Herbert Fried: The Law School's Friend Indeed

Claire E. Pensyl, Karen Gardner, and Anne L. Tiffin

Herbert Fried (JD '32) swims 100 miles each year. His swimming record is indicative of the energy and perseverance that he applies to each endeavor and activity that he undertakes.

Clearly, that energy has been conscientiously applied to the Law School's Placement Office, which Herb Fried has directed since 1976. Before he took command, the Placement Office was concerned primarily with arranging on-campus interviews for approximately 225 organizations, which hired second-year summer associates and law school graduates. The Placement Office was staffed by one person and all the work of arranging interviews was performed manually.

Now, the Placement Office employs three full-time staff members and the interviewing process for law students is fully computerized. Over 600 organizations come to the Law School during the fall interviewing season, and virtually all graduates and second-year students are placed in legal jobs. Moreover, approximately 80% of the first-year class are placed in law-related summer jobs. Herb also confers with alumni who are contemplating a job transfer or who are thinking of making a career change; the Placement Office provides a newsletter to interested alumni concerning job opportunities.

A major part of Herb Fried's role in Placement is counseling students,

Claire E. Pensyl, a 1978 alumna of the Law School, is associated with the Chicago law firm of Adams, Fox, Marcus, Adelstein & Gerding; Karen Gardner is editor of The Law School Record; and Anne L. Tiffin is a third-year student at the Law School.
especially those who are having trouble finding the right job. He may, for example, call firms with whom a discouraged student has interviewed to find out what might be wrong with the student's interviewing technique and pass this information along to the student.

Herb's attitude is a mixture of toughness and enthusiasm. He exhibits a clear distaste for handling things over on a silver platter. "If a student calls me and asks for the name of an interviewer, I tell him to come down and look at the list." His concern for the ultimate welfare of his charges is nonetheless evident; he calls the job "rewarding" and explains that he enjoys helping the students.

He shares the opinion of many students that those more successful in job seeking should be sensitive to the feelings of those who have not yet secured a job. First-year students in particular, he notes, must be shielded from the tension of job seeking. "We've got to discourage first-year students from fiddling around in Placement before they get their feet wet in school."

In addition to his work as Placement Director, Herb Fried enthusiastically works at other projects for the benefit of the Law School and the students. He is a member of the Development Committee. He can also take credit for adding a bit of color to the Law School: Dean Casper complained that the hallways and stairwells of the Law School building were depressingly gray. Herb courted Chicago art collector, Joseph R. Shapiro, and the hallways, offices, and stairwells are now decorated with prints by artists such as Man Ray, Murray Louis, Picasso, and Andy Warhol.

Many of his hours away from the Law School are devoted to art collecting. Herb and his wife, Marjorie, have an extensive collection of American folk art. They are members of the Prints and Drawings Club and the Renaissance Society. In the past several years, they have begun to collect the works of young Chicago artists.

Herb brought his interests in the Law School and art together in 1977 and was instrumental in the presentation of the show "Artists View the Law in the 20th Century," an exhibition in honor of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the University of Chicago Law School at the David and Alfred Smart Gallery. The exhibit included works loaned by a number of individuals and institutions across the country and presented a variety of statements on the law and legal issues.

Although it may seem as if Herb Fried has always been helping students at the Law School, his long association with the Chas. Levy Circulating Company, the largest wholesale distributor of paperback books and magazines in the United States, is a distinguished one. After practicing law with his father for twenty years, Herb worked with the Circulating Company as Treasurer, Vice-President, Executive Vice-President and General Manager, and President until his retirement in 1976; he continues to serve on the Board of Directors of the company and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Board.

In addition to work, much of Herb Fried's energy goes into maintaining the close personal relationships he has developed with many of Chicago's most noted citizens. When asked to talk about their friendship, Don Roth, owner of the famous Blackhawk restaurants in Chicago, was full of praise about Herb, except when it came to his cooking: "He has a grandiose opinion of his own cooking, especially his soup; he's always freezing jars of soup and giving them away."

Mr. Roth believes that his friend displays a deep understanding of people and "has a real knack for getting inside of them." He noted that Herb has been a real friend to the children and grandchildren of his cronies and that "children love him." As students and colleagues at the Law School would undoubtedly agree, his friendships with children are probably the result of his warmth, his own youthful vigor, and what Roth calls his "spicy sense of humor."

Remembering one particularly adventurous vacation that he and his wife took with Herb and Marjorie, Don Roth explained that Herb Fried is "God's worst driver" and that driving with Herb is "the thrill of a lifetime." As Herb "hates maps, thinks they ruin trips, and won't be outdone by foreign drivers," the Roths and the Frieds got to see more of the south of France than they had ever hoped to.

It has been said by his colleagues that Herb Fried is the most popular person in the Law School. Surely, he is one of its most loyal and generous supporters. Yet with all that he does for the Law School, he finds time to work for other organizations in the city as well, such as the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, Mount Sinai Hospital Medical Center, the Jewish Vocational Service of Chicago, and the Standard Club in Chicago. That the Law School, charitable organizations, and the Fried family all seem to be the recipient of 100% of Herb's generosity is further testament to his energy and talents.