



BROOKS McCORMICK JR
**ANIMAL LAW &
POLICY PROGRAM**
HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

PROGRAM AND CLINIC YEAR IN REVIEW

2025–2026





Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals

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OUR MISSION

The Brooks McCormick Jr. Animal Law & Policy Program at Harvard Law School is committed to analyzing and improving the treatment of animals through the legal system. The Program engages with academics, students, practitioners, and decision-makers to foster discourse, facilitate scholarship, develop strategic solutions, and build innovative bridges between theory and practice in the rapidly evolving area of animal law and policy.

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

by Kristen Stilt

As we reflect on the 2025–2026 academic year—another year of challenge and uncertainty for the Harvard community and for academic institutions across the country—we want to begin with profound gratitude to everyone who has steadfastly supported our mission. ALPP is entirely donor funded, and it is your support that allows us to keep doing this work at a moment when it matters more than ever. The stakes remain high, and amid these challenges we are even further motivated to roll up our sleeves and redouble our efforts.

This year also marked a milestone: more than a decade since the Program’s founding in 2014. We are honoring that milestone not with a retrospective but with a serious look forward—convening as a team, with the support of Scarlet Spark, to consider our future direction and to set priorities for ALPP’s second decade.

It was a fitting year for that reflection, because the reach of the Program’s work has never been clearer. With co-editors Anne Peters and Saskia Stucki, we completed *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, which establishes Global Animal Law as a field of study. With the support of Open Philanthropy (now Coefficient Giving), we launched Phase 1 of the Assessment for Continuous Improvement (ACI), a major new project assessing the welfare of farmed land vertebrates around the world.

With a seed grant from the Harvard University Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability, we convened lawyers, scholars, tribal leaders, and advocates from the rights of nature and climate change movements for a two-day workshop that we expect will bear fruit for years to come. And in the classroom and beyond, our community thrived—from Animal Law Week’s five days of conversations at the intersection of animal welfare, human rights, and constitutional law, to our students’ prize-winning scholarship, to the Clinic’s continuing advocacy.

Our team also grew and changed. We welcomed Lana Nadj in her first full year as Executive Director, a natural leader whom I and our team have come to deeply trust for her intelligence, compassion, and strategic thinking. We also warmly welcomed and appreciated working this year with Research Fellow Debora Bresch and Visiting Fellows Nina Kerstensteiner and Finn Preiss. We said farewell, with deep gratitude and support, to Legislative Policy Fellow Kelley McGill, whose precision and dedication shaped so much of our work, and we welcomed Callum LaFrance, who initially took up the Brooks Animal Law Digest on an interim basis and has now been appointed to our research team.

Thank you, as always, for being part of this community and this mission.



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

by Lana Nadj

It has been a great pleasure to join the Program as Executive Director. This year I have seen first-hand the appetite on campus and in the community for the ideas that drive the Program. During Animal Law Week, around 250 students flocked to hear inspiring speakers who are changing the world for animals. Our Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop in May opened the door to collaborations that will have global reach. I am looking forward to expanding our impact by drawing growing numbers of future leaders into the Program and deepening our collaborations. I am particularly excited about many of the projects about to take off, especially in aquaculture and our Assessment for Continuous Improvement project for terrestrial farmed animals, funded by Coefficient Giving. We look forward to keeping you updated throughout the year, and invite you to contact us to find out more, including how you can support our work for a better world for animals.

MEET OUR TEAM



Kristen Stilt

*Faculty Director,
Animal Law & Policy Program*

The Animal Law & Policy Program is led by Professor Kristen Stilt, who founded the Program in 2014 and remains at the center of everything it does — as Faculty Director, editor of the Brooks Animal Law Digest, convener of its workshops, and teacher and mentor to its students and fellows. Professor Stilt also directs Harvard Law School's Program on Law and Society in the Muslim World, and her scholarship bridges the two fields, spanning animal law, Islamic law and society, and comparative constitutional law — including The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law, which she co-edited.



Mary Hollingsworth

*Faculty Director,
Animal Law & Policy Clinic*

Mary Hollingsworth is the Faculty Director of the Animal Law & Policy Clinic, and an experienced trial attorney. Before joining Harvard Law School, Professor Hollingsworth litigated cases arising under the Endangered Species Act for over a decade and led the Justice Department's efforts in groundbreaking civil enforcement of federal statutory provisions for the protection of animals. Her collaborative efforts with the United States Marshals Service against dog-fighting operations have resulted in the rescue of over 3,000 dogs.



Lana Nadj

*Executive Director,
Animal Law & Policy Program*

Lana Nadj joined the Program as Executive Director, bringing litigation and policy experience and longstanding ties to ALPP. Lana is an experienced project manager, researcher, and policy lawyer with an LL.M. from the University of Sydney and an LL.M. in Animal Law from the Vermont Law & Graduate School awarded with distinction. Lana's connections with ALPP extend back to many of the Program's previous projects, for which she provided research and strategic support. She brings international experience and connections as the Program broadens its global reach and impact.



Bonnie Nadzam

*Associate Director of Ethics,
Culture & Religion,
Animal Law & Policy Program*

Bonnie Nadzam is ALPP's writer, editor, researcher, and workshop facilitator. Major projects this year included editorial assistance with The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law and facilitating the ALPP's Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop. Bonnie is a widely published author across genres, holds a PhD in Literature and Creative Writing from the University of Southern California, and works closely with visiting and former fellows, and faculty and staff, on their writing projects.

MEET OUR TEAM (cont.)



Debora M. Bresch
*Research Fellow,
Animal Law & Policy Program*

Debora Bresch brought many years’ experience in animal advocacy to her work on the foundational phase of ALPP’s Assessment for Continuous Improvement (ACI) project. Supported by Coefficient Giving, the ACI project will pilot a comparative assessment tool for country-by-country, species-by-species deployment, to encourage improvements in the treatment of billions of farmed animals. Debora has brought extensive experience managing multi-stakeholder initiatives to the ALPP team. Her previous work has resulted in the passage of ground-breaking legislation that has helped animals across New England, and beyond.



Ann Linder
*Associate Director of Policy and
Research, Animal Law & Policy
Program (on leave)*

Despite her formal absence from the Program this year, Ann Linder has contributed her generous support to various aspects of Program work and its publications. Ann is lead author of ALPP’s groundbreaking reports on the zoonotic risk posed by industrial animal farming practices, especially live markets. Ann has recently served as research scholar with the Animal Agriculture Accountability Project at Yale Law School. Ann holds a J.D. from Stanford Law School and an M.S. in Animals and Public Policy from Tufts University’s Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, where she has taught Animal Law in recent years.



Callum LaFrance
*Legal Researcher (Temporary);
Research Fellow – Aquaculture,
Animal Law & Policy Program*

Callum LaFrance was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 2024. Callum holds a J.D. from the Vermont Law & Graduate School. As a new graduate and attorney he was a Legal Fellow at the Vermont Law & Graduate School’s Center for Agriculture and Food Systems and Environmental Justice Clinic. Callum joined the ALPP to research and draft the Brooks Animal Law Digest: U.S. Edition in April 2026 and will continue with the Program in the role of Research Fellow – Aquaculture.



Kelley McGill
*Legislative Policy Fellow,
Animal Law & Policy Program*

Kelley McGill focused on food and agriculture policy, including analyzing the proposed Save Our Bacon Act language that was slated for inclusion in the Farm Bill and is still under active consideration in modified form at the time of drafting this Year in Review. Kelley researched and drafted the Brooks Animal Law Digest: U.S. Edition and analyzed the regulation of aquaculture, cellular agriculture and other novel foods to produce her own scholarship. An experienced legislative drafter, Kelley holds a J.D., cum laude, from Harvard Law School.



VISITING FELLOWS AND RESEARCHERS

This year the Animal Law & Policy Program was proud to host Visiting Fellows Nina Kerstensteiner and Finn Preiss.



Nina Kerstensteiner
Fulbright Visiting Scholar

Nina Kerstensteiner was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar with the Program and was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Regensburg in Germany. Nina’s work centers on comparative constitutional law, public law, animal law, and access to justice. She is particularly interested in the enforcement of animal law at the local, national, and international levels. She also examines strategic litigation in animal and environmental law, assessing how domestic and international court decisions shape legal frameworks.

Nina studied law at the University of Regensburg and completed a legal clerkship in Munich. She earned her doctor iuris at the University of Regensburg with a dissertation on strategic litigation in animal law, which was subsequently published as a scholarly monograph on animal rights and welfare. Her book received several awards, including the Winter Foundation Prize for the Rights of Nature and the Felix Wankel Junior Prize, and was a finalist for the German Thesis Award.



