

Message from the Dean

Dear Friends,

I like to think of the *Record* as providing you with ongoing evidence about the life of your Law School. As you read or leaf through it, you are reminded of the energy that is evident here, and of the many ways in which we educate our students and ourselves. There are debates about national security, classes that range from *Elements* to seminars in faculty homes to statute-centered learning experiences, clinics that



put ideas into action, and much more. The magazine is thus meant for you, and constructed to keep you informed (and pleased, I hope) about what goes on here. Our news is usually of the intellectual kind, but we should also keep an accurate picture of the physical Law School in your mind.

To this end, I want to tell you about three new projects that will

transform the Law School and environs. The first is one you have read about in earlier issues of the *Record*. We are ready to take bids on the revitalization plan for our central tower, which is to say the D'Angelo Law Library's main home. We hope to succeed with that building as we did with our classroom wing, snatching attractive and functional spaces from the jaws of decline. We will have more pictures and drawings to show you before long, and you will see student-friendly spaces where books were once crammed and the relocation of student services to the Library's third floor. But you will need to visit the Law School to observe the transformation of our Library from one designed largely as a book warehouse to one where students gather, ideas are exchanged, and wired and wireless connections give access to information. As was the case with our classroom revitalization project, the plan is to take an aging building and to remake it into a first-class facility that attracts students and obviates the need for an entirely new (and more expensive) facility. And when you do visit, I warrant that you will see such quantity and quality of student interaction that you will know that Chicago is, more than ever, the best school for people like us.

Meanwhile, a modest project will appear at our doorstep and an ambitious one to the southwest. The fountain in front of the Law School—scene of skating parties, end of exam-period soakings, and the launching of the Centennial Navy—needs to be replaced. The fountain has become a maintenance nightmare and, even with large annual expenditures, it is a black hole for most of the year. The current plan,

designed and financed by the University, is to create a plaza with a zero-depth reflecting pool. Our hope is that the area will be attractive even when cold weather forces the shutting down of the water element. If all goes well, that construction, and renovation of the surrounding and crumbling walkways, will take place this coming summer.

To the southwest, a very large undergraduate dormitory will soon rise behind Burton-Judson. Workers can already be observed boring in exploratory fashion and readying the place for serious work as early as June. Some 900 undergraduates will become our neighbors. A new dining facility and cafe will service the new residential "houses" as well as the undergraduates now in B-J. The parking lot behind where I sit will vanish. This construction, as well as other projects intended for our side of the Midway, brings concerns but also great opportunities. We must worry about parking, about architecture, and about library crowding if we prove to be a popular destination. On the other hand, there will be new life nearby, and we will no longer be the least bit isolated. Pedestrian traffic and retail development will surely be good for us. Students are attracted to vital urban settings, and what is attractive to students is good for us.

I cannot stop here, because urban and campus planning is not what you or I expect of me, and so I will conclude by recording that another new arrival this summer is our Public Interest Program aimed at students who have completed the first year of study. Beginning this summer, our first year students have been promised a stipend, which can take the form of a forgivable loan, for anyone who works four weeks or more in a qualifying public interest position. I am eager to see how this unfolds—and we have already observed the positive impact on admissions. We plan to ask recipients to report thoughtfully on their summer experiences. In this, as in most things, I will keep you informed.

And so as you read through this *Record*, and begin to get know our extraordinary new faculty members as well as programs we have underway, I hope that you can picture the physical facility in which most of our work takes place. If you remember an intimate, collegial atmosphere, then be assured that none of that will disappear. But if you recall some coldness and malfunctioning infrastructure, then be assured that we are well on our way to improving the best Law School that an active and imaginative mind could want.

Saul Levmore