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Letter from the Editor

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers:

The Richmond Journal of Law and the Public Interest is proud to present the fall symposium issue of Volume XVII. The issue explores the condition of public education 40 years after *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* held the federal constitution did not guarantee a right to education. The articles in this issue grew out of the authors' participation at the conference, *Rodriguez at 40: Exploring New Paths to Educational Opportunity*, held at the University of Richmond, T.C. Williams School of Law in April 2013.

This issue has been several months in the making and is the product of the very hard work and dedication of the Editors and Staff of Volume XVII. In particular, I would also like to thank Kimberly Robinson, Professor of Law at T.C. Williams and a national expert on the federal role in education and equal educational opportunity. Professor Robinson organized the *Rodriguez at 40* conference, helped the Journal solicit articles, and went above and beyond to help make this edition come to fruition.

In *The Legacy and Implications of San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez*, Charles J. Ogletree, Jr., Jesse Climenko Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, examines the *Rodriguez* decision, discusses the case's legacy, and comments on numerous issues that still plague the Latino community today. Professor Ogletree focuses on the case itself, and includes commentary on Justice Marshall's dissent. The article includes possibilities for future school desegregation and funding litigation, based on the Court's language and the course of school funding equalization since *Rodriguez*. Lastly, Professor Ogletree discusses the evolving recognition of a unique Latino identity by comparing *Rodriguez* and the Ninth Circuit's decision in *Westminster School District of Orange County v. Mendez*.

In *It Takes a Federalist Village: A Revitalized Property Tax as the Linchpin for Stable, Effective K-12 Public Education Funding*, Mildred Wigfall Robinson, Henry L. and Grace Doherty Charitable Foundation Professor of Law at the University of Virginia School of Law, comments on diminished funding for public education. Specifically, Professor Robinson argues that necessary education cannot be accomplished without sufficient and stable funding support. The article examines how all levels of government must be

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involved in this effort and Professor Robinson urges policymakers to be aware of different, available funding sources.

Benjamin M. Superfine, Associate Professor in the College of Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, discusses the relationship between teacher evaluations and student performance on standardized tests in *The Promises and Pitfalls of Teacher Evaluation and Accountability Reform*. In the late 2000s and early 2010s, federal and state law sought to increase teacher effectiveness through increased evaluations that focused on specific methods and increased accountability. Professor Superfine comments that these reform efforts present promise and pitfalls for the education system. He recommends that policymakers commit to looking at evidence about assessment, accountability, teaching, and learning to increase opportunities through teacher evaluation and accountability.

Lastly, *Literacy, Poverty, and Brain Development: Toward a New, Place-Based Educational Intervention* centers on emerging neuroscience regarding children raised in high-poverty environments. Michael R. Hilton, Law and Policy Fellow at the Poverty and Race Research Action Council, discusses how science demonstrates a strong, and arguably causal connection, between high-poverty environments and differences in developing brain architecture. Mr. Hilton suggests that states should concentrate efforts to decrease areas of concentrated areas of poverty in order to provide these students with an equal educational opportunity.

Volume XVII's fall issue examines educational opportunity from a variety of contexts 40 years after Rodriguez. We hope you are enriched by these pieces, and we look forward to bringing you forthcoming publications.

Sincerely,

Stephanie S. Fitzgerald
Editor-in-Chief