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Bedrock of Democracy
Rule of law conference brings international recognition
Dean’s letter

‘A good and meaningful life’

This is my last letter to the Law School community as dean of this wonderful school. I urge you to join me in welcoming and supporting John Douglass in his new role as acting dean. John is a lawyer’s lawyer and professor’s professor. He is widely respected in the profession, a superb scholar, a gifted teacher, and natural leader. He and I have worked closely together this spring planning the leadership transition, and the Law School could not be in better hands during this coming academic year.

I recently wrote an article for our Law School student newspaper with some reflections on the school, the profession, legal education, and my own career, and wish to share some of those reflections again here.

One hears lawyers and judges debate whether law practice is now less of a “profession” than it once was, and more of a “business.” There is a much greater emphasis now on advertising and marketing. The fierceness of competition among firms and lawyers for clients is escalating. That competition places strains on civility, on the willingness to engage in pro bono service, on adherence to the highest and best traditions of our noble calling.

We are in an epoch of trans-jurisdictional law practice, corresponding to the globalization of business and communication. Knowledge of comparative and international law is increasingly important for many practitioners and judges. Connected to this is the increasing importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity, and the imperative that the profession welcome and encourage diversity in all its polymath manifestations.

The very substance of law is increasingly complex. The content of law has for decades been shifting from the common-law and constitutional law tradition of incremental judicial evolution to the regulatory and administrative state. There is a restless disquiet, at home and abroad, over the threats to the rule of law. We are all coping with the impact of the Internet and its rapidly changing forms.

And finally, lawyers today face great stresses on their mental, physical, and spiritual well-being as they struggle to reconcile the pressures and pace of modern practice with the living of a good and meaningful life, a life that includes connections to family, friends, community, and the spirit. Students, faculty, lawyers, and judges must all participate in conversations about these changes, and about what they portend for the evolution in American law schools in coming years.

As for me, I find I’ve always been restless to constantly seek out new challenges in professional life. I’ve identified with the sentiments of Ishmael, in the opening pages of Moby Dick, where he talks about how, periodically, he is taken by an incessant urge to head out to sea for new adventure, or with Huck, in the closing pages of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, where he declares his intent to light out for the Western Territories. I and my family will always treasure the friendships we have made with the University of Richmond Law School community, and carry those memories in our hearts.

Rodney A. Smolla
Dean, School of Law
Pursue your heart’s work, Starr tells graduates

Authentic success is having the insight and courage to follow one’s true passion, Robin Robertson Starr told 166 graduates of the University of Richmond School of Law May 12, as they prepared to receive their juris doctor degrees.

Starr knows what she is talking about. After graduating from the Law School, she became a corporate lawyer with A.H. Robins Co. and then spent 12 years with Williams Mullen, where she was a partner. In 1993, she decided to follow her lifelong dream of working with animals and became CEO of the Richmond SPCA.

Starr recalled the day when she received her law degree, “founded like a laser on achieving success.” But that “success,” she said, was defined by others, and in the early years of her career, she continued to pursue priorities “according to my perception of the priorities of others.”

“Finding your own true passion is hard work,” Starr told the graduates. “There is no manual, template or on-board navigation system.”

“The truly lucky, she said, find their passion when they are young. Others find it as a second career, and some never find it.

“In 1997, I decided to devote the remainder of my working life to what I loved” in spite of negative reactions from colleagues and friends. In her decade of service, the Richmond SPCA has become a national model of best practices for humane societies.

Starr urged the graduates to “stop carrying around the weight of other people’s expectations” and set aside gender roles and stereotypes. “Do the work of your heart and your soul.” She advised them to “stop worrying about peer assessment of the value of what you do” and “insist on having sole custody of your life.”

“If you’re lucky, what is to come in your life will be nothing like what you expect it to be.”

Student speaker Justin Fulton of Rustburg, Va., told his fellow graduates that there are never enough great lawyers. “We have a responsibility to help others,” he said. “No previous generation has had the tools we have at our disposal.” He advised his classmates to respond, to inspire, and “let us lead by example.”

The Hon. Donald W. Lemons, justice of the Supreme Court of Virginia and John Marshall Professor of Judicial Studies, addressed graduates as the faculty speaker. He urged them to return civilly to the law: “Freedom survives in civility,” he said. Their aim should be “to lift the profession to higher standards.” It is the privilege and duty of law, he said, “to serve your community.”

Jennifer Becker of Richmond received the Nina R. Keatin Service Award, given to the graduate who has contributed most significantly to the school, the community and the legal profession.

Michael Clements of Washington, Pa., received the Charles T. Norman Award for the best all-around graduating senior.

Dean Smolla leaves distinguished legacy

Rod Smolla

Rodney A. Smolla, whose energetic leadership brought inner confidence and international recognition to the Law School, has accepted a similar job at Washington and Lee University School of Law, effective July 1, 2007.

The University will conduct a national search to replace Smolla, with the intention of appointing a new dean by July 1, 2008.

John G. Douglas, who has served on the law faculty since 1996, was named interim dean. (See related story at right.)

“Today, the faculty, staff and students, Rod has been an inspiring example and a boundless source of energy and ideas,” Douglas said. “We will miss him as a teacher, colleague, mentor and friend. Still, the best way to honor Rod’s tremendous contribution is to show that we are more than capable of realizing—and improving upon—the vision that we developed along with him. That’s our challenge for the coming year. We’ve already started. There is no time out.”

“Rod is an example of a lawyer living greatly in the law,” said Justice Donald W. Lemons of the Supreme Court of Virginia, the John Marshall Professor of Judicial Studies at the Law School. Smolla is “an excellent teacher, scholar, and practicing lawyer, as well as a leader in community affairs. He will be sorely missed at the Law School.”

Smolla made his decision public shortly before the Rule of Law Conference, which brought prominent jurists from around the world and national attention to the Law School this April. With its distinguished roster of speakers representing diverse points of view, the conference was an appropriate capstone to Smolla’s tenure.

Upon becoming dean in 2003, Smolla set out to establish and to revitalize academic centers at the Law School to foster research, public outreach and new opportunities for students in areas such as environmental law, family law, intellectual property law, international law and health law.

The Law School also established the Institute for Actual Innocence, an academic program with clinical and classroom components to identify, investigate and litigate cases of wrongful convictions.

Smolla began a fundraising campaign for a building addition to house the centers and an expanded enrollment. The campaign would increase financial aid for students. He set forth a pro bono initiative designed to emphasize service and to strengthen the Law School’s ties to the community.

He also drew praise for adding to Richmond’s strong faculty some of the brightest young talents in American law schools.

“One of Rod’s greatest legacies will undoubtedly be the junior faculty hires he made, both as chair of the appointment committee and as dean,” said Corinna Barnett Lain, who joined the faculty in 2001. “He single-handedly raised the caliber of this school by actively recruiting top-notch candidates who have produced top-notch scholarship under his tutelage.”

By example, he pushed faculty and students toward more ambitious...
Professor al-Hibri among four awarded First Freedom prize

Akhtash al-Hibri

The Council for America’s First Freedom awarded professor Azizah Y. al-Hibri a First Freedom Award for 2007 for her contributions to the advancement of religious liberty around the world.

She was one of four distinguished advocates for religious freedom to be so honored. Others include Madeleine K. Albright, former U.S. secretary of state, AbdolFHadi Amor, president of the UNESCO human rights jury, and Kevin J. “Seamus” Hasson, founder and chairman of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, a nonpartisan, interfaith, public-interest law firm.

Ambassador Robert A. Seiple, president of the Council for America’s First Freedom, said, “These four extraordinary individuals have committed much of their professional lives to the defense of religious liberty.”

Azizah al-Hibri has been a leading national and international voice on issues relating to Islam, the rights of Muslim women, Islamic jurisprudence, and legal, political and religious issues relating to the Middle East and Islam,” said Dean Rodney A. Smolla.

“Particularly in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks, Azizah has been a voice for moderation and tolerance.”

al-Hibri is the founder and president of KARAMAH: Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights.

research and writing, more engagement with various constituencies, and toward an awareness of the value of “living greatly in the law” (see the dean’s farewell letter on the magazine’s inside cover).

