

# Rowling Scholars – 2022-23



## Jessica Lee

Jessica Lee is a 3L at SMU Dedman School of Law and a recipient of the Sarah T. Hughes Diversity Scholarship from the Dallas Bar Foundation. She graduated from Brown University in 2018 with a double major in Applied Mathematics-Economics and Public Policy. Prior to law school, she worked in the Global Markets Division of Goldman Sachs as a Legal Analyst here in Dallas. Jessica is also involved in a number of on-campus organizations. She is Editor-in-Chief of the International Law Review Association, President of the Corporate Law Association, and Secretary of the Asian Pacific American Law Students Association. By working closely with the Robert B. Rowling Center for Business Law & Leadership this year, she hopes to bring the Dallas-Fort Worth business and legal communities closer together and facilitate the creation of many meaningful relationships.

She will be joining the Plano office of Spencer Fane LLP following graduation.



## Michael Vuong

Originally from Arlington, Texas, Michael Vuong is a 3L at SMU. He serves as the managing editor for the SMU International Law Review Association and the chair of the SMU Asian Pacific Islander Alumni Board. In law school, Michael has gained experience in all three branches of the federal government through internships with Senior District Judge A. Joe Fish of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, the Judiciary Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives, and U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Chair Charlotte Burrows. Michael received the Bill Bridge Award for the Outstanding 1L for 2021 and the Best Case Note Award from the SMU International Law Review Association. After graduating magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from SMU, Michael earned a Master of Public Administration, Master of Public Policy, and Master of Urban Planning from the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California.



## Sarah Walden

Sarah Walden is a third-year JD student at SMU Dedman School of Law. Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Sarah received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance from SMU. Prior to law school, Sarah worked at Merrill Lynch as a Client Associate. Since starting law school, Sarah has been actively involved in a number of student organizations. Sarah served as a 1L Representative for the Student Bar Association and as a Staff Editor for the SMU Law Review Association. Currently, Sarah serves as President of the SMU Energy Law Association and as an Associate Managing Editor for the SMU Law Review Association. Additionally, Sarah is involved in the SMU

Corporate Counsel Program, where she is working as a legal extern at Bridgewest Group, a private investment company. After graduation, Sarah will work as a Corporate Associate at Kirkland & Ellis LLP in Dallas.



## Sarah Ghaffari

Sarah Ghaffari was born and raised in Dallas and is currently a 3L at SMU Dedman School of Law. She graduated cum laude from the University of Texas at Dallas with a B.S. in Finance and a minor in Political Science. After participating in the Duke Law Transactional Competition last year, Sarah is working with the Board of Advocates to increase the number of transactional competitions available to students at SMU. Currently, Sarah is a member of SMU's Corporate Law Association and Women-in-Law Association. Sarah hopes that her background in finance and determination to bring more transactional opportunities to the law school will enable her to help the Rowling Center achieve its goals this year.



## **Robel Tsegu**

Robel Tsegu was born and raised in the heart of Dallas. He is a third-year JD/MBA student at SMU Dedman School of Law and the Cox School of Business. Before attending SMU, Robel graduated from Texas Tech University with a B.B.A. in Supply Chain Management. He sits as a Notes Editor for SMU Science and Technology Law Review. His interest in law and business led him to write about securities regulation in the blockchain industry. The published note is titled, *Cryptocurrency and Security Issues: The Tide Awaiting Ripples Decision*. Currently, he is externing at Aviditi Advisors, a private placement firm. His previous experience is in fund formation, ESG compliance, and bankruptcy law. Additionally, he is a member of the Black Law Student

Association, Cox Graduate Finance Association, JD/MBA representative for the Student Bar Association, and On-Campus Competitions Director for the Board of Advocates. During his free time, Robel enjoys riding his bike around White Rock Lake, working on cars, and playing Catan.



## **Thomas J. Emeterio**

Thomas J. Emeterio was born and raised as a Southern Californian but spent many summers in Austin and Houston. He graduated from Texas A&M University in 2017 with a Political Science degree and a Business minor. Outside of his studies, Thomas was active in extracurriculars and the community. He worked as an intern for a law firm; he served on the the board of the Texas A&M Pre Law Society; and he chaired a Philanthropy Committee and raised money for the local Down Syndrom Association. After graduation, he studied for law school; he worked jobs as a sales floor manager, meat clerk, and accounting clerk; and he moved to Dallas to advance his career. Now, at SMU Law as a Rowling Scholar, Thomas is a member of the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers and is gaining valuable legal experience by externing for a General Counsel, clerking at a litigation law

firm, and externing with a federal magistrate judge. After graduation, Thomas is excited to join the Dallas legal community and begin practicing law.



## **Grayson Cieszkowski**

Grayson Cieszkowski is a third-year law student at SMU Dedman School of Law. She is from Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and graduated from the University of Michigan (Go Blue!) in 2020 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Grayson has interned at both the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan and the Fifth District Court of Appeals in Dallas. At SMU, she is a member of Women-In-Law and the International Law Review Association. Grayson has also been recognized as a Dean's Scholarship Recipient, Jackson Walker Moot Court Competition Round Winner and Top Score Recipient, and Best Case Note Finalist. Upon graduation, Grayson looks forward to returning home to practice corporate transactional work.



## **Pauline Hodencq**

Though a French native, Pauline Hodencq has established residence in Texas where she is currently enrolled at SMU Dedman School of Law as a third-year law student. She attended the University of Texas at Austin for her undergraduate degree where she double majored in History Honors and Government. Pauline has a keen interest in Aviation law. She currently serves as the Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Air Law & Commerce with SMU Law Review and is the President and founding member of the Air & Space Law Organization (ASLO) on campus. Pauline is also interested in the field of Bankruptcy; she is the President and co-founder of the Bankruptcy Law Society (BLS). She wrote a comment at the crossroads between Bankruptcy and Aviation, which will be published later this year. Pauline successfully completed her summer internship with Kirkland & Ellis in New York City. She will return to the firm post-graduation as a first-year Corporate Associate to pursue her interests in M&A and Capital Markets.