

Duquesne

FALL 2022

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

IGNITING A NEW ERA

DUQUESNE LAUNCHES AMBITIOUS,
HORIZON-EXPANDING CAMPAIGN

In this issue: Big Stakes ♦ Career Connections ♦ Impacting at all Levels

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Check out new *Duquesne University Magazine* videos at duq.edu/magazine highlighting: Big Stakes, Out of Africa, Into the Studio and Time to Get Fired Up.

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For generations, Duquesne University has provided a world-class education, helping students grow as individuals, as professionals and as ethical decision-makers. The spark that first lit the way for our founders in 1878 has grown into a brilliant flame, tended by subsequent generations. That flame—the Spirit of Duquesne—has transformed our region—and our world. I’m proud that the torch has been passed to us, and that we have the privilege of blazing exciting new trails here in Pittsburgh, and far beyond.

On Sept. 7, thanks to the incredible generosity of an esteemed alumnus, we announced an unprecedented gift and the naming of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. A month later, we lit the night sky ablaze with a grand fireworks display, as we launched Ignite: The Campaign for Duquesne University. These pivotal moments will go down in the Duquesne history books—and you’ll learn more about these game-changing developments as you read this magazine. We’re also proud to include stories of other alums, students, faculty and staff who are determined to change lives, just as a Duquesne University education has changed their lives.

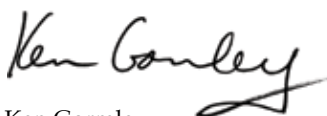
You’ll read about Raheem Perry, an alum of our Digital Media Arts program, who is now pursuing his MFA in Media Arts and Technology at Duquesne. Raheem credits much of his academic success to mentorship he received through our Gussin Spiritan Division’s Summer Passage Program—support he later paid forward as a mentor to subsequent classes of Summer Passage students.

You’ll also meet History Professor Robin Chapdelaine, who inspires her students to engage personally with history so they are “empowered to know their voices matter.”

Voices will always matter at Duquesne University. Our many diverse voices ring true as one vibrant Spirit of Duquesne—an entrepreneurial spirit that leads us forward with energy, wisdom and compassion. We seek to find solutions—as did the biomedical engineering and nursing alumni you’ll read about, who created an award-winning prototype with the potential to save lives in hospital settings.

I’m proud to lead this special University at a pivotal moment in our history. Each day, I learn of new stories like these, and I’m filled with pride. Our Duquesne community is filled with extraordinarily talented individuals who give their all, in every field imaginable. I never cease to be impressed, and amazed. I hope you enjoy reading and learning more about just how committed, how driven and how passionate our Duquesne University community continues to be, as we light the spark for future generations. ♦

Sincerely,



Ken Gormley
Duquesne University President



AS YOU READ...

...you will see the icons below on many stories. They reflect the imperatives of *Re-Imagining Duquesne’s Spiritan Legacy for a New Era: Strategic Plan 2018-2023*. The stories told here show how the plan is alive and vital, often reflecting more than one imperative. To learn more about our progress, visit duq.edu/strategicplan.

Five Strategic Imperatives

-  Re-Imagine the Student Experience for 21st Century Success
-  Become a Flagship for Community Engagement
-  Be a Leader in Interdisciplinary Programs
-  Create a Vibrant Campus Community
-  Encourage Entrepreneurial Spirit



Left and middle: Students don new Duquesne Kline School of Law gear and talk with Tom Kline.

Right: From left, Pennsylvania State Sen. Jay Costa, President Gormley, Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, Duquesne University Board of Directors Chairman Jack McGinley.

BIG STAKES

by Ken Gormley, President of Duquesne University

On Friday, Sept. 7, Duquesne announced that one of its most prominent graduates had committed \$50 million to a law school that would bear his name: the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. Dozens of news outlets across the nation covered what is among the largest gifts ever made to any law school, and the largest gift to Duquesne University in its history. Hundreds gathered for the announcement and celebration, shaking hands with Kline and getting some gear at the exciting moment of unveiling. Later the same day, Kline taught an impromptu class.

