MOMENTUM

You feel it the moment you approach our spectacular new Chapman University School of Law complex, situated on a beautifully landscaped 50-acre campus in the heart of historic Old Towne Orange. It's here that the past and the future meet. It's where a university with a rich, 140-year legacy — which began the very hour of Abraham Lincoln's presidential inauguration — welcomes the future with enthusiasm, energy, and expectation. It's a place where established traditions guide us and new traditions are constantly evolving — a place where the time-honored tenets of law are taught in an environment utilizing the most advanced developments in technology.

Since its founding in 1995, the momentum at Chapman University's School of Law has been building — literally and figuratively. In six short years, Chapman University School of Law has distinguished itself as an emerging leader in legal education. The only law school in Orange County located on a university campus, Chapman School of Law achieved American Bar Association approval in only its third year of operation. Our faculty has grown to include 21 full-time professors. Our entering students possess academic credentials that place them in the top third of America's law students.

In June 1999, we opened our new $30 million law complex. Classrooms and seminar rooms are equipped with cutting edge computer and electronic technology. Two beautifully-appointed courtrooms — one designed for trials and the other for appellate hearings — provide fully equipped facilities for trial advocacy exercises, mock trial and moot court competitions. The law library, featuring more than 250,000 volumes and volume equivalencies, is designed and equipped to meet the needs of legal education well into the new century.

While our new building represents an enormous accomplishment and commitment to the future, we believe our greatest resources are the people — the students, staff, and faculty — who make Chapman University School of Law a unique, supportive environment in which to study law. The following pages will introduce you to our faculty, a notable array of men and women whose wealth of legal experience and commitment to teaching truly embody Chapman University's mission statement: “To provide personalized education of distinction that leads to inquiring, ethical and productive lives as global citizens.”
If it’s true that the greatest asset of any institution is its people, the Chapman University School of Law is poised for greatness. The capable, accomplished men and women who comprise our faculty possess a degree of passion and commitment unlike any I’ve witnessed in more than a quarter century as a law school dean. As you review the faculty profiles on the pages that follow, you will be introduced to professors whose experience, energy, and enthusiasm for teaching law are truly impressive. It is a young faculty with extraordinary credentials, including two former United States Supreme Court clerks, several former federal courts of appeal clerks, and a wealth of experience in the practice and teaching of law.

With one of the best student to faculty ratios in legal education today and small first year sections, Chapman fosters a collegial environment in which law students come to know their professors well. The Chapman faculty consists of people who are genuinely committed to teaching, to their students, and to developing a body of scholarship that will be used, cited, and regarded throughout legal education. They possess keen insight in their individual areas of specialty and display a passion for sharing it. That ability to provide inspiration as well as information is, I believe, the heart of the teaching process.

Our goal is for the Chapman University School of Law to become an institution of national influence, one recognized for its high standards and high ideals. With the remarkable faculty we have assembled — and with gifted, dedicated students committed to learning the law — we are well on the way to achieving our goal.

Parham H. Williams
Vice President, Dean and Donald P. Kennedy Chair in Law
Chapman University School of Law
As an empiricist, I am interested in what works or what doesn’t work in the “real world.” For example, I believe that it’s important to observe how students learn. I’ve found that students get the most out of their legal education when they have mentoring—an observation that coincides with my vision of teaching as mentoring. I take a personal interest in my students’ educational and professional development. I listen, challenge, and encourage. I hope to stimulate their thinking and ethical judgment. And I develop lasting connections with my students. Two of my former students were my groomsmen in my wedding.

I also study land resources problems from a pragmatic problem-solving perspective. Good ideas need to connect to the real world of property rights, land use, and environmental regulation, so I do case studies and field research, as well as theoretical development. Then, I try to model what I teach and write into public service in forums where land resources problems are addressed and decisions are made.
Pundits often refer to the Internet as an ‘information superhighway,’ but I think it more closely resembles an ocean of information. Like an ocean, the Internet conceals both great beauty and terrible danger. We usually sail — or surf — along its surface, intent on our destination and unaware of the mysteries that lurk beneath its depths. While portions of this information ocean fall within certain jurisdictions and controls, much of its vast expanse remains wild and free.

