Improving Competition and Reducing Costs of Bio-Pharmaceuticals

Georgia State Law associate professor Yaniv Heled focuses his career on the intersection of biotechnology and the law. For nearly a decade, he has dedicated much of his research to the regulation of bio-pharmaceuticals (also known as “biologics”), which are used mostly for the treatment of cancer and autoimmune diseases. The Food and Drug Administration differentiates between biologics and conventional drugs. Biologics are pharmaceuticals derived from living organisms, such as a plant or animal cells, through cutting-edge technology. Conventional drugs generally are developed through chemical synthesis by combining chemical ingredients.

Heled wants to ensure that the law reflects a balance between innovation and patient access to these new pharmaceuticals. However, biologics also cost significantly more to develop and manufacture than traditional drugs, and thus cost significantly more for patients who need these advanced therapies. "For the sake of patients with these critical and complex diseases, who need to increase competition and reduce the prices of these products," said Heled. “That requires a change in the current regulatory structure.”

Continued on page 7
Director’s Message

I am delighted to take the helm of the Center for Law, Health & Society, following in the footsteps of two incredible predecessors; Leslie Wolf and Charity Scott. Our terrific center faculty, staff, students, alumni and community supporters have been busy doing amazing work over the fall of 2019. Here are some of our accomplishments in numbers:

- We hosted 10 conferences
- Published 5 books
- Published 20 articles
- Published 200 cases

In 2019, faculty, graduates, students and friends celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Center for Law, Health & Society. The fun “#ILoveHealthLaw” social media campaign asked everyone to tag the center and share how health law has impacted them professionally or personally.

Here are a few of our favorites from the faculty:

- “#ILoveHealthLaw because it is an intellectual smorgasbord!” – Paul Lombardo, Regents’ Professor and Bobby Lee Cook Professor of Law
- “#ILoveHealthLaw because it allows me to work in areas like HIV, Human Subjects Research, and Public Health where I can make a real impact on people’s lives.” – Leslie Wolf, Interim Dean, Distinguished University Professor and Professor of Law
- “#ILoveHealthLaw because of the remarkable diversity of issues to explore, domestically and globally, with the shared goal of advancing well-being.” – Jonathan Todres, Distinguished University Professor and Professor of Law
- “#ILoveHealthLaw because it has the potential to save lives and create equity. Health law is in aspects of private and public life, and lawyers have the tools to effect positive change.” – Courtney Anderson, Associate Professor of Law

The health law program at Georgia State Law is ranked No. 2 in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.

In 2019, Associate professor Erin Fuse Brown has been named the director of the Center for Law, Health & Society at Georgia State College of Law as of January 1. She follows Leslie Wolf, who was appointed interim dean of the law school effective July 1, 2019.

Fuse Brown’s research focuses on the regulation of health care markets, health reform and consumer protections in health care. Her work has influenced state and federal policymakers, including presenting to the Federal Trade Commission. She has consulted with the National Academy for State Health Policy, the Milbank Memorial Fund and the Georgia Health Policy Center on topics such as legal and policy approaches to address health care consolidation, ERISA preemption, health care price transparency and the Affordable Care Act.

Fuse Brown’s scholarship has been published in leading law and medical journals, including the University of Pennsylvania Law Review and the New England Journal of Medicine. She is frequently quoted in the media, including The New York Times, NPR and CNN.

I have big shoes to fill, and I am fortunate to take the helm of an incredible program built by Charity Scott and Leslie Wolf,” said Fuse Brown. “With our wonderful center team, we will continue our initiatives like the Health Law Partnership (HeLP) Legal Services Clinic, Journal of Legal Medicine, health law certificate and degree programs, and events and conferences. I am honored to serve in this new capacity and look forward to working with our amazing colleagues across campus, health law students and alumni, and extended health law community to continue the center’s great work.”
Silverthorn Heads Up Online M.J. Program

The Center for Law, Health & Society welcomes Brooke Silverthorn (J.D. '03) as director of the master of jurisprudence program. The online degree is designed for early to mid-career health care professionals who do not necessarily wish to become attorneys but need a deeper understanding of health law to advance in their careers. Silverthorn took an unconventional path to law. She went to Michigan State for a year; moved with a friend to Atlanta; joined AmeriCorps; finished her degree at Michigan State and eventually found her way to Georgia State University for law school.

Silverthorn believes that her experience on the road less traveled will allow her to help students who are forging their own path. Before returning to the College of Law, she spent 13 years in juvenile law. She represented the Gwinnett County Department of Family & Children Services (DFACS) for eight and a half years in cases involving child removals and termination of parental rights. She also worked in Denver at the National Association of Council for Children, where she created training materials for attorneys and social workers who are representing children. While there, she taught as an adjunct professor at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.

While teaching, Silverthorn says she had a light bulb moment. “Anytime we can get some of that interprofessional learning going, it helps us understand systems better, and it helps us understand our role in a system better,” she said.

