The Time is Now

The doors are opening. The window is closing. And you’re invited.

The doors are those of South Hall, our beautiful new academic building, and the Robert B. Aikens Commons. In November we will dedicate the Aikens Commons and celebrate the generosity of Ann and Robert Aikens, ’54. In January, current Michigan Law students will become part of Law School history as the first group to attend classes in the building’s five classrooms and three seminar rooms; to get hands-on legal experience in the Clinical Law suites; and to seek services from the Career Planning, Financial Aid, and Admissions offices as they are housed under one roof for the first time in many years. These are memorable times for Michigan Law.

The window is your chance to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime project. We are still seeking private support for the Law Quadrangle South Hall and the Aikens Commons, giving you the chance to be part of Law School history as well. All gifts of $50,000 and greater will be recognized on a permanent display in South Hall. But that window soon will close.

One person gave the resources to build the Law Quadrangle: William W. Cook. Today we have (and need!) hundreds of alumni and friends who believe in the need for the project, have committed personal resources to advance its progress, and soon will celebrate one of the most significant milestones in this great institution’s distinguished history. Will you be among them? I hope so.

That’s the message we want to send to future generations of students: That hundreds of their predecessors cared enough to want to educate them in the best possible facilities. That, in turn, it will be their privilege and their obligation to pay their good fortune forward to future generations.

And finally, my invitation: Join us. You can do so by calling our office at 734.615.4500. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Todd M. BaiIy
Assistant Dean for Development and Alumni Relations
Building Support

Randee and Joseph Seiger, ’67

As a new 1L, Joe Seiger first reacted to Michigan Law like so many other law students: He was awestruck.

“I was quite taken with the architecture, and by how capable all the other students seemed,” says Seiger.

Appropriately, Seiger and his wife, Randee, BA ’67, have made a gift of $250,000 to the building project, to be recognized with the naming of an interview room in the Career Planning suite in their honor—a space that pleases Randee because it will touch so many students’ lives.

The Seigers, of Los Altos Hills, California, met at U-M; he a native of Washington, D.C., she a native of Michigan whose family ties to the University go back to the 1930s. Joe came to law school interested in real estate development, and after clerking for then-Professors Beverley Pooley and Terry Sandalow, was certain of his career path: “They were very much an influence,” he recalls.

After two years in Washington, D.C., where Joe held public sector jobs and earned a master of law degree from George Washington University, the couple moved to the San Francisco Bay area, their home ever since.

Joe served as assistant general counsel of the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and general counsel to a publicly held real estate company, then in 1973 founded Vintage Properties, of which he remains a principal. The company’s portfolio includes a range of complex residential, commercial, and mixed-use projects honored for their design. As a volunteer, he advised on the development of a recently completed building for the Contemporary Jewish Museum of San Francisco.

Randee has pursued a career in the arts, dancing, creating ceramics, designing interiors, and cofounding a community outreach program, now a quarter-century old, that brings dance to underserved children. The couple has two adult children.

The Seigers have also endowed a scholarship fund benefitting students interested in public service, whose beneficiaries include Professor Eve Brensike Primus, ’01.

They were inspired to increase their building support to its current level after a construction tour last summer. Joe says, “I am very pleased with the building.”

“Buildings are important to us,” adds Randee, “and we understand how they impact a community, its reputation, and its appeal.”

Joe Seiger, with Professors Eve Brensike Primus and Yale Kamisar, at Joe’s 40th reunion in 2007 (above). Randee and Joe Seiger (above right).
GIVING

Building Support

Dee Brown, BA ’70, and Dickson Brown, BA ’68, JD ’71

After Dickson Brown’s first law-firm interview in New York City, he and his wife, Dee, left for the airport three hours early. The native Midwesterners couldn’t wait to leave the city behind. Even when Dickson took a job with Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP, the couple was firm: Three years, then back to our roots.

They stayed for 37 years.

“I loved my job,” says Dickson, a tax law specialist. “I can’t imagine doing anything more interesting than what I worked on over the years.”

The couple met on a blind date as undergraduates at Michigan, where he majored in economics, she in journalism. They married when Dickson was in law school, then went to New York “so Dee could be a buyer at Bloomingdale’s,” as Dickson says (which, in fact, she was), and so he could practice corporate law, for which he thought the city was the place to be. Over time, tax work proved more satisfying.

“I liked the intellectual challenge of putting puzzles together,” he says. “And the people I worked with had good attitudes about their work and their lives.”

The Browns found a suburban community they loved, “a great place to raise kids,” says Dee, who gave up the 24/7 retail life for jobs she could juggle as a working mom: Welcome Wagon lady, then real estate sales.

“Through selling real estate, I was exposed to local lawyers, and I said, ‘I can do a better job than that,’” Dee recalls. She enrolled in a local law school (in order to be home when the couple’s two young sons got home from school), graduated, and built a successful community-based practice, primarily in trust and estate and real estate work.

