I am often asked by alumni and friends of the Law School about our students. Who are they? Where do they come from? What are they like? These questions are quite natural, for our students are, after all, what we are all about.

As you know, there is great demand for admission to the University of Chicago Law School. Last year, almost 4,000 individuals applied for the 175 places in our entering class. We therefore have the luxury, and the necessity, of being highly selective in our admissions decisions. The median LSAT score for admitted students is 46, which corresponds to the 98th percentile nationally, and the median undergraduate grade point average of our entering students is a stunning 3.74. We do not, however, make our admissions decisions solely on the basis of such “objective” criteria. To the contrary, our Admissions Committee considers a broad range of factors in an effort to identify those applicants who possess not only the intellectual ability to succeed at the Law School, but also the character, background, and interests that will enable them to enrich the Law School community and to meet the highest ideals of the profession. To this end, the Committee considers not only LSAT and GPA scores, but also the applicant’s activities, references, personal statement, interests, and experiences. Moreover, in an effort to evaluate the personal as well as intellectual qualities of our applicants, the University of Chicago Law School is the only national law school that conducts several hundred interviews each year as an integral part of our admissions process.

The result of these efforts is a student body that is not only extraordinarily talented, but also wonderfully diverse, stimulating, and engaged. Students currently enrolled in the Law School attended 173 undergraduate colleges and universities, including not only such obvious “feeder” schools as Yale (30), Harvard (25), Chicago (22), and Stanford (17), but also such schools as Lebanon Valley College, Southwestern Louisiana University, the University of Scranton, Westfield State College, and Hampton Institute, which often provide us with some of our very best students. Our students come from thirty-eight states and nineteen different nations, including Indonesia, Israel, China, and Argentina. Our recently reinvigorated LL.M. program, which brings approximately twenty-five foreign graduate students to the Law School each year, adds immeasurably to the overall intellectual environment of the Law School. Approximately 38 percent of our students are women, 13 percent are minorities and 8 percent are African-American.

More than half of our students (55 percent) took one or more years off between college and law school. More than 10 percent used this time to earn a graduate degree in some other discipline. Others pursued a broad range of interesting and constructive endeavors. Approximately 10 percent worked in politics or government, and several worked as engineers, accountants, financial analysts, architects, peace corps volunteers, research scientists, journalists, broadcasters, teachers, bankers, actors, musicians, disc jockeys, social workers, and writers. Several were presidents of companies.

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one was a police officer, one was a paratrooper, one was a CIA analyst, and one played semi-pro water polo. Astonishingly, but perhaps wisely, some 70 students—almost 15 percent of our entire student body—spent a year or more as a paralegal before deciding to embark on a career in the law.

The breadth of our students' backgrounds and interests is reflected in the similarly broad range of activities they pursue within the Law School. There are now more than thirty student organizations, including the Law Students Association; *Law Review*; *Legal Forum*; Moot Court; the Legal Aid Association; the Black Law Students Association; the Hispanic Law Students Association; the Law Women's Caucus; the Gay/Lesbian Law Students Association; the International and Comparative Law Society; the Health Care Law Society; Law Students Against Homelessness; the Edmund Burke Society, which sponsors debates; the Entertainment and Sports Law Society; the Environmental Law Society; the Ethics and Law Society; the Metaphysical Club, which addresses jurisprudential and philosophical issues; the Federalist Society; the Progressive Law Students Association; the National Lawyers Guild; the Chicago Law Foundation, which raises funds to support law students who engage in public service; the Order of Protection Society, which seeks court-ordered protection for abused spouses and children; Scales of Justice, an a cappella singing group; Street Law, which sends law students to local high schools to teach about legal issues; the *Phoenix*, the Law School's student newspaper; and Tortuous Productions, which puts on the annual Law School musical.

The proliferation of such student organizations has enlivened the day-to-day intellectual life of the Law School, for each of these organizations sponsors speakers, panel discussions, debates and similar events on a regular basis. As a result, there is hardly a day when at least one student organization does not have an event of some sort. In the past year, for example, the Progressive Law Students Association sponsored talks by Senator Joseph Biden and Representative Pat Schroeder; the Federalist Society sponsored talks by Judge Laurence Silberman ("The Separation of Powers and the Special Counsel") and Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson ("The Case for Constitutional Restraint"); the Sports and Entertainment Law Society sponsored a panel on "Drug Testing and Privacy Rights in the Sports Arena"; the Legal Forum sponsored a conference on "Education, Law and Democracy"; the Society for Ethics and Law held a debate on "The Role of Ethics in Learning the Law"; the Environmental Law Society presented a symposium on "The Regulation of Pollution in Lake Michigan"; the Law Women's Caucus addressed "Children's Rights Law"; and the International and Comparative Law Society sponsored a discussion of "Extraterritorial Discovery."

In addition to these activities, our students actively assist the Law School itself. Students have long been involved, for example, in our efforts to attract the most able and interesting applicants to the Law School, and students play an essential role in this process. For the last three years, our students have also run a Phonathon designed to solicit contributions from alumni and other friends of the Law School to the Annual Fund. This fall, our students raised over $150,000 in this manner. And, through a program administered by the Law Students Association, students serve as liaisons to various faculty committees to provide advice, feedback, and suggestions on issues ranging from faculty appointments to curriculum to admissions to placement. In all of these roles, our students are exemplary citizens of the Law School community.

Finally, and of course most important, our students are splendid—students. They take the task of legal education seriously. They are engaged, conscientious, demanding, and challenging. Indeed, a universal reaction of professors from other law schools who teach as visitors at the University of Chicago is that our students are nothing short of extraordinary in their preparation, their involvement, and their level of expectation. They are truly a delight to teach. It is testament to their extraordinary ability that in the past three years alone almost 150 graduates have held judicial clerkships and a dozen have clerked for Justices of the United States Supreme Court.

Each generation of students leaves its own unique mark on the Law School. This generation of students, with its seriousness of purpose, its generosity of spirit and its intense commitment to the educational process, will undoubtedly leave the Law School a better place. We are deeply proud of their many achievements as students and we look forward eagerly as this, our next generation of alumni, moves on into what I am confident will be a promising and exciting future.

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