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In my spring letter, I described some of the stresses—mainly economic and market-related— that law schools are under today and how the Valparaiso University Law School has long been working to deal with these stresses. As I explained, we have dealt with them by focusing on the fundamental questions, *What are the valuable services and outcomes we offer students?* and *Are we delivering them?* I then discussed how we are adapting our curriculum and our career planning operations as part of our focus on those questions.

In the first part of this new fall letter, I wish to continue the conversation about value and services, and describe some other initiatives we are pursuing. Then, in the second half of the letter, I will share news about students, faculty, and events.

Student Services

We have launched three new services for students in recent months, all designed to support professional growth and career development.

One initiative is our new mobile Web application, VOLT. VOLT is designed to guide students through the career planning and career search process by providing an interactive guide for essential steps in the process. As a student completes a step, a record is entered in our database and the student's personal scorecard (accessed through VOLT) is updated. (For further information and a working example of VOLT can be accessed at valpo.edu/law/volt.) So far, students have been enthusiastic about the application and are using it extensively.

The application is designed to reach our law students through channels and tools that work best for the current generation. Our goal is to encourage students to be constantly engaged in the career process and support them as they take responsibility for their own destiny and success. We are continually working to improve the application in light of experience and plan in further iterations to integrate academic support and bar preparation.

VOLT is a first-of-its-kind digital service for law students and it has been receiving very favorable attention in the media (see, for example, www.nationaljurist.com/content/valparaiso-launches-online-career-tracking-system-students and www.campustechnology.com/articles/2012/10/01/valparaiso-law-school-launches-mobile-student-career-planner.aspx).

We have also created the **Alumni Mentoring Network** for our students and recent graduates. This network is a joint initiative of our Career Planning Center and our faculty. Through the network, alumni volunteers can assist students in a variety of ways, such as:

- Conducting informal interviews
- Networking by phone or email
- Hosting a student for job shadowing

Students and recent graduates can easily search our database of mentors, based on practice area, geography, or other dimensions relevant to the student's or recent graduate's needs and interests.

To date, well over 100 alumni from 22 states have become mentors. If you are interested in participating, you can complete the mentor profile form on the mentoring page of our website (valpo.edu/law/mentor or contact **Vanessa Verner**,¹ our Associate Director of Alumni Engagement.

We have also created this year a **Professionalism Series** for our students. The Series offers regular programs on a variety of topics designed to communicate the values and ideals of the legal profession and equip students with the skills and attitudes appropriate for practice in law, business, nonprofit organizations, and government. Starting with the class entering this fall, students are required to attend at least one program per semester; students must attend six programs in order to graduate. You can think of the Professionalism Series (and requirement) as akin to CLE.

Programs offered this semester include Interviewing 101, Wellness and the Profession of Law, Managing and Securing Your Online Identity, and Setting Up a Law Practice. More information is available at valpo.edu/law/professionalism-series.

Library and Information Services

Three of the Valparaiso University Law School's main centers of service are the J.D. educational program, the career planning center, and our library and information center. Library and information services form a large part of the Law School—in terms of people, space, budget, and number of persons served. Yet these services tend to receive the least attention when we talk about the Law School.

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We usually call this cluster of services a “library,” and I will use that term here. But in many respects the term is outdated. A library connotes a *place*, in particular one that consists mainly of shelves of printed materials, and suggests a staff whose job is primarily to manage those materials. But a library—certainly our library—is really something more intangible. It is neither a place nor a collection of things. It is a complex cluster of services that support the sophisticated use of information, and the teaching and scholarly activities of the school.

As I mentioned earlier, one of the great challenges for a law school today is to become focused on the nature of the value it is promising, and to ensure that the promise is kept. Each of our three main centers of service participates in the promise to deliver value, and its delivery. It is fairly clear what value means in connection with the educational program and with career services. It is harder to articulate with respect to libraries. One source of difficulty is that law libraries are currently undergoing rapid change. But another is that library services are too often thought of as ancillary, rather than central to the work of the law school.

Our library has long understood itself to have a role central to our educational mission, and has acted accordingly. For example, our librarians teach and we only hire librarians who we believe will be good teachers. The central accreditation requirement for a law library is that it be “an active and responsive force in the educational life of the law school,” and that is pretty much our library’s mission. So, the main task is to make sure that our library services continue to adapt and respond to the needs of students and other users.

Our new Associate Dean for Library and Information Services, **Emily Janoski-Haehlen**,² is leading the process of adapting. A variety of initiatives are under way, most of which are in the early stages. One initiative under development, for example, is an alumni support program that will include reference and research services. If you have suggestions about particular services for alumni that might be included in the program, please contact Emily.

Two recent initiatives designed to make information more accessible and less expensive are already under way. One is to digitize and make available on our website briefs from Indiana Supreme Court and Court of Appeals cases. Currently, these briefs are available only in paper form at very limited locations or else online, but for a fee. This project will make thousands of briefs freely available to the world.

Another initiative is to digitize and make available the scholarship of our faculty. This scholarship, of course, has been published and is available, but is scattered and often difficult to obtain. Through *Valpo Scholar*, a University-wide website (scholar.valpo.edu) that hosts scholarship, journals, and a wide array of other scholarly and creative work, the important articles and papers of our faculty will be readily available at no charge and fully searchable through Google.