Justice Lemens described Smolla as “a man of vision and energy. This combination served the University of Richmond School of Law well.”

New family law center to host symposium

The Law School’s new National Center for Family Law will host in September a symposium “State of the Family—2007” addressing current issues including the state of marriage and the family, same sex marriage and civil unions, and foster care.

The program will feature nationally known scholars, lawyers and judges such as Elizabeth S. Scott and Robert E. Emery, Stephanie Coontz, and Virginia’s first lady Anne Holton, a former Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court judge.

Nuremberg’s lessons remain valid in law and life

One of the last surviving prosecutors from the Nuremberg war crime trials recently declared, “The rule of law is not such a fragile thing.”

“The force of law can stand up to the law of force,” Henry T. King said in a sometimes-moving April address at the Law School.

King spoke of how Nuremberg’s lessons apply today in a world where borders often seem irrelevan.

With terrorism threatening security and stability globally, King said the United States should rejoin the International Criminal Court (ICC) to help shape international law so it can better respond to terrorism.

President Clinton signed onto the ICC, though he recognized significant flaws. President Bush has been “outwardly hostile” to the court, King said.

While the ICC is not perfect, the United States now has the opportunity to take the lead in this aspect of international law,” said King, a professor at Case Western Reserve Law School.

“Identifying and addressing gaps in current laws and treaties could be the most significant legal development since Nuremburg,” William J. Benos, CLE, whose practice includes international law, introduced King to a near-capacity audience that included three survivors of the Holocaust.

Henry T. King, former Nuremberg prosecutor, at the Law School just after the Rule of Law Conference served to “bring us all back to an understanding of the rule of law” as defined at Nuremberg.

King also spoke on a more personal level to the many law students in the crowd. He said he left a lucrative “dream job” on Wall Street at age 27 to go to Nuremberg. “I was told by a great many people that I was giving up my place in line on the road to success.”

But, King said, Nuremberg became “the defining experience of my life that I would not trade for anything. Nuremberg gave me that frame of reference, those ideals and values that provide a sense of what is truly important.”

Nuremberg remains relevant, he said it codified existing international law and affirmed enforceable penalties for violations. It established the principle that everyone is accountable before the law, be they heads of state or soldiers “following orders.”

It “denied the concept of sovereign immunity,” which might have shielded Nazi leaders acting on behalf of the state, King said.

Years later, these precedents meant that Slobodan Milosevic, Augusto Pinochet and Saddam Hussein could be tried in courts of law.

“The Nuremberg judgment lays groundwork for the concept that some crimes, particularly crimes against humanity, were so egregious that the accused could be tried anywhere,” King said.

King highlighted the role U.S. Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson played as chief prosecutor at Nuremberg.

It was Jackson who led four legal cultures—American, Russian, British and French—to the “foundation of modern humanitarian law.”

Jackson insisted that the Nuremberg tribunal “reflect America’s belief in fair trials, convictions based on evidence, and the rights of the accused.”

As in the war on terror, King said, there was “a very legitimate fear” that a public trial would give Nazis a forum that might incite violence, inspire recruits, and result in release of information harmful to those fighting the threat. A fair, public trial also might, and sometimes did, result in acquittal for some defendants.

“But the result for the Allies, for Germany, and for the world, was not darkness and chaos,” he said.

The result was “a much higher level of credibility, further discrediting the Nazi ideology and preventing a resurgence of violence.”

From his perspective as a prosecutor, King said, “I saw how in victory, civilization had responded not with like violence, hatred and persecution but with the rule of law, with fairness and accountability. It was the guiding light for my life’s work. What more could anyone ask for?”

Summer 2007

AWARD

Academics

Professor al-Hibri among four awarded First Freedom prize

For the Record

Tests of values come with career

Walter Pavlo

A former senior manager at MCI held an audience at the Law School in February to anticipate ethical challenges in professional life. “The chances of you facing an ethical dilemma in your business career is 100 percent,” said Walter Pavlo. “It will happen.”

Pavlo spent two years in prison for his role in an accounting scam intended to cover bad debt incurred by the former telecommunications company.

The trouble began when the division Pavlo worked with at MCI began piling up debt while Wall Street analysts and company executives were putting pressure on the firm to meet performance goals he knew were unattainable.

He turned to questionable accounting practices to cover the debt, but the situation only worsened.

Pavlo found himself wondering if every car on the street contained FBI agents. He worried that friends and business associates might be wired. “What kind of life is that?” he asked.

“You’ll never know the value of your values, what your values are worth, until the test,” he said. “When you’re tested, what are you going to do?”

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Student fellowships provide unique opportunities

Two law professors are working as mentors to undergraduate students this summer through fellowships awarded by the Richmond Quest/Bonner Center for Civic Engagement Student Research Fellowship Program.

Joel B. Eisen is mentoring Catherine Eason, ’08, for her project “An Analysis of the Potential Local Effects of Global Warming on Richmond Area Communities and Possible Implications for the Environmental Justice Movement.”

A Benjamin Spencer is mentoring students Lesley McCaly, ’08, and Capri Miller, ’08, in a collaborative research project titled “The Impending Judicial Crisis: How Politics and Indifference Are Destroying Our Federal Courts.”

The students receive $4,000 to conduct their research. They will present their findings at a special program in September sponsored by the Center for Civic Engagement, and at an arts and sciences research symposium in the spring.

The students are to receive their bachelor’s degrees in spring 2008, and they are employing a significant amount of time to conduct the research.

Law School welcomes two new faculty

The Law School welcomed Jessica Morell Erickson and Tara Casey to the faculty this summer.

Erickson is an assistant professor of law. She has been an associate at Hunton & Williams since 2004, focusing on corporate governance and securities litigation, appellate litigation, commercial contract disputes, and business torts.

Erickson graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School, where she served as editor-in-chief of The Harvard Journal of Law & Technology. She also taught legal research and analysis as a member of the Board of Student Advisers.

She received her bachelor’s degree summa cum laude from Amherst College in economics and law, jurisprudence, and social thought.

Casey is a 1994 graduate of the University of Virginia. She received her JD in 1999 from Washington University in St. Louis. Since 2002, she has served as assistant U.S. attorney in Richmond, and has taught in the Lawskills program.

Casey won the Richmond Bar Association’s Pro Bono Award in 2005.

Professor Berryhill retires after 31 years

Wade Berryhill, professor of law who joined the faculty in 1976, retired this May, but will continue to teach part-time.

The Law School honored Berryhill by awarding him emeritus status.

Berryhill has taught courses in environmental law, environmental law and policy, land-use planning, law and religion, ocean and coastal law, property law, real estate transactions and secured credit.

He earned his law degree in 1972 from the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, and practiced as a partner in Moore, Logan & Berryhill. He also holds a master of laws degree from Columbia University.

A bridge to the community

By Roberta Oster Sachs

As the nation commemorated the 400th anniversary of Jamestown, the Law School became a hub of intellectual discourse and civic engagement.

Hundreds of people from around the world came to Richmond for the Rule of Law Conference.

The Law School continues to distinguish itself as an essential community resource offering public events where people from different worlds can come together to learn about current issues.

It is a bridge connecting the campus and the community.

I invite you to look at our new interactive Web site to view all of our exciting initiatives: www.law.richmond.edu

This spring, the Law School hosted many other outstanding events including talks by: Sister Helen Prejean, world renowned anti-death penalty advocate; Henry King, one of three surviving U.S. prosecutors who participated in the Nuremberg trials following World War II, Virginia Attorney General Robert F. McDonnell; and Walter Pavlo, a former MLC WorldCom executive imprisoned for his role in a finance scam.

The Rule of Law Conference received extensive coverage from The Associated Press, the Richmond Times-Dispatch, Virginia Lawyers Weekly, the Virginian-Pilot, and The Washington Post, as well as local radio and television.

Today many people get their civic education from TV sound bites, but those who participated in our programs gained a deeper understanding of controversial issues in a forum where people can agree to disagree.

We will build upon the success of the Rule of Law Conference with programs of interest to the community. For example, the new National Center for Family Law will host a National Family Law Symposium on the State of the Family on Sept. 16-18.

