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Dean's Report 2001

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Dean's Report 2001

November 26, 2001

Dear Alumni and Friends:

All of us who are in our mid-forties or older can remember where and what we were doing on November 22, 1963 when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. There are, of course, many people who have vivid memories of their experiences on December 7, 1941 when Pearl Harbor was attacked. It deeply saddens all of us that Tuesday, September 11, 2001 will always be one those terrible, unforgettable days in our nation's history and our lives.

Faculty, staff and students at the University of Georgia's School of Law watched television in shocked disbelief that morning. Classes were canceled here and throughout the university, on-campus interviewing stopped, UGA's counseling service responded quickly to our request for help, and many urgent calls were made to family, friends and alumni in Washington, D.C. and New York City. Classes resumed on Wednesday but we decided to cancel all of our reunion activities scheduled for the weekend of September 15. Panel discussions on international law, terrorism and how lawyers could respond to this crisis were held the following week along with many other workshops, symposia and memorial services on campus. The law school community gave a record amount of blood at a Red Cross blood drive that had been scheduled several months prior. At the same time, on-campus interviewing resumed, candidates for faculty positions were interviewed, the Board of Visitors and the Law School Association Council met on campus, and our Moot Court exchange with London's Gray's Inn was held as planned. We have done our best to get back to the day-to-day activities involved in legal education.

One of the major challenges the law school is facing in this post-September 11 world results from our nation's economic slowdown. We are having to make budget reductions. Public higher education in Georgia is taking a 2.5 percent cut in this year's budget and planning for another 2.5 percent reduction in the 2002-03 fiscal year. Although these cuts are substantial, I am confident about the law school's ability to respond due to the outstanding private support we receive from our alumni and friends. During the recession in the early 1990s, Dean C. Ronald Ellington turned to the Law School Association and our annual fund to help the school weather budget cuts. Thus, I know that I will be able to turn to you and the alumni association in these equally challenging times.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Law School Association, and it is fascinating to think about how things have changed here since 1951. The first President was the late Roger Lawson (LL.B. '36), father of U.S. District Court Judge

Hugh Lawson, and the second was the late Gus Cleveland, a partner at Kilpatrick Stockton for many years and the father of continuing legal education in Georgia. This year, we are led by Dana Miles (J.D. '80) from Cumming. The Dean in 1951 was J. Alton Hosch, and he served until 1964. There were annual membership dues of \$1.50, and over 250 of the school's 800 alumni joined the fledgling association in the first membership drive. Today, all law school graduates (approximately 7,400) are members and there are no annual dues.

Law school graduate Herman Talmadge (LL. B. '36) was Governor of Georgia in 1951, and another one of our graduates, Roy Barnes (J.D. '72), is in that office today. In between, Ernest Vandiver (LL.B. '42), Carl Sanders (J.D. '48) and George Busbee (LL. B. '52) served as Georgia's chief executive. We are justifiably proud of the law school's role in preparing this kind of exemplary leadership for the state and the nation as well as for the legal profession, the judiciary, business, education, local government, and civic and charitable organizations. Below are some other changes and developments the school has undergone in the last half century.

Students

Enrollment was just 186 in 1951. There were no minorities and hardly any women at the law school. Admission was not competitive, and many students did not graduate. It was a "look to your left, look to your right" approach to legal education. Today, we are at almost 700 students, close to 50 percent are women and over 15 percent are minorities. It is difficult to be admitted from the pool of over 2,000 applicants for the first-year class, and the vast majority of students graduate. The quality of UGA law students is excellent. The 236 students in the Class of 2004 have a median LSAT of 162 (the 88th percentile) and a median GPA of 3.65 (our best ever). The top quartile of our GPA range is 3.84 - only a handful of the nation's law schools are above this impressive figure. Our students are graduates of many colleges and universities, and 75 percent are Georgia residents.

Faculty

In 1951, we had 10 full-time and four part-time professors. All of them were male but the librarian. There were some legendary teachers in those days like D. Meade Feild, Tom Green, Sigmund Cohn and Bob McWhorter. Today, we have 37 full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty, six full-time legal research and writing teachers, two clinical directors and a director of advocacy. Fourteen of these teachers are women. There also is a strong roster of adjunct professors including practitioners from Athens, Atlanta and Macon as well as several professors from other schools and colleges at UGA.