“The law has always been a closed club in a lot of ways,” said Silverthorn who is also teaching Health Law: Quality and Access in the J.D. program while working to enroll the inaugural M.J. class. “But, there are so many fields where it is critical for professionals to understand the law because they have to work within a legal framework. The health care field is so regulated. One of the things that really excites me about the M.J. program is opening up the law to other professionals who genuinely need it to excel in their roles.”

Confronting Child Trafficking

Child trafficking is pervasive. It is often perceived as a problem that only exists in other countries, but it is a significant issue in the United States. For many years, anti-trafficking policy and programs have relied heavily on the criminal justice system, but Georgia State Law professor Jonathan Todres and Dr. Angela Diaz, director of the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center, have a different approach. In their new book, Preventing Child Trafficking: A Public Health Approach, they advocate for using public health methodologies to forge a more comprehensive response to the problem.

“Most of what is happening today is aimed at addressing trafficking after the harm has occurred,” said Todres. “We want to spur efforts to ‘move upstream’ to more of a prevention focus.”

Todres and Diaz wrote the book with four aims: 1) Help bring public health methodologies into mainstream discourse; 2) Highlight the role that the health care system can play in responding to child trafficking; 3) Spur the development of best practices for addressing child trafficking and other forms of child exploitation; and 4) Offer a starting point for other sectors to think about how they can prevent trafficking.

Todres first learned of human trafficking while serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Thailand in the early 1990s. While his work there focused on other health projects for young children, he knew he wanted to do something about human trafficking with his career. The law, including pro bono work and research, provided that opportunity.

Public health has a wealth of experience in confronting harmful attitudes and behaviors, Todres explained: “Think about smoking. A generation ago, smoking was portrayed as cool,” said Todres. “Public health campaigns helped to educate, shift attitudes and bring attention to the harms caused by smoking.” Seatbelt use and violence are other issues where public health campaigns have helped foster changes and, ultimately, better outcomes. Drawing on this experience, Todres and Diaz identify ways that public health methodologies can contribute to and improve responses to child trafficking.

Preventing Child Trafficking: A Public Health Approach is now available through Johns Hopkins University Press.

READERS CAN FIND THE FULL INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR JONATHAN TODRES FROM WHICH THIS ARTICLE IS ADAPTED ON THE GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY NEWS HUB.

Retirement Congratulations!

Center for Law, Health & Society faculty members congratulate Paula Kocher Barnes on her retirement this year after more than 40 years of federal service! She served as the deputy associate general counsel for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry branch since 2004 and had been at CDC for 32 years.

During her career at CDC, Barnes played a critical role in several significant public health events, including responses to 9/11, Anthrax, Ebola, Zika and several natural disasters. She also contributed to litigation efforts related to studies of environmental exposures, including Agent Orange diesel, and radioactivity contamination. In addition to her legal work, Barnes wrote scholarly publications, including contributing to two public health law textbooks.

Barnes is a dear friend to the center, having served as an adjunct professor of Public Health Law, guest speaker and an externship and fellowship site supervisor for law students, faculty and other professionals who genuinely need it to excel in their roles.

Anytime we can get some of that interprofessional learning going, it helps us understand systems better, and it helps us understand our role in a system better,” she said.

“The law has always been a closed club in a lot of ways,” said Silverthorn who is also teaching Health Law: Quality and Access in the J.D. program while working to enroll the inaugural M.J. class. “But, there are so many fields where it is critical for professionals to understand the law because they have to work within a legal framework. The health care field is so regulated. One of the things that really excites me about the M.J. program is opening up the law to other professionals who genuinely need it to excel in their roles.”
Disparities Keynote

Anderson Gives Health Disparities Keynote

Georgia State Law associate professor Courtney Anderson was the keynote speaker for the David Satcher Health Disparities Research Seminar in September. The monthly series hosted by Morehouse School of Medicine serves as a stimulus for conversation among faculty, students, residents and fellows from a variety of disciplines. The program strives to “deliberate better understanding about psychosocial, socio-cultural and environmental issues that contribute to health disparities; and identify innovative and emerging models that may be useful for improving the well-being of communities.”

Anderson, a member of the Center for Law, Health & Society and the Center for Access to Justice, spoke about the disparities related to gentrification and poverty. “Gentrification has been a defining component of Atlanta’s history, resulting in the involuntary displacement of low-income residents, the majority of whom identify as a racial minority. There are adverse mental health impacts of this due to the unexpected academic and social mobility, together with the adverse physical health effects resulting from stress and other factors,” said Anderson. “Creating and maintaining affordable housing to residents can remain in their homes would be a desirable solution.”

Improving Competition and Reducing Costs of Bio-Pharmaceuticals

Where generics help to lower the cost of traditional drugs, the same is not true for biologics, explained Heled, who is the co-director of the Center for Intellectual Property and a member of the Center for Law, Health & Society. Ten years ago, Congress enacted the Biologics Price Competition and Innovation Act as part of the Affordable Care Act. For traditional generics, the Hatch-Waxman Act of 1984 provides for a smooth FDA approval process. As long as the active pharmaceutical ingredient is the same as the original, it is administered in the same way with the same dosage and strength, then the generic is expected to have the same therapeutic effect. BPCIA was supposed to do for biologics what the Hatch-Waxman Act did for traditional drugs.

