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A Dedication to Thomas A. Edmonds

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A DEDICATION TO THOMAS A. EDMONDS

*Daniel T. Murphy**

The Law Review dedicates this issue to Thomas A. Edmonds on the occasion of his resignation as Dean of the T.C. Williams School of Law. Dean Edmonds left Richmond in January, 1987, to assume his new responsibilities as Dean of the law school at the University of Mississippi. Tom and Martha Edmonds are from Mississippi, and Tom began his teaching career at the law school where he now serves as dean. In a sense this move is a return home for the Edmonds.

Writing this dedication was difficult because it was an acknowledgement of the fact that Tom Edmonds has left the law school; however, it does provide an opportunity to reflect upon the progress that has been made during his tenure here. As a consequence of this progress, our law school has a stable and confident future.

I, along with Professors W. Wade Berryhill and Nina R. Kestin, arrived at the law school in 1976, a year before the Dean. It was during this year that the law school was searching for a new dean. I was delighted to meet Tom Edmonds during the search process. I saw in him, as did the rest of the faculty, a person who had a sense of the law school's potential and the energy and determination to bring those ideas into reality.

During the more than nine years of his tenure Dean Edmonds accomplished a large portion of his vision and we are so much the better for it. It is not possible to recite completely the list of

* Acting Dean and Professor of Law, T.C. Williams School of Law, University of Richmond; A.B., 1965, Villanova University; J.D., 1968, Villanova University; LL.M., 1969, Columbia University.

changes and accomplishments that occurred during this time. A much better sense of Tom Edmonds' impact on the school can be derived from spending time walking through the school or observing some of our recent graduates. It is, nevertheless, worthwhile to note some of these changes.

The law school building was partially renovated and the library addition completed. Additional faculty members were added and the teaching effectiveness, scholarship, and public and professional service of the faculty increased significantly. As a consequence of the increase in faculty, the curriculum was expanded. Extensive clinical and skills training courses were added and the first year legal writing program was intensified.

As a result of an understanding the Dean reached with the University, the law school is now able to engage in its own development activities. This fact alone has brought about a truly remarkable change in the support and encouragement of our alumni. From a relatively small percentage of participants in the annual fund, the law school now enjoys one of the highest percentages of alumni participation among law schools nationally. Scholarships and financial aid available to our students has increased dramatically. The enhanced reputation of our school as a result of Dean Edmonds' accomplishments is evidenced by the increasing number of firms interviewing our students for employment.

These and other changes that have taken place during Tom Edmonds' tenure have resulted in a sense of stability and confidence within the school. This stability provides us with many advantages. It enables the faculty to pursue their scholarship interests and professional activities more readily, thereby enhancing their own and the school's reputation. As teachers, the faculty have the time and inclination to be more innovative, to structure their own courses in different stimulating forms and to press for curricular revisions that keep the school fresh and dynamic. Hopefully the students will challenge us and force us to continue this dynamism, and they in turn will be caught up in it.

One of the hallmarks of the school that many of us cherish and strive to protect is its small, collegial and supportive environment. These characteristics are apparent in the relations among the faculty, the students and, hopefully, the administration. Tom Edmonds' "down to earth" manner complimented these traits.

I know that Tom is satisfied that he leaves for his successor a

firm foundation. We certainly hope to keep faith with him by building on his accomplishments. As he leaves, we express our gratitude for all that he has done and wish him and the University of Mississippi School of Law all of the best.