The quality of teaching remains outstanding as demonstrated by the law school's three recipients of the university's prestigious Meigs Award - Hosch Professors Dan Coenen and Rebecca White and Callaway Professor Ron Carlson. Today's faculty stalwarts include Law School Association Professor John Rees and Carter Professor Perry Sentell who have been teaching at the law school for almost 40 years. This faculty also does a significant amount of writing and speaking. In 2000, we published 48 articles, 31 books and book chapters, and gave 97 talks, speeches and continuing legal education presentations around the state, nation and overseas. In

addition, this faculty wins awards and prizes and is recognized internationally as well as throughout the United States.

Course of Study

The 1951 curriculum was fairly standard and most courses were required. Today, we offer many courses every year with considerable depth in areas like international law, intellectual property, tax and business, and trial and appellate advocacy. In addition, we have civil and prosecutorial externships, the legal aid/public defender clinic, the Etowah Initiative, the Public Interest Practicum and the Domestic Violence Clinic. Today's students have many opportunities for hands-on learning.

The law school also publishes three student journals. Plus, we have very successful moot court and mock trial programs as shown by our tremendous success in 2000-2001. We administer the Institute of Continuing Legal Education and the Institute of Continuing Judicial Education for the State Bar of Georgia and the Supreme Court of Georgia in cooperation with the state's other accredited law schools. The school is proud of our Dean Rusk Center -- International, Comparative and Graduate Legal Studies. The School of Law and the Rusk Center have ongoing programs with Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Belgium, England and France as well as a thriving LL.M. program that brings us 20 to 25 graduate students every year from around the world.

We did not have administrative offices like legal career services, alumni relations, communications and development 50 years ago. The library's staff was small as was the collection. There was no need for computer support, and now we have a five-person computer services staff. The school has changed dramatically in 50 years.

Facilities

The entire law school was in Hirsch Hall during 1951. This building was constructed in the early 1930s. We had the southern end of North Campus to ourselves at that time because ground was not broken for the main university library until 1952. Morris Hall on Lumpkin Street was the law dorm. The entire Alexander Campbell King Law Library was in what is now the Hatton Lovejoy Courtroom. Then in the 1960s, Hirsch Hall was dramatically improved with the addition of new classrooms, faculty offices and the much improved and larger law library. This major expansion was dedicated in 1967. The Hosch Library Annex was added in 1981 and, in 1996, we dedicated Dean Rusk Hall.

Rankings

There were no rankings of the nation's law schools in 1951 but they are a fact of life today. We currently rank 27th out of the nation's 183 accredited law schools and 11th among the nation's public law schools in *U.S. News and World Report*. We are in good company. We are even with Emory, Boston University, Notre Dame and Washington University in St. Louis and just behind Illinois, UNC Chapel Hill, George Washington and the University of Washington. I hope we can jump a notch or two this coming spring since we have recruited another superb first-year class and our

employment statistics are strong.

The Future

I think it is human nature to worry about what the future holds when one is confronting difficulties. The University of Georgia School of Law has faced, and continues to face, significant challenges but I think all of us should be very optimistic about the school's future. Here are some things we are doing to enhance the school's quality and its national stature.

First, it is vital for the law school to attract the best and brightest students, especially Georgians. We are doing very well as evidenced by our student credentials. For instance, only a few schools will have a higher top-quarter GPA than our 3.84. In addition, the applicant pool is growing. Yet, competition for the top students remains stiff and law school is expensive so it is crucial for us to increase the amount of scholarship dollars we can award. We **cannot** use public money for scholarships and the Hope Scholarship is not available for law and other graduate students, so we have to use private funds for all of our awards. This year, we are distributing \$679,782 in varying amounts to 45 percent of our students. This may appear to be a large amount but it pales in comparison to the amounts awarded by some of the public law schools ranked above us in *U.S. News and World Report*.

