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Law School Report

Buffalo Law Review honors Judge Scott at Golden Anniversary Dinner



A golden anniversary is a significant milestone, whether it be a celebration of a personal nature, like a happy marriage, or of a professional sort, such as a thriving business. In 2001, the Law School celebrated a golden anniversary of its own as it commemorated five decades of publishing the *Buffalo Law Review*.

The occasion was marked during the 13th annual *Buffalo Law Review* dinner, held April 12 at the Saturn Club in Buffalo. As its outgoing editor in chief, Julie J. Olenn '02 proudly summarized the *Review's* banner year as one that saw the publication of valuable legal articles across a broad spectrum of subjects.

"Perhaps the overarching goal of the *Law Review* these 50 years has been to

provide a platform for legal scholarship — scholarship that is serviceable to our profession as a resource for information about developments in the law, the way we think about it, or the way we should," she said.

"Certainly, this year the *Review* has fulfilled that function. And I think we have done it well."

The *Review's* symposium issue was devoted to the topic of pension and employee benefit law. It was published with substantial editorial assistance from Associate Professor James A. Wooten, who contributed an article on the origins of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act.

Other issues have included articles advocating legal reform, such as providing a mechanism for adjudicating parenthood for non-biological lesbian co-

parents, and topics of contemporary legal debate with historically deep roots, such as the social responsibilities of business corporations. One article was self-referential, addressing the frequency with which the state Court of Appeals has found *Law Review* scholarship useful in deciding cases before it.

Among the student comments published during the 2001–2002 *Law Review* cycle was an analysis of the passage of landmark environmental protection legislation, and an examination of evolving state case law in the area of decedents' estates.

"Our work on the *Review*, and our sharing in these accomplishments, has enhanced our experience of law school beyond its classrooms and the legal training that our education itself provides. In the end, the publication of the *Review* is the best evidence there is of our effective unity," Olenn observed.

Honored at the dinner for his distinguished service in the community and at the law school was U.S. Magistrate Judge Hugh B. Scott. Dean Nils Olsen said, "Judge Scott has been an inspiration for hard work, fairness and involvement. His commitment to learning and community have not only shown the highest of ideals as a professional and leader, but also as a person."

Scott's legal career has been the definition of pioneering: After receiving his Juris Doctor degree from UB, he was the first African-American to become assistant attorney general in charge of Western New York, the first to become assistant U.S. attorney, the first assistant corporation counsel and the first assistant county attorney.

At the young age of 32, Scott was elected to Buffalo City Court. He was re-elected to another 10-year term before leaving the position to become the



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*U.S. Magistrate Judge
Hugh B. Scott*

first African-American to sit on the local federal bench.

“This award is so very special coming from people whose lives have enriched mine much more than I have enriched theirs, and from a school that gave me what I like to call an affirmative opportunity to pursue a career for which every day I am truly thankful,” Scott said.

During his keynote address, Scott – making frequent reference to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 – called on his colleagues to bring attention to the critical need to balance this country’s need for security with a respect for human rights.

“As lawyers, we must unite in our efforts to maintain the welfare and freedoms of all,” he said. “We must not allow ourselves to target groups or rush to hostile judgment out of anger.

“Let’s make sure that at the end of this dark period of war, we are not a country more splintered, more divided and less secure,” he concluded.

“The legal community must be America’s conscience during the challenging times ahead.”

Active in numerous civic activities, Scott is regional chairman of the National Conference for Community and Justice, which is dedicated to community involvement and justice initiatives.

He is a vice president of the UB Law Alumni Association and serves on the UB Law School’s Dean’s Advisory Council. He has taught trial technique at the school for the past 21 years, is involved in the Criminal Law Center’s LL.M. program and is a frequent guest lecturer. Most recently, Judge Scott brought the first federal trial to UB’s new courtroom.



Julie J. Olenn '02 presents a plaque to Judge Scott, left.

Below, left to right: Evelyn R. Agnant '02, Temietan O. Ofuya '02, Marie A. Martial '02, Stephanie Williams Torres '00 and SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Kenneth F. Joyce.



Kevin G. Hutcheson '02, above. Judge Scott and wife Trudy, left.