A letter to alumni from the Board of Visitors

The world has changed a great deal since many of us graduated from the law school several decades ago. One of those changes, of course, is that the world is getting smaller and smaller as international legal issues increasingly become a part of law practice in the United States and as more and more American lawyers practice abroad.

To prepare future Georgia Law graduates for this new and challenging reality, the law school is broadening the international law opportunities it offers its students. Since its establishment in 2001, the International Externship Program has grown fivefold. This past summer, eleven students worked for government or business entities in the countries of Belgium, Brazil, China, Colombia, Germany, Ghana, Guyana and India. Only about 20 other law schools in our nation maintain comparable externships and, of these, only five are public institutions.

The new Georgia Law at Oxford Program will commence this coming spring. UGA is partnering with The Ohio State University in this ABA-accredited semester study abroad initiative that will support 20 second- and third-year students. It is one of the few semester-long study abroad arrangements offered by an American law school.

In late October, the Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law convened a conference that focused on the recently-published book The Limits of International Law by Jack L. Goldsmith and Eric A. Posner. These two prominent authorities and nine other top scholars examined the relevance of international law during the two-day conference.

China has recently emerged as a real power in the world economy, and the law school is working to enhance opportunities for its students to learn about the law in this area of the globe. Through the efforts of C. Donald “Don” Johnson (J.D.’73), the director of the Dean Rusk Center, the school is creating a study abroad arrangement with two of the top universities in China.

In addition to these newer activities, Georgia Law continues its support of several long-standing foreign study/work offerings. With help from scholarships provided by the school’s Dean and Virginia Rusk Fund, Georgia Law students attend the Brussels Seminar on the Law and Institutions of the European Union, a three-week intensive course on EU law. The school has participated in this Belgium-based program for more than three decades.

The school also belongs to the London Law Consortium, a group of seven U.S. law schools supporting an ABA-approved semester of study in England for second- and third-year students.

And, the International Summer Clerkship Program, established by the Office of Legal Career Services in the early 1980s, continues to offer clerkship opportunities to first-year students.

With all these endeavors under way, it should come as no surprise that the University of Georgia, as a whole, currently ranks second in the nation in the number of students participating in short-term study abroad programs.

All of us are justified in taking great pride in our law school’s outstanding accomplishments in the realm of international law.

We’ve clearly come a long way since the days, not so long ago, when the ultimate career choice for almost all of us seemed to essentially come down to some form of traditional law practice somewhere in Georgia. This will remain the preferred career path for most of our fellow alumni and, as a result, all Georgians will continue to benefit greatly from the work of Georgia Law graduates in virtually every area of private and public life in the state.

Many of our current and future students, however, also want other options. These international law initiatives are an important part of our law school’s continuing efforts to broaden the career horizons for those students and to enhance the opportunities awaiting them, not just in Georgia but throughout the world.

Sincerely,

J.D. Smith (J.D.’71)
2005-06 Board of Visitors Chair
A letter to alumni from the Law School Association Council

By writing this letter jointly, Greg C. Sowell, the LSAC development committee chair, and I hope to underline the commitment that the Law School Association Council has to the quality of legal education offered at the University of Georgia School of Law.

One of the primary missions of the LSAC is to foster commitment among alumni to support our law school by making annual fund donations.

Our service on the LSAC brings us in close contact with the dean of the law school, Rebecca H. White, and her vision for the school's future. Dean White has set an ambitious course to make a great law school even better.

This spring, Dean White will be traveling to a number of cities to share her vision with area alumni. If you are interested in having Dean White visit your area, please contact Jill Coveny Birch at (706) 542-5190 or at jcbirch@uga.edu.

Greg and I want to help alumni understand that without financial support from alumni, the chances of Dean White achieving the goals set for our law school are dramatically diminished.

As you read in the recent Annual Report from Georgia Law, the quality of education at the law school, the type of faculty we can attract and retain, and the quality of our student body are all closely tied to the extent we financially support the school.

As president and development committee chair, we say it is time for Georgia Law graduates to demonstrate our pride in the law school and our gratitude for the rewards of our legal education.

Annual gifts raised each year ensure the quality of the legal education provided at Georgia Law. Annual gifts help us to stay competitive with our peer and aspirational schools. And, annual gifts help to address the day-to-day needs.

