

Legal Aid: Suzanne and Stuart Salsbury Endow Director of Trial Advocacy Position

Wanda Haskel February 3, 2022 6 min read

A generous gift of \$800,000 from Stuart Salsbury, JD '71, and Suzanne Salsbury, JD '73, is giving a big boost to opportunities for students at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law in the area of trial advocacy.



Suzanne and Stuart Salsbury are alumni and longtime donors to the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law.

With this investment, the longtime law school supporters have endowed a new position — the Salsbury Director of Trial Advocacy — to manage Maryland Carey Law's trial team program, which allows students to hone their courtroom skills in competitions across the country.

The law school also will establish the Salsbury Trial Competition, an

internal event that will provide a platform for students to test and exhibit their advocacy skills.

"We are deeply grateful to Stuart and Suzanne Salsbury for their incredible commitment to Maryland Carey Law," said Dean Donald B. Tobin, JD. "This gift ensures the sustainability and strength of our trial team for generations of students to come."

The Salsburys, who received a 2021 University of Maryland, Baltimore Catalyst for Excellence Award (along with their son, Ben, and daughter-in-law, Rebecca), attended the law school in the early 1970s and thrived in the moot court program, but missed the chance to be on a trial team. By the time Ben Salsbury, JD '07, was a first-year law student, the National Trial Team was well established, having started in the late 1990s, and well supported by alumni who volunteered to coach and travel with the students. Ben became one of the team's stars along with his future wife, Rebecca Salsbury, JD '08, and celebrated a national championship in his final year.

Despite its success, the team had challenges with funding, and, in 2007, the Salsburys established an endowment to help offset students' travel expenses and tournament fees. Since Ben's graduation, he has volunteered countless hours to coach and co-direct the team. That experience reinforced his view that the trial team needed a permanent director to make the program one of the best in the country. Ben's vision aligned with his parents' philanthropic priorities, and they decided to endow the position. "It was the right time to do the right thing," the Salsburys said.

Suzanne and Stuart have spent their careers as litigators. Before retiring in 2011, Suzanne practiced for 37 years in the juvenile and child support divisions of the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office. She was the first assistant state's attorney in Maryland to job share with a partner. After a federal clerkship, Stuart joined the law firm of Israelson, Pines & Jackson, which ultimately became Salsbury, Clements, Bekman, Marder & Adkins, LLC. He has practiced as a trial lawyer for over four decades and is recognized as one of Maryland's

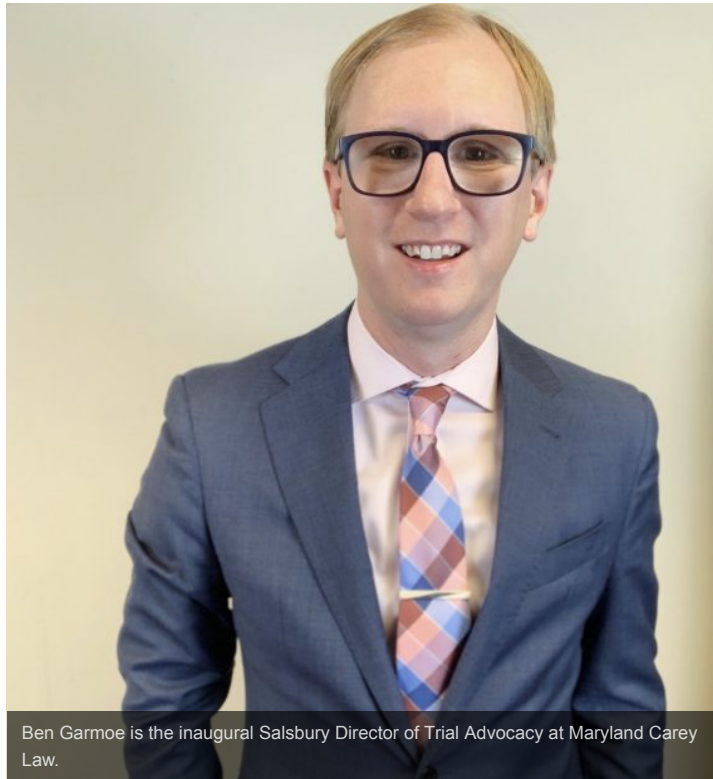
premier medical malpractice attorneys, having served as president of the Maryland Trial Lawyers Association and on the Board of Governors of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. The couple's daughter, Jessica Salsbury, JD, is continuing the family's contribution to the legal profession, working in immigration law since she graduated from American University's Washington College of Law in 2005.