There are very few areas of law that afford a young lawyer or academic an opportunity to take a swing at new problems, to do things that haven’t been done before. Internet law is clearly one of them. It seems safe to say that no other legal specialty is expanding and changing as dramatically or rapidly. It offers a rare opportunity to work on a legal frontier.
When you’re teaching, you’re learning. I bring 27 years of teaching — and learning — experience to the classroom, and I’ve enjoyed them all. Teaching is an opportunity to give back to the profession, to hopefully help students become better lawyers, if not better people.

The challenge of teaching law isn’t to stand up in front of a class and blindly lecture, nor is it to viciously cross-examine students in an effort to distill the essence of an obtuse point. The challenge of teaching law is to expose students to the majesty of legal analysis and the use of the law. That’s done through vigorous but respectful questions designed to further the analytical abilities of the student.

There’s a degree of enthusiasm and challenge that comes from starting a new law school. Chapman School of Law is not a place locked in by traditions. We have the opportunity to shape our own future. At older law schools, professors are often focused on publishing scholarly work. In some cases, students are a distraction from their academic pursuits. At Chapman, the students really do come first. They get a much more personalized education.
Transaction law is an intellectually challenging, constantly evolving area of law, and I enjoy introducing students to it. Some have a misconception that it is not exciting, but in fact deal-making can be intense, exhilarating work. When you close a transaction, the client gets funded, ground is broken on a project, and you are there at the center of the deal.

The world of transactional law is a mystery to many simply because the media typically focus on trial law, where litigators represent clients and argue cases in court; yet transactional law accounts for half of what lawyers do. At Chapman, we’ve balanced the scales by developing a transactional law curriculum that introduces students to this important other half of legal practice. Transactional lawyering is especially relevant in a center of wealth creation like Orange County, where businesses are being started and buildings are going up at a phenomenal rate.

Good transactional lawyers walk a fine line between the client’s interests and making sure the deal doesn’t stall. They do not get paid for obstructing deals or creating roadblocks — they get paid for making the deal happen. My goal is to expose our students to what good transactional lawyering is all about so they’re prepared to meet the challenge.

Dan B. Boga rt, professor of law • Areas of Expertise: Property, Real Estate, Commercial Leasing, Bankruptcy, Law and Economics
Education: B.A., magna cum laude, Duke University; M.A. in economics, Duke University; J.D., Duke University; note editor, Duke Law Journal
Experience: Private practice in Atlanta, specializing in real estate, commercial leasing and related practice issues; law professor at Drake University, 1990-1998 (tenured in 1996); 1996 Drake Law School Outstanding Professor; 1995 Editor’s Prize from the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges
Latest Project/Publication: Development of Chapman’s Bankruptcy Law Clinic; publication of an article on commercial leasing in the Pittsburgh Law Review; researching an article addressing aspects of bankruptcy court’s equitable jurisdiction and powers.
Having served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney handling criminal gang and narcotics prosecutions in New York City, and having worked as a civil lawyer specializing in corporate litigation, I've developed some strong opinions as to what's right — and wrong — about our judicial system.

Students entering and progressing through law school also have views about the legal system, views that will likely evolve with exposure to new subject matter and new ways of critically examining the law. In both substantive law and procedure classes, the different backgrounds and life experiences of the students contribute to and enliven the classroom discussion. I look forward to teaching both torts and criminal procedure at Chapman this year, where I hope both my passion for trial work and my enthusiasm for teaching and learning will be evident.

