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## Back-to-Back Accolades: Jacob D. Hyman Honored for 50 Years of Service

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# UB Law Anniversaries

## Back-to-back accolades

### *Jacob D. Hyman honored for 50 years of service*

**J**acob D. Hyman's 50-plus years of service to UB Law School – as a well-loved professor, as dean during a difficult transition, as a foremost advocate of the school's clinical program, as a champion of minority access – were recognized in one whirlwind day with two separate ceremonies of recognition.

The honorifics began the afternoon of Oct. 15 at the third annual University Convocation, held at the Center for the Arts. There, Dean Barry B. Boyer and UB President William R. Greiner lauded Hyman's contributions to both the Law School and the University.

"Jack's half-century at UB has not only helped to shape the Law School that we have today but also the University itself," Boyer began. He spoke of Hyman's work as dean of the school, for an 11-year period beginning in 1953 – during which time the University was merged into the State University of New York system, "what must be the most challenging experience for any dean."

"As a faculty member," Boyer noted, "Jack developed innovative programs to provide access and assistance to members of underrepresented groups who were seeking to enter the legal profession. He has become a legendary teacher who has left his influence on generations of students." He noted that Hyman, far from resting on his body of work, had developed a new course for this academic year.

"To me," the dean said, "Jack represents the highest ideals of public higher education: lifelong commitment to scholarship and learning, continuing engagement with the community in trying to be of service, and acting on the belief that our commitment to access and diversity can't just be rhetorical, that we have to

roll up our sleeves and find ways to get the job done through personal investment."

President Greiner added a personal note in saying, "If it hadn't been for Jack Hyman, I wouldn't be at the University at Buffalo. More than anyone else, Jack is the person who recruited me here."

In accepting the recognition, Hyman used the occasion to reflect on the ways the University has changed during his half-century of service. "When I came to Buffalo," he said, "the University of Buffalo was a very small private school with very limited resources, but an excellent university. But I was happily able to participate in the series of events that led to the growth of the University of Buffalo into the State University of New York at Buffalo, and a nationally recognized state university.

"The change has been great in terms of the magnitude of the service it has become possible to provide since we became a state university. Now, partly because of the flexibility arising from its continuing growth, it will serve as a leader in the transition we are now making in learning driven by the revolution in technology that is going to change our world in ways we can't begin to foresee now."

That same evening at the Park Country Club, the UB Law Alumni Association convened a reception for full-time faculty, adjunct faculty and the alumni board, and used the occasion to honor Professor Hyman, whose work had touched the lives of everyone in attendance.

Dean Boyer changed the focus of his remarks to speak of his own relationship with Hyman. "As I think back now 25 years," he said, "the main thing that I can remember about Jack was how

important it was to be taken seriously by somebody like him. And he did take us seriously as young scholars. If you came to him with your half-baked ideas, your half-written manuscripts, you would always get constructive comments, you would always get engagement as another serious questioner trying to figure out what this particular area of law was about. That meant a lot. It meant we were becoming part of the fraternity. It meant we were becoming part of a profession that had started a long, long time before we had gotten here.

"In our middle years I think we learned, as we got to know Jack a little bit better, that beneath his courtly, gentle manner was a steely determination and rigid integrity. If you dealt with Jack on any matter that was difficult or contentious, you learned that he was a person of substance. He put himself behind his beliefs. And he taught by example. He taught us all, I think, in important areas like minority access to the profession, that we had to do more than talk. That's something we're all going to try to pass on. It's something that extremely important to our Law School and our profession.

"As we matured and got accustomed to Buffalo, Jack reminded us of the importance of engagement with the community – the ideal that we're all part of a common profession and we have to work on problems together.

"Now, as the gray increases and the hairline recedes, and we become more senior professors, Jack has given us a model for remaining alive in the law: how important it is to be open to new thoughts, new experiences, to keep on working in our little corner of the world and stay intellectually alive as long as we are able to.

"All in all, Jack embodies the



*Professor William R. Greiner, president of UB, and Professor Jacob D. Hyman*



*Left to right: Dean Barry B. Boyer, Sheldon Hurwitz '53 and Jack L. Getman '58*

ancient ideal of the scholar that Chaucer articulated centuries ago: Gladly would he learn, and gladly teach. Jack, we're very glad to have learned your lessons and we will try to pass them on to the next generation."

Professor R. Nils Olsen added some thoughts on the clinical education program and Hyman's role in that vital part

of the Law School experience.

"What I've enjoyed the most in dealing with Jack is the last five or six years when I re-entered clinical teaching and taught an environmental policy clinic," Olsen said. "It dealt with a lot of issues that Jack had an interest in, and he very kindly would review legal work that was done and offer insights into ways to

improve it.

"What was probably most memorable to me, though, was when we had an oral argument in the 4th Department in a case that was quite contentious. The lawyer on the other side was just unspeakably rude. We were finally going to the Appellate Division, and they had scheduled an hour for each side for the oral argument. I asked Jack if he would accompany me to Rochester, so we drove down together with some students.

"It was the end of a long day, and the court was probably tired. Judge Callahan looked up and noticed Jack sitting in the back, and interrupted me to say, 'I see you've brought Dean Hyman with you.' The oral argument went on, and even my adversary was nice to me — in hopes that I would take him over for an opportunity to chat with Jack."

Samuel L. Shapiro, president of the alumni association, then presented a plaque with this text: "The University at Buffalo Law School Alumni Association proudly honors Professor Jacob D. Hyman for half a century of service to the University and the Law School. He exemplifies the highest standards of legal education. His leadership and integrity have earned him the respect of his colleagues, his students and the entire UB community."

Hyman, in accepting, noted, "The alumni have always been responsive when the need for support was felt. As we attempted to expand our program we leaned very heavily on our alumni.

"I want to thank you not only for your good wishes but for your willingness to support the Law School when the kind of problems that it was facing needed that kind of support. That support has always been generous, not only financially but also in terms of interest and concern and willingness to provide a supportive atmosphere.

"And the same goes, too, for many members of the local Bar. We still draw on them to provide adjunct professors, to fill in gaps in our program. So even though Buffalo is not quite the small law school and small city it was when I came, there still is a lot of that community atmosphere that is expressed at the Law School — and that makes teaching here so satisfying." ■