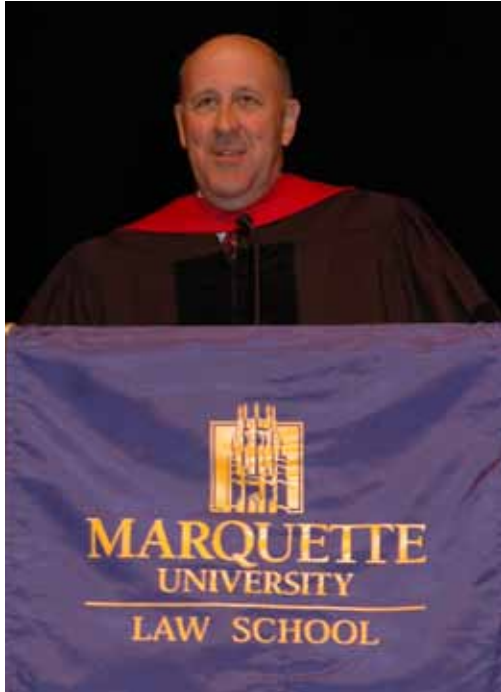


2008 Commencement Ceremonies



The Honorable Jim Doyle, Governor of Wisconsin, spoke at the Law School's Hooding Ceremony at the Milwaukee Theatre this past May. Governor Doyle's remarks touched upon his own career as a practicing lawyer, the nature of the lawyer's work, and his impressions of Marquette Law School.

Dean Kearney's Introduction of Governor Jim Doyle

It is a great privilege for me to welcome and formally introduce our commencement speaker, the Honorable Jim Doyle, Governor of Wisconsin. Governor Doyle has had a long and distinguished career in the law and public service. This began when, upon graduation from college, he served as a member of the Peace Corps in Tunisia, together with his wife, Jessica, whose presence with us this evening I also wish to acknowledge. This career continued after Governor Doyle graduated from Harvard Law School in 1972: he worked for several years as an attorney in a federal legal services office on a Navajo reservation in Arizona. Upon his return to Wisconsin in the mid-1970s, Governor Doyle engaged in the private practice of law before serving three terms as Dane County District Attorney. After another term in private practice, he was elected, three times, Attorney General of Wisconsin, serving for 12 years. He was elected Governor in 2002 and reelected in 2006.

As this briefest of sketches reflects, Governor Doyle has remarkable experience in law and public service. Tonight he does us at Marquette University a tremendous honor by joining us for the hooding ceremony for our law graduates. I am very grateful that he accepted our invitation. Please join me in welcoming the Honorable Jim Doyle, Governor of the State of Wisconsin.

Law School Commencement Remarks of Governor Doyle

Thank you, Dean Kearney, for the very, very kind introduction. I am really pleased—and honored—to have the opportunity to be here for this great moment for the graduates of this great law school and to join with your families and friends in congratulating you on what you have done. I know that, for many of your families, this is a great moment. It really is the end of the tuition run for them, so I am sure that there are a lot of happy parents in the audience here today. But it is a happy moment for all of us in the state of Wisconsin.

Let me first say that you graduates are truly fortunate to have received a legal education at this remarkable institution. Marquette University Law School is rapidly emerging as one of the finest in the United States, and, with the imminent new building, obviously with the generous donors, with the outstanding faculty, this school has moved to a preeminent place among law schools in the United States. We are so proud of what you have done here and that a new class of graduating Marquette lawyers is going out into the world. You have worked very, very hard for this moment, and we are very proud.

This is a moment in your life that is incredibly special, and for all of us who have graduated from law school, it leads to some reminiscence and, of course, the usual lessons that a speaker is supposed to note for you. I think that I would rather just tell you a couple of stories about my earliest years as a lawyer and a few lessons that I learned, not so much in law school as afterward.

In particular, I remember so clearly the day about a month after my graduation from law school that my wife, Jessica, who is here tonight, and I went to the passport office in Boston because we were about to go to Africa for a month or so. In that passport office, for the first time ever, when I was asked what my occupation was, I wrote it into that form: *attorney*. I can remember that moment as if it were yesterday because it was the time that all the hard work had



Governor Doyle and Dean Kearney at the Milwaukee Theatre

paid off. Now, unlike you, we did not have automatic admission to the bar. I hadn't passed any bar exam, so it's a little questionable. Maybe I was being slightly fraudulent even in putting the word *attorney* into that form. But it was a moment, again, that I will remember, feeling that I was finally an attorney, a moment of great pride and one, I know, that you share today.

As the dean mentioned, in my first years after law school, I went to the Navajo Indian reservation, to what was then a small town, Chandler, Arizona. Some of you no doubt have been through that part of the world: it's where a beautiful canyon, Canyon de Chelly, is located. I served Navajo and Hopi clients, people who were unable to afford attorneys. It was an experience like no other that I have had in my life, and I learned a lot.

One of the things I learned was that I better be a little humble about this process. I had come out of law school ready to change the world. In Chandler, Arizona, most of my clients were Navajo-speaking people, did not speak English, and worked through interpreters. A client came in to see me, by the name of Little Redhouse. Now, Little Redhouse had bought a pickup truck in a small town in Utah on the edge of the reservation, and he had entered into a credit contract. With my great legal education, I was able to look at that contract and determine that it violated the federal Truth in Lending Act, and I was able to determine that every single contract that that automobile dealer had

entered into violated the federal law. In those days, a violation of the Truth in Lending Act meant that the plaintiff got \$2,000 in cash.

