

# Remembering Emma Terrell



**December 23, 1946 - December 26, 2004**

*Written in part by Nelda Parker*

*Those of us who knew Emma P. Terrell, whether it was six weeks or 25 years, know the photograph above epitomizes the free, open and friendly spirit that she imparted to everyone who crossed her path. Emma's employment at the law school began in April 1979 and continued through several deans, numerous staff members and thousands of students and alumni. Most of us remember getting to know, working with and having fun with Emma. Her comprehensive involvement in all things law school and her terrific (and sometimes terrifying) anecdotes connected us all.*

*Emma worked at the law school for more than 25 years. For the last 20, she was a dean's office administrative specialist and served under five different deans. Below are some of their words regarding this special person.*

*"She had an amazingly generous spirit and a kind heart. I think the harshest thing I've ever heard her say was 'good grief.'"*

*-Dean C. Ronald Ellington*

*"The adjectives that describe Emma are many. Prominent among them are the words warm, nurturing, considerate, cheerful, extraordinarily optimistic, dedicated, loyal, hard working, cooperative and adaptive."*

*-Dean Edward D. "Ned" Spurgeon*

*"All of us know of Emma's ... communication skills. She really could make friends with a wrong number as well as the many odd balls who often telephoned the Dean's Office. Those stories are true. I would come out and say, 'Who were you talking to for the last 15 minutes?' Her response, 'Oh, that was some person who had us confused with the Georgia bar (or a computer salesperson who wanted to talk to you)."*

*-Dean David E. Shipley*

*"Emma was an exemplar. She loved her job [and] the law school and was determined to do whatever was necessary to further its goals. Every time I walk into the Dean's outer office, I can still see, in my mind's eye, the coat rack, the plastic bag and Emma pounding on the computer."*

*-Dean Emeritus J. Ralph Beaird*

*"Simply put, Emma took care of me. There wasn't anything I could ask of her that she wasn't happy to do, and she did many things that I would not even think of asking her to do that made the law school run more smoothly."*

*-Dean Rebecca H. White*

*Emma passed away at the age of 58, after suffering from kidney disease for several years. She is survived by her sons Chris and Ryan Terrell, three sisters and three grandchildren.*

*In February, the Law School Staff Council renamed its employee service award in memory of Emma and her strong work ethic, commitment and exceptional job performance. The first Emma Terrell Distinguished Employee Award will be presented in December 2005.*