In the classroom I value fresh ideas, innovative approaches to traditional challenges, and a lively exchange of ideas between students and teacher.
We have many things to be proud of here at Chapman, and our tax law emphasis and U.S. Tax Court clinical education programs are two of them. Chapman is the only law school in Orange and Los Angeles counties to offer a program where students actually handle real tax cases and represent small business owners and individual taxpayers in controversies with the Internal Revenue Service and in court. We are also one of only two ABA law schools in the nation to be awarded the highest federal grant to help support that program for all years since inception of the program. The clinic provides students with valuable, practical experience and exposes them to an area of law that I think is sometimes misunderstood.

Before they have an opportunity to learn firsthand what tax law is, some students assume that it’s all about numbers and that it will be dry and boring. In fact, practicing tax law is about being an advocate and going up against the government on behalf of your clients. Tax lawyers are also at the forefront of major corporate acquisitions, both national and international. They’re involved in structuring often complicated deals in ways that will minimize the possible tax consequences to their clients.

In addition to directing the tax law emphasis and U.S. Tax Court clinical education programs, I teach contracts, federal income tax, estate and gift tax, and taxation of business entities. I have a real passion for the work I do here at Chapman. I think when you enjoy what you’re doing, everything else falls into place.

FRANK J. DOTI, professor of law, director, Tax Law Emphasis Program • Areas of Expertise: Taxation Law, U.S. Tax Court clinical education program, Contracts • Education: B.S. in accounting, University of Illinois, Urbana; J.D. cum laude, Chicago-Kent; Certified Public Accountant, University of Illinois • Experience: associate attorney, McDermott, Will & Emery, Chicago; vice president & director of taxes, Leo Burnett, Chicago; certified Tax Law Specialist, California Board of Legal Specialization • Latest Project/Publication: Editor, the Tax Lawyer, a publication of the American Bar Association’s Tax Law Section.
As a political theorist and constitutional historian, I’ve devoted the better part of my life to the study of the political philosophy of the founders of the American system of government. That philosophy is largely embodied and codified in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. My classes in constitutional law provide students with a foundation of knowledge about our constitutional order, how the development of constitutional law by twentieth-century courts has followed or altered the original understanding, and with what consequence.

In the end, constitutional law is fundamentally about how people govern themselves and how they protect their inalienable rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness through the institution of just, consensual government. My classes and seminars in various aspects of constitutional law and legal history have a strong foundational and theoretical component, yet they also provide students with an opportunity for some “real life” appellate advocacy experience in brief-writing, oral argument, and opinion writing.

I think that above all else, three years in law school teaches students to think. More specifically, it teaches them to think like lawyers — to examine complex issues analytically and to grapple with tough questions to which there are not always easy answers.
At its best, the law is about helping people who need help. That’s why I’m looking forward to the growth of the elder law program here at Chapman. We have law students who need to learn how to be lawyers, and the best way for them to do that is to actually do the work. We have elderly people who need legal services but can’t afford them. Our program brings these two groups together so that both benefit.

Before coming to Chapman, I worked for an agency that provided free legal services to elderly clients. I’ve gained a huge amount of satisfaction from my work with elders. I represented one 75-year-old client who was illiterate. He had his house stolen because he trusted a niece who had him sign some papers and then locked him out of his house. He’d worked all of his life and suddenly found himself homeless. We were able to get his house back and get a judgment against the niece.

Unfortunately, that case is hardly unique. The elderly are targeted for scams, fraud and ripoffs more than any other population, and these problems are growing as our elder population grows.

When students are finished with my classes, I want them to understand what it’s like, day in and day out, to represent people passionately and successfully advocate on their behalf.
I became interested in international law while I was in private practice in Boston. Along with a number of other lawyers, I represented a group of former Argentine political prisoners in an international human rights case. Even then, in the late 1980s, international law seemed like a rather obscure specialty. But with globalization and advances in communication technologies, the world has become smaller. Very few transactions are purely local anymore. International law has grown accordingly, and lawyers in all areas of practice now ignore it at their peril.

