Giving Back

Through scholarships, many donors choose to give back by helping today’s students make their dreams of law school a reality.

by Jeanne Erdmann

or Harris Cutler, JD ’66, the summer of 1964 marked the beginning of a number of scholarships and honors from the School of Law. The first letter was dated July 10, 1964, from then-Dean Hiram H. Lesar: “It is a real pleasure for me to tell you that the Scholarship Committee has considered your application and has made an award to you in the amount of $675, to be divided equally between the first and second semesters of the school years 1964–65.” Two other letters followed, one presenting him with a $100 award as an Honor Scholar and the other informing Cutler of his nomination for candidacy to the Washington University Law Quarterly.

Described by his classmates as a colleague with an infectious good mood and a caring spirit, Cutler nudged young people toward higher education up until his death on July 30, 2000. Although his physical and cognitive abilities declined over his 10-year struggle with vascular disease, friends say that Cutler’s spirit and sense of humor remained strong and that his desire to help students and to help the University was unswerving.

“Harris would just adopt people. He liked young people, and he loved his school.”

Lee Cutler

among the best years of his life. If somebody said, ‘I would like to look into Washington University,’ he was the first one to say, ‘Maybe I can do something.’ ”

Even today, Cutler continues to assist his alma mater. After his death, many people contacted Lee Cutler to ask what they could do in her husband’s memory to help his ideals live on. The decision: Establish the Harris O. Cutler Endowed Scholarship Fund for law students. Cutler’s immediate family made the initial $5,000 donation; gifts and pledges from others now bring the total to more than $55,000.

“We just knew this would make Harris very happy,” says George Miller, JD ’66, a friend and classmate who spearheaded the effort.

Miller had an opportunity to spend time with Cutler during his illness: “He was still fun to be with. What touched me most was just how Harris dealt with his own difficulties and still kept his personality. To me, he seemed to still enjoy life. A lot of us who face difficulties and handicaps probably could learn a lot from just how Harris dealt with his.”

Like most law students, Cutler needed help in financing his legal education. Law school is academically rigorous; it is
also expensive. Although some students can pay full fare, other students need loans to cover tuition, books, and living expenses. Since not every law student graduates to a job with a six-figure income, scholarships help on many levels. Janet Bolin, the School of Law’s assistant dean for admissions and financial aid, says that scholarships not only help students to minimize expenses, but also are a recruiting tool. While overall reputation plays a pivotal role in selecting a law school, Bolin says a good scholarship package can swing the vote when prospective students are making their decision on which school to attend.

As the years go by, many of these scholarship students—now alumni—look back on their law education with gratitude and decide they want to give something back. Ron Gray, director of development for the School of Law, reports that more than 130 annual and endowed scholarships have been created for law students. Alumni now well established in their careers, Gray finds, frequently want to help younger people have the same kind of opportunities they had.

“I have found that individuals often start with an annual scholarship of $2,500 to benefit a student,” Gray says. “After participating in our annual scholarship dinner, which offers students and donors the opportunity to meet, most donors decide to renew their gift each year and some decide to establish an endowed fund to offer the scholarship in perpetuity.”

Maury Poscover, JD ’69, the keynote speaker at the 2000 Scholars-in-Law dinner, is one of those sponsors who initially funded an annual scholarship and then decided to endow a scholarship in perpetuity. “I think that, over time, you look back on your education and say ‘I enjoy my career and, without having my JD degree, I wouldn’t have had the same career opportunities.’ Alumni look back to where they received that degree,” says Poscover. “When they focus on their student days, they find they would like to help another student.”

This help, provided through the funding of scholarships, can be named for the donor or serve as an opportunity to honor or memorialize others. For example, two scholarships have been established in honor of David Becker, the Joseph H. Zumblen Professor of the Law of Property and a member of the School of Law’s faculty since the early 1960s.

