constitution Society and the Stetson Law of Democrats.

He has taught at Stetson for 13 years, lucky 13, as he says, and he regularly teaches first years and also serves as the Chair of the Faculty Admissions Committee.

Professor Virelli's topic today is "How to Get the Most out of Law School."

I want to mention two quick housekeeping notes. One, we ask that

you please be sure to keep your mics muted throughout the session. And number two, if you have questions for Professor Adams or Professor Virelli, please post your questions in the chat feature. We will reserve time after both presentations to take your questions.

We ask you to focus your questions in topics raised in the faculty presentations. And if you have questions related to other topics, maybe admission-focused or scholarship-focused that you would like to discuss, we encourage you to reach out to the Admissions Office and we will be happy to help you.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: Good morning, I'm delighted to talk with you today about empowering yourself to learn. All of us are individuals, students, faculty and staff alike. And in Law School, you may experience your Professors being individuals, and dare I say characters, even more than you did in your prior studies. Law Professors are sort of known for that. So my remarks are focused on how you can be an empowered learner. That is how you can create your own best learning environment in each and every one of your Law School classes.

So what's the goal here? The goal here is to get you to think about your legal education and what might be a slightly different way. And that is a series of opportunities to gather information, gather skills, and gather techniques all which will be relevant and applicable to you as an individual, regardless of the feel in which you choose to deploy your legal training ultimately.

So how do we do this? And as we get into talking about how we do it, I invite you to ask what I think is really the central question for empowered

learning and that is: Why should I care?

I often begin my first-year Real Property class by saying to my students something that shocks them a little bit, which is sort of the point. I say, I don't know why you should care about my class. And then I pause for a moment to let that sink in. And typically while I'm pausing, my students are giving me and one another some really strange looks as they try to figure out why on Earth I would say something that sounds so shocking.

And then I repeat the sentence just a little bit differently the second time. I don't know why YOU should care about my class. I'm going to spend a few moments encouraging you to invest the time and care in figuring that out because it's going to make all the difference in the world in how the semester goes for you. Because, you see, I'm very much in touch with why I care about my Real Property class and in every other class I teach as well. I care about the social justice implications of the course, regardless of where we are talking about eminent domain or landlord-tenant or the dreaded Rule Against Perpetuities. That's my lens. And it makes me proud to teach this material because this material matters so much to me. But that's my lens.

Yours may very well be different and it's not just okay that your lens might be different from mine, it's actually wonderful. It enriches our law profession, our school, and our community to have really smart people with really different lenses having conversations about things that matter.

So let's talk a little bit about how you find your lens. Those of us who wear glasses know that our prescription lenses make the world look different to us. They make it look better. They make it look brighter. They make it look clearer. The lens is what we look through that changes our perception

of the world around us.

And our doctors spend a lot of time making sure that we find the right lens because it makes all the difference in the world.

It's the same thing with legal education. When you find your lens, and by that I mean when you find that way of looking at the law that makes everything brighter, clearer, and better for you, it makes all the difference. It makes the material you learn not only more interesting, but also more memorable. When you learn in context, you remember what you learned and you enjoy it a lot more.

And let there be no mistake, legal education is meant to be something you enjoy, not just something that's good for you.

So a little bit more on this concept of finding your lens. For some of you finding your lens will be the easiest thing you have been asked to do in a long time because you're coming into Law School knowing exactly what your lens is.

For many others of us, this is a much more nuanced question and this slide is for that group. I want to share with you some advice that was valuable to me that I received a number of years ago. If you don't know what you value, check your calendar and your check bank account because, you see, the way you spend your time and the way you spend your money, especially beyond the essentials like food and shelter, may tell you a lot about who you are and with a you ultimately value.

It may also at certain times in a person's life help to explain a certain discomfort you might feel. If you feel that you're spending your time and your money in way that is don't reflect your values.

I've experienced that also and that realization was helpful to me.

So I want you to take a few moments and think about what your lens is or even just what you think is might be, if you're not sure what it is.

I'll tell you a little bit about me. And I want to encourage you, once you get to Law School, I hope you will also think about sharing who you are when you aren't in school with your classmates.

So this slide is me. I told you a little bit about my professional lens. My professional lens is social justice, but I want to share a little bit more about myself. I am the tea-loving Tampa Bay Rays fan who has two Vizsla dogs and I enjoy collecting books and fountain pens, among other things, but that's me. All of us have differences.

I want to talk about the difference we make when you approach your legal education knowing what your own lens is and also recognizing and respecting other people's lenses. Whether we are talking about your Professors or your classmates. You're all going to take the same set of required courses, but you will experience them through different lenses that reflect your Professors' professional and scholarly backgrounds.