Now retired, the Browns live in Naples, Florida, and maintain homes in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Ann Arbor, where they can be part of their six grandchildren’s daily lives. Son James and his family live in Charlottesville. The Ann Arbor contingent includes son Kincaid (known as K.C.), BA ’94, JD ’96, MS INF ’98, head of electronic systems services, a reference librarian, and webmaster at the Michigan Law Library; his spouse, Nancy Vettorello, MUP ’92, JD ’97, a professor in the Legal Practice Program; and their three children.

Closely tied to Michigan Law, the Browns have supported the building project with gifts totaling $500,000 and are thrilled that its traditional design matches the existing buildings. As Dee observes, “Any picture you ever see of U-M features the Law Quad.”

Dickson says their support also recognizes Dean Caminker’s “terrific” leadership and is made in thanks for the support and opportunities provided by Michigan Law.

“The project was needed,” he says, “and I like to see Michigan continue to be a first-rate national and international law school to attract people in competition with any law school in the country.”
International Student Support

Jean-Louis Joris, LLM ’75

In today’s global law environment, it’s hard to recall a time when few European lawyers studied abroad and few American law firms practiced across borders. Jean-Louis Joris remembers it well. Having joined Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP in 1975, he has been part of a pioneering age of internationalization at his firm and in legal practice worldwide.

Joris, of Brussels, credits the Michigan LLM as his passport to an extraordinary career—“an adventure,” he says. In appreciation, he has made a gift of $250,000 for international student support, matched by $125,000 from President Mary Sue Coleman’s Challenge for the Student Global Experience.

Joris came to the United States to study amid the emerging trend at that time for American law firms to be present in Europe (often through an office in Brussels), in order to meet the needs of American multinational corporations there more successfully than local lawyers. As the Brussels bar sought to protect its interests, Joris thought, “Why don’t we go study in the U.S. to learn what those guys know that we don’t?”

He did just that, via an exchange fellowship between Michigan Law and the Flemish University of Brussels, his European alma mater. He arrived in Ann Arbor in August 1974. Joris found the Socratic method refreshing; he enjoyed the luxury of choosing six elective classes; he was impressed by the teaching of J.J. White, ’62.

“But the most important thing was being in an international atmosphere,” he says. “That has led me to advocate in my own firm for the quasi-requirement that all European associates must get an LLM in the United States.” In doing so, Joris believes, the associates get the benefit of analytical legal training plus exposure to American culture, the better to serve American and international clients.

Joris’s 37-year relationship with Cleary began with the simple desire for a call-back interview to spend a weekend in New York. Offered a job as an associate, he worked first in New York, then in Brussels, where he became a partner in 1983. He spent most of his career in mergers and acquisitions, always in cross-border transactions.

Married to a psychologist and the father of three grown children, all professionals, Joris says his gift is also inspired by the desire to thank the school that gave him a fellowship and the fact that American universities depend on the generosity of their alumni to stay strong.

“In continental Europe, higher education is basically free,” he says, “whereas in America, I don’t have to tell you that it’s getting to what I believe are absurd numbers. Since I’ve benefited enormously from the American educational system, I wanted to give something back.”

Building Support

Bruce Featherstone, ’77
and Robert Gorlin, ’77

For evidence that lifelong friendships are forged at Michigan Law, look no further than Rob Gorlin (left) and Bruce Featherstone, 1977 alumni who became friends while working together on the Michigan Law Review, of which Gorlin was editor-in-chief and Featherstone an articles editor. Now Gorlin and Featherstone have collaborated on another enterprise: support for the building project, combining their gifts to make a joint commitment of $1 million. In recognition, they will name the unique, round seminar room on the first floor of South Hall, the new academic building. Featherstone is a founding partner of Featherstone Petrie DeSisto LLP, a Denver litigation boutique specializing in complex civil litigation. Gorlin currently serves on the board of directors for Guardian Industries Corp., of which he was formerly vice president and general counsel. The friends are pictured at the Capstone Ceremony held in October 2010 to celebrate the halfway point in construction of the project and the leadership donors who made it possible.
A Toast to Fiske

Since the founding of the Robert B. Fiske Jr. Fellowship Program for Government Service a decade ago, 30 Michigan Law graduates have launched careers in government service with its support.

In celebration of the program’s 10th anniversary, past and current Fiske Fellows gathered in Washington, D.C., on June 16 to toast the program’s benefactor, Bob Fiske, JD ’55, HLLD ’97, over dinner at the Dolley Madison House. Fiske, a senior counsel in the litigation department of Davis Polk & Wardwell—the firm he joined in 1955—has also had a full and distinguished career in public service. He served as independent counsel in the Whitewater investigation and as assistant U.S. attorney and U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York. He served and continues to serve on numerous appointed judicial commissions, including, recently, the seven-member Judicial Compensation Commission established by the New York legislature to determine the compensation of New York State judges for the next four years.

Fiske created the fellowship program believing that having a government service experience early in a professional career is a fulfilling path to pursue, and desiring to help Michigan Law graduates have that experience. Three Fiske Fellows are named annually. Fellows receive debt repayment assistance for three years on all educational loans and a first-year stipend.

