

# UCI Law

## Alumni **Newsletter**

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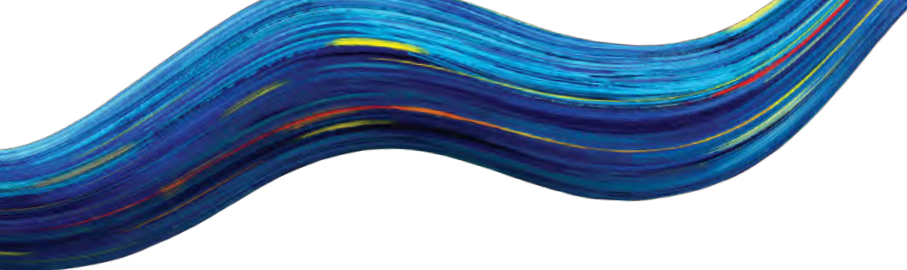
*Let's Go Change  
the World*

FEATURE

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### **The Crowell & Moring Endowed Diversity Scholarship**

Embracing different backgrounds,  
ideas, traditions, and perspectives



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Fernando Nunez '19



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## A Time for Action, Not Platitudes

Dear UCI Law Community,

I have been ripped apart by the events of the past few weeks. Not because the issues are new, but precisely because they are not. I am a Black, Korean, female dean. I have spent my entire career fighting for racial justice, for police reform, and for diversity, equity and inclusion. Both personally and professionally, I recognize that Anti-Blackness and racism (explicit, implicit, institutional, structural, and systemic) have existed for centuries in this country, too frequently aided by the force of law.

If we want this moment to be different, then it is up to us as a community to make it so. I challenge all of us, including me, to do better. As your dean, my commitment to our community is to make the law school welcoming, inclusive, and safe—a place where everyone can flourish.

To read Dean Richardson's full statement, please visit:

<https://www.law.uci.edu/news/in-the-news/2020/dean-richardson-time-for-action-community-statement.html>

# A Conversation with Dean Richardson

On January 1, 2018, when L. Song Richardson became dean of UCI Law, she also became the only woman of color serving as dean at a top-30 law school. Over the last two years, she has worked with our great faculty, students, staff, and community partners to accelerate the law school's ascendancy as one of the country's most important and influential institutions of legal education. In a recent talk with Dean Richardson, she shared advice she has for UCI Law alumni and her bold, inclusive vision for the future of the school.

## What attracted you to UCI Law?


I knew about UCI Law from the moment it opened its doors. I knew about its public service mission, and I loved the fact that it had mandatory clinics. Given my own background in public interest and social justice, everything about the school spoke to me. When I received the offer to join the faculty in July of 2014, it was a no-brainer.

## What is your vision for UCI Law in its next decade?

UCI Law has defied expectations from the start and surpassed the goals we set for our first decade. In our next 10 years, we will continue to defy expectations by inspiring our students to be champions for justice and empowering them to be leaders in the profession. We will continue to produce groundbreaking scholarship that transforms our communities. And, we will continue to innovate our curriculum, prioritize public service, and maintain and grow our commitment to diversity within the profession.

## The rankings use a criterion that prioritizes things that UCI Law doesn't necessarily prioritize. How do you plan to climb the list while staying true to the mission?

When we say that we want to be "10 in 10," we are not limiting ourselves to US News and World Report. Our goal is to be "10 in 10" in the ways that matter to UCI Law, and we are already well on our way towards achieving that goal. For instance, our clinical



program is ranked #8. We are ranked #9 in diversity.

**UCI Law is firmly committed to diversity in the legal space; what makes this commitment so important?**

The legal profession should mirror the society in which we live. The fact that it does not signals a deep and abiding problem with our profession. Additionally, a diverse profession would bring different and important perspectives to the legal system and lend legitimacy to the profession. Unfortunately, diversity hasn't been sufficiently important to the profession. If it were, we would have a diverse profession already.

**Why is the school so focused on innovation and emerging technologies?**

Law is at the center of all the important questions impacting our society. Lawyers in the 21st Century must be prepared to

understand, engage, confront, and deploy the new and emerging technologies that are influencing and transforming our world. Public service, social justice, and diversity and inclusion have, from the beginning, animated our faculty's work and our students' ambitions. We are applying those foundational principles to prepare our students to think critically about emerging technologies. These technologies are already raising issues of great consequence to the world, including bias, employment, criminal justice, the environment, and access to justice, to name a few. We want our students to be ready to tackle these issues and to develop the legal frameworks that will channel emerging technologies into forces for social good. A new kind of lawyer is needed in our world of ubiquitous and often disorienting technological change, and preparing that new lawyer requires a new kind of law school. UCI Law is that school.