You may have a class such as Employment-law-flavored Contracts, Social-justice-flavored Torts, or Feminism-flavored Criminal Law, or Skills-flavored Evidence, all of those things and more are possibilities.

And as you approach that and as you go through the Law School experience and especially the required curriculum in the 1L year, I want you to picture a delicious buffet. I mean, a big, glorious, Ritz-Carlton buffet with all of the trimmings, from the carving station to the jumbo shrimp to the sushi, to fresh fruits and veggies. It won't be all your favorite, but give it all a try, you

may be surprised by what you end up enjoying. To me that's one of the wonder of things about legal education.

Along the road one of the things you may experience is that your perspective may change because part of what's so wonderful about this feast of different subjects and lenses around you, your own, your Professors, your classmate, your perspectives may change and they will become more informed while you are in Law School.

This is also a really good moment in time to take inventory. And by taking inventory here's what I mean, pausing to take note of who you are, what you value, but then also what skills you have already mastered, and what skills you want to learn during this process.

And I welcome you to take the opportunity to do some journaling or even just take a few moments today and jot down some notes in a place where you can find them.

So what skills have you already mastered? Those are wonder of assets, things to be protected, but also further developed during your time in Law School.

And then, what skills would you like to master? What do you know you don't yet know how to do, but you really want to know how to do it? Share that list with your Professors while you're in Law School. We can help, we can help you point you in the direction of opportunities that will help you to enhance those skills that you want to master and haven't yet had the chance to do.

I also want to encourage you to be patient with yourselves, be patient with your learning curve. Some of you will take quite naturally and quite

quickly to the highly stylized form of learning that is Law School, others are going to take more time and that's all right. Be patient with yourselves. Be patient with one another.

And in addition, I'd like to provide you with some perspective. Grades are important things certainly for some jobs, but only for some. For many other wonderful legal jobs, grades aren't even close to being the most important thing. Please hear me again, not even close to being the most important thing you bring to the table. So please don't undervalue your judgment, your integrity, your professionalism, your pose, your writing skills, your advocating skills. Those matter a great deal as well.

I've shared with you the fact, in addition to the fact that all of your Professors are individuals, so are you, so you are. And I want to encourage you as you figure out what your own lens is or what you think it might be to apply your own lens to Law School. If your Professor teaches Contracts through the lens of Employment Law and you want to do Government work, that's fantastic. Apply your own lens. It's a great way to make it stick and it's a great way to make your Law School experience more enjoyable and more memorable as well.

So the last thing that I want to do in my brief remarks this morning is a closing exercise. I want you to take a few moments and write two notes to yourself and just tuck them away somewhere.

The first note is this: What is one thing about which you're apprehensive? What is one thing about which you're apprehensive when you think of Law School?

And the second is: When you think of Law School, what is one thing

you are really excited about? What is one thing you are really, really excited about Law School?

And here's what I want you to do with those, that thing which you apprehensive, chances are you in excellent company. Reach out to your Professors, our Ambassador, our wonderful Admissions Team and others, this is not our first rodeo, we can help you and help you make that things about which you are apprehensive one of the many successes in Law School.

And the thing you are excited about, consider that to be a promise you have made to yourself, that no matter what you're going to find a way to explore that during the time that you're in Law School.

So keep these, tuck them away, come back to them and allow them to be part of what is really wonderful and exciting about the first year law experience.

Thank you so much for your time this morning. I hope you'll reach out. I look forward to your questions and I hope that you will seriously consider Stetson's offer to join our community. Thank you so much.

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Thank you so much, Professor Adams. That was very informative. And just to reiterate, Professor Adam's charge to contact the Admissions Office, contact faculty, contact our Student Affairs Office with any questions, we are here for you and look forward to staying engaged with you throughout the next several months leading up to the start of Fall classes.

At this time I want to switch over to Professor Virelli. Professor Virelli, are you ready to take it away?

>> PROFESSOR LOUIS J. VIRELLI, III: I am, Karla.

Thank you for taking time on a Saturday to be with us. Lots of virtual learning has been going on. I have a 13 and 9-year-old who are doing that in the kitchen. I understand there can be fatigue watching a screen and listening. I hope this will be more than that to you. I hope you get a chance to ask questions and get better insight, this is one of our best jobs, communicating with current students and prospective students. It's always invigorating and energizing to meet you all and get a sense of what you are interested in.

That allows me to segue to my part of the conversation. I'm lucky to have colleagues like Professor Adams who are so invested in our students' success. You hear that a lot from people, but as you get to know Stetson more and more, that's really the fabric of who we are. We spent a lot of energy and resources at every level of the institution, faculty, staff, students trying to help one another succeed and especially help our students succeed. And Professor Adams talked about mostly ways to succeed as a law student. She mentioned other things I'm going to build off of.