Finn Preiss
Visiting Fellow

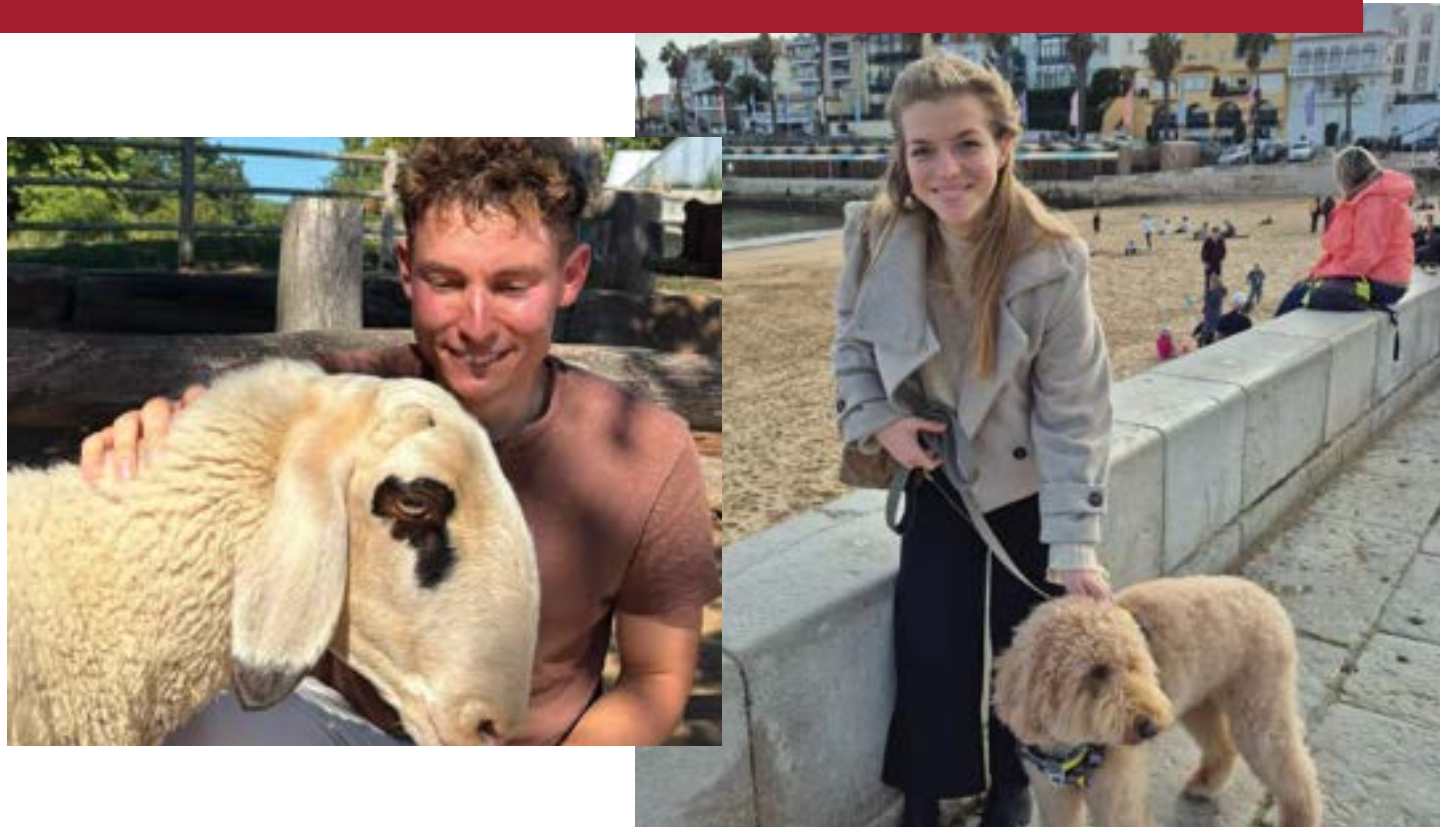
At the time of his ALPP Visiting Fellowship, Finn Preiss was also a Visiting Scholar and Research Fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law (MPIL) in Heidelberg, Germany. Finn’s research focuses on how the relationship between animal agriculture, climate change, and food security is addressed within the international climate regime. Coming from a family of veterinarians, Finn grew up alongside animals and developed a longstanding interest in animal welfare. He aims to improve the treatment of animals through the lens of international environmental law.

Finn studied law as a scholarship recipient of the German National Academic Foundation at Heidelberg University, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and the Hague Academy of International Law.

During his studies, he interned at the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection, where he worked in the “Fundamental Issues, Strategy, and Law of Adaptation to Climate Change” department. He also volunteered at his law school’s legal clinic. He graduated from law school in July 2025 as one of the top graduates in his cohort. Since then, he has worked as a law tutor at Heidelberg University and as a Research Fellow in the ENSURE research group at MPIL, led by Dr. Carolyn Moser.

“My time with the Animal Law & Policy Program was a very enriching experience in my academic career. It was great to meet so many other people working in the field of animal law. The exchange with colleagues across disciplines and legal systems – so often over a coffee in the dining hall – shaped my comparative research and helped me see my work from new angles. It was also fascinating to see how the Animal Law Clinic works – a model that has no real equivalent in European animal law (yet). I left Cambridge with new research questions, a broader academic network and a lasting connection to the ALPP. My heartfelt thanks to the ALPP for these months!”

Nina Kerstensteiner, Visiting Fellow



WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Animal Law & Policy Program had an impactful year of scholarly research and writing, public events, teaching and student mentorship, and partnership with the Animal Law & Policy Clinic.





POLICY & PRACTICE

The Animal Law & Policy Program collaborates with many individuals and organizations to share expertise on matters of law and policy. Our faculty and staff engage with law firms, academics, authors, practitioners, government agencies, international organizations, and the media.

This year, the Program’s Assessment for Continuous Improvement brought faculty and staff into consultation with regional specialists and animal advocates around the world. The Program’s Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop convened lawyers, scholars, tribal leaders, and advocates from two global movements for two days of exchange at Harvard. Each week, the Program also researched and drafted the Brooks Animal Law Digest: U.S. Edition, along with its annual year-in-review Compendium (see Brooks Animal Law Digest and Compendium, below). The Digest is widely read, providing an important, reliable source of information for practitioners, legal clinics, scholars, and the wider animal welfare community.

Legislative Policy Fellow Kelley McGill also worked with Faculty Director Kristen Stilt this year to publish a report on H.R. 4673, the Save Our Bacon Act (SOBA). The report supplied a detailed analysis of how the bill would destabilize the balance of authority between the federal government and the states over livestock-derived

products. Advocates, the media, and legislators relied on the analysis. As of the time of writing, the SOBA language no longer appears in the Farm Bill.

In September 2025 the High Court of South Africa admitted Kristen Stilt and former Rights of Nature Fellow Macarena Montes Franceschini as amici curiae (friends of the Court). In May 2026 the Court heard argument relevant to the proposed relocation of three elephants held in captivity in the Johannesburg Zoo to a sanctuary.

Kristen Stilt published an essay in Verfassungsblog arguing that the avian influenza crisis underscores the need for transformative meat governance and spoke with Harvard Law Today about extending California’s necessity defense to those who rescue animals in grave danger. Ann Linder addressed U.S. avian influenza policy in an e-Letter in Science, and her research on the global wildlife trade and zoonotic disease risk was covered by The New York Times and other outlets (see In the Press, below).

THE BROOKS ANIMAL LAW DIGEST & COMPENDIUM

“What I enjoy most about writing and researching for the Animal Law Digest is that I get to learn about the many different tactics and strategies for improving animal-human relations and the quality of life for animals. As someone who hopes to contribute to a just transition for our world, working at the Animal Law & Policy Program has helped expand my perspective on how to move forward with non-human animals as we deconstruct humanity’s extractive lifeways together.”

— Callum LaFrance, Research Fellow



SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM THE COMPENDIUM

2025–26

Year-in-Review Compendia are produced annually by the Program and published by the Brooks Institute for Animal Rights Law & Policy. Each Compendium captures the year’s ups and downs for animal law and policy across areas ranging from farmed animal confinement standards and animal disease to wildlife, commercial fishing, and the National Environmental Policy Act. The Compendium is a curated compilation of the Digest entries but also offers an overview in narrative form written by those with the bird’s-eye view of the year – the Digest researchers and its primary reviewer, Kristen Stilt. The overview looks ahead, too. Noting federal support for an interagency animal welfare initiative at the end of 2025, the most recent Compendium anticipated “expanded progress in areas of AWA enforcement, particularly against puppy mills” and the emergence of the New World screwworm. References to the year in the selections below are to 2025.

FARMED ANIMAL CONFINEMENT STANDARDS

State farmed animal confinement standards saw notable action in federal courts this year. In January, the Iowa Pork Producers Association filed a petition for a writ of certiorari with the U.S. Supreme Court challenging the constitutionality of California’s Proposition 12 minimum farmed animal confinement standards; in June, the Supreme Court denied the petition, declining to hear the case and allowing the law to stand. In September, Triumph Foods sued California officials in federal court, alleging that the Federal Meat Inspection Act preempts Proposition 12 and that the law unconstitutionally discriminates against out-of-state processors. And in October, the First Circuit upheld the constitutionality of Massachusetts’s similar Question 3.

ANIMAL DISEASE AND INFESTATION

This year saw ups and downs in the areas of animal disease and infestation. The spread and impacts of avian influenza were much less severe in 2025 than they were feared to be. At the federal level, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a new \$1 billion strategy to combat the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza in February, and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ended its emergency response. Meanwhile, the northward spread of the New World screwworm emerged as a growing concern for animal health officials heading into 2026.

ADVOCACY AND LOCAL ACTION

Advocates and localities continued to press for change in 2025. In August, Brookline became the first municipality in Massachusetts to ban foie gras. In December, animal rights activist Zoe Rosenberg was released from jail after spending two weeks in solitary confinement following her conviction related to the rescue of four chickens from a facility in Sonoma, California.

Example Entries Drafted This Year for the Brooks Animal Law Digest: U.S. Edition

2025–26

The U.S. Edition of the Animal Law Digest is researched and drafted by the Brooks McCormick Jr. Animal Law & Policy Program at Harvard Law School. It is published weekly by the Brooks Institute for Animal Rights Law & Policy.

California Enacts Migratory Bird Protection Act

November 2025

California Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill 454, the “California Migratory Bird Protection Act.” The legislation makes it unlawful to take or possess any migratory bird designated under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act, or any part of such a bird. An existing provision prohibiting the taking of designated birds in the state was scheduled to be repealed on January 1, 2026; this legislation removes the automatic sunset, making the prohibition perpetual, and took effect immediately as an urgency statute to protect the state’s hundreds of diverse bird species and the ecosystems that depend on them.

U.S. Senate Passes FDA Modernization Act 3.0

January 2026

The U.S. Senate passed S. 355, the “FDA Modernization Act 3.0.” The bill would require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to publish a final rule implementing the FDA Modernization Act 2.0, enacted in 2022, which removed animal testing as a legal requirement for human drugs and vaccines. The Senate-passed bill would require replacing references to “animal” tests, data, studies, models, and research in certain federal regulations with references to nonclinical tests, data, studies, models, and research.