International law encompasses a multitude of issues, including business relationships, human rights and environmental protection. One of my own areas of interest is how international law has assisted transitions to democracy and what this means for a system committed to formal equality among all states, regardless of their ideology. This kind of tension between a common global standard of behavior and distinct local cultures is what fascinates me about international law.

Before I came to Chapman, I served as co-counsel in an international arbitration involving a case between Eritrea and Yemen to determine which country owned a group of islands in the southern Red Sea. It was extremely gratifying to help resolve through adjudication a dispute that in previous times would have likely been resolved by armed force.
I think the happiest people in the world are those with great variety in their lives. I have many interests beyond law, including media, politics, and writing. But I enjoy the time I spend teaching as much as anything else I do. I teach constitutional law, which is one of the most interesting courses in law school. It’s about who we are as a people and where we came from. Intellectual exchange that occurs in the classroom when students are prepared is at a very exciting level when the subject is our country’s highest law.

To me, the task of a law professor is not to impart information as much as it is to help students appreciate and appropriate the world of ideas and develop the advocacy skills they’ll need to be good lawyers. One of the most vital is communication. Knowing the law is one thing, but knowing how to effectively communicate with your clients, the opposition, and the public is another. It involves listening skills, body language, and, yes, sometimes even a little theater.

This is a great time to be at Chapman. I think the best three years for a law student to be at this university are the next three. The pioneering has been done. The building is new, the vision is new, and the energy and commitment levels among students and faculty are off the charts. There’s a unique blend of momentum and tradition happening here that’s both rare and exciting.
For some people, the law is about winning and losing. For others, it’s about life and death... You’re fighting for your client’s freedom. In some cases, you’re fighting for his life.

SCOTT W. HOWE, professor of law, associate dean for Academic Affairs • Areas of Expertise: Criminal Procedure, Criminal Law, Capital Punishment, Evidence • Education: A.B., summa cum laude, University of Missouri; J.D., cum laude, University of Michigan; administrative and article editor, Michigan Law Review • Experience: Staff attorney, Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia; deputy director, Texas Death Penalty Resource Center; professor, Western New England College School of Law • Latest Project/Publication: “Publicity in Criminal Cases” (forthcoming article).

For some people, the law is about winning and losing. For others, it’s about life and death. That’s what attracted me to criminal law in general — and death penalty cases in particular — early in my career. It’s fascinating, challenging, and the stakes are high. You’re fighting for your client’s freedom. In some cases, you’re fighting for his life.

I worked as a public defender in Washington, D.C. for four years, then joined the Peace Corps and helped organize a coffee cooperative in Costa Rica. That experience changed me. It really helped me grasp what it’s like to live in poverty, to be powerless, to have no voice. When I returned home, I began work with the Southern Prisoners Defense Committee in Austin, Texas. I did everything from interviewing witnesses to filing motions for stays of execution in the U.S. Supreme Court.

I’m often asked if it was difficult representing clients I believed were guilty. There certainly were times when it was. But I found it much more stressful to represent clients I believed were innocent. As a defense lawyer, you come to realize the system is very fallible, that someone who is innocent can be convicted, and that it happens all too regularly. Those are the cases that kept me up at night. They’re also the ones that continue to remind me that every defendant needs — and deserves — an effective legal advocate.
Getting Down to Business

Lawyers who represent corporations must have a good understanding of the constituent interests in the business. I encourage my students to look at the entire economic picture so that as lawyers they can provide their future corporate clients with guidance in balancing these interests in the optimal way.

SUSANNA M. KIM, associate professor of law * Areas of Expertise: Corporations, Legal Ethics, Agency & Partnership, Securities Regulation
* Education: B.A., with distinction, Stanford University; J.D., UCLA School of Law; Order of the Coif; editor, UCLA Law Review; Phi Beta Kappa
* Experience: Law clerk for Judge Robert Boochever, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit; associate at O’Melveny & Myers, handling matters involving corporate securities transactions and corporate reorganizations
* Latest Project/Publication: Researching and writing an article addressing the provisional director remedy for intra-corporate deadlock and dissension.

