Message from the Dean

Dear friends—

There are few things more exciting—and daunting—for a dean than launching a major fundraising campaign. Campaigns are a tremendous opportunity for me and for the entire Law School community to really focus on what our short-term and long-term goals are and how we can all best work together to accomplish them. Having now been your dean for five years, it has been my honor to work with our extraordinary faculty, administrators, and alumni on several bold new initiatives that have formed the centerpiece of my thinking about the Campaign.

In your hands you hold an issue of the Record entirely dedicated to telling you about this Campaign, the public phase of which we launched in October, and about the goals and initiatives that characterize it. As you read through the articles, you will see how the funds we are raising during this campaign have already had real, tangible, important results not only within the Law School community but also far beyond it, affecting our community and the world.

This public Campaign launch is the result of years of hard work by many people. I am profoundly grateful to Debbie Cafaro, ’82, and Dan Doctoroff, ’84, our Campaign co-chairs, and to the entire Campaign Cabinet (whose names are listed on page 55) for their extraordinary work. Through their work and your generosity we have exceeded our wildest expectations for the early years of this Campaign.

Nothing at our Law School would happen without the efforts of our faculty, who not only expertly teach our students and produce the best scholarship in the world but also lead many of the initiatives made possible by the Campaign. For example, Douglas Baird steers the Doctoroff Business Leadership Program, Omri Ben-Shahar heads our Coase-Sandor Institute on Law and Economics, Lee Fennell runs the Kreisman Initiative on Housing Law and Policy, Geof Stone leads our newly revitalized Public Interest/Public Service Program, Lior Strahilevitz oversees our Rubenstein Scholars Program and our Levi Distinguished Jurists Program, and Jonathan Masur will steer the new Wachtell Lipton Program in Behavioral Law and Economics. Gifts from alumni have allowed us to begin these ambitious and innovative programs and initiatives, but we will require many more to enable them to grow and flourish.

We exist to educate our students who will become the leaders of our profession and our nation. Quite simply, the Law School would be a hollow shell without our students and, by extension, without all of the alumni who once were among their ranks. Successive deans over the past three decades—Gerhard Casper, Geof Stone, Douglas Baird, Dan Fischel, Saul Levmore, and now me—have devoted much time and energy to make our students’ experience here an extraordinarily rich one. This begins with admitting and enrolling an extraordinarily accomplished group of young men and women and extends to giving them the best education and experiential training conceivable. The generosity of David Rubenstein, ’73, and Debbie Cafaro, ’82, has already transformed our school and has made a dramatic impact on our students’ lives through the scholarships they support. You will hear about that impact directly from the students themselves on page 18. So many of our new and reinvigorated initiatives are focused on our students: a report on the first year of the Kapnick Leadership Development Initiative is in this issue, along with stories about our Doctoroff Program internships and our public interest postgraduate fellowships. And though we have dramatically strengthened our offerings in experiential education (you can read about one of our amazing clinics on page 46), continued growth and support for those programs is a key piece of this campaign.

The Law School today is an exceptionally vibrant place. There is a palpable sense of excitement in our halls over the wonderful mix of tradition and innovation that has always been our hallmark. I hope you enjoy reading about how far we have already come with this Campaign, and join with me to support the exciting places we are going.

Warmly,

Michael H. Schill