

“A RIVER TO MY PEOPLE ...”
NOTES FROM MY FIFTH YEAR AS DEAN

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FOUR years ago, at the conclusion of my first year as a law school dean, I wrote an essay for this symposium issue on my experiences as a new dean.¹ The conclusion of my fifth year seemed an appropriate time to look back and consider the experience.

There are many ways to be a successful law school dean. As I have gotten to know colleagues from around the country, I have been struck by the different ways in which we approach the common challenges of the job. Good deans come in a wide variety of personality types, with a remarkably wide range of backgrounds and prior accomplishments. Nevertheless, it seems to me there are some common threads in how good deans approach the job. In the following discussion, I suggest six such threads. I do so in the belief that while I personally exhibit none of these attributes, I am able to recognize them in others.

It is frequently suggested that the keys to great human challenges can be found in great literature. Presumably the keys to less great human challenges can be found in less great literature. Accordingly, I think that six important lessons for being a good dean can be found in the movie *Lawrence of Arabia*.²

1. Be An Agent For Action

Sherif Ali: There is the railway. And that is the desert. From here until we reach the other side, no water but what we carry with us. For the camels, no water at all. If the camels die, we die. And in twenty days they will start to die.
T.E. Lawrence: There's no time to waste, then, is there?

There are always good reasons why a proposed action is not, and perhaps cannot be, taken. Deans exist in an environment of limitations; financial, institutional, traditional, regulatory. We also exist in an environment where, often, either an action or a failure to act will not be apparent. In a large university setting, much of the action in which the law school dean should be

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1. Allan W. Vestal, “*Today the Administration Building Burned Down ...*” *Notes from My First Year as Dean*, 33 U. TOL. L. REV. 251 (2001).

2. LAWRENCE OF ARABIA (Horizon Pictures 1962). The quotations from *Lawrence of Arabia* reproduced throughout this article can be found on the IMDb website, at <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0056172/quotes> (last visited Nov. 21, 2005).

involved is on fairly arcane points at the university-wide level. A failure to act may carry serious consequences for the law school, but an action taken to avoid adverse consequences may be largely hidden from the faculty, students and graduates. Finally, most of us are inundated with things which need to be done, have very modest staffs to whom matters can be delegated, and have a substantial volume of new projects and initiatives which could be profitably undertaken.

The inertia against action, the hidden quality of the actions to be taken, and the press of required matters make it easy for a dean to succumb to inaction. In this setting, it seems to me that one of the most important roles a dean can fulfill is to challenge the limitations and prompt people to act. One of our most important roles is to ask why the limitations exist and to see whether there might be a way to change the limitations and permit institutional advancement.

The alternative is to be like General Allenby in the movie:

Colonel Brighton: Look, sir, we can't just do nothing.

General Allenby: Why not? It's usually best.

Of people who think as Allenby, there is never a shortage. Whether in matters curricular, or the appointment of committees, or the way in which graduation is handled, there is always inertia in the law school environment. A good dean, I believe, will frequently ask why things are done the way they are. The answers to that question can point the way toward real reform.

An example from my time at Kentucky illustrates the point. The public universities in my state have been the beneficiaries of the Research Challenge Trust Fund (RCTF) program. An initiative of former Governor Paul Patton and the legislature, the RCTF program provides matching state dollars for contributions in support of endowed chairs and professorships, library endowments, and certain graduate fellowships. Qualifying contributions of at least \$50,000—and pledges payable over up to five years—were matched dollar-for-dollar from the first dollar. When I arrived, the program was underway and scholarships for law students did not qualify for the RCTF match. We successfully challenged the exclusion of law scholarships, and as a result over the last five years the overall endowment for law school scholarships has been augmented with millions of dollars of RCTF funding.

2. *Have No Tribe*

T.E. Lawrence: The Law says the man must die If he dies, would that content the Howitat?

Auda abu Tayi: Yes.

