Raising

BY CHRIS HART

You’re looking at early drawings for a law school that will change the way lawyers are educated in Maryland and quite probably across the nation. It is a building that represents a new paradigm in the way students are introduced to the worlds of torts, criminal statutes, legal theory, and trial work—the vicissitudes of the lawyering life. Yes, the Socratic Method lives within these envisioned walls, but so do computerized casebooks, Internet-based research tools, and dedicated networks and spaces devoted to up-and-running legal practices. In the modern parlance, every University of Maryland law student inhabiting this structure over the next half century will be “jacked in”—that is, linked to a breathtaking array of technology and services. Information. Knowledge. Potential. Leadership.

From its frugal but honorable beginnings on Lombard Street to its present home one block north on Baltimore Street, the School of Law has operated on the assumption that leading students and teachers would gravitate to it simply because of the school’s stature in the larger community. Success Breeds Success, Inc.

But things changed in higher education, beginning in the 1980s, and around the same time legal education took on critics posing the twin questions of relevancy and readiness. The basic issue was this: Lawyers in training need more legroom, better access to the latest instruments for doing their jobs, collegial relationships with talented and busy faculty members.

How do you achieve all that in a tiny classroom stuffed inside a cinderblock building?

After years of working in deteriorating rowhouses and student spaces cramped beneath parking garages, the School of Law has decided to answer that question with a drafting pencil and a construction crew. A new, beautifully rendered, five-story structure will take root over the next two to three years. It will be a major highlight of the University campus, rising over its northern edge like a flagship. And like a flagship on the evening tide, other vessels—including yours, as an alumnus or friend of the school—will rise with it.

“When we’re done,” says Donald G. Gifford, dean and standard-bearer of the building effort, “we will have the best facility in the United States for students working directly with clients in a major law school facility. We simply will be the best.”

How do you achieve all that in a tiny classroom stuffed inside a cinderblock building?

After years of working in deteriorating rowhouses and student spaces cramped beneath parking garages, the School of Law has decided to answer that question with a drafting pencil and a construction crew. A new, beautifully rendered, five-story structure will take root over the next two to three years. It will be a major highlight of the University campus, rising over its northern edge like a flagship. And like a flagship on the evening tide, other vessels—including yours, as an alumnus or friend of the school—will rise with it.

“When we’re done,” says Donald G. Gifford, dean and standard-bearer of the building effort, “we will have the best facility in the United States for students working directly with clients in a major law school facility. We simply will be the best.”
Just completing its first year, the Critical Moment campaign for the new law school is progressing steadily, energetically, with one genuine surprise so far: faculty giving is nearly 100 percent—gifts are coming in at $25,000, $30,000, even the $40,000 range. These are major donations coming from law school professors.

Robert Percival, professor and director of the Environmental Law Program and co-chair of the faculty committee overseeing the internal campaign, said he is "astounded" by the level of success so far.

"It's a unique story," Percival declares. “Other fundraisers who looked at us said we would do well to get 70 percent of our faculty donating. But this is quite a collegial place, and the enthusiasm for the new building is so great that just about everybody has made a pledge. I've even had colleagues come up to me and say, 'When are you going to ask me to give? I've been waiting.'

Talking about a new building appears to have freed something in the psyche of the law school, if you will: It reminds those who have experienced it how atypical the school is among its peers, how sharply it contrasts with the legal education of old. It also demonstrates that a graduate's stock can rise or fall depending on the fortunes of his or her alma mater.

"I realized we needed a new facility when people started showing admiration for my undergraduate alma mater," Percival explains. "My old school had made a lot of physical improvements since I'd left, and the word was getting around that it was on the rise. It made me proud that I'd gone there. I'd like to see the same thing happen for our graduates when we rebuild."

"When we rebuild"—it's a phrase that might have seemed unutterable only five years ago. Now that the commitment is looking solid, what will $38,286,000 in
And how will the new building look?

Mario Boiardi, partner in charge for Hartman-Cox and senior designer for the project, is working closely with Dean Gifford and the faculty to create a design that works with the rest of campus, but also has a distinctive appearance that says "law taught here." As of now, that message is conveyed via the neo-Gothic style—dark red brick, tall, finely detailed windows, broad entryways.

