

# Prepare. Connect. Lead.

These words serve as a constant reminder of what our students hope to achieve and the important role that we as educators, alumni, alumnae and friends of the University of Georgia School of Law play in their success.

These words – prepare, connect, lead – define our mission. We **prepare** our students for success after law school by ensuring they receive a first-rate legal education. We **connect** our students to judicial clerkships, jobs, world-class scholars and invaluable experiences that will shape their future. We encourage our students to think about how they can be not only lawyers but also **leaders** in their professions and communities.

These words represent the commitment we make to each and every entering student, and we are living up to that promise.

The School of Law continues to receive national recognition for the quality of education our students receive and how that translates into success after graduation. The annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings placed our law school among the top 25 in the nation with regard to the percentage of graduates employed in high-quality jobs 10 months after graduation. Earlier this year, *The New York Times* highlighted a report listing the School of Law among the top five with regard to the best salary-to-debt ratios after graduation.

This level of success would simply not be possible without our team of dedicated and nationally recognized faculty who are in our classrooms, guiding our clinics and serving as thought leaders. I invite you to learn more about what some of our faculty have recently accomplished on pages 24-28.

Through our successful mentorship program launched in August 2016, we connect every entering student with a faculty member, a career development adviser, an upper-level law student and a graduate or legal professional. As a result, we are fostering relationships that extend far beyond the classroom and can translate into employment or experiential learning opportunities. This program and its positive effects on the student body are shared on page 7.

Our students are interacting daily with legal leaders including our Sanders Political Leadership Scholar – former U.S. Sen. Saxby Chambliss, our Sibley Professor in Corporate and Business Law – former U.S. Deputy Attorney General Larry D. Thompson, and our Edenfield Jurists in Residence – Lisa Godbey Wood (J.D.'90), judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia, and David B. Sentelle, senior judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia.

New initiatives such as our Distinguished Law Fellows program, the inaugural recipients of which are featured on the cover of this magazine, are also providing meaningful opportunities for students to connect with distinguished jurists and legal advocates willing to assist with their professional development. You can learn more about this expanding program on page 12. Alumni/ae leaders play an important role in this mission.

The 2017 Distinguished Service Scroll Awards were presented during Alumni/Alumnae Weekend to Ertharin Cousin (J.D.'82), the then-executive director of the United Nations World Food Programme; William J. “Bill” Stembler (J.D.'71), the chairman and CEO of the Georgia Theatre Company-II; and Audrey Boone Tillman (J.D.'89), the executive vice president and general counsel of Aflac (see pages 33-34). This year, alumnae Monica Allison-Ceruti (J.D.'82), chief counsel at NASA Stennis Space Center; state Rep. Stacey Godfrey Evans (J.D.'03) and Georgia Court of Appeals Judge Carla Wong McMillian (J.D.'98) were among a number of female legal leaders who came to campus as part of our Georgia Women in Law Lead initiative. You can learn more on page 19.

Our future ability to provide opportunities like these will depend on your continued engagement and support. Specifically, we ask that you consider investing financially in the university's capital campaign – Commit to Georgia. Our share of this campaign, which entered the public phase last fall, will allow us to continue to prepare our students for the workplace, recruit (and retain) thought leaders to our faculty, expand experiential learning programs that connect students to real-world clients and attorneys, and graduate a new generation of leaders.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of the *Advocate* and that what you read makes you even more proud to be an alumnus, alumna or friend of the University of Georgia School of Law.



Peter B. “Bo” Rutledge  
Dean and Herman E.  
Talmadge Chair of Law

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter B. Rutledge".