However, doing the same thing for biologics is much more complicated because biologics cannot be compared to one another as easily or straightforwardly as traditional drugs. As a result, the cost of developing follow-on versions of original biologics (a.k.a. “biosimilars”) is very high, which leaves little room for competition. If the market for biosimilars wasn’t already limited, Heled describes the “triple whammy” or “trifecta” of IP protections that make the original biologics more expensive, which further prevents price competition: 1) numerous patents on virtually any biologic; 2) an unprecedented twelve years of market exclusivity and four years of data exclusivity under the BPCIA; and 3) a law that makes FDA treat biologics manufacturing information as trade secrets, practically in perpetuity.

“My first article on challenging the need for such industry-favorable policy was in 2012. I was asking why a long exclusivity is needed if pharma is already protected by patents?” Heled said. “Combined, these industry-favorable policies mean that the first biosimilar wasn’t approved until 2015, and the impact on price was negligible. And now, a decade in, just over twenty biosimilars have been approved with only a few of them actually on the market and no price competition in any of these product markets.”

He continues, “The real question is whether the BPCIA is really working and will it ever? If it does, it will only be for a small number of the best-selling biologics. It isn’t going to have meaningful impact for the skyrocketing prices that patients are facing. The incentive for potential manufacturers of biosimilars just doesn’t exist in the way it does for generic drugs.”

In May of last year, the FDA issued guidance on how to develop biosimilars that would be interchangeable with original biologics, the same way generic drugs are. But Heled isn’t sure its effect will go far enough. He advocates for nothing less than the type of competition created for the traditional drug market under Hatch-Waxman. He believes that Congress will need to change the law in order to achieve competition and thus lower prices for patients needing these expensive treatments.

Wolf and Fuse Brown Examine Choice of Law in Precision Medicine Research

When different states’ laws provide different rights and protections to research participants, which law should apply? That is the question that Leslie Wolf, interim dean of Georgia State Law, and Erin Fuse Brown, director of the Center for Law, Health & Society, along with research partners at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, seek to find out.

The team’s previous National Institutes of Health-funded study looked at the state laws that create a “web of legal protections” for precision medicine research. Wolf and Fuse Brown were surprised by the sheer number of state laws that could provide very different substantive rights to research participants. “Some states, for example, provide minimum statutory damages; attorneys’ fees and costs for breaches of genetic or medical information, which makes it easier for affected participants to get some remedy for the harm,” said Fuse Brown.

This research finding prompted the current project. “In large-scale precision medicine research projects, the researchers, data and participants can all be in different states,” Wolf explained. “The usual ways of deciding which law applies—contractual agreement or litigation—don’t work in the research context.” The project explores stakeholders’ experiences with choice of law questions and whether and how existing choice of law frameworks apply to research.

The project, Exploring Choice of Law Challenges in Multi-Site Precision Medicine Research, is funded by the National Human Genome Research Institute, with Wolf and Laura Beskow, at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, serving as co-principal investigators.

Accolades for Fuse Brown’s Scholarship on ERISA and State Single-Payer Health Care

Associate professor and recently appointed center director, Erin Fuse Brown, has been receiving much attention from scholars and policymakers for her research. “The Federalism, ERISA, and State Single-Payer Health Care.” Co-written with University of Massachusetts Law professor Elizabeth McCuskey and forthcoming in the University of Pennsylvania Law Review, the article comprehensively analyzes state single-payer proposals since 2010, highlights the extent to which states must contort their health reforms to overcome federal legal hurdles particularly the threat of preemption by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 and prompts questions about whether states can actually implement single-payer health care.

Professor Christina Ho from Rutgers Law reviewed the article for Jotwell: The Journal of Things We Like Lots, calling it “masterful.” Fuse Brown and McCuskey were guests on The Week in Health Law podcast to discuss the paper with Professor Nic Terry of Indiana University McKinney Law, where Terry characterized ERISA as “the Voldemort of health law.”

Fuse Brown and McCuskey are not just gaining notice within academia but also translating their findings for state and federal policymakers who are pursuing comprehensive health system reforms. They published a shorter piece titled, “Could States Do Single-Payer Health Care?” on the widely read health policy forum, Health Affairs Blog. The National Council for State Insurance Legislators adopted their proposal for an ERISA waiver in an official resolution to Congress. Fuse Brown and McCuskey have worked with single-payer advocates in state legislatures and Congress to help craft health reforms that will withstand or alter ERISA’s obstructive effects.

“The point of my work is always to be policy relevant, so it is incredibly gratifying to work with policymakers who are in the trenches trying to create meaningful health reforms and to help them navigate the minefield of ERISA,” said Fuse Brown.
The Health Law Partnership (HeLP) is a medical-legal partnership among Georgia State University College of Law, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and Atlanta Legal Aid Society. Through this community collaboration, health care providers and lawyers address the multiple social and economic conditions that affect the health of low-income children. HeLP’s core components are interdisciplinary education of graduate professional students through the HeLP Legal Services Clinic at Georgia State Law.