Our students receive a superb education during their three years at the School of Law. They can select from a wide variety of courses which are taught by a strong and dedicated faculty. In addition, they enjoy many opportunities for learning outside the classroom by participating in organizations like the Student Bar Association, the Black Law Students Association, the Women's Law Student Association, the Equal Justice Foundation and the Georgia League. Your support for these co-curricular and extra-curricular activities enriches the experience of our students.

The school's journals and our prize-winning advocacy programs also benefit from great alumni support. This fall, we have had the Mel England Mock Trial Competition, the Talmadge Moot Court Competition and the biennial exchange with London's Gray's Inn. Our annual Hulsey-Kimbrell Moot Court Competition with the University of Florida was held in Jacksonville the day before the Georgia/Florida football game. We beat the Gators in the courtroom and now we lead the series 16-6. Our National Moot Court Team won the regional competition in Atlanta earlier this month and will compete in the national tournament in New York City during January. This will be the team's ninth trip to New York in the last 11 years.

Another way you can help increase the stature of the School of Law is to make employment offers to our students before they graduate. Although our final placement statistics are always strong (over 99 percent employed for the Class of 2000 with an average starting salary of \$69,894), we are striving to increase the percentage of students placed when they graduate. Our graduation placement rate for the Class of 2001 was 73.4 percent and our ambitious goal for the Class of 2002 is 80 percent. We appreciate any assistance you can provide in helping us reach this goal.

Second, we are recruiting outstanding faculty as well as planning to increase our faculty size by three or four professors. I am optimistic about creating new positions

but I am anxious about putting together competitive salary and research packages because of the big gap between salaries in legal education and private practice. When I left practice in 1977 to start teaching, I did not take a pay cut. Today many of our graduates have starting salaries in excess of \$100,000 so the law school's starting salary for someone with a superb academic record and five or six years of practice experience has to be in that range. Another challenge is that some law schools raid schools like UGA for strong faculty. In order to hire the best and keep our best, it is important for us to pay competitive salaries, to increase existing and establish new chair and professorship endowments that provide salary supplements, and to generate private funds to support summer research and faculty travel to conferences and symposia.

This year, our faculty is being enriched by several new colleagues and two distinguished visitors. Professor Emeritus John Cound from the University of Minnesota is teaching a section of Civil Procedure as well as Complex Litigation. He is a co-author of the nation's best selling civil procedure casebook. Florida State's Mason Ladd Professor of Evidence Charles Ehrhardt is teaching Evidence and Trial Practice. He has served as FSU's NCAA Faculty Representative for many years and is friends with Georgia's new head football coach, Mark Richt. Alan Cook (J.D. '84), former District Attorney for the Alcovy Circuit, is the Interim Director of our Prosecutorial Clinic. Susan Schaffer is the new Director of our Domestic Violence Clinic, and Athens attorney Elizabeth Padgett is now teaching Legal Research and Writing.

Third, we need to improve our facilities. North Campus is a beautiful location for our school but our facilities have changed very little since the 1960s. We need additional space in the law library. We need more offices and space for our students. We need to be computer/laptop friendly throughout our facilities. Plus, we need renovations to classrooms, offices and public places.

Thanks to Governor Barnes and our great alumni and friends in the Georgia legislature, the law school received \$3.2 million to fund major technological improvements. These include: making rooms F, J and K into state-of-the-art classrooms; remodeling the auditorium to become two high-tech classrooms; equipping the main reading room in the Alexander Campbell King Law Library so there is power access at every table; installing an online circulation system as well as a security system for our impressive library collection; putting smart podiums in all classrooms; and going wireless for Internet access throughout the school. These are exciting developments. The actual construction work required to modernize the classrooms and the main reading room will start right after graduation in May 2002.

We recently completed a thorough feasibility study of our facilities with the help of Danny Sniff, Linda Henneman and Paul Cassilly from the Office of University Architects for Facilities Planning and the Baltimore architectural firm Ayers Saint Gross. The study presents options for creating additional space on our existing footprint; making more effective use of our current space; further enhancing our technology; and renovating classrooms, offices, the library and student areas. The study's "Dream the Impossible Dream" proposal for improving our facilities involves major work on all three buildings. It is a very ambitious plan. We will be showing it to you in the coming months as we try to determine how we might be able to pay for some or all of the expansion and renovation work. Please be assured the improvements we are making this year with the \$3.2 million will not have to be

altered when we move forward on any other future renovation projects.

