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The New Courtroom: "If you build it, we will come"

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Law School Report:

→ *The new courtroom*

“If you build it, we will come.”

*—Eugene F. Pigott,
presiding justice of the
Appellate
Division,
Fourth
Department*

The opening of a state-of-the-art courtroom will be the culmination of the most exciting capital project seen in O’Brian Hall in its history.

One immediate benefit: The Buffalo judicial community is eager to make use of the courtroom, strengthening the ties between the Law School and the Bar, and affording invaluable opportunities for students to see the practice of law played out just down the hall.

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Courtroom



Main entrance



Judge's



Jury deliberation room



chambers



Classroom



Classroom

Law School Report:

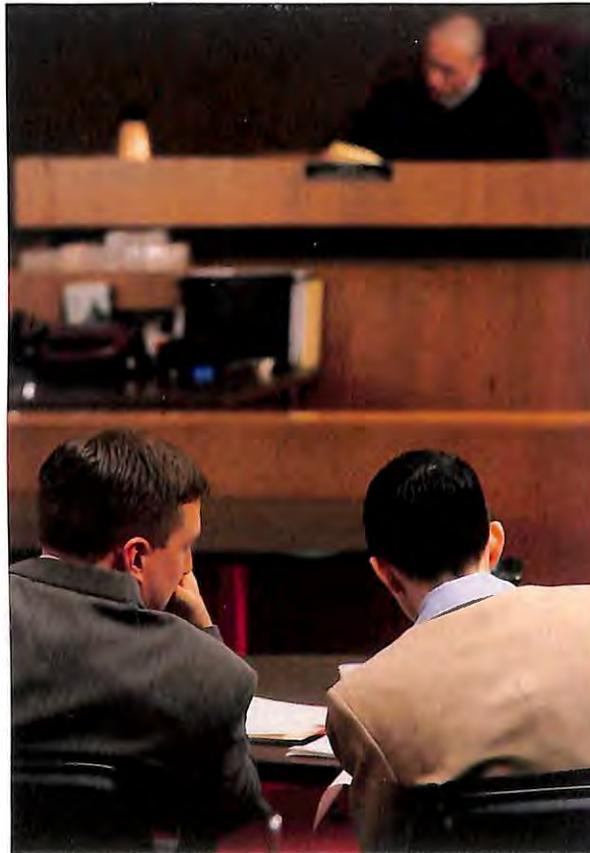
→ *The new courtroom*

“The response from the legal community has been uniformly enthusiastic. A number of judges at the state trial, federal trial and state appellate level have confirmed that they will hold sessions in our new facility.”

— Professor George Kannar, who is overseeing the project



Jury deliberation room



“The courtroom project should present several different benefits to the Law School,” said Professor George Kannar, who is overseeing the project. “I expect there to be real synergy between the academic community and the community of practice; they benefit from us, and we benefit from them.

“The response from the legal community has been uniformly enthusiastic. A number of judges at the state trial, federal trial and state appellate level have confirmed that they will hold ses-

sions in our new facility.”

The project involves converting the huge, outdated moot courtroom into genuinely usable space, creating a working courtroom, two 85-seat lecture halls and three smaller classrooms. The courtroom space includes a judge’s chambers, a technology support room and a jury deliberation room. The area under construction encompasses 11,700 square feet, according to Gordie Love, project coordinator for the University’s Design and Construction Department. The

courtroom, and the classrooms as well, will be capable of supporting the use of computers during trials and instruction.

Love said the classrooms are expected to be ready for use in the spring semester, and the courtroom should be completed later in the spring. The project, with a price tag of just over \$1 million, began in mid-July 2000.



Entrance

The case statement for the capital campaign describes the new space as “a well-proportioned, Mission-style, state-of-the-art courtroom, suitable for both jury trials and appellate arguments ... a tasteful and efficient new space. There seems no reason to doubt that this new courtroom, in these new surroundings, will quickly become a true point of pride and common focus for the Law School, its alumni and the legal community as a whole.”

The Western New York judicial community has expressed support for the project.

“If you build it, we will come,” Eugene F. Pigott, presiding justice of the Appellate Division, Fourth Department, New York State Supreme Court, said he told Dean R. Nils Olsen. “We will be there as soon as the dean tells us we are welcome.

“It will be very good for the court. I am certain it will benefit the Law School as well, but we like to bring the court to the people a little bit if we can.”

“It is invaluable if you are a law student,” said Samuel L. Green, Appellate Division judge.

Said Leslie B. Foschio, federal magistrate judge: “There is a general willingness on our part to conduct any type of

civil case we have consent jurisdiction for in the courtroom whenever feasible. I am willing to hold court at the Law School as often as I have a case that is amenable to the program. My approach is to be as supportive of the Law School as I can without interfering with our duties as magistrate judges. I am already looking at, and discussing with lawyers, cases that could be tried in the new courtroom.”

Added Barbara Howe, a State Supreme Court justice and adjunct associate professor of sociology at UB: “I would find this of great symbolic value. It will be a reminder to all participants in the process of the academic and intellectual roots of all that we do and the professionalism that should attend it.”



Classroom

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