Washington Bill Would Ban the Sale of Farmed Octopus

January 2026

A bill to prohibit the sale and possession of farmed octopus advanced out of a Washington State House committee. The measure builds on the state’s 2024 law — the first of its kind in the world — which banned octopus aquaculture in Washington before any such operation existed there. Because the earlier prohibition reached only farming and not commerce, the new bill would bar knowingly selling, possessing, transporting, or distributing any octopus that is the product of aquaculture, with violations carrying a fine of up to \$500. The legislation reflects a growing legislative focus on the welfare of cephalopods, which a substantial body of research recognizes as sentient animals capable of experiencing pain and distress, and follows comparable measures in California and bills introduced in other coastal states.

Mississippi Enacts First-of-Its-Kind Ban on Cell-Cultured Dairy Products

April 2026

The Mississippi Legislature enacted House Bill 1153, which prohibits the manufacture, sale, and offering for sale of any “cell-cultured dairy product.” The first-of-its-kind legislation defines the term to cover products intended to replicate or substitute for milk that are derived from animal cells cultured outside of a live animal, including products produced through the growth of mammary or other animal cells in vitro. Violations may be punished by a penalty of up to \$500 per day, up to a total of \$10,000 per transaction or occurrence. The ban is effective July 1, 2026. The legislation was allowed to become law without the governor’s signature.



Jo-Anne McArthur / Essere Animali / We Animals

Assessment for Continuous Improvement (ACI) Pilot

With the support of Open Philanthropy (now Coefficient Giving), ALPP has launched a major new project with significant potential for lasting global impact. The Assessment for Continuous Improvement (ACI) project will use robust comparative measurement data on the welfare of land vertebrates in agricultural production in specific countries to promote continuous improvement.

Worldwide, over 31 billion vertebrate land animals are farmed at any given time, and more than 80 billion are slaughtered annually. Because production and consumption are decoupled across borders — the demand, capital, and trade policy of one country routinely shape how animals are raised and killed in another — the welfare of farmed animals cannot be secured by domestic regulation acting alone, but only through coordinated, cross-border effort. This project draws on lessons from human rights, health care quality assurance, and benchmarking techniques to facilitate continuous improvement in the lives of farmed animals globally.

The pilot will assess the welfare of several animal species initially in Australia, Brazil, Denmark, India, and Malaysia. An anticipated Phase 2 will test the pilot's capacity to increase significantly in scale. Pairing documentary analysis with in-country expert interviews, it will apply a metric to produce a comparative assessment with contextual analysis. A public report designed to help governments, global institutions, and other actors will issue at the end of the project's second phase.

Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop

May 18-19, 2026 workshop supported by the Harvard University Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability

As temperatures soar and literally billions of animals have been killed in wildfires in recent years, climate advocates and environmentalists are looking for new approaches. The environmental movement in the country seems stagnant; its old ways are insufficient to meet the current challenges. With our deep experience in rights of nature, the ALPP identified an opportunity to bring rights of nature and climate change practitioners and discourse together in a workshop — individuals and communities who often work in parallel yet separately. That workshop took place in May.

Convened by Faculty Director Kristen Stilt and co-moderated by Frank Bibeau, Tribal Attorney and Executive Director of the 1855 Treaty Authority, the workshop facilitated many conversations over two days. It provided a platform for new relationships, mutual support and collaborations that will continue well beyond the gathering itself. Themes included rights of nature ordinances; the role of tribal courts; Native American traditions of reciprocity, kinship, and responsibility to land, water, animals, and other beings; the connection between Indigenous knowledge and state law and the strengths and shortcomings of “rights of nature” language; narrative change; and industrial agriculture and its failings.

The workshop was featured in the Harvard Climate Brief in David Trilling's article “Is ‘rights of nature’ the right phrase?” (May 27, 2026), and a report will be published soon.



Sarah Bastille Photography

“Bringing experts from the field to discuss important issues about the Rights of Nature is an integral step in finding meaningful solutions, ensuring Native Voices are not just included, but centered and honored as experts as needed. This convening can be an example for how institutions move forward and set these steps as common expectations for future work.”

— Jordan Clark (Wampanoag Tribe of Aquinnah),
Executive Director, Harvard University Native American Program

“It was an honor to be part of this workshop and to connect with others in different fields who have similar passions. We had helpful discussions that affirmed common feedback and questions I have seen come up while working with others on rights of nature and climate change issues. The questions raised by some professionals in the workshop helped provide myself with a guide post on where the education bar may be for the general population/ non-native population, legal professionals, youth, and other Indigenous people across turtle island and beyond. This workshop also gave me the opportunity to think more critically and analytically about the messaging and legal challenges in explaining Indigenous inherent relationships with our kin (ie; our sacred fish, the c’waam (Lost River sucker), koptu (Short-nose sucker) and c’iyaals (salmon) for the maqlaqs (“people”) of the Klamath Tribes) to a predominantly non-Indigenous and non-Indian law trained group. Having the opportunity to collaborate with other advocates who share common ground was helpful in identifying the challenges ahead. Through this workshop I met new allies eager to support the rights of nature advocacy work happening in Indian country. Overall, our group had constructive conversations that helped identify the work and discussions needed to help support this global rights of nature movement. I am looking forward to seeing how this workshop evolves and grows.”

— Juliette A. Jackson, J.D., LL.M.,
Attorney, Henkels Law LLC;
Co-Executive Director, tonip
ka-ak Alliance (5 Raven Alliance);
enrolled member of The
Klamath Tribes

SCHOLARSHIP & PUBLICATIONS

This year, in the form of a stand-alone paper, Faculty Director Kristen Stilt, and co-editors Anne Peters and Saskia Stucki, published “Global Animal Law in the Making: An Introduction.” The paper is the introductory chapter of the forthcoming Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law. The authors make the case that a global perspective and method that they term “Global Animal Law” (GAL) is needed to confront economic globalization, to advance global sustainable development, and to fill serious gaps in global justice. They set out how GAL should be done: with a plurality of approaches, sensitivity to context, attention to comparison, and aspiration and engagement.

The Handbook itself spans six parts. It opens with the story of Koro, a donkey in Kenya caught in the global trade in donkey hides – illustrative of the myriad rules and laws, “soft” and “hard,” and multiple jurisdictions that shape the fate of a single animal in a globalized world. The Handbook covers environmental, food and agricultural, health, trade, and human rights law, provides country and religion reports centered on understudied jurisdictions, examines questions of implementation and enforcement, and identifies new horizons for the field.

“Koro’s life and death shine a light on the dark fact that for many animals on this planet, the quality and length of their lives are determined by human desires and needs, however apparently essential or trivial these desires or needs might be.

The quality of treatment of animals cannot be equated with the mere economic status of the communities in which they live. Wealthier countries and individuals, and those living in terrible economic conditions, are all engaged in animal industries that use animals for all they are worth, without acknowledging they are actually someone who can feel pain and joy and can suffer from the loss of habitat, loss of dignity, loss of family integrity, and loss of their own life.

Human behaviour can affect animals on a purely local level, but increasingly, animals are governed by multiple cultural norms and social practices, and numerous national laws and even international law. Further, it is too often the case that the laws that should apply to a situation are inadequate, not enforced, or completely non-existent.

... GAL is an aspiration to do better for animals than we, humanity, have done so far. GAL has an inherently idealistic, future-oriented impetus that starts from an unacceptable status quo and seeks to substantially change it in favour of animals. GAL’s aspiration is to close the gap between present-day arrangements that commodify, hurt, and kill animals in the billions, and the real and urgent needs and interests of nonhuman animals. GAL envisions a future for animals that is governed by fair legal norms that create a world worth living in for both human and nonhuman animals.”

— Anne Peters, Kristen Stilt & Saskia Stucki, “Global Animal Law in the Making: An Introduction”

Kristen Stilt

Publications

- Peters, Anne, Kristen Stilt, and Saskia Stucki. “Global Animal Law in the Making: An Introduction.” Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law & International Law (MPIL) Research Paper No. 2025-12, 2025. Forthcoming in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*. Oxford University Press. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5309196.
- McGill, Kelley, and Kristen Stilt. *Animal Law Digest: United States Edition*. Brooks Institute for Animal Rights Law & Policy, 2025.
- Stilt, Kristen. “Avian Flu Shows the Need for Transformative Meat Governance.” *Verfassungsblog*, October 3, 2025.
- Stilt, Kristen, and Matthew Liebman. “Why Rescuing Animals Should Not Be a Crime.” *Los Angeles Times*, September 17, 2025.

As Amicus Curiae

- Stilt, Kristen, and Macarena Montes Franceschini. Amicus Curiae brief submitted to the High Court of South Africa (Gauteng Division, Pretoria), Case No. 32881/22, concerning elephants in the Johannesburg Zoo, November 22, 2025.
- Stilt, Kristen. Amicus Curiae brief submitted to the Court of Appeal of the State of California, First Appellate District, Division 5, in support of defendant/appellant Wayne Hsiung in *California v. Wayne Hansen Hsiung*.

Forthcoming Publications

- Stilt, Kristen. “The Law Against the Land,” in *America Unfinished: 250 Years of Law and Governance*. Natapoff, Alexandra, and Charles, Guy-Uriel, eds. *The MIT Press* (2026).
- Peters, Anne, Stilt, Kristen and Stucki, Saskia. “Introduction,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, Peters, Stilt, and Stucki eds. Oxford University Press. Forthcoming book chapter.
- Stilt, Kristen, “Religious Freedom,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, Peters, Stilt, and Stucki eds. *Oxford University Press*. Forthcoming book chapter.
- Stilt, Kristen and Montes Franceschini, Macarena. “Case Note: Estrellita.” in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, Peters, Stilt, and Stucki eds. *Oxford University Press*. Forthcoming book chapter.

