Why Do Alumni Return to the School of Law to Teach?

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—Michael P. Brockmeyer '77

Smalkin's demanding work schedule logistically possible: the law school is within easy walking distance of the federal courthouse in Baltimore and the earliest starting time for most trials is 10 a.m.

What keeps him coming back year after year? "I have a natural devotion to the school where I received my education," Smalkin explains. In addition, he notes, "It's a pleasure to work with James Forsyth, associate dean for Admissions and Registration, and Robin Stewart, who handles all the administrative details so well."

What's more, he says, working with students is a "refreshing experience. Each class seems to have a different personality,"

Smalkin describes. "It's fascinating to me the unique questions they ask and what they find interesting and humorous." One difference he's noted from his early days of teaching is that today more and more students have worked between college and law school. It's not unusual, he attests, to have a certified public accountant in class and others with backgrounds in retail or commerci-
cial sales. Smalkin calls on these students to enliven his lecture format, to “flesh out the dry things you have to go over.”

As a faculty member, his goal is to pass his knowledge and know-how on to his students. In a large lecture setting, there isn’t time to get to know all of the students on a one-to-one basis as he would like. Nevertheless, over the past two decades, Smalkin is gratified when former students appear before him in court as practicing attorneys. Over the years, the federal judge also has hired several former students as law clerks; Joanna Goger ’00 is the latest to hold that position. And Smalkin’s students are gratified—he has been chosen as the School’s Adjunct Faculty Member of the Year a number of times, most recently in 2000.

Sharing knowledge and experience
Michael P. Brockmeyer ’77, a partner with Piper Marbury Rudnick & Wolfe, LLP, and a former assistant attorney general of Maryland in the Antitrust Division, has taught a survey course in Antitrust since 1999. Brockmeyer’s course addresses federal regulation of competition, monopoly and restraints of trade with a concentration on Supreme Court decisions that have interpreted federal antitrust statutes. A former chairman of the Multistate Antitrust Task Force of the National Association of Attorneys General during his tenure with the state of Maryland, 95 percent of his private practice revolves around antitrust, consumer protection and trade regulation, he explains.

Brockmeyer is no newcomer to the classroom, for many years he has taught an ABA course, Product Marketing and Distribution, to practicing attorneys for continuing education purposes. Nevertheless, the 48-year-old father of three says he found teaching in law school a challenge. Part of that was due to the “soup to nuts” subject matter of his antitrust course. Another was his desire to make the course relevant and compelling. Antitrust cases are basic and don’t vary, he describes, many dating back to the 1930s. His goal was to help his stu-

dents understand the setting of a case, and the economics and underlying legal principles so that they would know how to apply them in government service or private practice. Realizing that many of his day and evening students were about to graduate, it was important for him to “make the course practical and current,” he notes.

That first year, Brockmeyer devoted three to four hours of preparation to every hour in class, creating “copious and detailed outlines.” Since then, the ratio of prep time to class time has been closer to two to one.

Why did he commit to being an adjunct? “There is a satisfaction of trying to teach what you know, of coming back and sharing with the students your knowledge and experience,” Brockmeyer attests. Every now and then “you see the light bulb go on,” he says, and that makes all the difference.

Connecting with students
Steven Groseclose ’94, a senior associate with Piper Marbury Rudnick & Wolfe, LLP’s Washington, D.C. office, agreed to teach a seminar on Federal Regulation of Hazardous Waste for the first time this semester because of personal ties to the School’s Environmental Law Program.

Groseclose, who has a graduate degree in engineering, is team-teaching the seminar with Rob Wing ’94. The course focuses on the liability scheme imposed by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liabilities Act, also known as the Super Fund legislation, and the regulation of ongoing hazardous and solid waste generation, treatment and disposal under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Wing, 36, works in the Office of General Counsel for the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C. “Because hazardous waste is a narrow niche specialty, graduates of the School of Law’s environmental program tend to keep in touch with Professor Bob Percival and Coordinator Laura Mrozek,” Groseclose says. Praising the University of Maryland for having one of the best environmental
law programs in the country, he says. Percival and Mrozek have gone out of their way since he graduated to offer professional advice and job leads. "It's hard to say no to Bob and Laura," Groseclose says. "They're very nice people."

Logistically, team-teaching appealed to Groseclose and Wing for a number of reasons. Because both men are in positions that require out-of-town travel, they have arranged their schedules to back up one another. They also have different specialties—Wing's background is in national and international issues, whereas Groseclose is an expert on hazardous waste regulation.

"Team-teaching takes the pressure off," Wing explains. They draw on one another's strengths. "It's important to your students to look at the issues from different perspectives," Groseclose notes. Both men have worked in the public sector and in private practice; Wing has also been a law clerk to a federal judge.

"Teaching is a humbling experience," Groseclose confirms, "it's also an opportunity to deepen your own knowledge."

What appeals to his teaching partner is the challenge of "connecting with the students, making the topic interesting and exciting, and explaining the law clearly and simply," Wing says. "I enjoyed law school very much, I wanted to try teaching."

**Giving something back**

Teresa K. LaMaster '95, an associate with Bowie & Jensen, a Baltimore-based business and intellectual property firm serving privately held companies doing business in national and international markets, explains that she became an adjunct professor in the School of Law for her own professional development. "Teaching is a great way for a practicing attorney to keep current," notes LaMaster, who has represented a variety of clients in trade secret, patent, trademark and copyright matters in state and federal trial and appellate courts in Maryland and around the country.

She and three of her colleagues—founding partner Robert R. Bowie '77, Mark Jensen and Michael Oliver—use a team approach for their course, Introduction to Intellectual Property Practice, a first-time offering in the evening program during the fall 2000 semester. The team gave an overview of the protection, enforcement and commercialization of intellectual prop-

"writing the best exam I ever had to take—a multiple choice," she remembers. "I tried to learn from his example and wrote a multiple choice exam for our students."

Fortunately, LaMaster affirms, "Bob and Mark were 150 percent behind what we were doing; they were committed to our devoting time to the course." Bowie explains that one of the themes and expectations of his law firm is teaching and education. He remembers the training he received in Professor Michael A. Millemann's clinical program during his third year at the law school. "We received good, practical real-world experiences—Social Security, landlord-tenant disputes as well as criminal cases," Bowie says. He praises Millemann for introducing him to the concept of lawyer as servant and adviser and for impressing upon him the need to work with people from every level of society, guiding principles that he values to this day.

LaMaster echoes similar sentiments. "Karen Rothenberg and Jana Singer were both examples to me of women who were real leaders, combining a career and a family," she says. LaMaster and her husband, John O'Brien, have a five-year-old daughter, Helen, who is autistic. In addition to teaching and private practice, LaMaster is an advocate for the educational needs of children with disabilities. She serves as chair of the Baltimore County Board of Education Citizen's Advisory Committee for Special Education and as a member of the State Advisory Committee for Special Education.

Another motivation for teaching in the School of Law was the "opportunity to give something back" to her alma mater, LaMaster notes. "I want to see the law school succeed."

"For the many adjuncts who are also alumni, teaching provides a way of remaining connected to the law school," explains Singer. "The school, in turn, benefits from their commitment and expertise. Having alumni on the faculty ensures the School of Law's success and the success of its future graduates."