

A Crossroads for Serious Discussion

Law. Politics. Education. Policy. Religion. Consumer protection. And, of course, baseball.

There were high expectations when Marquette University Law School moved into Eckstein Hall last summer. Most fundamentally, the University's leaders promised that Eckstein Hall would be an excellent setting for the study of law—and it is. They also promised that it would be a crossroads for serious discussion of major issues faced by the city, region, and points well beyond. The report card for the first year shows that this, too, is a promise kept.

In particular, during the past academic year, “On the Issues with Mike Gousha” saw the Law School's distinguished fellow in law and public policy moderate debates between the candidates seeking to be one of Wisconsin's U.S. senators, Wisconsin's governor, and the state's attorney general (last fall); the candidates in the Wisconsin Supreme Court election (this past spring); and the five candidates for Milwaukee County executive (in between).

Gousha also had guests such as U.S. Rep. Paul Ryan, chairman of the House Budget Committee, and Wendy Kopp, founder and CEO of Teach for America, for one-on-one discussions. Outgoing Gov. Jim Doyle joined Gousha for an hour of thoughts on his eight years as governor. And Rick Schlesinger, chief operating officer of the Milwaukee Brewers, talked about the off-the-playing-field matters that shape a Major League Baseball franchise.

There were other conferences, speeches, and gatherings. Leading figures from around the world,

led by Most Rev. Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin, took part in a conference in April 2011 on issues related to sexual misconduct by priests; Prof. Janine P. Geske led this effort as part of the Law School's Restorative Justice Initiative. National experts joined in the annual public service conference in February 2011 to discuss new regulations in the financial sector. A panel of leading local educators joined with prominent innovators from Washington and Los Angeles for a conference last fall on successful ways to educate high-needs children. Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm chose the Law School as the place for a speech on the future of criminal justice in Wisconsin.

The Law School's annual endowed lectures brought to Eckstein Hall experts on property law (Columbia Law School's Tom Merrill), punishment trends for murder (University of California–Berkeley's Jonathan Simon), and patent law (Mark Lemley of Stanford), as well as retired Israel Supreme Court President Aharon Barak.

And, among many other visitors, there were the 200 third-graders from Milwaukee schools who took part in a program combining the Law School's “Street Law” program, the local “Sam's Hope” reading-promotion campaign, and the Milwaukee Bucks. That included an appearance by Bango the Buck: the third-graders ensured that he received the warmest greeting of all this year. ■



Left to right: Distinguished Fellow Mike Gousha with Rep. Paul Ryan; Wendy Kopp, founder of Teach for America; Wisconsin Supreme Court candidates David Prosser and JoAnne Kloppenburg.