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Forum Faces: Professor Jane Murphy

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Professor Jane Murphy is undoubtedly the backbone of the University of Baltimore Family Law program. She started her legal career in New York where her interest in public policy guided her to the field of law. Professor Murphy's experiences include working at small firms, legal aid programs, and the federal government. Early in her legal career she had the opportunity to litigate and represent the Department of Energy in federal appellate cases. Later she decided to round out her legal experiences and work closer with clients in need of representation. Throughout her career she has sought to improve standards in the practice of law and to perform work of value.

While living in Washington, D.C., she taught at Georgetown University. During this time her life changed greatly. While managing a legal career, she married her college sweetheart, Dr. Chris Kearney. As Professor Murphy's husband worked in Baltimore, they moved to ease the commute and Professor Murphy applied for a faculty position at the University of Baltimore School of Law, where she has been ever since.

Professor Murphy's accomplishments at the School of Law include the 1988 expansion of the Law School's clinical program, which she considers the job of her dreams. Her position at the School of Law allows her to be with her children, to be part of the community, to perform socially valuable pro bono work, to write, and to practice law. Most importantly, her position allows Professor Murphy to mentor many law students. While her job is no less demanding than private practice, she admits that it provides more flexibility.

Flexibility is very important to Professor Murphy, who is very devoted to her husband and children. She proudly speaks of her children, Brendan (20), Margaret (17), Catherine (12) and Grace (9), and their many accomplishments. Education is one of Professor Murphy's priorities and her children are successful students. As Professor Murphy stated, "they make us look good."

Her mentorship and academic standards extend to Professor Murphy's students as well. Professor Murphy thinks very highly of UB law students. She feels UB students have a vested interest in their education, which pushes the school and faculty to offer the best education possible. For example, several years ago Family Law Clinic students performed public policy research on family law



cases, which was used to reform the family court system. More recently, students pushed the Law School to offer more opportunities and training in family mediation, which led to a pilot program in coordination with the Circuit Court for Baltimore City. Clinic students work with mediators to offer on-site mediation in family cases. While Professor Murphy credits students for their enthusiasm, undoubtedly her support made such an opportunity possible.

In addition to her roles as professor and Director of the nationally renowned UB Family Law Clinic, Professor Murphy is the academic advisor for the UB Family Law Association. Professor Murphy is very active with the local and national bar associations and with the circuit court, developing programs and policies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the family law system while helping the under-represented in family law cases. Professor Murphy recently worked with Family Law Clinic students in the "Civil Gideon" case heard before the Court of Appeals of Maryland.

The *Law Forum* Editorial Board recognizes the Law School is privileged to have Professor Murphy as a member of our faculty. Professor Murphy is also an asset to Maryland's legal

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community. On April 16, 2004, Professor Murphy received the 2004 USM Regent's Faculty Award for Excellence in Public Service.

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