“Each year, I am enormously impressed with the quality of the Fellows—their intellectual achievements, their dedication, and their clear promise of making significant contributions to public service,” says Fiske. “It has been my pleasure to see their careers grow and flourish, and it was wonderful to be with them again for the program’s 10th anniversary.”
In appreciation, the Fellows made a collective gift in Fiske’s honor to the summer fellowship program at Michigan Law and presented him with the University of Michigan seal, signed by all. In his toast, Ryan Danks, ’02, paid tribute to Fiske’s public service career and thanked him on behalf of all the Fellows.

Statements written for the occasion reflect the Fellows’ passion for their work and their appreciation of Fiske’s generosity. Maggie Smith, ’07, wrote, “I am extremely grateful to Mr. Fiske for putting this position within my reach,” echoing the words of other Fellows who said they could not have followed their chosen career paths without the support of the fellowship program.

“I am particularly honored to receive the support of Robert Fiske,” wrote Dana Kaersvang, ’06, “whose work in both government and the private sector demonstrates his success in living his values through his legal career.”
Scholarships

Southeast Michigan Scholarship Dinner

Scholarships play a critical role in keeping Michigan Law strong. They help attract great students, and in turn, great students attract great professors who want to teach them—all of which makes for a more dynamic and challenging learning community.

Every year the Law School hosts an event in Southeast Michigan to thank scholarship donors, also inviting scholarship recipients who have the chance to express their gratitude in person.

This year’s event, held March 26 at the Bloomfield Hills Country Club, was hosted by Alan Ackerman, ’72, a longtime major donor to the Law School, who reminded alumni of the importance of Michigan Law to their lives and careers.

Speaking on behalf of students were Jordan Peterson, the Wade Hampton McCree Jr. Scholar, and Cassie Weaver, a Dean’s Scholar. The McCree Scholarship was created by Howard Boigon, BA ’68, JD ’71, of Denver, who had the distinction of traveling the longest distance to attend the dinner.

Peterson and Weaver talked about their Law School experiences and assured the donors that their support of Michigan Law extends far beyond the Quad.

Dean Evan Caminker thanked donors for their generosity and vision as demonstrated by their support. “You are helping us do our jobs even better,” he said, “helping us to ensure that a legal education at the University of Michigan is really an unparalleled experience.”
Recent Gifts

Liz and Richard Burns, BA ’68, JD ’71, of Carefree, Arizona, major supporters of the building project, have made a gift of $100,000 to the Law School Fund in celebration of the Class of 1971’s 40-year reunion. Richard is vice president of business development and general counsel for a family-owned media company and of counsel to Hanft Fride in Duluth, Minnesota. He serves on both the Dean’s Advisory Council and the Development and Alumni Relations Committee.

Stacey and Christopher Caywood, BA ’82, MA ’83, JD ’86, of Kenilworth, Illinois, have made a gift for the building project in honor of the Class of 1986. Chris is president of online services for DeVry Inc.

Lynda, BA ’61, and Murray Feiwell, BA ’60, JD ’63, of Carmel, Indiana, have made an additional gift of $50,000 to the Feiwell Family Scholarship Fund, which they established in 2007. Murray was a founding partner of Feiwell & Hannoy in Indianapolis and now is retired from practice.

Geoffrey Gifford, ’71, of Chicago, has made a gift of $50,000 for the building project in honor of the 40-year reunion of the Class of 1971. Geoff is a partner and founder of Pavalon & Gifford in Chicago.

Irving Stenn Jr., BA ’52, JD ’55, of Chicago, has made a gift of $100,000 to endow a new scholarship at the Law School. Irv is in private practice in Chicago.

Stacey and Christopher Caywood, BA ’82, MA ’83, JD ’86, of Kenilworth, Illinois, have made a gift for the building project in honor of the Class of 1986. Chris is president of online services for DeVry Inc.

Ellen and Irv Hockaday, ’61, of Mission Hills, Kansas, have made a gift of $50,000 for the building project in celebration of the 50-year reunion of the Class of 1961. Irv is the retired president and CEO of Hallmark Cards Inc., and currently is a director of Ford Motor Company and Estee Lauder Companies.

Cyril Moscow, ’57, of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, has made a gift of $50,000 for the building project. He is a partner in the Detroit office of Honigman Miller Schwartz & Cohn LLP and an adjunct professor at the Law School.

Ruth and Brian O’Neill, ’74, of Minnetonka, Minnesota, have made a gift of $25,000 for the building project, bringing their total commitment to the project to $50,000. Brian is a partner in Faegre & Benson’s Minneapolis office and formerly headed the firm’s litigation practice.

How to make a gift to Michigan Law

Online credit card gifts: Visit www.law.umich.edu and click on Giving to Michigan Law on the left side of the page.

Gifts of securities: Call toll free 877.647.9090 or email umgiftsec@umich.edu

For assistance: Call the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, 734.615.4500

Have you remembered the Law School in your estate plan?