

Celebrating the First Fifty Years of Southern Illinois University School of Law

A photographic commemoration of SIU Law's milestones. The Southern Illinois University School of Law held its first class on September 4, 1973, in a temporary building on the outskirts of campus. 2023 marks fifty years since that humble beginning, and over the course of those years, the School of Law has expanded to offer eight joint-degree programs, four in-house clinics, and more than twenty student organizations. Continuing to improve the law through innovative teaching, scholarship, and advocacy has also remained a high priority as the School of Law continues to make its mark throughout Southern Illinois and beyond. Of the more than four thousand students who hold degrees from the School of Law, over one hundred and fifty are or have been federal or state judges. Other graduates practice law in forty-nine states as well as internationally. They are partners in major law firms, in-house counsel, politicians, leaders of nonprofit organizations, JAG Corps officers, hospital administrators, wealth managers, diplomats, and much more. "Established in the public interest, serving the public good" has long served as shorthand to describe the essential mission of SIU Law—its character, its essence. This book illuminates the true meaning of that shorthand, telling the story of the events and people that shaped the SIU School of Law throughout its first fifty years. Within these pages, you will find an annotated, illustrated timeline of events, as well as a gallery filled with photographs of faculty, staff, and student life and activities. From the hiring of founding dean Hiram H. Lesar in 1972 to the hosting of the inaugural Diversity Prelaw Summer Institute in 2022, this book charts the evolution of a small, regional school to one with thousands of graduates playing leading roles throughout the country and the world. Featuring more than one hundred photographs, complete indexed lists of full-time faculty members and deans, and identification of numerous "firsts" in the law school's history, this detailed commemoration is a testament to the faculty, staff, students, and alumni who have paved the way for future generations.

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