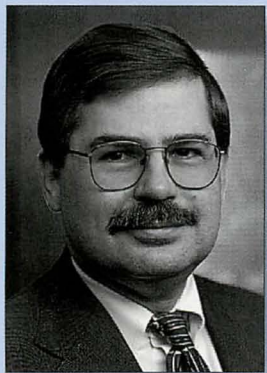


Coming Into Focus

There is electricity in the air at the University of Maryland School of Law. I sense it most on Monday morning when I teach torts to first-year law students. They came in August, bundles of energy and anxiety, each with extraordinary accomplishments already a part of their young lives. The new words they



encounter—“appellant,” “appellee,” “respondent,” “petitioner,” “duty” and “breach”—leave them initially befuddled. And yet, over a period of months, they begin a remarkable transformation to become “persons of the law.” What a privilege and pleasure it is to be a part of this experience. That is why I love being

a legal educator.

Each and every one of you is also a constant reminder of the mission of the University of Maryland School of Law. The summer brought great sadness to the School of Law community, while at the same time reminding us of our legacy. Three distinguished graduates and friends, Bel Air Attorney A. Freeborn Brown '41, Nathan Patz '26, and Maryland State Comptroller Louis Goldstein '38 passed away. Freeborn was widely acknowledged as the “dean” of the bar of Harford County, Maryland, a title that flatters those of us who hold that formal title. Nathan, a gentleman of remarkable wisdom, strength and kindness, was one of the early benefactors of the law school, endowing both a Student Emergency Loan Fund and a Library Fund. Louie, perhaps best known for having shaken more hands than anyone in the history of Maryland politics and for passing out coins engraved with his famous saying, “God Bless Ya’ll, Real Good” was a man of extraordinary intellectual

capacity and integrity. Maintaining a Triple-A Bond rating for the state of Maryland through all the political turmoil and budget crises of the last thirty years, in and of itself, is a remarkable accomplishment.

Freeborn, Nathan and Louis were unique individuals. And yet, despite their unique characteristics, they shared a common professional education—they were a part of the stream of graduates of the University of Maryland School of Law. The bright young men and women who entered the law school this year join that stream, and they too will make their own unique accomplishments through the years.

Just as the professional identities of these new young students are beginning to come into focus, so is the future home of the University of Maryland School of Law. In just a few years, our nationally acclaimed programs, well respected faculty and talented students will be housed in a red brick Gothic structure located at the same site as the current law school. This exterior, suggesting the dignity of the profession and continuity with tradition, will house the latest in technology, and classrooms and clinics containing the nation’s most up-to-date legal educational programs.

By the end of the year, we will share with you architectural renderings and floor plans for the new facility. Over the last several months, the architects have been meeting with faculty, students and staff to assure that the new building is a perfect match for the educational programs of today and tomorrow.

The students, the faculty, the programs, and now the building: the University of Maryland School of Law for the 21st century is coming into focus.

Donald G. Gifford, dean