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Dear Future Marquette Lawyer,

Permit me to welcome you and all your colleagues to the new academic year. Whatever your status—whether a returning student or someone new to the Law School—we are delighted that you are with us. Our school exists for you, it is not too much to say, and it is a great privilege for those of us who work here to help guide your legal education. I wish also to provide a bit of an update concerning the dynamic community that is Marquette University Law School.

**1. Goings, Comings, and the Like.** Some new appointments reflect our dynamism. Let us begin with Kathleen M. Pagel, who joins us as assistant director of academic success and bar preparation (and a member of our adjunct faculty). Professor Pagel received her J.D., with distinction, from the University of Iowa; for the past six years she was with Foley & Lardner in Milwaukee, first practicing in intellectual property litigation and then serving as professional responsibility counsel. The State of Wisconsin requires no bar examination of Marquette University graduates, of course, but in recent years an increasing number of our students (or, more precisely, graduates) have sat for the bar examination in other states. Even beyond providing an excellent general legal education, we want to make sure that our students are well prepared for the bar examination, whatever the jurisdiction. Under the direction of Associate Dean Matt Parlow and Assistant Dean Amy Rogan-Mehta, Professor Pagel will have a particular portfolio for ensuring this.

To say “Assistant Dean” Rogan-Mehta is to get to another appointment or, in any event, promotion. Returning students will already be familiar with Ms. Rogan-Mehta, as she has served for the past two years as director of student development and academic success. In that capacity, she has excelled, whether the matter at hand has been to work with student organizations, to counsel students on a host of issues, or to direct the Academic Success Program and Supplemental Success Program. The excellence is scarcely a surprise. Ms. Rogan-Mehta graduated first in her class from Marquette Law School several years ago, and she also holds a master’s in social work from Columbia University. Her performance and the importance of her duties warrant her promotion to assistant dean for students. Please join me in congratulating Dean Rogan-Mehta on her promotion.

There have been developments on the faculty front as well. To begin, Rebecca K. Blemberg and Lisa A. Mazzie have been promoted to the rank of professor of legal writing. Such promotion comes from a process requiring the engagement of the tenured law school faculty, me as dean, and the provost and president of Marquette University. We devote substantial resources to our legal writing program, and all six of our legal writing faculty have helped bring us to national prominence in that field. We are fortunate to have such colleagues, and I hope that you will join me in extending good wishes to Professors Blemberg and Mazzie on their promotions.

Let me continue with the faculty. Chad M. Oldfather has succeeded Michael M. O’Hear as associate dean for research. Professor O’Hear served in that position—indeed, he was our first associate dean for research—since 2008. I especially have appreciated his work in introducing the Marquette Law School Faculty Blog, which has been the site (and remains the repository) for thousands of engaging posts by faculty and a number of others associated with the Law School. Professor O’Hear also has made a point of working with interested students on their own scholarship. Professor Oldfather is a longtime leader on the faculty as well, not just as a classroom teacher but also in legal scholarship, and I look forward to his coming work as associate dean. Further on the faculty front: We have bidden farewell, with our thanks, to two faculty who have gone to other law schools. Irene Calboli, who since 2012 has been on leave in Singapore, has now formally departed (for Texas A&M University), and J. Gordon Hylton, after spending half his time there for a number of years, has joined the faculty of his alma mater, the University of Virginia. On the other hand, Carolyn Edwards, like Jack Kircher, is now among our emeriti faculty, but I am delighted that both Professor Kircher and Professor Edwards this fall will be where they long have been—and where we want them: teaching Torts and Contracts, respectively, to first-year Marquette law students.

We also welcome David A. Strifling as a new addition. To be sure, the claim is a slight stretch, as Mr. Strifling is a longtime member of the Marquette University community. He is a Marquette engineer and a Marquette lawyer (Class of 2004), in addition to holding a master’s degree from Harvard, and he has served as an adjunct professor of law here for the past several years. But his full-time work has been at Milwaukee’s Quarles & Brady. Now Professor Strifling is altogether with us: While he will continue his work as an adjunct professor, he joins us as director of our water law and policy initiative. By way of brief background, Marquette Law School has been engaged with the regional water initiative in Milwaukee and southeastern Wisconsin since its creation last decade. With Michael R. Lovell—a longtime leader in that regional initiative—having taken office last year as president of Marquette University, we have wanted to expand our contribution. I am grateful to President Lovell for his favorable action on the Law School’s application last year to the University’s new Strategic Innovation Fund. We have been able to use a grant from that fund, together with contributions by alumni and other friends to the Law School’s Annual Fund, to support Professor Strifling’s appointment for the next several years. We expect there to be particular opportunity for collaboration in the water initiative with the College of Engineering and with others at Marquette University, and in the broader region, interested in the law, technology, or policy related to water.

**2. Eckstein Hall Opportunities Beyond the Degree Program.** This focus on policy work brings me to the Law School’s public policy initiative. Since the appointment in 2007 of Mike Gousha as distinguished fellow in law and public policy, Marquette University Law School has become “Milwaukee’s public square” (a characterization of us a few years ago by the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*). That has especially been so since we opened Eckstein Hall in 2010. This coming semester will be no exception. To take only the already scheduled “On the Issues” events, you have easily available the opportunity to hear from the likes of journalists (e.g., Craig Gilbert and Molly Ball on September 2), city planners (Peter Park on September 10), law enforcement officials (Milwaukee’s police chief on August 27 and Wisconsin’s attorney general on September 23), educators (the president of the new Cristo Rey High School on October 7), and politicians (former Congressmen David

Obey and Tom Petri on October 28). We will also host a half-day conference on October 29 on “The Future of the American Public Library.”

