Career of Rusk Center director comes full circle

Why would a successful politician and lawyer leave the high-powered world of Washington, D.C.? To return home, of course.

Ambassador C. Donald “Don” Johnson (J.D.’73) did just that in June 2004. After a distinguished career in both the public and private sectors, including positions as a U.S. congressman, chief textile negotiator and principal adviser to the U.S. president on textile trade, Georgia state senator, partner at the law firm Patton Boggs and vice-chairman of Fleishman-Hillard Government Relations, the Royston native and former UGA student and faculty member landed the role of directing the activities of the Rusk Center.

“There are not many opportunities to pursue international trade and public policy work in this part of the country, which is home to me,” he said. “Over the years, I have always come back to Georgia and to the university.”

Since his return two years ago, Johnson has aided the Rusk Center in renewing its focus to become one of the leading sources of international legal research and to assist our state in confronting economic and trade issues affecting Georgia and the Southeast.

“We know for a fact that the School of Law, combined with the Rusk Center, has one of the best international curriculums and international programs of any school certainly in the Southeast and one of the strongest in the nation.”

According to Johnson, the center strives to be a place where ideas are exchanged in the form of conferences, the undertaking of research and outreach projects and the hosting of visiting scholars as well as getting students and faculty involved in programs of global significance. “We also have an important role of providing public service to the state and the nation.”

“I have always been naturally drawn to the work at the Rusk Center. In a way, I have never really left my work in D.C., I am now just in a different setting.”

– Rusk Center Director Don Johnson (J.D.’73)

Johnson’s public and private sector contacts have aided his success at the center.

He has three conferences under his belt, one on U.S.-China trade, one on agriculture and the World Trade Organization and the most recent, International Trade Under the Rule of Law, which was held earlier this spring.

“These conferences bring together, in terms of participants and presenters, people who are academics and those who are involved in the process as well as those affected by the process,” he said.

“The focus is on law and policy in a very practical way. With the WTO conference, for example, I felt it was important not just to cover the current legal cases from an academic perspective. I also wanted a focus on what was the policy impact of the cases and the multilateral WTO negotiations on the economic situation.”

Another area of emphasis under Johnson’s tenure has been the expansion in international work and study abroad programs. The International Externship Program has experienced tremendous growth. With only two students participating in 2001, this summer, the center intends to arrange for approximately 20 law students to have four to eight weeks of work experience in locations all over the globe.

Additionally, the Rusk Center has launched an American Bar Association-approved study program in China. Partnering with two of the country’s top institutions of higher education, Tsinghua University and Fudan University, the Georgia Law Summer Program in China will be unique in providing the opportunity for study in China’s largest two cities. As part of the program, Johnson will teach a course on U.S.-China trade issues.

Johnson’s varied expertise and experience has benefited him when advising students on various curricular and career options. In addition, so many of the Rusk Center’s projects involve international trade and national security issues and the people he worked with in Washington.

“I have always been naturally drawn to the work at the Rusk Center. In a way, I have never really left my work in D.C., I am now just in a different setting,” he added. And, Georgia Law is thankful he is.

Johnson earned his bachelor’s and law degrees from UGA, where he served as articles editor for the Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law. He obtained a Master of Laws from the London School of Economics and a certificate in private and public international law from The Hague Academy of International Law in the Netherlands.
Faculty Notes

The following will summarize the scholarly productivity of Georgia Law’s distinguished faculty during calendar year 2005 and early 2006.

Peter A. Appel

Milner S. Ball (J.D.’71)

Robert P. Bartlett III

J. Randy Beck

Daniel M. Bodansky

Ronald L. Carlson

Lonnie T. Brown Jr.

Thomas A. Eaton

Erica J. Hashimoto

Paul J. Heald

Walter Hellerstein
“Cano and Congress: An Analysis of Proposed Federal Legislation Authorizing State Economic Development Incentives” in 4 Georgetown Journal of Law & Public Policy...

Edward J. Larson

Charles R.T. O’Kelley

Faculty Colloquium Series

Last year, Georgia Law created a new program to provide a forum for provocative and innovative legal scholarship and to give Georgia Law faculty the opportunity to collaborate on works in progress, exchange ideas and foster relationships with scholars at other institutions. Through this initiative, some of the nation’s top legal academics presented their research to the Georgia Law faculty as part of the Faculty Colloquium Series. The array of guest speakers included both rising younger commentators and established senior ones. Below is a list of the scholars who participated this past academic year.

2005-06 Speakers
Anthony V. Alfieri, University of Miami
Akhil Reed Amar, Yale University
Olufumilayo B. Arewa, Case Western Reserve University
David A. Brennen, Mercer University
Lonnie T. Brown Jr., University of Georgia
Julian A. Cook III, Michigan State University
Sean J. Griffith, University of Connecticut
John H. Langbein, Yale University
Thomas H. Lee, Fordham University
Michael J. Perry, Emory University
Jedediah S. Purdy, Duke University
Jim Rossi, Florida State University
Ronald D. Rotunda, George Mason University
Peter H. Schuck, Yale University
Julie Seamon, Emory University
Alan Watson, University of Georgia
Michael L. Wells, University of Georgia

Edward J. Larson

Charles R.T. O’Kelley

This program is funded by the Kirbo Trust Endowed Faculty Enhancement Fund.
Brown, Coenen and Dupre recognized by students

The student body selected professors Lonnie T. Brown Jr., Dan T. Coenen and Anne Proffitt Dupre (J.D.’88) as the year’s top teachers.

Brown, an associate professor who joined the Georgia Law faculty in 2002, was presented with the Student Bar Association Professionalism Award. He teaches Civil Procedure, Legal Profession and Conflict of Laws. This is the second time Brown has received this special recognition.

The SBA Faculty Book Award for Excellence in Teaching was given to Coenen, who holds the titles of University Professor and Hosch Professor of Law. He has led courses in constitutional law, contracts and criminal law for nearly 20 years at UGA. Coenen has been awarded this honor on four other occasions.

Dupre was presented the John C. O’Byrne Memorial Award for Furthering Faculty-Student Relations. She joined the Georgia Law faculty in 1994 and was named a Hosch Professor of Law 10 years later. Dupre teaches education law, children and the law, contracts and remedies. She previously received this award in 1997.

Student Bar Association President Rakesh Parekh (left) and Third-year Class President Michele Kim (right) presented professors Dan Coenen (second from left), Anne Dupre (J.D. ’88) (center) and Lonnie Brown with teaching awards for the 2005-06 academic year.

Margaret V. Sachs

R. Perry Sentell Jr. (LL.B.’58)

David E. Shipley

James C. Smith

Jason M. Solomon

Peter J. Spiro
As always, commencement is a special time for graduates, their friends and families as well as faculty and staff. Photographs of this wonderful day follow.