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Gary Vance Schaber

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Gary Vance Schaber

On September 1, 1981, the McGeorge community was shocked to learn of the untimely death of Gary V. Schaber, Associate Dean for Administration. The announcement of his death by Dean Gordon Schaber stunned all of us. We had lost a valuable colleague who contributed so much of himself to our school, but more importantly, a good and dear friend.

Gary served the School of Law for twenty-five years. His commitment and dedication to the school, students, faculty and staff, was exceptional. In 1970, at a critical juncture in the growth of a developing law school, he made a personal decision which redounded to the benefit of the law school a thousand-fold. Resigning from his secure position as United States Commissioner for the Eastern District of California, a position he filled with great distinction for seven years, he devoted his energies full time to the building of a truly national law school.

At the time Gary assumed full-time duties at the law school, the campus consisted of one building on a corner lot in a residential area of the city. With his good friend Sooky Lee, A.I.A., Gary conceived, directed, and presided over the development of the current seventeen acre, forty-eight building, campus of McGeorge School of Law.

A ten-year master plan for campus maturation was adopted in 1970, shortly after Gary resigned as a United States Commissioner. Due primarily to his foresight, the construction of the campus has produced a functional living and learning environment unique to American legal education. With the opening of the Center for Advanced Study of Law and Policy in 1979, the ten year master plan was completed—an entire year ahead of schedule. Perhaps his greatest design achievement has yet to be completed. The new lecture and seminar hall is one of the most impressive teaching facilities on the campus. Gary's design talent, and creative sensitivities could have no finer memorial.

Gary's innovations have received the praise of national figures in legal education. The ambience and functional utility of the educational facilities have been admired and emulated.

Gary's foresight in integrating the latest electronic technology has made the McGeorge School of Law into a computer-age legal education leader. Because of his intense desire to build a high quality na-

tional law school, McGeorge students—present and future—will be better lawyers.

What is not apparent to many, but is of equal if not greater importance to the development of the law school, was Gary's commitment to the individual student. He wanted each one to be a part of an educational experience that would receive national prominence.

I was privileged to work closely with him during the past eight years in my capacity as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. We shared a close, harmonious professional and personal relationship. He knew that the development of the law school rested primarily with the quality of the academic program. Not once in eight years as an administrative colleague did Gary deny a request for funds to improve the quality of legal education at McGeorge. His support for the academic program was without reservation. Perhaps this marks the measure of the man when one considers the traditional conflict in academe between academic programs and a balanced budget. Such conflict did not exist with Gary Schaber.

A part of Gary's responsibility as Associate Dean involved the supervision of the student financial aid program. For a private educational institution, the importance of a supportive financial aid program is obvious. Thousands of current and former students will appreciate the depth of interest and concern Gary devoted to student financial assistance. He genuinely believed that no student should be denied a legal education or terminate his or her law studies because of lack of financial support. Further, he believed that a student should not be distracted from study of law because of financial insufficiency. On one occasion, a student came to see Gary about his inability to pay a past due account. During the course of the conversation, Gary learned that the student had applied for a loan, the proceeds of which had not yet arrived and that the student, being broke, had not been able to eat for several days. Gary gave the student his personal check for a hundred dollars and told him to get something to eat, go back to his studies, and settle his account when the funds arrived. The student, who now practices law, maintains that had it not been for Gary he probably would have had to drop out of school.

We shall miss Gary Schaber. In particular, we miss his devotion and dedication to excellence; his ideas; his creative instincts and design talents. An institution consists of more than bricks and mortar. People make the institution, and all the people in the McGeorge community miss our dear friend and colleague deeply. His spirit, sense of humor, and great compassion were a great building block. We can be what we

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are because he was with us, his spirit lives on. *Requiescas in pace*, my friend.

John E. Ryan
Professor of Law

