



Dear Alumni and Friends,

Anyone who has spent any time in legal education knows that buildings and classrooms – no matter how impressive – do not determine a law school's greatness. (Which is not to say they are irrelevant – more on that point later!) A law school's people do – its faculty, its leadership, and most importantly, its alumni and its students! On that score, our law school stands second to none. One of my great pleasures as the dean of our law school has been traveling all over Kansas and the rest of the country meeting with so many of you. It is obvious from your record of achievement that you, our alumni, are both extremely accomplished and loyal. As we celebrate our first century, we can all take great pride in what you and the generations of graduates who preceded you have accomplished!

In this issue of The Washburn Lawyer we want to introduce you to our current students. They are an impressive group – highly credentialed and immensely talented. Some continue a long family connection to our law school. Others are new to Washburn and, indeed, new to Kansas and the legal profession. What sets all of them apart from so many other law students is their commitment to serving our profession, their clients, and their communities. As you read their stories, I know you will feel the pride and the pleasure we have in welcoming them to the Washburn family.

I also want to share with you developments at the law school. Our campus indeed has been an active place this past year. In addition to centennial-related events, we held conferences on a range of important topics including the legacy of Brown v. Board of Education, genetically-modified foods, the death penalty, international law, high-conflict custody cases, and conflict-of-interests issues for transactional lawyers, just to name a few. We became one of the first law schools in the nation to provide NITA training for all of our Trial Advocacy professors. We hosted a number of important speakers, many of whom were our alumni participating in the activities of one of our new Centers. This spring semester will be an equally busy time. In particular, we will be holding our Centennial Gala on March 27th. We hope to see you there and at many of this spring's other events.

I began this letter by stating that great facilities do not necessarily make a great law school. On the other hand, they do not hurt! That is why I am pleased to tell you that we are continuing to update and improve the building. We opened our new Career Services Office this fall. Stop by to see it. I know you will be impressed. As I write this we are putting the final touches to the plans for the \$1.25 million dollar renovation of our classrooms. By next fall, the blue, green and orange plastic chairs, the cement floors, the block walls and the ancient black boards we all know so well will give way to new furnishings, carpets, power outlets for laptops, white boards and other niceties of the 21st Century! The improvements will be the most dramatic changes to our educational facilities since we left those infamous trailer buildings in 1969! For the first time in a long time, our classrooms will be as modern as our students are talented.

We look forward to seeing you, either here on campus or at one of the many receptions we will be holding this year throughout the country. In particular, I look forward to seeing you at the Centennial Gala. It promises to be a great event at which we celebrate our first hundred years and launch our aspirations for the next!

Sincerely,
Dennis