Four New Faculty Join School

Since spring, four new faculty have joined the School of Law. David Hyman, MD, JD joins the Law and Health Care faculty this fall and will teach a seminar on Health Care Finance in spring 1996. Hyman received his MD from the University of Chicago in 1986 and his JD from Chicago in 1989. Since then, he has worked with the Chicago firm of Mayer Brown & Platt, specializing in tax and health care law.

Joyce McConnell will be a visiting associate professor in the Legal Theory and Practice Program. She is on the faculty of the CUNY Law School, where she teaches courses in constitutional law, torts, property and women and the law. Before entering academia, McConnell worked in labor law with the National Labor Relations Board and the U.S. Department of Labor.

Deborah Hellman joins the faculty as a visiting assistant professor. She will teach professional responsibility, jurisprudence and contracts. A 1991 Harvard Law School graduate, Hellman was book review editor of the Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review. Before law school, she studied philosophy at Columbia University and at the Sorbonne, then practiced employment law with Hughes Hubbard & Reed in New York.

Douglas Colbert joined our nationally acclaimed Clinical Law Program this spring. He previously directed the Criminal Justice Clinical Program at Hofstra and frequently coached trial competition teams. His scholarship, largely focusing on issues relating to race, includes articles published in the Stanford, Cornell and Hastings law reviews. A popular teacher at Hofstra, Colbert was selected Faculty Member of the Year numerous times. He earned his JD at Rutgers-Newark in 1972.

President Ramsay Talks about Academics and Community

In its goal to become the best public law school in the country, the University of Maryland School of Law has a firm advocate in UMAB’s new president. "In fact, I challenged the law school to do just that," says President David J. Ramsay.

A physician and research physiologist, Ramsay is no stranger to academic excellence. He holds several degrees from Oxford University and brings to Baltimore two decades of experience at one of America's most prestigious academic medical centers, the University of California, San Francisco. As senior vice chancellor of academic affairs, he was part of the team leading UCSF to national eminence, particularly in moving the university toward strengthened academic programs and increased community involvement.

Ramsay is sensitive to the need for balance among the traditional missions of state-supported universities—teaching, research and public service—especially as universities become more involved in addressing societal problems. "It's important to connect the outreach programs with our academic programs," he notes. "Outreach efforts become much stronger if the core academic programs of the university also move out into the communities. Health care reform is producing a powerful accelerating pressure to do just that."

In fact, he points out, health care reform has been a catalyst in pushing universities out into the community, because primary care is provided in community outreach clinics, not in hospitals. In this, the University of Maryland at Baltimore has a real advantage. "Here we have a marvelous opportunity to involve other health professions, and to include social work and legal clinics," Ramsay observes. From such initiatives come new ways of thinking, research proposals, contracts that will make the community and society better. "In this way," he says, "we not only help our local community, we also help to develop model systems that then can be adapted in other areas."

The new president believes a cross-disciplinary approach often strengthens community outreach. For example, he notes, one discipline can analyze a community problem and bring significant experience to bear in solving it. But a fully developed approach is more likely to involve several disciplines and include health, housing, family counseling and legal assistance. "The more cross-disciplinary the approach, the better the outcome is going to be," he concludes.

Pronouncing himself "very impressed by Maryland law school clinics that help settle disputes between landlords and tenants and give free legal advice," Ramsay agrees that mechanisms need to be developed so that legal services are available to those who are not economically privileged or indigent.

—J.S.