Lisa Raddke Bliss, clinical professor and associate dean of experiential education and clinical programs at Georgia State University College of Law, taught in the Patient’s Rights Clinic and Human Rights Clinic this fall at Palacky University Olomouc in the Czech Republic as a Fulbright Distinguished Chair. Bliss’s teaching drew from her experience as co-director of the Health Law Partnership (HeLP) Legal Services Clinic, a leading U.S. medical-legal partnership.

Bliss co-taught the Human Rights Clinic with vice dean Maxim Tomoczek. As one of its collaborative projects, “the clinic students identified a human rights issue to work on and the class identified potential legal and policy solutions,” Bliss said.

In the Patients’ Rights Clinic, Bliss focused on comparative perspectives in health law. “The U.S. health system is unique. Czech students were interested in learning about how health care works in the Czech Republic,” said Bliss. With nearly universal coverage, low cost and comparable quality to other European countries, the Czech Republic health care system has improved greatly since the end of communism. Bliss’s visit coincided with the 30 year anniversary of the so-called Velvet Revolution, which began with a student protest in Prague and precipitated the end of communism in the Czech Republic.

The Faculty of Law at Palacky University has symbolic importance. It was created in 1991 in the buildings of the former District Committee of the Communist Party. Students at Palacky University participated in the 30 Year Anniversary Celebrations, including the re-enactment of a protest that students in Olomouc held at the Communist Party site in 1989. Bliss attended the ceremonies and participated with students and faculty in the re-creation of a wall constructed of cardboard boxes with messages of peace and hope.

“It is a big deal to Czechs. It has symbolic importance. It was created in 1991 in the buildings of the former District Committee of the Communist Party,” Bliss said. “It’s a big deal to Czechs, and it’s a big deal to the Czech Republic as a Fulbright Distinguished Chair. We did significantly more than we normally do. It was a banner semester for us,” said Margaret Middetton, co-director of the clinic.

The amount of work for the clinic could have been overwhelming for the students assigned to the cases, but Taylor Lin (J.D. ’20) says that it created a sense of comradery, allowing them to learn from the complexities of each case.

“You’re able to bounce ideas off each other and talk about the complications you have in your cases and how to deal with certain conflicts and personalities,” said Lin. “It was a different way to connect with law students and look at what being an attorney is like.”

Lin worked with Michael Foo (J.D. ’20) to prepare their brief. Foo says the amount of cases was record setting in its own right. He and Lin had to comb through more than 15,000 pages of medical records, which was unheard of for the clinic.

“To us that is exactly what legal practice is about,” said Foo. “You do everything for your client. It doesn’t matter whether it’s 15,000 pages or 15 pages, we were there to do everything that needed to be done.”

Lin and Foo were fighting for disability insurance for a family with a two-year-old boy with sickle cell disease. Their fight was a joint effort of a medical administrative law judge,” said Lin. Their team was awarded a favorable result and obtained disability insurance for their client. They credit the HeLP Legal Services Clinic with gaining the crucial hands-on experience they need to be successful after graduation, as well as reminding them why they chose law as a career.

“Everyone comes out realizing that we all played a part in this thing that’s bigger than us, and we all walk away wanting to do more to that end,” said Foo.

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“I am grateful that my Fulbright visit coincided with this important anniversary for the Czech people. The timing offered a unique opportunity to talk with Czechs about their memories and experiences of communist rule and how their lives have changed since then,” said Bliss. “I also was honored to attend a lecture by a photographer who documented every day life in the Czech Republic under communism. A colleague kindly interpreted the talk for me, and it was amazing both to see the photographs and to experience living history.”

After completing the Fulbright program at the end of November, Bliss traveled on to Indonesia to speak at the Global Alliance for Justice Education 10th Worldwide Conference on incorporating justice into clinical education. She is co-president of GAJE and also co-organized a two-day Training of Trainers workshop following the main conference.

Bliss believes her experiences immersing herself in other cultures and contexts have helped her become a better teacher. Cross-cultural learning is critical because health-law partnerships are growing around the world. “The challenge is gathering people from different disciplines and working out ways for them to come together!” Bliss said. “These collaborations help pave the way for the future.”

The Health Law Partnership (HeLP) is a medical-legal partnership among Georgia State University College of Law, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta and Atlanta Legal Aid Society. Through this community collaboration, health care providers and lawyers address the multiple social and economic conditions that affect the health of low-income children. One of HeLP’s core components is interdisciplinary education of graduate professional students through the HeLP Legal Services Clinic at Georgia State Law.

www.healthlawpartnership.org

HeLP Clinic Handles Record Number of Hearings

Fulbright Distinguished Chair Teaches Overseas
“Olmstead at Twenty” Celebrates Landmark Supreme Court Decision

The Center for Law, Health & Society at Georgia State University College of Law and Atlanta Legal Aid Society hosted the “Olmstead at Twenty: The Past and Future of Community Integration” symposium on August 8 and 9. Attorneys, advocates, academics, service providers and members of the disability community from across the country gathered at the College of Law to reflect on the Olmstead v. L.C. and E.I.W. decision, which found that unjustified institutional isolation of people with disabilities is a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Georgia State Law has a history of supporting Olmstead’s mission, as it hosted the 2014 Georgia State Law Review symposium to mark the 15th anniversary of the decision and houses the Olmstead Disability Rights Clinic. “We felt it was important to revisit community integration and take some time to think about the future,” said Lombardo, “we now think of Olmstead as an analogue of Brown—a case that signaled a foundational moment in articulating the rights of people with disabilities.”

