Conference explores ethical challenges associated with controversial or high-profile cases

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark (left) and former U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico David Iglesias served as the keynote speakers for the 10th Annual Legal Ethics & Professionalism Symposium in Athens. The hosting of this annual symposium rotates between the state's law schools each year.

What are some of the practical challenges and ethical concerns when taking on a controversial case? How far should a lawyer be permitted to go in zealously representing a client? When the representation of a client conflicts with the public good, what should or must a lawyer do? These questions and more were explored during the 10th Annual Legal Ethics & Professionalism Symposium hosted by Georgia Law in October.

Titled Drawing the Ethical Line: Controversial Cases, Zealous Advocacy and the Public Good, the daylong symposium featured an array of notable practitioners and academics who examined the difficult ethical issues encountered by attorneys when defending and prosecuting controversial or high-profile cases.

Contributing their personal experiences to the day's analysis were keynote speakers former U.S. Attorney General W. Ramsey Clark and former U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico David C. Iglesias.

In his address, "From Attorney General to Attorney for the Condemned," Clark shared general lessons he learned throughout his time as a lawyer as well as from handling a variety of infamous cases.

"Ethics tends to deal with something that applies to everything–you shouldn't steal, you shouldn't betray people, but to me, legal ethics has a broader meaning," Clark said. "Lawyers have an ethical or moral obligation … to always act to protect, serve and advance the rule of law.

"Our burden is trying to help shape the law to meet the needs of a constantly changing society, in which many have few rights or privileges. … There is only one reason to be here, and that is to make a difference," Clark added.

He said one of the differences he strove to make during his career was in the U.S. prison system.

"… There is only one reason to be here, and that is to make a difference."

- Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark

"More crime came out of prisons than went in, more potential to harm other people came out than went in. If the rule of law doesn't address things like that, who is going to address it?"

Iglesias added to Clark's examination of the rule of law by discussing what can happen when politics gets involved.

"It became abundantly clear that the oath I took [as a U.S. attorney] was to the Constitution. It wasn't to my party, it wasn't to my senator, it wasn't to a specific ideology, but it was to the rule of law," Iglesias said in his presentation titled "A Prosecutor's Non-negotiables: Independence and Integrity."

"I believe that U.S. attorneys are the only appointees that can take away your life, your liberty and your property, and do it completely legally. It's a tremendously serious job, and politics have to stay out of it."

Iglesias said that was why it came as such a shock when on Dec. 7, 2006, he received a phone call from the director of the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys saying it was time for him to "move on."

During his tenure, Iglesias had received two positive evaluations of his office and was unaware of any current problems. When he asked for a reason to explain the directive, Iglesias said the response was, "All I know is it came from on high." Six other U.S. attorneys received similar phone calls that day.

"I went from having one of the proudest days of my life being sworn in as a United States attorney to, five-and-a-half short years later, swearing to take an oath in front of the United States Senate and the United States House, joined with some of my colleagues, who were there to tell the American public what had happened.

"Justice Jackson said …'While the prosecutor at his best is one of the most beneficent forces in our society, when he acts from malice or other base motive, he is one of the worst.' I believe the sad saga of the U.S. attorney firings represents some of those base motives."

In summary of the day's proceedings, symposium organizer and School of Law Professor Lonnie T. Brown Jr. said, "This event explored some of the thorniest and most troubling ethical issues that members of the legal profession can face. The reflections and insights offered by the distinguished participants exposed the many issues that can arise in controversial representations and demonstrated the necessity for very thoughtful drawing of the proverbial ethical line in this context."

Clark's and Iglesias' individual addresses are available for viewing at *www.law.uga.edu/lecture-series.*

Cleland speaks at public interest weekend

Former U.S. Sen. Max Cleland presented "We are Public Interest" as the keynote speaker for the 25th Annual Equal Justice Foundation Auction and the 5th Annual Working in the Public Interest Law Conference. This is the second time the two groups hosted a combined event, the first of which received the UGA 2009 H. Gordon and Francis S. Davis S.O.A.R. Award for Outstanding Campus Event.

The 25th Annual Equal Justice Foundation Auction and the 5th Annual Working in the Public Interest Law Conference joined forces again this spring to host two days dedicated to the field of public interest at the law school.

The event included a keynote address by former U.S. Sen. J. Maxwell "Max" Cleland, an auction to raise money for students working in public interest positions and a variety of roundtable and panel discussions exploring public interest issues.

"The vehicle of law is one of many tools available to combat social injustice," third-year law student and conference co-organizer Stinson W. Ferguson said. "Our goal was to raise awareness while supporting and equipping those trying to make a difference. I believe we accomplished that and more."

In his presentation titled "We are Public Interest," Cleland stressed the importance of being a public servant. He also discussed the pressure on politicians, legislators and lawyers to please their constituencies while still working for the benefit of the public as a whole.

Notable academics and practitioners from across the country also weighed in on topics such as: human sex trafficking; issues facing former inmates struggling to reintegrate into society; the disproportionate impact of pollution in minority and impoverished communities; the pipeline carrying children from foster care to juvenile delinquency; hate crimes directed at members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community; the role of treatment-based programs within the judiciary such as drug courts; and balancing the competing interests of our nation and immigrants.