My part is to talk about how to take your time at Law School and build a set of skills and a collection of information, sort of a dossier that will help you be fulfilled and content in your life after Law School.

You know, we're all familiar with the litany of lawyer jokes out there, they overwhelmingly sort of imply that somehow a career in law is not all it's cracked up to be sometimes. I think that's unfortunate and, frankly, not true. I got everything I could have imagined out of my legal career, both as a practicing lawyer and Law Professor and I think my story is not unusual.

The trick is helping students early in their career develop an idea of

how they can bet what they want out of this exercise and that's what I want to talk a little about today.

As my students will no doubt tell you, it is not unusual to make it about me. Let's start there. I have a story that I think relates to the larger picture of what I want to talk about today.

I am a failed engineer. I'm, in fact, more than that, I'm a failed Engineering Professor. I am someone who started their career junior year in high school quite enamored with what I was doing. I really liked knowing the amount of energy at the top of the roller coaster and how that would relate to when you got to the bottom, and how far a ball would go when you hit it with a bat. I was an Undergraduate engineering student.

My sophomore year as a grad student, I was tutoring pre-med students. That's a common thread, I'm teaching pre-med students in physics, if you have ever met a pre-med student or have been one, you know it's not the calmest group on campus, it's not an easy going group stereotypically. It was a tough group to teach because they are used to being good at things.

And I loved this. I wasn't sure how much I would like it, but it totally captured me, the idea of teaching somebody something and maybe it was having a captive audience and maybe the idea of hearing my own voice. At the minimum, I was having a good time.

I thought maybe this is what I should do, maybe I should be someone who teaches this subject to other people for a living. Not profound, but something I have not come up with based on my family history. My mother is an elementary school, it took two and two to put things together. Bottom line is sophomore year I had a notion that I wanted to teach people physics

for a living.

I started pursuing. One was to become a physics teacher right out of college and I pursued that along with an engineering degree. Engineering has enough physics in it that I would get by. Spent six weeks there before I learned something I should have known from the beginning, engineering was super hard and complicated. More complicated than I was able to master or at least make my own that I could be a happy and productive teacher of it. So six weeks in, I said to my advisor, who was a very kind and insightful man, I think I need to move on. And he nodded his head, apparently he knew that already, and said, yeah, you should probably move on. I applied to Law School.

Why is any of that relevant? Besides the fact I like telling the story? I am learning in this arc things about myself I didn't otherwise know. I'm learning them by doing.

When I get to graduate school in engineering, I am no less enthusiastic about teaching, four years later, I still think I want to be a teacher, I am now certain that neither I nor the engineering field wants me to be an Engineering Professor. That was easy.

But I didn't give up on the teaching idea. I thought of a different field. I went to Law School. I went across the street to Law School and that was easy to avoid moving, but other than that, just a coincidence. I go to Law School and everything falls together.

I enrolled in my first year Constitutional Law class. I was enamored and I said, this is it! I asked my Professor how I become a Common Law Professor. He was very kind and chuckled at me, thinking there is no way this kid is going to be a Common Law Professor. I started pursuing that

path.

That was 1997, I did not get a law teaching job for another decade, but during that process I had an idea of what I wanted to do and I was able to make decisions, even though they were iterative, even though they weren't getting me all the way to where I wanted to go, I was able to make decisions with what I thought I wanted to do. I underline "thought." At no point in this process, even when I got to graduate school, at no point was I certain, that's not the way life works. Life doesn't work out such that your decisions are 100 to zero in terms of your confidence level. But I was pretty sure.

I was more sure about the idea I wanted to teach and eventually I wanted to teach law, than I was about anything else, so I pursued that idea and at each step I learned more about myself.

What does this have to do with you? The good news is all of the engineering talk is basically over and there will be no math, I promise. I should have said that ahead of time in case anybody was getting nervous.

I still like the occasional bout with arithmetic, but that's not fair to you. It is relevant because it sets a framework for what I think you all need to understand about how we go about helping and working with you at Stetson and more importantly, how I think every young aspiring professional should go about deciding what they want out of life.

What's the first part of this theory? It's think like a scientist. Again, no math, just thinking like a scientist. What does it mean to think like a scientist? At least for my purposes. It means having an idea and testing it. Getting data. We live in a data-rich society. I'm not a statistician, but I can tell you there is always value, at least in my experience there always has been,

and in the dozens or scores or hundreds of students I've had this conversation with over the last 13 years, the feedback is overwhelmingly this is a useful way to do it.

Gather information about your idea and see if you were right or not. Now are you going to determine if you were 100% correct? Not all the time.