A picture-perfect moment, it was also decades in the making, built from a career dedicated to the welfare of others.

President Gormley shares Kline's story for Duquesne Magazine.

Tom Kline's Philadelphia office occupies the top floor of a 19-story building near Rittenhouse Square and offers a spectacular view of the city below. Amid such fine trappings, Tom says, "I take every opportunity I can to remind myself where I came from."

In that office, Tom keeps his well-worn baseball mitt, along with a ball signed by Red Sox slugger Ted Williams that his dad caught in Yankee Stadium. On the wall hangs a typed letter his dad sent in 1969 that reads, in part, "I don't want to get mushie or anything but what more can I say than I know you are good and I know Mother and I will always be proud of you."

Tom Kline truly embodies the Duquesne story, the mission of our Law School, and the Spiritan ideal of service to others that first built the Law School in 1911. Tom's journey, from working-class roots in Hazleton, Pa., to high school teacher in his hometown, to stand-out at Duquesne Law School, to nationally acclaimed trial lawyer in Philadelphia, recognized for working tirelessly to achieve justice for ordinary citizens and his unyielding commitment to the highest standards of ethics, is the story of our Law School itself.



Kline with the late Pennsylvania Supreme Court Chief Justice Max Baer, L'75.



And in his 44th year of practicing law, Kline still immerses himself in each case, keeping a notebook next to his bed so he can scribble down notes as his mind grinds through all of the evidence he plans to present to the judge and jury.

"Every time I stand up to give an opening speech I know someone's future is riding on what I do," he told one reporter. "Those are big stakes."

On Sept. 7, I had the privilege of announcing that Tom Kline committed \$50 million to the Law School—a transformational gift *and* the largest gift in Duquesne's 144-year history. In thanks, the Law School has been renamed the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University.

It's a true honor for any president to name one of the University's flagship schools after a generous philanthropist who wishes to advance its mission and upward trajectory. In this case, the privilege is even more profound. In naming the School of Law after Tom Kline, we are honoring the past, present and future of this special institution.

Tom's vision is simple: give present and future generations of law students and graduates the same opportunities that he enjoyed in order to enrich the legal profession that he cares so deeply about. In the 15 years in which I've gotten to know and admire Tom, he and I have discussed his desire to give back meaningfully to the Law School that made his extraordinary career possible.

Tom's transformational gift will create scholarships to help students reap the benefits of an education from this distinctive Law School; aid in the recruitment, retention and academic excellence of Law School faculty; expand our prized Bar Preparation program; re-imagine clinics that aid the underserved; continue emphasis on public service as a critical aspect of myriad legal careers; and fuel a continued rise in our ranking and reputation.

Tom's gift models the remarkable spirit and sense of integrity that has made our Law School—and our storied list of graduates—so great.

No matter what area of law practice or civic engagement future classes of our students embark on, they will bear the imprimatur of the gold standard of skill, ethical practice, high ideals and commitment to justice, as graduates of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University.

Even among those who have heard of Tom Kline's stellar reputation as one of the top trial lawyers in the nation, many do not know his personal story.

EARLY HISTORY AND DUQUESNE LAW TRAINING

Born in December 1947, Tom Kline grew up in Pennsylvania's anthracite coal region, the son of a dress factory manager whose grandparents emigrated to America from Lithuania. As a boy, "Tommy" worked summers slinging bundles of fabric from machine to machine at Rival Dress Co.. He learned to play the accordion, earning a spot in Rosebud's All Accordion Band, performing in Moose Clubs, Polish wedding halls and local parades. Having developed an interest in bowling from his mother, Jeanne, he joined a league at the Hazleton Jewish Community Center. In school, he excelled at every stage and was elected class vice president at Hazleton High School.

When working with his hands, his skills were more limited. Tom returned from shop class and presented his dad with a funnel he had made, and his father, Isadore, said, "It's clear you're going to have to make your career with your head, rather than your hands."

