

WILLIAM HOYE  
2013 DUKE LAW SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP REMARKS

Good afternoon. I'm Bill Hoyer and I'm pleased to open the program for the 2013 Scholarship Luncheon. I'm responsible for admissions, financial aid, and student affairs at the Law School. With all due respect to Dean Levi (who you will hear from in just a moment), my colleagues in the administration, and members of our faculty, I believe that I have just about the best job at the Law School, and I'd like to tell you why.

Every fall semester, I travel widely across the country to speak with top college students and working professionals who are considering law school. We talk about Duke: the extraordinary faculty and an academic community that is ambitious, forward-thinking, and innovative. We talk about a school that aims to develop highly skilled lawyers who possess strong leadership skills, the ability to adapt to unanticipated circumstances, and who know how to bring out the best in others.

We then return to campus to work with prospective applicants who travel to Durham – they know that there is no substitute for visiting Duke's extraordinary campus, seeing the Law School's impressive physical space, and feeling for themselves the community's intellectual firepower. We work to construct a visit that clearly demonstrates to each prospective student the benefits that flow from a Duke Law education – not only to them personally, but also to the legal profession, and to the greater society.

Then the really challenging work begins – reading and assessing the application materials of those who compete for an opportunity to study at Duke, and often conducting in-person interviews with candidates. The good news is that so many of the nation's best college graduates want to come to Duke Law School. And while applications to law schools are down over 20% nationally, we have experienced no such decline at Duke. Our selection process this year will

remain just as competitive as ever as we have received 25 applications for each available seat in the class.

Give this volume, the assessment process is necessarily complex. We strive to make sound judgments about which candidates are especially prepared to take full advantage of the opportunities that exist here – who possess the qualities of mind and character that will sustain the tradition of excellence that Duke Law has built for all these many years and who have the necessary personal qualities that will lead to success in the legal profession.

So that is a big part of the job and it is a tremendous privilege to be a part of bringing such tremendous talent to Duke. The law school dean of admission is sometimes called one of the gatekeepers of the profession. While it is true that I may be in a position to help open the gate for some extraordinary students, it is also true that the gate can swing shut very quickly for those who are unable to meet the high cost of a legal education.

Indeed, the potential for incurring a high level of debt exercises a strong influence on students who are selecting a law school. It can also tremendously influence their career and life choices after graduation.

Today you are meeting some of Duke Law's most talented and accomplished students. The students who are here today were able to come to Duke because of the support of alumni and friends of the school. In many cases, these scholarships were the deciding factor for these students when they were selecting a law school.

Your support has enabled us to build a student body that is extraordinarily talented and also quite diverse. This year, for example, the entering class included graduates of over 100 undergraduate colleges and universities from around the country and the world. Their most recent homes were in eight foreign countries and 42 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Many of our law students studied at Duke as undergraduates but we also have a

significant number of students who attended college just down the road at the University of North Carolina. (They receive an especially warm welcome to their new home at Duke.)

Many of the students who are supported through scholarships have had remarkable and varied experiences before starting law school that help to enrich our academic community. For instance, one of our students, prior to enrolling at Duke, worked for several years at the State Department, serving as the Iraq Grants Specialist, helping to oversee the implementation of democracy and governance foreign assistance programs in Iraq. Another served on the staff of the Congressional Oversight Panel, charged with reviewing the Treasury Department's management of TARP.

One of our current students received the Bronze Star while serving as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and was a guest at the White House in recognition of his service.

A number of students pursued graduate education before coming to law school. Several hold Ph.D.'s, and a few hold U.S. Patents for their scientific innovations. Another is certified by the U.S. Nuclear Reactor Regulatory Commission to operate a nuclear reactor.

Many of our current students have pursued successful professional careers serving as consultants, bankers, and accountants, and patent agents.

And, of course, many of our students had impressive community service records before coming to law school, many serving in Teach For America and other national service organizations. One student, after completing college, traveled to a small village in Senegal that had no running water – just a hand-dug well that collapsed regularly. Due to the scarcity of water, residents were often forced to take water from the Gambian River, an unsafe source. In fact, five children in the village had died from water-borne illnesses the previous year. Using a small amount of money from her own savings, our student paid for supplies and the services of an engineer to establish a reliable well in the village – and she developed a plan that included

everyone's efforts. Some villagers collected sand needed to combine with the concrete; others helped with the digging. The well was finished just a few months after her arrival – a good example of how thoughtful and focused action on the part of Duke Law students can profoundly affect the lives of others.

I trust that the conversations today at your tables have revealed the amazing talents and experiences of our students. A high-quality student body really matters to Duke. It helps us to attract top faculty, elevates the quality of our academic discourse, challenges all of our students to excel, and builds an unsurpassed reputation in the practicing bar.

The students who receive the scholarships you support will always know your names, will always list you on their resumes, and will always feel a connection and deep gratitude for your role in launching their careers. Given all that these students are likely to accomplish and what they have accomplished already, that connection is powerful indeed.

I am proud of our students. And I am deeply grateful to you for your commitment, for your generosity, and for your faith in these remarkable students.

Thank you.

William Hoye  
March 8, 2013