The Salsburys believe that Ben's experience on the trial team was invaluable preparation as he grew into his own litigation career. In 2015, Ben and fellow alumnus Kevin Sullivan, JD '03, co-founded Salsbury Sullivan, LLC, a boutique litigation firm in downtown Baltimore. Stuart, who signed on to contribute his experience at Salsbury Sullivan in 2016, said, "I saw what trial advocacy did for Ben. ... I have always felt that trial advocacy is one of the most important parts of what you should be doing in law school."

Maryland Carey Law's new Salsbury Director of Trial Advocacy position has been filled by Ben Garmoe, JD '16, who had been the team's part-time managing director since 2020. In 2021, Garmoe led the University of Maryland, Baltimore County's mock trial team over Yale University to win the American Mock Trial Association national championship for the first time in program history.

A former captain on the Maryland Carey Law trial team, Garmoe is thrilled to be back with the team full-time, calling the newly endowed position his "dream job," adding, "I am incredibly grateful because this school meant so much to me. To get to walk here every day and do this job, I can't imagine anything better."

Since Garmoe came on full time last fall, the team has seen growth and success, taking first place in the Quinnipiac School of Law's highly competitive Criminal Justice Trial Advocacy Competition in October.



Ben Garmoe is the inaugural Salsbury Director of Trial Advocacy at Maryland Carey Law.

Current trial team member Nicholas Spiller, a Class of 2023) student who competed in the Quinnipiac event, is thrilled by the direction the team is taking thanks to the Salsbury gift.

"Being on the trial team is providing me with valuable experiences that I know are preparing me for the reality of lawyering," Spiller said. "Everyone involved with the team, from the coaches to classmates, have been very encouraging and supportive. I am grateful that the team now has a full-time, permanent director to build on our momentum and continue strengthening the program for future students."

In recognition of the Salsburys' generosity, Maryland Carey Law also intends to create the Salsbury Trial Competition, an annual event similar to the longtime Myerowitz Moot Court Competition in which students present briefs and oral arguments before local judges and vie

for seats on the Maryland Carey Law Moot Court Board. Members of the trial team, which is a for-credit student organization, are selected through a rigorous two-round tryout process. The competition likely will become integrated into that process.

Garmoe, who is a past Myerowitz winner, appreciates the benefits of an elite, internal competition for students. “Myerowitz has such an important role around here,” he noted. “Ever since I was a student, I thought that the trial team should have something similar.”

Stuart and Suzanne Salsbury feel the same way, emphasizing their desire for a signature competition to be the cornerstone of a thriving trial advocacy program, which, Suzanne remarked, already produces “some of the star litigators and judges in Maryland.”

The Salsburys’ remarkable history of philanthropy at the law school began soon after their graduations in 1971 and 1973. Recognizing that being a state school does not mean an institution is fully funded, the Salsburys have been unwavering in their dedication to supporting their alma mater.

“The law school gave me all kinds of opportunities,” Stuart said. “It opened up a whole different life and world.”

The couple also stepped up when the law school undertook the construction of a new building in the early 2000s, making a significant gift toward the capital project. Additionally, Stuart served on the school’s Board of Visitors for 25 years. “The Salsburys’ commitment to philanthropy is inspiring,” said Shara Boonshaft, JD ’02, Maryland Carey Law’s assistant dean of development and alumni relations, reflecting on the couple’s enduring generosity. “In creating this legacy and in all they have contributed for decades, Stuart and Suzanne exemplify the value of giving back, for which the law school is profoundly grateful.”

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