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## President's Report: The Impossible Dream Has Come True

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# President's Report: the impossible dream has come true

## Dear Alumni, Faculty and Students:

In 1996, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked our Law School 108th out of 179 ABA law schools. Your Law Alumni Association and the faculty of our Law School strongly disagreed with that ranking and together immediately began taking steps to significantly improve the ranking. Dean Barry B. Boyer committed administration resources and announced our goal to be in the Top 50 law schools by 2000.

R. Nils Olsen, vice dean for academic affairs and director of clinical education, along with Dean Boyer, studied and outlined the technological and some of the more critical capital needs of our Law School. Alan S. Carrel, vice dean for administration, studied the rating criteria employed by *U.S. News and World Report* and committed the necessary time to develop the information the Law School needed to be able to fully respond to the criteria. Ilene R. Fleischmann, assistant dean for alumni, public relations and communications, outlined and implemented an institutional marketing strategy to enlighten the individuals who vote on the magazine's reputational survey of law schools. Your Law Alumni Association created a working committee to assist the administration and to obtain the much-needed capital funds. It also allocated approximately \$15,000 per year to fund the costs for the printing and mailing of brochures for the marketing campaign.

March 1997 arrived and *U.S. News and World Report* ranked our Law School 68th out of 179 — an improvement of 40 places. We were pleased by the progress, but we knew we still had to work harder. We analyzed the projects that we believed were needed for

our law school to again be ranked in the Top 50 and realized we needed supplemental funding from the state of approximately \$1,800,000 for:

- **Law Library** — \$510,000 is needed to build collections and electronic access to information to support curriculum concentrations and clinical programs. \$78,000 is needed for network CD-ROM products and user work stations, and \$233,000 is needed to reconfigure shelving and remodel work areas to facilitate group work and to construct a "virtual law office."

- **Laptop computers** — \$480,000 is needed for laptop computers, which will be lent free or leased at modest rates to approximately 160 students who require subsidized machines for three years of law school.

- **Koren Center for Clinical Legal Education** — \$170,000 is needed to upgrade visual and microfilm resource facilities, to use interactive and multimedia computer/video/audio programs and to digitize extensive archival materials, video and microfilm collections.

- **Training for staff and students with new hardware and software** — \$12,000 is needed to be able to implement special training programs.

- **Classroom remodeling** — \$83,000 is needed to modernize classrooms for computer use and group work.

- **Electronic courtroom** — \$210,000 is needed to create a trial practice courtroom, to support student training in use of technology for litigation and to enable local courts to hold proceedings at UB

Law School.

- **Conference center** — \$112,000 is needed for a conference facility to enable students and faculty to interact with each other and with practitioners.

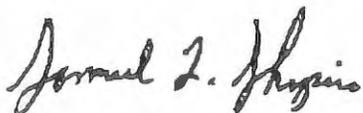
We all realized that to reach Dean Boyer's goal to be one of the Top 50 law schools in 2000, we needed funds beyond our resources, and even those of the University at Buffalo. Late in 1997, President William R. Greiner gave the Law Alumni Association the green light to try to obtain these much-needed funds. Like Don Quixote, we set forth on our quest to seek the impossible dream. I am pleased to report that through the combined efforts of a team of wonderfully committed people, our quest has been successful. We now anticipate full funding from the State of New York in the spring of 1999.

Let me express my appreciation to the people who have assisted us on this important project. Erland E. Kailbourne, vice chairman of the State University of New York (SUNY) Board of Trustees, Arnold B. Gardner, a SUNY trustee, and Pamela R. Jacobs, a SUNY trustee, brought the needs of our Law School to the attention of Thomas F. Egan, chairman of the SUNY Board of Trustees, and to the other SUNY trustees. The Western New York Delegation to the New York State Legislature quickly and diligently supported our funding request. Mary Lou Rath and Dale Volker, State Senators; Tom Reynolds, minority leader of the NYS Assembly; and Arthur Eve, deputy majority leader of the NYS Assembly, coordinated everyone's efforts and offered invaluable guidance. Dennis C. Vacco, attorney general of New York, with Bill Flynn, deputy attorney general and Erin M.

Peradotto, assistant attorney general in charge of the Buffalo office, recognized the importance of the technological needs of our Law School and assisted us in strategizing how to obtain the funds. The attorney general went directly to Gov. George E. Pataki to point out the needs of our Law School and to ask for his help. Gov. Pataki's staff, and particularly Maryanne Gridley, deputy secretary, was also an immense help to us in obtaining the funding. Michael Clemente, general manager of the SUNY Construction Fund, agreed with our request and has already begun the process for funding our projects. The projects described above should be completed by the fall of 1999.

We must all remember that this special one-time grant from the state represents designated funds targeted to priority projects which address infrastructure needs only. We still have enormous scholarship and programmatic needs at the Law School which we alumni must continue to support. The Law School will continue to depend on the generosity of its alumni and friends to maintain its margin of excellence. I urge you to support the Law Alumni Association with your membership dues — and to respond positively to the Law School's ongoing development initiatives. As much as we have achieved, there is still much to do.

Respectfully submitted,



**Samuel L. Shapiro**  
*President, UB Law Alumni Association*

