Message from the Dean (2009)

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Message from the Dean

Congratulations on your decision to study law. We are delighted that you are considering William & Mary Law School!

William & Mary's greatest strength is the superb job we do educating new lawyers. Our faculty of nationally known scholars puts tremendous energy into working with students — both in the classroom and one-on-one. At William & Mary, you will undergo rigorous training that will prepare you to practice law in every conceivable setting.

Our award-winning Legal Skills Program develops excellence in the full range of transactional, litigation, and other skills that lawyers require. We are home to the most technologically advanced courtroom in the United States, which we use to teach students what they must know to thrive in a technological age.

Both our trial team and moot court team excel on the national stage. Students represent clients under the supervision of skilled attorneys in our legal clinics, including our recently established Veterans' Benefits Clinic and Special Education Advocacy Clinic. Our four student-edited law reviews afford in-depth opportunities to develop research and writing skills. A broad array of law school programs, including our nationally acclaimed Institute of Bill of Rights Law, foster debate on cutting-edge legal issues.

William & Mary has deep and enduring roots, reaching back more than two hundred years into American history. We were the first institution in the United States to teach law in a university setting. Thomas Jefferson had the original idea, believing that university-trained lawyers could provide leadership necessary to the success of the new nation. In 1779, he turned to William & Mary to implement his vision. William & Mary's first law students exceeded Jefferson's expectations. They included Chief Justice John Marshall, President James Monroe, and many others who later served as governors and United States senators.

Institutions take strength from their past. William & Mary continues to train lawyers who serve their communities and the nation at the highest levels of law, business, and government.

Our graduates span the globe. Some work in the nation’s largest law firms. Others use their legal skills in public interest law or in the business world. Many engage in government service. Our job is to help students fulfill their professional goals, whatever those goals might be.

We hope that you will consider joining us next year.

DAVISON M. DOUGLAS
Dean and Arthur B. Hanson Professor of Law