Tom enrolled at nearby Albright College, where he studied



Kline in his Duquesne days.



Left: Kline with students beneath the new Duquesne Kline School of Law sign. Right top: Kline with Ron Davenport, who was the dean of the School when Kline attended. Right bottom: April Barton, Dean of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University.

liberal arts. As the Vietnam War raged overseas, Tom became interested in political science and pre-law. Although his father, "Izzy," urged him to attend law school, Tom opted to teach sixth grade social studies near home, putting law school on hold for six years. Tom relished striding into his classroom wearing a wide paisley tie, thick leather belt and aviator glasses, especially on days he taught Pennsylvania History and Geography, a class that covered the founding by William Penn and the evolution of all 67 Pennsylvania counties.

Intent on advancing his education, Tom enrolled in a graduate program at Lehigh University, traveling over the mountains to take classes on evenings and weekends, studying American history with an emphasis on 19th and early-20th century social and urban history. He already had begun dating his future wife, Paula Wolf, who grew up in Mount Carmel, close to Hazleton.

Paula had just graduated from Boston University and was beginning her own teaching career in the Hazleton School District when the couple married in late 1972. They both loved their work in their respective classrooms. Yet, Paula urged Tom to pursue his dream of attending law school; she was prepared to work full-time as an elementary school teacher to support both of them. Paula's step-father, Leonard, advised Tom that he should consider his own alma mater, an excellent school in Pittsburgh.

Tom and Paula made the trek to check out Duquesne, which had received such a trusted endorsement. Tom met with then Associate Dean John Sciuolo, a friendly figure who worked alongside Dean Ron Davenport. Sciuolo quizzed the gangly applicant; the two clicked. Both came from working-class backgrounds. Sciuolo was impressed by Kline's intellectual acumen, his easy-going nature and his laser focus on earning a degree embossed with the name of this particular Law School. Three days later, Kline received a letter accepting him into Duquesne Law School.

Tom's vision is simple: give present and future generations of law students and graduates the same opportunities that he enjoyed...

Paula and Tom taught their final classes, then drove the Pennsylvania Turnpike over the mountains and through tunnels to their new home, where Paula had landed a job as a reading specialist at Hampton School District. Their one-bedroom place in Cricklewood Apartments sat adjacent to Duquesne's campus, a stone's throw from the Law School. Everyone from that era knows Cricklewood, and recent alumni and current students know it by its current name: Brottier Hall.

Tom's favorite class turned out to be Torts, taught by a young professor named Frank McClellan. Influenced by Yale Law School Dean and later federal appeals Judge Guido Calabresi, McClellan emphasized in Torts class the notion that the legal system had to achieve fairness and justice in seeking redress for plaintiffs who had suffered injury and other forms of harm through no fault of their own. The notion would stick with Tom.

MENTORS, PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES AND CAREER CHOICES

Tom landed a summer job with Stephen Zappala Sr. (later Chief Justice of Pennsylvania), a solicitor for many municipalities and a Democratic powerhouse. Working in



the basement of the Zappala law building on Forbes Avenue, down a black iron staircase, Tom would sit within earshot of legal luminaries of the day, including attorney Zappala, County Commissioner Tom Forrester, County Coroner Cyril Wecht and others.

Thanks to a good friend from his class, Ann Strickland, Tom learned of a clerkship opening with Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Thomas J. Pomeroy Jr., a towering figure in the legal community and founder of the Kirkpatrick, Pomeroy, Lockhart and Johnson firm (now K&L Gates).

With Ann Strickland, Tom shared an office in a converted hotel room at the William Penn Hotel downtown, and joined senior clerks Fred Thieman and Robert Hoelscher, who had graduated from Pitt and Harvard Law, respectively. That year, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court decided over 400 cases. Pomeroy authored nearly 50 of them, with the full engagement of his clerks.

