



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Summer session is in full swing and I would like to thank you for your warm welcome to Online Learning. I am working with the team to accomplish a vision that will solidify our reputation as a pioneer in the innovative field of bringing law and policy education online with a human connection.

On the following pages, you will find our new Online Learning Newsletter. Each Term, we will issue a newsletter that communicates the amazing work of our Online Learning community.

I am committed to providing an online experience for students that is consistent with our on-campus experience. In addition to bringing the law online, this means teaching in a way that brings the vital human connection online. Walk the halls of VLS and you soon realize that it is a unique school, where the student experience extends far beyond the classroom to encompass everything from career counseling and strategic academic advising to involvement in special interest groups. I am eager to bring the full VLS community experience to our online students.

Online Learning will be woven into the fabric of VLS to provide increased flexibility for residential students who seek this flexibility in their learning trajectories. Once their doctrinal foundation is established, residential students broaden their educations with live-client experiences that carry them across the nation and world. Here in Online Learning, we will look for ways to serve all VLS students by offering a similar opportunity for expansion.

Unprecedented change is occurring in the work place and in higher education. Our Online Learning program positions our students to navigate these changes. Seeking an advanced degree may seem risky because the opportunity costs are high and the return on investment is uncertain. As a leader in online education for close to a decade, VLS is part of the solution. Poised to conduct smart, sustainable growth, our Online Learning program will evolve and equip students with the tools they need to be resilient. Speaking on behalf of the Online Learning team, we look forward to serving our students and stand ready to teach the next generation how to serve their communities and the world.

Sincerely,

[Professor Sarah M. Reiter](#)

Faculty Director of Online Learning

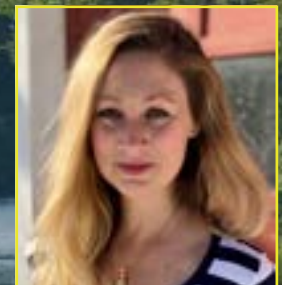
## SCHOOL'S IN FOR SUMMER

### NEW FACES, NEW COURSES

Summer Session Term I is underway, with over 150 class registrations. Welcome, in particular, to Professors Emily Gould, Katharine Blake McGowan, and Greg Johnson. They are teaching the following newly developed courses this summer: Global Restorative Justice, Narrative Writing Seminar, and Advanced Writing Seminar. Both Professor McGowan and Professor Gould are part of our growing Restorative Justice program.



[Professor Emily Gould](#)



[Professor Katharine Blake McGowan](#)



[Professor Greg Johnson](#)



# SWAN SPOTLIGHTS

“THE VLS EXPERIENCE AND THE NETWORK I MET WHILE THERE, IS THE REASON I HAVE THE CAREER I HAVE TODAY.”

**Michelle Bender MELP’15**, an online Master of Environmental Law and Policy graduate, is working as the Ocean Rights Manager at Earth Law Center, where she is spearheading an innovative and paradigm-shifting solution to our ocean management challenges. While enrolled in the online program from her home state of Washington, Michelle traveled to Vermont to participate in several summer courses, including Ocean and Coastal Law. She also decided to pursue an externship, and worked with Professor Sarah Reiter at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. While there, Michelle worked on a project for a partnership of aquariums interested in addressing the challenges of plastic pollution in the marine environment. She also conducts ongoing work for NOAA and the Friends of the Sea Otter, focusing on Large Marine Ecosystem governance and marine mammal protection. In 2018, she was named one of 15 Youth Ocean Leaders by the Sustainable Ocean Alliance. Michelle also serves on the Executive Committee for the Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature and is a member of the IUCN’s World Commission for Environmental Law. Michelle graduated Summa Cum Laude from Vermont Law School and holds a B.S. in Biology with a Marine Emphasis from Western Washington University.





# SWAN SPOTLIGHTS



**Chloe Castro JD'19**, is no stranger to the need for innovative technology in the legal field. Chloe co-organized a Solutions Conference to “Disrupt the Stone Age,” which focused on the intersection of technology, law, and social justice. Chloe also chose to access an online course during her Semester in Practice at the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office in Boston, Mass. She participated in Ethics and Restorative Justice, and like many residential students, Chloe found the flexible option of online courses beneficial while working towards her professional goals. Her training will be put to good use next year when she starts her legal career at the Miami-Dade State Attorney’s Office in Florida.