Nina Kerstensteiner**Publications**

- Kerstensteiner, Nina, and Mareike Mittag. “Der Buckelwal Timmy vor dem Verwaltungsgericht Schwerin: Die Geltendmachung tierlicher Interessen im deutschen Verwaltungsrecht” [The Humpback Whale Timmy Before the Schwerin Administrative Court: Asserting Animal Interests in German Administrative Law]. *Verfassungsblog*, 2026.
- Kerstensteiner, Nina. “Bridging the Gap: Reflections on Germany’s Legal Structure and Practice in Animal Law.” *German Law Journal* (2025): 1025–1053.
- Kerstensteiner, Nina, and Stefan Knauss. “Rehe im Schatten der Bäume: Repräsentation ökologischer Interessen und die Stellung der Tiere” [Deer in the Shadow of the Trees: The Representation of Ecological Interests and the Standing of Animals]. *Politische Ökologie* (2025): 42–48.
- Kerstensteiner, Nina. “Das Tierschutzrecht im Schatten des Umweltrechts: Prozessrechtliche Defizite und Reformansätze” [Animal Protection Law in the Shadow of Environmental Law: Procedural Deficits and Reform Approaches]. *Zeitschrift für Umweltrecht* (2025): 332–339.
- Kerstensteiner, Nina, and Felix Aiwanger. “Personhood Across Borders: The Mar Menor Before Swiss Authorities.” *Verfassungsblog*, 2025.
- Kerstensteiner, Nina, and Darija Željko Mrljak. “Access to Justice: The Role of Legal Clinics in Addressing Current Social Issues in Germany and Croatia.” *SEE Law Journal* (2025): 30–51.
- Kerstensteiner, Nina. “Zehn Jahre Refugee Law Clinics in Deutschland” [Ten Years of Refugee Law Clinics in Germany]. *Zeitschrift der Gewerkschaft für Erziehung und Wissenschaft in Bayern* (2025): 10–12.

Forthcoming Publications (Selected)

- Kerstensteiner, Nina. Urteilsanmerkung zu BVerwG, Urteil vom 23.04.2026 – 3 C 2.25 – Tierschutzwidrigkeit der „Standardputenhaltung“ in Deutschland [Case note on the German Federal Administrative Court (BVerwG), judgment of 23 April 2026 – 3 C 2.25 – the incompatibility of “standard turkey farming” in Germany with animal welfare law]. *TieR*, issue 5, forthcoming (invited).
- Kerstensteiner, Nina. Urteilsanmerkung zu OVG NRW, Beschluss vom 16.09.2025 – 20 A 536/22 – Behördliche Auslaufanordnung bei der Anbindehaltung von Rindern [Case note on the Higher Administrative Court of North Rhine-Westphalia (OVG NRW), decision of 16 September 2025 – 20 A 536/22 – administrative order requiring outdoor access for tethered cattle]. *TieR*, issue 6, forthcoming (invited).

Ann Linder**Publications**

- Linder, Ann. “The Choice of Culling or Letting Avian Influenza Spread Obscures Larger U.S. Policy Failures.” e-Letter, *Science*, 2025. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.adx8639>.
- Linder, Ann. “Animal Industries and Zoonotic Disease in the United States.” In *Leveraging Viruses for the Treatment of Viral Diseases and Cancer: Improving Host Fitness Through Virus-Host Genetic Combinations*, edited by Tibor Bakacs, 17–38. Academic Press, 2026. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-443-29164-7.00005-4>.

Forthcoming Publications

- Linder, Ann. “Science and Animal Law.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, edited by Anne Peters, Kristen Stilt, and Saskia Stucki. *Oxford University Press*, forthcoming 2026.
- Waisman, Sonia S., Pamela D. Frasc, Bruce A. Wagman, and Ann K. Linder. *Animal Law: Cases and Materials*, 7th ed. Carolina Academic Press, forthcoming 2026.



Kelley McGill

Publications

- McGill, Kelley. “Legislative Analysis of H.R. 4673: Save Our Bacon Act.” Brooks McCormick Jr. Animal Law & Policy Program at Harvard Law School, 2025. <https://animal.law.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/Legislative-Analysis-of-HR4673.pdf>.
- McGill, Kelley, and Kristen Stilt. Recent Developments in *United States Animal Rights Law & Policy: 2025 Year-in-Review*. Brooks Institute for Animal Rights Law & Policy, 2025. <https://thebrooks institute.org/sites/default/files/2026-03/2025%20Year-in-Review%20Compendium%20-%20United%20States.pdf>.
- McGill, Kelley, and Kristen Stilt. *Animal Law Digest: United States Edition*. Brooks Institute for Animal Rights Law & Policy, 2025 through April 2026. <https://thebrooks institute.org/animal-law-digest/us>.

Forthcoming Publications

- McGill, Kelley. “The Regulation of Cultivated Meat: An Exploration of Emerging Approaches Around the World.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, edited by Anne Peters, Kristen Stilt, and Saskia Stucki. Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2026.
- McGill, Kelley. “The Regulation of Alternative Aquatic Proteins and Novel Aquatic Foods in the U.S.” In *The Global Compendium of Aquaculture Law & Policy*, edited by Hira Jaleel. Lewis & Clark Law School’s Center for Animal Law Studies, forthcoming.

Bonnie Nadzam

Forthcoming Publications

- Nadzam, Bonnie. *The Magpie Spoke to Me: How the Stories We Tell Shape Our World*. Shambhala, forthcoming 2026.
- Nadzam, Bonnie. “Buddhism.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, edited by Anne Peters, Kristen Stilt, and Saskia Stucki. Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2026.
- Nadzam, Bonnie, and Caroline Merrifield. “China Wildlife Farming.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Global Animal Law*, edited by Anne Peters, Kristen Stilt, and Saskia Stucki. Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2026.
- Nadzam, Bonnie. “Parking Lot Species Inventory.” In *The Dillard Project*, Wolverine Farm Publishing, 2027.



ANIMAL LAW & POLICY WORKSHOP SERIES

During the academic year, the Program held Animal Law & Policy Workshops in which academic colleagues convened in person and online to review and critique drafts of scholarship in progress.

December 5, 2025

Nina Kerstensteiner (ALPP Visiting Fulbright Scholar)

“Building Bridges for the Voiceless: A Comparative Analysis of Weak Interests”

December 15, 2025

Kristen Stilt, Lana Nadj and Debora Bresch (ALPP)

“Founding Principles and Methodology – Assessment for Continuous Improvement Project”

February 13, 2026

Valerie Wilson McCarthy (Harvard Law School J.D. student and President of the Harvard Animal Law Society):

“Companion Animals as the Gateway Species”

March 11, 2026

Finn Preiss (ALPP Visiting Fellow)

“The More, the Better? States’ Productivist Approach to Food Security and Livestock Emissions Under the Paris Agreement”

March 13, 2026

Nicolas Cornell (University of Michigan Law School)

“Epistemic Humility”

“The ALPP was one of the many highlights of my visiting semester at Harvard. I particularly enjoyed getting to participate in the writing workshop, which is such a collaborative, encouraging, and incisive group. I really enjoyed the new people that I met, and I got some wonderful feedback on an early draft. I also really appreciated the ALPP’s other programming. In fact, one of the animal week panels inspired me to start thinking about a new paper, which I’ve been researching in the past few weeks.”

— Nico Cornell, University of Michigan, visiting professor at Harvard and Workshop participant

March 20, 2026

Kelley McGill (ALPP Legislative Policy Fellow)

“Chapter for the Global Compendium of Aquaculture Law & Policy”

March 27, 2026

Matthew Liebman (University of San Francisco School of Law), Iselin Gamber (The George Washington University Law School), and Elan Abrell (Wesleyan University)

“Prefigurative Animal Law”

April 10, 2026

Maneesha Deckha (University of Victoria)

“Rights of (Mother) Nature: A Feminist Animal Studies Framework for Legally Uplifting Animals?”

“What makes the ALPP workshop series remarkable is the breadth and depth of experience and perspective of the folks around the table: philosophers beside litigators, anthropologists beside doctoral students, scholars from around the world reading one another’s unfinished work with attention, interest, and care. So much of what is shared at our table — articles, essays, and books — goes on to be published. I really believe our workshop series offers one of the best rooms anywhere for exchanging ideas about human relationships with animals.”

— Bonnie Nadzam



I particularly enjoy the ALPP workshops because they allow us to engage with some of the world’s foremost thinkers on animal law and animal rights.

What I found most enriching was not only the caliber of the speakers, but also the diversity of perspectives they bring. They approach similar questions through different disciplines, methodologies, cultural traditions, and lived experiences. That kind of intellectual cross-pollination is rare, even at Harvard, and it encourages us to think more critically, more creatively, and with greater humility about the complex issues surrounding animals, law, and society.”

— **Yi Jian**
former Visiting Fellow





TEACHING AND LEARNING

Enrolling in an animal-law-related course at Harvard Law School can be a life-changing experience.

Animal Law (Spring 2026)

This course examines how legal systems construct the relationship between humans and other animals, and how those constructions affect and indeed shape the lives of animals. Using cases, history, philosophy, religious and Indigenous traditions, and contemporary science, the course investigates three competing frameworks: animals as subordinate to human interests, animals as protected insofar as their protection serves humans, and animals as beings whose interests warrant equal or approximate consideration. Students learn to look beneath the surface of animal law to ask a more fundamental question: *what conception of the animal is the law expressing—and what might change if that conception changed?*

“Attending Professor Stilt’s Animal Law class changed the course of my life. After our unit on the legal treatment of farmed animals, I became a vegan, and learning how these laws are shaped inspired me to look into advocacy and other ways to get involved. An added bonus: the course brought together brilliant people I’m now actively collaborating with on projects I care about.”

— Sara Dadkhah, Harvard Kennedy School Graduate,
Masters in Public Administration, 2022

“The course was an intoxicating intellectual cocktail of synthesis, critique, and imagination. Many law school classes concern themselves chiefly with the answers of black letter law, but Animal Law was a reminder that the open questions are the most exciting.”

— Calvin Nickelson, HLS Class of 2028

“Professor Stilt guided us through engaging material and created a really warm class community with lots of opportunities to discuss and reflect on the material alongside brilliant peers.

