

GARY ROBERTS: AN APPRECIATION

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INTRODUCTION

I was privileged to have served under Gary Roberts as his Vice Dean during most of the years of his deanship.

This was a period marked by significant changes in the law school. In part, these changes were fortuitous. For example, the faculty's composition changed radically in part due a tragic death and to many retirements and replacements (ultimately including my own). Its composition changed as well through Gary's leadership in expanding its size and in appointing many new and dynamic scholars. It was also through Gary's leadership that other significant changes occurred. The faculty adopted a strategic plan he initially drafted. At his urging, academic policies and procedures—particularly those governing examinations and grading—were re-examined and reformed. Academic programs and faculty research became better supported. The school's administration was reformed and strengthened. In particular, student affairs, external affairs, admissions and institutional development were greatly improved.

On all these counts, Gary's was a successful deanship. But it was more than this, as it not only changed but transformed the law school. He came to the school with a clearly stated diagnosis of the most significant challenge facing it. The school was doing a very good job of educating lawyers and had a solid academic reputation. It was enviably located in a thriving urban environment with immediate access to the courts and to the offices of federal and state government. Yet, the school was starved of the financial resources it needed to fulfill its great potential. Gary backed this diagnosis with grim statistics demonstrating that the school was greatly underfunded relative to both all other "Big Ten" law schools and, on an expenditure per student basis, relative to most law schools in the country. The solution was obviously to greatly increase financial resources.

I. STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING FINANCIAL RESOURCES

There were three strategies for pursuing this solution. First, tuition could be raised. Gary did this, judiciously and reluctantly. It was, however, becoming increasingly clear that students could not sustain the student debt burden created by excessive tuition increases, so moderation was required, and tuition was not a panacea.

Second, overhead costs could be reduced, freeing resources for the school. Gary pursued an intense and ultimately successful campaign to reform the university's formulae for calculating overhead charges, reducing them significantly for the law school.

The third strategy is that for which Gary's leadership will no doubt be most remembered: increasing philanthropic support for the school. He pursued this

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with imagination, with great energy, and through an exhausting schedule of meetings, visits, conversations, luncheons, and dinners with alumni and others throughout the state of Indiana and, indeed, across the nation. At these he would with great persuasive force argue the case for the school. I observed these efforts, and was and remain enormously impressed by Gary's stamina, his intense devotion to the school's cause, and his ability to instill a significant measure of devotion in persons outside the walls of Inlow Hall.

II. RESULTS

The efforts paid off. Alumni giving increased and a number of significant major gifts were made. The greatest success, of course, was the extraordinary naming gift made by Robert H. McKinney, transforming the school through support of student scholarships and faculty chairs, rendering it the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law.

I would be remiss, however, if I did not point out a further aspect of Gary's efforts, in part related to fundraising but also independently significant and largely pursued for independent reasons. Gary recognized, and never tired of reminding others, that the school has produced over its history an extraordinary number of political, judicial, business, and civic leaders both within Indiana and throughout the nation. This implied not only that the school was worthy of support, but also that these leaders, and, indeed, alumni generally, should be made a greater part of the life of the law school. Gary urged alumni to reconnect with the school, to participate in its programs and activities, and to become involved with its faculty and students. This, I believe, greatly strengthened the school, quite apart from the generous financial support offered by the alumni.

A further aspect of Gary's efforts, also of largely independent significance, was a general enhancement of the school's profile. It became better recognized and its reputation for excellence better acknowledged nationally through the publications of its enhanced external affairs office (which publications garnered several national awards), through Gary's presence and advocacy in national forums, and, with Gary's support, through faculty presentations and participation in national academic conferences and meetings. The school became better known and appreciated within the Indiana and Indianapolis communities through Gary's acceptance of leadership positions in civic organizations, his constant advocacy for the school, and his support of faculty initiatives connecting the school with local institutions.

CONCLUSION

In short, Gary Roberts, as dean, had a profoundly favorable impact on the law school. As the school now faces new challenges arising from a national decline in demand for legal education, it is a matter to be regretted that Indiana University's age limit for senior administrators compelled Gary to step down from the deanship. His leadership in a difficult time would have been invaluable. He is, however, an accomplished teacher and scholar, a very prominent figure in the field of sports law, and a continuing source of advice and counsel. He will no doubt continue to contribute greatly in his role as a member of the faculty.