At the Olmstead at Twenty conference was made possible through the generous commitment and support of the following sponsors: Atlanta Legal Aid Society; BakerHostetler LLP; the Center for Law, Health & Society at Georgia State University College of Law; the Center for Leadership in Disability Research; the Georgia Advancement Office; the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University Andrew Young School of Public Policy and Administration; Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities; Goico Bolet, PC; and the Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia.

Paul Lombardo, Regents’ Professor and Bobby Lee Cook Professor of Law at Georgia State Law, moderated a panel discussion with the attorneys involved in the Olmstead case. Some of them worked directly with plaintiffs, Lois Curtis and Elaine Wilson, and shared with attendees the journey of bringing such an important case to the Supreme Court. The participants in the Olmstead case said it repeatedly: just as it was made possible through the generous commitment and support of the following sponsors: Atlanta Legal Aid Society; BakerHostetler LLP; the Center for Law, Health & Society at Georgia State University College of Law; the Center for Leadership in Disability Research; the Georgia Advancement Office; the Georgia Health Policy Center at Georgia State University Andrew Young School of Public Policy and Administration; Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities; Goico Bolet, PC; and the Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia.

“Olmstead means to me is that disabled people are full and equal citizens in their communities who can engage with folks with and without disabilities, not as clients, but as peers and fellow citizens.”

—Samuel Bagenstos, Frank G. Millard Professor of Law, University of Michigan

“Often, the disability community is forgotten in discussions about human rights, and the Olmstead decision represented a turn in the tide,” said Susan Goicoe, director of Atlanta Legal Aid’s Disability Integration Project and adjunct professor with Georgia State Law’s Olmstead Clinic. “We felt it was important to revisit community integration and take some time to think about the future.”

Samuel Bagenstos, the Frank G. Millard Professor of Law at the University of Michigan, opened the event with a keynote speech about expanding meaningful choice and social interactions for people with disabilities. Bagenstos is a former law clerk for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who wrote the opinion in Olmstead. He is also the author of Disability Rights Law: Cases and Materials.

“The court’s primary focus in the Olmstead case is in articulating the community,” said Bagenstos. “The court emphasized the harms of segregation – stigma and the denial of connections with family and the civil and economic life of the community – rather than on the harms of being denied a choice.”

Beyond reflection, the symposium served to educate and empower attorneys, providers, advocates and policymakers. Breakout sessions on implementation of Olmstead as it relates to nursing homes or prisons, access to supported housing, employment, education and Medicaid were just a spattering of topics covered at the two-day symposium.

Picturing Justice

This fall, Atlanta Legal Aid Society once again hosted Picturing Justice, part of the Atlanta Celebrates Photography festival. The annual exhibition explores how photography can illuminate the human stories that live behind the common shorthand of “case,” “client,” or “issue” in Atlanta Legal Aid’s important work. The 2019 theme, “Olmstead at Twenty: Promises Kept, Promises Unfulfilled,” featured commissioned work by photojournalist Robin Rayne accompanied by stories behind the photographs written by E. Robin McDonald. The images and stories depict the lives of Atlanta Legal Aid clients impacted by Olmstead. The Center for Law, Health & Society at Georgia State Law was one of many sponsors of this exhibit.

Attendees of the “Olmstead at Twenty” conference viewed some of Rayne’s earlier Olmstead-themed work, courtesy of Citizen Advocacy. The historic photo featured here was made in 2009 as one of the first images in an ongoing photojournalistic project on Olmstead and disability rights.

Visit cbs.law.gsu.edu/journal for more information.
Title I of the ACA was designed as a “three-legged stool”: conversation. Texas v. U.S. case. Eric Segall, Kathy and Lawrence Ashe Professor of Law, and Erin Fuse Brown, associate professor of law, led the conversation.

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The Fifth Circuit found standing. The House of Representatives and Democract-led states unsuccessfully petitioned the Supreme Court for an expedited review of the case. The Trump administration and Republican states have urged the Supreme Court to wait. Although the Court will hear the case in the fall, the Court won’t likely issue its opinion before the 2020 election.

“If the ACA is struck down, would we revert to pre-ACA rules? The stakes in the case are very high,” said Fuse Brown. The fate of the ACA remains in limbo, and without the Supreme Court for clarification, it will continue to cast a pall of uncertainty over the health care industry and worry voters as they head to the polls next November.

In September, the Center for Law, Health & Society at Georgia State Law hosted a discussion on the Affordable Care Act and the Texas v. U.S. case. Eric Segall, Kathy and Lawrence Ashe Professor of Law, and Erin Fuse Brown, associate professor of law, led the conversation.

