Law School thriving

Dear Graduates and Friends of the Law School:

As I write this to you, excavation for the Dwight D. Opperman Hall and Law Library is under way; and the University is in the midst of an unparalleled transformation of its campus. New construction, restoration and renovation total $38 million and represent a tremendous investment in the University’s and the Law School’s future. It is a very exciting time filled with expectation, confidence, and dedication.

Even though first-rate facilities are critical to high quality education, what matters the most are the people, the faculty who teach and serve as role models and sources of advice, and the fellow students with whom one learns and grows. This is a point we do not forget; and in selecting faculty and admitting students, we are acutely mindful of it.

Our new class is drawn from nearly half of the states, and another banner year in applications has enabled us to be, indeed forced us to be, unusually selective. The 189 students who enrolled are a remarkable group of people. They are of course characterized by talent and initiative, and they add tremendously to the quality of life of the school. That is evident in the activities of our many student organizations and associations. As important, but less visible, is the wide-ranging and warm welcome which upperclass students individually extend to first-year students and the assistance that they provide in myriad ways each day to help one another in law school. Many schools and universities would envy this culture. The impressive number of alumni participating in our Partners Program and the success of that program are, I believe, a continuation and reflection of that environment. At a time when there is concern about declining civility and lack of professionalism among the professions, this collegial atmosphere is certainly something for all of us who are a part of Drake to treasure and support.

Students’ experience at the Law School is being enriched in additional, significant ways. In Jerry Anderson, Greg Sisk and Maura Strassberg we have continued to make very impressive

(Continued on Page 2)

Alumni build a tradition during reunion weekend


The reunion events, which included the Dean’s Reception, a continuing legal education seminar, class dinners, a golf tournament and the annual Jake More Dinner, provided alumni with many opportunities to reminisce about days spent in Carnegie and Cartwright Halls. Alumni also saw the plans and site for the new Dwight D. Opperman Hall and Law Library, on which construction began recently.

Law School memories weren’t the only focus of the weekend. At special dinners held for each class, alumni caught up on the activities of classmates and their families. Alumni also visited with faculty members who attended many of the reunion events. Golf enthusiasts vied for the title of “Best Shot” at the reunion golf competition. Brett Anderson, Phil Vaccaro and Neil Goldberg of the class of 1981 were named the “Best Shots” of 1991.

(Continued on Page 12)

Alumni of the Year, Charles F. Wasker, L’52; Roscoe Riemenschneider, L’35; and William H. Engelbrecht, L’51, were honored along with their favorite dean, the late Martin Tollefson, at the Jake More Dinner.
Delta Theta Phi offers law students more than just good times

Delta Theta Phi legal fraternity, according to its members past and present, is more than an organization in which they pay dues to have a resume builder. It’s also more than a club where law students get together just to lament about briefs, exams, oral arguments and the Socratic Method. It’s described as a society that offers friendship and support and at the same time provides valuable instruction.

“The greatest thing about being a Delt is that you participate in many learning experiences. You have contact with other members in the legal profession to give you that common bond between law student and lawyer,” says third-year student Allan Wallace.

Jane Van Werden, L’91, says, “not only do the Delts provide academic support for students but they also provide social outlets.”

Third-year student and 1990-91 dean of the Delts Mark Fiorentino maintains, “we do more to improve the quality of life at the Law School than any other student organization.”

“Our members became good friends. We had fun and at the same time, tried to leave the Law School a better place,” says Jon Vasey, L’83, and former dean of the Delts.

“The Delts have been an important part of the history of this law school,” says Professor James Albert, faculty adviser of the Drake chapter.

The Drake Delta Theta Phi chapter — the Chester A. Cole Senate — has created a tradition since 1921 as the first law fraternity at the Law School.

The Delts today are making history for themselves and the Law School. The national executive body of the fraternity, the Supreme Senate, named the Drake chapter the most outstanding student senate in the country at the 1991 National Delta Theta Phi Convention. Julie Stevenson, third-year law student and dean of the Cole Senate, was named one of two student representatives of the Supreme Senate at the convention as well.

“It’s good for Drake; it’s great visibility. It’s just further recognition for this outstanding law school of ours and the students,” says Albert.

Creating further visibility for the Delts is the record numbers of students joining each year. Currently, 275 Drake students are Delts.

Stevenson attributes increased recruitment efforts as the main factor for the large numbers. She says convincing potential members of the assets of membership in the fraternity is not difficult. “You make friends right off the bat, and it’s a way to get involved in a leadership position.”

Fraternity activities also prompt students to surface from the library, maintains Stevenson. The Delts arrange many activities and social events throughout the year. Events such as the Delt Cup golf tournament, tennis and volleyball matches, in addition to festivities such as a Halloween party and pig roast are becoming expected occurrences each year. For many of these events, the fraternity encourages the participation of the entire Law School.

Albert says students need the release that the Delt events offer. “Law school is boot camp and the Delts have given hundreds of students several three-day passes.”

One “three-day” pass that goes down in Delts history is a “Malibu Beach Party” that was held several years ago one winter evening in one of the residence halls on campus. For the effect of a shoreline, members dumped sand across the basement floor. However, when they ran out of real sand, they substituted kitty litter. Albert remembers this episode vividly. “To this day I still think there’s kitty litter in the basement of Morehouse [Residence Hall]. We were never invited back, but it was a great party,” he says.