**How can alumni participate in your vision for the school?**

Our alumni base is small but mighty, and their commitment to public service and social justice is inspiring. From the very beginning, our graduates have been intimately involved in creating the unique and special culture we have here at UCI Law. As we prepare to enter our next decade, our alumni can help us thrive by remaining involved, and supporting our students through mentoring, sponsorship, spreading the word about our incredible school, and contributing financially to our success.

**What is the most meaningful thing that anyone has ever taught you?**

"Stay true to who you are." Constantly checking in with yourself and reminding yourself of your values and beliefs is critically important because otherwise, the pressures of life and society may pull you from your path.. That

advice, of staying true to who you are, still serves me well today.

**What advice would you give to recent law graduates embarking on their careers?**

I would remind them that hard is not impossible. When I consider everything that they've had to deal with this Spring - from a global pandemic to uncertainty in the job market and uncertainty with the Bar exam- they've shown incredible resilience and grit. And, even as they deal with their own personal and challenging circumstances, they have remained committed to public service and to helping the broader community. They already know that hard is not impossible because they have demonstrated their ability to persevere, no matter what the challenges. It has been truly amazing to witness the grit, resilience and sheer determination of our graduating class, and these qualities will serve them well in the future.



## Diversity in Action

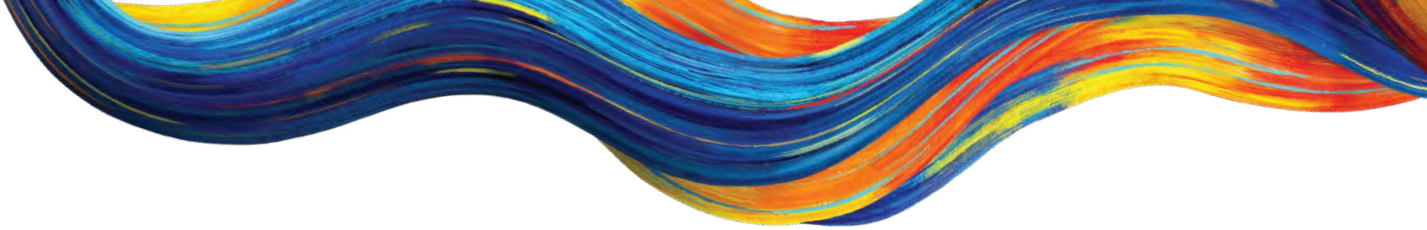
UCI Law and Crowell & Moring ensure that young, talented students of all backgrounds have a sturdy stepping stone to professional success

In 2019 Crowell & Moring announced a scholarship fund at UCI Law that will award \$5,000 each year to an incoming first-year law student who demonstrates an interest in promoting diversity and inclusion in the legal profession. The fund is made up of contributions by alumni, attorneys in the firm, and a match from the firm, representing years of generous giving.

Given Crowell & Moring's ongoing commitment to diversity and pro bono service, the endowed fund represents a partnership between two kindred spirits. "We are a law firm that focuses heavily on diversity, says Crowell & Moring Associate and **UCI Law '17** alumnus, **Eric Fanchiang**. "There are a million diversity efforts, and we also recruit heavily out of UCI Law." Fanchiang is the driving force behind fundraising and establishing parameters for selecting students for the scholarship. "The idea was to do something that can help UCI attract diverse candidates, regardless of whether or not they want to work here. We want to help those who want to go to law school, but for whom it may be cost-prohibitive."

"Our firm values diversity and cultural integrity, and we are proud to promote this by supporting the next generation of lawyers at one of the top law schools in the country," says Chahira Solh, partner and





head of Crowell & Moring's Orange County office. Solh, along with Crowell & Moring partner Dan Sasse, helps Fanchiang manage the fund and select recipients—the first scholar will be announced later this summer.

Despite recent strides, the legal field remains one of the least diverse of any profession. Reports indicate that lawyers of color, lawyers with disabilities, LGBTQ2+ lawyers, and women lawyers are not well-represented, particularly at the partner level or in leadership roles. According to the ABA's National Lawyer Population Survey, "4 percent of

active attorneys identified as Black or African American in 2007 and 4 percent identified as Hispanic or Latino. By 2017, those numbers rose only slightly to 5 percent each."

This is progress, but there is still much work to be done. Fanchiang, Solh, and Sasse are deeply committed to that work. "There's so much need to have people of color doing work for their communities," says Fanchiang. "And I think diversity in corporate law is just as important as diversity in other areas of law, especially when you consider the importance of representation," says Fanchiang.