Our students and faculty are working hard to create such engaging programs.

The Law School is a resource within a few miles of a million people, and it is making a difference in the community.
Azizah al-Hibri was invited by the American embassies in Belgium, Holland and Saudi Arabia to lecture in May on topics including “Women’s Rights in Islam,” “Virtual Corporations in the Age of Internet,” and “Women’s Roles in Developing Societies.” Al-Hibri, the founder of KARAMAH, Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights, met with KARAMAH’s International Muslim Women Jurists Network for the Gulf region in Bahrain, and in Egypt for the North-African region during a tour financed by the National Endowment for Democracy. As a member of its 100 Club of religious leaders, al-Hibri attended the World Economic Forum held this summer in Jordan. The topics for discussion included women’s issues, interfaith issues, and world peace. In April, al-Hibri lectured at the Wharton Business School on peace. In April, al-Hibri lectured at the Wharton Business School on peace.

Partnership Program. (See related story on page 4). She spoke to a class of Arab professionals and legal technologists. Libraries in Baton Rouge, La. The institute focused on the working relationships between law librarians and legal technologists.

Margaret Ivey Bacigal was elected to a second term as the Law School’s representative to the Virginia Bar Association’s board of governors.

Joshua Burstein, associate dean for career services, was appointed a member of the National Association for Legal Career Professionals’ recruitment practices advisory group for 2007-08. This is his third appointment to an NALP committee.

Timothy L. Coggins to a second term as the Law School’s president. He was elected in 2005 (see related story on page 4). Coggins also served as the 2007 Institute for Law, Technology and Policy conference organizer.


John G. Douglas presented a paper in January at a symposium on “Prosecutorial Ethics and the Right to a Fair Trial” at Case Western Reserve University School of Law. The paper, entitled “Can Prosecutors bluff? Boyd v. Maryland and plea bargaining,” will be published by Case Western Reserve Law Review. Douglas lectured on “Hearsay and Criminal Justice Since Crawford v. Washington” at the annual criminal law seminar of the criminal law section of the Virginia State Bar in Charlottesville and Williamsburg, in April. He served as a panelist on “Teaching Professionalism in Law Schools,” as part of the annual leadership conference of the American Inns of Courts, which met in Richmond in conjunction with the Law School’s Rule of Law Conference. Also in April, Douglas served as a panelist in a program for mediators entitled “Breaking Impasse.” The program was presented by the Joint Committee on Alternative Dispute Resolution of the Virginia State Bar and the Virginia Bar Association.

Joel B. Eisen’s article “Brownfields At 25: A Critical Reevaluation” was published in the May issue of the Fordham Urban Law Journal. Eisen spoke on “Brownfields and BRAC: Which Is More Compatible?” at a February symposium on environmental law and the military sponsored by the William and Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review. He also contributed an article to the review’s symposium issue. His essay on “‘Smart’ Brownfields Development is in the Environmental Law Institute’s Sustainability—Five Years Later,” which was published this summer, Eisen also moderated a panel discussion on Virginia’s recent electricity re-regulation law at the National Regulatory Conference in May in Williamsburg.

David Frisch’s article, “Rational Reactivity in a Commercial Context,” was published this spring in the Alabama Law Review. His essay, “Chattel Paper, Shakespeare, and the Insoluble Question of Stripping,” was accepted for publication by the UCC Law Journal. This summer Frisch is teaching a course on international sales in Barcelona as part of the University of San Diego’s summer abroad program.

James Gibson published the article “Risk Aversion and Rights Accrual in Intellectual Property Law,” in March in the Yale Law Journal. A shorter version of the article is available on the Yale Law Journal’s “Pocket Part” web site [http://yalelawjournal.org/], along with commentary by two other scholars. Gibson has presented at three conferences so far this year: “What If We Used IP Rights To Impede Evil Industries?” What’s . . . and Alternative Stories in Intellectual Property and Cyberspace Law,” Michigan State University School of Law; “Risk Aversion and Rights Accrual in Intellectual Property Law,” Intellectual Property Symposium, University of Texas School of Law; “Privacy, Technology and Privacy,” Mid-Atlantic People of Color Legal Scholarship Conference, University of Richmond School of Law.

Ann C. Hodges spoke at the Center for Leadership in Education to administrators and leaders of the
Chesterfield County Public Schools on “Employment Law and Sexual Harassment in the Education Workplace.” The center is a partnership between the Jepson School of Leadership Studies and the School of Continuing Studies.

Phyllis Katz, ’82, and Hodges taught a course this spring on nonprofit organizations to 28 law and MBA students. The students then helped two organizations complete legal and operational documents to become incorporated as 501(c)(3) organizations. She wrote an op-ed article titled “Virginians Deserve a Living Wage: Commonwealth Should Follow Maryland’s Lead.” The article appeared in the Washington Post. Hodges also served on the executive committee of the American Association of Law Schools section on labor relations and employment law.

Corrina Barrett Lain presented a paper “Deciding Death” to a faculty colloquy at the Law School, and at the Center for Civil Engagement. The paper has been accepted for publication by Duke Law Journal. Lain also moderated panels for the law review’s symposium on the death penalty, which was held in April.

Kristen Osenga’s article “Linguistics and Claim Construction” was published in the Research Lab. Why Universities Should Take a Lesson from Big Business to Increase Innovation” was published in a symposium issue of Maine Law Review, summer 2007. Osenga presented her article “The Componentization of Information” at the annual Intellectual Property Scholars conference at Michigan State University in January 2007. She also spoke at the American Intellectual Property Law Association’s spring meeting in May on a panel discussing the implications of MedImmune Inc. v. Genentech Inc. She received a grant from the University to provide iPods for use in her trademark class this spring. The devices were used for a multimedia project where students conducted a mock survey on consumer confusion.

Noah M. Sachs presented his article “Strengthening Tort Remedies in International Environmental Law” at the Yale/Sanford Junior Faculty Forum on May 19. It was chosen as the best article submitted by junior faculty in private international law. Harold Hongju Koh, dean of the Yale Law School, and Alan Sykes, professor at Stanford Law School, were the commentators on the paper.

On March 26, Sachs, professor Joel B. Eisen and 15 students from the environmental and energy law classes toured Dominion’s Chesterfield Power Plant. The tour was arranged through the Merthig Center for Environmental Studies. Sachs is the center’s faculty director. The tour included a briefing by the plant’s environmental compliance officer on how federal environmental laws apply at the facility.

Robert Oster Sachs, associate dean for external affairs, has been presented with the Willie L. Moore Award. The Black Law Students Association presents the award annually to a faculty or staff member who has continued in the tradition of the late professor Moore by showing strong support for the BSLSA and the student body as a whole. Tracey Evans, BSLSA past-president, in presenting the award, noted Oster Sachs’ numerous contributions to the association and the student body, including moderating events, participating in the Minority Student Open House, and working with BSLSA presidents on program planning.


Smolla’s article “Cornerstone Principles: Rule of Law Helps Maximize Freedom, Stability,” appeared in the Richmond Times-Dispatch, April 8, 2007. His appearances included the keynote speech at the (Ronson-Hoffman American Inn of Court XXVII, May 9, on “Are We Failing to Properly Educate and Mentor Law Students and New Lawyers?” Smolla was keynote speaker April 12, before the Virginia Department of Historic Resources reception for Virginia Indian tribal leaders. His address was “Justice for Virginia’s Indian Tribes.” Smolla delivered the keynote address to the Commonwealth Education Law Conference in Williamsburg, April 12. His topic: “Making Sense of the Senseless, the Virginia ‘Tech Tragedy.’” Smolla was a panelist on a program: “The Magna Carta and the Four Foundations of Freedom,” April 10, at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art in Virginia Beach. He spoke on “How Has the Legal Profession Changed in the Last 100 Years and How Should Law Schools Respond to Those Changes?” in the keynote address to the Ted Dalton American Inn of Court in Roanoke, April 9. Smolla spoke on “The Changing Legal Profession and the Changing American Law School,” at the Hunton & Williams luncheon in Richmond, Feb. 21. He spoke on “Equality and Race in Public Schools,” Issues in Leadership series for Chesterfield County public school administrators at the Richmond Center for Leadership Education in Richmond, Dec. 15.

