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Leadership Giving

Roger Jones supports faculty scholars

By Jessica Keltz '06

UB Law alumnus Roger Jones '84 once wanted an academic career teaching medieval history. Now, he's a partner at one of the world's most prestigious law firms, Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw LLP. Recently, he decided it was time to give back to UB, the institution where he not only earned his law degree, but also his B.A., M.A. and Ph.D. He and his wife Karen have made a generous gift to the Law School, allowing Dean Nils Olsen the discretion to use the money where it is needed most. Dean Olsen has earmarked these funds for faculty scholarship.

"When I earned my Ph.D. in history, it would be fair to call it a buyer's market," Jones said, noting that in 1979 tenure-track positions were scarce. He made much more money working in middle management at a trucking company. Teaching at the university level, the career he had envisioned, "didn't look like it was going to be a realistic possibility," he recalls.

Luckily for Jones, when he enrolled in UB Law, he found another subject he could enjoy: tax law. And tax law, in addition to engaging his intellect, also provided the foundation for a dynamic career.

"I took every tax course that was available to me while I was there," Jones said, recalling in particular the teaching talents of professors Louis Del Cotto, Ken Joyce and former university president William Greiner.

After graduating from UB Law, Jones spent two years as an associate with the Buffalo office of the law firm then known as Phillips, Lytle, Hitchcock, Blaine & Huber before moving to Chicago to take a position with the firm now known as Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw LLP. Mayer Brown has offices in six U.S. and seven European cities and a tax de-



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partment Jones finds unique.

Tax law at Mayer Brown, he explained, is divided into two departments — transactional, which is like the tax practice of most law firms, and tax controversy, which deals with disputes with various tax authorities. Attorneys can begin to represent clients at any level of a dispute, from the beginning of an IRS audit to arguing a client's case before an appeals court.

"I have dealt with tax controversies at every level of our system," he said. He added that the firm's litigation expertise informs its tax planning services as well.

Jones entered law school with some career experience under his belt, with a

family to think about in addition to his homework. When he started in 1981, his son — now a successful attorney himself — was almost 11 and his daughter was 4. During Jones' first semester in law school, he kept his full-time job with the trucking company.

The schedule, Jones said, was an unusual one, with managers working seven 12-hour shifts every 14 days. To make it to class every day, he volunteered to cover nights.

"The terminal where we operated from was up on the Niagara River by the Grand Island Bridge," he said. "My wife, our kids and I lived out in West Seneca, which was 20-some miles from work."

Work finished at around 7 or 8 a.m., so rather than drive all the way back to West Seneca — then turn around and head to Amherst — Jones decided to make better use of his time.

"I would close the curtains of the station wagon and sleep for about two hours," in a North Campus parking lot, he said. Later in his law school career, he

worked as a summer associate and taught LSAT prep courses, which made for a more conventional schedule.

Jones decided it was time to give back to UB after serving on the Law School's Dean's Advisory Council. "And the rest is history, I guess," Jones said.

"My education at UB Law School prepared me very, very well for everything I do. I have been extremely fortunate in my professional career and thought it was worth trying to give back a little bit to the school."

Named Roger and Karen Jones Faculty Scholars are: Professor John Henry Schlegel, Professor Markus D. Dubber, Professor Robert J. Steinfeld and Professor Rebecca R. French.

Members of the University Founders Society

The University at Buffalo created **The University Founders** recognition society in 1994 to honor individuals who have given a least \$50,000 to the university over a lifetime. The names of University Founders whose gifts have benefited the Law School are listed below:

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The Law School has only recently begun to reach out to alumni and friends to talk about including the Law School in estate plans. If you have already made a will provision, or other estate plan, to benefit the Law School, please be so kind as to let us know. If you are interested in receiving more information about deferred giving, please contact either:

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