In today’s economy, large corporations play an increasingly significant role in producing wealth and promoting innovation. In my classes, I have the pleasure of introducing students to the law of corporations and alternative business entities. Before coming to Chapman, I worked in the corporate and securities department of a large law firm. I learned some important lessons while representing public and private corporations in various transactions. In particular, I saw firsthand how important it is to corporate clients that they have a lawyer who understands all of the elements of the corporate enterprise, and how all those elements fit together. Although the corporation is itself a “person” under the law, the entity combines several constituent persons, including shareholders, directors, officers, creditors, and suppliers, to name a few. Lawyers who represent corporations must have a good understanding of the constituent interests in the business. I encourage my students to look at the entire economic picture so that as lawyers they can provide their future corporate clients with guidance in balancing these interests in the optimal way.

At Chapman, students have the opportunity to take a variety of business law courses. What’s more, Chapman allows students to earn a joint J.D./MBA degree in cooperation with the business school on campus. I think the popularity of the joint degree is a reflection of the increasing demand for lawyers who possess a strong working knowledge of modern business concepts, and vice versa, business executives who have a good command of business law. My goal is to help students develop an appreciation for the rules of law that govern business associations.
judging by the book

I want students to think of the law library not as a necessary evil, but rather as a place where they can access the resources they’ll need to be successful in law.

SHERYL KRAMER, Library director; associate professor of law • Areas of Expertise: Computer Assisted Legal Research; Advanced Legal Research; Medical Reference • Education: B.S., M.S.L.S., Wayne State University, Detroit; J.D., Detroit College of Law • Experience: Associate director, Thomas M. Cooley Law Library; reference librarian, U.S. Courts Library, Detroit; reference/computer-assisted legal research librarian, Thos Levin Memorial Library; reference librarian, St. John Hospital Medical Library • Latest Project/Publication: Teaching new course in advanced legal research; researching article on teaching computer-assisted legal research to law students.

As director of Chapman’s law library and an associate professor of law, I wear many hats. I always say I’m a librarian first and a lawyer second. I love what I do because it allows me to combine my love of the law and my interest in library science.

Helping launch a new law school literally from the ground up has been an amazing experience. One of the reasons I came to Chapman was that I had a vision of what it would be like to create a law library from nothing. That’s exactly what we did. When I started, there were no books, no staff, no law building. In five short years, we’ve developed a collection of more than 240,000 volumes and volume equivalencies. We now have a staff of 12 and a spectacular state-of-the-art facility.

I teach advanced legal research, but I think my staff and I are teaching every time we interact with a student. We’re showing them how to effectively utilize a vital, valuable resource. It’s one thing to know where the library is; it’s another to be able to walk in and know how to find what you need. Learning how to use a law library is like taming a beast. It can be totally intimidating.

We teach students how to tame that beast so they can become skilled, capable researchers. I want students to think of the law library not as a necessary evil, but rather as a place where they can access the resources they’ll need to be successful in law.
What I love most about the law — and about teaching the law — is the fact that it’s both intellectually and creatively challenging. Back when I worked as a broadcast journalist and producer, friends encouraged me to take the LSAT, but I resisted because I didn’t think of law as an especially creative field. Once I began law school, I was pleasantly surprised to discover how wrong I had been about believing the law to be a linear, structure-bound discipline.

One of my primary areas of interest, for example, is contracts. The study of contracts, like the study of most legal disciplines, requires the synthesis of complex, seemingly disparate rules into a comprehensible whole. This, in turn, requires the ability to think globally about the rules of law that are constantly evolving as statutory schemes shift and public policies change.

Likewise, civil procedure is a class that gives students a framework for analyzing cases. When a student understands the procedural posture of a particular case, he or she is better equipped to ferret out the substantive principle contained within the case.