Smolla served as moderator for the Rule of Law Conference at the Law School in April.

A. Benjamin Spencer’s casebook, Civil Procedure: A Contemporary Approach, has been published by Thomson West. His article, “Anti-Federalist Procedure,” has been published by the Washington and Lee Law Review. (See related story on page 6).

Peter N. Swisher is co-author of a new treatise, Virginia Tort and Personal Injury Law, which was published this summer by Thomson West. Other co-authors of this treatise are Robert E. DRAIN, L’79, and David D. Hudgins, L’80. Swisher also wrote “Causation Requirements in Tort and Insurance Law Practice: Demystifying Some Legal Causation Riddles,” which appeared in the summer 2007 issue of the Tort & Insurance Law Journal, a publication of the ABA tort trial and insurance practice section. Thomson West also recently published the 2007 revised edition of Swisher’s treatise Virginia Family Law: Theory, Practice and Forms, with co-authors Lawrence D. Diehl and James R. Cottrell, L’77.

Students win honors mooting by the Bay

Six Richmond law students and professor J.P. Jones returned this spring from a trip to San Francisco with a boatload of awards in the Judge John R. Brown Admiralty Moot Court Competition. The team made up of Amanda Binns, Christine Owen and Justin Paget was named this year’s overall champion, the fourth time a team from the Law School has achieved such success. They also won the Maritime Law Association of the United States Award for the competition’s best brief. The brief will be published in the Tulane Maritime Law Journal.

Owen also was selected as the best oral advocate of the championship round. Paul Cataneo, Brandon Santos and Michael Wall were runners up for the best petitioner’s brief award.

For three days over spring break, after training on the ski slopes of the Sierra Nevadas and in the tasting rooms of California’s wine country, the teams from Richmond faced 20 others from schools including George Washington, Gonzaga, Texas and Tulane.

The competition, including six rounds of oral argument, took place in the en banc courtroom of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit before a panel led by the Hon. David F. Levi, chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California (Levi is now dean at Duke Law School.)

The trip is made possible by the generosity of graduates who practice maritime law, or who as students participated in this competition.

Portugal interns in Vienna, Austria

Vinicius Portugal is spending this summer in Vienna, Austria, working as an intern with the U.S. State Department’s Mission to International Organizations.

Portugal, a native of Rio de Janeiro, participated in a highly competitive application process that included interviews in three languages to earn the position. Landing the job was particularly impressive because Portugal just completed his first year at the Law School, and the internships usually go to students in their second or third year.


After graduation, Portugal, who holds a degree in political science and international affairs from George Washington University, plans to practice international law.

Law students join hurricane relief

Over the 2006 winter break, 12 Richmond law students went to New Orleans to volunteer with the Student Hurricane Network, a national association dedicated to providing long-term assistance to communities affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

RAMSEY BRONYAH, Devin Pope and Ben Silbert worked with a center assisting people with mental and physical disabilities. Much of their work involved taking information from those seeking assistance, and matching their needs with volunteer help. Typically, callers needed help with issues ranging from making utility payments, coming up with rental deposits, and reconstructing damaged homes. Students also served as witnesses for wills and performed research on behalf of disabled people who wanted to know if they had a cause of action.

Charlotte Dauphin worked with the New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice, which she described as “completely surprising.”

“I expected to be doing legal research, but I did not expect to be standing on a street corner near a suburban Home Depot, acting as a buffer between illegal immigrant workers and the police,” she said. I found myself among people who were experienced grassroots organizers, who called each other ‘brother’ and ‘comrade.’ I felt like a fish out of water.”

“I came out of the week with a changed perspective,” Dauphin said. “I emerged with an open mind and better understanding of the social situation in New Orleans.”

Brian Tacey, Kristen Kelly, Cara Sims, Molly Geissenhainer, Chelsea Dunn, and Jamie Specter, worked with the Gert Town Revival Initiative, a grass roots organization that focuses on the revitalization of the Gert Town community. Richmond students worked on a mapping initiative to photograph and otherwise document all the properties within the community and to research the ownership of the homes. This included determining whether each house was occupied and its condition.

The survey provides information for a database that will be used in saving and rebuilding the historic area.

Brody Reid and Chris Hoadley survey New Orleans homes.

Of note

Alysha Fulkerson and Ramsey Bronyah won the 2007 Moran Kiker Brown Trial Advocacy competition.


Kimberly A. Brown won the District 4 National Association of Women Judges Equal Access to Justice Scholarship competition for students at the Law School. She received a $1,000 award. Winners of the 2006-07 Moot Court competition are:

• Barnett competition: Scott Jones
• Barnett best brief: Jon Goodrich
• Carrico competition: Emily Bishop and Evan Miller
• Carrico best brief: Emily Bishop

5671.842.1234
Rule of law conference brings international recognition
By Rob Walker

Four hundred years after the founding of the Jamestown colony, lawmakers, jurists and leaders from around the world gathered this spring to celebrate and examine the colonists’ most valuable import: the rule of law.

In a four-day conference that concluded April 14, the Law School hosted presentations that paid tribute to lawyers and lawmakers from Thomas Jefferson and John Marshall to civil rights icon Oliver W. Hill.

The gathering culminated with a star-studded event at Historic Jamestowne, where John G. Roberts Jr., Chief Justice of the United States, and his British counterpart, The Rt. Hon. Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers, Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, along with retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor unveiled a plaque honoring the rule of law and those who dedicate their lives to it. Before the cover was lifted from the plaque, a fife and drum corps in full costume played historic tunes and a replica of the Godspeed, one of the three ships that brought the first English settlers to Jamestown, sailed past.

In presenting the plaque on behalf of the English Inns of Court, Lord Phillips said, “We are bound together not just by friendship but by a mutual dedication to the rule of law.”

While presenters at the conference spoke eloquently of the rule of law as a cornerstone of democracy and human rights, others offered strikingly different perspectives on how the rule of law has been applied throughout history. Among the most eloquent voices were those of a Native American leader, a veteran of the American civil rights struggle, and a Chinese dissident working to bring democratic reforms to China.

Many of the discussions also addressed the role the rule of law will play in building new and emerging democracies. Speakers outlined the challenges posed by technology and globalization in a world of disparate cultures and systems of justice.

At a black tie dinner at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond, the Law School presented its most prestigious honor, the William Green Award for Professional Excellence, to Chief Justice Roberts. In his speech that evening, Roberts cited a Virginian, Chief Justice John Marshall of Richmond, who saw the fundamental importance of the separation of powers and an independent judiciary. “That separation and independence is the United States’ greatest contribution to the rule of law,” Roberts said. “It was in America that English ideals of liberty took root.”

He noted that the ideals of liberty continue to move back and forth across the Atlantic. The British Parliament enacted the Constitutional Reform Act of 2005, creating an independent judiciary there.

The Law School also honored Hill, the Richmond-born civil rights attorney and pioneer, with the first Oliver W. Hill Social Justice Award. Elaine R. Jones, former President of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, presented the award to Hill. Together with Dean Smolla and Justice Lemons, Jones read a Proclamation outlining Hill’s commitment to building a more just and inclusive America and securing equal rights for African-Americans. The proclamation also noted his many awards, including the 1999 Presidential Medal of Freedom. (See related story, page 17.)

The conference played to enthusiastic audiences—many of them standing-room-only—at venues on campus, in Richmond and in Jamestown. It received expansive coverage in local and national media.


Conference co-chair Justice Donald W. Lemons of the Supreme Court of Virginia, said, “The rule of law is the bedrock principle of democracy. From shared history, culture, traditions and values, we reach some fundamental consensus on the rules that govern our society. It is helpful to have a public dialogue about the rule of law as we confront new and challenging issues.”
The conference opened with a panel discussion before an audience of over 400 people on “Global Issues and the Rule of Law.” Lord Phillips and Justice Breyer were among the 10 high-ranking British and American jurists asked by Dean Rodney A. Smolla, moderator and the conference’s co-chair, to define “rule of law.”