T.E. Lawrence: Sherif Ali. If none of lord Auda's men harms any of yours, will that content the Harith?

Sherif Ali: Yes.

T.E. Lawrence: Then I will execute the Law. I have no tribe and no one is offended.

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It is a fact of life for many deans that their faculties have deep, seemingly permanent divisions. Sometimes these are ideological in nature, sometimes pedagogical, sometimes chronological, and sometimes personal. I am fortunate to have a faculty that has remarkably little of that type of division. It seems to me important that the dean try hard to not be associated with any of the groups, so as to preserve the dean's ability to make difficult decisions without deepening the divisions.

To be without a tribe can be difficult to accomplish. Deans who come from the inside, deans whose selection is credited to one group or another, deans whose agenda for change matches one or the other group, can find it difficult to avoid tribal identification. But let me suggest that there are some important reasons to try. First, it is a rare situation where one group has the numbers to establish functional control over matters of faculty governance and reliably carry the day. Quite often, the groups are constantly shifting alliances of subgroups, coalescing and dissolving as new matters arise. Second, even if such hegemony is possible, members of the other group will have tenure and will be sources of constant difficulty. Third, and most importantly, it is almost never the case that one group or another has a monopoly on good ideas, initiative and energy. To be an effective leader, the dean has to be able to draw upon the talents of all the faculty members and have their support when the dean's program merits it.

3. *Only Appear Insubordinate*

T.E. Lawrence: It's my manner, sir.

General Murray: Your manner?

T.E. Lawrence: Yes. It looks insubordinate, but it isn't really.

Almost all of us exist within a larger university. We answer to a provost, a chancellor or a president. Because law schools are very different than other units within the university, we typically spend much of our time explaining why we should be outside of the rules and expectations that apply to our colleagues.

This may occasionally appear insubordinate to those to whom we answer.

I find that I spend quite a bit of time explaining why the law school should be different, and should be treated differently than other academic units within the university. The justifications are many. We don't as a rule generate sponsored research dollars, or secure federal research grants. Our scholarship looks quite different and is typically placed in student-edited, not peer-reviewed, journals. Most of us don't have Ph.D.s, few of us have any formal preparation for teaching. Many of us have had periods of private practice before entering the academy. We typically have higher university salaries and get compensated at a higher rate when we do outside consulting. In many schools our tenure and promotion cases skip some hurdles, such as academic area committees, that our colleagues in other colleges face. Our graduates tend to be better development prospects than theirs—both because they tend to have their primary loyalty to their law school and not their undergraduate institution, and because they tend to have more resources than their peers from other programs. We don't have

undergraduate programs, which can be an insatiable drain on resources with inadequate call on tuition-driven resources. We are separately accredited and, as a result, we have our own libraries and buildings. We exist as independent units far smaller than most of our peers, safe in the knowledge that we cannot be combined with any other small units because of accreditation considerations. At many schools we maintain our own schedules, starting, ending and graduating apart from the rest of campus. No wonder we occasionally appear insubordinate.

There are reasons, really rather valid reasons, for the differences noted above. How then should a good dean deal with these differences? There are, I think, two important steps the good dean must take. First, make certain you don't overplay the card. The type of candid and trustworthy relationship a dean ought to have with the central administration cannot withstand dissembling on this point. I have a friend, a former law school dean at a large public university, who used the "accreditation requirements" card frequently when he was a new dean. His provost always accepted without question the argument that because of its special accreditation requirements the law school couldn't compromise on a given point, until it happened that a high-ranking administrator went on a university-wide accreditation team for a similarly situated university. During the inspection visit, the administrator was assigned to the team reviewing the law school. Upon his return to his home university, he reported to the provost that their law school dean was flagrantly misstating the accreditation requirements of the law school. The jig was up and shortly thereafter the law school dean found a new position.

