



School of Law
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



2016 DEAN'S REPORT



from Peter B. "Bo" Rutledge,
Dean & Herman E. Talmadge Chair of Law

I'd like to begin this report with a message about impact – specifically, the impact of your commitment to the new mentorship program launched earlier this fall. As a result, University of Georgia School of Law graduates from around the country have been meeting or speaking with members of the first-year class yielding amazing results. In just one week alone, five different mentors and mentees have shared stories of those interactions. In some cases, they resulted in invaluable

advice about what courses to take. In others, they expanded a student's professional network. Indeed, a few already have led to jobs. In all cases, those interactions and the support that stands behind them bespeak something unique about your school – it is a school of authentic support.

That authentic support takes many forms. Beyond mentorships, a critical form of authentic support is student financial aid – the single greatest need for the law school right now – as approximately 70 percent of this fall's entering class received some form of support. That financial aid can come in the form of an endowed scholarship, through which students are connected with benefactors who have agreed to make not just a financial but also an emotional investment in these students' futures. It can come in the form of a contribution to the Law School Fund, a record percentage of which goes to support financial aid. It can come through your participation in events hosted by the school's Career Development Office, here in Athens or at our new Atlanta facility. Or it can come through your willingness to speak to admitted students who are deciding where to study law.

While these and other forms of authentic support help distinguish your law school from many others, they are not our school's only defining features. As the rest of this report explains, we continue to focus on our other core priorities – providing a strong foundation of ideas and thought leadership, offering first-rate legal training, instilling in our students an ethic of service to state and society, and doing so at a value that allows our students to pursue whatever career paths they might choose.

A STRONG FOUNDATION OF IDEAS AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

At your law school, students are learning from national thought leaders, authors and subject matter experts who are shaping both law and public policy. In addition, notable graduates and scholars visit campus annually through conferences and lectures, enhancing opportunities to explore timely and important issues.

Above: Following the fall Board of Visitors meeting, members enjoyed a gathering on the Dean's Patio with several scholarship recipients – many of whom are recipients of funds in which our BOV members are personally invested. Gathered at the reception were: (l. to r.) Ken Klein (J.D.'76), Pin Point Scholar Timia Skelton, Alston Distinguished Law Fellow Lindsey Bunting and Hosch Professor Emeritus Tom Eaton.

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At the November dedication of the James E. Butler Courtroom, alumnus Jim Butler (J.D.'77) posed with second-year law student Grace Liu (left), who is the recipient of the 2016 James E. Butler Scholarship.

- Your law school has launched a yearlong initiative, **Georgia Women in Law Lead**, which is designed to highlight women's leadership in law, business and public service. A few of the pathbreakers include: U.S. District Court Chief Judge **Lisa Godbey Wood (J.D.'90)**, The Krystal Company and On the Border Chief Legal Officer **Sloane Perras (J.D.'02)**, State Representative **Stacey Godfrey Evans (J.D.'03)**, Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme **Ertharin Cousin (J.D.'82)** and Delaware Court of Chancery Vice Chancellor **Tamika R. Montgomery-Reeves (J.D.'06)**.
- "Humanity's Common Heritage" was the title of a conference sponsored by the **Dean Rusk International Law Center** that focused on the International Committee of the Red Cross' 2016 Commentary on the First Geneva Convention. **Jean-Marie Henckaerts (LL.M.'90)**, legal adviser to the International Committee of the Red Cross delivered the keynote address and was one of several featured legal and government experts from around the world.

- Constitutional and media law expert **Sonja R. West** has been named to the **Otis Brumby Distinguished Professorship in First Amendment Law**, effective Jan. 1. West was recently honored with the National Communication Association's 2016 Haiman Award for Distinguished Scholarship in Freedom of Expression.
- On Jan. 1, international law expert **Harlan G. Cohen** will also become the **Gabriel M. Wilner/UGA Foundation Professor in International Law**, a position supported by alumnus **Kenneth "Ken" Klein (J.D.'76)** in memory of the late Gabriel Wilner, former associate dean and holder of the Kirbo Chair of Law.