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Becerra Prepares to Shape the Future of Health Care Law

Jasmine Becerra (J.D. ’20) didn’t slow down in her last semester of law school. She was the vice president of programming for the Student Health Law Association, worked on a Supplemental Security Income case in the HELP Legal Services Clinic and completed the certificate in health law, alongside her J.D. She has a position with King & Spalding LLP.

Science led Becerra to health law. Pre-med at the University of Georgia, she found that she liked writing and research more than cellular structure. Law was a natural fit and all of those pre-medicate classes and internships with physicians translated to an interest in health law.

Becerra says that her favorite class has been Health Law: Financing and Delivery with professor Erin Fuse Brown. In the class, students learn about everything from health care organizational structures to federal fraud and abuse laws, lessons that experiential learning classes have reinforced.

“I got a deeper dive into these issues in the health law certificate program. ‘The courses that are offered in the certificate program build off of and complement one another to provide a comprehensive understanding of this specialized field, which opened several doors during my job search,” said Becerra.

After her second year of law school, she switched from part-time to full-time in order to get more involved. This was made possible through a graduate research assistant position at the Georgia Health Policy Center, which covers tuition.

Since then, she joined the Law Review, wrote her student note on the False Claims Act and participated in the National Health Law Transactional Moot Court Competition in Chicago. She has also won numerous awards, including the 2019 Student Health Law Award, Best Brief Award for Litigation Advocacy, 2019 ABA/BNA Award for Excellence in Health Law and three CALI Awards.

At King & Spalding, she will be working in the litigation practice group. Her goal is to pursue health care litigation, specifically health care fraud and abuse and government investigations. Her advice to underclassmen?

“Get involved early and meet as many people as possible,” said Becerra. “Networking with local attorneys can lead to mentorship and job opportunities, and becoming close with your classmates and professors will provide a strong network of support that will remain with you even after graduation.”

Students Gain Experience through Summer Fellowship

Last summer Morgan Schroeder (J.D. ’20) participated in a valuable summer fellowship sponsored by the Georgia Academy of Healthcare Attorneys. “I am interested in health law and had taken a few classes, but the fellowship allowed me to have actual hands-on experiences in the field,” she said.

Nearly twenty Georgia State Law students have participated in the GAHA fellowship since it first began in 1998. GAHA is a member organization of the Georgia Hospital Association and is comprised of health care attorneys that serve as in-house or outside counsel to hospitals and health systems. The paid summer fellowship is intended to provide students an opportunity to advance their knowledge and skills in health law, policy, advocacy and practice.

“The summer fellowship is highly competitive. Initially, one law student in Georgia was selected to work with GAHA’s legal department for the summer. The program expanded to two students. Beginning in 2007, the students began alternating half of the summer at Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta in the Office of the General Counsel and half with GAHA.

“The experiences at GAHA and Children’s are very different,” said Keni Conley, general counsel and senior vice president of health care policy at GAHA and a member of the Center for Law, Health & Society’s advisory board. “Children’s is a much larger organization, and the work there supports the operation of the hospital, whereas the time spent at GAHA, a nonprofit trade association made up of member hospitals and health systems, tends to be more focused on legal analysis of various health care policy proposals or helping to provide education to our members.”

Ryan Kerr (J.D./M.S.H.A. ’15), an associate at Arnall Golden Gregory LLP, recalls participating in the GAHA fellowship when the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius was announced in 2012. “Being able to listen to discussions of the case gave me a real-world perspective on the implications of the decision.” The position helped him meet his first employer after law school in the legal department of one of GAHA’s member hospitals. He credits his fellowship supervisors at GAHA and Children’s with providing valuable advice on his work product, working with clients and applying for jobs.

“The experience at GAHA helped me to hit the ground running as a first year health law associate. I am still in touch with individuals I worked with, many of whom have moved on to different roles,” said Laurice Rutledge Lambert (J.D. ’10), a partner at BakerHostetler LLP. She participated during the summer after graduation while studying for the Bar exam and says that the fellowship helped with developing time management skills. “I love what I do, and am thankful that I pursued a legal career in a field that I genuinely care about and am interested in.”

Applications for the GAHA fellowship are due in September for the following summer.

On the Move

• Jon Ciliberto (J.D. ’15) joined the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as an attorney advisor working with an administrative law judge on Medicare appeals.
• Sophia Horn (J.D./M.S.H.A. ’18) joined the Arizona Attorney General’s Office in the Education and Health Section of the State Governor’s Office as an assistant attorney general representing the Department of Health Services.
• Carson Lamb (J.D. ’15) joined Dorsey & Whitney LLP in Des Moines, Iowa, as an associate representing health care clients.
• Laurice Rutledge Lambert (J.D. ’10) was elected to the partnership of BakerHostetler LLP.
• Edgar Neely IV (J.D. ’15) joined Hall Booth Smith in September as an associate specializing in medical malpractice and product liability.
• Robert Rohr (J.D. ’90) joined Sun Life Family Health Center in Casa Grande, Arizona as its director of human resources and corporate compliance.
• Jenny Sewell (J.D. ’11) is now the lead budget analyst for USAA’s global health portfolio in the Office of Budget, Management and Resources.

