



MICHIGAN STATE

UNIVERSITY

College of Law

Commencement Ceremony

FRIDAY, MAY 8, 2026 — 11:00 a.m.

Michigan State University Breslin Center
East Lansing, Michigan



HISTORY OF MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW

Founded in 1891 as Detroit College of Law, Michigan State University College of Law was the first law school in Detroit. Before the founding of the Law College, the only way a Detroit resident could become a member of the bar without leaving the city to study was by “reading” law in local attorneys’ offices. The Law College’s founders were a group of such “readers”—law clerks and students in southeastern Michigan. As a result, during the first two years of the school’s history, its directors were themselves students—a unique situation.

The first class of 69 graduates included a future circuit court judge and a future ambassador. A female student in the first class and an African American student in the second exemplified the Law College’s commitment to offering all sectors of the population an opportunity for a quality legal education.

Detroit College of Law affiliated with Michigan State University in 1995, expanding the school’s long-held tradition of educational excellence. This affiliation enabled the Law College to build state-of-the-art facilities in the heart of a leading research university, connecting students to a wealth of resources and opportunities while preserving its student-centric culture. The Law College achieved full integration with Michigan State University in 2020.

Michigan State University College of Law continues to pursue its original purpose of providing a superior legal education to diverse men and women. Many of Michigan’s most eminent attorneys, judges, public officials, and business executives are graduates of this distinguished institution, as are a growing number of practitioners throughout the United States and around the world. Michigan State Law alumni carry on our school’s commitments to diversity and excellence as they contribute to the legal, commercial, and public life of the wider community.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Michigan State University occupies the ancestral, traditional and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabeg – Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi peoples. In particular, the university resides on land ceded in the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw. We recognize Michigan’s 12 federally recognized Native Nations, historic Indigenous communities in Michigan, Indigenous individuals and communities who live here now, and those who were forcibly removed from their homelands. In offering this land acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty, history, and experiences.

ORDER OF EVENTS

Processional

Pomp and Circumstance
by Edward Elgar

Welcome & Land Acknowledgement

Dean Michael Sant'Ambrogio

National Anthem

Alirna Korieva

**Introduction of Platform Party
& Charge to the Graduates**

Dean Michael Sant'Ambrogio

**The Honorable George N. Bashara, Jr.
Distinguished Alumni Award**

Presented to Donald D. Nystrom, '00

Introduction of Class Speaker

Dean Michael Sant'Ambrogio

Class Speaker

Joshua Kaplansky

**Recognition of Class Gift &
Introduction of Distinguished Speaker**

Dean Michael Sant'Ambrogio

Commencement Address

The Honorable Ann Sherman, '04
Solicitor General of Michigan

**Presentation of Degree Candidates,
Closing Remarks, & Valediction**

Dean Michael Sant'Ambrogio

ANN SHERMAN, '04
SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

ANN SHERMAN is the Solicitor General for the State of Michigan. In that role, she coordinates all appeals for Michigan Department of Attorney General and practices in the United States Supreme Court, various federal appellate courts, and Michigan's appellate courts.

She graduated summa cum laude from Michigan State University College of Law and holds master's degrees in music from the University of South Florida and Northwestern University. Prior to her career at the Michigan Department of Attorney General, Ann clerked for the Honorable Richard F. Suhrheinrich at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit.

She was appointed Solicitor General in December of 2022, having previously served the Department as Deputy Solicitor General, Assistant Solicitor General, and appellate specialist in one of the Department's busiest litigation divisions, during which time she received the Department's top civil litigator award, several appellate advocacy awards, and desk awards for success in major cases before the Michigan Supreme Court.

In 2021, the National Association of Attorneys General awarded Ann its prestigious Meritorious Service Award for her service to the Nation and the State of Michigan. Also in 2021, Michigan State University College of Law recognized her for Outstanding Service to the College, honoring her many years as a part-time instructor teaching research and writing and Trial Practice I and II. Ann has twice argued before the United States Supreme Court.

DONALD D. NYSTROM, '00
THE HONORABLE GEORGE N. BASHARA, JR.
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

DONALD D. NYSTROM is President of Dynamic Aerospace & Defense, where he has led the company's growth for nearly a decade, expanding its operations across the United States, United Kingdom, and Asia. Under his leadership, the organization has grown through a combination of strategic acquisitions and new investments, serving the aerospace, defense, rail, and heavy equipment industries.

A graduate of Michigan State University College of Law, Nystrom served as Editor in Chief of the Michigan State Law Review and founded the College's Best Brief competition—an enduring part of the 1L Oral Argument Competition, which he continues to support. He began his legal career at Miller Canfield in Detroit before transitioning into private equity and business leadership.

