

# Dean's Note

*Dean Daniel O. Bernstine*

I welcome this opportunity to write to you in my new capacity as Dean of the Law School. I am honored to have been selected as the 12th Law School dean and look forward to many years of service to my alma mater.

First, I want to thank my predecessor, Dean Cliff Thompson, who served as dean for 7 years and to wish him the very best on his sabbatical year at the University of London.

These first few weeks of my tenure have been both hectic and exciting, as I have traveled around the state and the country, meeting with fellow alumni to discuss the status of the Law School and our objectives for the future. Over forty alumni gatherings have been planned for this year, and I hope that through these events I will have a chance to see as many of you as possible.

I am very excited about the future of the Law School. We are currently ranked in the top twenty academically, but, more importantly, we have the ingredients and commitment to be even greater. My major objective during my tenure will be to increase the Law School's overall ranking. In order to achieve this objective, we will continue to pursue academic excellence while at the same time enhancing our academic reputation even further. We already have an outstanding faculty, and we must remain competitive in terms of salaries and research support for the faculty so that we can retain them as well as recruit new faculty.

The student body continues to be outstanding. The median LSAT for this year's entering class is 40 which is in the 90th percentile. The median undergraduate grade point average is 3.4. I am committed to a strong student recruitment program and, in addition to alumni events, I will be traveling around the state and the country recruiting potential applicants to the Law School.

One primary goal in our faculty and student recruitment efforts will be to further enhance diversity here at the Law School. As most of you know, in 1989 the Law School received a well-deserved award from the Society of American Law Teachers in recognition of our hiring four minority faculty members in one year. Our current student body is composed of 9 percent minority students compared to about 4 percent on the rest of the campus. Furthermore, this year's entering class is about 48 percent female. These figures represent significant strides on the Law School's part to maintain excellence through diversity and we are all committed to capitalizing on our momentum.

Another major ingredient in enhancing the Law School's overall reputation and strength involves even further support to our Law Library. In recent years, the Library has taken extraordinary steps toward halting the decline that the library experienced during the 1970's.

The Law School is currently part of the Campaign for Wisconsin, the University's capital endowment campaign; our goal is \$3.5 million. Two million dollars will be



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used to endow competitive grants for faculty so that they can become more involved in special projects which will add to the quality and distinction of the School. One million dollars will be used to support students who will work with faculty on these projects. The remaining half million dollars will be used to build an endowment for the Law Library.

This current capital campaign will go a long way toward improving the quality of our already strong institution and will help us to become more competitive with our peer institutions. I encourage you to support this campaign.

Finally, one of my major commitments as dean is to witness the construction of the long-awaited and much needed addition to the current building. Our existing facility, which was designed for 650 students, now houses nearly 900 students. Our library also needs room for growth. We need more space to house clinical programs, student activities, a new simulation courtroom and a host of other projects. Moreover, a major portion of the existing building will be renovated—allowing enhancements to the present courtroom and other building improvements which are consistent with a law school of the first rank. In short, the Law School must have a physical plant which can adequately and competitively prepare lawyers for the 21st Century. I will be in touch with you later about how you can support us in this very important initiative, and I look forward to and expect your vigorous support.

Again, I am honored to serve you in my new role as dean.

It feels good to be back home.