I have a particularly fond memory of one week where Justice Minallah of Pakistan (the first common law judge to recognize animal rights in a ruling) gave a lunch talk (and sat in on class!), Prof. Hollingsworth (who led the first DoJ civil actions under the Animal Welfare Act) taught us about the AWA, and David Wolfson (the Executive Director of Milbank) had come in earlier in the week for HALS to speak about his decades of pro bono practice in animal law. These speakers came from legal backgrounds that are often perceived as small-c conservative and far from hotbeds of animal law — large law firms, federal law enforcement, and the judiciary. But each showed that one person with a vision and the determination to follow through can make meaningful change.”

— Varun Magesh,
HLS Class of 2028

“Taking Animal Law this year has been one of the most intellectually and personally formative experiences of my first year of law school. The course changed the way I think about legal categories, institutional power, and the limits and possibilities of advocacy, and it has already shaped my professional trajectory by deepening my interest in animal protection, nonprofit work, and the ways lawyers can move between doctrinal constraints and moral imagination.”

— Annie Cheng,
HLS Class of 2028

“I enrolled in Animal Law on not much more than a whim, but my experience in the class fundamentally changed how I view animals, humans, and law.”

— Chris Carey, HLS Class of 2026

“Taking Animal Law challenged me to examine long-held assumptions about personhood, rights, and the role of law in shaping moral progress. It has inspired me to think more seriously about how animal protection will shape not only my future legal aspirations, but also my diet, my conversations with others, and the way I live my life.

There has never been a class that I’ve talked about more at the dinner table, in the grocery store, or in casual conversation than this one. I came into the course intimidated by the prospect of taking a class alongside law students, but Professor Stilt created an environment where I felt comfortable learning, asking questions, and contributing alongside my classmates. That sense of intellectual curiosity and encouragement made the experience incredibly meaningful.”

— Jacqueline Metzger, Harvard College, Class of 2027

Introduction to Islamic Law (Spring 2026)

Professor Stilt also taught Introduction to Islamic Law in Spring 2026, alongside Animal Law — reflecting the intersection of animal law with religion and culture that runs through her scholarship.

This seminar examined contemporary issues in Islamic law, with a focus on issues highly salient in our world today, including climate change and its many impacts, protection of the environment, animal status and protection, food security and sovereignty, human health and welfare, pollution, and access to water. Advocates, policy makers, and governments worldwide (and not only in countries with significant Muslim populations) are drawing on Islamic law in pursuit of solutions to these existential problems. Case studies were drawn from countries including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Turkey, Qatar, and the U.S.

Justice Athar Minallah Visit (March 2026)

In March, we joined our colleagues at the Program on Law & Society in the Muslim World in welcoming Justice Athar Minallah, former judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and former Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court, to Harvard Law School. Justice Minallah is the author of the landmark 2020 judgment in *Islamabad Wildlife Management Board v. Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad*. This ruling, closely taught and studied at ALPP, answered “without hesitation” and in the affirmative the question of whether animals have legal rights. The case of Kaavan, an elephant held for decades in solitary confinement whose transfer to a Cambodian sanctuary drew worldwide attention, became the ruling’s emblem, and one of the most consequential animal law decisions of this century.



Grounded in the conviction that life itself has intrinsic value, a principle he traced to Islamic legal philosophy alongside comparative constitutional study, his court became the first to declare nonhuman beings legal persons, ordering the relocation of 878 animals from Islamabad’s Marghazar Zoo to species-appropriate sanctuaries. This was not judicial activism, he emphasized, but a constitutional and moral imperative — humanity’s duty of stewardship toward a natural world whose gravest burdens fall on those least able to resist them, which is precisely where courts must stand as guardians.

His engagement with the Program extended beyond the podium, as he participated in the ALPP Workshop Series, reading and offering his critique of a draft paper, preliminarily titled “Epistemic Humility,” by visiting Harvard Law Professor Nicolas Cornell, bringing a jurist’s perspective to the workshop table with the same care and rigor he brought to the bench. And it is a particular pleasure to record what his time in Cambridge meant beyond the formal program: Justice Minallah has become a true colleague and friend to each of us at ALPP, generous in conversation, unfailingly gracious, and deeply engaged with the Program’s work and aspirations. His visit reflects the questions at the heart of ALPP’s year, from the Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop to our engagement with courts worldwide grappling with the legal status of nonhuman life, and we look forward with real enthusiasm to working together in the seasons ahead. We are all so grateful for his generosity, his candor, and his example.

HARVARD ANIMAL LAW & POLICY CLINIC 2025-2026

The Animal Law & Policy Clinic, launched in 2019, provides students with direct, hands-on training in legal advocacy on behalf of animals. Under the supervision of Mary Hollingsworth, Faculty Director, Animal Law & Policy Clinic, students represent animal advocacy organizations and other animal advocates, gaining practical lawyering skills and building a foundation for ethical, reflective legal practice.

Through this work, student clinicians advance the interests of wild, farmed, and captive animals through litigation, administrative rulemaking, policy initiatives, organizing, and other legal advocacy avenues. Students gain direct experience with federal and state laws, including the Endangered Species Act, the Animal Welfare Act, and the Administrative Procedure Act. In April 2026, the Clinic and wildlife advocates called on the Massachusetts pesticide board to end the use of toxic rodenticides, continuing the Clinic’s multi-year campaign to protect owls, eagles, and other wildlife — as well as companion animals — from anticoagulant rodenticide poisoning.

This year, the Clinic’s docket included a regulatory petition, advocacy letters, and litigation assessments prepared for a number of animal protection organizations.

Letters

In December 2024, the Massachusetts Pesticide Board Subcommittee voted to undertake a scientific review of anticoagulant rodenticide products in response to a petition submitted by the Clinic. In response to the Subcommittee’s request for public comment on the different phases of the review process, the Clinic submitted comment letters on behalf of Massachusetts wildlife advocates and tribal advocates and urged the Subcommittee to cease registration of anticoagulant rodenticides that are poisoning Massachusetts wildlife, including bald eagles and red-tailed hawks.

Litigation Assessments

The Clinic has a practice of preparing litigation assessments for national organizations considering novel claims to advance the interests of wildlife, captive animals, or farmed animals. The assessments help the organizations determine the viability of claims and potential litigation risk, and include recommendations. In some cases, the Clinic then works with the organizations to draft federal complaints and prepare for litigation.

Advocacy

The Clinic has partnered with leaders in the Jain community to advocate on behalf of Jain families with students in public K-12 schools who lack access to nutritious, plant-based school meals. Many members of the Jain community follow a vegetarian or vegan diet because of their deeply held religious beliefs. However, after surveying Jain students and families across the country, the Clinic determined that just a fraction of Jain students can participate in their school meal programs. The Clinic recently submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) an impact statement on behalf of the Jain Center of Greater Boston that urges the department to commit to ensuring that at least 30 percent of meals at public schools in Massachusetts are plant-based by 2031, and a white paper that sets out clear labeling standards that distinguish between vegetarian, vegan, dairy-containing, and egg-containing foods. The Clinic’s proposals also implement recommendations of the Commonwealth’s School Meal Nutrition Standards Commission. The Clinic is now working with Jain leaders to empower Jain youth to advocate at the school district level for increased plant-based offerings.

CLINICAL TEACHING

The Clinic is offered in both the fall and spring semesters. Alongside their case work, student clinicians complete the Animal Law Clinic Seminar, a unique classroom opportunity to gain the knowledge and develop the essential lawyering skills needed to be effective and creative animal advocates. Students learn from Animal Law & Policy Clinic Faculty Director Mary Hollingsworth — an animal law expert with over 15 years of experience litigating landmark cases under the Endangered Species Act, the Animal Welfare Act, and other statutes impacting animals — and from guest lectures presented by leading animal law litigators and policy experts. The seminar introduces the advocacy strategies used by animal lawyers under a variety of laws, including the Endangered Species Act, the Animal Welfare Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and laws pertaining to animal agriculture, consumer protection, and animal cruelty. Its hands-on training supports student clinicians in their Clinic projects to advance the interests of animals through litigation, administrative law practice, and policy initiatives. The seminar also provides students the space to consider the ethical and policy-related issues that arise in an animal law practice.

Students are given significant responsibility over their projects and learn best-practice case management, including how to juggle multiple projects and how to work with co-counsel. Each project is assigned at least two students, and student teams typically meet with their supervisor every week or two. In a given week, clinicians might draft the factual background of an Endangered Species Act complaint bound for federal court, lead a client meeting, serve as a judge in a moot for a case litigator, assess the likelihood of success of a novel claim and draft a recommendation for a client, or interview a potential standing declarant.



EVENTS

Each year, the Clinic participates in Animal Law Week (see below). The Clinic collaborated with the Harvard Animal Law Society on several other events this year, including a career panel of animal lawyers who transitioned from big law to public service, and a conversation with two leading animal cruelty prosecutors and Animal Law & Policy Clinic Faculty Director Hollingsworth on careers in government service. The Clinic co-sponsored a Lunch Talk with Assistant Attorney General Todd Kim of the U.S. Department of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Division (November 2025). Beyond their casework, student clinicians and Clinic staff gathered throughout the year, including the Clinic's annual visit to Unity Farm Sanctuary and a May 2026 celebration marking student clinicians' graduation.



CLINIC ALUMNI AND STUDENT VOICES

Three recent Clinic alumni reflect on their time with the Clinic and the Harvard animal law community.

“Participating in the Animal Law and Policy Clinic and working with the Animal Law and Policy Program have been extraordinary experiences, ones that will continue to shape my thinking not just about animal rights, but about law and justice more broadly....

I worked on projects and cases that touched nearly every dimension of the animal protection landscape—from challenging painful and outdated animal experimentation methods, to researching vast negative externalities of factory farms and slaughterhouses globally, to advocating for access to plant-based meals in public middle and high schools, to ensuring meaningful protections for threatened wildlife. One of the most powerful lessons I’ve learned through this work is that animal rights is not a siloed cause. ... Enrolling at Harvard meant that I could enroll in the Harvard Animal Law and Policy Clinic, which takes an intersectional approach to animal rights.