For example, when I go and pursue engineering education because I like physics, am I certain I'm right the minute I get there? No. Am I learning more about that decision over time? Yes. When I get to graduate school, am I sure I was wrong? No question about it. But it took a long time.

All of that data collection matters. Analyzing that data, again, not a complicated technical process, but thinking hard about what it is that I like and what it is I don't like about my current situation.

That sounds easy, but it's shockingly awkward or not intuitive to students and it was not intuitive to me, which is why I think my story is relevant. I don't think I'm unique in anyway. I think I got lucky in some regard. It's better to be lucky, a little luck never hurt anybody. I was doing something by accident that I think is important to highlight for students. I was evaluating things I was doing at a pretty detailed level. At least the end, right?

So what is it I like about engineering? I like the problem-solving. What is I don't like? Everything else. I hate being in the lab. I hate everything about it, I don't like anything but the presentations.

How do those skills translate to a line of work or pursuit that is more intensely connected to the skills I like and am good at and less connected to the skills I'm not enthusiastic about or don't want to develop? And that's

really the first step.

So think like a scientist and do it with respect to skills not jobs.

So what does that mean? Well, Professor Adams talked a little about this, right? Developing skills through your own lens as a first year is a good start. And we do this your whole career. This is not something that gets accomplished in your first year, you have plenty of time. But the earlier we start thinking about our careers this way, I think the better.

How do we develop -- how do we focus on skills we want to develop? We start being pretty nuanced about what we are good at, what we like, what we find frustrating, what we wish we were better at, like but could be better at, all of those things. We are collecting a list of skills we as spire too.

We then as faculty and staff, more experienced people, can help you find lines of work that match with those skill sets. Students come into my office all the time and say, I think I want this job is. And I say why? They say because I like to do X.

I say, you know, you can do that thing, you can do X in lots of places. Why do you want the particular job you mentioned? And usually the answer is, it's the only job I can think of that does that.

So the job calculus is something that happens later and is something that we, as an institution, can help you with quite easily because your faculty has had most of these jobs. Somebody has. And I'm very proud to say we work together doing this. So that collaboration really benefits students, in my view.

So that's the first step. What are we doing? We're thinking like a scientist. All that means is we have an idea and we are chasing it down and

collecting data about it. And the idea is skills-based. What things do I like to do? Am I a writer? Am I a researcher? Am I a talker? Who do I want to talk to? Do you I want to be somebody that talks about the law? Do I want to be someone would talks to the juror about a story that happened on a given day? All of these things we can help flush out later, I'm not asking for answers at all, but by framing the question that way we make a lot of progress early on in helping students get a sense of what they want.

Resiliency is critical. So scientists, one of the many reasons I was a failure as an engineer is that scientists embrace failure at a rate that I found sort of awe inspiring. Most scientific experiments fail, but there's always a kernel of usefulness in there.

I work with a lot of students and I work with a lot of good students, successful students, they all good students, successful students, and I can say the hardest thing to teach them is that getting no as an answer educational. And that's when I end up starting with my story about being a failed engineer. The universe told me in response to my request, can I be or should I be an Engineering Professor? No. I want to be clear about that. And I heard them.

That no was the best thing that happened to me in my early 20s because it helped me eliminate confidently one pursuit while helping me understand what exactly I was wrong about and, in turn, what I was right about. What I was right about, I still wanted to teach, I just didn't want to teach this thing called engineering. And everybody, as I said, is better off for that.

Getting no has another benefit, you can determine if you have maximized your potential. I proudly announce I have been rejected from

some of the most prestigious and sought after jobs in the country.

Rejected outright and appropriately. I was not the best choice for those jobs.

I did not make that decision for myself. I made the hiring entity make that decision for me.

I actually was watching television this morning and there's a story about a Baylor University basketball player, Freddie Gillespie. He started his basketball career very late in life and started in Division 3 at Carlton College. Division 3 Athletic Program, not a highly rated athletic program. He transferred to Baylor and they said, you can be a walk-on, but you don't have the credentials for a scholarship.

He said on TV, and I thought, boy, am I going to tell the students this at the webinar, he said, I wasn't going to say no to myself. I was going to put myself in a position to get what I wanted to and make somebody else tell me no. And that is a really important lesson.

Can it be frustrating? Maybe. Can it be humbling? Sure, but I think in a good way. What it does, no question about it, it sets a ceiling. I tell students all the time, unless you know who won't hire you, you can't be sure you have the full list of people who will hire you. Until you get to no, you haven't set the bar. You haven't set the ceiling.

I'm proud to say I set that ceiling in stone, in steel girders, it is built quite solidly, I know exactly who in America will not hire me. The flip side is I know exactly who will because I went to that line and I had other people draw it for me. And that's something we really encourage you to do. And it's hard because you are all incredibly successful people, that's what brings you here today and you are not used to not achieving. I hope you get every job you

ever asked for, including the most aspirational ones. I encourage everyone to seek that no so you are sure you are maximized your potential.

