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# (Sesquicentennial) Preserving and Enhancing a Legacy of Excellence in Challenging Times (1989 - ): The Deanship of Judith Welch Wegner

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**Preserving and Enhancing a Legacy of Excellence  
in Challenging Times: 1989-  
—The Deanship of Judith Welch Wegner<sup>†</sup>**

S. ELIZABETH GIBSON

*Elizabeth Gibson was born in Raleigh in November 1950. She graduated from Duke University in 1972, after majoring in political science and serving as vice-president of the student government. After working for a year with the United States Department of Justice, she returned to North Carolina to attend law school at the University of North Carolina School of Law. She graduated with high honors, then went on to clerk for Judge J. Braxton Craven on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and United States Supreme Court Justice Byron R. White. She practiced in Washington, D.C. and became a partner with the firm of Shea & Gardner. Since returning in 1983 to teach at her alma mater, she has become known as a respected teacher and scholar in the areas of civil procedure, bankruptcy, and federal jurisdiction. Gibson has served with distinction on numerous law school and University committees and has emerged as a leader among both the law school's and university's faculties. She was the principal author of the law school's 1993 self-study.*

Continuing the tradition of choosing strong leadership from within the school, yet breaking new ground by selecting a woman, the University of North Carolina Board of Governors confirmed the selection of Judith Welch Wegner to become the fifteenth dean of the University of North Carolina School of Law effective July 1, 1989. Her confirmation ended a twenty-seven month national search and enabled the law school to concentrate once again on moving forward toward the fulfillment of its mission. At the time her selection was

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<sup>†</sup> Most of the material for this chapter was gathered from the *Dean's Report* for the years 1990-93, the 1993-94 *UNC-Law Record*, the *Law Alumni Newsletter* and *UNC-Law Alumni News* for the years 1989-94, and the 1992-93 *Self-Study Report* of the UNC School of Law.

announced, Chancellor Paul Hardin remarked that "Judith Wegner is exceptionally well prepared to be dean of this university's law school . . . . She is an outstanding teacher and a well published scholar. . . . She will be an effective and assertive dean."<sup>1</sup> His prediction proved correct.

Judith Wegner was born and raised in Windsor, Connecticut. She was the oldest of four children. After graduating from the public schools, she spent her first year of college at Mount Holyoke, where she planned to major in astrophysics. A desire for a more open and active campus, however, led her to transfer to the University of Wisconsin after her freshman year. There she majored in English, completing an honors thesis on James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Selected for membership in Phi Beta Kappa, she graduated with honors in 1972 and was the recipient of the Helen C. White Award for the outstanding woman in the humanities.

After marrying fellow Wisconsin student Warren Wegner and working briefly with the extension service at the University of California at Los Angeles, Wegner enrolled in the law school at UCLA. Combining her interests in language, rigorous analysis, public policy, and public service, she found a home in the law. She served as Chief Comment Editor of the *UCLA Law Review*, was elected to the Order of the Coif, and received the J.D. degree in 1976.

Upon graduation, Wegner served as law clerk for United States District Judge Warren J. Ferguson of the Central District of California. After completing her one-year clerkship in Los Angeles, she moved to Washington, D.C., where she held several positions with the federal government. Her first jobs were at the United States Department of Justice, where she served as an attorney-advisor in the Office of Legal Counsel and as an appellate attorney in the Lands and Natural Resources Division. She then moved to the Department of Education and served for thirteen months as a special assistant to the Secretary, Shirley M. Hufstедler, for whom she had served as a law clerk on the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit during a law school externship.

Encouraged by some of her law school professors to consider law teaching as a career, and believing that such a career was where her long-term interests lay, Wegner decided to join the teaching ranks. As she and her husband were ready to leave Washington by that time,

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1. Mark Schultz, *Wegner Picked as UNC Law School Dean*, CHAPEL HILL HERALD, May 9, 1989, at A3.

she looked broadly at teaching opportunities. During the spring semester of 1981, she taught at the University of Iowa College of Law as a visiting professor. She then joined the UNC law faculty as an assistant professor in July 1981. She brought to the classroom the expertise she had gained through government service, teaching courses in real property, land use, the rights of disabled persons, and local and state government law. Her research interests were as broad as her teaching skills, ranging from inquiries about discrimination based on disability to the financing of highway improvements.