The second step the good law school dean will take is to get involved in broader university issues, and encourage your faculty colleagues in the law school to get involved as well. It is far too easy for the law school, which is so different anyway, to retreat into isolation within the university. This is an easy mistake to make. We are all working in an environment where we have far too little time for the work at hand. Swirling around us are discussions of issues that don't impact the law school—the size of the undergraduate enrollment, the allocation of indirect cost reimbursement funds, whether the university starts a school of public health—or have only a tangential relationship to the law school. They are complicated issues, demanding time consuming preparation and seemingly never-ending meetings. But the credibility to argue that the law school should be treated differently on some items of importance comes, I believe, from an active involvement in such matters of little direct concern to the law school. The demonstrated commitment to the good of the university brings with it the ability to argue for the law school in those matters of importance to us.

The related point as to faculty members is equally compelling. I think a good dean should encourage law school faculty members to participate in broader university debates and policy discussions. University-wide committee work can be burdensome and frustrating for law faculty members—especially when our colleagues in other colleges are, as they are wont to be, amazingly imprecise in their use of language and distressingly capricious in their application of university rules. Nevertheless, the dean well serves the law school by

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encouraging and rewarding such university service on the part of faculty members.³

We probably have to resign ourselves to being misunderstood within the broader university, and perhaps even by ourselves. *Lawrence of Arabia* speaks to the situation:

General Murray: I can't make out whether you're a bloody madman or just half-witted.

T.E. Lawrence: I have the same problem, sir.

In the end, it's probably better to be seen as a bloody madman or half-witted, not insubordinate.

4. *Don't Mind That It Hurts*

[Lawrence has just extinguished a match between his thumb and forefinger.

William Potter surreptitiously attempts the same]

William Potter: Ooh! It damn well 'urts!

T.E. Lawrence: Certainly it hurts.

Officer: What's the trick then?

T.E. Lawrence: The trick, William Potter, is not minding that it hurts.

One of the difficult aspects of being a dean is having to say no. We disappoint people all the time. We evaluate people and give them salary increases below their expectations. We give the new endowed professorship to one person, thereby alienating the other five who felt themselves more deserving. We deny people tenure. We deny admission to graduates' children. We decline to buy the new telephone system. Even when we don't personally take the actions—I have no formal input in the admissions process, for example—we get blamed on behalf of the school.

The least successful dean I know is someone who literally never said “no” to anyone during his short tenure as dean. He felt good right up until the moment came to pay the accumulated bills.

There is no trick. There isn't even a way to keep it from hurting when your faculty colleagues, your graduates, your students and your friends in the central

3. I would routinely make an exception to the encouragement of university service for some faculty members. Recent, entry-level hires seem to me to need some protection from university-wide service until they are reasonably well-established in their teaching and scholarship. This is especially true as to junior faculty members who have expertise in areas central to the university-wide discussion, such as law professors with expertise in intellectual property, employee benefits or discrimination law. Along the same lines, faculty members from minority groups, gay and lesbian faculty members, and faculty members from other historically under-represented groups may well require some protection from university-wide service. While such faculty members can make important contributions to university-wide policy discussions, it is not uncommon for such service to be disproportionately burdensome. The dean can perform a valuable role in giving such faculty members cover in declining such appointments when they are unduly burdensome.

administration are disappointed. You simply have to take Lawrence's advice and try to not mind that it hurts.

5. *Be Of Good Humor*

Club Secretary: I say, Lawrence. You are a clown!

T.E. Lawrence: We can't all be lion tamers.

President Truman is reported to have predicted that, as President, Dwight Eisenhower would have a tough time because of his management style:

He'll sit here, and he'll say, "Do this! Do that! And nothing will happen. Poor Ike—it won't be a bit like the Army."⁴

Most of us recognize that Truman's observation applies equally to the job of being a law school dean. We have remarkably little power—we aren't lion tamers.