Second-year student Annie Littlefield says that her scholarship, funded by Scott Seitter, JD ’83, and his wife, Barbara, is helping her through her career transition. She was working in Washington, D.C., in the software and telecommunications field when she decided to change careers and attend law school. Littlefield says the scholarship helps with “astronomical” loans and also validated her decision: “The scholarship gave me support and an extra vote of confidence.”

Littlefield, like Poscover, spoke at the November 13, 2000, Scholars-in-Law dinner. This annual celebration, Gray says, is a great place to create connections between students and alumni and to establish memories that may encourage students to become scholarship donors themselves one day. “It is a continuation of individuals being connected to the institution. Whether it is people identifying with Professor David Becker, or with a student, or with our dean’s efforts to advance the School of Law, this is one program that definitely puts a positive face on our efforts,” he says. “In the future, students are likely to remember the individual they had dinner with and who helped support them. And when they are able to do so, I think they will decide to give back in their turn.”

Littlefield says she will “absolutely” give back when she is financially able—just as Harris Cutler did. The letter seeking contributions to the scholarship fund set up in his memory opened with a quotation from singer/songwriter Joan Baez: “You don’t get to choose how you’re going to die, or when. You can only decide how you’re going to live. Now!”

The School of Law’s annual Scholars-in-Law dinner provides an opportunity for donors and students to get to know one another.
Delivered November 13, 2000, at the Scholars-in-Law dinner

Thanksgiving has indeed come a few weeks early to the Washington University School of Law because tonight is truly about giving and gratitude. Although this room is filled with alumni and friends of the School of Law, for the moment I would like to direct my remarks to our student Scholars-in-Law.

You are an exceptionally gifted group of women and men; you may be the most talented in the history of the School. I do know for certain, however, that you bring excitement, energy, and intellect into the building each time you enter and that whenever you join me in the classroom you enrich my day. We are always the better for your presence at the Washington University School of Law.

This is your law school and for nearly everyone it will always be your only law school, so an enlightened comparison becomes near impossible. For me, however, it has been different. I received my JD from one school and served as an instructor at another before I arrived at Washington University close to 40 years ago. And both of these other schools were and are regarded by all polls as at or near the top of the pecking order of law schools. Not long after I arrived I discovered that there was truly a difference, one that surprised me and pleased me.

The Washington University School of Law had real greatness. The commitment to learning within the classroom and beyond it among both teachers and students far surpassed anything I had ever experienced. There was a tradition of excellence rooted in the faculty and promoted by the students, a tradition that carries on today. And there was more: a culture of caring about each other—students, faculty, and staff. It was and has been an extraordinary place. You may not quite understand this yet, so for now I ask that you accept my word.

Nevertheless, there was one thing that I did not immediately and fully appreciate—namely, the alumni. Yet over time I have come to know them, especially since many are now my former students. Look around you tonight, and you will observe the kind of success that casts the bright light of greatness upon our law school and enhances the value of your degree. Look around you, and you will observe many alumni who struggled financially to pay for their education—some who made it with scholarships, some with loans, some with full-time jobs at night, and others with all three. Look around you tonight, and you will also observe loyalty and, above all, generosity—generous people who have lessened your debt load and in many cases made it possible for you to attend law school or experience public service opportunities. Look around you, and you will see people who have made it possible and are making it possible for this School of Law to remain a leader in education for the 21st century.

Finally, please take one more look. The only thing that separates you from them is time, time that is needed to earn your degree and success. In time I ask you to remember these people here tonight. When your educational debt is paid and when you have climbed your professional mountain, I ask you to remember and to support a new generation with Scholarships in Law and Public Service Fellowships. I ask you to do this, and I am confident that you will because I know—that you “care” greatly about others just the same as our distinguished alumni who precede you.

