



# DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND BELONGING

## DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ENHANCE THE CLASSROOM CONVERSATION

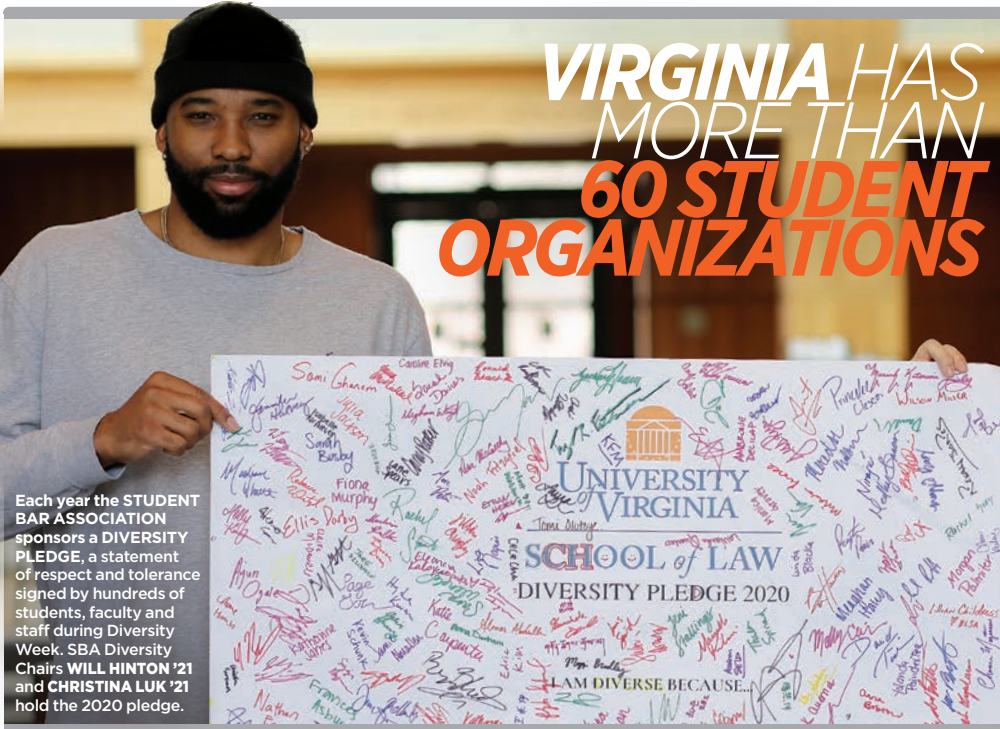
and foster shared values of tolerance, respect and mutual support.

Ask any student: What sets Virginia Law apart from other top law schools is the extraordinary sense of community found here.

At Virginia, a rigorous and academically challenging professional education is paired with a collegial environment in which all voices are heard and all views considered.

It is a better way to learn — but equally important, it's better preparation for the legal profession.

Teamwork, cooperation, respect for different points of view, skilled communication and an understanding of varied perspectives are all an integral part of a profession that serves an increasingly diverse society.



# VIRGINIA HAS MORE THAN 60 STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Each year the STUDENT BAR ASSOCIATION sponsors a DIVERSITY PLEDGE, a statement of respect and tolerance signed by hundreds of students, faculty and staff during Diversity Week. SBA Diversity Chairs WILL HINTON '21 and CHRISTINA LUK '21 hold the 2020 pledge.

**MANY STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS** focus on bringing together students of different racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and religious backgrounds, as well as people of different sexual orientations and political affiliations.

