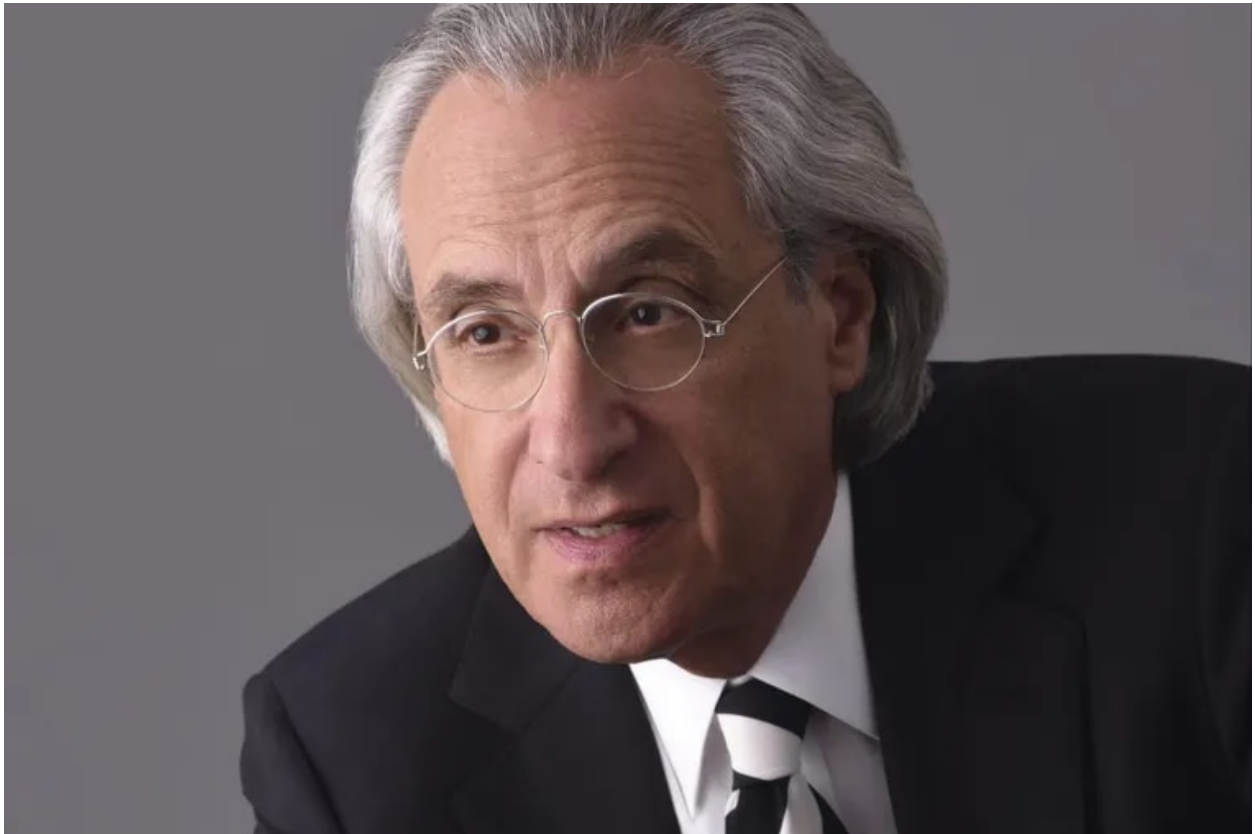


The Philadelphia Inquirer

With \$50 million gift, Tom Kline has a second law school named after him, this one at Duquesne

"It will mean that roughly three of 10 graduates of Pa. law schools will be at a Kline School of Law, one on one side of the state and one at the other," Kline said.



Philadelphia trial attorney Thomas R. Kline
Duquesne University

by Susan Snyder
Sep 7, 2022

Eight years ago, Philadelphia trial lawyer Thomas R. Kline gave \$50 million to Drexel University's relatively new law school, and in return, it was named after him.

On Wednesday, Kline did the same for Duquesne's law school, his alma mater, which now will be called the Thomas R. Kline School of Law at Duquesne. The Pittsburgh-based university heralded the gift as the largest in its 144-year history.

“It was a natural step for me to take today,” Kline said in a phone interview from Duquesne, where he had just taught a class as part of the day’s festivities around the announcement. “It will mean that roughly three of 10 graduates of Pa. law schools will be at a Kline School of Law, one on one side of the state and one at the other.”

Kline, who got his law degree at Duquesne in 1978, is one of the most prominent trial lawyers in the nation. He cofounded Kline & Specter P.C. in 1995 with partner Shanin Specter, son of the late U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter, which has become one of the leading firms handling catastrophic personal-injury cases. The firm also specializes in medical malpractice cases and has achieved hefty verdicts in high-profile cases.

Kline said that Drexel officials were aware and supportive of his gift to Duquesne and that his commitment to Drexel’s law school remains steadfast.

Both Kline in an interview and Drexel’s law school dean, Daniel Filler, in a statement to students and colleagues hinted that more financial support could be forthcoming from Kline.

“I’m happy to report we are in significant conversations with Tom right now about bolstering his already generous support of our law school,” Filler wrote.

Filler also noted that the law schools at Drexel and Duquesne already collaborate through the Thomas R. Kline Center for Judicial Education, which was established at Duquesne in 2017 and assists courts in providing continuing judicial education to the state’s judges.

“Through the center, faculty share their expertise with trial and appellate judges in Pennsylvania,” Filler wrote. “We anticipate the law schools will continue to collaborate to support ethical lawyering throughout the state.”

At Duquesne, the gift will support student scholarships and faculty grants for excellence in teaching and scholarship, among other priorities at the 111-year-old law school, Duquesne said.

Kline said he was thrilled to give back to his alma mater and saw the gift as “an investment in the future of the legal profession in Pennsylvania.”

Duquesne was particularly pleased that the gift came from Kline.

“We’re proud that one of our most distinguished alumni, who has represented Duquesne so impressively on a national and global stage, will now help shape the next century of our renowned law school,” said Duquesne president Ken Gormley, who previously had been dean of the law school.