Purpose, you need to have a purpose. You do not need to be certain of anything. In fact, I would suggest most people, if you are certain of what you want to do, that is terrific and I'm -- we will welcome that conclusion, we will help you pursue the thing to which you -- about which you are certain.

Most students that's simply not the case and that's not necessary. What is important, I think, is that you have an idea that is more likely than the other. In other words, I encourage students, make decisions, evaluate what you think you want, and decide which of those you want the most.

So if am I 60% confident that I want to be a Criminal Defense Attorney or I'm 60% confident I want to be an in-house mergers and acquisition lawyer, or an education lawyer, or I want to open my own business, 60% is great. 60% likely. 55% is fantastic. We can work with that. What I encourage students to do is act on it. So take that 60% likelihood and action-alize it, that's not a word, and work with it to find out if you are right. If that 60% turns into 80% or 90% or it turns into 30%, like me with my engineering pursuit.

I was at least 60% sure I wanted to be an Engineering Professor. Six weeks into Engineering School, I was 30% sure -- maybe 10%, but I was 90% sure teaching was my preferred choice. So act on those decisions.

Ironically, the most successful students often have the hardest time doing that because what I get a lot of -- what we get a lot of is, I'm interested in lots of things. Terrific. All smart people are, that's a good thing. The hard part is saying, I am more interested in corporate law than litigation. I'm more interested in Government service or the environment than I am in securities

regulation or family law. Or vice versa. It doesn't matter. The substantive answer, the questions matter not at all to us, but do I have a preference I can currently start acting on?

Then how do we do that? Well, then, hopefully, you will come to a faculty member, come to a staff member, we have an incredible Career Development Office, lots of people on campus to help with this, you can come to somebody with the institution and say, this is who I think I am: I think I'm a litigator, I think I'm somebody that likes writing and research, what are my choices? We can help you think of career paths.

And then the idea is to set a long-term goal. I can't emphasize enough, you are not making a binding deal with the University. You are not promising anybody anything. But having a long-term goal is really useful.

I also want to be clear I'm not talking about the Steve Jobs follow your passion line of reasoning. What distinguishes Steve Jobs is he is a genius and he was extraordinary in a very narrow way and it happened to be that his extraordinary ability matched his goals.

We see a lot of follow your bliss. If you are able to do that, that's terrific. That, in my mind is not the standard and that is not the measure of success in a career. What we are looking for in a career is a job that is rewarding, that has purpose to it, it doesn't have to be necessarily the only thing you could imagine doing or the only thing you could get out of bed and feel good about.

In fact, that's not generally true for most people's jobs. It is meant to be a positive aspect of your life. Unfortunately, for too many people, it's less than a positive part of their life and that's what we are trying to avoid.

The follow your bliss idea is too ambitious and, frankly, unrealistic. I certainly am not a genius so for me to have one passion project I can make a living doing is highly unlikely. I was precluded early for playing second base for the Philly's and I cannot play the bass so that rules out passion projects.

I'm doing something I love, that inspires me, motivates me all the time and I'm quite content in doing, but it does not have to be something as dramatic as follow your passion.

So we try to marry these things. You have a long-term goal. That long-term goal is 10-15 years out. You have heard this before. None of this is profound for planning.

It gives you a better idea of what the steps in between should look like. So set up as someone interested in being a Law Professor, I made a series of choices that made being a Law Professor more likely. I served on a journal as a law student. I did Court as a law student. I was a Judicial Clerk for Judges upon graduation. I worked for the Department of Justice, for which reasons that may not be obvious, but are obvious if you are in the industry, makes academia more likely. All of those jobs were terrific and I enjoyed very much and I'm convinced part of the reason I enjoyed them so much was they had something in common with my ultimate goal.

If you have an ultimate goal, the steps to get there, it stands to reason are more likely to be rewarding.

As I wrap up, how do you do that? So we have lots of ways early in your career that you can start testing these ideas of what your long-term goal is going to be and getting feedback as to how to adjust it. I like this thing about what I thought I wanted to do. I'm not crazy about this part of it. How do

I eliminate the part I'm not crazy about and use the part I'm interested in?

That process happens early, we can do it lots of ways. Class selections, of course, things like journal service, student organizations which are available to you very early in your career.

Of course, employment. In your first summer and after. Clinics and externships. I supervise the Federal judicial externship where students spend a semester in a Federal Judge's chambers. We have far more internship and externship placements than we have students. So the opportunity to get real experience and earn credit are enormous and that can be really informative.

