

A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW DEAN

It is a great honor having been chosen to succeed Dean William B. Spong. It is also a great responsibility. Under Dean Spong's leadership, our law school has made remarkable progress. We have moved from the brink of disaccreditation to a point where national distinction is in view. I am confident that the next few years will bring us closer to achieving excellence in all parts of our educational program.

Our law school has special strengths. We have a highly committed faculty, an able student body and exceedingly loyal alumni. We also have a uniquely distinguished history. Together these things make the hope of future progress quite realistic.

No dean can accomplish anything of significance by himself. Success will be measured not by any personal achievements of mine, but rather by my ability to unite all parts of the law school community in a common effort to achieve important goals. This spirit of affirmation and collaboration has characterized our law school for the 12 years I have known it. It is critical that we preserve it. Only through a sustained spirit of shared enterprise will the law school become all that we hope.

In our eagerness to improve we should not forget to preserve the good things we already have. I include among these an atmosphere here which is founded on a sympathetic interest in each other as human beings. Lawyers are more than technicians. Great lawyers have an interest in the human spirit and in the hopes and dreams of individual men and women. We must continue to cultivate that spirit in our students, our faculty and our graduates. The best way I know to do that is to guard and nurture the present environment in which mutual concern is a common virtue.

In some areas, improvements are needed. We must find more money to support student scholarships. We also need additional funding for faculty development. A number of important student activities such as the law review and moot court have achieved remarkable levels of excellence with inadequate financial resources. We need a new law school dormitory and additional space for smaller classes, student organizations and placement activities.

Our faculty is devoted to the welfare of this law school and to its own improvement. Our faculty is still relatively young. Many of my colleagues are at the beginning of very promising careers. To the degree that their work brings them to the favorable attention of the national legal educational and professional community, our law school will benefit. To help each faculty member achieve his or her full professional potential requires more than the faculty member's personal commitment. It requires an institution able and willing to provide the financial and intellectual resources adequate to fulfill high aspirations.

Our alumni are a special point of pride. We have an unusually loyal body of graduates. Their loyalty and willingness to devote time and resources to the law school have made the difference in nearly every important part of our educational program. I believe this commitment is a reflection of the special educational experience our law school provides. I will be looking for new ways to involve more of our graduates in the ongoing educational program of the school.

All law schools share a fundamental obligation to educate their students to be good lawyers and to encourage their faculties to advance society's understanding of the law. The unique and distinguished history of the Marshall-Wythe School of Law imposes upon us an additional responsibility. That responsibility was best expressed by George Wythe who wrote not only for his time but for our own: "Here we must form such characters as may be fit to succeed those who have been useful in the national counsels of America." I hope that my service as dean will be remembered as a time in which the Marshall-Wythe School of Law strove with determination and some success to be worthy of George Wythe's great ambition.

Timothy J. Sullivan