In this issue of JD, you will learn about the exciting ways in which the Internet is becoming an integral part of our teaching, research and public service activities at the University of Maryland School of Law. Students and faculty at the law school now ask each other questions and conduct Socratic dialogues “on line.” The School of Law hosts “list-serves,” which are active computerized discussion forums for the nation’s best lawyers in fields such as state securities law. For those who are Internet-adept, the School of Law provides a wide variety of hypertext connections for researching Maryland law. Many lawyers do not yet realize that by vastly expanding the legal research resources available to them, the Internet in the late 1990s will change legal and factual research every bit as much as the advent of Lexis and Westlaw in the late 1970s.

So I suppose this means that the University of Maryland School of Law is a leader in facilitating “connectivity,” that buzzword of the 90s.

But “connectivity” is merely a tool, a means to an end. Great law schools are more than just vast library resources or the latest hypertext links. It is connectedness which provides the foundation for our superb legal education programs at the University of Maryland School of Law. This connectedness is amply illustrated by several other articles in this issue of JD.

The School of Law has a great full-time faculty. But the teaching at the School of Law is even better than that which could be offered by our full-time faculty alone. Year after year, the School of Law draws upon many of the most distinguished lawyers and judges to teach our students as adjunct members of the faculty. On most mornings, before heading over to the federal courthouse, United States District Court Judge Frederic Smalkin ’71 heads to the classroom to teach commercial law. Do the students appreciate this? You bet they do: they responded last year by selecting Judge Smalkin as the “Teacher of the Year.” And imagine the benefit to students of learning estate planning from Shale Stiller, one of Baltimore’s most highly respected attorneys, who has been teaching at the School of Law for 34 consecutive years.

Some law schools view adjunct faculty almost as an embarrassment to their “ivory tower” image of themselves, or merely as a means to staff courses when fulltime faculty members are not available. For “the law school embracing the real world” at the University of Maryland, however, adjunct faculty provide a valuable link to both the latest developments in the real world practice of law and to the continuity of the legal profession. This is more than connectivity, this is a connectedness to the profession which we foster and treasure.

Our two distinguished alumni profiled in this magazine are recipients of the 1997 Distinguished Graduate Award and the 1997 Benjamin L. Cardin Pro Bono Service Award. These two winners exemplify various dimensions of the School of Law’s connectedness.

The life history of Judge Robert B. Watts ’49, the Benjamin L. Cardin Pro Bono Service Award recipient, is the struggle for equal justice under the law in Maryland. This struggle for equal justice, exemplified not only by Judge Watts, but also by the work of many of our students and faculty in the clinical program, is something that those of us at the School of Law are proud to be connected with. The struggle for justice, in our law school, unlike others, will never be limited to 50 ways to parse the words “equal protection” during a constitutional law course.

Just as the struggle for justice is an integral part of the University of Maryland School of Law, so is the role of the law in facilitating responsible economic growth. Economic growth provides the employment opportunities and revenues necessary to meet the problems of today and the challenges of tomorrow. A remarkable number of School of Law graduates have left their mark as leaders of businesses and corporations. The list includes past recipients of the Distinguished Graduate Award such as the late James Rouse ’37 and his successor as CEO of the Rouse Corporation, Mathias J. DeVito ’56. It also includes this year’s Distinguished Graduate Award recipient, Alvin “Buzzy” Krondag ’75, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Alex. Brown and Sons Incorporated, who is profiled in this issue. Mr. Kronrad’s receipt of this award is an important reminder that many of our graduates who contribute the most to their nation and their communities will do so not as practicing lawyers, but as important leaders of business and other organizations. We serve the mission of the University of Maryland School of Law best when we recognize our connectedness to the economic sphere, as well as to the struggle for equal opportunity and justice.

In 1997, the University of Maryland School of Law is emerging in legal education as a pioneer in the field of connectivity. These efforts build, however, on a tradition of connectedness which goes back 180 years. The law school is connected to the Internet, but more importantly, connected to the bar and bench through extraordinarily distinguished lawyers and judges who serve as adjunct faculty. And, most importantly, the law school is connected to both the business world and the struggle for equal justice through the accomplishments of our distinguished graduates such as Buzzy Krondag and Bob Watts.

Donald G. Gifford, Dean