**Nic Pritchett LLM'20** began working as a civilian attorney for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers within the past year. Prior to that, he practiced civil litigation at a law firm in Texas for seven years and served as an active duty judge advocate in the U.S. Army for five years. As a judge advocate, he deployed to Afghanistan, Qatar, and Kuwait, where he witnessed significant environmental and social issues. Environmental law heavily impacts his work. This work includes reviewing fill and dredge permits under the Clean Water Act, Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements under the National Environmental Policy Act, and the implications of the Endangered Species Act on proposed projects. He decided to pursue an LLM in environmental law to develop additional expertise in these areas and to broaden his understanding of current environmental issues.

# FACULTY FEATURES

“I’VE DISCOVERED THAT I CAN IMPROVE MY RESIDENTIAL COURSES BY USING COMPONENTS FROM MY ONLINE COURSES. THIS SUMMER I AM TEACHING TORTS RESIDENTIALLY AND I AM EXCITED TO USE MOODLE AS A COMPANION TO THAT COURSE AS WELL.”

Professor [Joe Brennan](#) is known to the Online Learning Team as a pioneer in utilizing blended learning. As director of the Academic Success Program, he developed and teaches the Bar Exam Skills and Tactics (BEST) class online and residentially. This gives him a unique perspective on the functionality of learning tools like TWEN and Moodle. Prior to joining VLS, Professor Brennan was a member of the Student Success faculty at Charlotte School of Law. He began his legal career as judicial law clerk to the Honorable Edwin H. Stern, P.J.A.D, in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division. Following his clerkship, Professor Brennan was a civil defense litigation attorney at Graham Curtin law firm in Morristown, New Jersey. His practice focused on product liability, premises liability, personal injury, complex litigation, employment law, breach of contract, fraud, and claims brought under the Uniform Commercial Code.

# FACULTY FEATURES



Congratulations to Professor [Cari Rincker](#) for being recognized as a Rising Star from Super Lawyers both in Metro New York and Illinois. She owns Rincker Law, PLLC, a national general practice law firm concentrating in food and agriculture law with offices in New York and Illinois. Recognized as an author of a Top 100 Blawg from the American Bar Association, she is the co-author of “Field Manual: Legal Guide for New York Farmers and Food Entrepreneurs.” Her passion for agriculture issues is deeply rooted. She grew up on a seedstock Simmental cattle operation in Shelbyville, Illinois where she spent significant time working on her family’s farm. Cari continues to have her boots planted firmly in agriculture—she enjoys judging livestock shows around the country and recently purchased a small horse farm near Champaign, Illinois which she hopes to develop into a small animal operation.

## WATER YOU UP TO?



Professor [Jack Tuholske](#) is currently working with Kasa to design Water Resources Law, which will be offered in Fall Term 2. With impeccable timing, he recently argued on behalf of plaintiffs as lead counsel in two related lawsuits in the Montana Eleventh Judicial District, trying to prevent a massive new water bottling plant. His 30 year legal career has focused on public interest environmental litigation in state and federal court in Montana and the West. He has been lead counsel for over 50 published decisions, including over a dozen successful cases at the Montana Supreme Court in the fields of water law, land use, constitutional law and natural resource management.

# CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

#SwansFlyTogether

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 33 ONLINE SUMMER GRADUATES!

Several students—graduate and LLM—traveled from across the nation and beyond to attend Commencement in South Royalton, Vermont on May 11. They join the ranks of more than 300 online Vermont Law School graduates. We wish them the best of luck as they use the power of the law and policy to make a difference in their communities and the world.

# MEET MONICA FROM CAREER SERVICES

## INDIVIDUALIZED CAREER COUNSELING SESSIONS

[Monica Collins](#), associate director for Career Services at Vermont Law School works with master's degree students interested in new jobs and/or transitions. She is also available to review application materials and provide individualized career counseling sessions.

## CAREER RESOURCES

Each week Monica compiles a newsletter, *Career Notes*, which is now available on Moodle. In addition to *Career Notes*, students and alumni are invited to join the Vermont Law School Career Services Facebook page at [facebook.com/groups/295128751297/](https://facebook.com/groups/295128751297/).



# STAY TUNED!

The Online Learning team is collaborating with Monica to develop and deliver a self-paced Career Services Toolkit, which students will be able to access online by 2020.



## FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS

Please join the Online Learning team in bidding farewell to our Online Student Services Advisor, **Kathy Hartman**, as she approaches retirement this Summer. With a career spanning more than three decades in higher education, Kathy has touched the lives and careers of hundreds of students. We will all miss her dearly.



# ONLINE LEARNING

SPRING  
2019

## NEWSLETTER

