

# ROBERT CORREALES

ASSISTANT DEAN  
FOR STUDENT AND  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

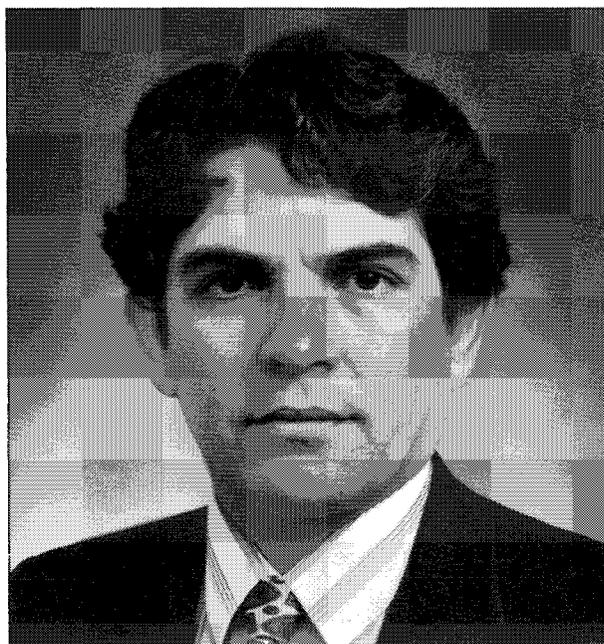
BY LISA KAISER

Asst. Dean Robert Correales began his law studies after a ten-year career as a chemist in Texas. "The curious thing is that if you look at my employment history as a chemist, you'll see the ebb and flow of the Texas economy," Correales said.

Correales worked as a lab technician dealing with kidney transplants at the Southwestern Medical School, in the quality control lab at Texas Instruments, as a chemical analyst in the gas and oil field at Dresser Industries, in the pharmaceutical industry at Cullum Companies, and as a process chemist in a cement plant at Texas Industries.

Correales decided to go into law so that he could work on civil rights issues, and also because he wanted a career that wouldn't depend on economic cycles. "I also wanted to get a job that I could take with me and use anywhere," Correales said.

Correales left Texas and earned his J.D. in 1991 from the University of Kansas School of Law, where he was the student director of the Douglas County Legal Aid Clinic. He then became a graduate fellow at the Institute for Public Representation



(IPR) at Georgetown University School of Law while working on his L.L.M., which he completed in June 1993.

Correales said that his most memorable case at the IPR involved the environmental problems of Washington, D.C., in which inner city residents were being harmed by a local landfill and a polluted tributary of the Potomac River that carried waste from an automobile recycling plant. Correales represented a nearby neighborhood and was able to block the plant's expansion. The Environmental Protection Agency got involved in the case later. "It was mostly due to the fact that the residents rose up and complained about the conditions in their neighborhood," Correales said. "It was through their political efforts that changes were made."

At the IPR Correales helped supervise

30 student interns who were practicing their skills in legal research and writing and drafting briefs and motions. "I loved working with the students in the clinic," Correales said. "We worked heavily on the students' skills as attorneys."

This experience led him to his position as Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Affairs at the Law School, which he began in July 1993. "When I stumbled into the placement office at Georgetown and saw that this position was open, I knew that this was the perfect job for me," Correales said.

Correales said that he's finally settling into his new job. "This position is very promising," Correales said. "This job can be an awful lot of fun and no two days are the same. I'm getting more comfortable—I wanted to do a good job but I didn't know what to expect from the students." His duties include helping students with their personal and academic questions and helping to build a sense of community among the diverse student population.

Correales said that communication is important, and before the fall semester began he and Asst. Dean Reisner built cabinets that now hold hanging folders for every law student, which are used for sending messages. "This has helped establish a sense of community and students will always benefit from communication," Correales said.

# JAMES THOMAS

ASSISTANT DEAN  
FOR ADMISSIONS  
AND FINANCIAL AID

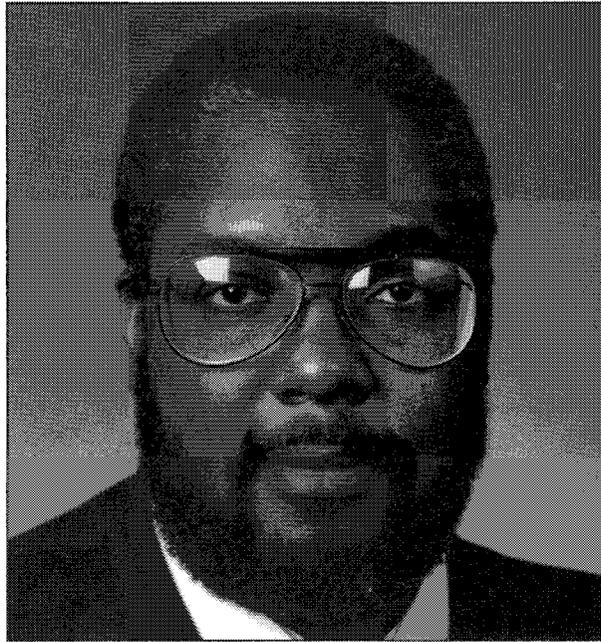
BY LISA KAISER

James Thomas can explain why he has been so successful at recruiting new law students: "I speak candidly and tell the truth." These qualities would have been appreciated by Thomas when he was looking at law schools to earn his J.D. in the mid-1980s. Thomas is now the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid at the Law School, and represents the school to prospective students and supervises scholarship funds.

"My own past experience with the recruiting process was really aggravating, and to this day I think that I relive my own agony in terms of deciding which school to attend," Thomas said.

Thomas received his J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1986. He then worked at the university as a Compliance Officer in the Affirmative Action Office. In March 1988 he became Associate Director of Law Admissions, and was later promoted to Director. He became nationally known as an admissions professional and recruiter working on many national committees.

While at Iowa, Thomas directed the Bridging the Gap program, which began in 1978 as a way to increase knowledge of skills that successful students need and to



create awareness of the opportunities that law school can give. Thomas also expanded the concept of the Bridging the Gap Pre-Law Conference.

Thomas initiated a program here that encourages high school students in Madison, Milwaukee and Racine to prepare for their academic careers beyond attaining an undergraduate degree.

"It may be a scaled-down version initially but the idea is to begin a dialogue so that we can keep students in communication, because the greatest thing high school students can say is that they met some law students and they were really friendly and cared sincerely about their future," Thomas said.

Thomas said that he knows first-hand that this exposure can influence kids' lives, since that's how he became interested in the law. "I was exposed to law school

when I was five or six years old," Thomas said. "Having that exposure so early meant there never was a question of law school being attainable."

Thomas considers the financial realities of attending law school when he counsels students. "As a financial aid dean I have some real concerns about the amount of debt that students are involving themselves in," Thomas said.

Despite the obstacles students may encounter during and after law school, Thomas still encourages people to go for it. "I think that with the downsizing of the markets, the realization is that the J.D. is still the most flexible, terminal degree that one can attain," Thomas said.

Thomas travels extensively to recruit students from around the country, which takes him away from his wife, a registered nurse, and their children.

Thomas admitted that the move was difficult for him personally. "It's probably my adjustment to Madison that has been the most difficult," Thomas said. "When you bring in a class, you've basically obligated yourself to be there when that class graduates. Therefore as each class entered at Iowa, I wanted to see that class graduate. The gratification each year from watching an entire class walk across that stage and get their diplomas and do well is unreal."