Other Developments

This newsletter's report on students, faculty and facilities shows that we are making good progress on the goals set forth in the School of Law's Strategic Plan. The plan was published in the fall 2000 edition of our alumni magazine, the *Advocate*. (If you would like to receive another copy, please let me know.) Speaking of our alumni magazine, there will not be a fall 2001 edition due to the budget cuts mentioned earlier. The magazine will be published in the spring and its new editor and primary writer will be Ms. Heidi Murphy. She joined the staff in October as the School of Law's Director of Communications and Public Relations. Heidi worked at the *Athens Banner-Herald* for several years before joining us. She takes over for Ms. Kathy Pharr who is now working for UGA President Michael Adams in the position of Assistant to the President. Kathy did great work during her eight years at the School of Law, and I know that Heidi will carry on that tradition.

At the Law School Association's annual State Bar breakfast meeting this past June on Kiawah Island, we honored two of our most prominent leaders within the law school community with the Distinguished Service Scroll Award. Bainbridge attorney Bruce Kirbo (J.D. '51) was one of the recipients and the other was Athens attorney and former Board of Visitors Chair John Noell, Jr. (J.D. '65). Both have long records of outstanding service and leadership, and I congratulate them on the well-deserved honor.

The leadership legacy exemplified by Bruce and John is being carried on with our alumni boards. Jim Smith (J.D. '81) of Macon led the LSA in 2000-01, Sam Matchett (J.D. '84) of Atlanta chaired the Board of Visitors and Craig Bertschi (J.D. '90) of Atlanta guided the Younger Law Alumni Committee.

They have been succeeded by Dana Miles (J.D. '80) of Cumming as LSA president, Read Morton (J.D. '73) of Atlanta as BOV Chair and Tracie Johnson (J.D. '96) of Atlanta as YLAC President.

On November 16, we named the large fourth floor meeting room of Dean Rusk Hall after Larry Walker (J.D. '65). Larry is an active supporter of the School of Law and was instrumental in securing the state funding for the construction of this building.

The "Dean's Road Show" is up and running again this year. We have been to Atlanta, Augusta, Brunswick, Gainesville, Jacksonville, Macon, Marietta, Rome and Washington D.C. and we are scheduled to visit Albany, Columbus, Savannah and Statesboro this spring. Hundreds of alumni came to campus for our annual Homecoming BBQ before the Kentucky game, and YLAC, along with the State Bar of Georgia's Young Lawyers Division, had a great tailgate party before the Auburn game.

During the State Bar of Georgia's Mid-Year Meeting in Atlanta, there will be an alumni reception on the evening of Thursday, January 10, 2002, and the LSA Breakfast Meeting will be on January 11. We will be hosting the Intrastate Moot Court Competition in March, Georgetown University Law Professor Carrie Menkel-Meadow will be our Sibley Lecturer on Monday, April 1, the Red Clay Conference will be April 3-6 in Dean Rusk Hall, and graduation will be Saturday, May

18.

In special recognition of the LSA's 50th anniversary, we are asking alumni to join the Joseph Henry Lumpkin Society by contributing \$1,000 or more to any law school fund. By becoming a member of the JHLS this fiscal year, you will be invited to an exclusive black tie celebration gala to be held June 1 at the Governor's Mansion in Atlanta. Georgia Governor Roy Barnes, UGA President Michael Adams, LSA President Dana Miles and I will be in attendance. This will be an event you will not want to miss.

The alumni association will start compiling an updated alumni directory with Harris Publishing Company this coming spring. The new directory is scheduled to be released in early 2003. It will be a complete reference of more than 7,400 UGA law school graduates.

We have many things to celebrate and a bright future ahead of us. Through your continued support, we can further increase the law school's prominence and stature. On behalf of the faculty, students and staff, we look forward to facing the challenges ahead with you, our alumni and friends.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley
Dean and Professor

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