But no matter what class I’m teaching, the global goal is always to teach the student to be elastic in his or her thinking and to hone the ability to communicate analyses and conclusions. I stay focused on this goal because I believe the ability to write, think and conduct research analytically and creatively is the foundation of any lawyer’s practice. How a lawyer writes and speaks truly is his or her stock in trade.

LISA LITWILLER, assistant professor of law • Areas of Expertise: Contracts, Complex Civil Litigation (including pre-trial and appellate practice), Civil Procedure, Insurance Law (including mass torts and third-party general liability) • Education: B.A. in English literature, A.A. in broadcast journalism, cum laude, University of Southern California; J.D., University of Southern California; Order of the Coif; executive note editor, Computer/Tax Law Journal; founding member, Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal; captain, Jessup International Moot Court Honors Board • Experience: litigation associate, O’Melveny & Myers, LLP; litigation partner, Berger, Kahn, Shafton, Moss, Figler, Simon & Gladstone, LLC • Latest Project/Publication: “Reexamining the Seventh Amendment: Punitive Damages in the Wake of Gasperini, Gore and Leatherman” (working title), “Section 1367 and Due Process Denied: Compulsory Counterclaims and Non-Diverse Third Party Defendants” (forthcoming); panel participant at the California State Bar Annual Meeting, co-presenting a paper titled “No Way Out: Mandatory Discovery Returns to the Federal Courts” in September, 2001.

... i believe the ability to write, think, and conduct research analytically and creatively is the foundation of any lawyer’s practice.
One of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life was serving as a law clerk to Supreme Court Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist. Witnessing the honor and respect paid to the traditions of our law by the highest court in our land helped me better appreciate both the mission and the majesty of the law, as well as the importance of the rule of law. Those are lessons I remember every day — and lessons I do my best to pass on to my students.

I’ve always had a passion for the learning experience. I find the process of gathering and synthesizing information to be incredibly stimulating. Becoming a great lawyer requires an enormous commitment. It also requires a genuine love of the law. As a teacher, my goal is to instill in my students the same sense of excitement and wonder that the law continues to hold for me.

I’m committed to creating a classroom environment that fosters an open, voluntary discussion. I encourage students to approach the study of law with energy and curiosity, and I strive to create an atmosphere in which they’re enthusiastic and motivated to actively participate. It is incredibly satisfying to engage in the learning process with my students, watching as they ‘get it’ and the light bulbs go on.

CELESTINE RICHARDS McCONVILLE, associate professor of law • Areas of Expertise: Constitutional Law, Capital Punishment, Wills and Trusts, Federal Courts • Education: B.A., magna cum laude, Boston University; J.D., magna cum laude, Georgetown University Law Center; Order of the Coif; author of the Criminal Procedure Project; The Georgetown Law Journal • Experience: Law clerk for Hon. William H. Rehnquist, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of the United States; law clerk for Hon. Cynthia Holcomb Hall, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit; law clerk for Hon. Donald C. Nugent, United States District Court; associate at Shea & Gardner, Washington, D.C., specializing in constitutional, labor, banking, and aviation law issues; visiting assistant professor, Case Western Reserve University School of Law, Cleveland, Ohio; co-recipient of 1999 Teacher of the Year award, Case Western Reserve University Student Bar Association • Latest Project/Publication: “Pre-Performance Effectiveness and the Right to Counsel: Is the Statutory Grant of Counsel for Capital Inmates an Empty Gesture?” (in progress)
I’ve been lucky in law. I had incredible role models very early in life. My father’s best friend, Paul T. Smith, was one of the leading criminal defense attorneys in New England. He represented the defendants in the famous Brinks Robbery trial. In the tradition of old English law, I dined with Smith and countless fine lawyers over the years and was initiated into an old and noble tradition of law. My good fortune continued into law school, where I had the privilege of having the Honorable Louis Schwartz, co-author of the Model Penal Code, supervise my post-graduate studies.

