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From the Dean (1991)

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FROM THE DEAN

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 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 William and Mary 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 both rigorous and personal. 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 communities, our states and our nation.

No law school can change the 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. We view our educational responsibility to you 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



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