I have been reminded that these closing remarks must be brief, but forgive me because I must add one more note, something quite personal. I first came to this dinner seven years ago as a donor because I wanted to honor the memory of first my father and then my parents with a scholarship. Tonight, however, also represents an evening of profound gratitude—gratitude specifically to James Palenchar and Liz Lynner for the scholarship they created in my name several years ago, gratitude for their friendship and for their presence here tonight. I am also deeply indebted to Mark McCareins, a dear friend—also here tonight—who has within the last year led the alumni of Chicago in endowing a scholarship in my name as well. Mark, Jim, Liz, what can I say? Thank goodness these are not memorial scholarships because I hope not to expire and do not intend to retire. So what can I say to express the full measure of my appreciation? I dearly love this School and the people who have been my students and who are my students. They have made my life full and joyful. No honor—none whatsoever—could ever mean more than the one you have bestowed. You have granted a gift to a place and for a purpose that mean everything to me. You have granted a gift that should never stop giving, and for that I thank you from the bottom of my heart.
A History of Giving: The School of Law's Endowed Scholarships

1919
Henry Semple Ames (LLB 1888) Fellowship
*Endowed by Lucy V. Semple Ames*

1938
Christian Peper Memorial Fund
*Endowed by Estelle Peper Barlow Conzelman*

1948
Finkelnburg Scholarship
*Endowed by Emma Jorgensen Wernse*

1951
Henry H. Furth (LLB 1899) Scholarship
*Endowed by Family & Friends of Henry H. Furth*

1961
Charles Wendell Carnahan Scholarship
*Endowed by Family & Friends of Charles Wendell Carnahan*

1965
John S. Marsalek (JD 1911) & George Woodruff Marsalek (LLB 1936) Scholarship
*Endowed by Family & Friends of George Woodruff Marsalek & John S. Marsalek*
Tyrrell Williams (LLB 1900) Memorial Scholarship
*Endowed by Zoe Harrison Williams*

1971
Erna Arndt Scholarship
*Endowed by Friends of Erna Arndt*
Rubey M. Hulen Memorial Scholarship
*Endowed by Anna Hulen*

1973
William R. Bascom Scholarship
*Endowed by the McDonnell Foundation & Others*

1975
Ethan A.H. Shepley (LLB 1922) Scholarship
*Endowed by Anheuser-Busch & Friends of Ethan A.H. Shepley*

1979
Meyer Kranzberg (JD 1926) Scholarship
*Endowed by Marcelle, Ken, & Nancy Kranzberg*

1980
Bryan Cave LLP Scholarship Fund
*Endowed by Bryan Cave LLP*
William E. Fisse (LLB 1878), Frank H. Fisse (LLB 1911), & Edna Fisse (MA 1924) Scholarships
*Endowed by Edna Fisse*

1981
Sam Elson (JD 1930) Memorial Scholarship
*Endowed by Sol Elson (JD 1938)*
Abraham E. Margolin (JD 1929) Scholarship
*Endowed by Abraham E. Margolin*

1982
W.L. Hadley Griffin (LLB 1947) Scholarships
*Endowed by W.L. Hadley Griffin*
Albert J. O’Brien Scholarship
*Endowed by Denis J. O’Brien (JD 1966)*

1984
Cyrus P. & Jeannie Austin Memorial Scholarship
*Endowed by C. Henry Austin (JD 1923)*
G. Duncan Bauman (LLB 1948) Scholarship
*Endowed by Friends of G. Duncan Bauman*
Frederick W. Lehmann, Jr. (LLB 1907) Memorial Scholarship
*Endowed by Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.*

1985
Frederick A. Eppenberger (LLB 1928) Scholarship
*Endowed by Husch & Eppenberger LLC*
Jerome A. Gross (JD 1931) Scholarship Fund
*Endowed by Jerome A. Gross*
Thomas J. Guilfoil (JD 1941) Scholarship
*Endowed by Friends of Thomas J. Guilfoil*

1986
David Baron (JD 1916) Scholarship
*Endowed by David Baron*
William McChesney Martin (LLB 1900) Scholarship
*Endowed by Malcolm W. Martin*

1987
Herman A. Goralnik (JD 1935) Scholarship
*Endowed by Jack Goralnik, Charles Goralnik, & Diane Goralnik Weinstock*
Daniel D. Weiner (JD 1956) Scholarship  
Endowed by Daniel D. Weiner