WORLD-CLASS PRACTICE PREPARATION

Your law school remains widely recognized as one of the top public law schools in the United States. Today's students are learning both within and outside of the classroom. New academic programs and experiential opportunities allow them to receive the education and training they need to be successful while gaining practical knowledge and skills that will help them in their careers.

- The **Atlanta Semester in Practice**, in its first full academic year, continues to gain popularity with students who are now able to leverage the law school's proximity to job placements and the vibrant alumni/alumnae network in our state's capital. The program offers corporate, nonprofit, judicial and government placements where students gain full-time practical experience while continuing their coursework. Thanks to the support of a generous alumna, we will offer stipends to students participating in this program this coming spring.
- Clinical programs continue to provide unparalleled experience while allowing students to make a real-world impact. The **Wilbanks Child Endangerment and Sexual Exploitation Clinic**, made possible by **Marlan B. Wilbanks (J.D.'86)** and led by **Emma M. Hetherington (J.D.'11)**, has investigated more than 20 cases since opening its doors in January 2016. The work of six students in our **Appellate Litigation Clinic** over a three-

"Georgia Law's tradition of preparing women to practice law is almost as old as the 19th Amendment. Georgia WILL (Women in Law Lead) celebrates that legacy. With this initiative, we hope to underscore the many achievements of women in our Georgia Law community, and especially to nurture women who will lead in the future."

—Associate Dean for International Programs and Strategic Initiatives & Woodruff Chair in International Law Diane Marie Amann



year period culminated this spring in the granting of a clemency petition for a nonviolent offender. Students in the Appellate Litigation Clinic have also recently secured significant legal victories in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit and presented oral argument in the 4th and D.C. Circuit Courts.

- Another way your law school is expanding educational options for students is through **distance learning**. Nearly 90 students participated this summer in some form of distance learning, which is still in its early stages but quickly expanding. This initiative allows students to maintain their academic schedule while taking advantage of externship, professional development and other meaningful opportunities in Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and other places in our state and nation as well as overseas.

AN UNWAVERING FOCUS ON SERVICE

Your law school maintains a strong tradition of service to our state, nation and world. Faculty and graduates hold a wide range of appointed and elected positions, are heads of nonprofit agencies and are leaders in their communities. We encourage all students to follow in these footsteps through internships, clerkships and interaction with public servants.

- As a result of the **B. Avant Edenfield Jurist in Residence** program made possible by a gift from **Allen W. Yee (J.D.'03)**, two distinguished jurists are teaching during the 2016–17 academic year including Chief Judge Lisa Godbey Wood, who taught a course on sentencing, and **David B. Sentelle**, former chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, whose course was titled *Persuading the Judge and Jury*.
- During the fall, students had the opportunity to learn from U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Clarence Thomas** who taught on the topic of *stare decisis*. Other jurists who will be in the classroom this academic year include Judge **R. David Proctor** of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, who is teaching Multidistrict Litigation, and Vice Chancellor Tamika Montgomery-Reeves, who will teach *Advanced Corporations*.
- To allow students with an interest in public service to gain professional experience, your law school offered an **unprecedented number of public interest fellowships** to rising second- and third-year students last summer. Over 20 students secured placements in domestic and international nonprofit agencies, a law school clinic, and prosecutor's and public defender's offices as well as in the U.S. Department of Justice. These fellowships



“Last month, I had the privilege of serving as the first Edenfield Jurist in Residence. The experience exceeded my high hopes. The interplay between judges in the heart of their careers and bright students on the brink of theirs is uniquely beneficial to both groups.”

—U.S. District Court Chief Judge Lisa Godbey Wood (J.D.'90),
Georgia Law's inaugural Edenfield Jurist in Residence

were made possible by a number of generous donors including three new opportunities with the **Justice John Paul Stevens Public Interest Foundation**, the Wilbanks CEASE Clinic and the **Melburne D. and Jacqueline K. McLendon Endowment**.

