



EXCELLENCE SERVICE LEADERSHIP

FOR 125 YEARS THOSE WHO TEACH THESE CORE VALUES HAVE GUIDED

USD KNUDSON SCHOOL OF LAW

Forming the next generation of lawyer leaders for South Dakota is the heart of USD Knudson School of Law's mission. Since 1901, generations of excellent faculty have made that mission reality through their work with thousands of our graduates.

Excellent faculty are necessary to teach and mentor excellent students, helping them unlock their full potential. Our faculty could serve the legal profession anywhere but choose USD because of the close bonds they can form and profound impact that can make with our students. Our faculty serve as foundational mentors while producing innovative scholarship that shapes the law.

Investment in faculty support is an investment in recruiting, retaining, and developing the faculty who form students in our values of excellence, service, and leadership. As we begin our next 125 years, the impact of investment in faculty has never been greater.

The Sterling Fund, named in honor of our founder, Dean Thomas Sterling, allows everyone to make an investment of any amount in perpetual faculty support. Your investment will sustain our tradition of exceptional faculty, and their formation of exceptional students, for generations to come.





Thomas Sterling | USD Law's 1st Dean

In August of 1901 Thomas Sterling became the 1st Dean of the law school. His qualifications included an A.B. from Illinois Wesleyan University, and A.M. from Illinois Wesleyan's law school, two years as Superintendent of schools in Belmont Illinois, and two years as the South Dakota Constitutional Convention Representative.

Sterling was born near Fairfield County, Ohio in 1851. He and his family moved to what was then the Dakota Territory in 1882. He became a member of the State Constitutional Convention. After his time at USD Knudson School of Law, he was elected to the United States Senate in 1913. Sterling continued to work for South Dakota and the whole country until his death in 1930.

Sterling was an advocate for the people, their education and our democracy. As the first dean, he was also the first to embody our values: Excellence, Service and Leadership.

EXCEPTIONAL FACULTY SHAPE LAW STUDENTS AND THE LAW

Scholarship Here Shapes The Law Everywhere

Our faculty's scholarship on Indian Law, trust and estate law, advocacy, and constitutional law drives the national conversation about how the law should evolve in our modern world.

It also informs local public policy responses as South Dakota continues to address the rural lawyer shortage plaguing the state, financial services regulation, how to create and utilize statutes, and constitutional limits on government intrusion upon personal liberties.

Faculty scholarship at USD Law provides an opportunity for our students to become prepared caretakers and shapers of the substantive law, instead of mere users of it.



USD Knudson School of Law presented me with multiple opportunities to co-publish with my professors. This has been a phenomenal learning experience. I have been able to publish law review articles throughout my law school career because of their academic expertise.

-Travis Letellier Class of 2026

Excellent Teaching Brings The Law To Life In Students

The spark of interest and recognition so many of us find in classrooms launches our careers. It is no secret, law is a complex area of study, and our students are taught to embrace complexity. Great teaching makes the complexity of law understandable without dilution and also makes it inspirational and fun.

Teaching extends beyond the classroom to lifelong mentorship. Our faculty model how to act as professionals, their career choices inspire students and their investment in our community provides students with personal support.

Great legal careers start with great teachers who form and guide great students on their journeys.



I really do think that at USD over any of the bigger schools I could have gone to, the faculty and staff actually care how I end-up.

-Nolan Rounds Class of 2028

THE STERLING FUND: PERMANENT INVESTMENT IN FACULTY SUPPORT

Great faculty members are in great demand. USD Law competes nationally for the best legal minds who want to work closely with students in our deeply connected community. Competition does not end once faculty arrive. In recent years, law schools across the country have attempted to recruit away members of our faculty. Financial support gives us a competitive advantage. USD Law must be in that conversation to recruit, develop, and retain the caliber of faculty we proudly expect to shape our next generation of lawyer leaders.

The Sterling Fund was established to sustain that support in perpetuity. The Sterling Fund is an endowed fund that allows anyone to make a permanent investment, of any size, in faculty support. Investing as a community in the future of our faculty will sustain our tradition of excellence, service, and leadership.

No law school can survive, much less thrive, without exceptional faculty. Faculty dedicated to teaching forms students in their understanding of the law. Faculty dedicated to shaping the law through the exposition of innovative ideas and solution of complicated problems. Faculty dedicated to service provide vital support to the profession, their university, and their community. USD has a proud tradition of faculty achievement; investment in that tradition will sustain and expand the impact of the Law School and its graduates in South Dakota and beyond for generations to come.



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I once asked a lawyer who appears regularly before me, but who graduated from the University of Nebraska's College of Law, if she knew Professor Hutton. Her response was that she did not, but she knew enough about her to wish that she did.

- The Honorable Susan Sabers



Professor Miller has been such an important mentor for me during law school while I have worked as his research assistant. He expects a lot from people, but he gives 110% back to the people he helps as well.

– *Jenna Reidel*



My strongest memories include competing in trials around the nation on USD's Trial Team, led by Professor Horton, and learning from exceptional professors like Professor Garry, and Professor Haksgaard who inspired me and helped me develop my critical thinking and other legal skills, while exploring exciting areas of the law; and working as a graduate assistant for Professors Hess and McKey.

– *Kimberly McNulty*



Professor Pommersheim was always a person I felt like I could go to with questions and I always looked forward to attending one of his classes. He was always engaging and supportive of his students.

– *George Hawkins*



MAKE A GIFT IN HONOR OF THE FACULTY WHO FORMED YOU

Investment in faculty has transformative power for our law school. An exceptional professor changes many lives through the courses they teach, the students they mentor, and the reach of their scholarship. The transformative effect of your gift goes beyond direct support for USD Law's faculty, and toward the next generation of lawyer leaders. We humbly ask you to consider helping us carry our tradition of Excellence, Service, and Leadership into the next 125 years.

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MORE INFORMATION AND
TO MAKE A DONATION**