Stevenson and Albert say that joining the Delts involves more than just social occasions. The Delts focus on the academic aspect of being a law student as well. They sponsor many tutorial sessions that help students cope with the rigor of law school. Sessions that feature course-outlining and test-taking skills teach students how to refine their study habits.

The fraternity gears many tutorial sessions toward first-year students, who may need added direction. In addition, a mentor program was developed to pair first-year students with second- or third-year students who will offer guidance.

To offer insights on the legal field, the Delts established “Delt Nights” in the 1950s at which prominent members of the Bar or Bench are invited to speak to members on a variety of topics. Also, professional seminars sponsored by the fraternity bring attorneys from throughout the Midwest to lecture on aspects of the legal profession.

Within the legal profession, the fraternity provides networking resources. Oftentimes, members seek other Delts for advice or leads on jobs.

Albert says overall, Delta Theta Phi provides a support system for students. “It’s made the lives of hundreds and hundreds of law students more survivable.”

(Continued on Page 10)
Alumni recruiting

(Continued from Page 7)

Because it may be difficult for students who do not live in Iowa to visit the School and personally meet faculty, students and administrators, they do not receive the same exposure.

“We want to personalize the school from the very beginning,” Henson says. “I remember that personal contact made a real difference,” she adds.

Personal letters, rather than form letters, and phone calls prompt more serious consideration by students, according to Henson. “They provide a kind of commitment from the very beginning — you’re not going to be just a body on a seat.”

Having alumni from across the nation, with varying backgrounds, spreading the word, helps bring diversity to the Law School. Susan Unkrich, director of recruitment and financial aid, says, “they can really help us recruit highly qualified applicants from a wider geographic area.” She adds, “It’s our goal to have a national perspective, and we’re achieving that.”

Also, with alumni talking about their own experiences with faculty, classes and life in Des Moines, they provide credibility for the Law School. “I had a really good experience so it’s easy for me to sell Drake,” says Henson.

It also is a benefit for the alumni to contact students and bring potential leaders to Drake. “It makes everyone’s degree a little bit more,” adds Henson.

Delts

(Continued from Page 5)

J. Clyde “J.C.” Wilson, L’28, says Delta Theta Phi created a bond among members. When he attended the Law School, he was dean of the Drake chapter, which had a house where 15 members lived. “We had a great time,” he says. In addition to fun, Wilson says the fraternity was a source of support when studying for exams and for the bar. “It was more than a social fraternity, it was truly a professional fraternity,” he says.

Although he lives in Arizona, Wilson still keeps in contact with fellow Delt members in Des Moines.

Glanton

(Continued from Page 3)

judge status six years ago. He retired earlier this year.

Before being appointed to the bench, Judge Glanton served as president of the Iowa and Des Moines chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He was a member of the executive boards of the governor’s Commission on Human Rights, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Iowa branch of Boy Scouts of America, and Goodwill Industries of America, Inc.

In 1962, Judge Glanton served as a goodwill ambassador to Africa, Cyprus and Southeast Asia for the U.S. State Department.

Annual Fund goals set

Along with the daily activities performed at Drake University, the Annual Fund plays a vital role in the institution’s existence. With alumni support, the Law School hopes to reach the 1991 participation goal of 24 percent. In early November, alumni participation was at 21.34 percent.

Alumni are encouraged to respond to calls and letters requesting their help for the fund, which provides essential support for scholarship assistance, faculty development, student activities, and library growth, among other things.

Justice Scalia to speak as Opperman Lecturer

United States Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia will visit the Law School in January to deliver the Opperman Lecture in Constitutional Law. Scalia’s visit will include a question-and-answer forum for Constitutional Law students and meetings with faculty and student leaders. The lecture will be given Thursday, January 30, 1992 and is open to alumni and friends and the entire University community.

Nominated to the Court by President Reagan in 1986, Scalia was confirmed 98-0 by the U.S. Senate. He replaced William H. Rehnquist, who was promoted to Chief Justice following Warren E. Burger’s resignation. Prior to his appointment to the Supreme Court, Scalia served for four years on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. His career has been varied and distinguished. He graduated summa cum laude from Georgetown University in 1957 and received his LL.B. magna cum laude from Harvard in 1960, where he was note editor of the Harvard Law Review. Following private practice with Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue from 1961 to 1967, he taught at the University of Virginia and the University of Chicago Law Schools until his appointment to the Court of Appeals in 1982.

The Opperman Lecture was endowed by Dwight D. Opperman, L’51. Previous lecturers include Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun, who inaugurated the lectureship series in 1988, and Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr. (Retired), who delivered the lecture in 1990. Opperman is a member of Drake’s Board of Governors and a past recipient of the University’s Distinguished Service Award and the Law School’s Alumni of the Year Award. He is president and chief executive officer of West Publishing Company in St. Paul, MN.

“Thank you, the students, and the alumni for your support.”

David Walker, Dean of the Law School
Stephanie Schuck, Editor
Michelle Soyer, Designer