Few university administrators have much power. Law school deans frequently have less power than other administrators. More than most units in a typical university, the law school's budget is fixed—a higher percentage of our budget goes for faculty costs, a lower percentage goes for staff costs, and a much lower goes for operating expenses than other academic units. We tend to have higher percentages of our faculty tenured; at one point in my first year as dean, I had only one untenured member of my faculty, and I had declined to send that faculty member's dossier forward in the tenure process. Happily I now have five entry-level faculty members, all of whom are doing extremely well.

My first five years as dean have taught me, however, that if we don't have the power to direct, we do have the capacity to influence events. We have the ability to engage in a collegial process that I have found to be unexpectedly pleasant and productive. With an overall enrollment of about 30,000, the University of Kentucky is a relatively small public research university. But in terms of the breadth of our offerings, the University is surprisingly comprehensive. We have colleges in law, medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, public health, health professions, business and economics, arts and sciences, fine arts, design, education, communications, agriculture, social work, and engineering. It is a remarkably interesting and energetic place.⁵

4. RALPH KEYES, *THE WIT & WISDOM OF HARRY TRUMAN* 46 (1995).

5. I understand, for example, that we have nationally recognized programs in both opera and bubonic plague in addition to programs in equine research, biomedical engineering, communications, community dentistry and the like that one would expect to find in a Kentucky university that takes its land grant mission seriously. I am reminded of the random richness that the opera and bubonic plague research programs bring to the University when yet another committee tries to channel the productive energy of the University into a set of utterly predictable "centers of excellence." I'm not sure that anyone years ago would have picked the opera program for such emphasis, and yet, there it is. The trick, it seems to me, is to recognize and support such initiatives once they show promise. That is exactly what our remarkable Dean of Fine Arts, Bob Shay, has done with the opera program—I believe the University of Kentucky has the first fine arts extension

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We are fortunate to have a group of college deans at the University of Kentucky who see beyond the limits of their academic programs and realize that in most instances the success of programs at the University is not a zero sum game. We work well together, and we serve a President and Provost who see great promise in cross- and interdisciplinary work. In my first five years at the College of Law, we have explored new joint degree programs. We have instituted classes that bring law students and medical students together to discuss medical malpractice; we are planning courses for law and medical students on forensic medicine and on medico-legal ethics. As I write this, the Dean of the College of Dentistry, Sharon Turner, is leading the way to establish an interdisciplinary task force looking at the problem of methamphetamine abuse. She is gathering together people from all around the campus to target this problem that has so profoundly challenged communities across the Commonwealth. The College of Law, with our federally-funded rural drug prosecution project, will be an active participant in the methamphetamine project.

No law school dean can direct that such projects be done. They happen, if at all, because a critical mass of autonomous people who could direct their energies in a different direction choose to participate in the project. It isn't as easy as being a lion tamer, perhaps, but the end result is undoubtedly better.

6. *Be A River*

Auda abu Tayi [to Lawrence]: I carry twenty-three great wounds, all got in battle. Seventy-five men have I killed with my own hands in battle. I scatter, I burn my enemies' tents. I take away their flocks and herds. The Turks pay me a golden treasure, yet I am poor! Because I am a river to my people!

I suspect that the vast majority of faculty members have very little understanding of matters financial as applied to their home institutions. They expect the situation they are in to continue, with few changes from year to year. On the margins things may change, usually for the better: additional faculty positions may be created; endowed chairs and professorships may appear; the staff resources of the law school may seem larger. On the negative side, salary increases may be lower than expected; the number of staff assistants may shrink. In truly dire circumstances, the amount of Xeroxing may go down, summer research grants may become tight, or travel budgets may disappear.

It has been my experience that law school budgetary affairs are both remarkably simple and terribly complex. Law schools are simple because so much of our budget is more or less untouchable. Salaries make up the vast majority of most of our budgets. Faculty salaries are essentially beyond the reach of the dean, either as a matter of regulation for tenured members of the faculty or

agent in the nation, bringing the education benefits of the opera program and other fine arts programs to a multi-county area in the Appalachian region of Eastern Kentucky. This innovative program is a result of the cooperation of the Dean of Fine Arts and the Dean of Agriculture, Scott Smith; two individuals who take the land grant mission of the University seriously.

as a practical matter as to those who are not yet tenured. Staff salaries are off limits as well in all but the direst of circumstances. Further, even if one was in a position that required a cut in the allocation of resources to cut staff salaries, most of us have such small staffs that the savings would be essentially inconsequential.