And things like being part of the community, lawyers that have a common subject matter interest, where you can meet others. Pro bono activities are a great way to do that.

Before I tax your patience any more than I have, Stetson is an institution caring very much about getting students to a place, not only where they are successful law students, as Professor Adams said, but as you take the inventory of yourself, as she talked about, using that information to transition to a content, rewarding and productive career you can be proud and happy about and that starts as early as you are ready. And we are ready and willing to help you do that.

So thank you very much for your attention and I think now it's time to open it up for questions.

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Thank you, Professor Virelli, before I shift to questions for you and Professor Adams, I want to remind everyone, if you haven't already posted your question in the chat feature, please feel free to do so now. And we'll try to handle as many

questions as possible. We are prepared to take questions for the next 15-20 minutes.

One question that I just wanted to quickly address and then I'll switch the mic to Professor Virelli and Professor Adams is related to our current situation with COVID-19.

We obviously know there's a lot of questions and concerns related to what will be happening in the fall and I just wanted to quickly state that we certainly are continuing to prepare and plan to welcome you to Stetson Law in the fall. But we are also following very closely state and Federal policy and guidelines. And we're, you know, following those policies and guidelines in order to make sure our community is safe.

We'll continue to do so and obviously be in as close of contact with you as possible as to what those guidelines suggest we should be doing come August. I just wanted to mention that for any questions out there related to the current virtual setting that we find ourselves in.

So now, I want to see if there are some questions for Professor Adams or Professor Virelli. I think Professor Adams was prepared to tackle a few questions related to social justice and campus organizations.

Professor Adams.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: Absolutely, Dean Davis. Before I get into that, would it be helpful for both of us to talk about how we are handling our classes currently?

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: That would be perfect. Thank you.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: Absolutely. I am now using

the Microsoft Teams platform to teach my classes virtually. I'm teaching a seminar this semester. I'm teaching a large upper level class. I'm teaching a first year class. And then I also direct the Dispute Resolution Board and run the Homeless Advocacy Externship. And for each of those we're using the Microsoft Teams platform.

And I have, for the DR Board class and my externship next week invited a guest speaker to join us virtually to talk about some current events with us that are relevant to both Dispute Resolution and Homeless Advocacy.

For my seminar class, my upper level third year class, which is commercial transitions, and my first year class which is Real Property, it's a combination of a few different things.

So I am running my classes synchronously, but I'm also recording all of them because we, of course, have students who now because of family responsibilities and other needs aren't always able to join us at the time at which class is offered. So using that platform is kind of nice because the students can turn on their mics and their cameras and we can talk with one another.

And I am notorious for drawing pictures when I teach, so the school let me bring home one of their fantastic document cameras, so my students can still see that. I call that my virtual chalkboard. So we have the lesson and then we have conversation after the fact.

I'm also conducting virtual office hours. And I've told students the only real downside of that is I can't serve them tea in virtual office hours. If you come and visit me in my office, and I hope you will, I always offer my students a cup of tea as we talk about whatever it is on their minds. So we're doing that

in cyberspace these days.

>> PROFESSOR LOUIS J. VIRELLI, III: I think it also turns out to be a really nice segue because I'm using a different platform than Professor Adams, but trying to serve the same goal. I'm using a platform called Blackboard and it is for asynchronous learning, which those of you haven't been exposed to all of the terminology yet, just means something like this, where we are doing things live and in realtime.

I have two large classes this semester. I have a class of 86 and a class around 70. And we have been able to meet pretty seamlessly online in realtime.

Now I'm recording every minute of every class as well for the same reason. We don't want to put anybody at a disadvantage who is at home with children, who might be ill, who has technology problems, we are focused, I think it's fair to say, very closely on equity. We want to make sure everybody in this unusual situation has equal or similar access to the material.

I also am holding virtual office hours. And regularly, and I think this is true for Professor Adams as well, students feel very comfortable contacting us lots of ways. I'm always getting e-mail questions about class all the time. I joke that Siri and I have a very intimate relationship because I can dictate Constitutional law answers in Target and somehow she knows what I mean when I say Commerce Clause. That is continued. We had a culture of education that really helped the transition, which I'm proud of.

And I can't say enough about what the institution has done to switch over to a virtual environment about in two weeks. My classes have gone, as I

say, pretty seamlessly. I'm able to communicate with students in realtime. I'm able to get them involved in the conversation. They are chatting with each other in realtime basically by typing to one another. Sometimes they want me to comment. Sometimes they are just talking to each other. I'm able to talk to them. There's a virtual whiteboard feature on the Blackboard program, that's a little confusing semantically.

