

To the Thomas Jefferson School of Law community,

As our namesake once said, “Act as if all the world were watching.” The courage of Thomas Jefferson is what I aspire to every day as I walk the halls, talking to students whose quest for a law degree is about social justice and serving their communities.

Whether you are a student, a prospective student, one of our respected alumni or a dedicated professor, you have a stake in seeing this law school endure and an opportunity to advance it. We have, over the last 20 months, installed new leadership, trimmed the fat off the budget, restructured the debt, and instituted effective bar prep programs so students are fully ready to take the exam. It has been inspirational and gut-wrenching at the same time. Despite our efforts and achievements, the unfavorable perception of this law school is rampant in social media and traditional media as well as in law offices and courthouses. It wreaks havoc on our ability to attract potential students at a time when there is a serious decline in those aspiring to be lawyers.

This must change.

You will be seeing and hearing about our efforts to honor our mission of providing outstanding legal education for a diverse student body. We will confront the reality of our reputation head on and act as if all the world were watching. We will seek opportunities to understand our role and our system’s role in the unfavorable opinions and develop a course of action for ourselves and for our school community. We know our value and our worth. We will tell our story in many different ways and invite our critics to our table.

Keep your eye on us because good things are happening at this school. Through open collaboration and thoughtful discourse, we all succeed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Guernsey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas Guernsey
President and Dean