

Who Will Stand with the Ecksteins and Zilbers?

The gifts of \$51 million and \$30 million to Marquette University Law School within the past year do several things. They attest to the extraordinary generosity (and immensely successful careers) of Ray and Kay Eckstein and of Joe Zilber and his late wife, Vera. They honor the Marquette Law School of the past: Joe Zilber graduated in 1941 and Ray Eckstein in 1949. They reflect confidence in the future of the Law School and in the contributions that a great law school can make.

But perhaps more than anything, these gifts raise a question. There is no point in being indirect about it: *Who will stand with the Ecksteins and the Zilbers as we build a new Marquette University Law School?* We are doing this quite literally, in the form of Eckstein Hall, the majority of this project being funded by the Ecksteins' \$51 million commitment. We are doing it in a more metaphysical sense also, as facilitated in considerable part by the scholarship program endowed by the bulk of Joe Zilber's \$30 million commitment (the rest of the commitment going to the building). As extraordinary as these commitments are, they surely do not complete our campaign for the Law School.

This incomplete agenda is no surprise, not least because until now we have not formally announced the campaign and instead have been proceeding in a "leadership phase" before a formal announcement (this is sometimes also called a "quiet phase," but it has proved, well, hard to be quiet in these circumstances). This leadership phase has been gratifying even apart from the Eckstein and Zilber gifts. We have received several gifts that themselves exceed the largest single gift that the Law School had ever previously received, beginning with the \$1 million commitment last spring from the Bradley Foundation, which got us going.



While some of these gifts have been the result of requests that we have made, others have been unsolicited. This is very much along the lines of our lead donors' intent. In the lead article that follows this column, for example, you will read Ray Eckstein's remark that his and Kay's intent has been to inspire others to see clearly the Law School's potential and to help Marquette University do more.

In these circumstances, I want urgently to express to every alumnus and friend of the Law School that your financial support will be critical to our success. With respect to the building, although we are nearing a point where we hope to break ground, the project will require another \$20 million. We look to alumni and friends to support other aspects of the program as well—in particular for annual-fund donations to support the teaching, scholarship, and service mission of Marquette Law School.

For make no mistake about it: every donation to the Law School helps us to advance. As significant as tuition revenue is, there are aspects of the Law School program that we must fund otherwise. This includes direct instruction, where we have supported some faculty lines through the combination of generous individual annual-fund donations by hundreds of alumni. The same is true with respect to our burgeoning public-service and public-policy efforts, where we are increasingly connected to the community and the region that we primarily serve, as anyone familiar with the Law School could attest. Simply stated, our advances of the past decade-plus—but particularly those of the past several years—are real and are attributable in considerable part to increased financial support.

Against this backdrop, I hope that all alumni and friends of Marquette University Law School—that all concerned with Marquette University's mission of Excellence, Faith, Leadership, and Service—will step forward and join the Ecksteins, the Zilbers, and the 40 or so others who by late this past year had enabled us to climb near an historic summit. My wife, Anne, and I have joined this group, as have several of my faculty colleagues. Others are joining as well, for they see the remarkable partnership between the Law School and the larger University that has occurred under the leadership of Rev. Robert A. Wild, S.J., President. I hope that the Law School's history and its vision for the future will inspire you to stand with us as well.

J.D.K.