My goal has always been to share the generosity of knowledge that all my teachers so generously shared with me. In the classroom, I do that through lectures.
WHERE EVERYBODY KNOWS YOUR NAME

Personalized education isn’t just a marketing phrase at Chapman.
It’s a philosophy.
It’s part of our mission statement.

SHARON C. NANTELL, professor of law • Areas of Expertise: Federal Income Taxation, Wills and Trusts, Corporations, Estate and Gift Tax
Education: B.A., magna cum laude, Cleveland State University; J.D., Cleveland-Marshall College of Law; LL.M. in taxation, Georgetown University
Law Center • Experience: Associate professor, Thomas M. Cooley Law School (recipient of the Stanley E. Beattie Teaching Award in 1992 and 1995), Lansing, Michigan; director and chief operating officer, The Denver Paralegal Institute; seven years as sole practitioner with emphasis in general tax practice, Denver; associate attorney, Backman, Thomas and Johnson, P.C.; associate attorney, Esperti, Elrod, Katz, Peterson, Schraudt & Pruss, P.C.; Corporate Tax Counsel, The Sherwin-Williams Company; estate and gift tax agent, Internal Revenue Service • Latest Project/Publication: Forthcoming articles on “The Cruel Contradictions of Taxation and Welfare” and “The Untold Ironies of ‘Work Opportunity’ Under Welfare Reform”.

I came to Chapman from a law school that had 1,700 students. Teaching 200 students each of three semesters, it was difficult for me to be what I thought a good teacher should be. Then I read about this new law school in California that intended to have a student-supportive environment, an emphasis on personalized education, and a curriculum focus in tax and business. It was everything I wanted in teaching. Even though I was just 18 months away from tenure, I left it all behind in 1995 to become part of Chapman’s inaugural faculty.

Personalized education isn’t just a marketing phrase at Chapman. It’s a philosophy. It’s part of our mission statement. I’ve known the name of every student! I’ve taught here and I try to know their aspirations and interests as well. I attend as many student functions as I can. I’ve met my students’ spouses, their parents, their kids.

I appreciate the impact that teachers can have on students. In my law school experience, two of my professors proved to be a major influence, not just on who I am as a lawyer, but also on who I am as a person. That happened because they knew who I was and took a personal interest in me. I always remember that — and try my best to do the same for my students.
Teaching law combines two things that matter very much to me — helping people and having fun. Many people don’t think the words ‘law’ and ‘fun’ belong in the same sentence, but I think anyone who doesn’t believe the law can be fun is missing something. It’s a stimulating, creative profession that intellectually challenges one to solve problems, craft solutions and look at issues in a humanistic, holistic way.

While the practice of law can indeed be a great deal of fun, I also think lawyers have an enormous responsibility. When a client comes to you with a problem, it’s almost certainly the most important and most disturbing thing that’s happening in their lives at that moment. They want an ally, an advocate. To them, it’s much more than just another case.

Lawyers have a responsibility to meet a client’s needs while conducting themselves in a moral, ethical way. In my classes, students often discover a great deal about their own values and ethics. The assignments and exercises challenge them not only to examine what kind of lawyer they want to be, but what kind of people they want to be. When a lawyer is true to his or her own values and ethics, it’s much easier to be proud of one’s profession, to sleep well at night, and yes — even to have fun.
I believe students think better and learn more when they feel comfortable rather than intimidated. That’s why I always strive to create an environment that ensures a student never leaves a classroom discussion feeling embarrassed. My style of teaching seems to provide the level of intellectual challenge that’s traditionally associated with the Socratic style of teaching, but without the level of tension customarily associated with that traditional method. My approach to teaching is to encourage students to actively participate in class discussions. In turn, that seems to help them to stay focused. It challenges them to be thoughtful. It also gives me the freedom to pace the class in whatever way necessary to make it easy for students to reflect on comments offered and questions raised during our time together.

