

Plaintiffs lawyer, trial advocacy program director give Drexel Law \$1.65M



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By Jeff Blumenthal – Reporter, Philadelphia Business Journal
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Trial lawyer Andy Stern and wife Gwen have gifted \$1.65 million to Drexel University's Kline School of Law for enhancements to its community lawyering clinic that will now bear their name.

Located in Drexel's Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships, the clinic allows students to represent individual clients and families in nearby Mantua and Powelton Village facing legal issues, provide training to residents who face

common problems and publish reports that advocate for policy changes that would promote justice and equality for Drexel's neighbors.

Andy Stern is partner at plaintiffs personal injury firm Kline & Specter and is one of the region's more prominent plaintiffs personal injury lawyers. In May 2017, he obtained a \$95.6 million arbitration award on behalf of a catastrophically injured woman in the litigation related to Salvation Army building collapse at 22nd and Market streets. He was also among the group of plaintiffs attorneys who won a jury verdict and subsequent \$227 million settlement following a 17-week trial involving the 2013 incident that killed seven people and injured 12 others.

Kline & Specter's co-founder, Thomas Kline, had Drexel Law named after him after he gifted the school \$50 million in 2014.

Gwen Stern serves as director of Drexel Law's trial advocacy program. In 2005, she established the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project in Philadelphia, bringing a national program dedicated to teaching city teens about the legal system.

The gift will enable the community lawyering clinic to hire a staff attorney to support the important work done there under director Rachel López. So far, the clinic has helped residents restore Social Security benefits and utilities, prevent foreclosures and filed employment discrimination claims.

"Andy and Gwen's generous gift will allow us to realize the clinic's full potential," Lopez said in a statement. "Not only will it mean that we can provide more high-quality legal assistance to some of Philadelphia's most vulnerable, but it will also create new opportunities for innovations that will facilitate a more collective and holistic approach to legal problem-solving."