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Dean's Message

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MESSAGE

from Dean Lehman

This summer I will be stepping down as dean of our Law School to become the eleventh president of my other alma mater, Cornell University.

My nine years as dean have been extraordinarily satisfying for me. I have had the good fortune to serve during a period in which our faculty has been brilliantly productive, creative, and daring; our graduates have been ferociously loyal; and our students have been devoted to sustaining that distinctive Michigan culture — a school where students take the enterprise of being a lawyer seriously without taking themselves too seriously.

One of the great privileges of my service as dean has been the opportunity to write a message to you in each issue of *Law Quadrangle Notes*. In these messages (I call them “homilies”), I have had the luxury of employing an unapologetically aspirational voice to offer a vision of what it means to be an outstanding lawyer. In an era when many others have written trenchantly about the practice of law as a service industry, I have enjoyed being able to reflect publicly about other dimensions of success in our calling.

At alumni gatherings over the years, many of you have told me that I am not alone in believing that we are privileged to belong to a noble profession. You have spoken passionately for the proposition that the quality of American society depends upon the leadership of a cadre of outstanding lawyers. I have appreciated your willingness to explore

what qualities of heart and mind distinguish the lawyers whose work defines our civilization as healthy and strong.

No law school in the world does a better job of preparing its students to be outstanding lawyers than the University of Michigan Law School. When I first came to the Law Quadrangle as a student over 25 years ago, I recognized how fortunate I was to be here. As a graduate of the Law School, I realize every day how my experiences as a student in Ann Arbor shaped my identity and made possible all of the opportunities I have enjoyed.

Thanks to your devotion and support, Michigan today is vastly better than the Michigan I attended as a student. And I am absolutely certain that in the future our School will continue to thrive, providing inspiring leadership for our nation and our world.

As for myself, I know that even as I move on to new challenges, I will always be grateful to have had the opportunity to be a student, a professor, and a dean at the University of Michigan Law School. Thank you.



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