

## Stetson Law Enhances Student Well-being with Dedicated Meditation Rooms



Stetson University College of Law has taken a significant step in prioritizing its students' mental health and well-being by introducing two dedicated meditation rooms on campus. This initiative highlights the pressing need for enhanced mental health resources for law students.

The introduction of the meditation rooms was spearheaded by Dominique Alford-Raymond, a part-time student at Stetson Law and the chair of the Student Bar Association's Student Health and Wellness committee. Alford-Raymond has strongly advocated for improved access to mental health resources since her first semester in 2021. She observed that previous generations of law students often embraced a mindset that considered alcohol and drug abuse integral to the lawyer experience.

Recognizing the harmful impact of such beliefs, Alford-Raymond was determined to create a different environment for herself and her classmates. After discussing with Associate Dean for Assessment and Professional Engagement, Anne Mullins, the idea of establishing meditation rooms gained momentum.

During their conversation, Alford-Raymond casually mentioned the positive effects of daily meditation. To her surprise, Mullins expressed her strong support, having advocated for meditation herself for a long time. This shared belief in the power of meditation motivated them to bring the concept to life.

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Stetson Law currently has one meditation room in the Dolly and Homer Hand Law Library, and another in the Office of Student Affairs. The library meditation room is available 24/7 and is designed for one to two individuals at a time. The larger meditation room in the Office of Student Affairs can accommodate groups of up to five people during office hours.

Licensed mental health counselor Angie Speller played a crucial role in designing the meditation rooms. Students entering these serene spaces will find a cozy atmosphere with a low, cushioned chair in one corner, accompanied by floor pillows and yoga mats of various sizes. White noise machines, including a multi-speed fan, also contribute to a calming ambiance. The lighting is deliberately dimmed to foster relaxation.

Alford-Raymond expressed her gratitude to Mullins, Speller, ADA Coordinator Kathryn Pelham, and Student Success Manager Julia Baltas for their support and assistance in making the meditation rooms a reality. Baltas emphasized that this project was driven by the students themselves, reflecting their collective determination to improve their law school experience.

Previously, students felt a lack of dedicated spaces for relaxation on campus. However, with the introduction of these meditation rooms, Stetson Law now offers a sanctuary where students can momentarily escape the pressures of their studies and find solace. It is a place where they can set aside the intense competition and the sense of constant struggle. For a brief moment, they can close the door behind them, release their stress, and find inner peace.

The establishment of student meditation rooms at Stetson Law demonstrates the institution's commitment to the overall well-being of its students. By acknowledging the importance of mental health and providing dedicated spaces for meditation, Stetson Law acknowledges the unique challenges law students face and aims to support their journey toward becoming successful and balanced legal professionals.