Nystrom remains deeply engaged with MSU Law, having served as Chairman of the College's Board of Trustees, where he played a key role in guiding the College's full integration into Michigan State University. His leadership and generosity continue to shape opportunities for future generations of Spartan lawyers.

SENIOR CLASS OFFICERS

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| J.D. Class Speaker: | Josh Kaplansky |
| J.D. Class Gift Officer | Alexander Doyle |
| J.D. Class Gift Officer | Jasmine Felder |
| J.D. Class Gift Officer | Mahek Khangura |

Honors indicated for the spring and summer 2025 graduates are based on each individual's cumulative grade point average through fall 2024 and do not reflect final semester grades.

- ◆ Cum Laude
- ◆◆ Magna Cum Laude
- ◆◆◆ Summa Cum Laude

FALL 2025

JURIS DOCTOR

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Cesciley J. VanSingel | Mariah M. Vieau | Jeremiah A. Wimberley |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|

MASTER OF JURISPRUDENCE – GLOBAL FOOD LAW

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Javier Chicata | Sierra Faust Deuber | Wendy Patricia Rivera Guzman |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|

SPRING 2026

JURIS DOCTOR

- ◆◆ Yousef Nagi Aamir
Amgd Abdelgadir
Samuel Lawrence Adams
Wyatt Cole Adams
- ◆ Miguel Angel Aguirre
Hajra Akram
Jack Anderson
- ◆◆ Kenneth M. Anderson
Alyse Marie Armstrong
Emily M. Aspinwall
- ◆◆◆ Samuel Baker
Daniel David Bartolotta, Jr.
- ◆ Brianna Grace Becker
Andrew D. Bell
Olivia Helen Berryman
- ◆ Robert Duncan Bjerke
Emily Claire Bluck
- ◆ William P. Boatman
Jessica Ruth Boeve
Tori Katarina Bonn
Daniel J. Bottke
Catherine E. Bozarth
Bailey Adam Braneff
- ◆◆ Jennie M. Brooks
- ◆◆◆ Daniel Lee Brown
DeCarlo Orlando Brown II
Kevin Butler
- ◆ Elizabeth G. Byrd
- ◆◆◆ Neil Albert Chesney
Timothy K. Cooke
Skyler Alexis Cordova
Jordan P. Corwith
- ◆ Patrick Michael Daniels
- ◆ Ethan R. Day
Adiya Christine Daza
Whitney Faith Dean
Jaelyn J. Deng
Alexandra Marie Derksen
Nayeli D. Diaz
Stephanie M. Diaz
- ◆ Alexander M. Doyle
- Kelsey L. Drake
- ◆◆◆ Daria M. Elwell
- ◆◆ Thomas Dean Ermiger
Caroline Grace Esper
Jasmine T. Felder
Conrad Irving Ferguson
- ◆◆ Riley Danielle Fisher
Rolando Foster
Jessica Lynne Fox
- ◆◆◆ Laura A. Fox
Matthew J. Garland
- ◆ Jarod Alan George
Griselda Gjikolaj
Donovan Jake Golich
Andrey S. Golovashchenko
- ◆◆ Stephanie Marie Golphin
Paola Gonzalez
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Ghadeer Haidar
- ◆◆◆ Bethany M. Hall
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Madalyn Grace Hayden
Katherine K. Held
Sydni Nicole Henagan
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Jared M. Hoes
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Haolin Huang
Janet Ibarra
Arec C. Igwebuike
Firas Bashar Imam
Syed Z. Jafry
Tianxin Jiang
- ◆ James Alexander Joyce
- ◆ Devin Kalra
Soo Jeong Kang
- ◆ Joshua Noah Kaplansky
- ◆ Mallory M. Kean
Mahek Kaur Khangura
- Madison E. Koen
- ◆◆ Nicholas A. Kozitza
- ◆◆◆ Julia Golden Kresch
Carschana R. Laporte
- ◆ Justin Lauer
- ◆◆ Ian Scott Lee
Taya I. Lee
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- ◆◆ Valerie Janet McNamara
Lilian M. Mears
Abigail Grace Meehan
Andrew Meisner
Ethan Blain Merenda
Tristyn M. Meyer
- ◆ Taylor Joy Mikkelson
Dominique Miller
Olivia Rae Miller
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Benedict Rugendo Nsenga

JURIS DOCTOR

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| Esmerelda L. Rios | ◆◆ Stephanie Ann Stenger | |

MASTER OF JURISPRUDENCE - GLOBAL FOOD LAW

Stephanie Ann Gledhill

Zachary Louis Porior

Emma Teresa Pridgeon

SUMMER 2026

MASTER OF JURISPRUDENCE - GLOBAL FOOD LAW

Selena Healy

Nicola Anne Kahn

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