- Graduates of the law school have recently been selected to serve in two of the highest legal positions in the state. **Christopher M. “Chris” Carr (J.D.'99)** was sworn in by Gov. Nathan Deal as the state's attorney general on Nov. 1. **Harold D. Melton (J.D.'91)** will serve as presiding justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia beginning Jan. 6, 2017.
- Our graduates are also leading the state's top legal associations. **Patrick T. O'Connor (J.D.'81)** was installed as president of the State Bar of Georgia in June. He is joined by **Kenneth B. “Ken” Hodges III (J.D.'91)** as treasurer and **Jennifer Campbell Mock (J.D.'07)** as the Young Lawyers Division president. Also this summer, **W. Pope Langdale III (J.D.'92)** was unanimously elected president of the Georgia Trial Lawyers Association.

QUALITY LEGAL EDUCATION AT A GOOD VALUE

Your law school is committed to providing high-quality legal education in a way that affords students the opportunity to seek employment that leverages their education in any way they find meaningful. This goal could not be achieved without the generous support received for endowments and gifts to the Law School Fund.

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“It is crucial to have someone to go to with any and all concerns or questions I have. Law school is one rigorous journey, but it helps phenomenally to have a group of mentors assigned specifically to me. Whether it's an older fellow student, a recent alum who has had experience practicing law, or a member of the law school faculty each of these mentors has great advice to give.”

—First-year law student Nils Holman Okeson, mentor program participant

- **Sixty-six new quarter scholarships** were made possible by the nearly 1,600 gifts made to the 2015-16 Law School Fund. Many of these gifts were in response to the challenge issued by a group of anonymous donors to reach an historic \$2 million in gifts, an amount we not only met, but exceeded. Quite often, scholarships are the difference between a student being able to attend law school or being forced to give up his/her dream.
- This investment in our students provides a great return. **Eighty-three percent of the graduates of the Class of 2015 are employed** in full-time, long-term jobs that either require or rely heavily upon a law degree. And, for the third consecutive year, your law school boasted the **highest bar passage rate** among state law schools. Nearly 88 percent of our first-time takers who sat for the bar in July 2016 passed the exam.
- A \$2 million founding gift made in early 2016 by **The John N. Goddard Foundation** created the **Philip H. Alston, Jr. Distinguished Law Fellowships**. Modeled after the university's prestigious Foundation Fellows Program, the first three recipients of the full-tuition-plus scholarships were named in August, and they will benefit from externships, guided research and targeted networking opportunities as part of the Distinguished Law Fellows experience. Recipients were selected for their extraordinary academic achievement and exceptional professional promise.
- When UGA President and 1980 Georgia Law graduate **Jere W. Morehead** recently announced the public phase of the university's comprehensive capital campaign, he asked our community to “**Commit to Georgia.**” In support of that effort, I ask you to consider your commitment to your law school, which may come in the form of enhancing the number of scholarships or increasing experiential opportunities for our students. Specific law school goals for the campaign include the expansion of the Distinguished Law Fellows program,

the addition of new endowed scholarships and meeting the needs of our existing clinics and externships. We also hope to create a new clinic focused on providing legal services for our nation's veterans.

WHAT IS YOUR COMMITMENT?

This report represents only a fraction of all that is going on at your law school. And our success would not be possible without the commitment of our alumni and alumnae leaders – **Kathelen V. Amos (J.D.'82)**, chair of the Board of Visitors, **Wade W. Herring II (J.D.'83)**, president of the Law School Association, and **Catherine H. Curlet (J. D.'11)**, president of the Young Alumni/Alumnae Committee. These individuals, along with the vibrant committees they represent, have made a commitment to your law school's achievements.

I encourage you to consider your own commitment. Whether through our mentoring program, visits to a workplace or on-campus programming, our students always appreciate the chance to interact with and receive advice from alums and others who have leveraged their law degree to build a successful career. If you would be interested in such an opportunity, please contact our Office of Law School Advancement.

Thank you for your support, your commitment of time and your willingness to invest in our students and the future of your law school. Together, we will continue to build upon the great tradition that is the University of Georgia School of Law.

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