

MESSAGE from the Dean



Kenneth B. Davis, Jr.

THE UNIVERSITY of Wisconsin Law School has a remarkable history and a strong tradition of excellence. We consistently are listed among the best public law schools in the country; and you, our alumni, are international, state, and local leaders in all areas of law, business, and government.

As the Law School's dean, each day I see the impressive teaching, scholarship, and service that are at the heart of this institution. While we have much to celebrate, we cannot rest on our past accomplishments-it is not enough to continue "as is."

To remain and grow as a preeminent law school, we must continually reevaluate ourselves and listen to those who care about us. We did this, in part, through Assessment 2000, our extensive survey of recent graduates and employers, as a result of which we made changes that include the following: reduced the size of each of our first-year legal writing classes to 15 students in order to give more attention to writing; began a national search for a legal research and writing director who can make our writing program one of the best in the country; hired new faculty with interests in e-commerce, intellectual property, and entrepreneurship; committed additional resources to student services, particularly to the Career Services Office, and hired outstanding J.D. advisers both to provide academic counseling and to help students develop strong job-seeking skills; began a faculty review of the grading system to ensure that our system is fair, consistent, and easily understood by students and employers; initiated informal programs to encourage student-faculty interaction outside of classrooms.

We are proud of these accomplishments, but they are only a beginning-the first phase of an exciting time of change and innovation. The next step is the development of a strategic plan to articulate our vision and identify our priorities for the coming years. Our strategic plan will chart a course that will embrace our past but reach for the future. It will help us to advance to the top of the public law schools and meet the challenges affecting legal education and the legal profession. *But to chart this course, I need your help.*

Over the next year, I will travel to meet with you, our alumni and our friends, to learn what *you* see as our future and how *you* view our strategic choices. I intend to come to you with the key elements of a plan and to listen to your feedback. Your input will help us set our priorities and develop the plan's more detailed initiatives, and it is critical that this process involve the participation of a broad range of alumni-alumni from all types of practices, at all levels of experience, and in all parts of the country.

During the first half of the upcoming year, I will meet with alumni groups in Wisconsin as well as in Phoenix, Scottsdale, Dallas, Houston, Seattle, and Minneapolis. Other cities where a number of you live and work will follow throughout the summer and fall. I hope that many of you will join me at alumni meetings to discuss the priorities of the strategic plan and help chart the course of *your* Law School. Please watch for more information about the strategic plan and about alumni meetings in your area. If you would like to set up an alumni function or discuss the strategic plan with me at one of your local bar meetings, please let me know. For those of you unable to meet with me, I welcome your ideas in a letter or in an email to deansoffice@law.wisc.edu.

I look forward to meeting with or hearing from many of you over the coming months.

As some of you know, the Law School's Development Director for the last three years, Tricia Wheeler, resigned her position this fall to join the ranks of our first-year class. Tricia has been an extraordinary colleague who did great things for the Law School. We will miss her as a member of the Law School's administrative team, but we are excited for her as she embarks on the adventure of law school.

After a national search, in October the UW Foundation appointed Tricia's successor, Ken Krueger. Ken's professional achievements, educational background and wealth of ideas for the Law School impressed all of us who interviewed him. Turn to page 47 for a profile of Ken and a conversation with him.

Want to help chart the course of the Law School? Here's how.

THE LAW SCHOOL'S strategic plan will be the result of a process involving alumni, employers, students, faculty, and staff. Since the plan will affect the entire Law School community, it is critical that the process encourage the participation of as many voices as possible, both inside and outside of the Law School.

Based on information collected through interviews and surveys of the Law School's many constituencies, five to ten key long-range priorities will serve as the core of the strategic plan. Faculty, staff, students, and alumni will have an opportunity to discuss and shape these key priorities and develop the specific initiatives of the plan. As the plan develops, the Law School Web site (www.law.wisc.edu) will include drafts of these priorities and the initiatives developed to support them and will invite comments. We will also be holding discussions within the Law School and outside to encourage widespread input on the plan. National events in the next few months will include:

FEBRUARY

Phoenix Scottsdale Dalla Houston

APRIL^S

Seattle Minneapolis

Local events are in the works and additional alumni events will be scheduled during the summer and fall. For those who are tillable to attend a listening session and who wish to share written comments, Dean Davis welcomes your comments at deansoffice@law.wisc.edu.