

1-1-2008

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Recommended Citation

UB Law Forum (2008) "Annual Fund Aims for \$1 Million in 2008," *UB Law Forum*: Vol. 20 : No. 1 , Article 59.

Available at: https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/ub_law_forum/vol20/iss1/59

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Annual Giving

Annual Fund aims for \$1 million in 2008

The Annual Fund giving campaign, which last year brought \$924,814 in crucial support to the Law School, is poised to cross the \$1 million mark in 2007-08 – and appreciation for Dean Olsen as he leaves office is seen as the key. “Increase your gift in honor of Dean Nils Olsen,” urges a mailer that went to all 9,500 UB Law alumni. The publication notes that alumni giving makes up 12 percent of the school’s budget, and that Annual Fund giving is crucial to continuing the improvements that Olsen has brought to the school over his nine years as dean.

Karen R. Kaczmariski ’89, the assistant dean for development who is in charge of the Annual Fund campaign, has seen those improvements firsthand. Kaczmariski returned to the Law School in April after practicing commercial litigation for many years.

“I know what it was like before we had a courtroom, before the new curriculum was in place,” Kaczmariski says. “I have seen the way the facility has changed, the advent of our January bridge courses, the course offerings that are more now than there ever have been before.

“It has really been the alumni giving back and Dean Olsen with his vision – those two things have really driven the school forward.”

Now, with Christopher T. Greene ’74, senior partner at Damon & Morey, as chair, the Annual Fund drive is seeking not only to cross that \$1 million threshold, but to reach 25 percent alumni participation.

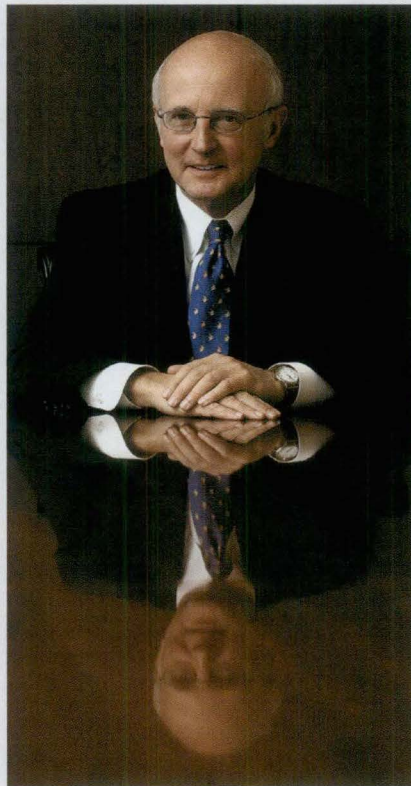
Annual Fund dollars, Kaczmariski notes, are used at the dean’s discretion to fill the gap between state funding/tuition income and the expense of running the Law School. Those dollars support scholarship assistance to needy students; fund named professorships and faculty scholars; support UB Law’s mock trial teams in national competitions; help fund over 27 stu-

dent organizations and eight student journals; support the Law School’s well-regarded clinical program; and help fund public-interest summer fellowships, among other efforts. In addition, alumni giving helps to keep class sizes down, making for beneficial faculty-student ratios and a better educational experience, and to keep UB Law’s tuition rates extremely affordable.

One of the happy side benefits of the campaign, Kaczmariski says, is the interaction between alumni and students who work side by side on phonathon calls. “Alumni get a chance to interact with students, students get a chance to interact with them, and there is a great energy there,” she says. “For students, it is a chance to make connections and to see that the alumni really do love the school. And they can see how alumni interact with their alumni friends. There is a lot of laughing going on.”

For Kaczmariski, her return to UB Law School is a chance to practice “advocacy without an opponent,” as she sometimes calls development work. She says that her fellow alumni, by investing in the Law School, can only help the value of their degree.

“The most important thing,” she says, “is that we need to keep the momentum going. Dean Olsen has been able to transform the Law School, together with the alumni. We need to give the new dean, whoever that is, the same flexibility to continue that progress.”



“Your gift makes a difference more than ever.”

– Christopher T. Greene ’74