1989  
Gladys Stamm Boester (JD 1931) Scholarship  
Endowed by Gladys Stamm Boester

Gustavus A. Buder & Gustavus A. Buder, Jr. Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed Anonymously

Robert H. McRoberts (AB 1917, JD 1919) Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Bryan, Cave, McPheeters & McRoberts & Friends

1991  
Shepard Barclay Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Edward Mallinckrodt, Jr.

Kent Koerner (LLB 1898) Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Zoe Harrison Williams

Joseph H. Zumbalen (LLM 1887) Student Aid Fund  
Endowed by Joseph H. Zumbalen

1992  
Gary I. Boren Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Friends of Gary I. Boren

1993  
Judge Marion T. Bennett (JD 1938) Scholarship  
Endowed by Judge Marion T. Bennett

Paul A. Freund (AB 1928) Scholarships  
Endowed by Paul A. Freund

William George Vogt (JD 1934) Scholarship  
Endowed by William George Vogt

1994  
Warren D. Flackbert (JD 1952) Scholarships  
Endowed by Warren D. Flackbert

Ralph W. Shetterly (LLB 1929) Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Grace Ruth McGilvray

1995  
Ronald J. (JD 1927) & Maxine B. Foulis Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Saralée E. Irwin & Ronald J. Foulis, Jr.

Janite Lee Scholarships  
Endowed by Janite Lee

The Proost Family Scholarship  
Endowed by Robert L. Proost (JD 1962) & Mary Jo Proost

1996  
Sol Elson (JD 1938) Scholarship  
Endowed by Sol Elson

George A. & Martha Jensen Scholarship  
Endowed by George A. & Martha Jensen

Lucy & Stanley Lopata (AB 1935) Scholarship  
Endowed by Lucy & Stanley Lopata

Charles Alan Seigel (JD 1959) Scholarship  
Endowed by the Illinois Distributing Company

1997  
Joseph (JD 1930) & Marie Chused Scholarship  
Endowed by Joseph & Marie Chused

Dunbar Family Scholarship  
Endowed by Georgia Dunbar Van Cleve (AB 1951) & William M. Van Cleve (JD 1953)

Judge Joseph H. Goldenhersh (LLB 1935) Scholarship  
Endowed by Maxine H. Goldenhersh & Friends

William A. Sippy (JD 1949) Scholarship  
Endowed by William A. Sippy

1998  
Norris H. Allen (JD 1925) Scholarship  
Endowed by Dorothea Hedges Allen

Francis M. Barnes III (JD 1948) Scholarship  
Endowed by the Clifford Gaylord Foundation

Clay & Mildred Cox Scholarship  
Endowed by the Clark Cox Trust

Dorsey D. Ellis, Jr., Scholarship  
Endowed by Family & Friends of Dorsey D. Ellis, Jr.

Jane & Whitney Harris Scholarship  
Endowed by Jane & Whitney Harris

Jordan Charitable Foundation Scholarship  
Endowed by the Jordan Charitable Foundation

Delmar (JD 1953) & Betty Koebel Scholarship  
Endowed by Delmar Koebel

W.C. (JD 1937, AB 1938) & F.A. Schade Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by W.C. & F.A. Schade

1999  
Henry H. Oberschelp Memorial Scholarship  
Endowed by Vera Oberschelp Howes (AB 1924)

2000  
Professor David M. Becker Scholarship  
Endowed by Chicago Law Alumni

The Honorable William Holmes Cook (JD 1947) Scholarship  
Endowed by the Honorable William Holmes Cook

Class of 1959 Scholarship  
Endowed by the Class of 1959

Harris O. Cutler (JD 1966) Scholarship  
Endowed by Family & Friends of Harris O. Cutler

Margaret C. Shiozawa (JD 1943) Scholarship  
Endowed by Family & Friends of Margaret C. Shiozawa

2001  
Edward B. Greensfelder (JD 1928) Scholarship  
Endowed by Greensfelder Hemker & Gale, PC