In support of students working to right these and other social grievances, EJF hosted their annual auction during the conference, raising more than $30,000 – a record high. These proceeds help fund EJF's summer fellowships, which give monetary aid to Georgia Law students in public interest positions.

The weekend also celebrated those who have made outstanding contributions to the public interest arena with the presentation of three awards. The Milner S. Ball Working in the Public Interest Lifetime Achievement Award went to John W. Whitehead, founder and president of The Rutherford Institute, while the EJF Annual Practitioner Award was presented to H. Bradford Morris Jr., a public defender for the Northeastern Judicial Circuit. Nikki D. Thanos, a third-year law student at Loyola University at New Orleans, was also honored for her contributions with the Working in the Public Interest Student Achievement Award.

Morehead appointed senior vice president for academic affairs and provost at UGA

Alumnus Jere W. Morehead (J.D.'80) officially began his service as the new senior vice president for academic affairs and provost at UGA on Jan. 1 of this year. He was chosen from among four finalists identified in a national search to fill the second-highest position in the university's administration.

Morehead succeeded Arnett C. Mace Jr., who retired after 18 years of service to UGA, with seven of those years as provost.

"After reviewing all of their résumés and considering carefully these matters for 10 days or so, I became convinced that the person most capable of leading the academic mission of the University of Georgia for the next several years was already here in our vice president for instruction, Jere Morehead," UGA President Michael F. Adams said in making the announcement.

As the chief academic officer of the university, the senior vice president for academic affairs and provost oversees instruction, research, student affairs, and public service and outreach.

Since joining the UGA faculty in 1986, Morehead has held several leadership positions. He served as acting executive director for the Office of Legal Affairs from 1998 to 1999, as associate provost and director of the Honors Program from 1999 to 2004 and as vice provost for academic affairs from 2004 to 2006. In 2007, he was named vice president for instruction, after serving on an interim basis.

Additionally, Morehead co-chaired the university's 1996-97 President's Task Force on the Quality of the Undergraduate Experience and the 2004-05 Task Force on General Education and Student Learning.

Before joining the UGA faculty, he served as an assistant U.S. attorney with the Department of Justice for six years.

"I appreciate the opportunity to serve the university as its next provost," Morehead said. "In everything I do in this position, I will attempt to maximize our academic resources to benefit this university, the state of Georgia, and those we serve around the world."

Martin becomes first alumna to be tapped for service on appellate court

When Beverly B. Martin (J.D.'81) was confirmed 97-0 by the U.S. Senate in January to serve as the newest member of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit, she also had the honor of becoming the first Georgia Law female graduate to hold a judicial position on a U.S. appellate court.

President Barack Obama nominated Martin for the post last year after Senior Judge R. Lanier Anderson III announced his retirement. At the time of her selection, Martin was serving as a U.S. District Court judge in Atlanta.

Born and raised in Macon, Ga., Martin is a fourth-generation attorney. She began her legal career during 1981 working at a firm founded by her great-grandfather, now known as Martin Snow.

Three years later, Martin moved to Atlanta to work for the State Attorney General's Office as an assistant attorney general. In 1994, she became an assistant U.S. attorney, and ultimately the U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Georgia. In 2000, she was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, where she served for a decade before joining the U.S. Court of Appeals.

During the administration of her public oath of office held in March, former district court colleague Chief Judge Julie E. Carnes (J.D.'75) praised Martin's work ethic saying no matter what odd hour she came to the courthouse, Martin's car was there.

In her comments, Martin promised to continue to uphold that standard. "You won't hear from me much anymore, except when I write. I'm going to give it all I've got," she vowed, "and I'm going to try as hard as I can."

Yates named first female U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Georgia

The U.S. Senate recently confirmed the first female U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Georgia, Sally Quillian Yates (J.D.'86).

Yates joined the U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta as an assistant U.S. attorney in 1989. She served as chief of the Public Corruption and Government Fraud Section from 1994 to 2002 and was then named the first assistant U.S. attorney, where she was responsible for overseeing approximately 86 attorneys and all of the office's criminal and civil cases.

Previously, Yates worked for three years as an associate in the commercial litigation area at King & Spalding.

Tarver sworn in as first African-American U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Georgia

This past November, Edward J. Tarver (J.D.'91) was sworn in as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Georgia and became the first African-American to ever fill the post.

Tarver entered the U.S. Army in 1982 and served for seven years as a field artillery officer, attaining the rank of captain before entering law school. After earning his Juris Doctor, Tarver served as a judicial clerk for Chief Judge Dudley H. Bowen Jr. (LL.B.'65) of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia.

He then joined what is now known as Hull Barrett as an associate in 1992 and became a partner in 1999. In 2005, Tarver was elected to the Georgia General Assembly as a senator for Senate District 22. He was re-elected in 2006 and 2008.

President of India presents award to Rusk Center

The Dean Rusk Center was honored in India this past fall for its work in the area of international legal education and outreach with an International Jurists Award. The accolade was presented to Rusk Center Director C. Donald Johnson (J.D.'73) (left) during the International Conference of Jurists in New Delhi, India, by the President of India Pratibha Devisingh Patil (center), the Indian Minister for Law and Justice M. Veerappa Moily (right) and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of India K.G. Balakrishnan (not shown). While in India, Johnson also met with Balakrishnan, Moily and officials from the Indian Law Institute to discuss future collaboration on international legal education.