At the Clinic, I wasn’t just handed assignments. I was trusted with real responsibility. I helped write petitions to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), worked on litigation strategy, helped draft a brief we filed in the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and drafted materials for public education and advocacy. My supervisors held me to the highest standards, and I’m grateful for that. ... The Clinic also gave me a preview of the kind of attorney I hope to be. After graduation, I’ll be joining a law firm where I plan to continue doing animal rights pro bono work.”

— Nuala Bela Tringali-Carbado, J.D. 2025

“Through my experience in the Clinic this semester, I discovered new and promising ways in which I can continue my work advocating for animals in my long-term career. Through my work in the Clinic, I learned more practical skills and about how the actual legal process functions than through any other course or experience in law school. Overall, I feel proud that I was able to channel my passion for animals — which often feels overwhelming given the current state of the world — into concrete recommendations and plans for actual legal action to improve the lives of animals. My positive experience with the Clinic will forever be the highlight of my time in law school.”

— Shira Fischer, Student Clinician,
J.D. 2026



“I first experienced the world of Animal Law during my 1L year. I registered for an Animal Law course taught by Professor Stilt. From the very first class, I was drawn in by the intrigue of our class materials and the robust discussions we had, far outpacing my other classroom experiences in terms of nuance and rigor. ... I soon joined the student Animal Law Society and enrolled in the Animal Law & Policy Clinic ... The culmination of my time with Animal Law came when I was able to visit Point Reyes National Seashore, a nature preserve in California that was the subject of one of the projects I worked on in the clinic. Our litigation centered around the removal of a fence barrier that was threatening the native population of tule elk. Through our legal efforts and local grassroots organization, the fence was removed and the elk allowed to roam free. On my trip, I attended an “Elk Freedom Party” hosted by the local organizers, and even made the hike out to see the elk herd. Seeing first-hand the passion and dedication of those on the ground fighting for what they believe in and also coming face to face with the elk, the very subject of our months of advocacy, was the perfect encapsulation of what makes this work meaningful to me.”

— Vinny Byju, J.D. 2025

HARVARD ANIMAL LAW SOCIETY

The Harvard Animal Law Society (HALS) is a student organization that supports students learning and advocating on behalf of animals.

Throughout the year, HALS hosts social and academic events and attends conferences with animal law professionals from around the country. Student representatives also collaborate closely with our Program, which provides financial and other forms of support. The Animal Law Society has four major goals:

- To support HLS students interested in animal protection law;
- To engage the HLS community with issues facing animals, and educate its peers and community on how the law can help or hurt;
- To serve delicious vegan meals (HALS welcomes meat-eaters, vegetarians, and vegans alike—and promises that everyone will love their food!); and
- To work to protect animals, especially via the legal system.



HALS Leadership and Reflections

The 2025–2026 HALS Board:



Valerie Wilson McCarthy
President '25–26



Andrew Ciacchi
Vice President '25–26



Jackson Faulkner
Treasurer '25–26



Shira Fischer
Internal Chair '25–26



Mahima Menghani
Campus Advocacy Chair '25–26



Elizabeth Messman
Communications Chair '25–26



Akber Khan
Events Chair '25–26



Andrew Zhang
Webmaster '25–26



Macarena Montes Franceschini
LL.M. Representative '25–26



Heather Callahan
1L Representative '25–26



Varun Magesh
1L Representative '25–26



ANIMAL LAW WEEK

From March 30 to April 3, 2026, ALPP, the Animal Law & Policy Clinic, and the Harvard Animal Law Society (HALS) held the annual Animal Law Week at Harvard Law School: five days of timely, provocative lunchtime conversations at the cutting edge of animal law.

Monday, March 30 —
“Exploitation and Silence in Industrial Animal Agriculture”

Amal Bouhabib, Senior Staff Attorney at FarmSTAND, and Beatrice Lindstrom, Senior Clinical Instructor in Harvard Law School’s International Human Rights Clinic, examined the intersection of industrial animal agriculture and the labor of immigrants, who face dangerous conditions and limited power. The speakers discussed *Pierre v. JBS*, a landmark class-action lawsuit that FarmSTAND is actively litigating, which seeks justice for over 1,000 Haitian workers and exposes the human cost of the meat industry through allegations of discrimination, dangerous working conditions, and labor law violations at JBS Foods’ meatpacking plant in Greeley, Colorado.

“Animal Law Week was an incredible experience. It was a privilege to help plan and organize a week filled with incredible speakers, and to see such great turnout from the HLS community. I had several classmates who were completely unaffiliated with HALS and animal law come up to me in the days and weeks that followed to tell me how surprised they were at the range of legal issues implicated in our treatment of animals — from labor and environmental law to consumer protection and First Amendment rights. That, to me, is exactly what this work is about — showing that animal law, far from being some niche concern, is something that touches nearly every corner of the legal field.”

— Akber Khan, HALS Events Chair, 2025–26

Tuesday, March 31 — “False Food Promises and Farmed Animals — Green-Washing in Food Law: The Case Against JBS”

Assistant Attorneys General Ashley Gregor and Rita McDonough of the New York State Attorney General’s Environmental Protection Bureau, one of the nation’s leading state-level environmental enforcers, pulled back the curtain on corporate greenwashing, detailing their office’s high-profile legal challenges against industry giant JBS and the fight to hold corporations accountable for their climate claims.

Wednesday, April 1 — “The Front Lines of Companion Animal Law Enforcement”

From cruelty investigations to dangerous dog proceedings, this panel offered a behind-the-scenes look at how complex companion animal cases are built from three distinct perspectives: Chris Schindler, Director of Law Enforcement at the MSPCA, who leads on-the-ground investigations; Lynsey Legier, Staff Attorney with the MSPCA’s Animal Protection Division, who handles the resulting legal actions; and Jeremy Cohen, founder of Boston Dog Lawyers, a private firm specializing in these unique cases.



Thursday, April 2 — “Arctic Wildlife, Oil, and the Rule of Law”

With the Arctic as ground zero for the clash between energy extraction and wildlife survival, Bridget Psarianos, Staff Attorney at Trustees for Alaska, and Margaret Williams, Senior Fellow with the Arctic Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, discussed the legal battles shaping the future of this fragile ecosystem, drawing on Psarianos’s work representing Indigenous-led organizations to protect regions like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and her experience within the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Friday, April 3 — “Does a Public Actor Have the Right to Anonymity? Animal Research and Wider First Amendment Implications”

Using the charged issue of animal research oversight as a starting point, this panel confronted the broader First Amendment implications of anonymity in public life, featuring Noah Feldman, Arthur Kingsley Porter University Professor at Harvard Law School and one of the nation’s leading constitutional law scholars; Asher Smith, General Counsel, Litigation, at the PETA Foundation; and Julia Allison, Media and Innovation Fellow at the Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School.

MENTORING STUDENTS

We play a role in the lives of HLS students in many ways, from offering courses to providing hands-on teaching and guidance in the Clinic, to career advising.

We offer career advice and mentorship to our students who seek to work in the area of animal law and policy, whether full time or on a pro bono basis from a position in a law firm. Season after season, there are more Harvard graduates doing just that, and every year we offer advice and support to launch them in the field.

*“My time working with Professor Stilt, through her Animal Law course, a research assistantship, and most recently as her Teaching Fellow, has been one of the most intellectually formative parts of my law school experience. She has consistently engaged with my independent thinking, including many conversations about Chief Judge Wilson’s dissent in *NhRP v. Breheny*.*

Professor Stilt has pushed me to develop and publish my own views, culminating in a discussion post for the Animal Law course arguing that civil remedies, rather than criminal law, offer the better path forward for animal protection. That piece got great engagement from the students of the course who offered substantive responses.

She has also created space to test my ideas outside the classroom, from a dinner conversation with PETA’s Chief Legal Officer Jeff Kerr about coalition-building, to a discussion with former Pakistan Supreme Court Justice Athar Minallah about the pressures judges face from the political branches of government and civil society. That mix of rigorous doctrinal engagement and exposure to how legal change actually happens has sharpened my understanding of both judicial reasoning and its context, knowledge I will carry with me as I begin my legal career with a judicial clerkship.”

— Trevor L. Núñez, HLS Class of 2027



Working with Professor Stilt this past year has been one of the most important parts of my first year in the S.J.D. program. She has been an extraordinarily generous and rigorous advisor, helping me turn a set of broad questions about law, science, and the nonhuman world into a more focused research agenda: for example, what counts as ‘nature,’ whether nature is necessarily imagined as an original or pre-political condition, and how legal institutions define and transform the natural world. Through our field readings and conversations, I have been able to think more carefully about method and the kind of interdisciplinary/comparative project I hope to build. Her guidance has made me feel both intellectually challenged and genuinely supported as I begin building an interdisciplinary project.”

— Biyuan Hu, SJD candidate

Macarena Montes Franceschini

Visiting Fellow, Rights of Nature Fellow, LL.M. Class of 2026

Macarena Montes Franceschini, ALPP’s Rights of Nature Fellow (2024–25), completed her LL.M. at Harvard Law School this year, winning the Animal Law & Policy Program Writing Prize and serving on the organizing team of the Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop — her brainchild — with Kristen Stilt. She has accepted a position as Associate Professor and Researcher with the Faculty of Law, Universidad de Las Américas, Santiago, Chile, where she will continue her scholarship at the intersections of animal rights, constitutional law, environmental law, and international law. In the coming period, Professor Montes will provide critical intellectual guidance to the Program’s important amicus work for animals globally — work to which she has been central since she first joined the Program as a Research Fellow in 2021.

“ALPP has been one of the most transformative influences on both my career and my life. Academically, it gave me the opportunity to deepen my research, collaborate with extraordinary scholars, and explore the intersections between animal rights, constitutional law, environmental law, and international law. But its impact extends far beyond my scholarship. Professor Stilt has been much more than a mentor. She has become a trusted friend and my family away from home. Her guidance, generosity, and unwavering belief in me have profoundly shaped the scholar and person I aspire to be. Likewise, Lana Nadj and Bonnie Nadzam have become dear friends whose support has meant more than I can express. From these remarkable women, I learned not only how to become a better academic, but also the importance of compassion, integrity, resilience, loyalty, and trust. They showed me what it means to build a community rooted in kindness and genuine care for one another.

