

As we begin the new academic year at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law – and, in 2017-18, celebrate the law school's 125th anniversary – I write to update you on our recent institutional successes and ambitious future plans.

Our Research

The core strength of Denver Law is its remarkable faculty – and the achievements of our faculty over the past year have been spectacular. Two faculty members received prestigious Fulbright Awards: Professor César Cuauhtémoc García Hernández will travel to Slovenia to conduct research in cross-border migration and immigration-related imprisonment; and Professor Robin Walker Sterling will travel to Ghana to engage in comparative research on juvenile justice. Two other colleagues have been recognized with significant awards by the University of Denver: Professor Sam Kamin has been selected as the University Lecturer for 2017-18 for his superlative creative and scholarly work in the areas of constitutional law, federalism and marijuana law and policy; and Professor Nancy Leong, an expert in constitutional rights, anti-discrimination law, and criminal procedure, has received the Distinguished Scholar Award, which recognizes significant and meritorious achievement in professional scholarship, as evidenced by scholarly publications and their enhancing effect on classroom teaching. (Professor Leong was also elected into the American Law Institute (ALI), the most important independent legal organization dedicated to the reform and clarification of American law.)

Our Teaching

Denver Law enjoys a national reputation for rigorous and innovative teaching grounded in real-world, practical skills. Alongside Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Michigan, we were one of only 14 law schools in the nation to have five or more programs ranked among the nation's best by U.S. News & World Report, including our nationally-recognized programs in advocacy, clinical training, and legal writing. Based on the strength of our experiential learning program, including our students' strong performance in inter-school competitions, the *National Jurist* awarded us an A+ ranking in its listing of Best Schools for Practical Training. Moreover, *Forbes* recently ranked Denver as the nation's number one location for business and careers. Our strong curriculum and enviable geographic location are yielding impressive results: Full-time, long-term employment for the Class of 2016 in jobs requiring bar admission or where a JD provides a professional advantage exceeded 80%.

Our Outreach

Upon joining the University of Denver in July 2016, I set the goal of getting to know 5,280 DU alumni, in an effort that we have styled "The Extra Mile Campaign." I am pleased to report that, as of this letter's writing, I have met or personally corresponded with 3,197 DU alumni. I have met with alumni in Aspen, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Chicago, San Francisco, and Seattle in settings ranging from cafes, to ski slopes, to hockey rinks. And the response to this energetic initiative has been impressive. Over the past year alone, the number of donors to the law school increased by over 25%, resulting in an increase in annual giving of over \$100,000. But we are not done yet. As we continue to celebrate our 125th anniversary year, we are taking active steps to engage with even more alumni and complete the Campaign. To that end, we are pleased to invite all graduates of the Classes of 1984-2005 to an event on October 7, 2017 from 7-9 pm at the Park Hill campus (the current Denver campus of Johnson & Wales University). The evening's program will include brief remarks, tours of the former Lowell Thomas Law Building, and a catered reception. We encourage graduates to come back to the campus at which they studied for a fun evening and to reconnect with classmates, and for all other graduates to go the "extra mile" by meeting me and by reengaging with your alma mater!

Our Plans

In the coming year, we have a number of important projects to tackle. High tuition levels (and the rising cost of rental housing in Denver) has placed Denver Law among the nation's 25 most expensive law schools – a state of affairs that threatens to foreclose opportunity for prospective students and recent graduates alike. We need to modernize our cutting-edge curriculum by adding courses in financial compliance, legal technology, and the business of law. We have plans to expand support for students and recent graduates dedicated to public service, in the form of short-term grants and postgraduate public service fellowships.

Our Request of You

To achievement our ambitious plans, we need to engage more of you in the work and mission of your alma mater: At the nation's top private law schools, more than 50% of alumni give back to their institution in some form – by making a financial contribution, mentoring a current student, or hiring a recent graduate. By contrast, fewer than 10% our 17,000 Denver Law alumni contribute to the Denver Law Fund – the fund that backs our most important strategic initiatives. I have a simple request of you in the coming year: Join me in making a contribution to the Denver Law Fund. And, if your circumstances permit, join me in making a Sturm Scholarship Challenge gift, which multiples scholarship commitments of at least \$50,000 (pledged over a period of up to five years) by a factor of 2.5 (i.e., transforming a \$50,000 commitment into a \$125,000 scholarship).

Of all of my responsibilities (and joys) as dean, one stands out: to encourage more of our alumni and friends to invest in our programs and to assist us in advancing our mission. Together, we can take one of the nation's most ascendant and innovative law schools to even greater heights!

Sincerely,



Bruce Smith, Dean

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