

A new day has dawned!

In my roughly 40 years of contact with the Law School I believe that the faculty and alumni have never had more reason to walk the same path as they do today. This is so, in my opinion, because the problems of providing an appropriate legal education to meet the demand of students, those who hire them and those who will ultimately use their services, and the coincident needs for private resources have never been so real and immediate.

In short, we need each other.

Legal Education

On the legal education front, close scrutiny is being given to the question of whether law schools in general, including this Law School, are providing adequate education and training to students, particularly those who ultimately choose to practice law. Recently, for example, these issues have had the express attention of the UW Board of Regents.

Are law graduates being properly prepared to enter the practice? Is this the responsibility of the Law School or the Bar? What do students want—particularly those students who want to enter the practice? These same questions are being asked nationally. For example, the ABA's MacCrate Commission Report addresses similar provocative questions and concerns.

Last spring our Board of Visitors met and began the process of reexamining these questions. Their report will be published in the next issue of the Gargoyle. In general it confirms what most of us, I am sure, have assumed: Generally speaking, the faculty is doing a fine job of delivering a legal education to a diverse student community, maximizing limited resources and using an outdated facility. Our Visitors' Report begins the dialogue in this state.

With the support and participation of

both law schools in this state, the State Bar of Wisconsin likewise is about to undertake a two-year study of these and related issues. Chief Justice Nathan Heffernan, a UW Law School alumnus, has agreed to chair this committee. Erica Eisinger, also an alumna, will be the reporter. Associate Dean Gerald Thain, Emeritus Professor Stuart Gullickson, and Clinical Professor Ralph Cagle will also serve.

As the work on this front continues I will attempt to keep you posted. In the meantime, if you wish to express your views on this important subject, please feel free to write me. What is clear to me is that the common goals of both the faculty of this Law School and its alumni are to continue to improve the final product and to maintain, and hopefully enhance, the Law School's standing as one of the premier law schools in the country.

Resources

Regardless of training and curriculum issues, it is manifest that the Law School must have improved alumni financial support. There can be no question that the Law building is outdated and inadequate. It is probably true to say that the list of what it lacks as a modern legal education facility is longer than the list of what it can now provide. These deficiencies are eroding the faculty's ability to deliver a state-of-the-art education.

And we are doing something about it. As hopefully you now well know, we are in the midst of a capital fund drive that will raise the required \$5 million to meet the private funding requirement for our building addition and remodeling. (The Dean's column more fully reports on our progress.) The WLAA has jumped into the middle of this drive. We have formed a liaison committee to the national drive; a

member of our Board, Lane Ware, has become the Vice Chair for the national drive. We are in the midst of organizing our alumni throughout the state and nation to facilitate the maximum participation. Recently, WLAA dedicated \$500,000 of unrestricted and available WLAA funds to guarantee pledges up to \$4 million to meet State Building Commission requirements for breaking ground.

Our Dean has spent untold hours visiting alumni and getting their support. He has done an outstanding job. But he cannot do it alone. I have committed my presidency to reaching the \$5 million goal. As a team, led on the national level by David Ruder, and with your help, we will get the job done.

And we cannot stop with bricks and mortar. Today's competitive world of legal education requires program and research support from private sources. It is no longer accurate to describe the Law School strictly as a state school to rationalize a lack of private funds. In fact, the Law School, like the University, is now more accurately described as a "state assisted" school. As alumni of a state school, we simply have not been called upon to give at the level historically associated with private schools. This cannot continue. We must accept our obligation to support quality legal education in this state. Without us, the Law School will continue to have difficulty competing against its heavily funded competition.

Recently the Law School greatly benefited from a gift of more than \$1 million from the estate of former Governor Warren P. Knowles. This is a good beginning—but only a beginning. Each of us owes much to the Law School. It's pay-back time.

*John S. Skilton
President, WLAA*