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From the Dean (1986)

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William & Mary Law School

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Dean Sullivan and President Verkuil

From the President

To those who have undertaken its challenges, the study of law is viewed as the most satisfying of educational experiences. At William and Mary we take pride in the fact that the Marshall-Wythe School of Law is not only one of the most historic but also one of the best places to learn the law in all its breadth and majesty.

It is the law school of John Marshall, the “Great Chief Justice,” whose portrait hangs alone in the Justices’ conference room at the United States Supreme Court. It is also the school of recent graduates, too numerous to mention, who practice, teach and serve the judicial and political systems in ways that are worthy of the grand figures who formed it.

You are invited to submit an application and explore this institution in greater depth. The information that follows should answer your questions and pique your interest. The Law School Admissions Office and the College itself stand ready to provide any further service and assistance you may need. Should matters work out in a mutually satisfactory way, I look forward to welcoming you in the fall of 1987.

Sincerely,



Paul R. Verkuil
President

From the Dean

This bulletin has been prepared to help you understand what it is like to study law at the College of William and Mary. Law schools are not the same. Each has its own character. You would be wise to avoid judgments based on vague and subjective measures of presumed prestige.

The essential questions for every prospective law student are: Why do I wish to become a lawyer? Will this law school meet my personal needs and help me fulfill my professional aspirations? Answers to these questions require honest and sustained reflection. No brochure, no faculty advisor, no friend can substitute for your own considered judgment—about yourself and about the kind of law school which is right for you.

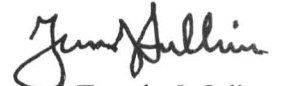
I hope that what you find in these pages will help you begin the process of critical self-examination without which thoughtful career decisions are not really possible.

The greatest lawyers have always possessed disciplined minds, practical judgment and caring hearts. These virtues remain prerequisites to greatness despite the major changes which have altered the conduct of professional legal practice in recent years. Whether your ambition is to practice in a small town or a large city, whether you dream of counseling large businesses or advising individual clients of modest means, the ingredients for professional success are much the same. You must understand the law, understand your client, and use the full measure of your professional skills to secure your client’s cause.

Legal education at the Marshall-Wythe School of Law has been designed to help you acquire the habits of mind and the special skills required to be a great lawyer. You will discover that the educational experience here is rigorous but personal, comprehensive but coherent. We place more than ordinary emphasis on legal writing and advocacy skills. We expect a great deal of our students, and we are intensely proud of their considerable success. We believe that our high standards have helped us educate lawyers who are destined for leadership roles not only in the profession but also in the public life of our local communities, our states and our nation.

No law school can alter the fundamental character of its students or promise professional success. In the end, the person you are and the determination you bring to your work count most. I can assure you that we view our educational responsibility in the broadest terms. Our hope is that after three years here you will leave not only with sound basic professional skills but also with a sense of our profession’s greatest traditions and a determination to use your talents in the service of mankind.

Cordially,



Timothy J. Sullivan
Dean