It quickly became apparent to her colleagues that Wegner was an extremely hard worker and an energetic pursuer of her goals. Her rise through the law school's faculty ranks was as rapid and impressive as that of her predecessors. In 1984 she became an associate professor with tenure, and in 1986 she commenced a two-year term as Dean Ken Broun's associate dean. It was in this job that her administrative skills became apparent. In July 1988 she was promoted to full professor, and a year later she became dean. In eight years, she had gone from being the faculty's newcomer to its leader.

Dean Wegner's dedication to her law school duties during this period did not preclude her active participation in a variety of activities in the community and the University. Most notably she served for four years as a member of the Carrboro Board of Aldermen, maintaining her lifelong interest in local government affairs. As an elected town official, she concentrated her energies on resolving interjurisdictional disputes over land use and watershed management. On campus she chaired the University's Committee on the Status of Women. Under her leadership the committee undertook an extensive survey of women in the Division of Health Affairs and drafted one of the University's first maternity-leave policies.

Upon embarking on her deanship in 1989, Dean Wegner stated that her goals included working on solutions to the law school's space problems, fostering more ambitious faculty research efforts, improving the students' learning experience, and increasing alumni participation in the ongoing life of the school.<sup>2</sup> Ambitious goals in their own right, they became all the more challenging due to serious financial problems that the State of North Carolina encountered in the early years of her deanship. The resulting fiscal constraints on the law school demanded energetic leadership, determination, and creativity

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2. *Judith Welch Wegner Is Picked to Lead School of Law*, LAW ALUMNI NEWSLETTER (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), Summer 1989, at 1.

in the dean's office—qualities Judith Wegner quickly showed she possessed. In her able hands, the law school not only survived but continued to move ahead on a variety of fronts.

### CHALLENGES DURING DEAN WEGNER'S FIRST TERM

As the new dean, Judith Wegner pursued the goals she had identified, as well as addressing the law school's other needs, with impressive energy and enthusiasm. Her efforts in the early months of her tenure were buoyed by the announcement of what was then the largest gift in the history of the law school—a \$1 million donation by Reef C. Ivey II, a member of the class of 1968. This money was earmarked for the creation of a distinguished professorship in corporate or international law, a research professorship, and a visiting professorship; the establishment of a teaching innovation fund; and the initiation of a new need-based scholarship program.<sup>3</sup>

While efforts to increase private fundraising by the law school were off to a strong start, shortfalls in state revenues led to the imposition of sudden and substantial budget cutbacks on all units of the University system beginning in 1990. Reduction of funds for instructional and staff positions resulted in the loss of faculty and staff slots for the law school; noninstructional faculty support funds were also cut, leading to the permanent loss of state funds for the Albert Coates Law Center. Law school faculty and staff received no salary increases from the State for the 1991-92 school year and only token increases for 1992-93. The law library was hit especially hard: it not only suffered similar budget cuts, but even failed to receive funding needed to keep pace with the high rate of inflation in the publishing world.<sup>4</sup> Just months into Dean Wegner's first term, and for the next several years, the law school confronted severe financial problems that were not fully anticipated when she accepted the deanship.

The law school responded to this challenge in a variety of ways. Belt-tightening measures included making do without previously available services, reorganizing staff and resources with an eye to maximum efficiency, and eliminating class sections or even entire courses that had previously been taught. But the reduction in state funds also led to an increased emphasis on private fundraising, under the able leadership of Assistant Dean Todd Lindsley. The results of

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3. *Law School Receives \$1 Million Gift*, LAW ALUMNI NEWSLETTER (UNC Chapel Hill School of Law) Summer 1990, at 1.

4. *1992-93 Self-Study Report* (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), at 6-8.

these efforts are described in more detail later in this history,<sup>5</sup> but their success is illustrated by the fact that the law school surpassed its original Bicentennial fundraising goal of \$9 million more than a year and a half prior to the conclusion of the University-wide campaign.<sup>6</sup>

Students also played an important role in addressing the law school's financial needs. In the spring of 1991, the Student Bar Association spearheaded a school-wide drive that raised over \$7000 for the Law Library. Thereafter, several graduating classes pledged funds for the library as part of their class gifts. During the 1993-94 academic year, the Student Bar Association actively supported a proposal to raise annual student fees by \$500 per law student to fund critical law school needs not covered by state funds. The student support proved a very valuable part of a successful law school effort to gain approval of the fee increase from the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the demands of financial matters she faced during her first term, Dean Wegner moved forward with planning for a much needed addition to Van Hecke-Wettach Hall. Funded with private law school money, architects drew up plans for a 53,000 square-foot addition and the renovation of 15,000 feet of existing space. University trustees approved the exterior design for the project in 1993. As of this writing, construction awaits the securing of necessary funding, which Dean Wegner is rigorously pursuing from public sources. Significant progress toward securing the necessary funding came in the summer of 1994, when the legislature appropriated \$1 million for completion of planning for the new addition.