So what did do? I started a class-action law suit on behalf of every single person who had bought a truck from that car dealer, and it was a great case. It involved millions

of dollars. I went to a trial in Salt Lake City, Utah, the first trial of my life, and we won the trial. We went to the U.S Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit on very interesting legal issues, and I briefed them and argued them. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me standing before the Tenth Circuit, barely out of law school, arguing a big case. We won the case, except that the Tenth Circuit said we had to go back down to the trial court for some more proceedings. So we did. Then we went back up to the court of appeals for some more proceedings.

After about two years of this, Little Redhouse came to into my office and sat down. He didn't speak English, so he asked through an interpreter, "*When am I going to get a truck?*"

And I realized that I had missed the whole point of what being a lawyer was. All my client wanted was a truck, and, believe me, that car dealer at that point would have been willing to give Little Redhouse 25 trucks to have me go away. I learned how important it is as a lawyer to really understand what the word *represent* means and to humbly represent your client and to listen to what your client has to say. Little Redhouse didn't care whether I was getting my name and case into the *Federal Reporter*. He didn't care whether we were making some kind of great new law. He wanted to have a truck, and, I'll tell you, it was a very happy day for me when we actually got that truck, delivered it to Little Redhouse, and I think that, maybe for the first time, I was on my way to being a pretty good lawyer.

Let me share with you another recollection. Early in my career, I represented a woman, 50 years old, in

"Let me first say that you graduates are truly fortunate to have received a legal education at this remarkable institution. Marquette University Law School is rapidly emerging as one of the finest in the United States . . ."

a criminal case, a hit-and-run matter—a woman who had never done anything wrong in her life. There was a significant factual matter about whether she was guilty or not, and, in fact, I really believe she was not guilty. We went to trial, and as I was sitting in the courtroom, in front of the jury with this woman sitting next to me, I

realized something else about being a lawyer that you're going to find out very soon into your careers, and that is that this really matters. This was not about a moot-court exercise or a trial-court exercise. This woman's life, how she saw herself, whether she would receive punishment, whether she would be tagged as a criminal for the rest of her life, depended on whether or not I knew how to do my job. It's a pretty frightening moment when you come to that realization—that it really matters.

But it does matter, and practicing law requires you to develop the craft and the skill of being a lawyer. It requires you to continue your education after this graduation. In fact, some of your most intense education is going to be in the coming months and early years of your life as a lawyer. Learn the skill, learn to do it well, but know that it is more than a craft. It is a profession. You, as lawyers, have a responsibility to do justice. So you have to make sure that you do it well, but it is also imperative that you do it right.

You have had the blessings of a legal education at a Jesuit school, and I hope, if anything, you have learned the Jesuit principle of service. A lawyer is a person who provides service. There are people who need your services. Some of them are rich, some of them are poor, and most of them are somewhere in the middle. Some of them will be able to pay for your services, and some of them won't. Some of them will have a cause that is popular, and some will have a cause that, however just, is reviled. Please serve them all. Please take and apply the great education that you have learned here. Please go out and earn a really good living, but also make sure that you take some time and donate some of your

time and your skills to people who really need you.

I know now—I know as I look out at you—that we are receiving in the State of Wisconsin another great, great group of graduates from this wonderful university. And I know that this state, for those of you who will work and serve here, and other states around

the country and other countries around the world will be the beneficiaries of the great education that you have received at Marquette. So, congratulations to the Marquette Law School graduates of 2008.

Thank you. •



December 2008 Commencement

In his remarks at the Law School's December 2008 midyear commencement, Professor Peter K. Rofes, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, addressed whether there was "advice—perhaps even wisdom—germane to the broad spectrum of future courses that you have charted for yourselves." As reflected in the following excerpt, Professor Rofes's answer focused on the "skill of listening."

A partner in a business apprehensive about diminished revenue, undiminished debt, beckoning creditors, and loyal employees; a spouse trying to come to grips with the many implications of a marriage irretrievably broken; a corporate officer infuriated that the corporation's trademark is being infringed and bewildered about what to do in the face of such infringement; an elderly couple anxious that assets created through decades of hard work and frugality somehow will not make their way to the intended targets of the couple's largesse; a group of friends that has lost a substantial investment by virtue of what it believes to be a fraudulent scheme on the part of an overseas company; parents whose teenage child has been charged the night before with operating a vehicle while intoxicated.

Each of these clients will have her, his, its, or their own distinctive story. But the stories will not unfold in your offices like the cases in your law school casebooks. They will not be told to you in neat, organized, dispassionate paragraphs . . . Instead, your ability to listen—to what is said as well as to what is left unsaid, to the emotions that accompany the words conveyed no less than to the words themselves—your ability to listen with care, kindness, and discernment, your self-conscious cultivation of the skill of listening, will empower you to serve clients with increasing effectiveness over the course of your careers.

The skill will play a material role as well in other aspects of professional life. Colleagues with whom you share a practice, judges before whom you appear, coworkers in a corporation, the range of individuals you happen upon as you tackle the scores of transactions, cases, and matters that together add up to a professional career—these folks will form enduring impressions of you based in no small measure upon how committed they perceive you to be to the skill of listening to them and their stories, even, or perhaps especially, when the challenge of doing so is most daunting. In a world in which the volume at which speech is delivered is often mistaken for the amount of wisdom contained in the speech, the wise lawyer grasps that much can be accomplished through a closed mouth and adept deployment of the ears. In a world in which the modifier "value added" has begun to crop up all across our culture . . . , the wise lawyer grasps that in many professional circumstances truly substantial value can be added only after absorbing in all their nuances the words, sentiments, positions, and professed objectives of others.

In the arsenal of each of the truly superb lawyers I have had the pleasure to encounter is a highly refined commitment to listening. And so: Listen well, and carefully, to others. •