Beyond salaries, law school expenditures are modest and hard to cut. Many of us don't control or directly pay for facilities or for activities such as custodial services, utilities and the like. Even in situations where we are assessed by the central administration for facilities or services, there frequently isn't much room to maneuver. It isn't as though we can readily move the law school to less expensive quarters.

Other types of expenditures, such as faculty travel, library acquisitions, admissions travel, and communications, can be readily cut, but with a fairly immediate and corresponding cut in faculty productivity or student learning. Class sizes can be increased, of course, but since the size of the faculty is essentially fixed—unlike our counterparts in arts and sciences who staff large parts of their curriculum with adjuncts or teaching assistants—there are few short-term savings to be had in that direction.

It has been my experience that if budgetary matters within the law school are essentially fixed, budgetary matters affecting the law school but occurring in the larger university setting are anything but. For most of us, the allocation of university budget surpluses and shortfalls, the setting of tuition levels, the projection of university-wide enrollment levels, the decision to establish a new college, the decision to increase the capital campaign goal mid-stream, and the negotiation of public resources are all university-wide decisions that impact the law school fairly directly.

I simply don't see how one could be an effective law school dean at a research university without actively participating in these decisions that take place, if you will, upriver from the law school. And I honestly don't know how one would involve the faculty in a meaningful way in those discussions.

Certainly that has proven to be true during my five years at Kentucky. My school, like many public law schools, has been hit over the past four years with a serious downturn in public support. Support from the Commonwealth to my university has declined over the past four years, and while the law school was better—much better—able to absorb and reverse such cuts than some other units, it has been a time of financial stress. Largely because of the cut in public funding, we have been forced to raise tuition 56% over the past three years. Although our tuition rates are still quite competitive—right at \$10,000 for residents, \$20,000 for non-residents—it is a source of great concern that our tuition levels may be outpacing the resources of families in this state. There are signs that the financial picture is getting brighter. The current budget restores some, but not all, of the cuts in funding to the University, and the Commonwealth has started to fund new capital projects on campus.

During that time the deans group and the Provost began to discuss the merits of responsibility center management, a system under which the various academic units would be given the tuition dollars they generate, would be given increased control over their operations, and would be responsible for conducting their

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programs without extensive university subsidies. We spent quite a bit of time studying our existing operations and looking at how some other similarly situated universities had implemented responsibility center management. In the end it became clear that certain units, especially the group of medical colleges, could not operate under such a system. As to the law school, the evaluation was mixed. The central budget office generated a study that showed the law school being the recipient of a subsidy from the University to the tune of \$1,000,000 per annum. We produced a similar evaluation that demonstrated that the law school actually subsidizes the University. In the end, the combination of opposition from some of the major colleges and the departure of our Provost to become president of another university shelved the discussion of responsibility center management. But the proposal will certainly be revived, and when it is, the interests of the law school will require that the law school dean be centrally involved in the discussions and decisions that are made.

Perhaps the effective law school dean isn't a river to his or her people as much as a hydraulic engineer, laboring upriver to increase the size and flow of the river upon which the law school community lives. We do that by participating in the broader university financial discussions, by adding resources from private donors, and by securing additional public funding. If we are good at what we do, and are fortunate enough to work in a time when external budgetary pressures are not too severe, our faculties can continue to assume that the resources they require will always be there.

So these are the six lessons for being a good law school dean I take from *Lawrence of Arabia*: be an agent for action, have no tribe, only appear insubordinate, don't mind that it hurts, be of good humor, and be a river to your people.