Boiardi, who contributed to the architecture for the Georgetown Law Center’s significant renovations, says the appearance of the building is meant to make it easily identified as a major component of the Baltimore campus, but also appropriate for a neighborhood that is receiving renewed attention from development interests, private and public.

"In one of the first meetings I had with Dean Gifford, I asked him what he wanted the building to look like, and he pointed to Westminster Hall, the former church that abuts the school. That made sense to me—it’s a beautiful structure, evocative of Oxford. It was also clear that he did not want the school to appear alien to other buildings in the neighborhood."

But clearly, the two principals of this project are on the same page of blueprints. Around the middle of the 21st century, some member of the next generation of bright young lawyers may find a dusty copy of this JD in his mother’s collection of alumni memorabilia. He’ll pore over the article about the new school, about the hopes and dreams of those who will occupy it for a few precious years of their lives. He may look out a window of the handsome structure at 500 West Baltimore Street, and think back to those days when it existed only as sketches and models.

"They cared about us," he’ll say.

"They cared about the law."
Frankly Speaking...

There’s a term in old English law—the “frank-pledge.” It refers to the commitment made by English freemen toward corporate responsibility and good behavior for all free-born citizens over the age of 14. Black’s defines it as a “pledge of surety to the sovereign for the collective good conduct of a group.”

If ever there was a time for friends and alumni of the School of Law to make a frank-pledge, this is it. As we focus on the look and content of our new building—a building that will pay for itself in terms of high-quality students, teachers and programs well into the next century—we are facing a looming deadline: We must meet or exceed $8 million in campaign gifts and pledges if we are to capitalize on the state legislature’s offer to triple that amount.

The opportunity is staring us in the face. It’s the judgmental, yet hopeful look of great legal scholars like David Hoffman, who got the school off to a solid start in 1816. It’s John Brumbaugh, Wharton, Levin, Ehrmantraut Klein, & Nash Distinguished Service Scholar and Emeritus Professor of Law, and mentor of perhaps more great lawyers and leaders than any other single person in the history of Maryland. It’s teenagers and residents in Park Heights, Baltimore, where our students and teachers have established a significant presence in the search for legal ways out of the chaos of urban poverty and strife.

Many eyes are trained on the School of Law. Some already know what we can accomplish; others have great expectations. If they pass by the school, they might wonder: All that good work is being done there? How long can they keep it up?

It’s a legitimate question. While we provide clinical expertise in hundreds of cases every year, and while our students find creative and astounding ways to meet their extensive public-service requirements, only so much can be accomplished with a couple of rooms and some PCs. For those of us who know the school well, it sends a bit of a chill: Will Maryland’s best law students search elsewhere for their ideal school, because the school in their backyard could not measure up in terms of facilities and study space? And, even tougher to swallow: Will we, as products of the University of Maryland, be satisfied with such a prognosis?

At the date of this publication, gifts to the building campaign total $5.8 million. That’s well over halfway to the goal, but still too little for us to get comfortable.

In fact, none of us should feel comfortable. We should be agitated, even righteous—concerned about the long-term future of training and education for Maryland’s lawyers, its principals in business, politics and other Keystone institutions. If these talented people don’t earn their JDs in Maryland, how are we going to keep them in Maryland or bring them back to Maryland?

There is no sly and sophisticated way to say this: We need your help. The competition could be gaining on us.

So, the next time you crack open the Maryland Code, or wrap up a business plan you’ve labored over or edit a computer file that contains your latest patent application, think about the School of Law. Give a second thought to those who gave you a shot. And make a frank-pledge that will free up the men and women of the law in the future. They’re waiting to hear from you.
The University of Maryland School of Law would like to thank the following contributors
(as of Sept. 25) for their generous gifts to the Building Campaign!