Most of the attendees at these various sessions are not Marquette law students, but some are—and all of you are welcome. The reasons supporting your attendance include far more than that, like other guests, you will have lunch available to you (although that may be a higher interest for students). Rather, you will find, when you are out in the practice, that lawyers are more likely to be public citizens than is the case in many professions. This is so not just of government lawyers (e.g., prosecutors) but also those in the private practice. Whether in formal service, such as on school boards and zoning commissions, or more generally in matters affecting the commonweal, your fellow citizens will expect the engagement of those trained in the law—i.e., of *you*. You should prepare for that in such small-scale ways as reading the daily newspaper (online, no doubt) and attending free events at the Law School.

Sometimes those events are the Law School’s distinguished lectures. We have two each semester, the fall entries being the Boden Lecture and the Barrock Lecture on Criminal Law. The former remembers the late Robert F. Boden, L’52, one of my predecessors as dean of the Law School (1965 to 1984); the latter honors the late George, L’31, and Margaret Barrock, who were part of the legal and Lebanese-American communities in this area. Both lectures have become showpieces for us, annually welcoming a distinguished academic or public intellectual to Marquette Law School. Robert J. Sampson, the Henry Ford II Professor of Social Sciences at Harvard, and Nicola Lacey, School Professor of Law, Gender, and Society at the London School of Economics, will deliver the Boden and Barrock lectures, respectively, on September 16 and October 27, at 4:30 p.m. You can see in their lecture titles—“Neighborhood Inequality and Public Policy: What Can Milwaukee Learn from Chicago and Boston?” (Sampson) and “Socializing the Subject of Criminal Law? Criminal Responsibility and the Purposes of Criminalization” (Lacey)—that they will be addressing topics of interest not only to us in the law but also to society more generally. As with most of the “On the Issues” events, I expect large crowds at the lectures, but you are especially welcome—and in that regard it is important that you register. Information is available on the school’s website and is regularly promoted to you.

**3. Pro Bono and Public Service Work.** Engagement with the Law School’s public policy initiative and distinguished lectures is not the only means of broadening your education beyond your classwork. Marquette Law School’s public service and pro bono programs are especially far-reaching and impressive. There are many reasons for this, including the leadership of Angela F. Schultz, assistant dean for public service, but none has been more significant than this: the active and enthusiastic service of so many lawyers and law students.

Let me begin by focusing simply on the Marquette Volunteer Legal Clinic, our flagship pro bono program, which has four fixed sites plus the Mobile Legal Clinic (details on all of them are online). Over the past three years, the number of lawyers volunteering at the MVLC has gone from 222 to 265 to 307. Some of them are Marquette lawyers; others are not. Some of them are at large law firms; others are solo practitioners. The result of their work has been that the number of clients served in these years has gone from 3,185 to 3,825 to 4,256 individuals.

But it is not just *their* work: It is also *your* work as Marquette law students. The latter contribution has been quite extraordinary. In each of the past three years, well more than 100 law students have been inducted into the Pro Bono Society in our late-April ceremony, reflecting that they have undertaken more than 50 hours of pro bono work, through the MVLC and our numerous other programs, while law students. To look at it from another angle: on average, two-thirds of our students have participated in pro bono work in each of the past several years, annually donating more than 10,000 hours of their (or your) collective time. The benefits include the incidental (e.g., the connections that you forge with practicing attorneys), educational (in particular, the development of your legal skills), institutional (this advances the Law School's mission and reputation), and societal (simply stated, your work helps others). And that is not to exhaust the list. Dean Schultz and Katie Mertz, our assistant director for public service, would be happy to give you more information about our programs. Here, too, the website will help you immensely.

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Let me close with two points. One is that we will keep you up to date about events, developments, and possibilities at the Law School throughout the semester. But, as with the law itself, you will not learn much if you do not read. Here I refer particularly to the semiweekly Law News; during the academic year, it comes out on Mondays and Wednesdays. You will find in it important information, from bar application deadlines to dates that the Eckstein Hall parking garage will be unavailable. You are on notice of all this information. More affirmatively, this information will *help* you and is worth your time.

The other is to “end where I began,” to borrow a phrase from a famous lawyer, John Donne (his fame deriving, admittedly, from his work as a poet and churchman not his law practice). We are delighted that you are with us at Marquette University Law School. And, to broaden the point, we are pleased that you are with one another. Among the great benefits of legal education generally and of Eckstein Hall particularly is the time that you get to spend with your fellow students. I urge you to embrace this opportunity and to appreciate it even in the ordinary moments. So no doubt you will do things with one another outside Eckstein Hall and even beyond the legal profession. But you should reach out to one another especially while in the building. Perhaps the occasion might be as well-organized as the formation of a study group—a phenomenon whose incidence no doubt has declined with the rise of the laptop computer but that I very much recommend to you: Requiring yourself to explain the law to one another will help you understand it, to understate a point. But your fellowship might also be in incidental conversations. At the Hooding Ceremony this past May, I told the members of the graduating class that I had been most impressed by the way I had seen them support one another through the challenges of law school. Not only is this evident among Marquette law students whom I know to be close to one another, but also, as I have looked out from my office onto the Huiras Lounge or conversed with students, I have sensed this even among students with less close but professional relationships.

We are fortunate that you are with us—and your good fortune includes being with one another. Please make the most of it.

Sincerely,



Joseph D. Kearney  
*Dean and Professor of Law*