Above and beyond the subject matter at hand, I also try to instill in my students a fundamental philosophy that will serve them well. I teach — by example — that a lawyer must always be well-prepared.

WILLIAM L. STALLWORTH, PH.D., Salvatore professor of Law • Areas of Expertise: Business Law, Uniform Commercial Code • Education: B.A., Cornell University; J.D., Harvard Law School; Ph.D. in sociology, Stanford University • Experience: Counsel to General Electric Company in corporate transactions, antitrust, employment law, and commercial law; taught antitrust, commercial drafting, contracts, and Uniform Commercial Code law at the University of Dayton School of Law • Latest Project/Publication: Research and scholarship related to the Uniform Commercial Code.
Whenever I encounter adversity, I remind myself what my parents endured to pursue a dream. My mother was one of the first female lawyers in South Vietnam, and my father headed the pharmacy at the Naval Hospital in Saigon. But when South Vietnam fell in April of 1975, our lives changed forever. My family left everything behind and started over in the United States, where the language and culture were totally foreign.

The challenge that first-year law school students face is, in many ways, similar to the journey my parents and I made. No matter where you come from, law school is a brave new world. It has its own very different culture, where the language, customs, and concepts are unfamiliar. Accomplished people find that whatever reputation they’ve established over the years means very little, because they’re essentially starting over.

I feel uniquely qualified to assist others who are entering a new environment. I’ve learned from experience that starting over can be an opportunity to create an even better life. As a professor, one of my roles is to encourage students to make their own luck, to have faith in their own resilience, and to fully embrace the challenges that await them.

NHAN T. VI, assistant professor of law • Areas of Expertise: Civil Procedure, Business and Commercial Law, Private International Law
Education: A.B. in government, Harvard University; J.D., Yale Law School; Phi Beta Kappa; Olin Fellowship in Law & Economics; Ford Foundation Research Fellowship; Cyber Teaching Fellowship • Experience: Law clerk for Hon. Alex Kozinski, United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit; associate at Latham & Watkins, Los Angeles and Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, Irvine, specializing in complex commercial and business arbitrations; associate at Russin & Vecchi, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, specializing in transnational trade and investment projects in developing countries; adjunct professor, Whittier Law School • Latest Project/Publication: Contributed chapter on Vietnam to “Food Law in Asia”; “Finance and Securities Laws in Vietnam.”
I am convinced that I was born to teach. There’s nothing I’d rather do than help students realize their potential and pursue their dreams.

ROBIN S. WELLFORD, associate professor of law; director, Legal Research and Writing • Areas of Expertise: Legal Research and Writing, Client Interviewing and Counseling • Education: B.A, Northwestern University; J.D., Washington University School of Law, St. Louis; Order of the Coif; senior editor, Washington University Law Quarterly • Experience: Director of Legal Research and Writing, Washington University School of Law; faculty coach for two national finalist Moot Court teams; associate attorney at Suelthaus & Kaplan, specializing in employment, labor, and ERISA litigation; associate attorney at Greenfeld, Weinberg & Gola, law clerk for Hon. James H. Meredith, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri • Latest Project/Publication: Smart Chart: Legal Research and Citation, a flow chart of legal research and citation for first-year law students.

I love teaching legal research and writing because the skills they help students develop are at the very core and essence of good lawyering. To be a great lawyer, one must reason logically, think strategically, and present abstract ideas clearly, concretely, and persuasively. The ability to research and write effectively creates a solid foundation that prepares students to excel in other areas of law. These are skills that emerge when both student and teacher are fully committed to the process.

Law is an area of study where teachers often become mentors. Since I work with students during their first year of law school, I have the pleasure of watching them develop and thrive as they proceed in their legal education. And because I teach small classes, I have an opportunity to develop one-on-one relationships with my students. Guiding them along their journey to becoming ethical, competent lawyers is as exciting today as it was when I first began teaching.

I’m convinced that I was born to teach. There’s nothing I’d rather do than help students realize their potential and pursue their dreams.
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