Legal jobs were scarce in the late 1970s, so before his clerkship began Kline had accepted a position at a small law firm in Pottsville, Pa., near Hazleton. Tom endeavored to fit into this small practice, joining the Rotary Club and other organizations to attract clients. He and Paula had their first child—a baby, girl, Hilary, in March 1979.

Soon, Paula posed the question: “What, exactly, are we doing here?” In many ways, she said, they were back where they had started, living a life they had left in Hazleton. Paula encouraged her husband to think big. He had spoken effusively about the powerhouse plaintiffs’ firm in Philadelphia led by the legendary trial lawyer James E. Beasley—why not aim high and give it a shot?

Tom agreed and mailed a letter to Beasley, with his resume. A week later, he sat in the office interviewing with Jim Beasley himself, who offered the young lawyer a job on the spot.

THE ‘BABE RUTH’ OF TRIAL LAWYERS

Tom’s legal career blossomed as he gained invaluable courtroom experience and learned first-hand from the master trial lawyer, Jim Beasley. In October 1984, the couple had their second child, Zachary Wolf Kline, his middle name Paula’s maiden name. Raising a family and building a career was all-consuming and exciting.

Yet Tom would suffer a personal blow when, a year after the couple’s move to Philadelphia, his father, Izzy, died of a rare form of leukemia. His mother felt lost and alone. Tom and Paula made trips to Hazleton as often as possible.

Having established his *bona fides* as one of the top litigators in the state, Tom took a chance and joined forces with Shanin Specter to form their own firm: Kline & Specter. The firm swiftly gained a reputation of excellence and Tom established an incomparable record of courtroom victories. In one front-page story, the *Philadelphia Daily News* described Kline as “the Babe Ruth of personal injury litigation.”

The headline presaged a period of significant victories in cases that not only sought justice for the people affected but also led to corporate, institutional and governmental change. As Tom’s accolades accumulated, the man who kept his baseball glove in his office continued to remember his roots as well as his purpose.

Perhaps more than any other reward of his storied career, Tom treasures the letters of thanks from families. One came from the mother of a baby who was catastrophically injured due to a hospital medication error in 1991. More than 20 years later she wrote:

Tom, please always remember that, because of you we were able to spend every day with Johnathan. We were able to take him to any doctor anywhere. Had the money to take the very best of care of him. We are forever grateful. When having a bad day, know that and feel proud.

Love, Linda

This letter hangs on the wall in Kline’s office and reminds him of the reasons he committed himself to his profession in the first place.

SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX

From the moment I first encountered Tom Kline, I recognized he was an extraordinary person—one of the most impressive lawyers and human beings I’d ever met. He has built a career by representing ordinary citizens and a wide range of clients in the most difficult, complex cases that most would shy away from—because he cares so deeply about using his considerable talents to accomplish justice. His groundbreaking cases have helped to shape the law in trial and appellate courts across the country and have helped to produce change for the good of his clients, the legal profession, and our system of laws and justice.

The motto of the Law School, affixed to the wall just inside the building’s entranceway, is *Salus Populi Suprema Lex*. Loosely translated from Latin, that means: “The Welfare of the People is the Highest Law.” That is what the Law School has stood for, for the past 111 years. It is also precisely what Tom Kline has stood for, during 44 years of legal practice, using his Duquesne degree to advance the causes of others and society more broadly.

Tom’s celebrated career of pursuing justice and changes for the greater good matches perfectly with a law school committed to the good of the people.

Speaking at Duquesne in 2021 to a packed hall in the Power Center ballroom, he told our students: “I cherish that card in my wallet that allows me to practice law. I belong to a profession that is necessary. We are the guardians of democracy, the backbone of our nation, and we are all in this together.”

Tom Kline has devoted his entire career and all of the talents at his command to the service of others, particularly those needing the most basic guarantees of justice and fairness. That is the essence of what Duquesne University has always stood for. Now, he has given an incomparable gift to future generations of Law School graduates, who will forever carry his shining imprint of integrity and excellence with them. ♦



Visit duq.edu/magazine to hear more about this historic event.