



Dear Alumni and Friends,

*I have now enjoyed six months as interim dean, and I'm looking forward to the final half of my year in this office. The fall semester was a great time to be at Washburn, thanks in large part to the success of our students and recent graduates. Bar exam performance has been outstanding. I have personally received extraordinary support from a dedicated faculty and staff for which I am deeply grateful.*

*This year I have focused on fostering the values of our law school culture that motivate students to develop the knowledge base and skills needed to be outstanding representatives of the legal profession. My emphasis on motivation includes an important distinction. I hope that our students will be motivated by intrinsic rather than extrinsic factors; that they will do their best primarily because of the satisfaction they gain from doing so, rather than out of acclaim for high grades, fear of failure, or expectations of wealth.*

*There are a number of reasons for making this distinction. Recent research indicates that law schools that sustain the intrinsic motivations of their students are more likely to succeed in their primary missions of teaching and learning. Law graduates who retain such motivations perform better on bar exams, and may even experience greater life satisfaction as lawyers.*

*Washburn's history reflects our strength in sustaining student motivation. The last time efforts were made to survey such factors, Washburn ranked among the top five law schools in the nation in levels of student satisfaction. That ranking can be traced to our curriculum, our faculty, and our alumni. The Washburn live client clinical program was one of the nation's first, and continues to be one of the nation's best. Generations of students in that program have learned the intrinsic values of providing quality representation to their clients.*

*In recent years we have added dimensions to our curriculum. Our first year program, emphasizing writing skills and academic success, helps beginning students understand professional standards and expectations. Added opportunities for community service will reinforce those values. Our Center for Excellence in Advocacy, the Children and Family Law Center, and the Business and Transactional Law Center combine to stimulate student engagement, reinforcing the intrinsic motivations that I consider key to understanding why Washburn has been and will continue to be a great law school.*

*What are the constituent parts of our success? We have a diverse and yet cohesive, highly motivated faculty. Faculty members govern the law school, and their leadership sets the tone for the institution as a whole. The law school functions effectively because of support from a motivated staff which, through interaction with both faculty and students, reflects the same core values that we collectively seek to foster. We benefit from our tie to a vital university with a supportive administration. We also benefit from strong bonds with our alumni. They provide our students with role models, they teach, they participate in our centers, train and judge our competition teams, and support our program in ever increasing ways. By working together, we sustain a truly outstanding institution.*

*As a final note, I am pleased to highlight an example of this cooperative spirit. For the last six months, alumni, faculty, staff and students have worked together in an intensive search for a new dean. I write this message with confidence that the future of the school will be in capable hands with Thomas J. Romig as new dean. I am also confident that Dean Romig will appreciate your sustained support in years to come.*

Sincerely,

Bill Rich

