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Dean's Message

As I come to the close of my first semester as the Dean of the University of Baltimore School of Law, I take great pleasure in sharing some reflections with you. This has been a challenging period in our region, the country and the world. The events of September 11, and the national and international responses have challenged our notions of law, liberty, security, and the rule of reason. We face a new era in which our commitment to the fundamental principles of our country are being tested as they were when the country was founded, before, during and after the Civil War, during the anti-communism activities of the 1950's and the civil rights movement of the 1960's. As a country we have not always passed those test with flying colors. My prayer and hope is that support the fundamental values of America, as we have appropriately supported the victims and heroes of the September 11 attacks.

I wish to congratulate the editors of the University of Baltimore Law Forum for maintaining the tradition of this periodical as an important vehicle for the discussion of the law. I have spent most of the past six months learning about the Law School and meeting our alumni, friends, and supporters. I have frequently been asked to describe my experiences here. My constant response has been that I could not have scripted a better place in terms of its mission, goals, faculty collegiality, student commitment, and alumni accomplishments, than I have found at University of Baltimore School of Law. This is not to say that we do not have our challenges, because we do. But I believe that we have the will and the spirit to meet and overcome whatever challenges may stand in the way of UB Law School being valued and acknowledged within the State of Maryland and receiving national recognition as one of the great law schools in this region.

Many law schools around the country are attempting to create the type of legal education that has been offered at UB Law School from its inception. In 1992, the ABA Task Force on Law Schools and the Profession: Narrowing the Gap issued a report entitled "Legal Education and professional Development – An Educational Continuum." That report is commonly known as the McCrate Report. Since the issuance of the McCrate report, law schools have been attempting to add more skills training and practical experience to their curriculum. University of Baltimore School of Law has always had skills training and practical experience as an integral part of its curriculum. UB Law School has also been known for producing gradates who are ahead of the learning curve in the transition from student to attorney. And we are continuing to promote and provide a quality legal education that has a skills orientation as well as strong theoretical and international law programs.

Already this year our Community Development Clinic has made significant contributions to advance the development of Baltimore communities, not-for profit community organizations, and small businesses. CDC is one of the few transactional clinics in the country and provides students with opportunities to participate in real estate another business transactions as part of their legal education. Our Tax Clinic has garnered dismissal of tax liabilities and refunds for its clients in Tax Court. Funded by a grant from the Internal Revenue Service, the tax Clinic is having an economic impact on people's lives while teaching students with a strong interest in tax law the enforcement side of a tax law practice. Additionally, the Civil Clinic won a Social Security overpayment case in federal court, and received an award of counsel fees in a settlement with the government on this claim. Moreover, the Center for Families Children and the Courts has issued a major report on Performance Standards and Measures for Maryland's Family Divisions and the Center For litigation Skills held a workshop in conjunction with the American College of trial lawyers on "Ethics in Discovery." All of these activities demonstrate how the University of Baltimore continues to provide cutting-edge legal education as had been its tradition.

Dean's Forum

Additionally, Professor Michael Higginbotham has authored a book entitled "Race Laws" published by Carolina Press. This book which is both a case book and an informational resource has been critically acclaimed. Professor Higginbotham has been participating in book-signings up and down the East Coast. The law school was proud to sponsor one of those book-signing at which Professor gave a stirring lecture to a standing room only crowd in the Moot Court Room. The book-signing was attended by students, alumni, the Chief Judge of the Maryland Court of Appeals and judges representing every state and feral court in Maryland.

The international program is similarly making great strides. I have the privilege of visiting our sister school, Shandong University Law School, in Jinan, China in the fall. One of the possible collaborations that may be coming as a result of the visit is the creation of a summer institute for Chinese law students at UB Law School. This program would allow the Chinese students and opportunity to study American law in the United States, and would allow our students who are unable to travel abroad to have an experience with international students. While there are a few logistics to work out, I am confident that we will have this program operational by Summer 2003. This fall we also added T.C. Beirne School of Law at Queensland University, Brisbane, Australia, to our family of sister schools. This relationship includes faculty and student exchange possibilities, and at least one University of Baltimore law student has indicated a desire to attend Beirne Law School for a semester.

All of these accomplishments create a greater need for resources in the law school. President Turner and I are working with the Board of Regents to have University of Baltimore receive an appropriate level of state support for the excellent program offered by the Law School. Similarly, William Lynerd, Vice-President for Advancement and I are contacting the law school's alumni and friends to increase the level of private support. Increasing support from all of our funding sources is essential to our maintaining the quality and comprehensive legal education at the University of Baltimore School of law.

I am looking forward with excitement and anticipation to the remainder of this academic year and the years to follow. I continue to receive enthusiastic welcomes and responses from the UB community – faculty, staff, alumni/ae, central administration, and students, and as a result continue to believe that UB Law School is a dynamic and influential institution. I will be working to complete the initiatives started by my predecessors as well as in the past six months to manifest the Law School's great potential to become valued and acknowledged as the great legal educational institution that it is.

Sincerely,

Gilbert A. Holmes
Dean and Professor of law