Another challenge of Dean Wegner's first term was to devise an administrative structure that made the best use of the available talent within existing financial constraints. In all of her work, Dean Wegner was ably assisted by her administrative assistant, Ginger Morgan, who joined the law school staff in 1992. A number of administrative positions were reorganized and new positions were created in an effort to improve service and to meet increased demands on administrators and staff. The administration of the school's student-related programs was reorganized by separating the admissions and student

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5. See Todd T. Lindsley, *The History of the UNC Law Alumni Association and UNC Law Foundation*, 73 N.C. L. REV. 942 (1995).

6. *Bicentennial Goal Raised to \$400 Million*, UNC-LAW ALUMNI NEWS (UNC School of Law) Winter 1994, at 7.

7. See *Law Students, UNC Board Approve Fee Increase*, UNC-LAW ALUMNI NEWS (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), Winter 1994, at 10.

affairs functions. Elizabeth Furr continued as Assistant Dean for Admissions and International Programs, and Winston Crisp filled the new position of Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. The creation of a second faculty-staffed associate dean position strengthened the administration of academic programs. The previously existing associate dean's position became that of Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; Professor Burnele Powell, followed by Professor Lissa Broome, filled this position. The new position of Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs was created to provide additional leadership for faculty development and research. This position was held successively by faculty members William Turnier, John Conley, and Donald Hornstein. Additional administrative support was also provided in the area of the law school's external relations. These functions were carried out not only by Assistant Dean for Development and Alumni Affairs Todd Lindsley, but also by a Director of Alumni Affairs and Annual Fund, a position first held by Mary Edgerton and then by Peggy Myers; a Director of Public Information, Ellen Smith; and their assistants, Stephanie Thurman and Helga Sonner.

#### FACULTY

During Dean Wegner's first term as dean, the size of the faculty remained relatively stable. While eight new faculty members were hired during the 1989-94 period, the school lost seven others due to retirement or other causes. Those joining the faculty were John Charles Boger, Jerry Markham, Molly McUsic, Michael Selmi, Marilyn Yarbrough, Ruth McKinney, Melissa Saunders, and Associate Director of the Law Library Thomas French. These new colleagues brought with them impressive academic credentials, as well as valuable experience in the practice of law. Two of the new faculty members, Professors McUsic and Saunders, were former United States Supreme Court law clerks. Professor Yarbrough came with significant experience in academic administration, which the University quickly tapped. In 1994, Yarbrough became Associate Provost, a post that required her to divide her time between the law school and the Provost's office.

Despite the excitement over the school's ability to attract these new, talented faculty members, the law school regretted the departure of other cherished colleagues. In 1989 all mourned the untimely death of Professor Nancy Rhoden, a gifted scholar and teacher, who had been at the law school for only two years. A scholarship fund at the law school was established in her memory.

Three of the law school's most beloved faculty members left the teaching ranks due to the University's mandatory retirement policy. Bill Murphy retired in 1990, at the end of his nineteenth year at the law school. The winner of the McCall Teaching Award in 1977 and 1990, he was honored by the school with a special "Bill Murphy Day" and the establishment of a William P. Murphy Distinguished Speaker Program designed to bring to the school prominent authorities in the areas of Professor Murphy's expertise: constitutional law, labor law, employment discrimination, and dispute resolution. The following year another McCall Award winner, Professor Ferebee Taylor, retired. University Chancellor for eight years, he was a member of the law school faculty for more than a decade. The creation of the Nelson Ferebee Taylor Prize for Excellence in Corporate Law marked his retirement. This award goes annually to the member of the graduating class "who has sustained the strongest record of achievement in the area of corporate law."<sup>8</sup> In 1992 Professor Dan Pollitt retired after thirty-five years at the law school. To honor him, students and alumni arranged a "roast" attended by numerous friends and colleagues, including Chancellor Paul Hardin and basketball Coach Dean Smith. In addition, the *North Carolina Law Review* dedicated its September 1992 issue to Professor Pollitt, and a fellowship was created in his honor to fund civil rights and civil liberties work by law students. Fortunately for the law school, each of these outstanding teachers continued to teach an occasional course at the law school in retirement, thus permitting subsequent classes of students to learn from them.