Because of them, I felt brave enough to accept a faculty position in Chile, knowing that although I was leaving Cambridge, I was not leaving behind my academic home. I know that the Animal Law & Policy Program will always be a place where I can return, share my ideas, seek advice, and continue building projects with a community that believes in me. For that, and for the friendships and sense of belonging I found there, I will always be deeply grateful.”

—— **Macarena Montes Franceschini,**
Rights of Nature Fellow (2024–25)



ANIMAL LAW AND POLICY WRITING PRIZE



The Harvard Law School Animal Law and Policy Writing Prize encourages students to become future leaders for the benefit of animals, rewarding original thought and diligent work.

Congratulations to this year’s winners:

Macarena Montes Franceschini, LL.M., 2026

“Listening to Backlash: Legal Responses to Nonhuman Rights in the United States”

“How should legal advocacy engage with lawmakers and political actors who do not share its moral language, assumptions, or goals? In highly polarized contexts, debates about animals and nature often become confrontational from the start. Each side defends its own position, assumes the other is either irrational or acting in bad faith, and leaves little room for understanding what the other side is actually trying to protect. If legal change is to occur outside courts and beyond sympathetic audiences, advocacy must do more than state its own principles. It must also understand the fears, interests, and misconceptions that animate resistance.”

— *Excerpt from “Listening to Backlash: Legal Responses to Nonhuman Rights in the United States” by Macarena Montes Franceschini*

Yun Kyung Jeong, LL.M., 2026

“Rethinking Dog Breeding Regulation in South Korea: Structural Challenges and Policy Recommendations”

“In South Korea, dogs have historically occupied a dual status as both a source of food and companion animals, and the dog breeding industry has developed in response to these competing social demands. Although the enactment of the Dog Meat Consumption Prohibition Act in 2024 has eliminated the legal status of dogs as food, the structural realities surrounding the industry remain largely unchanged. Dogs formerly raised for consumption, the operators of such facilities, and residual consumer demand continue to exist. At the same time, the population of companion animal owners in South Korea has reached a historic high, with approximately one-third of companion animals acquired through pet shops. Despite strengthened legal

requirements, a significant number of dogs continue to be rescued from even licensed breeding facilities under conditions that pose serious threats to their welfare. These recurring cases suggest that the problem cannot be solved by stricter legal rules alone.

A more effective response requires a broader regulatory framework that addresses the distribution structures through which abusive breeding practices are reproduced. The comparative experiences of the United States and the United Kingdom suggest that targeting intermediaries such as pet shops, brokers, and auction systems may offer a meaningful solution, provided that such reforms are accompanied by practical safeguards to prevent underground transactions and to protect animals displaced by market restrictions.”

— Excerpt from “Rethinking Dog Breeding Regulation in South Korea: Structural Challenges and Policy Recommendations” by Yun Kyung Jeong

“I wrote my paper on the dog breeding industry in South Korea, focusing on the legislative challenges of regulating an industry in which dogs have long been treated as mere goods.

As a prosecutor in Korea, I had been aware of the poor conditions in the dog breeding industry, but I had not had the opportunity to examine the issue in depth. Professor Stilt’s Animal Law class motivated me to explore the industry’s structural problems and the efforts of those working to address them.

Although the writing process was emotionally difficult at times, especially when I encountered heartbreaking cases from Korea, it also gave me a sense of closure and healing that I was engaging deeply with an issue that had long stayed with me. I am especially grateful to Professor Stilt and the Animal Law class for inspiring and guiding my engagement with this issue.”

—— Yun Kyung Jeong, LL.M., 2026

PRESENTATIONS

Our faculty, staff, and Visiting Fellows share their research with audiences across campus and around the world, sparking conversations that influence scholarship, policy, and practice.

Kristen Stilt

- “Someone,” Vermont Law & Graduate School (VLGS), Hot Topics in Environmental Law, July 22, 2025. Presentation given while VLGS Distinguished Animal Law Summer Scholar.
- “What Can a Healthy Environment Do For Animal Rights?” University of Cambridge Faculty of Law, Centre for Animal Rights, December 4, 2025.
- “Rights of Rivers,” Mittal Institute Symposium: Living With Rivers, Harvard University, April 17, 2026.

Mary Hollingsworth

- “Government Litigators at Work,” Panelist, Harvard Law School, October 2025.
- “Lab Dog: A Beagle and His Human Investigate the Surprising World of Animal Research,” conversation with Melanie D.G. Kaplan, December 2025.
- Guest Lecture on Captive Wildlife and the Law, Georgetown Law School, April 2026.
- “Conducting the People’s Business: Prosecutions, Public Service, & Professors,” Panelist, American Bar Association Animal Law Committee Professionalism Series, May 2026.

Lana Nadj

- Panelist, “Agricultural Policy and Sustainability,” Massachusetts Institute of Technology, March 10, 2026.
- Contributor, Summit on Preventing Octopus Farming, George Washington University, March 14–15, 2026.
- Contributor, Aquaculture Convening, Vermont Law & Graduate School, Burlington, Vermont, June 12–14, 2026.

Bonnie Nadzam

- “Intra-Species Spiritual Care.” Presentation at Dharma and Ecological Justice, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, March 19, 2026.
- “What Is Multispecies Chaplaincy?” Presentation at Upaya Zen Center, Santa Fe, NM, April 15, 2026.

Debora Bresch

- “What’s Happening at ALPP This Year.” Talk presented at the Fourth Annual Brooks Animal Law Student Summit, New York University, New York, NY, November 15, 2025.

Nina Kerstensteiner

- “From Rio to Remedies: Operationalizing Information, Participation, and Justice for Other Animals.” World Congress of Constitutional Law, Bogotá, Colombia, July 2026.
- “Weak Interests in Law.” Workshop, Animal Law & Policy Program, Harvard Law School, December 5, 2025.
- “Das Durchsetzungsdefizit im Tierschutzrecht – Probleme und Lösungsansätze” [The Enforcement Deficit in Animal Protection Law – Problems and Solutions]. Opening lecture (also co-organizer and moderator), Junges Forum Umweltrecht conference “Tierschutzrecht im Schatten des Umweltrechts,” October 9, 2025.
- “Das Durchsetzungsdefizit im Tierschutzrecht und die strategische Prozessführung” [The Enforcement Deficit in Animal Protection Law and Strategic Litigation]. Körber Stiftung, Berlin, July 2, 2025.
- Panelist, Roundtable 1, “Current Challenges to the Legal Representation of Animal Interests in Europe,” international conference “Access to Justice for Animals in Europe,” Max Planck Institute for Comparative and International Private Law, Hamburg, July 1, 2025.



IN THE PRESS



The work of ALPP and Clinic faculty, ALPP staff, and Visiting Fellows received significant coverage in the media this year. The list below is not exhaustive but represents some of the impact and reach of our research.

Harvard Law Today

In October 2025, Harvard Law Today interviewed Faculty Director Kristen Stilt about her argument that California’s necessity defense should apply to those who rescue animals in grave danger, not only humans. In the interview, Professor Stilt explained how the defense works, why nothing in the statute, case law, or jury instructions limits it to harm to human beings, and how California’s many laws protecting animals from cruelty and bodily harm reflect the view that “animals are sentient beings whose harm is something we want to avoid.”

In July 2025, Harvard Law Today told the story of Penny, a three-year-old beagle who visited the Law School to meet Mary Hollingsworth, Faculty Director, Animal Law & Policy Clinic, whose litigation at the Department of Justice in United States v. Envigo led to the rescue of approximately 4,000 beagles — including Penny — from an inhumane breeding facility in Cumberland, Virginia. Hollingsworth recounted the case to her Animal Law & Policy Clinic students at their final clinical seminar of the semester, with Penny in attendance.



Verfassungsblog

On October 3, 2025, Verfassungsblog, a widely read forum on constitutional and international law, published Faculty Director Kristen Stilt’s essay “Avian Flu Shows the Need for Transformative Meat Governance,” arguing that the ongoing avian influenza crisis underscores the need for fundamental change in how meat production is governed.

Vox

On October 8, 2025, Vox examined the sharp decline in USDA enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act in “Animal Abusers Are Getting Let Off the Hook. Trump and His Supreme Court Are Partly to Blame,” reporting on how a recent Supreme Court ruling and agency staffing cuts have weakened enforcement against violators. The article quoted Mary Hollingsworth, Faculty Director, Animal Law & Policy Clinic, as saying, “The USDA lets animal abusers off easy. Trump and his Supreme Court are making it worse.”

The New Yorker

In November 2025, The New Yorker published “The Runaway Monkeys Upending the Animal-Rights Movement,” which quoted Mary Hollingsworth on the Animal Welfare Act’s minimal standards and enforcement, noting that facilities can accumulate consistent warnings and violations that are almost never followed by action.

Barn Raiser

On March 11, 2026, Barn Raiser drew on the Program’s legislative analysis of the Save Our Bacon Act in its article “The Trojan Hog in the Farm Bill.” The piece reported the analysis’s findings that the bill would shift longstanding state authority over livestock-derived products to the federal government, and that its vague, undefined terms could nullify hundreds of state and local laws and regulations.

Harvard Climate Brief

On May 27, 2026, the Salata Institute’s Harvard Climate Brief featured the Program’s Rights of Nature and Climate Change Workshop in David Trilling’s article “Is ‘rights of nature’ the right phrase?” The piece explored the questions at the heart of the two-day convening: how Indigenous relationships of kinship and responsibility to the natural world translate — and resist translation — into Western legal frameworks.