Whether you are a regular donor, a sometime donor or a never donor to the school, please think about the influence Georgia Law plays in your professional life. Then think about the effect your financial support will have on the law school and its current students.

We ask you to join us and become a regular donor to the law school's annual fund.

Sincerely,

Robert O. Freeman (J.D.'72)
2005-06 LSAC President

Gregory C. Sowell (J.D.'83)
2005-06 LSAC Development Committee Chair

Every gift and every donor counts
In June, the Law School Association presented its highest honor, the Distinguished Service Scroll Award, to attorney John D. Comer (LL.B.’49) and Georgia Court of Appeals Judge J.D. Smith (J.D.’71).

Given annually, the award goes to worthy individuals whose selfless dedication to the legal profession and the School of Law merits special recognition. The awards are presented during the LSA’s annual breakfast held in conjunction with the State Bar of Georgia’s Annual Meeting.

Fellow law partner and Georgia Law alumnus Tilman E. Self III (J.D.’97) presented Comer with his award. Self described Comer as a well-rounded individual dedicated to his family, community and profession. He said the award was “tailor-made for somebody like John Comer” who has “demonstrated on a daily basis how a person should live [his] life and conduct [himself] as a lawyer.”

Upon receiving the award, Comer said he was “deeply honored” and would change only one thing in respect to his ties to the legal profession – being more active in the law school’s alumni association.

Comer was born in Macon, but attended Middlesex preparatory school in Concord, Mass. Upon his graduation in 1941, Comer spent the next 42 months serving in the U.S. Army as a first lieutenant in Field Artillery (Pacific Theatre). After the war, he earned his bachelor’s degree at Harvard College and his law degree cum laude at UGA, where he graduated first in his class in 1949. While at the university, he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi and Gridiron, and served as editor-in-chief of the student editorial board (which would later publish the Georgia Law Review).

After law school, Comer returned to Macon to practice as an associate with the firm Turpin & Lane. He later associated with Harris, Harris, Russell & Weaver and became a partner at Harris, Russell, Weaver & Watkins. Comer formed the law firm Sell & Comer in 1956 with fellow Georgia Law alumnus Edward S. Sell Jr. (J.D.’39) and, in 1980, partnered with Melton, McKenna, House & Green to form Sell & Melton. He became of counsel at Sell & Melton in 2002, a position he still holds today.

Comer has held multiple leadership positions within the legal profession and has served as president of the Macon Bar Association, the Macon Legal Aid Society and the Georgia Academy of Hospital Attorneys. In addition, he has been a recipient of the Macon Bar Association’s Lawyer of the Year Award and has earned a listing in The Best Lawyers in America.

Comer and his wife, Mary, have a son and daughter as well as two grandchildren.

Carter Chair Emeritus R. Perry Sentell Jr. (LL.B.’58) presented Smith with his award. Sentell called Smith a “paragon of character and integrity.” Sentell said, as evidenced by their nominations, Smith’s colleagues also hold him in high esteem, regarding him as “the kindest, most thoughtful [and] most helpful judge on the bench.”

After receiving the Distinguished Service Scroll Award, Smith acknowledged Sentell as one of the most inspirational people in his life, stating that “having this award presented to me by Professor Sentell is as much of an honor as the award itself.” He also reminded alumni of the great value of their associations with the law school and the friendships they formed there.

Born in Hall County, Smith was educated in the county’s school system at both the primary and secondary levels. He graduated with honors from the University of Florida in 1968, earning his Bachelor of Arts in Economics. Then, he obtained his Juris Doctor from UGA in 1972. While at Georgia, Smith served as associate editor of the Georgia Law Review and was named to the Dean’s List.

Following law school, he served as a law assistant to Justice William B. Gunter of the Supreme Court of Georgia before beginning private law practice. While practicing law, Smith earned a Master of Laws in Taxation from Emory University. While serving...
as an appellate judge, he earned a Master of Laws in Judicial Process from the University of Virginia.

Gov. Zell Miller appointed Smith to the Georgia Court of Appeals in 1993. Smith currently serves as a presiding judge and is the court’s immediate past chief judge. Previously, he was a Superior Court judge for over eight years and served as chief judge of the Northeastern Judicial Circuit.