Solh agrees: "The reason why diversity - both gender and ethnic - really hasn't moved that significantly in big law, or law in general, is due to a couple of things: one, there aren't role models for the younger talent or more junior talent as they're coming through. They often don't have someone who looks like them, or who acts like them, or who grew up like them to look up to. Another reason is that in law firms, most leaders are people who have significant books of business. When you have business, you can create opportunities for others and help pull others up. Law firms need



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- Eric Fanchiang, UCI Law '17  
Associate, Crowell & Moring LLP



“For big law to change, we recognize that we need to do something different than we’ve done before.”

- Dan Sasse  
*Partner, Crowell & Moring LLP*



“Promoting diversity is something we’ve already been doing very well at Crowell & Moring, but If we can make a difference more broadly within the legal profession, we’re really excited to do that.”

- Chahira Solh  
*Partner, Crowell & Moring LLP*

to be making sure that their diverse attorneys are actually getting access to the firm's clients and that those relationships are being supported so that they can grow their books of business and help other diverse attorneys.”

Sasse stresses the importance of diversity in the workplace, saying “It makes our office more tolerant, more creative, and more thoughtful in terms of the way we think and solve problems and interact with each other. Unfortunately, the field in general is

behind, and it's something we need to pay attention to,” he says. “For big law to change, we recognize that we need to do something different than we’ve done before.”

Fanchiang, Solh, and Sasse, are taking action to help make a difference in the legal profession as a whole. “The more diverse people you have coming into the legal profession, the better chances you have of diverse people becoming leaders within the legal profession,” says Solh. “Promoting diversity is something we’ve already been doing very well at Crowell & Moring, but If

*All members of the UCI Law community are welcome to contribute to this endowment fund. Your support will help build a more diverse profession.*

<https://bit.ly/2BkbScM>





# UCI Law Partners

UCI Law Partner donors help the school attain its educational goals, participate in premier school events with school of law thought leaders and support the UCI Law Scholarship Fund.

## UCI Law Partners Membership Levels

Member \$1,000\*

Advisor \$2,500

Advocate \$5,000

Champion \$10,000

Visionary \$25,000

\*Recent graduates of 1-5 years are members at \$500 annually.

**Become a donor here:**  
<https://bit.ly/2Aj8gHI>

UCI Law Partners recognizes donors who have made leadership gifts that demonstrate a strong commitment to the future of the Law School. UCI Law Partners honors alumni and friends who contribute annually.

# Alumni in Action

Thank you to the alumni who participated in our recent survey!

## Share a favorite memory from your time as a UCI Law student:

" Participating in the Mississippi Center for Justice pro bono project."

- Karisa Chapa, '14



" Working for the Immigrant Rights Clinic and participating in the UCDC program."

- Crystal Adams, '15



## What are some resources that you have found helpful in your career that you would like to share with other alumni and students?

" Local and specialized Bar associations can be a good resource for learning and networking. For example, the International Cannabis Bar Association (INCBA) is a bar association for lawyers and law students who are practicing and/or interested in cannabis law around the globe. They host live and virtual CLEs and have social events."

- Lauren Mendelsohn, '16

" Washington Council of Lawyers (DC's public interest bar association) offers free/discounted programming and pro bono opportunities."

- Crystal Adams, '15

## Any exciting recent life events?

" A few months ago, I got engaged to my boyfriend of many years, Sam Sabzehzar! We were originally planning to get married this fall, but due to Coronavirus the wedding has been postponed until (we hope) next year."

- Karisa Chapa, '14

" On June 7th, 2019, I gave birth to my daughter, Quinn Cary Diaz-Ozaeta. We just celebrated her first birthday!"

- Natalie Diaz, '16



We're always eager to hear from our alumni and would love for you to be included in the next edition. Keep an eye out for surveys!

Follow us on LinkedIn!

<https://www.linkedin.com/edu/school?id=377043>

# Congratulations Class of 2020 UCI Law Graduates!

## Your alumni days are just beginning.

We encourage you to stay connected to your classmates and all alumni through the **Alumni Community** at [alumni.law.uci.edu](https://alumni.law.uci.edu). This website holds your alumni directory profile, class notes and photos. In addition, it serves as the hub for information on upcoming virtual alumni events.

Please take a moment to complete the following form so that we might send you your gift this summer as our newest members of the Law Alumni Association: <https://bit.ly/2Zk3FNZ>

Again, with the full support of your UCI Law alumni community cheering you on, congratulations on your graduation and welcome to the UCI Law Alumni Association (LAA).

**UCI** Law

[law.uci.edu](http://law.uci.edu)

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