From 1989 to 1994, several faculty members were named to distinguished professorships in recognition of their significant accomplishments. In 1990 former dean Kenneth S. Broun, returning to the law school from a two-year leave of absence in private practice, was named to one of the two Henry P. Brandis, Jr., professorships. In 1991 Charles Edward Daye was also named a Henry P. Brandis, Jr., Professor. The same year the following distinguished professorships were awarded: Paul G. Haskell, William Rand Kenan, Jr., Professor; Thomas Lee Hazen, Cary C. Boshamer Distinguished Professor; Arnold H. Loewy, Graham Kenan Professor; and William J. Turnier, Willie Person Mangum Professor. In 1992 John V. Orth became a Graham Kenan Professor, which honor was replaced the

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8. *Professor Taylor Retires After 21 Years of Service*, LAW ALUMNI NEWSLETTER (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), Summer 1991, at 6.



following year when he was named William Rand Kenan, Jr., Professor. John Martin Conley was also named a William Rand Kenan, Jr., Professor in 1993, and in the same year Joseph J. Kalo became a Graham Kenan Professor and S. Elizabeth Gibson became Burton Craige Professor. Reef C. Ivey II Research Professorships were held first by John Conley and John Orth, and later by Donald Thomas Hornstein and Lawrence Zelenak.

Just as in earlier decades, faculty members worked hard at becoming effective, challenging teachers in the classroom. Some introduced into their courses new ways of presenting material or involving students more actively in the class discussion. Others attempted to provide greater linkages between law school education and the actual practice of law, while still others introduced methodologies and insights obtained from other academic disciplines. Clinical and trial advocacy courses continued to enroll large numbers of students, thereby providing practical skills training under the close supervision of full-time and adjunct faculty members. As discussed elsewhere in the chapter, the faculty adopted curricular changes designed to increase the effectiveness of instruction, particularly in the second and third years.

The graduating classes of 1990-94 recognized the following faculty members for excellence in the classroom: Bill Murphy (1990), Elizabeth Gibson (1991), Lissa Broome (1992), Rich Rosen (1993), and Jack Boger (1994). Although only one faculty member was selected to receive the McCall Teaching Award for Excellence each year, third-year students nominated many other faculty members for this award during these years in recognition of the strength of their teaching skills. Evidence of the students' high regard for the quality of instruction throughout the law school appeared in their responses to a survey conducted in 1992 as part of the law school's self-study. With over seventy-five percent of the student body responding, approximately ninety percent of the students indicated that the quality of instruction at the law school was good or excellent.<sup>9</sup>

During Dean Wegner's first term, the law school increased its efforts to provide institutional support for and encouragement of the faculty's scholarship. A research and study assignment policy was adopted, which allowed four to six faculty members each year to be relieved of teaching duties for one semester in order to engage in research and professional development activities. Summer research

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9. 1992-93 *Self-Study Report*, (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), at App. I-2.

grant funds were also increased. The Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs organized faculty speaker and discussion series and assisted individual faculty members in achieving their research goals.

During this period, faculty members produced an impressive array of scholarly publications. Several wrote or co-authored new or revised editions of legal casebooks, anthologies, treatises, or other scholarly books. Virtually every member of the faculty published one or more law review articles; among the distinguished journals in which these articles appeared were the *North Carolina Law Review*, the *Columbia Law Review*, the *Texas Law Review*, the *Michigan Law Review*, the *Northwestern University Law Review*, the *Southern California Law Review*, and the *University of Illinois Law Review*. Several faculty members also produced significant professional manuscripts for continuing education programs for lawyers or judges.

Besides engaging in valuable scholarship, faculty members also provided service to the University, the profession, and the public in ways too numerous to recount fully. Dean Wegner provided special encouragement and support for the faculty's public service activities through her own personal example of active involvement in professional and University affairs. Long active in the Association of American Law Schools as a member of the Executive and Accreditation Committees, in 1994 Dean Wegner became president-elect of the Association.<sup>10</sup> She thus followed in the footsteps of former Dean Maurice T. Van Hecke, who served as AALS president in 1956. Closer to home, Dean Wegner continued to serve on numerous campus-wide committees during her first term as dean. This University service included chairing or co-chairing the Public Service Roundtable, the Academic Affairs New Faculty Professional Development Committee, and the Committee on Community and Diversity, as well as serving as a member of the Provost Search Committee.