Smith is a member and past president of the Gainesville-Northeastern Circuit Bar Association and a member of the Atlanta Bar Association, the State Bar of Georgia and the American Bar Association. He currently serves as president of Georgia Law’s Joseph Henry Lumpkin American Inn of Court and is chair of the law school’s Board of Visitors.

He and his wife Flo have two adult children, Brian and Joanna. Brian is a 2004 graduate of Georgia Law, and Joanna is a second-year law student at UGA.

**State Bar of Georgia Annual Meeting Alumni Events**

At the State Bar of Georgia Annual Meeting alumni reception, held at Ingleby, Falligant, Horns, Courington & Chisholm, are 2004 classmates (l. to r.) Stas Baker, Sally Gordon Haskell, Benjamin Perkins, Susannah Rogers Pedigo and Jason Pedigo.

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Class of 1980 alumni Eleanor Banister (also LSA president-elect), Mark Worsham and Mary Katharyn Higginbotham found time to reconnect.

Attending the State Bar of Georgia Annual Meeting breakfast were: (standing, l. to r.) LSA President Robert Freeman (J.D. ’72), Dean Emeritus Ralph Beaird, George Mundy (J.D. ’72), Paul Kilpatrick (LL.B. ’55), Tommy Burnside (LL.B. ’62), Alex Crumley (J.D. ’66), (sitting, l. to r.) John Pridgen (J.D. ’75), Bobby Chasteen (J.D. ’89) and Marion Pope (LL.B. ’53).
Gay/Lesbian Legal Network
Atlanta Alumni Reception

Enjoying the event are: (l. to r.) Knox Withers, Joseph Colette, Jimmy Miller and Leah Weinberg.

Former leaders of GLLN pose for a picture with the group’s current president during the reception – (l. to r.) Melanie Wilson (J.D. ’90), Colin Wright (J.D. ’04), second-year student Preston Meche and Robert Vann (J.D. ’05).

Swearing In Ceremony

Daniel Courty (J.D. ’66) (left), Linda Hunter (J.D. ’80) and Greg Adams (J.D. ’83) listen to Dean Rebecca White addressing the crowd at the 2nd Annual Swearing In Ceremony prior to administering the oath to those who successfully passed the July Georgia Bar Exam.

Graduates of the Class of 2005 raise their right hands to take the pledge. Photographed are: (l. to r.) Knox Withers, Joseph Colette, Jimmy Miller and Leah Weinberg.

Joseph Henry Lumpkin Society
Champagne Reception

William Solms (J.D. ’47) (left) and his grandchildren Goodrich Wright and Katharine Solms smile for the camera together with Callaway Professor Emeritus Verner Chaffin (LL.B. ’42) (back, center) and his wife Ethel (front, left).

Attending a reception for JHLS donors ($1,000 or greater) are Rick Shackleford (J.D. ’78) (left) and his wife Honey and George T. Smith (LL.B. ’48) and his wife June.

80th Birthday Party for Dean Emeritus J. Ralph Beaird

In October, Georgia Law held a birthday celebration for Dean Emeritus Ralph Beaird. Above, the guest of honor points to a Jack Davis caricature of himself presented to him at the party.

Attending a reception for JHLS donors ($1,000 or greater) are Rick Shackleford (J.D. ’78) (left) and his wife Honey and George T. Smith (LL.B. ’48) and his wife June.

LL.M. Reunion in Athens

LL.M. alumni returned to Athens in the spring for their annual reunion. Those attending the graduation reception were: (l. to r.) Zeni Hatilu, Thomas Halu (LL.M. ’97), Patrick Specht (LL.M. ’97), LL.M. Alumni President Christoph Sieferth (LL.M. ’86), Frederic Eggenschwiler (LL.M. ’04), Marc Cazembie (LL.M. ’00) and Christian Winterhausen (LL.M. ’86).
This past fall semester at Georgia Law was a historic one in the area of fund raising. We welcomed the single largest gift to the law school in its history as a part of the Archway to Excellence Campaign.