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Student News

The Law School has 30 student organizations that fall under the umbrella of the Student Bar Association. These organizations are very busy and it would not be feasible to review here all the activities of these many groups. Instead, I will describe this year's activities of one, since it is representative of the service and educational activities our students engage in through their many organizations.

The Military Veterans Law Association (MVLA) is a relatively new organization, but a very active and committed one. There are many veterans in the Law School today and we expect the number to grow. MVLA's first event this year was a panel discussion, "Veterans and Higher Education," held on 27 September. The program dealt with the panoply of issues facing veterans as they transition from military life to the academic life. The program was designed to reach not just law students but also students, faculty, and administrators throughout the University.

The week of 3-10 November is Veterans Week, which will serve as an opportunity to recognize veteran law students and members of the community. As part of the Week, there will be a 5K run and walk, to help provide veterans in Northwest Indiana with shelter and rescue animals through the Help a Vet Get a Pet program. The program was developed by MVLA President **Katherine Genther ('13)**, who is also President of the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund.

In February, in honor of Black History Month, MVLA will host a program on the Tuskegee Airmen. In March it will hold a Volunteer Day, where students can provide assistance in local homeless veterans shelters. Also in the spring, the MVLA will sponsor training for students to become VA claims agents (who help veterans obtain VA benefits) and will host a program with a Veterans Court judge in the region.

I should also note that we have added to our curriculum a course in Military Law, which will be taught for the first time in spring semester.

In addition to our SBA-affiliated student organizations, there are also three major inter-school advocacy competition organizations and a law review. Students also are involved both formally and informally in bar associations, including the ABA Law Student Division, in which we have national and circuit leaders. Information on our student groups and activities can be found at valpo.edu/law/current-students/student-organizations. You can also keep track of student activities and interests through the student newspaper, *The Forum*, at vuslforum.org.

Faculty News

Our faculty members are as productive as ever, and several have recently been recognized for important accomplishments. **Bruce Berner**³ received a 2012 Distinguished Barrister Award from the *Indiana Lawyer*. The award recognizes his many years of achievement, ranging from his work as a

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special prosecutor on the Ford Pinto criminal proceedings 40 years ago, to his present work with the Indiana Supreme Court in evaluating a pilot project that will open certain court proceedings to the public through webcasting. **Faisal Kutty**⁴ received the 2012 Civil Rights Award from the Council on American Islamic Relations, for his leadership in the field of human rights. Faisal also delivered the Keynote Address at the CAIR annual meeting, *Making Democracy Work*. And **Bernard Trujillo**⁵ was honored at the 14th Annual International Latino Book Awards at the Instituto Cervantes in New York City. The book, *Immigration Law and the US-Mexico Border*, co-authored with Kevin Johnson, earned First Place as the Best Reference Book in English.

Several members of the faculty are active on blogs. **Jeremy Telman**⁶ is the editor of ContractsProf Blog, www.lawprofessors.typepad.com/contractsprof_blog, the official blog of the American Association of Law Schools Section on Contracts. I have a blog on the *Huffington Post* site, www.huffingtonpost.com/jay-conison, where I write about current issues in law schools and legal education. Several others contribute to blogs occasionally.

Curt Cichowski⁷ was one of the principal organizers of an American Bar Association Section of Legal Education conference this summer for associate deans. Moderating panels at the conference were Associate Dean **JoEllen Lind**⁸ and Vice Dean **Mark Adams**.⁹ **Zachary Calo**¹⁰ taught in a program for Chinese judges in Beijing for the second time this summer. Zachary's subject was religion and the rule of law.

Associate Dean **Jeremy Telman**¹¹ was named International Correspondent of the Hans-Kelsen Institute in Vienna. **Rebecca Huss**¹² is now Chair of the ABA Torts, Trial, and Insurance Practice Section's Animal Law Committee. **Linda Whitton**¹³ was appointed Reporter for the Interjurisdictional Recognition of Advance Planning Documents Act, a joint project of the Uniform Law Commission and the Uniform Law Conference of Canada. And I have been named Reporter for the ABA Task Force on the Future of Legal Education, which will make recommendations regarding issues in the economics, delivery, and regulation of legal education (see www.americanbar.org/groups/professional_responsibility/taskforceonthefuturelegaleducation.html).

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Rosalie Levinson¹⁴ delivered the Donohue Lecture at Suffolk University Law School. Her paper, “Targeted Hate Speech and the First Amendment: How the Supreme Court Should Have Decided Snyder,” will be published in the *Suffolk University Law Review*. Rosalie also lectured on substantive due process topics at the Annual Civil Rights Conference at the Chicago-Kent College of Law. **David Herzig**¹⁵ presented a paper, “Rethinking FIRPTA,” at the Junior Tax Scholars Conference at the University of California Hastings College of Law; the paper will be published in the *Columbia Journal of Tax Law* in spring 2013. David also presented a paper at the 2012 Law and Society Conference on proper IRS action in response to the Department of Justice’s position on the Defense of Marriage Act.

