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## A Tribute to Professor Hugh Ross

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## TRIBUTE

### A TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR HUGH ROSS

*Professor Hugh Ross has served our law school for almost forty years. His legacy should serve the legal community for at least forty more. It is ironic that the honor of saluting him is upon those of us who have yet to realize the depth of the knowledge he has imparted to us. This realization will come only as we experience first hand what Professor Ross prepared us for; the practice of law with conscience and character. With this in mind, we recognize a "Cedar of Lebanon" in our law school.*

- The Staff of Volume 40



Peter M. Gerhart\*

OUR LAW SCHOOL is a far different place than it was when Hugh Ross joined the faculty in 1954. The law school then was smaller, more local, and establishing its identity after a turbulent decade of war and recovery. Much has changed over the years, but it is remarkable to reflect on how much the maturing law school and the maturing Hugh Ross have had in common. I, of course, have known each for a short period only, but when reviewing their histories, I am struck to see how much they have grown along similar paths.

Hugh's scholarship, for example, is marked by evolution toward matters of increasing national scope and impact. His book, *Hospitalizing the Mentally Ill in Ohio*, dealt with the local manifestation of a national issue, but it was based on his pioneering work for the American Bar Foundation. That work, and his later work for the National Council on Aging, dealt with national issues and had a national impact. In his analysis and recommendations, Hugh did not pull punches or shrink from difficult choices. As a result, his work was central to reforming national and local policies concerning the mentally ill and aged. Scholars sometimes worry that their work might be ignored or forgotten. Hugh has no such worry. The legacy of his work is in the changes that it has wrought.

As a teacher, Hugh viewed his subject broadly and taught well. Here I rely on the reports of those who have sat in his classes over the years — reports of a type that a dean loves to hear. Hugh assumed student preparation and taught on a high level. He was not content simply to go over the assigned material, but insisted on extending and expanding it. Those who had not read the materials had extreme difficulty following the discussion. He was willing, and well-prepared, to deal with the most subtle, sophisticated questions that were thrown at him and he had a great memory for both the details and the nuances of cases.

Hugh's contributions went beyond his teaching and scholarship, however. He brought the law school of today into shape by

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taking a lead role in developing the administrative infrastructure that allowed our law school to expand, and grow. As the law school's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs from 1978 to 1983, and as the Secretary of the law faculty from 1974 to 1989, he was instrumental in undertaking the difficult administrative tasks that have defined who we are and how we operate. For example, he is almost singly responsible for drafting the law school Code of Conduct, and then negotiating its implementation with faculty and students. He kept the faculty by-laws in shape, and held the faculty to them, while recording the outcome of successive faculty meetings and integrating new policy into governing law.

His service went far beyond these responsibilities, of course, for he served the University as legal counsel for eight years and served on five different committees of the University's Faculty Senate — all with grace and wisdom. However, it is as the chronicler for the law school that Hugh's service will chiefly be remembered. The infrastructure is not often visible — which shows how good it is — but if it were, it would have Hugh Ross's name written all over it.

Thus, over his career, Hugh Ross has satisfied all of the requirements of a successful academic. He has earned the title of "Emeritus" and the respect of those who care about the advancement of legal education.

Oliver C. Schroeder, Jr.\*

TO SALUTE HUGH Ross, a colleague for 37 years, is a challenging privilege. What did he bring to our Law School? A dedication to classroom teaching, a concern for basic legal research, a willingness to shoulder the burdens of University and Law School administration, a warm friendship with faculty colleagues both in law and the other disciplines of knowledge. Hugh has a breadth and depth of vision which challenges us all to emulate. Pioneering work in the study and research of the law affecting the mentally ill mark him as a sensitive professional. Not only is he concerned with publishing legal papers, but more importantly he has sought by legal research to improve the hospitalization of the mentally ill and the protection of the personal and property rights of the mentally disabled. Hugh helped to lead our law school's faculty into the undeveloped area of empirical legal research concerning how the law was functioning in the real world. As Research Director of the American Bar Foundation's Project on the Hospitalization and Discharge of Mentally Ill three decades ago, he set the highest standard of professional service for himself, his fellow faculty members and the entire bench and bar. Private practice in Madison, Wisconsin (1950-1953), William S. Cook Research Fellow at the University of Michigan (1953-1954) and an S.J.D. degree from the University of Michigan (1959) authenticate his high competency in legal scholarship founded on legal practice.

Hugh Ross has proved most valuable in the "nuts and bolts" administration of the University and School of Law. As legal counsel for the University (1959-1966), continuous service on the University Faculty Senate and its committees since 1970, Law Faculty Secretary (1974-1989) and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the Law School (1978-1983), he provided skillful attention to detail and thoughtful leadership for academic excellence.

Perhaps the most significant impressions I retain of Hugh Ross as my colleague is his cooperative spirit, his willingness to

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help, his constantly pleasant personality. I never saw or heard Hugh Ross angry — a rare individual in the academic world where injured feelings, academic jealousies and frequent personality clashes are prone to emerge. Hugh Ross never contributed to this more seamy side of the University world.

Our University and Law School are the better for his 37 years of service. My life has been enriched by his friendship. What more is there to say?