$2 Million and Above
France-Merrick Foundations

$200,000 - 500,000
Anonymous
Carlyn & Sol Hubert

$100,000 - 199,999
Paul Bekman
T. Carroll Brown
Francis B. Burch Jr.
Mathias J. DeVito
Rhona S. Ginsberg
James J. Hanks Jr.
Joseph R. Hardiman
Leroy E. Hoffberger
Leonard A. Orman
Adena W. and M. David Testa

$50,000 - 99,999
Duron Inc./The Feinberg Foundation
Ellen M. Heller & Shale D. Stiller
Barbara Kerr Howe, Susan L. Howe, & Harvey S. Howe III
David Levin
Stuart and Suzanne Salsbury
Shawe & Rosenthal
Arnold M. Weiner

$25,000 - 49,999
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Alter
Richard D. Bennett
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Finnerty Jr.
Gallagher, Evelius & Jones
Nancy & Henry Hopkins
Steven P. Lockman
C.E. and Delphine Peck
Hanan and Carole Sibel
Richard C. Tilghman Jr.
Jeffrey A. Wyand

$10,000 - 24,999
Cary M. Adams
Abe A. Bailey
Lynne A. Battaglia
Wes & Georgia Blakeslee
Raymond Blank
Joseph P. Blocher, Linowes & Blocher, L.L.P.
The Hon. Andre Davis and Margaret Roberts
William B. Dulaney, Esq.
Charles O. Fisher
Howard & Karen “Chaya” Friedman
James J. Gitomer
Louis Michaux Gonzales, Esq.
Thomas B. Lewis, Esq.
P. Michael Nagle
O’Malley, Miles, Nylen & Gilmore, P.A.
Wilbert Sirota
Rudolph A. Vignone

$1,000 - 9,999
Alison L. Asti, Esq.
Phyllis and Dennis Belman
Myrna and Ben Cardin
Sally C. Chester and Gerri G. Willford
Daniel H. Crowley
The Hon. Elijah E. Cummings
PG County Executive Wayne K. Curry
Robert H. Dyer Jr. and L. Paige Marvel
James R. Eyer
Jeffrey B. Fisher, Esq.
Herbert S. Garten
Frank R. Goldstein, Esq.
Robert G. Goss
Christina & Christopher Grigorian
Isaac & Catharine Hecht
The Hon. Patricia C. Jessamy
State’s Attorney for Baltimore City
Raymond G. LaPlaca
Jeffrey and Anne Kelly Laynor
Myles V. Lynk
Alfred J. Maleson
Bernard S. Meyer, Esq.
Howard B. Miller
David B. Mitchell, Esq.
The Hon. Diana G. Motz and the Hon. J. Frederick Motz
The Hon. Charles J. Muskin
John C. Nason
The Hon. Lawrence F. Rodowsky
Gilbert and Lora Rosenthal
Shelley Sadowsky, Esq.
Sheldon P. Schuman, Esq.
Stuart and Candace Simmons
Seymour B. Stern, Esq.
Craig A. Thompson
M. Melinda Thompson
University of Maryland School of Law Alumni Association
Mr. and Mrs. Martin Z. Vogelhut
Roger D. Winston

Faculty and Staff - $294,005
José Bahamonde-González
Taunya Lovell Banks

Barbara Bezdek
David Bogen
Richard A. Booth
Trishana E. Bowden
Surell Brady
Irving and Sally Breitowitz
John and Alice Brumbaugh
Hungdau Chiu
Douglas L. Colbert and Suzanne Sangree
Karen Czapanskiy
A. A. Dash
Jerry and Sue Deise
Susan Hankin Denise
Joseph B. Espo and Rena I. Steinzor
John and Janet Ester
Jim and Vickie Forsyth
Larry S. Gibson
Don and Nancy Gifford
Shelley B. Gitomer
Barbara Gontrum
Barbara Gordon
Barbara Gontrum
Oscar S. Gray
Deborah S. Hellman
Stanley S. Herr
Diane E. Hoffman
Alan D. Hornstein
David and Karen Hyman
Sherrilyn A. Ifill
Robert I. Keller
Andy King
Susan Leviton
Linda McDonnell
Dana L. Morris, J.D.
Tricia D. O’Neill and Timothy L. Mullin Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Max Stul Oppenheimer
Joan L. O’Sullivan
Robert V. Percival
Peter E. Quint
William L. Reynolds
Karen H. Rothenberg
Jana B. Singer
Robert E. Suggs
Mr. & Mrs. Edward A. Tomlinson
Katherine L. Vaughns
Anhonny Waters
Deborah J. Weimer
Marley S. Weiss
Roger C. Wolf
Joel Woody
Gordon G. and Ruth F. Young

* Gifts under $1,000 are not listed
* Names are listed according to the specifications of the donor