Justice Breyer described it as a complicated system that satisfies citizens’ natural desire for fairness. “We make a lot of wrong decisions in our court. I admit it,” Breyer said. “But people will follow them even when they’re wrong. That’s the rule of law.”

The rule of law “is an antidote to insidious corruption of power,” said Lord Justice Rix. “By promoting rationality, it promotes the dignity of man.”

Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals described the rule of law “an exquisite balance” between liberty and order. It confines rights but those rights are not absolute. It must be applied, he said, with “humility and restraint. Its abuses usually arise from arrogance and highhandedness.” And despite the lofty sound of the term, rule of law “is an antidote to insidious corruption of power,” said Lord Justice Rix. “By promoting rationality, it promotes the dignity of man.”

Judge Carl Stewart of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said rule of law “gives citizens confidence that there are norms. They will get a fair shake.”

Justice Breyer said that after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, he became aware that “there is a division in the world between the forces of reason and of irrationality.” By advancing the rule of law, the United States and Britain are “trying to further the force of reason.”

In his keynote address that evening at the Jepson Alumni Center, Lord Phillips stressed that the rule of law will help resolve the struggle between free countries and those that “deny all the basic individual rights we now take for granted.”

On the second day of the conference, speakers focused more critically on how the rule of law has been applied throughout history. From slavery and the separate-but-equal doctrine to the destruction of American Indian nations, rule of law has for many an elusive reality and a tool for oppression. For them, the 400th anniversary of Jamestown is something to commemorate, but not to celebrate.

Professor Kevin Gover of the Sandra Day O’Connor School of Law at Arizona State University, and Joe Shirley Jr., president of the Navajo Nation, the largest and most influential Indian tribe in North America, offered insight into the plight of Native Americans, past and present, and how the law has been used to deny their basic human rights.

Gover cited opinions by Chief Justice Marshall, who had been lauded throughout the conference by other speakers, that gradually stripped away Indian rights. Marshalls’s rulings, he said, turned the rule of law “into a tool, a weapon for dispossession of Indians.” As a result, said Professor Gover, “Indians have very little confidence in the rule of law.”

Gover added that, in Chief Justice Marshall’s opinions, the Indian tribes were treated as wards of the United States. The sovereign nations “What it comes down to is that [in Marshall’s writings] European nations represented a superior civilization,” Gover said, while the Indians were made increasingly dependent, and their rights, including access to courts, were denied. Over time, he said, “there was an outright effort to destroy these tribes as entities.”

“We are bound together not just by friendship but by a mutual dedication to the rule of law.” — Rt. Hon. Lord Phillips

Social justice award honors civil rights icon

With the creation of an award bearing his name, the Law School honoring Oliver W. Hill during the rule of law conference for a lifetime of work that furthered social justice.

Elaine N. Jones, former president of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, joined Dean Rodney A. Smolla and Justice Donald W. Lemons of the Supreme Court of Virginia to honor Hill with the first Oliver W. Hill Social Justice Award. They presented the award to Hill, who turned 100 May 3, at a luncheon during the conference. Hill was greeted with a standing ovation.

“The last of the living giants of the early civil rights era,” as the Richmond Times-Dispatch called him, Hill was born in 1907 in a city, state and nation that legally sanctioned segregation. Hill spent his vigorous professional life working to push rule of law back onto the right path. Eventually, the courts concurred.

The resolution accompanying the award spoke of landmark civil rights cases dealing with schools, public facilities, voting rights, fair housing, and service on juries.

In a passionate address, Jones, who described Hill as “a mentor and friend,” spoke of being the first black woman to graduate from the University of Virginia School of Law.

“It was an experience for all of us,” she said with a laugh. She discussed rule of law from the African-American perspective, beginning in the 19th century. “I have read that history,” Jones said. “I have never had more depressing reading.”

She recounted how slaves were legally constrained from owning property. Their masters could punish them, sell them, mortgage or lease them at will. A slave could not go before a tribunal against his master for any reason.

Even after the Civil War and constitutional amendments aimed at righting wrongs, the courts supported laws that disenfranchised blacks again. A century passed before the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed, fully guaranteeing blacks the right to vote.

The task fell to lawyers, with Hill at the forefront, to work in courthouses and capitals against the inequality in “separate but equal,” and to work within the law to overcome injustices.

The founding fathers were very smart men,” Jones said, but “we’re talking about the rule of law.”

Jones recounted the threats Hill and his family faced. He once came home to find his wife sitting on the porch with a gun because she had been threatened. The Hills would not allow their children to answer the phone. A mortician once arrived at the house to collect Hill’s body.

The lesson from Hill’s life, Jones said, is that “a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. As lawyers, we can make a huge difference.”

He found in the system of justice that came to Jamestown “a system he could challenge under,” Jones said. “Oliver Hill saw that this law could work for all of us.”

The luncheon ended with the crowd of about 280 singing “Happy Birthday” to Hill, who took the microphone and said, “I want to thank everyone who has had anything to do with this.”

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Global rule of law

Speaking through an interpreter, Xu Wei, a founder of the Chinese Democracy Party and now a senior fellow at Brown University, told the rapt audience that
the rule of law has been non-existent in China for most of its history. Xu was first arrested in 1982 for his pro-democracy activities and for publishing underground newsletters. He spent 16 years in prison. In solitary confinement, he watched the web-spinning and mating habits of spiders in his cell to keep from going crazy.

Finally released from prison on Christmas Day in 2002, Xu and his wife were granted asylum in the United States. While grateful for the sanctuary offered in America, he said he was perplexed by the exploitation of immigrants that often takes place and by the complexity of the justice system here.

“Righteousness can survive in this society but so can evil,” Xu said.

As the United States and China have become close commercial partners, leaders of the democracy movement there still remain in prison. Andrew Prozes, global CEO of LexisNexis Group, an international information management company, spoke of the rule of law in international business. Prozes’ credentials go deeper than his years as a business leader and lawyer on the world stage. His parents fled Estonia in 1944, ahead of the Soviet army, only to end up in the German labor camp where he was born.

Prozes recalled his father pounding the table, talking about laws. “There was no rule of law under the Soviets,” he said. “Those experiences shaped me.”

Today, his firm is advancing in world markets, the largest of which is China, where “just a tenuous sense of rule of law exists.” There, the political process enters into the judicial system. A strong nationalist sentiment favors Chinese businesses. Intellectual property, which is the core of his business, is not protected. “We send so much information and data there, and we are fearful of what is happening with it,” Prozes said. “The Chinese say not to worry.”

Moving into China is an opportunity to make money, he said, but it also is an opportunity to move that emerging giant toward processes and cultures that support the rule of law.

“Corporate economic activity is based on trust,” he said. “People who live with in countries with the rule of law expect that. Nations and businesses have obligations beyond their own borders and shareholders to see that the protections of the rule of law are enjoyed throughout the world.”

Rory Brady, attorney general of Ireland, described issues his nation faces in implementing rule of law with the recent evolution of the European Union. In a keynote address, Brady explained how court systems in many E.U. member nations are overburdened and, therefore, not as effective as they should be. Brady said “Delays can undermine the rule of law.”

Brady, who used arbitration and alternative dispute resolution to help bring about Ireland’s transformation into a prosperous democracy, said those same processes should resolve many problems in the E.U.

“That will require a cultural shift among lawyers and litigants,” he said. “They must recognize that justice can be obtained outside the judicial system.”

Church and state

Debate over separation of church and state was a high-light of the conference, with panelists agreeing that sharp disagreement on public issues is an indicator of a healthy society.

“The freedom to believe or not is woven into our country’s constitution,” said Ambassador Robert Seiple, president of the Council for America’s First Freedom. “Ours is a country where we can debate our differences.”

Dean Starr spoke of the Jamestown colonists’ “embarking on those ships seeking gold and finding disease.” He said that with the First Amendment, the founders “broke through a powerful cultural barrier” and demonstrated that “peace could prevail even with religious pluralism.”

In the debate over “ecclesiastical freedom,” Starr said, religious organizations enjoy the right to govern themselves “and limits on that require a higher step.”