Do you have news to share? Send news and updated contact information to lawandhealth@gsu.edu.
Broce Appointed to Georgia Board of Nursing

Serving as the consumer member Candice Broce (J.D. ’13) was appointed to the Georgia Board of Nursing Jan. 9.

“It’s an honor to be asked by the governor to serve on the Georgia Board of Nursing,” Broce said. “I know that I’m passionate about health care and that I’ll work tirelessly to advocate on behalf of Georgia families and patients.

“He believes that it’s important to have a strong consumer voice on regulatory boards to ensure that all sides of an issue get representation. He has given me countless opportunities over the years to grow not only as an attorney but as a public servant. I’m proud to work for the governor.”

According to the website, “Georgia Board of Nursing exists to protect, promote and preserve the public health, safety and welfare through legislative, regulation and control of practical nursing and registered professional education and practice.” Along with licensing, the board offers services in nursing program approval, enforcement and information.

“In law school, I had the privilege of interning for State Rep. Sharon Cooper (R-Marietta), who currently serves as the Georgia House Health and Human Services chairwoman,” Broce said. “She is a registered nurse, former nursing educator and medical administrator.

“I was placed in her office in part because I was pursuing the health law certificate at Georgia State University College of Law. I worked for her for two legislative sessions and became intimately familiar with state laws and rules involving health care professionals, especially nurses.”

After Broce passed the bar, she started working for Kemp — then-secretary of state — as an elections and legislative affairs attorney. She currently is the governor’s director of communications and deputy executive counsel.

“Day to day, I manage a team of nine people who coordinate the First Family’s traditional media, social media, photography, videography and related content,” she said. “I advise state agencies on how to handle public relations issues — the good and the bad — and work with two junior attorneys in the office to respond to pressing legal matters.

“I’m a political junkie, and I love the legislative process, so the most memorable moment for me was watching the Heartbeat Bill — House Bill #1 — pass. I worked closely with State Rep. Ed Setzler on that bill, so I was really invested in securing its passage. We’re currently embroiled in litigation over it, but I believe that we’ll ultimately be victorious.”

EXCERPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY MARIE NESMITH, THE DAILY TRIBUNE, CARTERSVILLE.

Rohr Named Director at Arizona Health Center

Georgia State University College of Law alumnus Robert Rohr (J.D. ’90) recently joined the Sun Life Family Health Center as the director of health resources and corporate compliance. Serving southern Arizona, the Federally Qualified Health Center includes 13 clinics in 9 communities. Relying on his background in health law and human resources, Rohr is redesigning the corporate compliance program to encourage employee participation and engagement.

“Sun Life practices an integrated approach to community-based health care. There is a high level of teamwork in the organization and departments do not work in silos,” said Rohr. “It is exciting to work on the continuing development of a value-based model of health care delivery.”

Rohr has served a variety of different communities throughout his career. Rohr, who also has a master’s degree in international affairs, joined the U.S. Army JAG Corps after law school and was stationed in Panama. While there, he volunteered for an assignment in health care law and labor and employment law. He has been combining the two ever since.

He later spent twelve years at Grady Health System, an urban safety net hospital in Atlanta, as the director of employee relations and a member of the medical ethics committee.

Rohr relocated to New Mexico where he led the human resource and compliance programs first for two rural tribal health care clinics and then for the largest continuing care retirement community in the state. Taking another turn in his career, Rohr applied his expertise to build a new human resources program for the State of New Mexico Department of Corrections’ health care operations, visiting prison clinics in many rural communities. He was also appointed as a panelist on the New Mexico Medical Review Commission for medical malpractice hearings.

Rohr returned to the Atlanta area briefly but realized that urban life was no longer for him. He recently accepted the position with Sun Life and is excited to be back in the rural southwest.

While the communities Rohr has served may be diverse, health law has provided a common thread. “My law school experience could be best described as ‘generalist,’” said Rohr. “This allowed me to work on the breadth of issues that affect health care operations, such as contract law, tax, torts, labor and employment, real estate, mental health law, administrative law and corporations.”

To students, Rohr recommends health care compliance certification as an advantage. He also suggests participation on a nonprofit board as a learning experience and opportunity to develop leadership skills.

But Rohr also encourages students to find a passion unrelated to work to maintain personal wellness. “In my case, I joined the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and have had a lot of fun with it,” he said. “Last year, I participated in a water parachute drop qualification exercise with the U.S. Army Rangers.” While in Georgia last year, Rohr was elected vice flotilla commander for the Central Georgia Lakes, and his flotilla received several awards and recognitions.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BRYAN HORN

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Courtney L. Anderson
Anderson was invited to the keynote speaker on gentrification, poverty and health disparities at Morehouse School of Medicine’s Satcher Health Leadership Institute. She also presented to Georgia Stand-Up's Fall 2019 Policy Institute on Housing and Health Disparities. Professor Anderson was also invited to serve as a member of the Georgia State team for the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities Social Determinants of Health Innovation Workshop.

