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They Did It for Murph

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They did it for Murph

At the inaugural "Murph," the Bob Murphy Memorial Golf Tournament, Bob's memory was honored by using one of his passions, golf, to benefit another — his commitment to the training of young lawyers. Proceeds from the golf tournament, held Aug. 12, at Tan Tara Golf Club in North Tonawanda, N.Y., will support the Bob Murphy Memorial Trial Competition Fund.

About 60 golfers participated in the tournament, mostly Law School alumni. "Everyone seemed to have a very enjoyable time. People are excited for next year," said James W. Grable Jr. '76, one of the organizers. "We laid the groundwork for bigger, better Murph events in the years to come, to sustain the trial competition fund at the Law School."

Robert M. Murphy '56, or "Murph" to his innumerable friends, was a trial lawyer of the first order. Brash, colorful, and brilliant before a jury, he wove magic in the courtroom.

Murph took over a fledgling trial team program at the University at Buffalo Law School at a time in his career when he had earned the right to play a lot more golf and do a lot less work. He did take the time to play golf, but he dedicated the vast majority of his time to a passion he held closer to his heart: giving back to young lawyers-in-training. He gave thousands of his hours and large sums of his money to the UB Law trial team program. Over those many years, Murph shared his priceless courtroom wisdom with countless lawyers-to-be.



Murph was far too gruff, practical and humble to accept the accolades he so richly deserved. He was quick to scoff at efforts to recognize the time, energy, money and love he gave to the program. All he asked was that others do their best to give back themselves.

On Feb. 15, 2001, Murph passed away after a battle with brain and lung cancer. Days before his passing, too weak to speak or stand, Murph smiled broadly with his characteristic twinkle in his eye when he heard the news that his "kids," a team of Murph-trained law students, won the regional championship of the National Trial Competition. When a new trial team from the Law School won the regional championship this past spring for UB Law's second straight regional title, and then advanced to the top three in the nation in the National Finals in Texas, they did it for Murph.

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