Professor Chemerinsky, whose parents fled Nazi persecution, described Thomas Jefferson’s wall between church and state as “high and impregnable.” He said there are several justices on the U.S. Supreme Court who now seem willing “to abandon the establishment clause.”

“Why trade something that has worked so well for so long for something that’s worked so poorly elsewhere?” Chemerinsky asked.

When his turn came, Chief Judge James R. Spencer of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia said, “This is getting good.” Robust debate demonstrates “the pure genius” of the drafters. “The creative tension was intentional.”

Many of the nation’s founders’ ancestors had experienced persecution on religious grounds, Spencer said. They understood that a state-sponsored church could become dictatorial. They wanted to ensure that all religions would be protected, but they also intended to keep religion in check, “to protect against the tyranny of the majority,” Spencer said.

“People are going to be debating this long after we are gone,” he said. “As far as I’m concerned, that’s a good thing.”

The Rule of Law Conference was part of the International Conference Series on the Foundations and Future of Democracy, sponsored by the Jamestown 400th Federal Commission. Representatives from the Law School and other Virginia colleges and universities that held events in conjunction with the Jamestown 400th anniversary conference series will gather in Jamestown, Colonial Williamsburg and at the College of William and Mary Sept. 18-19 for the World Forum on the Future of Democracy. They will join leaders from mature and emerging democracies for closing programs. For more information see: http://www.jamestown2007.org/ndemocracyforum.cfm.
Among several new programs, the Law School, the Legal Aid Justice Center and Virginia Commonwealth University Hospitals are collaborating on a child health advocacy program, Bacigal says. The program will help meet legal needs of indigent patients and their families. Students will volunteer to do initial intake screening and work with the attorneys assigned to the case.

“This holds great potential,” Bacigal says. The list of pro bono and public service activities at the Law School is long, ranging from work with Virginia Indians and in on- and off-campus clinics, to the investigation of capital cases through the Institute for Actual Innocence. (For more information, see: http://law.richmond.edu/probono/index.php.)

When he was in law school there were people who seemed to be drawn to that kind of work, Seyfarth says, but “there was no big push for students to do” pro bono work. He has seen more interest since Smolla became dean and Bacigal joined the bar’s pro bono committee. “It’s impressive what they are doing now,” he says.

Erin Murphy, a second-year law student, pro bono activities have provided a significant share of her law school education. She has volunteered at the Virginia Poverty Law Center, helped with the Just Children program at the Legal Aid Justice Center, and helped start a Street Law Program. Much of her pro bono work has been on behalf of children.

“This experience has not only made me feel good about helping innocent children in unfortunate circumstances, but also has helped me see how I can be a better lawyer,” Murphy says. “It has shown me the importance of every decision, argument, and conversation.”

Many firms stated commitment to pro bono service “seems to be more lip service than reality,” says Charles F. Seyfarth, L ’99, who is active in the Richmond Bar Association’s pro bono committee. “For most firms, it’s still a business. It’s up to the individual to make time for community service and pro bono work.”

Overholser, a third-year law student who worked for the Virginia Poverty Law Center during his years at Richmond, says the Law School administration “is doing as good a job as it can promoting pro bono work.” But making that work part of most students’ routine is a challenge. Apathy, burnout and debt from student loans contribute to the lack of involvement, he says.

Still, “virtually all students here would say that pro bono service is a noble service and hold it in high regard,” Overholser says.

Students should come out of law school understanding that they are privileged, says law professor Margaret Bacigal, a member of the Richmond Bar Association’s pro bono committee and point person for many of the Law School’s community service initiatives.

“We are privileged to be lawyers and with that privilege comes an obligation to help effectuate changes and shepherd people through a system that can be daunting.”

Over the past few years, Bacigal has seen an increase in interest among students in pro bono work.

Recent graduates, she says, are even inclined to ask prospective employers about pro bono opportunities.

Ashley R. Dobbs, L ’05, left law school thinking a secondary consideration at many bottom-line-oriented firms, where Collier works, Hogan and Harston in Washington, and Hunton & Williams in Richmond, credit their lawyers with billable hours for some pro bono work, and some even expect a raise for some pro bono work, and some even expect a raise for some pro bono work. “It’s impressive what they are doing now,” he says.

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“T”
D r. Rami Indudhara’s days are filled with patient visits and surgeries, so the urologist and surgeon in Redlands, Calif., doesn’t have much free time. But on six weekends since late January, Indudhara flew from Los Angeles to Richmond to take part in the Law School’s new “Medical Malpractice Law and Litigation” class, which was offered this year for the second time to law students and health care professionals. The course offers an overview of medical malpractice law.

“I am totally ignorant of the legal aspects of the practice of medicine,” Indudhara says. When he read about the course in the American Medical Association’s newsletter, he decided to enroll, despite the cross-country commute. “It has never been taught formally in my long, 15-year medical training,” he explains. “You could get practice rather than theory. You could be involved in a mock trial and also talk to practitioners.”

To entice physicians to take the class, Byrne and Taylor negotiated with The Doctors Company, a physician-owned medical malpractice insurance provider that endorsed the course. “If TDC-insured physicians take the class and successfully complete it, they can reduce their annual malpractice premium by 5 percent,” Byrne says. “We hope other malpractice insurance carriers will follow suit.”

The benefits of the class outweigh the costs of getting there, he says. “It’s the only place in the country that provides me an opportunity to interact with law students … within a classroom structure.”

Porcher L. Taylor III, associate professor of paralegal studies in the University’s School of Continuing Studies, came up with the idea for the class. Sean Byrne, R’93 and L’97, a partner at Hancock, Daniel, Johnson & Nagle in Richmond, developed and teaches the class.

“My goal was to create an innovative, rigorous learning laboratory for law students and doctors who could learn from each other about the sensitive medical malpractice field,” Taylor says. “This is an area of considerable conflict that we hope we can help resolve.”

The practices of law and medicine, Taylor says, seem to require different mindsets that are often at odds with one another. He hoped to bridge that divide by bringing law students and health care professionals together in the classroom. “I’ve sat in on four classes, and I’m an eyewitness to the vigorous and robust dialogue and interaction between the doctors and law students,” he says. “I’ve seen the camaraderie and academic friendships that have developed.”

To entice physicians to take the class, Byrne and Taylor negotiated with The Doctors Company, a physician-owned medical malpractice insurance provider that endorsed the course. “If TDC-insured physicians take the class and successfully complete it, they can reduce their annual malpractice premium by 5 percent,” Byrne says. “We hope other malpractice insurance carriers will follow suit.”

The physician students also receive continuing medical education credits through an arrangement with Virginia Commonwealth University’s Office of Continuing Professional Development.

The resulting course, he says, “Demonstrates the kind of unique academic experience we can deliver with collaborations like this between the Law School and continuing studies, and other schools within the University.”

The first class was offered in spring 2006. Eighteen physicians, two hospital risk managers and 13 law students enrolled. “We drew from Northern Virginia, Tidewater and the western part of Virginia, as well as Richmond,” Byrne says. “We were excited about the turnout.” More than 20 students enrolled this spring. Seven six-hour classes are held on Saturdays. The final session is a mock trial, Byrne says.

Students study topics including informed consent, analysis of common medical negligence claims against physicians and hospitals, claims and defenses, and medical records issues. The course touches on emerging fields like telemedicine/tele-health law, and more familiar matters, such as depositions and trial preparation.

Because it is unique, the course is generating its share of media attention. “We’ve gotten inquiries from interested professors at other law schools around the country such as the universities of Texas, Florida, Miami and North Carolina at Chapel Hill,” Byrne says.

“The Association of American Law Schools knew of no other law school in the country that had opened up a medical malpractice course to practicing physicians when we rolled out the course,” Taylor says. Second-year law student Tim Lingo was attracted to the class for several reasons. “It was more pragmatic in its approach,” he explains. “You could get practice rather than straight theory. You could be involved in a mock trial and also talk to practitioners.”

Lingo and Indudhara say they also learned from the guest speakers, who are usually working professionals. Lingo notes that it is interesting how attitudes of defense attorneys differ from their counterparts who work for the plaintiffs in malpractice cases. For the Feore family, the course proved to be an unusual educational opportunity. Dr. Colman Feore is a practicing obstetrician. His wife, Janet, is a legal nurse consultant, and their daughter, Margaux, is a second-year law student at Richmond. The three of them are taking the course together.

