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2013 Dean's Annual Update

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Welcome

The 43rd America's Cup finals are taking place just steps from GGU Law. Competing teams have designed vessels that are innovative, nimble and competitive. They have recruited the most skillful teams to sail them, with ambitious goals. The powerful vessels racing on the bay outside my office provide what I believe is a powerful image in the fluid, shifting environments of legal education and the legal profession today, emphasizing the importance of innovation and creativity.

Keeping with the sailing metaphor, in a 1938 fireside chat, President Roosevelt said "To reach a port we must set sail. Sail, not tie at anchor. Sail, not drift." The quote was adapted from a book by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr., a writer and physician as well as father of Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. In 1936, the ambassador to Mexico sent a letter to President Roosevelt suggesting he may want to invoke Holmes Sr.'s metaphor in one of his "chats" and two years later Roosevelt did just that.

Since I became permanent Dean in January of this year, these words have also served me well in framing bold planning and new initiatives we are undertaking at the law school. I have used them to frame our intentional, swift strategic planning process. I have also used them to inspire our skillful students as they embark on their legal careers.

Over the past year, we have laid important foundations for GGU Law's future course. Our faculty collaboratively produced a comprehensive, multi-volume self study for our ABA and AALS accreditation visit last spring. This evaluation of our strengths and challenges included feedback from students, alumni, and employers of GGU Law graduates. Our faculty and deans also participated in two retreats to discuss our findings and the future direction of the law school. This important work has served as a springboard for planning meetings with our president and board of trustees. A board-appointed advisory group is now working with us this fall as we create a three-year strategic plan.

While designing a master plan to lead GGU Law into a future that is sustainable and bold in ambition, we will seek further feedback from you, our alumni, as well as students, faculty and staff. Together, we will create and execute a plan that combines GGU Law's legacy of focusing on practical education and opening the legal profession as we maintain a keen eye on the future of
the profession. I am most fortunate as Dean to have the wisdom, commitment, and contributions of our entire community as we design our future and set sail.

Thanks to each of you for all the ways you support GGU Law. Last spring we sent a call to alumni to join our annual summer recruitment efforts. We were delighted by the enthusiastic response we received, a response showing how well our alumni understand that today's GGU Law students are tomorrow's colleagues and fellow alumni. However you choose to give back to GGU—giving a gift, hiring or sharing your expertise with students, or getting connected through events—I am grateful for your support of our extraordinary students and school. I have enjoyed getting to know many of you this last year at events in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. as well as in the Bay Area and look forward to getting to know many more and to hearing your thoughts as we embark on an exciting year ahead.

Sincerely,

Rachel Van Cleave
Dean

Accolades 2012-13

School Recognition


- James Silkenat, current ABA President, served as 2013 commencement speaker

- Dean Van Cleave appointed to the ABA's newly created Legal Access Job Corps Task Force

- Environmental Law & Justice Clinic received the ABA's Dedication to Diversity and Justice Award from the Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources

- For the third consecutive year, LL.M. programs voted among the top 3 in California by Recorder readers

Student Recognition

- Marina Pantchenko (JD 13) one of 50 law students nationwide to receive an Equal Justice Works Fellowship that will allow her to advocate for the healthcare of immigrants

- Three students honored with California Bar Foundation scholarships for public interest

- Mock trial teams took first place in two competitions, held by the San Francisco Trial Lawyers Association (SFTLA) and the ABA Labor and Employment Mock Trial

- Appellate advocacy team won the Roger J. Traynor Appellate Moot Court competition

- First place in the ABA's National Appellate Advocacy competition
• LL.M. program in taxation ranked among the top 10 in the nation for the second consecutive year by 151 heads of corporate tax departments

• GGU Law programs, including 1st STEP and 1L Electives, ranked among the top 25 most innovative nationwide by PreLaw and National Jurist magazines

Program Innovation 2012-13

Coaching
Our Coaching program provides students with professional mentoring to enhance their law school experience, professional development, and transition into the legal community. We launched the program this fall with our 1L class. New students enjoy small, monthly gatherings with faculty coaches who serve as allies and mentors. Coaches share opportunities for professional development on and off campus and discuss emerging topics in law with their student teams. This program helps strengthen students’ academic and professional profiles and cultivate the next generation of proud GGU Law colleagues.

