



2026 Woman of Distinction

Education



April Mara Barton

Dean and Professor of Law
*Thomas R. Kline School of Law
of Duquesne University*

April M. Barton is in her seventh year serving as dean and professor of law at the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. As dean, she is the principal academic, financial, and administrative leader of the Law School and provides strategic direction to approximately 70+ faculty and staff, 500+ students, and 9000+ alumni. She is a tenured professor and teaches courses in AI law & policy and law & leadership.

Duquesne Kline School of Law remains grounded in its Catholic and Spiritan ethos, while embracing a mission focused on educating lawyers to excel in the ethical practice of law, to preserve the highest ideals

of our profession, and to promote equal justice and democratic discourse through leadership, service, and civic engagement.

Since becoming dean in 2019, she has helped steer Duquesne Kline School of Law through a period of transformative change. Under her leadership, the law school has risen 40 spots in *U.S. News and World Report* rankings, the largest increase of any law school in the nation in 2022-2023.

She previously held various positions at Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law, most recently as associate dean for academic affairs.