“Physicians and lawyers talk a different talk,” says Colman Feore, who notes that obstetrics is an area of high risk for malpractice claims. “I wanted to see inside a lawyer’s head.”

Janet Feore, whose work combines medicine and the law, says, “I can take what I’ve learned in the class and turn it around and use it in my work.” She gives credit to Byrne for making the course work. “He can speak to both health care professionals and lawyers. I don’t think there is a physician or medical person who wouldn’t benefit from this class.”

During class sessions, participants learn practical aspects of medical malpractice law, such as how cases are investigated and prepared for trial. They also learn trial strategy. At the end of the class, students play various roles in a mock trial based on an actual case. Last semester, Dr. Richard Rosenthal, an attorney from Johns Hopkins University, was so convincing in his role as plaintiff’s attorney that some people watching the trial thought he was a seasoned lawyer.

Rosenthal enjoyed the course so much that he came back this semester to audit some of the classes.

Frequent, free-flowing debates help participants share perspectives. For example, Byrne brought in as guest speakers an insurance company CEO and a trial lawyer who represents patients in malpractice cases to debate the hot topic of tort reform. “I try to get everyone in the class to see their commonalities and debate how the system should work theoretically and how it currently functions practically. Is it just and fair as is, or is the medical liability system broken?”

Several of Indudhara’s peers have been involved in medical malpractice litigation. “It appears that every patient we see and every act of care given to a patient is a potential source of litigation,” he says.

“Malpractice isn’t all about suing doctors to make money. I believe it provides a system of checks and balances for the common good,” Indudhara says.

Indudhara believes the class is important to both health care professionals and lawyers. “Our society is based on rule of law and is increasingly demanding perfection in every aspect of our lives.”
Buck in 1987, as part of his work as a special counsel to U.S. Sen. Paul Trible in the Iran/Contra hearings, Richard Cullen interviewed Richard Nixon at a “Washington, D.C., hotel. “I went over during lunchtime to [the former president’s] hotel to meet with him,” Cullen recalls, “and he’s talking to Trible, asking where are you from, and he said to me, ‘Where are you from, where did you go to law school?’ and I said the University of Richmond, and [Nixon] said, ‘Oh, the Spiders!’ Which I thought was pretty cool, a former president knowing the Richmond Spiders!”

In the years since, Cullen has frequently crossed paths with the powerful, the famous and the infamous.

A former Virginia attorney general and U.S. attorney for Virginia’s Eastern District, Cullen, 59, took over in January as chairman of McGuireWoods, the firm he has worked for (with brief interruptions) since graduating from the Law School in 1977. The nation’s 45th largest law firm, Richmond-based McGuireWoods employs around 800 lawyers in 16 offices worldwide. The firm’s clients include Dominion Resources, CSX, Verizon, Smithfield Foods, DuPont and AOL.

Forming political ties
Born in New York, Cullen moved as a young child to Staunton, Va., where he played football for Robert E. Lee High School. His father, Walter Cullen, 90, is a retired human resources executive, and his late mother, Helen, worked for the Virginia Lung Association.

Cullen graduated from Furman University and worked after graduation at the University of Virginia law school. "I was into sports as opposed to politics growing up,” Cullen says. “If Butler had been a lifelong Republican. “I was into sports as opposed to politics growing up,” Cullen says. “I didn’t just rest on the laurels and keep the trains running on time as most of those interim AGs do.”

Before that, Allen had appointed Cullen to co-chair his task force on abolishing parole, one of Allen’s signature gubernatorial achievements. As Allen’s state public safety secretary, Kilgore was also on the task force, and he and Cullen barnstormed the state to build support for the initiative. Cullen also was instrumental in building bipartisan support in the General Assembly to abolish parole. “He had a lot of Democratic friends and a lot of Republican friends, and he was able to help us reach...
across the aisle and get some of the conservative Democrats in Virginia to join,” Kilgore says.

Cullen chalks that up to a lesson he learned in law school, to see both sides of the argument and not to become needlessly hostile to the attorney representing the other side. After all, when he played high school football, he became good friends with some opposing team members.

“Some of the best friends I have are lawyers I [opposed] in a case,” Cullen says. “They’re just representing the client.”

For example, even though he’s been an ardent Republican, Cullen held a fundraiser for former Gov. L. Douglas Wilder, a Democrat, in Wilder’s successful campaign for Richmond mayor.

“He doesn’t wear his party on his sleeve. You don’t have to be of his party for him to form friendships,” Wilder says of Cullen, whom the mayor and former governor describes as a good friend.

In a move that Cullen describes as “very controversial,” Cullen crossed party lines as a U.S. Attorney during Wilder’s governorship, helping Wilder author and pass a law limiting handgun purchases in Virginia, an NRA stronghold. “We could never have gotten it passed without Richard’s support and help,” Wilder says.

It was part of Cullen’s aggressive attack as federal prosecutor on violent crime during the crack cocaine epidemic. He also prosecuted gun traffickers, and successfully sought the death penalty against members of Richmond’s feared Newtowne Gang, which was responsible for at least 10 murders.

**Building a great firm**

As chairman of McGuireWoods, Cullen will be “a terrific leader,” says Burrus, his predecessor. In addition to having a broad network of potential clients, Burrus says, Cullen is a creative problem-solver and “an excellent strategist.”

Wilder calls the McGuireWoods board’s decision to make Cullen chairman a “tremendous choice and a fine tribute to him. He’s an excellent ambassador for the firm. Richard is well-respected in legal circles as well as in political circles.”

Says Vick, “He’s a wonderful guy to work with. He has the ability to put clients at ease and to counsel them through very, very complicated situations and to lower their blood pressure.”

Cullen wants the firm to continue growing to enhance its reputation as a national leader. When Cullen joined McGuireWoods 30 years ago, it had 80 attorneys. Now it has around 800.

“To be a great national firm, you have to be recognized by your peers to have a national scope, to work on things that are of utmost importance to [client] companies and to have lawyers that are recognized [as some of] the best in the country in several different areas, and that’s what our aspiration is,” Cullen says.

Cullen wants McGuireWoods to be in clients’ board rooms “so that the things that are keeping the CEO awake at night are the things we’re being asked to work on.”

Cullen remembers his beginnings and wants his rising attorneys to realize how fortunate they are to work at a firm like McGuireWoods.

Most importantly, he wants them to do everything they can for the client.

“You don’t want your doctor being lazy, cutting corners, saying, ‘Oh, I’ve done enough.’ So try to take it that seriously because a lot of times when you’re representing a client, it’s their whole life,” Cullen says.

“Never lose sight that you’re there to serve people and they’re counting on you. When they wake up in the morning. And they’re wondering, ‘Is he working hard? Is he going to call me? Never forget that if it weren’t for the clients, we wouldn’t have a job.’ ■
Richmond Law magazine is looking for information on alumni to include in Class Notes. If you have news or if you would like to gather and send news of your classmates, please contact us at LawAlumni@Richmond.edu or Law Alumni, University of Richmond School of Law, University of Richmond, VA 23173, (804) 289-8028.

1960s

S.D. Roberts Moore, L’61, has been named to Virginia’s Legal Elite by Virginia Business magazine. He is an attorney at Gentry Locke Rakes & Moore in Roanoke, Va.

Irving Michael Blank, L’67, has been certified as a member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum. Membership in the forum is limited to attorneys who have won million- and multimillion-dollar verdicts, awards and settlements. Blank is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers, one of the premier legal associations in America. He is a partner with ParisBlank in Richmond.

R. Carter Scott III, L’67, is a member of the business section at Hirschler Fleisher. His practice focuses on corporate and securities law matters, including the formation and capitalization of corporations, partnerships and limited liability companies. He is the former director of the Greater Richmond Technology Council and the Virginia Biotechnology Association.

