Elizabeth Long's gift

endows three new faculty chairs

Three faculty members, Samuel R. Gross, Catharine A. MacKinnon and William I. Miller, have been named to newly established endowed chairs at the Law School, thanks to the generosity of Elizabeth A. Long, daughter of a founder of Butzel Long in Detroit.

The chairs were announced during a gala "Evening in Celebration of the Life of Elizabeth A. Long," held at the Lawyers Club in March. The banquet celebration featured live musical entertainment, remarks by Dean Jeffrey S. Lehman, '81, and testimonials from Richard E. Rassel, '66, Senior Partner of Butzel Long, and remembrances of Elizabeth Long by her lifelong friends, retired Michigan District Court Judge John R. Mann, '40, and his wife, Mary Lou Mann.

Elizabeth Long died last year. Her bequest, expected to exceed $10 million, allowed the University to establish chairs honoring her; her father, Thomas G. Long, '01; and her parents, Thomas G. and Mabel Long. Lehman introduced the new chair holders to the celebrants.

The first Thomas and Mabel Long Professor of Law is Samuel Gross, who was unable to attend the celebration. Lehman described Gross as "one of the world's foremost authorities on the death penalty. His writings on capital punishment, politics, race, and crime have been widely read and discussed. "In the classroom, Professor Gross, who teaches evidence and criminal procedure, has been a pioneer in helping our students to understand the uses and abuses of social science research in the legal context."

Gross earned his undergraduate degree at Columbia College and his J.D. from the University of California at Berkeley.

MacKinnon will be the first Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law. "What can one say about Professor MacKinnon?" Lehman asked. "Only that she is, without a
Professor Samuel R. Gross, below, has been named the first Thomas and Mabel Long Professor of Law, one of three chairs endowed through the bequest of their daughter, Elizabeth A. Long.

Professor Catharine A. MacKinnon, right, chats with the Honorable John R. Mann, '40, Mary Lou Mann and Richard E. Rassel, '66, Senior Partner of Butzel Long, during the “Evening in Celebration of the Life of Elizabeth A. Long,” whose bequest to the Law School has endowed three professorships. MacKinnon was named the first Elizabeth A. Long Professor of Law.

Below: Professor William I. Miller, right, shares a laugh with his wife, Kathleen Kochler, and the Honorable John R. Mann, '40, during the “Evening in Celebration of the Life of Elizabeth A. Long” in April. Miller was named the first Thomas G. Long Professor of Law, one of three endowed chairs made possible by Elizabeth Long’s bequest to the Law School. Thomas G. Long, '01, was her father and a founder of Butzel Long.

MacKinnon’s amicus curiae brief in support of plaintiff Joseph Oncale, written at the request of 14 groups of men “dedicated to ending sexual violence,” was part of the legal package in Joseph Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc., et al, that led to a unanimous decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in March that same sex-harassment violates civil rights to sex equality the same as opposite-sex harassment does. MacKinnon holds a B.A. from Smith College, a J.D. from Yale.
Law School and a Ph.D. in political science from Yale University.

Miller, named as the first Thomas G. Long Professor of Law, “epitomizes the level of scholarly distinction that the members of our faculty aspire to,” Lehman said.

“Professor Miller’s scholarly research has concerned the relationship between legal norms and social norms, and the complex ways in which legal and political institutions are shaped by the social practices of their societies. He has published dozens of articles and four books.

“His most recent book, The Anatomy of Disgust, has won academic prizes for its quality, and has made Professor Miller an international celebrity. He has been written up in scholarly and popular magazines from Brazil to Italy, and he has been the subject of commentary in the New Yorker, the New Republic, and in a forthcoming edition of ABC’s ‘Primetime Live.’ He has brought that scholarly erudition into the classroom, teaching the subject of property law with insight and perspective that his students describe in the most glowing terms imaginable.”

Miller received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin, his Ph.D. in English from Yale University, and his J.D. from Yale Law School.

Elizabeth Long graduated from the University of Michigan in 1936. For 60 years she worked as a volunteer with the Monica Guild, a group of women who raised funds for charity, including the Salvation Army and Goodfellows. She also was a lifelong, devoted bridge player and belonged to seven bridge groups.

Long’s father, who practiced with Butzel Long for 64 years, died in 1973. During his long career, Thomas G. Long drafted the Dodge Act to simplify the administration of estates, worked with Elliott Stevenson and William Carpenter on the reorganization of General Motors, and represented Michigan Bell Telephone Company for 40 years in rate proceedings. He served on the boards of directors of several companies and on the Detroit Library Commission for 25 years, including five terms as president. He received honorary degrees from the University of Michigan, Lawrence Institute of Technology and Olivet College.

Thomas Long “was a giant throughout his 64 years of practice with this firm,” said Butzel Long Senior Partner Rassel. “We fly daily under the banner of his name.”

Thomas Long married Mabel A. Somers of Dearborn on August 13, 1912. She died in 1956. They had one child, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth Long’s gift to the Law School is expected to exceed $10 million, making it the second largest the Law School ever has received and the largest cash gift. As Lehman said, “$10 million is much more than most of us will have the opportunity to deploy in a single act in our lifetimes,” but the true significance of her gift “lies in what it will mean in practice for the future of this Law School, and the expression of values that lies behind it.”

Said Lehman: “Elizabeth Long’s bequest adds a resounding exclamation point to the statement that nothing is more important to this institution than its ability to attract and retain the very finest teachers that may be found anywhere in the legal academy.”

— Dean Jeffrey S. Lehman, ’81