CBS News

On April 9, 2026, CBS News quoted Hollingsworth, Faculty Director, Animal Law & Policy Clinic in “Inside Pam Bondi’s Aggressive Push to Crack Down on Animal Cruelty Crimes,” where she drew on her experience with the civil side of the Envigo investigation at the Department of Justice to note that Animal Welfare Act enforcement is almost exclusively civil, and that the lack of emphasis on the criminal component is a missing piece of the federal push against puppy mills.

The New York Times

On April 14, 2026, the New York Times covered ALPP research on the global wildlife trade and zoonotic disease risk in a story entitled “Global Wildlife Trade Fuels Spread of Disease From Animals to People.” Led by ALPP’s Ann Linder, the research showing that the wildlife trade is driving the spread of disease from animals to humans was also covered by U.S. News & World Report (“Wildlife Trade Tied to Higher Risk of Diseases Spreading to Humans,” April 15, 2026), Pulmonology Advisor (April 27, 2026), and Yahoo News (May 3, 2026).

Radiolab

In May 2026, Faculty Director Kristen Stilt appeared in Radiolab, one of the most widely heard programs in public radio, in an episode titled “What is a Pig Worth?” The episode revisits the 2017 case of activist Wayne Hsiung, who was charged with burglary and theft after removing two sick piglets from a Utah facility operated by Smithfield Foods, one of the world’s largest pork producers. The trial turned on a question the law is rarely forced to answer directly: what is the value of a piglet? As the jury wrestled with whether the value of an animal lies in its market price, its meaning to humans, or something inherent in the animal itself, Professor Stilt, alongside University of Denver Professor Justin Marceau, helped listeners understand the legal frameworks beneath the questions that the jury struggled with, walking the audience through the three ways the law has conceived of animals — as pure property, as property valued for what it means to us, and, most rarely, as beings with an approximate equality to humans, protected for their own sake. The episode exemplifies the Program’s commitment to bringing rigorous animal law scholarship into public conversation, translating questions ordinarily confined to courtrooms and law reviews for an audience of millions.



LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT YEAR

During the 2026–2027 academic year, the Program will welcome new fellows, offer a wide variety of Animal Law courses to students, and continue to generate new scholarship and policy work that advances the field of Animal Law and strives to improve the treatment of animals through the legal system.

Founded in 2014, ALPP has now completed more than a decade of scholarship, teaching, policy work, and community building in the rapidly evolving field of animal law. This year, we marked that milestone by convening as a team for strategic planning. Working with Scarlet Spark, a nonprofit that provides leadership development and organizational support to organizations that help animals, the Program has begun a structured strategic planning and visioning process to sharpen our mission, set priorities, and ensure that ALPP's second decade is even more impactful for animals than its first. That work will continue into the coming year, shaping the Program's priorities for 2026–2027 and beyond.

A Look Ahead at HALS

The Harvard Law School Animal Law Society (HALS) continues to serve as an important community for HLS students and members of the broader Harvard community who share a passion for animals and a commitment to advancing their welfare.

The 2026–2027 HALS Board:

- Akber Khan — President '26–'27
- Andrew Ciacchi — Vice President '26–'27
- Heather Callahan — Treasurer '26–'27
- Varun Magesh — Events Chair '26–'27
- Campus Advocacy Chair — to be announced
- Jonathan Hostottle — Communications Chair '26–'27
- Abigail Baldauf — Webmaster '26–'27
- Taewon (Timothy) Ko — Internal Chair '26–'27
- Sara Dadkhah — External Chair '26–'27

"We've got our sights set on some ambitious goals for HALS next year. As President, I'm thrilled to lead our incredible and committed Board. Our priorities are to continue fostering a community of animal advocates at the law school and to find effective ways to raise awareness of how animals are treated across the broader HLS student body. Whether it's factory farming, the use of animals in medical and cosmetic testing, the exotic wildlife trade, or the pork industry's push to federally preempt animal welfare laws in the Farm Bill, it's our responsibility to make sure these issues get a fair hearing here at HLS."

— Akber Khan, HALS President, 2026–27

WELCOMING 2026–2027 VISITING FELLOWS

Deborah Brewster

In the year ahead, Deborah Brewster will focus on the critical issue of the implications of artificial intelligence for animal welfare. She aims to evaluate the potential benefits and harms of AI for animals and identify the appropriate governance of AI for animal welfare.

Deborah Brewster has had a distinguished career spanning journalism, media strategy, and digital innovation. She was most recently a senior executive at News Corp, a global media company, where she led corporate initiatives in strategy, acquisitions, and business development. Previously, Deborah was deputy managing editor at The Wall Street Journal, a newsroom leadership role in which she helped modernize the publication, launched new sections, and led several departments. Deborah began her journalism career in Australia before joining the Financial Times, where she held both writing and editorial leadership roles.

She has contributed her expertise to global institutions through consulting engagements, is a senior advisor at investment bank Oaklins deSilva+Phillips, and serves on several nonprofit boards, including Sentient Media and Animal Policy International. Deborah has spent the past year as an Advanced Leadership Initiative Fellow at Harvard, where she focused on farm animal welfare.

Additional Fellows TBD

Growing our Research Team

Aquaculture Project

“Aquaculture” includes seaweed farming and supporting oysters and mussels to filter toxins from water but the

majority of aquaculture is not benign. Yet fish are seen as healthy to eat, and the farming of fish is viewed as a viable alternative to terrestrial factory farming and a way to minimize carbon emissions. Our forthcoming work will challenge these narratives while addressing the question that aquaculture claims to answer: How do we feed the world?

After examining the work of other animal law and policy research programs to avoid duplication, we have carefully laid the foundations this year to maximize our impact in this emerging field. At the time of writing, Executive Director Lana Nadj and our new Research Fellow in Aquaculture, Callum LaFrance, are designing a live legislative, regulatory and litigation tracker for researchers, practitioners and advocates to use to promote animals’ interests in the water. As aquaculture takes off, so too will our new tools, our real-time analysis, and deep global research. This project builds on prior work in this area by Kristen Stilt, who taught a course on Outlaw Oceans in Spring 2025, and the work of our former Fellow, Kelley McGill.

A new staff attorney will join us in September to lead this and related projects.

Welcoming 2026–2027 Divinity School “Field Education” Intern

Kristen Symbula

The ALPP has been approved as a site for field education for the experiential learning part of the Master of Divinity Program at Harvard. This reflects the reach of our ideas and our clear intent to build enduring relationships with other Schools within Harvard and beyond. In September we will welcome Kristen Symbula, a Master of Divinity candidate at Harvard Divinity School. Over the course of a year, Kristen will undertake field education with the ALPP for mutual learning and to deepen her intended vocation based on the importance of embodied knowledge, interdisciplinary research, and public engagement.

Kristen’s research to date has focused on the religious dimensions of animal-human relationships found in cosmologies, myth, and ritual practices of sacrifice in Mesoamerica. She has published on psychedelics and spirituality in *ReVista: The Harvard Review of Latin America* and studied Indigenous weavers and justice in Chiapas, Mexico. Kristen’s projects with the ALPP will be rooted in advocacy and research dedicated to the care of animal life as inseparable from the care of human life and nature.



SPECIAL THANKS AND BEST WISHES IN NEW ENDEAVORS

Kelley McGill

An alum of Harvard Law School and the researcher and drafter of the Brooks Animal Law Digest: U.S. Edition, Kelley tracked an entire, fast-moving field week after week and distilled it with a precision and clarity that has made the Digest an indispensable resource. Her incisive thinking shaped everything she took on: the annual Compendium she developed with Professor Stilt, her legislative and policy analysis, her scholarship, and the countless moments — visible and invisible — in which her judgment and rigor made the Program’s work better.

Just as important as the quality of Kelley’s work is the way she did it: with generosity, steadiness, and an unwavering commitment to animals. We are enormously grateful for everything she has given to ALPP and to the field, and we take comfort in knowing that this is not goodbye. We look forward to all that Kelley will accomplish for animals in the years ahead, and to continuing to work alongside her as a colleague, collaborator, and friend.

Debora Bresch

This year we also said farewell to Research Fellow Debora Bresch, who departed in August 2026. Over the course of a year-long fellowship, Debora worked with Kristen Stilt and Lana Nadj to develop the principles underpinning a tool to assess and advance global farmed animal welfare standards. We are grateful for her passion and dedication and we look forward to cheering her on in her new role. Debora now joins the PETA Foundation, where, as Regulatory Counsel, she will continue her research and advocacy on behalf of animals used for human purposes, with a particular focus on using legal tools to protect animals used in experiments.

Macarena Montes Franceschini

The ideas, work, and constant positive presence of Macarena Montes Franceschini have been essential to the ALPP since “Maca” joined the ALPP family in 2021 as a Rights Research Fellow, then as Rights of Nature Fellow (2023 – 2025). This year, Maca was an LL.M. candidate at Harvard Law School, Harvard Animal Law Society board member, and winner of the Animal Law and Policy Writing Prize.

Maca’s scholarship and advocacy have shaped some of the most significant developments in the global animal law field. While Maca came to the Program already an accomplished scholar (with a Ph.D. in Law from Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, 2022), in 2021, she and Faculty Director Kristen Stilt co-authored an amicus curiae brief with the Nonhuman Rights Project in the landmark Estrellita case before the Constitutional Court of Ecuador — a brief cited extensively by the court in its historic ruling for animals. This collaborative amicus work will continue. Maca’s work on animal personhood, animal rights, and the rights of nature, and her service as a UN Harmony with Nature expert, have made her one of the most important and influential voices of her generation at the intersection of animal law and the rights of nature.

Maca now joins the Universidad de Las Américas (Chile) as Associate Professor and Researcher, Faculty of Law. Her appointment extends ALPP’s collaborations into the Latin American legal academy at the very moment when the region’s courts are leading the world on questions of animal rights and rights of nature. We have treasured having Maca in close physical proximity in Cambridge, but we are thrilled for Maca in her new endeavor, and we are looking forward to many new and critical projects and dialogues with her in the years ahead.



BROOKS MCCORMICK JR
**ANIMAL LAW &
POLICY PROGRAM**
HARVARD LAW SCHOOL

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