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## A Tribute to Travis A Skelton

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Wesley E. Stockard\*

Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, a psychiatrist who spent most of her life studying the effects of death, once wrote, “Mourning is not forgetting . . . it is an undoing. Every minute tie has to be untied and something permanent and valuable recovered and assimilated from the dust.” In its most basic sense, this *Journal* is about assimilating pieces in the name of progress. It is about the many aspiring law students who devote hours of time to putting out the next issue in a chain of volumes that began long before they arrived, and will continue long after they have left, the halls of Hutchins. It is about bringing together ideas and scholarship, giving them a voice, and hoping that the resulting ripples go out into the world and assist in making change. Travis Skelton had the distinct honor of leading this effort.

As I revisit the time I spent working with Travis for this *Journal*, and therefore begin to understand how to say goodbye to him, I cannot help but feel an overwhelming sense of loss. It begins with the simple loss of a friend, someone with whom I worked closely and someone whom I admired in so many ways. But it grows bigger, it becomes stronger. I mourn the loss of someone who would have touched so many more lives, championed so many more causes, done so much more good had he been blessed with more years among us. There is no easy way to say goodbye to someone so wonderful. There is only the hard reality that the world has lost something valuable: that today, now that he is gone, it is without something that made it better.

All that is left for me to do, for this *Journal* to do, is to recover what is valuable from this emptiness. What becomes ever clearer to me as I remember him, is that Travis showed us just how to do this. Travis’ tireless work for this *Journal*, his belief in its mission, reminds us that the process of change is bigger than any one of us. His effort reminds us that aspiration and devotion are the building blocks of a difference. If Travis would have us do anything, he would have us find in our memories of him a tireless devotion to making the kind of positive difference he wanted to make.

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Once, when asked if he was sure he was leading the United States in the right direction, Abraham Lincoln stated simply, "I do the very best I know how—the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing so until the end." Travis Skelton lived the life portrayed in Mr. Lincoln's words. We are sure to miss him.