



From the dean ...

INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE AT GEORGIA LAW

It is an honor to serve as the 13th dean of your law school. This first semester of service has offered many occasions to connect with you. Keith Mason (J.D.'85) kicked things off with a lovely reception

during the State Bar Midyear Meeting. Recently, at our graduation ceremony, President Jere Morehead (J.D.'80) personally conferred degrees on the Class of 2015, and the Honorable Steve Jones (J.D.'85) from the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia delivered an inspiring address about a lawyer's obligation to serve.

I've been crisscrossing the country, listening to your ideas and developing a strategy for continuing the tradition of excellence at Georgia Law. To do so, we **must provide first-rate legal training and produce world-class scholarship, in service to state and nation, all at a good value.**

First-Rate Legal Training: Our students will continue to develop the tools necessary to serve the changing demands of the job market. New courses aiding this effort include: Compliance, Internal Investigations, Document Drafting and Advanced Legal Writing for Judicial Clerks, among others. This spring we began a comprehensive re-examination of our writing curriculum and inaugurated two new writing prizes in order to build writing skills in our rising second-year students under the close supervision of faculty members.

Our new "Georgia Law in Atlanta" semester will enable students to take classes in Atlanta while working in externships, thus enhancing their employment opportunities. Georgia Law students have seen success with this model in our Washington, D.C., Semester in Practice Program. I am excited to see the results in our own state.

World-Class Scholarship: Our faculty, among the most talented in the country, shape policy discussions on state, national and international platforms. In February, professors participated in the Working in the Public Interest Conference where Attorney General Sam Olens spoke about his efforts to combat sex trafficking. In March, Associate Dean for Faculty Development Usha Rodrigues and Professor Mehra Baradaran assisted the *Georgia Law Review* in hosting a nationally recognized symposium, featuring the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, Dennis Lockhart, and U.S. Securities and Exchange Commissioner Luis Aguilar (J.D.'79). In May, Professor Elizabeth Chamblee Burch received the Young Scholars Medal from the American Law Institute – the nation's highest honor for law professors. Next spring, under the leadership of Professor Harlan Cohen and the new Associate Dean for International Programs and Strategic Initiatives, Woodruff Chair Diane Marie Amann, the *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law* will host an expert conference with the International Committee of the Red Cross in order to inaugurate and evaluate the ICRC's new Commentaries on the Geneva Conventions – the first such update in over a century.

Service to State and Nation: Service is a top priority for the law school. Under the leadership of the new Associate Dean for Clinical Programs and Experiential Learning, Erica Hashimoto, our programs help to fulfill the university's mission as a land-grant and sea-grant institution. For example, the Appellate Litigation Clinic recently scored several major victories on behalf of clients in cases before the federal appellate courts in fields such as criminal law, immigration law and

franchise law. Additionally, the school's newly created Community Health Law Partnership Clinic, under the guidance of Professor Jason Cade, helped to address the unmet legal needs of Georgia's most vulnerable citizens.

Our alumni and alumnae reflect this strong tradition of service. The recent confirmation of Sally Quillian Yates (J.D.'86) as deputy attorney general serves as a reminder that those educated here rank among the nation's leading legal policymakers. *Class Notes* details the other amazing achievements of your fellow alums.

The judiciary plays an especially important role in this tradition. In January, Georgia's Superior Court judges joined us at a reception hosted by the outgoing Law School Association President, Jen Jordan (J.D.'01). This spring, the Honorable Leigh Martin May (J.D.'98) and R. Stan Baker (J.D.'05) joined the ranks of alums on the federal bench. In May, I visited with the justices of the Georgia Supreme Court to discuss how the law school and the state judiciary can partner more closely. This fall, recent graduates from the law school will fan out across the state and country to serve as law clerks.

At a Good Value: The law school is near the top in rankings among state law schools nationwide, while at the same time its tuition is low compared to many peer schools. However, as law school applications have plummeted nationally to levels not seen since the 1970s, competition to recruit an academically talented and diverse class is fiercer than ever. Many law schools have responded to these trends by "discounting" their tuition by 50 percent or more. It is not unusual to hear about private schools guaranteeing to "match Georgia's offer."

The law school as a state institution cannot make such offers, and we do not want to. Instead, the scholarships that we offer – and will continue to offer – are authentic ones. True private support, from actual donors, stands behind every dollar of aid, including the recent gift from the late Governor Carl Sanders (J.D.'48), which will begin to provide \$80,000 in scholarship support starting in 2016.

To remain competitive and to continue on the path toward excellence, we must build on Governor Sanders' legacy. To begin, **let's double the annual fund in a single year.** To do so, a small group of anonymous donors has created a \$500,000 fund that will match all new or increased contributions to the Annual Fund during the 2015–16 year. Be sure to read more about this important and exciting initiative in Anne Moser's column (page 44). Every dollar raised will support these authentic scholarships, and achieving this goal will underwrite over 30 new half-scholarships, or 60 new quarter-scholarships, for applicants in 2016.

A single letter can only convey so much information. For the latest updates, check the law school's website and follow us on Twitter and Facebook. Be on the lookout for regional alumni/alumnae events in the coming year. Make plans to join us for Homecoming on October 17, 2015, and our 2nd Annual Alumni/Alumnae Weekend on March 18–19, 2016. This is your law school, and together we will continue to invest in its excellence.

Sincerely,

Peter B. "Bo" Rutledge
Dean and Herman E. Talmadge Chair of Law