Practice Intensive Courses
PIC courses combine substantive competencies and objectives with intense simulation training, research and writing, and feedback from a professional that mirrors practice in the field of study. This fall, Professors Yates and Gallagher are teaching Torts as PIC courses and Professor Porter will teach a PIC Criminal Law course. In the upper division, Associate Dean Stanley will teach Characterization of Income and Expenditures as a PIC course and Professor Porter will teach Evidence as a PIC course.

Veteran's Initiative
The Yellow Ribbon Program was enhanced so that qualifying veteran students are provided...
litigation and advocacy training. Next summer, the second floor lecture halls will be refurbished to upgrade technology, improve acoustics, and, most excitingly, convert a lecture hall into a ceremonial courtroom. These upgrades will not only create rich learning experiences but also allow us to host our annual competition, The Professor Bernie Segal Mock Trial Competition, In Vino Veritas, on campus, bringing the nation's top advocacy schools to campus in fall 2014 and beyond.

Dynamic Leadership

Like law schools nationwide, GGU Law decided to enroll a smaller incoming class this fall, which meant decreasing the size of our staff. To achieve this, Golden Gate University offered a successful voluntary separation program that provided those opting in to leave GGU with added benefits. During these transitions, we have ensured that all the supportive services and resources that we are committed to providing for our students remain. As part of our strategic planning process, we are also looking into ways of strategically integrating the supportive services our students enjoy to enhance their experience and opportunities.

Bar Services

Alumnus Jonathan Chu (JD 01, LLM 05) returns to GGU as our new interim Director of Bar Services.

Working with Bar Services over the last four years, Jonathan has helped prepare GGU Law students for the bar exam, bringing years of professional experience to his role. We are equally fortunate that our Associate Director of Bar Services Jay Bijlani, who recently became a new father, will continue to help our students prepare for the bar exam by serving as an adjunct professor.

Jay and Jonathan each helped to build our current, strong program working with former Bar Services Director Rod Fong, and we are delighted they will each continue to serve our students in new capacities. We are also matching grants that cover 100% of tuition. In the new Veterans Law Externship Clinic, students assist veterans with benefits-related legal needs under the supervision of distinguished veteran, attorney, and alumnus Dan Devoy (JD 10). GGU's newly formed Veterans Law Student Association will sponsor events and raise awareness of the local veterans community. GGU and other Northern California veteran law students also formed the Law Student Veterans Coalition of Northern California to raise awareness of veterans issues, starting with the Veterans Law Conference to be held at GGU Law October 18. Finally, this year's Fifth Annual Chief Justice Ronald M. George Distinguished Lecture: Veterans in the Judiciary will feature a keynote address by Associate Justice Ming W. Chin.

Externships

This year, we express our gratitude to and celebrate Professor and Director of Externships Susan Rutberg, who will retire this year. Our 2014 Alumni Celebration this spring will commemorate her decades of outstanding mentoring and teaching.

Professor Michele Benedetto-Neitz will assume the role Director of Externships. Michele is an outstanding professor and scholar who led our Poverty Law Conference four years ago, chaired the law school's dean search, and has taught at GGU Law since 2006. Drawing on her experience teaching and working in corporate and public interest law, and working closely with our Law Career Services staff, Michele is ideally positioned to help the next generation of GGU Law students envision and bridge their education and
studying how to best integrate academic support and bar preparation services to provide our students with seamless overall support at each stage of their education.

**Career Services** GGU Law welcomes [Cynthia Chandler as our new Public Interest Career Counselor](mailto:myemail.constantcontact.com/Dean-s-Annual-Update.html?soid=1108953471107&aid=LuZcNP6r3pM). Cynthia has been an adjunct professor at GGU, teaching a Wrongful Convictions seminar, an Advanced Externship course, and Lawyering Skills: Using the Law for Social Change. She is co-founder of Justice Now, and served as that organization's Executive Director for twelve years. She has spoken and written on a wide variety of social justice topics and has mentored many GGU students in developing their public interest careers.

With deep gratitude we bid farewell to professors Mary Ann Wolcott and Helen Hartnell, who have retired after years of committed service to our students.

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