Other faculty members also held significant positions in national professional organizations. Charles Daye served from 1991-93 as president of the Law School Admissions Council, and Ken Broun served in 1991 as chair of the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. Professor Broun also served as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Federal Rules of Evidence. Several members of the faculty, including Laura Gasaway, Marilyn Yarbrough, Burnele Powell,

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10. *Dean Reappointed; Elected AALS President*, UNC-LAW ALUMNI NEWS (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), Winter 1994, at 3.

William Turnier, Ronald Link, and Lissa Broome, played active roles on various American Bar Association committees.

Professor Jack Boger provided exceptional service to the public through his key involvement with two important conferences sponsored by the law school. In 1992 Boger spearheaded a pan-university conference on the education of minority and disadvantaged children in North Carolina. Collaborating with colleagues from the UNC Schools of Education and Social Work and from North Carolina Central University, Professor Boger brought together nationally recognized scholars and a broad group of educators, parents, and advocates interested in education policy reform in the state. The next year Professor Boger and Dean Wegner, along with faculty members in the UNC Department of City and Regional Planning, organized a major symposium on "Race, Poverty, and the American City: The Kerner Commission Revisited." This symposium allowed scholars in various disciplines from throughout the University and nation to share insights on critical urban policy issues. Papers presented at the symposium later appeared in the *North Carolina Law Review*.<sup>11</sup>

Many faculty members continued the fine tradition, which their predecessors began, of playing active roles in the North Carolina Bar Association or by serving in advisory positions to legislative committees or courts within the state. Two notable examples are Professor Ken Broun's service as vice-president of the Bar Association and Professor Bob Byrd's continued distinguished service on the North Carolina General Statutes Commission. Professor Broun also provided service to the local community as Mayor of Chapel Hill.

Law school faculty members continued to play important leadership roles throughout the campus, as they chaired and sat upon various elective and appointive University committees and task forces and filled positions of leadership in University organizations. Three faculty members and one administrator received University-wide recognition of their significant contributions to the University. In 1992 Laura Gasaway, like Dean Wegner before her, received the Mary Turner Lane Award in recognition of her important contributions to women on campus, and in 1994 Dean Wegner herself was named a finalist for the inaugural Cornelia Phillips Spencer Award, which was established to recognize the woman who had made the greatest contributions to the University in recent years. Director of

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11. See Symposium, *The Urban Crisis: The Kerner Commission Report Revisited*, 71 N.C. L. REV. 1283 (1993).

Administration Kay Wijnberg, who served as the first chair of the University's Employee Forum, was also named as a finalist for the Spencer Award. In 1992 the University bestowed upon Esphur Foster, the law school receptionist, the C. Knox Massey Award, which recognizes employees who have given distinguished service to the University. Professor Bob Byrd's many years of service to the University's student judicial system were recognized in 1994 by the establishment of a University award in his honor, the Robert G. Byrd Award for Academic Integrity. This award will go annually to a faculty or staff member who has worked to promote the ideal of academic integrity.

Finally, several faculty members engaged in valuable service to the public by performing important pro bono work. Among those providing their legal services to indigent clients were Professors Bennett, Billionis, Boger, Broome, Broun, Corrado, Rosen, Larimer, Nakell, Pollitt, and Robertson.

#### STUDENTS

During Dean Wegner's first term, the enrollment of the law school remained relatively stable, even as the number of applicants, following national trends, rose and then tapered off slightly. Retaining 235 as a target figure for the entering class, the law school during the 1989-93 period welcomed first-year classes ranging in size from 223 to 253. The number of applications submitted to the school during this period ranged from a high of 3419 in 1990 to a low of 3113 in 1993. Throughout this period, the quality of the incoming students remained strong, with the median LSAT score being at approximately the 90th percentile and the median undergraduate grade point average hovering around 3.5.

The law school continued to seek a diverse student body. Minority student presence increased from 13% of the 1989 entering class to 16.8% of the class entering in 1993, and the percentage of women in the entering class ranged from 41% to 47%. The law school also continued to attract a number of older students, who were turning to the study of law after pursuing other careers. Interest in the law school by those outside the state remained high, although the school continued the tradition of limiting nonresident enrollment to approximately a quarter of the incoming class.