Students have been great in doing things like taking screenshots of the whole whiteboard and sharing that with their students in case it goes away, occasionally I will switch screens and lose something. It has really been a group effort and that's adding to the experience in a positive way. Everybody is a little unsettled by this situation and to have a community response the way we've had has been really great. I've been really proud of it.

And holding synchronous classes has been way more successful than I could have imagined. I'm not a high-tech teacher under most circumstances. I'm a chalkboard, podium sort of person and it's worked even better than I could have imagined.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: Dean Davis, would you remind us of the next topic you would like us to cover?

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Sure. If I could interject here. Thank you very much for both of those presentations.

We have a few questions from students in attendance today. A couple are asking things about exams. So what are exams like? And is it an all or nothing grade base or just an exam that covers a whole semester? Or do you assess other things such as projects, participation, and quizzes? Professor Adams, would you mind taking that?

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: I'd be delighted.

Remember how I said your Professors are individuals, so I speak only for myself here that I do a lot of interim assessment opportunities in my classes and whether they -- they are always available, but whether they are optional or whether they are required depends somewhat on the level and nature of the course.

So for my upper classman, the interim assessments are required. For my first years, they are optional, but highly recommended. Some of my colleagues do exactly the opposite for equally good reasons. And what I think we all have in common is not only a willingness, but an eagerness to interact with our students and provide feedback along the way so that they not only know where they stand, but also know that they have access to us as Professor Virelli was saying in a lot of different ways.

One of the things I love most about students is -- one of the things I love most about Stetson, rather, and my misspeak was telling, one of the thing I love most about Stetson is the level of interaction between faculty and staff and students. I think it's something that makes our environment really special.

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: Okay, great. So getting on to the next question, Professor Virelli, can you speak about the role of the Career Development Office? I know you mentioned that in your presentation today, but what does Stetson do and what steps do they take to help students achieve their goals while attending Stetson? What makes us special?

>> PROFESSOR LOUIS J. VIRELLI, III: I think that's a great question

and the Office of Career Development is an extraordinary place. If you look at, I mean, there's sort of the quantitative. So the failed engineer in me wants to use some numbers and I don't have specific numbers off the top of my head, but our success rate in terms of employment is extraordinary. And it has always been on the positive side of the curve as the market moves. So that office does a great job in helping students find employment.

But I think what is special about them is that not the end goal in and of itself. Having students be employed is important. No question about that, we all need to keep our lights on and fridges stocked. But really what is going on is this quest to have students not only be employed, but be employed in a way they are content with and proud of and they are building something that will be a positive part of their career and life going forward.

And that theme is what I meant to convey in my presentation more generally. The Office of Career Development is the lead, they are the experts in the market, the experts in the mechanics and process of gaining employment, but it's a campus-wide effort to help students realize what they want, what's available to them and help them achieve it.

And where faculty fit in, in terms of relaying our experience, helping students think through some of the big picture issues and then the nuts and bolts, recommendation letter, helping people connect with alums that are in the field or might be hiring. We get calls like that all the time from our alumni network, the community, Stetson, as you know, and as the students will likely know, to call it a major player is an understatement, it is a major community. The Office of Career Development is really the engine and the people in there are incredible in the amount of time and energy they are willing to spend, not

just on placement, but on development of ideas and goals for students so that when they do get those placements, they feel like there's a purpose to them and they are going someplace with them.

>> DARREN KETTLES: Okay, terrific. Yes, I have worked directly with -- this is Darren in the Admissions Office -- the Office of Career Development and if you have any questions about the services they provide, by all means reach out to us at the Office of Admissions. They are tremendous. They will take an interest in your life and care about your plans. So by all means do feel free to reach out with them.

Professor Adams, would you mind touching on Stetson's Clinical Education and what role that plays in terms of success and the opportunities for launch jobs? Would you mind talking about that? Because I think we do a tremendous job connecting our students with Clinical Education.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: As Professor Virelli said, we are very fortunate to have more externships and clinical placements than we have students. Many of our students take advantage of even several of those during the time they are in Law School. You guys may already know this, but in case you don't because I didn't when I was starting Law School, the difference between a clinic and externship, in an externship you are doing project-based work and in a clinic you are actually practicing law under the direct supervision of a Florida licensed attorney. And so a lot of students have the following progression. They will do an externship first and then a clinic or two after that. And we're both involved with our Department of Clinical Education.

You heard about the Federal judicial externship, the amazing Federal

judicial externship that Professor Virelli runs and I have the homeless externship as well. I'm very proud of the Attorneys who work with me in that externship. They are not just great lawyers, they are also great mentors. They really enjoy working with our students and helping them learn how to practice law.

