

Thomas Jefferson School of Law Dedication

February 7, 2013

Remarks of Dean Rudy Hasl

Thank you, Beth, for that wonderful introduction. I want to describe a journey. To be more accurate, I want to describe an Odyssey. As a classics major, I am familiar with the story of Odysseus. My story hopefully will not mirror the full ten years of his Odyssey, but it has had many of the challenges that he and his crew encountered. Our odyssey began in 2005 when I arranged for our then Board Chair, Sandy Kahn, to come up to Seattle for an ABA Conference on law school architecture, called Bytes, Bricks, and Continuous Renovations. That conference set in motion a series of events that culminated in our dedication today. Faced with a deteriorating physical plant in Old Town and increasing pressure from our neighbors to curtail enrollment and to reduce parking, the Board of Trustees made the decision to find a new location for the School. This process involved the defeasance of the bonds issued in 2005 and the sale of the Old Town property. We were successful in both of these challenges, but we closed the transactions during the San Diego fires in 2007, when documents were not able to be delivered as a result of road closures. We developed a financial plan, with the assistance of Joe Piscitell and Dean Flanagan, then at Merrill Lynch. We were finally able to close the transaction at the end of August, 2008, about one week before the markets closed and financing stopped. During the preceding year, we developed the conceptual plans for the new building, with the creative energies of David Symons, from S2 Architecture in Calgary, Canada. We traveled to numerous locations to see other new buildings as a part of the design process. Some critical themes emerged which gave inspiration to the design:

1. Supports the culture of the school as an inviting and welcoming diverse collaborative environment, where the focus is on student interaction and development;
2. Draws on our location in the East Village of downtown San Diego for colors, textures, and themes;
3. Exemplifies environmental responsibility and sensitivity, reflected in our LEED Gold designation; and
4. Educates the users of the building through art, plants, and displays.

We started construction in December 2008 and took occupancy in January 2011. We had a great team who worked together to ensure that the building incorporated the elements we sought. I would like to recognize Erich Aragon and Steve Nelson of Midwest General, the owners representative; Deborah Elliott of I-D Studios, as the interior designer; and Greg Nowell as the Landscape architect. And we had a few challenges, like the challenges of Odysseus with the Sirens, the Cyclops, and the Scylla and Charybdis. I still remember the call in February 2009 when the excavator discovered the fossil remains of a Columbian Mammoth (300,000 years old), a shell bed of unique scallop shells, the remains of a baleen Whale (500,000 years old), and even gold particles from an ancient river bed. But none of these discoveries slowed us down. They established an even closer connection to the namesake for this institution – Thomas Jefferson - who was known as the father of American Paleontology and had a fascination with the discoveries of mammoth remains in the Hudson Valley and in Big Bone Lick, Kentucky. The Notes on the State of Virginia, an original copy of which is in the library, make clear that

an incentive for the Lewis & Clark expedition was the discovery of mammoths in the western United States. I invite you to look at the fossil collection on the 4th floor of the library and to see the Jefferson written and signed documents in the lobby.

From its early origins, the School has placed an emphasis on the international dimension to its program of legal education and its outreach to other countries. During the early stages of the construction process, we collected the coins from over 100 countries from our students and faculty members. They were added to the concrete foundations of the building as a symbol of the centrality of the internationalization of the legal educational program and the importance of our international programs and connections. We have built special relationships with Brazil, China, and France and they are an important part of our celebration today. Unfortunately, our Justice from the Supreme Court of the People's Republic of China was not able to be with us this afternoon.

It is a very distinct honor for me, at this time, to be able to introduce our distinguished speakers from the judiciary.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg has been an Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court since 1993. She had previously served as a faculty member at Rutgers and at Columbia and a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. She has had a very special connection with the Thomas Jefferson School of Law, being a distinguished speaker in 1993 and having a lecture established in her honor that constitutes the core of our annual Women and the Law conference.

Our next speaker served as a Justice of the Supreme Federal Court of Brazil from 2003 until 2012, having been appointed by President Lula. He also served as Chief Justice until his retirement from the Court. I present Justice Carlos Ayres Britto.

Finally, I am honored to present a distinguished Jurist and Diplomat. In addition to academic positions, she served as the 1st woman and the youngest person to serve on the French Supreme Court for Constitutional Matters from 1992 to 2001 and as Minister of European Affairs from 2002-2004. Justice Noëlle Lenoir.