A Lawyers’ Teacher

Professor James D. Ghiardi, L’42, recently marked his sixty-first year as a member of the Marquette University Law School faculty. Ghiardi currently is Professor Emeritus, but his legacy continues, as was noted by speakers at a recent luncheon, including Professor J. Gordon Hylton and Ghiardi’s former students, Professor John J. Kircher, L’63, and John P. Brady, L’73. This is most obviously true in the practice, where numerous of his former students frequently find themselves even arrayed against one another in litigation in torts and other areas of the law.

The legal academy also would do well to emulate Professor Ghiardi’s scholarship, as reflected in the comments of another of his former students, himself a renowned teacher and scholar. Specifically, Aaron D. Twerski, L’65, the Irwin and Jill Cohen Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School and former dean of Hofstra Law School, drew a contrast to some modern scholarship and remarked as follows: “People reacted to Jim Ghiardi’s articles. Thirty years ago, he wrote about punitive damages—the need for judicial control of them, the constitutional problems associated with them. Finally, the Supreme Court, 20 years later, got the message that there may be some due process problems, in BMW v. Gore and the like. . . . It makes no difference whether you agree or disagree: Jim Ghiardi was talking about real problems, and he had an impact. Scholarship was designed to speak to lawyers, to speak to judges, to get and bring the problems to court.”