Jessica Gabel Cino
Cino continues her work on facial recognition and is piloting a study focusing on the accuracy and reliability of live witnesses compared to software. Her article, “Roadblocks: Cultural and Structural Impediments to Forensic Science Reform,” will be published by the University of Houston Law Review this spring. The article focuses on the wide differences between research-based sciences and outcome-based sciences, including forensic science.

Paul A. Lombardo
Lombardo was interviewed on the NPR podcast RadioUrbis was elected a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation; spoke on “The ‘Well-Born’ Science: The Legacy of Eugenics in America” at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; presented the “Legal Update” at the American Association of Bioethics and Humanities; discussed “Current Status of Abortion Law” at the American College of Rheumatology Annual Meeting; and presented “Eugenics in America” at the Florida Holokaust Museum, St. Petersburg.

Margaret Middleton
Middleton was invited to be the keynote speaker on the Health Law Section of the State Bar of Georgia. She presented on the incoming cohort of mentors and mentees on how fostering professional well-being supports professional competence. She also continues to offer a popular six-week program training on mindfulness to law students.

Lisa R. Bliss
Bliss was in residence at Palacky University Faculty of Law in Olomouc, Czech Republic, for the fall semester as a Fulbright Distinguished Chair. Bliss taught in the clinical program, teaching students in the Patients’ Rights Clinic and the Human Rights Clinic. She also offered workshops on innovative teaching techniques and developing interdisciplinary collaborations. In December, Bliss went to Bandung, Indonesia, to present on designing clinics at the 10th Worldwide Conference of the Global Alliance for Justice Education, for which she serves as co-president.

Yaniv Heled
Heled published “The Case for Disclosure of Biologics Manufacturing Information” in the Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics. He led a panel on regulation and competition of biologics at Texas A&M Law School and NSU Law School. He co-wrote (with Timothy Lytton and Liza Vertinsky) and filed an amicus brief in Nixom vs. Yates, pending before the Georgia Supreme Court. Heled’s article, “A Theory of Genetic Interests” (with Liza Vertinsky), was presented at the Wilt Life Sciences Law Scholars Conference at Loyola Chicago Law School.

Charity Scott
Scott is a member of the advisory board for the mentorship program of the Health Law Section of the State Bar of Georgia. She presented on the incoming cohort of mentors and mentees on how fostering professional well-being supports professional competence. She also continues to offer a popular six-week program training on mindfulness to law students.

Lauren MacIvor Thompson
Thompson was invited to speak at a symposium on suffrage history and the Nineteenth Amendment at the Pennsylvania State University sponsored by the George and Ann Richards Civil War Center. Her presentation was on the long history of the suffrage movement’s complicated relationship with legalizing birth control. She also published an op-ed on the history of abortion law and advertising in the New York Times.

Leslie E. Wolf
Wolf is the co-principal investigator on the National Human Research Genome Institute funded grant “Exploring Choice of Law Challenges in Multi-Site Precision Medicine Research” that will explore stakeholders’ experiences and opinions regarding choice of law questions in the research context and how existing choice of law frameworks apply to them. Erin Fuse Brown is a co-investigator.

Erin C. Fuse Brown
Fuse Brown was named director of the Center for Law, Health & Society. She published “Could States Do Single-Payer Health Care?” with Elizabeth McCuskey in Health Affairs Blog. She presented at conferences by the National Academy for State Health Policy, the Association of Public Policy Analysis & Management, the Next Steps in Health Reform 2019, and at UCLA, Indiana University McKinney and DePaul law schools. She appeared on CNN and was quoted in the NY Times, Salon, NPR, Modern Healthcare and Politico.

Stacie P. Kershner (J.D. ’08)
Kershner worked with Atlanta Legal Aid Society on planning the “Okefenokee at Twenty: Past and Future of Community Integration” conference in August and the Academy of Food Law and Policy on the Annual Conference Food Law and Policy on the Southern Clinical Conference. She served as the Law Section program chair for the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting and Expo, organizing a dozen panels, collaborative panels, round tables and poster sessions.

Timothy D. Lytton
Lytton has been a frequent media commentator on gun violence, clergy sexual abuse and food safety. He was quoted in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post-Time Magazine, Bloomberg News, Associated Press, Reuters, NPR, CBS News, Fox News and CNBC. He was part of the Center for Law, Health & Society team that hosted the annual meeting of the Academy of Food Law & Policy at Georgia State Law in December.

Jonathan Todres

James E. Mitchell
Mitchell co-published “Interdisciplinary Work in Clinical Legal Education” at the Southern Clinical Conference. He also presented, along with colleagues from the Health Law Partnership, “Public Health Law: Exploring Possible Partnerships and Barriers” at the University of Georgia College of Public Health’s State of the Public’s Health in December.

Brooke N. Silverthorn (J.D. ’03)
Silverthorn joined the Georgia State Law and the Center for Law, Health & Society in July to help develop the master of jurisprudence with a concentration in health law. The M.J. is planning for its inaugural class in August 2020. This fall, Silverthorn also presented at attorney conferences on child welfare law and practice in Colorado and Maryland.

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