And one of the things that we do in the classroom component of the externship course, I work with them in that context on some of their practicing lawyer skills. At the beginning of the semester I have them make a list of what their goals are, and recognizing back to what I was talking about in my presentation, skills they haven't had a chance to master, but they really want the chance to master. So sometimes it is as straightforward and practical as, I really don't like how I handle my calendar or my e-mail inbox, or, I get really nervous talking to clients on the phone. So we work on those things in that setting.

And so I love to say that one of the things that really distinguishes the Stetson lawyer is that you will walk into the office on your first day of practice knowing a couple of things.

One, you will know that you don't know what's going to happen, but you will know that whatever happens you are well equipped to handle it.

>> DARREN KETTLES: Love it. Okay, great. Professor Virelli, could you just touch a little bit more on Stetson's standing advocacy and what that actually means and why would students want to get involved under the umbrella of advocacy, there are several components, maybe you can touch on that? And what is the process to get involved in that and how that can be successful in the launching of their careers?

>> PROFESSOR LOUIS J. VIRELLI, III: Sure. As most people on this webinar will likely know, Stetson is ranked number 1 in the country in advocacy. I am not bragging about that, other than bragging on behalf of the institution. We are very, very good at training people to be advocates. I'm also proud to say we are very good at training people to do lots of things because we take the training aspect of our jobs very seriously. That is a group effort.

I think one of the interesting things about the advocacy program at Stetson is how varied it is and student often don't appreciate how many different ways there are to be an advocate.

On the one hand, of course, there's trial advocacy, how to be a trial lawyer, and those are the folks that stand up and you see them on TV more often than any other lawyer, they stand up in front of a Judge and jury, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, they launch into presenting evidence and conduct a trial. We are extraordinary at teaching people how to do that, so much that when I taught pretrial, it's about civil litigation, I would also ask in the room, I would say to them, if I'm in a Courtroom with you and there's a jury, there I concede, I give up, you win.

My next point is, if we're in Federal Court and it's not going to a trial I have an advantage and after 13 weeks in this course you will understand why. In each category we take this seriously.

Professor Adams is Chair of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Board, which is a Board that incorporates a kind of advocacy that is not traditional Courtroom-based, it's on TV very little if at all, but we are very productive and sophisticated at things like mediation, client counseling, negotiation and

arbitration.

There's the Moot Court Program, which is two students arguing in front of a Judge, but not in front of a jury and the kind of witness and fact witnesses, storytelling that you do in a traditional trial. It's incredibly varied and we take great pride in all of it.

How can you get involved? Lots of ways. Classes, the simplest way, but the most useful way. Competition Teams are the most obvious where we go out and compete with other schools or even sometimes intramurally amongst ourselves in developing our skills and sharpening them.

And then the clinics and externship, we can go out and do it and get feedback and be that much farther ahead when you graduate and have a client of your own.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: May I jump in for a second?

>> By all means, go right ahead.

>> PROFESSOR KRISTEN DAVID ADAMS: One of the things I wanted to share was to talk a little more about the process for trying out because I saw questions coming up about that.

This year we're moving tryouts to right before classes begin in the fall and students have to have completed their first year of Law School to be eligible for tryouts.

Having said that, students who are interested in our Competition Teams often self-identify during the first year and I will always invite those students to come in and scrimmage with the DR Board, for example. Having them be in the room and I tell them that actually scrimmaging against people

who don't know what they're doing is much harder than scrimmaging against people who are well trained and so our interested, eager 1Ls who have not studied mediation or arbitration are very helpful to our teams as they are getting ready to compete.

I also wanted to share that Stetson advocacy is still going on right now. Later today our Client Counseling Team will be competing for a national championship, of course, all that is happening online. And our students who would have traveled to Vienna to compete in this International Commercial Arbitration Moot are competing and sometimes their rounds at 2:30 and 4:30 in the morning because everything is set Vienna time. That is going on and I'm arbitrating some rounds for other schools tomorrow, so we are still going strong with that.

>> ASSISTANT DEAN KARLA DAVIS-JAMISON: We are about one minute from the end of this live stream and I just wanted to make sure we make a mention regarding some next steps.

First today's session was recorded, so if you missed the beginning or you would just like to watch it again, we will be e-mailing that to all admitted students, so you'll have a chance to do so.

If we weren't able to get to your question, I just want to encourage you to reach out to Admissions and we'll be happy to provide some assistance in answering your questions.

We also want to mention that we have some additional live stream events upcoming. Our next live stream scheduled for Thursday, April 9th at noon. It will feature Professor Julia Metts and Professor Kelly Feeley discussing Stetson's Advocacy and Legal Writing Program. And we plan to

host a Career and Professional Development and Current Law Student Panel.

Watch your inbox for invites and we hope you will join us on April 9th.

Enjoy the rest of your Saturday and have a safe weekend, everyone!

Thank you for joining us.

[Webinar concluded]

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