A MESSAGE FROM DEAN CAMINKER

Worldwide Presence, Innovations at Home, and the Road Ahead

The cover story in this issue of the Law Quadrangle evidences the continuation of a longstanding truth: Michigan Law is among the great centers of global law scholarship in the world. You will read, in the story beginning on page 12, the following description of Professor James Hathaway, director of our Program in Refugee and Asylum Law (PRAL), from a top scholar in the field: “Without a doubt, he is the leading scholar internationally in refugee law. You probably wouldn’t find any leading decision in the world that doesn’t make reference to his work.”

Our status as one of the great global law schools is evident in the news media, where our faculty are called upon as experts on China, India, Sudan, Australia, the European Union, and much more. It is evident in the externships where our students will spend their summers or part of the school year, including new PRAL fellows, who will work in Belgium, Ecuador, and Nepal. It is evident in the worldwide placements of our alumni, who are employed in more than 75 countries.

The increased globalization in the reach of our scholarship, coursework, legal training, and experiential activities is occurring at the same time as many other innovations at Michigan Law. In its first few months, we already can call the Zell Entrepreneurship and Law Program a great success, based on the interest of law students who want to be in the Entrepreneurship Clinic and students around campus who are seeking their advice. Our revamped debt management program supports an increasing number of alumni; we have updated the 1L curriculum (see page 7); our available clinic placements are up by 50 percent.

Our spectacular new South Hall academic building is now open, with its technologically advanced and appropriately sized classrooms that better meet our students’ needs, as well as our faculty’s (and not just because of the panic button in each room that allows a professor to ask for IT help at any time). The new Aikens Commons continues to serve as the central gathering spot for students and faculty alike. It is a rare day when the vast space is not packed with study groups, informal student-faculty meetings, and wall-to-wall laptops.

I am fortunate to have witnessed and been involved with so many of these positive changes at Michigan Law during my time as dean. Looking ahead, my tenure will expire at the end of my second five-year term, on August 31, 2013.

Michigan Law was a remarkable place when I became dean in 2003, thanks to the longstanding and hard work of smart and dedicated faculty, students, alumni, administrative leaders, staff, and supporters. And I have no doubt that whoever is chosen to succeed me will further enhance the educational, professional, and intellectual missions of Michigan Law.

We in the Michigan family still have much work to do together in the next 16 months, and beyond. And I promise you this: Every day for those remaining 16 months, I will work to continue the wonderful trajectory of this great law school.

Sincerely,

Evan Caminker
Dean and Branch Rickey Collegiate Professor of Law