



MARQUETTE
UNIVERSITY

LAW SCHOOL

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Dear Future Marquette Lawyer,

Welcome to a new year and a new semester at the Law School. Let me provide you with something of an update. To be sure, the range of our initiatives and the fact that a number of them are still in process mean that I cannot in this short space encapsulate all the activity and energy within or about the building. How exciting for me and I hope for you to be part of such an enterprise.

First, I wish to report that the Law School is in the midst of a highly successful season for faculty hiring. Along with the recruitment of students, there is nothing more important to ensuring the long-term (and near-term) vibrancy of the school than the recruitment of talented faculty. On occasion we lose a talented faculty member (this year, Professor Shirley A. Wiegand has reluctantly determined to move for family reasons), although there is no question that over any recent span of several years we have fared exceptionally well in attracting and retaining talented new faculty.

This year, after interviewing scores of potential faculty members (including nineteen in full-day interviews at the Law School), we will hire at least three new faculty members. These individuals have accepted our invitation to join us beginning next fall. One is expert in intellectual property, and the others bring expertise in business transactions. These are both fields in which we have made a conscious effort to grow even stronger. Because these appointments must be confirmed by the Provost and the President, I have to wait a bit before providing you with more information about these outstanding individuals. Suffice it to say (a) that we are grateful to the students who, under the leadership of Student Bar Association President Mandy Gardner, helped us to interview most of the candidates and (b) that we are very excited about these new additions to our Marquette Law School community.


Second, we have two new additions to the Law School community who are with us now. One is an appointment that I announced to you and others more than a year ago. E. Michael McCann, after serving for thirty-eight years as the District Attorney of Milwaukee County, has joined us as Boden Teaching Fellow and Adjunct Professor of Law; he has elected to take no salary from the Law School. Even apart from his remarkable length of tenure in office, Mr. McCann is a renowned lawyer, admired for his integrity, ethics, and sensitivity to the extraordinary role that a prosecutor plays. How much of this he learned at the Jesuit institutions he attended (including Georgetown Law School), I cannot say, but I do know that he does us a great honor by joining Marquette Law School. I expect that he will focus on some long-deferred writing projects, but I am also hopeful that Professor Peter K. Rofes, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, and various of our faculty teaching in the area of criminal law will develop appropriate ways to draw upon Mr. McCann's experience.

The other immediately effective appointment occurred after most of you had left for the semester break. Specifically, the Law School announced that Mike Gousha, well-known and longtime Milwaukee broadcast journalist (twenty-five years is a long time except by Mr. McCann's standards), has joined us as Distinguished Fellow in Law and Public Policy. This is an unusual and unusually exciting appointment. Mr. Gousha will focus on issues of public policy and public service at the local, national, and international levels, including such topics as crime, poverty, and education. He will have the flexibility to take on projects that include writing, interviews, documentaries, and the preparation of conferences and workshops which address serious topics in our society and which both draw upon and engage members of the Law School and broader communities for inquiry into and discussion of those issues. In short, this appointment will enable us to continue and advance our commitment to public engagement on societal issues, even outside of the formal curriculum (Mr. Gousha is not a lawyer). While we never forget that the primary thing that we do is contribute to society by helping to train legal professionals who will serve the interests of clients—assisting you as you become in more-specific ways men and women for others—you will recall my describing in last semester's letter that we have a broader interest in helping to build the civil society. We wish to be a vital intellectual commons with respect to law and public policy matters, and the addition of a journalist/political observer of Mike Gousha's quality, with his deep interest in public policy, will further the opportunities we have to pursue this mission. Please join me in welcoming both him and Mike McCann to the Law School.

Finally, you may recall as well that in last semester's letter I included a footnote (not because the point was unimportant, but rather the opposite) remarking on, among other things, your responsibility for your upper-level curricular choices and intimating that I might some day make broader comments on the matter. After reflecting on the matter myself, I think it sufficient for current purposes primarily to relate, and briefly elaborate upon, one of my comments to the group of new Marquette lawyers who graduated in December. I told them that they had learned enough legal doctrine, become sufficiently skilled at the legal discourse, and soaked up enough of the legal culture that we could say with confidence that they had accomplished something fundamentally important in their years with us.

So it is with you, I hope. I placed learning legal doctrine first among those three items because I think that it is the most important aspect of a legal education. This is the sort of matter that can be debated: for example, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching just last week issued a substantial report contending that legal education focuses too much on cases, not clients. And surely the Law School has improved materially both with respect to helping students develop legal-discourse skills (our first-rate legal writing and research program as restructured in recent years is a true advance) and with respect to helping you introduce yourselves to the legal culture (particularly through our clinical programs). But it is knowledge of the law—or, perhaps more accurately, knowledge of how to proceed within the law—that especially makes lawyers valuable to our clients.*

Sincerely,



Joseph D. Kearney
Dean and Professor of Law

* This does not mean that you all have to join me next fall in Advanced Civil Procedure, although of course I hope that many of you will elect to do so.