1970s

Frank Overton Brown Jr., R’60 and L’76, is the 19th recipient of the Tradition of Excellence Award, presented annually by the Virginia State Bar’s General Practice Section. The award recognizes a Virginia attorney who has dedicated time and effort to activities that assist the community while improving the standing and image of general practice attorneys in the eyes of the public.

Ramon E. ”Trip” Chalkley III, L’73, was re-elected to a two-year term on the board of the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation. The foundation promotes delivery of pro bono legal services in the Richmond area, and sponsors law-related educational and service projects.

Edwin A. Bischoff, R’70 and L’74, is a substitute judge for Virginia’s 14th Judicial Circuit. As a substitute judge, he will serve as needed on the bench of Henrico County’s General District and Juvenile and Domestic Relations courts. Bischoff operates his own firm specializing in general civil practice.

Peter Connors, L’76, was named to Euromoney’s list of the world’s leading tax advisors. He is a partner at Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe in New York City.

Bruce C. Stockburger, L’76, has been named to Virginia’s Legal Elite by Virginia Business magazine. He is an attorney at Gentry Locke Rakes & Moore in Roanoke, Va.

Lewis T. Stoneburner, L’76, a trial lawyer with CantorArkema in Richmond, was listed in Virginia Lawyers Weekly for having three of the top verdicts in Virginia in 2006. He was inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Trial Counsel, is a member of the Million Dollar Advocates Forum and is an advocate in the National College of Advocacy.

Richard Cullen, L’77, was elected chairman of McGuireWoods, which is, according to the National Law Journal, the 45th largest law firm in the United States. He regularly represents corporations in complex civil commercial litigation and advises corporations and key executives facing investigation by prosecutors or other governmental investigative agencies. (See story, page 24).

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For additional information, contact Nancy H. Phillips, director of Law Development, at (804) 289-8023 or nphillip@richmond.edu.
ALUMNI PROFILE

Developing good citizens economically

A basic understanding of both law and economics is critical to personal and professional success, says Sarah Hopkins Finley, W’74 and L’82. That helps explain Finley’s non-traditional career path from the Law School to practice with top Richmond firms, posts in state government, and on to her role as executive director of the Virginia Council on Economic Education.

Her goal today is ensuring that “all students graduate [from Virginia high schools] with an understanding of basic economic principles and the decision-making skills needed to be good citizens, wise consumers, savers and investors, and productive employers and employees.”

A Roanoke, Va., native, Finley has lived in Richmond since earning her law degree. She worked with Mays & Valentine and Williams Mullen, concentrating on local government work and lobbying the General Assembly. She joined Gov. Mark R. Warner’s administration as a senior policy advisor and went on to become deputy secretary of education, with responsibility for K-12 schools and museums. In that position, Finley met with representatives from the economic education council from time to time, and she came to realize how important a basic understanding of economics is for all high school graduates. “It’s critical, not only for your personal success but also for our global economy,” Finley says. “The more I looked at what the council did, the more I appreciated its mission.”

When Finley’s term in the Warner administration ended, the council offered her the post as executive director and she says she eagerly accepted.

The council is based in the business school at Virginia Commonwealth University. It has centers at colleges and universities across the state through which it seeks to ensure that all K-12 teachers attend the council’s workshops each year. The council is based in the business school at Virginia Commonwealth University. It has centers at colleges and universities across the state through which it seeks to ensure that all K-12 teachers attend the council’s workshops each year.

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Save the date! Make plans to join friends and classmates October 19 and 20 for Fall Gathering and reunion events. This year, reunions will honor classes that graduated in years ending in ‘2’s and ‘7’s.

Mark F. Leep, ’89, is principal of Human Research Law Group PLC, a Richmond firm that focuses on biomedical and behavioral research law, regulation and human subjects. His practice focuses on institutional review boards, regulatory compliance and related issues. He teaches in the International Business Practice Program, which he describes as one of the most innovative and unique classes in the law school. The teaching is as challenging as it is rewarding, Benos says. “It’s one of the most innovative and unique classes in the country: The program connects law students with students from the Robins School of Business and the School of Engineering and Applied Science. "We pick companies that are looking to expand their business overseas, whether it’s exporting or creating more jobs here or looking for the opportunity to diversify their operations," Benos explains. "Students identify the company’s goals as well as issues that need to be addressed. They present their findings to the school and senior management of the company."
Jayne A. Pemberton, L’01, is a member of the risk management practice group at Sands Anderson Marks & Miller, where she concentrates on the defense of companies and individuals in insurance litigation and on insurance coverage issues. She also focuses on defense of toxic torts including defense of lead paint litigation.

Ashton Jennette Harris, L’02, has joined the Richmond office of Woods Rogers. She practices in the areas of civil and corporate litigation with a concentration in general civil litigation, commercial litigation, toxic torts, and personal injury defense.

Joel C. Hoppe, L’02, has joined Spotts Fain as an associate in the commercial litigation group.

Robert R. Musick, L’02, is an associate at ThompsonMcMullan.

Christopher Peace, L’02, represents the 97th District in the Virginia House of Delegates. He is the director of the Historic Polegreen Church Foundation, which works to preserve the birthplace of religious and civic liberty.

Paul W. Emigholz, L’03, is a member of the local government practice group at Sands Anderson Marks & Miller, where his practice is centered on land use, zoning, condemnation, other local government issues and general civil litigation.

Kevin J. Funk, L’03, is an associate at CantorArkema in the firm’s commercial litigation and bankruptcy practice groups.

Tara Manson, L’03, has joined Setliff and Holland as an associate.

Gregory L. Pimentel, L’03, has joined the business and intellectual property law firm of Clark & Associates. His practice concentrates on real estate and planning matters.

Michael C. Cooper, L’04, is an associate in the business section at Spotts Fain.

Nancy Kaplan, L’04, has joined Hancock, Daniel, Johnson & Nagle as an associate in the corporate practice group.

Cassandra Peters, L’04, has joined the board of directors of Prevent Child Abuse Virginia.

R. Brent Rawlings, L’04, is an associate at McGuireWoods.

Rebecca Adams, L’05, published the article “Violence Against Women and International Law: The Fundamental Right to State Protection from Domestic Violence” in the NY Law Review.

Ryan D. Frei, L’05, has joined McGuireWoods as an associate in the commercial litigation department.

Jeffrey C. Meyer, L’05, is an associate in the real estate section at Hirschler Fleisher.


Brandy S. Singleton, W’96 and L’05, has joined Spotts Fain as an associate in the creditors-rights group.

Brock Cole, R’01 and L’06, is an associate at Sands Anderson Marks & Miller, where he works with the firm’s business and professional litigation practice group in Richmond.

Bary W. Hausrath, L’06, is an associate at Richard J. Knapp & Associates.

Kathryn E. Kransdorf, L’06, is an associate at Hancock, Daniel, Johnson & Nagle, where she practices with the firm’s corporate health law and commercial litigation teams.

Neal H. Lewis, L’06, is an associate at Hancock, Daniel, Johnson & Nagle, where he concentrates on representing physicians and other healthcare providers with the firm’s medical malpractice defense team.

Andrew J. Petesch, L’06, practices in the litigation group at Poyner & Spruill in Raleigh, N.C.

Manesh Shah, L’06, is a clerk with the Hon. Robert G. Mayer of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Virginia in Alexandria. In September he will begin working as an associate in the business finance and restructuring department of Weil, Gotshal & Manges in Houston.

Kimberly A. Skiba, L’06, is an associate at Hall & Hall.

Robert Cantor, L’49
April 18, 2007

J. Peter Holland III, L’50
February 19, 2007

John M. Carter, R’49 and L’52
December 13, 2006

Richard Earl Smith, L’53
January 4, 2001

James W. Renney, L’55
April 26, 2007

John F. Kelly, R’51 and L’56
February 27, 2007

William W. Coppedge, L’57
April 30, 2005

Henry Franklin Minor, R’56 and L’59
December 22, 2006

Henry Alexander Thomas, L’59
February 20, 2007

Oliver D. Rudy, L’60
March 13, 2007

Susan M. Hagerty, L’63
January 29, 2007

Albert W. Schlim, L’93
March 2, 2007

Richard Wigley Perrott Johnson, L’94
January 19, 2007

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