



**First and last name:**

Kyle Clauss

**VLS degree(s) and class year(s):**

JD'20

**What is your vision for VLS in the next five years?**

I envision VLGS finding steadier financial footing in the next five years and steadily rising toward its rightful place atop the environmental law school rankings. Most importantly, I envision an institution that provides its students value commensurate with their debt load. Doing so would do much to soften any lingering hard feelings among alumni, and aid fundraising efforts.

**What skills do you bring to the VLSAA to accomplish these priorities?**

I bring a collegial, collaborative attitude, as well as an intimate knowledge of the school's inner workings and culture. Above all, I have a deep love for this institution and heartfelt respect for those who have stewarded it through difficult times.

**How would you galvanize the energy and enthusiasm of alumni to increase participation in VLS events and giving?**

I would highlight the impact that this energy and enthusiasm has on current VLGS students when channeled into fundraising and mentorship opportunities. Many alumni remember how it feels to compete against students from better ranked, better endowed law schools for internships and jobs. If alumni are made aware that their participation can make a difference in the lives of students whose seats they once occupied, their energy and enthusiasm would be magnified.

**List and describe your alumni service.**

As SBA President, I drafted a resolution recognizing the corridor between the Library and Chase Center as the Dean Shirley A. Jefferson Gallery and urging administration to formally dedicate the arts space to the best friend VLS students ever had. Though the SBA adopted the resolution unanimously, the proposal languished until a subsequent SBA President, Heather Francis, took up the cause in 2021. I assisted Heather's efforts, which culminated in the 2021 class gift that made the Gallery a reality. At the Admissions Office's request, I have also spoken with prospective students about VLS and encouraged them to start their legal careers in South Royalton.

**List your activities as a VLS student.**

I served as a 1L Senator in the Student Bar Association and spearheaded the creation of a Housing Committee to address student-renter concerns. The Housing Committee published the Little Green Book, a handy digest of Vermont's rental housing laws and regulations, which the Admissions Office distributed to incoming students. I was also an active member of the Black Law Students Association and served on its Public Service Committee. On the eve of the 2018 restructuring, my peers elected me SBA President, and I spent most of the summer of 2018 reassuring my peers that VLS would soldier on. During my term, the SBA hosted Lt. Gov. David Zuckerman and Attorney General TJ Donovan; ran a voter-registration drive that helped flip the Windsor-Orange 1 district; worked with administration to double the number of gender-inclusive restrooms on campus; adopted a resolution condemning U.S. Border Patrol's raids on undocumented Vermont farmworkers; and converted the barren hallway between the Library and Chase Center into the Dean Shirley A. Jefferson Gallery, a vibrant arts space dedicated to an amazing woman. In my 3L year, I helped relaunch The Forum, the student-run newspaper of VLS, after a seven-year hiatus and served as its editor-in-chief. I was also a member of the Moot Court Advisory Board's Emory Civil Rights and Liberties Team, as well as a charter member of the Appellate Advocacy Project, which provides pro se litigants appearing before the Vermont Supreme Court with pro bono representation. As a Dean's Fellow, I taught a weekly legal writing seminar for first-year students, an experience I found deeply rewarding.

**List any appropriate professional and community activities, and please describe how that experience would serve you as a board member.**

I am an At-Large Member of the New Jersey State Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division, as well as a member of the New Jersey Law Journal's Young Lawyers Advisory Board. In my spare time, I serve on the board of the Easton Redevelopment Authority, where I work with staff to ensure my city remains an affordable, inclusive place to live.

**Having reviewed the standing committees on the VLSAA Board, which committee(s) would you choose to serve on and why?**

I would choose either the Regional Groups Committee or the Mentoring Committee. Entering the legal profession during the pandemic made me appreciate how valuable in-person connections are. Though "Swans fly together" may not be scientifically accurate, I have always admired how VLS alumni look out for each other. I would relish the chance to help coordinate such efforts through the school's mentorship program.

**Discuss whether you have the resources and ability to make the board a priority over the next three years.**

I have the resources and ability to make my service on the board a priority over the next three years. I frequently visit northern New England throughout the year, and I hope to relocate to Vermont in the coming months. During law school, I made an effort to never overcommit, both for my sanity's sake and out of respect for my peers' time. I would bring this same approach to my work on the board.