Under Dean Wegner's leadership, the law school strengthened its efforts to recruit excellent students. The Chancellors Scholars program, initiated in 1988, continued to attract to the school applicants who were being actively recruited by several of the top law

schools in the country. Minority Law Day and the High School Symposium, both held annually, attracted large numbers of potential law students and encouraged them to consider law as a career and the study of law at this school in particular. Assistant Dean for Admissions Elizabeth Furr visited numerous undergraduate campuses and large recruitment forums in order to spread the word about the school. She took with her copies of a new "viewbook," attractively designed to present information about the school's academic program, its community, and the flavor of life for students here. In various of these recruitment efforts, the law school staff was ably assisted by enthusiastic students and alumni.

As in past years students at the School of Law were engaged in a wide variety of activities during the 1989-94 period. Whether sponsoring speakers and symposiums for the benefit of the entire community or providing programming and support for law students with particular interests or needs, student organizations helped to enrich life at the law school. The Student Bar Association remained in the forefront of student activities, providing oversight and funding of law school organizations, as well as providing a voice for student opinions on issues as diverse as the need for increased financial support for the school and the placement in the building of a controversial Pepsi machine. Presidents of the Student Bar Association during this period were Jonathan Williams (1989-90), Lauren Burnham (1990-91), Eric Levinson (1991-92), Timothy Woodland (1992-93), Paul Koutouzakis (1993-94), and Corinne Harrah (1994-95). A new Dean's Advisory Committee was formed to increase communication between Dean Wegner and student leaders.

As other chapters describe, the *North Carolina Law Review*<sup>12</sup> and the *North Carolina Journal of International Law and Commercial Regulation*,<sup>13</sup> both long-standing journals, continued to provide excellent opportunities for students to increase their analytical, research, and writing skills, while at the same time providing useful and provocative legal commentary for both practitioners and scholars.

The Holderness Moot Court was especially successful during this period. In the 1989-90 academic year, the UNC National Team advanced to the national competition in New York City and placed fifth in the nation, while the Jessup Cup team won its regionals and

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12. See Martin M. Brinkley, *The North Carolina Law Review at Threescore and Ten*, 73 N.C. L. REV. 775 (1985).

13. See Jerry W. Markham, *The North Carolina Journal of International Law and Commercial Regulation and International Course Offerings*, 73 N.C. L. REV. 807 (1995).

also advanced to the national round of this international law competition. The following year the National Team also advanced to the national finals in New York, this time placing second out of all 250 teams that participated in some phase of the competition. Team member Seth Cohen ('91) was named runner-up for best oralist in the competition. During the 1990-91, 1991-92, and 1992-93 school years, the school's Client Counseling Team won its regional competition and advanced to the national competition.

The early 1990s saw law students develop an increased interest in public service activities. One group, working to support the Public Interest Law Fellowships, was especially creative in its efforts to raise funds to support public service summer grants for students. For several years it held an auction of faculty and staff donations, producing several thousand dollars to assist students in low or non-paying summer public interest jobs. A number of new student organizations were formed during this period, and several of them provided additional opportunities for law students to help persons outside the law school. The new student organizations included the Wills Assistance and Referral Project, the Carolina AIDS Wills Project, the Death Penalty Project, the UNC Trial Lawyer's Academy, the International Law Club, and the Lambda Law Students Association.

Several graduating students were honored each spring by inclusion in the James E. and Carolyn B. Davis Society. This high honor was granted in recognition of the exemplary character of the new members and their outstanding contributions to the school. In addition, the School of Law continued to recognize high academic achievement by students. Each year the top ten percent of each graduating class was inducted into the Order of the Coif. The faculty on occasion recognized truly superior academic performance by awarding the J.D. degree with highest honors. Those receiving their degree with highest honors were Steven Bruce Epstein and Dinita LeAnne James (1990), Seth Ray Cohen (1991), Elizabeth Eggleston Drigotas and Paul Howard Schwartz (1992), and Amy K. Johnson (1994).

#### CURRICULUM

During Dean Wegner's first term, the faculty engaged in a two-year review of the curriculum, which resulted in the adoption of several changes designed to strengthen the upper-division curriculum and the teaching of research and writing. Beginning with the 1992-93 academic year, all second-year students were required to take one

course in a small-section format. Limited to an enrollment of no more than 25 students, these core and elective courses were designed to keep second-year students actively engaged in their legal education and to provide additional training and feedback in legal writing. An essential component of each of these courses was a series of writing assignments relating to the course content.