Bruce Berner published a review of the book, *Immortality and the Law*, in the *Valparaiso University Law Review*. **Robert Blomquist**’s¹⁶ article, “Overinterpreting Law,” was published in the *Penn State Law Review*. **Zachary Calo** has recently published two articles, “Faithful Presence and Theological Jurisprudence,” in the *Pepperdine Law Review*, and “Higher Law Secularism,” in the *Chicago-Kent Law Review*. **David Cleveland**’s¹⁷ co-authored article, “The Decline of Oral Argument in the Federal Appellate Courts: A Modest Proposal for Reform,” will appear in the *Journal of Appellate Practice and Process*. **Geoffrey Heeren**’s¹⁸ article, “Persons Who Are Not the People: The Changing Rights of Immigrants in the United States,” is forthcoming in the *Columbia Human Rights Law Review*. **Faisal Kutty** contributed a chapter, “‘Shari’a’ Courts in Canada: A Delayed Opportunity for the Indigenization of Islamic Legal Rulings,” to a new book edited by Anna Kortweg and Jennifer Selby, *Debating Shariah: Islam, Gender Politics And Family Law Arbitration*.

Michael Murray’s¹⁹ article, “DIOS MIO: The KISS Principle of the Ethical Approach to Copyright and Right of Publicity Law,” will appear in the *Minnesota Journal of Law, Society, and Technology*, and his article, “The Great Recession and the Rhetorical Canons of Law and Economics,” will appear in the *Loyola Law Review*. Two articles by **Nicole Negowetti**²⁰ will appear shortly: “Judicial Decision Making and the Limits of Perception: Mitigating Implicit Bias with Judicial Empathy,” in the *Boston University Public International Law Journal*, and “A National ‘Natural’ Standard for Food Labeling,” in the *Maine Law Review*. And **Jeremy Telman**’s article, “Intolerable Abuses: Rendition for Torture and the State Secrets Privilege,” appeared in the *Alabama Law Review*.

On non-academic news, **Sy Moskowitz**²¹ recently climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa.

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Conferences, Lectures, and Events

On 19 October, the Law School hosted the annual **Tabor Institute on Legal Ethics**. The keynote speaker was **Steven Lubet**, the Edna B. and Ednyfed H. Williams Memorial Professor of Law at Northwestern University Law School. Professor Lubet spoke on “Stonewalling, Leaks, and Counter-Leaks: SCOTUS Ethics in the Wake of *NFIB v. Sebelius*.” On 29 November, we will host the annual **Seegers Lecture in Jurisprudence**. The speaker will be **Brian Leiter**, the Karl N. Llewellyn Professor of Jurisprudence at the University of Chicago Law School. The subject of his talk will be “Legal Realism, Old and New.”

The Library hosted the annual conference of the Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries on 17-19 October. **Steve Probst**²² was chair of the committee that organized the conference. Steve is a past President of ORALL and **Emily Janoski-Haehlen** is currently the Vice President and Chair of the Education Committee. At the Conference, **Michael Bushbaum**²³ and **Jesse Bowman**²⁴ presented a session, “Feathers, Sex, T-Shirts, and Medals,” on blending internet skills and legal skills to conduct accurate and cost-effective online research.

On 7 November, we held the Annual Luther M. Swygart Moot Court Competition. Judges this year were **Frank H. Easterbrook**, Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, **Jon E. DeGuilio**, Judge of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Indiana, and **Denise K. LaRue**, Magistrate Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana.

On 9 November, we held a conference on the subject, “Exploding Prison Population and Drug Offenders: Rethinking State Drug Sentencing.” **Randall Kennedy**, the Michael R. Klein Professor of Law at the Harvard Law School, was the featured speaker, and there was an array of distinguished scholars and lawyers on the panels. Further information is available at valpo.edu/law/exploding-prison-population-and-drug-offenders-rethinking-state-drug-sentencing-conference.

On 26 October, we held the first in our schedule of regional faculty workshops at the Law School. The second regional workshop will be held in the spring, at our Hyde Park campus. Also at our Hyde Park campus, on 8 December, will be a Junior Tax Workshop, organized by **David Herzig**.

In the spring, we will hold the annual **Law Review Symposium**. This year, the Symposium honors former Indiana Chief Justice **Randall Shepard**, and will devote the program to issues relating to diversity in legal education and the legal profession.

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Also in the spring will be the **Martin Luther King Lecture**, on 24 January, by Gary, Indiana Mayor and former Indiana Attorney General **Karen Freeman-Wilson**; the **Indiana Supreme Court Lecture**, on 28 February, delivered by former Indiana Supreme Court Justice **Frank Sullivan**; and the **Monsanto Lecture in Torts Jurisprudence**, on 12 April, delivered by **Martha Chamallas**, the Robert J. Lynn Professor of Law at Ohio State University.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that we are in challenging times for legal education, we continue to make strong progress in serving our students and pursuing our mission. We do so because of our focus on providing value and high quality service to students and the other constituencies we serve.

Thank you for your support for our work and for being part of the Valparaiso University Law School community.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Conison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jay Conison
Dean and Professor