**KEY GROUPS INCLUDE:**

- Advocates for Disability Rights American Constitution Society for Law and Policy
- Asian Pacific American Law Students Association
- Black Law Students Association
- The Federalist Society

- Feminist Legal Forum
- Jewish Law Students Association
- Korean American Law Student Association
- Lambda Law Alliance
- Latin American Law Organization
- Law Christian Fellowship
- Law Republicans at UVA

- Middle Eastern and North African Law Student Association
- Minority Rights Coalition
- Muslim Law Students Association
- Rex E. Lee Law Society
- St. Thomas More Society
- South Asian Law Student Association

- Virginia Law Democrats
- Virginia Law Families
- Virginia Law First-Generation Professionals
- Virginia Law Veterans
- Virginia Law Women
- Women of Color





**AS THE LAW SCHOOL'S** assistant dean for diversity, equity and belonging, **MARK C. JEFFERSON** works to strengthen and advance the school's commitment to being a diverse and equitable institution in which every member — including students, faculty and staff — feels an equal sense of belonging.

"I take very seriously the work of diversity, equity and inclusion," Jefferson said. "Part of the desired outcome, especially for those of us who sit in marginalized identities, is to be able to show up as our whole selves and belong, and to not

have to defend or explain what it means to be me in the world — and that diversity, equity and inclusion work is one of the ways in which we attempt to achieve that goal."

With recent events bringing issues relating to diversity and equity to the forefront for law students across the nation, Jefferson said he is comfortable helping students through difficult times.

"We're actually trying to figure out the language to talk about the thing that we don't know how to talk about," he said. "And that is the work. There are no shortcuts."



**"DIVERSITY IS CRUCIAL** for so many reasons: for establishing genuine dialogue across difference, for achieving true equality, for ensuring access for all to law school and the legal profession, and for maintaining a legal system that represents and mediates conflicts between differing interests, goals and perspectives." —DEAN RISA GOLUBOFF



"It's only recently that first-generation students are being recognized for their own unique backgrounds," said **JENNY KWUN '21**, co-founder of Virginia Law First-Generation Professionals. "There are issues that are unique to the first generation, and we're starting to spark conversation about it not just among students, but also among the faculty."



"The aptitudes presented by this community in valuing people — their voices, experiences and beliefs — are unmatched," said **MANAL CHEEMA '20**. "The UVA Law community is caring, helpful and full of role models."



**UVA LAW'S BLACK LAW STUDENTS ASSOCIATION** has won national chapter of the year honors six times since 2002.



Students and faculty participate in **COMMON LAW GROUNDS**, an organization in which participants seek to understand diverging points of view as a first step toward finding common ground.

**EVENTS** Student organizations are the drivers behind a variety of events designed to support their members, including career networking receptions, social and mentoring events with faculty, and talks by female, minority or LGBT lawyers about their experiences practicing law.

**RECENT EVENTS**

**REFLECTING ON THE RISE IN VIOLENCE AGAINST ASIAN AMERICANS**, featuring UVA Law faculty and sponsored by the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association and Virginia Law Women

**UNPACKING PRIVILEGE: AN EXPERIENCE-BASED DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY**, sponsored

by the Student Bar Association as part of Diversity Week

**TEACHING RACE IN K-12 SCHOOLS? CULTURAL, LEGAL AND POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES**, sponsored by the Center for the Study of Race and Law and the American Association of University Professors

**STUDENT-PROFESSOR PASSOVER LUNCH**, sponsored by the

Jewish Law Students Association

**WOMEN IN BIG LAW AND WOMEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE**, sponsored by Virginia Law Women

**NOWRUZ CELEBRATION**, with the Middle Eastern and North African Law Student Association

**SERVING THE LGBT COMMUNITY IN BIG LAW**, with attorneys


from "Big Law" firms

**50 YEARS OF TITLE IX**, with Suzanne Goldberg, U.S. Department of Education

**BLSA BLACK HISTORY MONTH KICKOFF**, with Chief Judge Roger Gregory of the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals

**THE PEER ADVISOR PROGRAM**

Through the Peer Advisor program, run through the Law School's Office of Student Affairs, second- and third-year law students help entering students acclimate to law school by offering friendship and support.



law.virginia.edu/diversity

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