With those lessons in mind, how would I evaluate my time as Dean? Let me begin by noting that I was right about one thing, when in the earlier essay I said "that the path was not always going to be an easy one."⁶ The budgetary pressures of the intervening four years presented a formidable challenge.

But even with the effects of the budgetary situation, the successes have substantially outweighed the challenges. In the earlier article I said:

I believe that law schools need to serve the communities in which we exist. For those of us at public institutions the link may be more direct, but for all of us the call to service is important. . . .

We serve broader communities as well. . . . [W]e serve by educating lawyers from traditionally under-represented populations.⁷

Serving these populations becomes even more difficult, but no less important, in times of financial challenge. I am pleased that since I last wrote we have generated significant new resources for scholarships, meeting in some measure the challenge of the tuition increase. With the leadership of Chief Justice

6. Vestal, *supra* note 1, at 251.

7. *Id.* at 252.

Lambert of our Supreme Court, we have the Kentucky Legal Education Opportunities (KLEO) program, which runs a transition program and funds scholarships at all three Kentucky public law schools for students who are diverse or come from traditionally educationally underserved areas of the Commonwealth. With the leadership of the University administration, we have the Provost Scholars program, which brings scholarship assistance for non-resident students who increase the diversity or the academic qualifications of the student body. With the leadership of an anonymous donor, we have the Appalachian Fellows program, a \$2,000,000 endowment gift for scholarships targeted at students from the eastern part of our state.

What I said four years ago remains true today: “I have had no greater satisfaction as dean than from participating in the admission, education and graduation of young people from the minority population of our urban areas and from the traditionally under-served population of the Appalachian areas of my state.”⁸ These successes are doubly rewarding “[i]f you believe, as I do, that education is the premier engine of positive social change . . .”⁹ I had the pleasure this summer of hosting a reception for the graduates of the KLEO program. We now have three cohorts of KLEO graduates, some forty-five in number. Looking around that room, with the KLEO graduates from all three years together with the judges and lawyers who have volunteered to be mentors in the program, gave one a wonderful sense of accomplishment.

There is a second part of the challenge in this regard, making sure that graduates can return to their home communities if they choose. This is also related to tuition levels; given the relatively low salaries that new lawyers in rural Kentucky are paid, it is important that education debt not limit their options. As I said in the earlier article:

But our obligation to serve under-represented communities requires more. We must make it possible for our students to return to those communities, if they desire, to practice law. This means finding ways to finance the students’ education so that they are not required by burdensome educational debt to forego opportunities for community service.¹⁰

I am very pleased that with the leadership of Senator Mitch McConnell, a 1967 graduate of the College of Law, we were able to secure a direct appropriation of Department of Justice funds to establish the Rural Drug Prosecution Project. This is a \$1,000,000 initiative to place our students as interns and our graduates as employees with Commonwealth attorneys, public defenders and circuit court judges in the rural parts of the Commonwealth. The program will fund salaries and, perhaps most importantly, student loan forgiveness, for graduates in the program, while at the same time mobilizing much-needed resources for areas greatly impacted by the scourge of illegal drug usage. The day I announced this program I had a number of students in my office telling me that it would allow

8. *Id.*

9. *Id.*

10. *Id.* at 252-53.

them to return to their home communities to practice law. Given the stress on the social fabric of rural communities hit by the drug crisis, and the contributions that our graduates can make to those communities, this is a wonderful result.

If one of the areas of great satisfaction was foreseeable four years ago, two others were perhaps not as clear: the development of new faculty and the work on a new building.

When I arrived at Kentucky as the new Dean, we had a faculty that was almost fully tenured. In the following four hiring cycles, we have recruited five entry-level professors—a significant development in a faculty of twenty-seven.¹¹ I must say, my faculty made a string of very good choices in these appointments. The professors in this cohort are, without exception, very strong in both teaching and scholarship and thoroughly enjoyable as colleagues. There is little a dean can do in this regard except to provide the resources necessary to expand the size of the faculty, which I have done, and then provide the resources necessary to fully support our new colleagues, which I believe I have also done. Summer research grants have increased each year; starting salaries have increased significantly, and a pre-tenure light load semester has been instituted. Despite the small claim to have influenced the success, the appointment and progress of these new faculty members has been the source of great personal satisfaction.

