Michael Vandenbergh
David Daniels Allen Distinguished Chair of Law, Vanderbilt University Law School

Michael Vandenbergh is the David Daniels Allen Distinguished Chair of Law at Vanderbilt University Law School. An award-winning teacher, he has published numerous articles and book chapters on private environmental governance and household energy use. “Beyond Gridlock: his article on private climate governance, won the Mentzner Prize as the top sustainability article in North America in 2015. Prior to joining the Vanderbilt faculty, he was a partner at Latham & Watkins in Washington, D.C., and served as chief of staff to the Environmental Protection Agency from 1993 to 1995. Vandenbergh has been a visiting professor at Harvard and the University of Chicago, and his research has been discussed in major media outlets such as National Public Radio’s All Things Considered, National Geographic, The Daily Show, and The Washington Post.

Cynthia Williams
Oskar Chair in Business Law, Osgoode Hall Law School

Cynthia Williams is the Oskar Chair in Business Law at Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto, Ontario, and professor of U.S. corporate and securities law at the Vrije Universiteit (VU), Amsterdam. Williams graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with a B.A. in neurobiology, and received a J.D. cum laude and Order of the Coif from the New York University Law School. She practiced law for five years at Cravath, Swaine & Moore in New York City, where she concentrated on securities, mergers and acquisitions, and antitrust cases. From 1995 through 2013, Williams was on the faculty of the University of Illinois College of Law, with research visits to Cambridge University and Georgetown University, and at Osgoode Hall Law School, where she was the inaugural Oskar Chair in Business Law from 2007 to 2009.

Williams writes in the areas of securities law, corporate law, corporate responsibility, comparative corporate governance, and transnational business regulation, often in interdisciplinary collaborations with John Conley (anthropology and law), Deborah Rupp (organizational psychology), and Ruth Aguilera (economic sociology). Her most recent work with Conley, Rupp and Smeehuijzen (VU Faculty of Law) examines the Dutch Central Bank’s supervision of financial institutions’ behavior and culture. Her work has been published in such top journals as the Harvard Law Review, the Georgetown Law Review, the Journal of Corporate Law, the University of Virginia Law Review, Theoretical Inquiries in Law, the Academy of Management Review, and Organizational Behavior.


Williams helped founded and is on the board of the Climate Bond Initiative, http://www.climatebonds.net, which is spearheading the development of a new asset class, climate bonds, to fund the transition to a low-carbon economy. She is also the Canadian partner of the Commonwealth Climate and Law Initiative (CCLI), a project of the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, Oxford University, and the Prince’s Accounting for Sustainability (PAS). CCLI is evaluating corporate offsets and directors’ obligations to consider climate change in their companies’ strategies, and potentially to disclose more information about those strategies pursuant to securities law obligations.

Adam Zurofsky
(Moderator)
Adjunct Professor of Law, Fordham Law School

Adam Zurofsky serves as Deputy Secretary for Energy and Finance in the Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. In that capacity, Zurofsky oversees all policy and regulatory aspects of New York State’s energy and finance portfolios as well as the following State agencies and authorities: the Department of Public Service, the Department of Taxation and Finance, the New York Power Authority, the Long Island Power Authority, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, including its New York Green Bank, the State Insurance Fund, and the Department of Financial Services, including its Banking, Insurance and Consumer Protection divisions. Zurofsky also helps lead implementation of Governor Cuomo’s climate agenda, including the U.S. Climate Alliance of 16 states committed to upholding the Paris Climate Accord and the decarbonization of the over $200 billion New York Common Retirement Fund.

Prior to joining the Cuomo administration, Zurofsky was a partner at the New York law firm of Cahill Gordon and Reindel, LLP, where he advised leading companies, financial institutions and their boards in a wide variety of regulatory, litigation and corporate governance matters. He is a co-founder of Fordham Law School’s Corporate Sustainability Initiative and is a member of Fordham’s adjunct faculty, where he teaches a course that examines the purpose of corporations and its relationship to corporate sustainability. He is a published author and a regular speaker at conferences on topics ranging from corporate social responsibility to renewable energy.

Zurofsky holds an A.B. with honors in political science from Stanford University, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and a J.D. cum laude from Harvard Law School. Zurofsky currently serves on the Board of Directors of Cities Unplugged, a crisis education organization, and was previously a member of The Brookings Institution’s Leadership Council for Governance Studies as well as the board of directors of the Roundhouse Theatre Company. Zurofsky lives in New York City with his wife and three children.

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Ibrahim Abdul-Matin
Informed Capital; Former Director of Community Affairs, New York City Department of Environmental Protection
Ibrahim Abdul-Matin has advised two mayors on sustainability policy and on the best ways to translate complex policy decisions. He has advised the Green New Deal Political Action Committee. He is an expert on the costs and benefits of environmental policy. He is currently an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois.

Jeffrey A. Smith
President, BlackRock's Investment Stewardship
Jeffrey A. Smith has 15 years of experience launching and managing CR-related programs and campaigns focused on cross-sector partnerships, thought leadership, CR reporting and media relations for organizations such as Capital One, Evergreen & LLP and The Timberland Company.

Danielle Sugarman
Vice President, BlackRock
Danielle Sugarman is a vice president with BlackRock's Investment Stewardship team. She serves as the lead analyst for BlackRock's energy, utilities, pharmaceutical, and biotech portfolios in the Americas. Sugarman's work includes engagement with executives and directors of BlackRock’s portfolio companies on matters related to corporate strategy, governance, environmental and social matters, M&A considerations, proxy contests, and shareholder activism. Sugarman also votes BlackRock’s shares at corporate annual and special meetings in relation to key governance and climate change, sustainability and environmental issues, and securities law.

Prior to joining BlackRock, Sugarman practiced as an attorney for over 10 years, including spending several years at the Center for Climate Change Law out of Columbia Law School. She also served on Columbia Law School's program office of the Robertson Foundation, where she worked on Julian Robertson's environmental and medical research giving. She holds a J.D. from Penn Law School and a B.S. from Boston University. She is currently the chair of PVH’s Working Parents Business Resource Group and previously served as an adjunct professor at the Fashion Institute of Technology. She resides in Brooklyn, N.Y., with her husband and daughter.