I am pleased to report the good news about this and other generous gifts to the law school:

• Chester C. Davenport (LL.B.’66) has established the Chester C. Davenport Scholarship Fund at Georgia Law with a pledge of $1.5 million, which is the single largest lifetime commitment to the school. The scholarship fund will provide needed assistance to deserving students as well as help the law school with meeting its diversity goals.
• James “Jim” E. Butler (J.D.’77) made a $1 million pledge to support multiple scholarships and, this past fall, the law school enrolled the first group of James E. Butler Scholars.
• The CF Foundation, Inc., agreed to launch a new initiative at the law school – the Cousins Public Interest Fellowship Program – with a major gift that will allow Georgia Law to dramatically enhance its public interest offerings. In 2006, Georgia Law will recruit the first Cousins Public Interest Fellow.
• Laura M. and Richard H. Jack, both 1983 Georgia Law graduates, decided to include the law school in their estate plans. Their gift will provide a lasting legacy by establishing a fund for a faculty chair in trial law.
• An estate gift from Inslee M. (LL.B.’35) and Betti Johnson created a scholarship fund to benefit the law school.
• The Synovus Foundation committed a major gift to establish a scholarship fund at the law school that will support an outstanding Georgia resident.
• Frank M. Swift (LL.B.’35) has arranged to ultimately support the law school through charitable gift annuities.
• Julie and A. Felton Jenkins Jr. (LL.B.’65) have included a provision in their estate plans that will support the law school. We are especially grateful to Felton for the active role he has taken as a member of the law school’s capital campaign committee.

A number of other notable contributions include: a gift from Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi for scholarship support over a period of 10 years, a gift from Michael J. Bowers (J.D.’74) to spearhead an effort to establish a professorship in memory of Arthur K. Bolton (LL.B.’43) and a six-year commitment from James “Jim” R. Borders (J.D.’88) to benefit law students who hold an undergraduate degree from the Georgia Institute of Technology.

We are thrilled that we have crossed the $10 million mark in our fund-raising campaign, and we look forward to announcing more new gifts this spring.

Also, this fall, Georgia Law welcomed three new faces to the Office of Development. Kitty C. Abell serves as major gifts officer, having most recently served as the director of development for the Schenck School in Atlanta. Margaret A. “Meg” Poitevint joins us as our gift and stewardship officer. She formerly worked in the university’s central development office. And, we welcomed Gloria Strait as our new administrative assistant.

The Office of Development invites the opportunity to talk with members of the Georgia Law family about the way your philanthropy can impact this institution. Every gift and every donor counts, and we hope you will be counted.

- Anne S. Moser

2004 Order of the Coif Inductees

Membership in the Order of the Coif, the legal profession’s equivalent of Phi Beta Kappa, is reserved for those who graduate in the top 10 percent of their class and is the highest academic honor in legal education. The Georgia Law Class of 2004 inductees are:

Sara K. Alexander
Scott Amy
James G. Anderson
Meredith A. Bunn
Jason J. Carter
Caroline G. Castle
Christopher A. Cosper
Amanda Eaton Ferrell
Christopher C. Frost
Michael R. Grubbs Jr.
Alan J. Hamilton
Stephanie J. Harris
Daniel P. Hart
Anbar F. Khal
Stephanie Kirven Oginsky
Leslie C. Lane
Michelle M. Moore
Charles A. Pannell III
Noah P. Peeters
James H. Richards
Heidi Rine Royal
Sarah T. Sloan
David M. Waldroup
Homecoming and Reunion Weekend 2005

A record-breaking crowd of over 1,000 alumni and friends were on hand at the 15th Annual Homecoming BBQ. Attendees enjoyed good food, music and conversation before heading down to Sanford Stadium to watch the Bulldogs beat the Arkansas Razorbacks 23-20. Photos of Homecoming and reunion activities follow.
The young and the old always enjoy the music played by alumni band “Strung Jury - Legends in Their Spare Time,” composed of Tim Herring (J.D. ’85), Dennis Helmreich (J.D. ’86) and Greg Gronholm (J.D. ’85). Above, the young dance to a tune.

In honor of Strung Jury’s 15th appearance at the annual BBQ, group leader Tim Herring (J.D. ’85) presents Executive Director of Development and Alumni Programs Jill Convery Birch with a band sign and framed group photo.

After checking in, Claire Crumbley, Alex Crumbley (J.D. ’66) (center) and Felton Jenkins (LL.B. ’65) smile for a photo.

Two future Law Dawgs – Ella with mother Ansley Bell Thrashfield (J.D. ’01) (left) and Lawton IV with mother Jennifer Auer Jordan (J.D. ’01).