HE LAW SCHOOL has finalized agreements with two more exchange programs—one in Israel and another in Germany—bringing the total number of student and faculty exchange program agreements to 12. The most recent partnership is with Bucerius Law School, Germany’s first and leading private law school.

Last fall, the law school signed an agreement with the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel. IDC-Herzliya is one of Washington University’s McDonnell Academy partners and a leading law school in Israel. Both agreements will enable Washington University students to study at the new partner school and respective partner school students to come to Washington University. Faculty exchanges also will occur.

Uriel Reichman, president of IDC-Herzliya, visited the law school during the fall semester to formalize the agreement. He noted that “it is a great honor for IDC to join Washington University as a partner,” and that he looks forward to collaborating with the university at a time when he believes that the legal profession will benefit from increasing interdisciplinary and globalized approaches to legal education.

Dean Kent Syverud noted that the student and faculty exchanges are part of the law school’s “extraordinary array of international assets and programs, including our international LLM program and Transnational Law Program, faculty teaching and scholarly exchanges, student externship and summer abroad programs, and the work of the Whitney R. Harris World Law Institute.”

In addition to Bucerius Law School and IDC-Herzliya, the law school has developed international exchange programs with the University of Trento in Italy, Utrecht University in the Netherlands, National University of Singapore, Hong Kong University, Catholic University of Portugal, Fudan University in China, Queen’s University Belfast in the United Kingdom, National Taiwan University, Korea University, and the University of Queensland in Australia.

Dean Kent Syverud, left, and President Uriel Reichman, IDC-Herzliya

IMAGINE living in a country at the crossroads of the world’s three major religions—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. Now imagine that country is roughly the size of New Jersey. That is Israel’s precarious position—and it’s exactly what inspired Seth Heller, JD ’08, and current associate at Arnold & Porter LLP, to seek a clerkship in Israel’s Supreme Court.

“I was specifically drawn to the Supreme Court of Israel because of the unique conditions there,” says Heller of his recently completed clerkship. “Israel deals with an almost incomprehensible combination of political, legal, and national security issues simply because it is such a small country in such a volatile part of the world.

“Professionally and personally, I thought that gaining an international perspective would be a positive experience for me,” he adds. “I had the opportunity to develop both perspectives through the lens of a clerk on Israel’s Supreme Court.”

Having previously clerked at the federal trial and appellate levels, Heller is no stranger to powerful courts. His first clerkship was with Judge Christine O.C. Miller at the United States Court of Federal Claims. He then worked at a large intellectual property firm in Washington, before clerking for Chief Judge Randall R. Rader on the United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. At the Supreme Court of Israel, his clerkship was with Justice Asher D. Grunis, the new president (chief justice) of the court.

Heller says he was particularly surprised by the sheer volume of cases that come before the Supreme Court of Israel. “The court hears thousands of cases a year, and it is the court of first and last resort for some of the most difficult human rights issues in the world,” he says.

For example, one case concerned families of terror attack victims who were attempting to prevent a deal for the release of a captured Israeli soldier in exchange for hundreds of prisoners. Another addressed a law that denies Palestinian spouses of Israelis an automatic right to live together in Israel.