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A new chapter for Professor Ewing

After closing out his nearly 35-year teaching career at UB School of Law, Professor Charles Patrick Ewing could be taking it easy in the sunshine of Naples, Fla., where he now lives with his spouse, Dr. Sharon Harris-Ewing.

But that’s hardly likely.

There’s his burgeoning practice as a forensic psychologist, which fills his calendar with court dates and evaluations of defendants and prison inmates.

There’s his love of photography – his images, mostly landscapes and other nature themes, have been viewed nearly 5 million times online.

And, of course, he continues to write. The latest project: a memoir of his experiences in forensic psychology, all the way back to his first job, at age 18, as an attendant in a state psychiatric hospital.

“I’m working harder than I’ve ever worked,” Ewing reports.

Most of that comes from his practice. Ewing travels throughout Florida and beyond, evaluating criminal defendants, consulting with attorneys and testifying as an expert witness. Because Florida is a death penalty state, that includes high-stakes work in examining capital murder defendants, probing their life histories in seeking out mitigating factors such as child abuse, neglect or traumatic brain injury. He’s especially interested in the cases of juveniles who were sentenced to life without parole and, since the U.S. Supreme Court’s prohibition of that practice, are up for resentencing. “I’ve seen people in their 60s who have been in prison all that time,” Ewing says. “Those cases are especially intriguing to me because you’re looking at a person’s entire life. I spend a lot of time reviewing school and prison records, then individually examining these individuals. You really have to go in depth.”

In addition to his memoir, Ewing continues as editor in chief of the international journal Behavioral Sciences and the Law, and he writes a few scholarly reviews here and there. But his real passion is taking pictures. “One of the great joys of photography is the absolute concentration it requires,” he says. “When I’m taking photos, there is literally nothing else on my mind other than getting the best shot possible. And having spent a lifetime using my brain as my only tool, it’s great to be doing something that requires hands-on skills.”

He has left the Buffalo weather behind, but not the School of Law. “I really enjoyed my time there,” Ewing says. “The law school gave me the opportunity to pursue my academic and practical interests wherever they took me. It enabled me to have an amazing career both in and outside the school. That was a real gift.”

Students remember

Some former students on how Professor Ewing made a difference for them:

Milton D. Gordon ’15, assistant Erie County district attorney: “Because of him, I was given the opportunity to succeed as a minority student at UB Law. The depth of his involvement can only truly be explained with the word ‘compassion.’”

Daniel T. Lukasik ’88, private practitioner: “Professor Ewing had an enormous impact on me during my time at UB. Not only did he challenge me intellectually, he set an example of dignity and compassion that I have carried with me throughout my 30 years in the legal profession.”

Trini E. Ross ’92, director of Attorney-Investigators for the Inspector General’s Office of the National Science Foundation: “I took four classes with Dr. Ewing because I enjoyed the blend of practical and theoretical he provided to the students. His extensive courtroom experience made his classes interesting and practical, while his academic background, in law and philosophy, provided the academic knowledge I expected as a law student.”