The new building is another source of satisfaction. When I arrived, it was clear that the College of Law needed a new building. A faculty study had set that as a goal, although understandably no concrete steps had been taken toward that end. We set in motion the process to get a new building. From an initial ranking of sixty-sixth on the University's capital projects priority list, we have made the case for the new building and are now ranked third. A site study was commissioned, and a very good site has been allocated to the project. Preliminary architectural studies have been done, and the result has been shared with the law school community.¹² An outside evaluation of the capital campaign was done, and we are now in the process of raising the private funds necessary for the building. It is a challenging and arduous process, but one which I believe will be successful.

The new building is important for the possibilities it brings to the way in which we teach, write and serve. Two examples illustrate the possibilities. We have an entering class of about one hundred and forty students. In recent years most first year classes have been taught in two sections of seventy, a smaller number in three sections. We have the faculty resources and the desire to teach all of the first year classes in three sections, preferably three equal sections of about forty-five students. The shortage of classrooms, and the configuration of the existing classrooms, prevent us from teaching all of the first-year classes in three sections and causes us to have unequal sections even when we can have three. The new

11. The new professors are Professor Lori Ringhand (2002), Professor Jonathan Cardi (2002), Professor David Moore (2003), Professor Mark Kightlinger (2004), and Professor Nicole Huberfeld (2005). During that same period, we also recruited Professor Rebecca Trammell to be the Director of the Law Library.

12. University of Kentucky College of Law, New Building News, http://www.uky.edu/Law/alumni/new_building_news.html (last visited Nov. 7, 2005).

building will be configured to allow us to reliably schedule three sections of all first-year classes.

The second example relates to the provision of informal working spaces for collaborative student work. We have always had a lack of sufficient space for such student collaboration. A step in the right direction was taken when we replaced our computer lab with laptop computers and a wireless network, thus freeing space in the library for student use. But the library is simply too small, and even the introduction of compact shelving for some little-used elements of the collection hasn't solved the tension in the allocation of existing space between the collection and the students. The solution is the new building, with almost exactly twice as much space across the board for a student body stable in size.

As short-term measures, we have reconfigured the library and added compact shelving, converted space to provide new faculty offices, consolidated student activities spaces, subdivided administrative space, and spent millions of dollars renovating classrooms. These have provided usable short-term solutions. The new building will solve each of those challenges for the long term.

Reading the preceding paragraphs, one might get the impression that I view the challenges and successes of being a law school dean through the prism of resources. I think that is true, to some extent. If so, it represents a departure from some very good advice I got when I was considering the opportunity to become a dean. At that time I spoke with David Vernon, who had of course been the dean at Iowa before going back to the faculty. He told me that he thought it was a mistake for anyone to become a dean unless he or she had an agenda they wished to advance. In his case, he told me, it was curricular reform. I must confess that I didn't have such an agenda when I took this position. I felt, I still feel, that there are any number of reasonable ways to organize a first year curriculum, and I am perfectly willing to defer completely to the faculty in choosing among them.

It is not, I think, that I lack a vision. It is that my vision of success is defined in terms of providing an environment in which others can realize their individual goals and aspirations. Four years ago my essay concluded by commenting on "the challenges and accomplishments of the role," stating: "[w]ith a fair amount of hard work and a good bit of luck, it is possible to help the law school better serve the communities and the university. That is why the job, at least at the end of the first year, is so rewarding."¹³

To help the law school better serve the communities and the University—to be a river to my people—continues to be the source of satisfaction and reward even after five years on the job.

13. Vestal, *supra* note 1, at 255.