The faculty also implemented changes in the professional responsibility requirement. The course was moved from the third to the second year in order to provide students with insights into the ethical and professional obligations of lawyers earlier in their studies. In order to facilitate greater class discussion and student-faculty interaction, the faculty set a class enrollment goal for each professional responsibility course at 35. Faculty were also encouraged to develop alternatives to the traditional professional responsibility course. Among the new professional responsibility offerings were courses in Professionalism and Morality, Professional Responsibility of the Litigator, and Ethics in Criminal Practice.

In order to facilitate the offering of second-year small section courses, the faculty voted to eliminate the second semester of the first-year small section program. As a result, two or three fall small sections of a first-year course were combined into one large section in the spring semester. The first-year research and writing program also underwent changes. Placed under the administrative control of the director of research and writing, Ruth McKinney, the fall portion of the course was taught by the director and three adjunct instructors and several library staff members. This eliminated involvement of the small-section faculty in the teaching of the research and writing course.

Recognizing the increasing international nature of the practice of law, the school under Dean Wegner's leadership expanded its course offerings in the international area. In addition to the traditional courses in international and comparative law, the school offered courses in international business transactions, international litigation, international human rights, Russian law, and a seminar on the European Economic Community. The faculty also initiated an exchange program with the Universite Jean Moulin-Lyon III, a law school in Lyon, France. Under the program students and faculty of the two schools were able to visit at the other school for study and teaching. Professors Jerry Markham and Joe Kalo visited at Lyon in the spring of 1994. The school also created ties with law schools in other countries, including the Netherlands, England, Costa Rica, Eritrea, and the former Soviet Union.

The faculty continued to offer new courses throughout the curriculum. Additional offerings in existing subject areas included advanced family law, advanced bankruptcy, advanced environmental law, advanced legal research, and federal civil rights litigation. New subject matters added to the curriculum included immigration law, judging, sports law, state constitutional law, and national security law. The faculty also added courses in innovative areas, such as law and literature, oral history of lawyers and judges, race and gender, and race and poverty.

#### PLACEMENT

By the time Dean Wegner commenced her deanship, the days in which placement services for students were handled by the dean's office on a part-time basis were long gone. By the early 1990s, the Office of Career Development and Services ("CD&S"), headed by Amanda Harding, operated with a staff of three full-time employees, one part-time employee, several student assistants, and many student volunteers. Because students now faced a highly competitive job market, substantial debt burdens, and increasing tensions between the demands of law practice and the maintenance of a satisfactory personal life, CD&S continued to expand the scope of services it provided. Besides the traditional job of putting students in touch with potential employers of summer clerks and recent graduates, CD&S provided employment services and advice for alumni seeking new positions, provided employment-related and personal counseling, published a biweekly employment bulletin advertising positions for recent graduates and experienced lawyers, and offered thirty to forty workshops each year on areas of traditional and nontraditional practice, skills training, and quality of life issues.

In 1990 major renovations to the ground floor of Van Hecke-Wettach Hall enabled CD&S to move into expanded quarters. The renovated space, though still not fully adequate, provided additional interview rooms, space for the office's resource library, and private space for confidential counseling sessions.

With the downturn in the economy in the early 1990s came a tighter job market for lawyers. Law students felt the pressure acutely. A look at the hiring statistics for the classes of 1990-93 shows that the students' concerns were not unfounded. Six months after graduation, 91% of the class of 1990 was either employed or in graduate school. For the class of 1991 this figure was 89%. Then for the class of 1992 it dropped to 86%, and for the class of 1993 it was 78%. For several years there was a substantial drop in the percentage of graduating



students going into private practice: 1990—70%; 1991—65%; 1992—54%. For the class of 1993, however, the figure was back up to 75%. As the job market tightened up, more students chose to remain in North Carolina. While only 50% of the class of 1990 remained in the state, 66% of the class of 1992 did so. Starting salaries also fell during this period. The median starting salary for the class of 1990 was \$40,000; for the class of 1991 it was \$36,000, and by 1992 it was \$32,000, perhaps reflecting the decline in the percentages of students going into private practice and leaving the state. For the class of 1993, however, the median starting salary was back up to \$40,000.

During this period employment was naturally at the forefront of students' minds while they were in law school. CD&S faced the challenges that the job market presented by encouraging students to be more creative in their employment searches, to take greater initiative in seeking employment opportunities, and to consider a wider range of employment possibilities. Bolstering students' confidence, providing them with information, and equipping them with the necessary employment-seeking skills, Amanda Harding and her staff enabled the overwhelming majority of each graduating class to find satisfying legal employment.

#### ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

Under Dean Wegner's leadership the School of Law strengthened the ties with its almost 7000 alumni by improving communications with them, sponsoring more alumni gatherings, and encouraging their more active involvement with the school. An executive committee of the Law Alumni Association was also created. This group worked closely with the dean, providing advice in such areas as special projects, continuing legal education, and alumni outreach.

Alumni were involved with the school in a variety of paid and volunteer capacities. Some participated in the Alumni Admissions Network, which was established to encourage accepted students to enroll at the law school. Others served as mentors for current students or volunteered to serve as judges in the school's moot court competitions. Still other alumni were employed as adjunct instructors in various courses including trial advocacy, research and writing, and seminars drawing on their special expertise. The school established an additional opportunity for student-alumni contact in the fall of 1993 when it hosted the initial Professionalism Roundtable. Funded by a generous gift from Raymond Witt ('39), this dinner brought together thirty-two second- and third-year students and an equal

number of alumni for discussion of a hypothetical practice situation requiring ethical decision-making and sound judgment. Both students and alumni found it to be a challenging and thought-provoking evening.<sup>14</sup>

Alumni not living in proximity to Chapel Hill maintained ties with the school by attending alumni events in their area, by socializing with other alumni and law school representatives at school-sponsored events at the North Carolina Bar Association or the North Carolina Academy of Trial Lawyers annual meetings, or by returning to the school for Law Alumni Weekends in the fall. The Law Alumni Weekend also provided the occasion for class reunions for those returning forty, twenty-five, ten, or five years after graduation.

Dean Wegner had the privilege of presenting two alumni with Alumni Leadership Awards during her first term. Reef C. Ivey, II ('68) and Marion A. Cowell, Jr., ('64) were honored for their outstanding volunteer and philanthropic leadership at the law school. Two other alumni, Kathrine R. Everett ('20) and William B. Aycock ('48), were honored in 1990 with the presentation of Lifetime Achievement Awards in recognition of their distinguished careers in the law.

As previously noted, restrictions on state funding during Dean Wegner's first term led to an increased emphasis on private fundraising. As part of the University's Bicentennial Campaign, the law school by the middle of 1994 had surpassed its original fundraising goal of \$9 million and was well on its way toward meeting its increased goal of \$12 million. The largest gift received during the campaign, and the largest in the school's history, was a bequest from Kathrine Everett, J.D. 1920, and the UNC law library was renamed in her honor. As a result of these and other generous contributions by alumni and friends over the years, the law school's endowment had grown to a value of just over \$13 million by 1994. Annual giving also continued to grow. During the 1993-94 fiscal year, alumni, parents, and friends contributed \$1.4 million, an increase of 15% over the previous record-setting year. Approximately 30% of the school's alumni participated.

Another way in which the law school continued to reach out to alumni, as well as to other practicing attorneys in North Carolina, was its sponsorship of continuing legal education programs. The school

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14. *Generous Gift Funds Professionalism Dinner*, UNC-LAW ALUMNI NEWS (UNC School of Law, Chapel Hill, N.C.), Winter 1994, at 2.

annually offered its well-established programs in evidence, tax, trial advocacy, depositions practice, and negotiation, the latter three being conducted as part of the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. It also began two new continuing legal education programs during Dean Wegner's first term. The Festival of Legal Learning, a means of raising funds for the library, offered a selection of programs on a wide range of legal topics presented by some forty members of the faculty and librarians of the law school and the Institute of Government. Another new CLE offering during this period was the Dan K. Moore Program in Ethics, which, starting in 1991, became an annual offering as part of the Law Alumni Weekend. This program enabled legal scholars, judges, and practitioners to come together to consider varied topics involving the ethics of legal practice. The School of Law also sponsored one-time programs on environmental law, white collar crime, the North Carolina Constitution, and other current issues.

### CONCLUSION

As Dean Wegner began her second term on July 1, 1994, the law school community felt a sense of optimism as it looked toward the future. With the upturn in the North Carolina economy and resulting increase in state revenues, the school seemed to be emerging from the most severe financial conditions of the previous few years. More generous state funding of the University was expected, although the continued importance of private support was understood. Fortunately, the School of Law's private fundraising efforts were not only strong, but growing.

Dean Wegner's first term brought to a close the first 150 years of the UNC School of Law—a century and a half of progress and accomplishment. With a strong and stable faculty and staff, talented students, and loyal alumni supporting her, Dean Wegner's second term was sure to establish a successful beginning of the next 150 years.