

SECTION III
COMMENCEMENT/HOODING

COMMENCEMENT SPEECH – LSU – SUMMER 1988

It has been my experience that commencement speeches are usually prospective with a twinge of nostalgia thrown in. Nostalgically, the speaker reminds the graduates of the hard work and good times coming to a close. Prospectively, the orator states the challenges facing the graduates in the “real” world they are about to enter and confidently asserts his or her faith in their ability to meet those challenges. Although I do not always consider myself a conformist, I have no intention of making any waves today and so will follow the tried and true formula just outlined. So, first the retrospection.

There is no need to remind you of the hard work you’ve been through. Anyone graduating from law school has probably spent three years working harder than they have ever worked before in their lives. Anyone who’s been through law school at LSU today has probably worked harder than anyone at any other law school I know of in the U.S.A. But you sixteen (or so) have been through even more: going to school, taking classes, studying for those classes (I assume), studying for the bar, and taking the bar all in one summer. What you did was a Herculean task, and I’m sure you’ll all look back on this summer and wonder how you did it. It probably made the spring of your first year seem like a walk in the park. In fact, I’m impressed you’re all upright and not asleep yet.

Give me five minutes. Congratulations, because if you can do what you did this summer, you can do anything.

Speaking of doing anything—that’s my transition from nostalgia to the future—I started out by making a list of all the challenges facing new lawyers today, and when I got to the third page, I knew why I decided to go into teaching and leave the practice of law. Then I took another track and decided to be practical. But what could I say that was practical and not mundane? And what could I say that was practical and would interest your non-lawyer family and friends in the audience? Finally, I hit on it, and it comes right out of Shakespeare, which lends an aire of academe. In Act IV, Scene 2 of Henry VI, Part 2, Shakespeare paints a picture of what seems to be a riotous rebellion. Amidst all the discontent, one of the characters, Dick the Butcher, shouts out, “The first thing we do, let’s kill all the Lawyers.” Well, if you’re not a lawyer and you read that you might think it’s funny. You might think it’s still apropos, or if you’re really an aggressive reader, you might say, “Yeah, get all those so-and-so’s,” with as much feeling as you put into rooting against Alabama; forgetting for the moment that your wife, husband, daughter, son, relative, or friend is now a lawyer. But if you’re a lawyer, as I am and as these sixteen graduates are, when you read that play your collar starts to tighten and your hands get a little clammy. You start to wonder what it is you’ve done and look around for

the fastest way out of whatever room you're in. So that's what I thought I'd talk a little bit about this morning. How did you, as a lawyer, get to be in a position where the greatest playwright of all times calls for your head? And, more importantly, how can you avoid a twentieth or twenty-first century repeat of that scene from Henry VI, Part 2 in your reception rooms?

Let's start with the first question. How did you get to the point that somebody wants to do you in even before you've tried a case? Who can you blame? The first place you might look, as I'm sure you've done before, with a disdainful gaze is us, your professors. Did we do something to you? I still remember my law school orientation. It was held in the school chapel of the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington, and one of the speakers talked about the Socratic Method and how law school would change us all and especially the way that we thought. To be honest, I felt a little threatened by that. First of all, I was not so sure law school was for me. I was only there because I had not yet written a great novel, probably would never throw a no-hitter in the World Series, and could not play guitar well enough to be a rock star. I needed a profession, and since my father was a lawyer who loved his work, I thought I'd try this one. Second, although cognizant of a few minor faults, I sort of liked myself the way I was. I had a girlfriend who I was fairly fond of; I liked to read; and I loved baseball. I wasn't so sure I wanted someone messing with my mind. But with all that talk about changing my life and all those eager faces staring up at the speaker, I decided then and there that if anyone started chanting, I was going to get up and go. I was immediately reminded of Franz Kafka's grossly vivid novella *Metamorphosis* where the protagonist, a young man named Gregor, wakes up to find he has changed from a human into a giant cockroach and his family is disgusted by him. Could law school do that to me? I looked to make sure I still only had two arms and two legs. I touched my head to see if feelers had grown yet. No—but I was already losing more hair.

Well, although the chanting never did begin and I never sprang wings, I had no doubt then, and am absolutely sure now, that a not-too-subtle bit of brainwashing was going on. The moniker for this brainwashing was teaching my classmates and me to “think like lawyers.” Any of you who remember the movie or television show “Paper Chase” no doubt recall John Houseman as the stuffy Professor Kingsfield, who not so charitably and very often told his students that their minds were like mush and it was his job to shape them and train them no matter how painful the process. All this was part of learning to think like a lawyer. Or, as the legal philosopher Karl Llewellyn facetiously told the first year law class at Columbia Law School in 1929 about their forthcoming freshman year of law school:

The first year aims to drill into you the more essential techniques of handling cases. It lays a foundation

simultaneously for law school and law practice. It aims, in the old phrase, to get you to “thinking like a lawyer.” The hardest job of the first year is to lop off your common sense, to knock your ethics into temporary anesthesia. Your view of social policy, your sense of justice—to knock these out of you along with woozy thinking, along with ideas all fuzzed around their edges. You are to acquire ability to think precisely, to analyze coldly, to work within a body of materials that is given, to see, and see only, and manipulate the machinery of the law. It is not easy thus to turn human beings into lawyers.¹

Perhaps then we’ve found part of the reason why Shakespeare wanted to kill all the lawyers. Is it really a profession with no sense of right or wrong and no idea of humane conduct, but only the cold, cool logic of the uncaring technician? And is it legal education? Have we really spent the last three years trying to lop off your common sense, to stymie your sense of justice, and to desensitize your values? If we have, then let’s change Shakespeare’s quote to “kill all the law professors,” and none of us could object but only go to the gallows shamefully hanging our heads. At least that would save all of you. Maybe only to save my own skin and the skin of those who might give me tenure in the not-too-distant future, I must protest. We haven’t been trying to do those things to you; but we definitely have been trying to teach you to work within the logical framework of the law, to be precise, to realize that in this business it’s not enough to say a result is justified because it’s fair or unjustified because it’s not fair. We’ve tried to teach you to play by the system’s rules. But legal education, like any field of specialized study, has a narrowing effect—it puts blinders on you. And it’s those blinders that contribute to the way Shakespeare looked at us. What do those blinders lead to? Conceivably, they tend to make some lawyers believe that either there are no values behind legal rules or, instead, that their own values, their own sense of fairness and justice is second rate or unimportant. This, in turn, might lead to a very intense and negativistic form of cynicism about all people and institutions. Concomitantly, the disenchanted lawyer begins to view everyone else’s values as his or her own—either nonexistent or suspect. When this happens, the lawyer begins to lose self-respect and respect for his or her clients and former friends. Former, because with an attitude like that, there can be no true current friends. With such a cynical negative attitude, the lawyer begins to treat clients, colleagues, and acquaintances with disdain. He or she becomes hyper-critical. In practicing his or her profession with bankrupt values, the lawyer becomes a mere wordsmith who achieves results not because of some primary belief that they are

¹ K. N. LLEWELLYN, *THE BRAMBLE BUSH* 101 (Oceana Publications 1951).

right—either for the particular case or because of some broader systematic goal—but because he or she is being paid to achieve those results, and the lawyer is able to manipulate the strict words of the law to justify that result. Given that sad state of affairs, it is not hard to imagine how society as a whole might view lawyers and the law. Society might believe that the law is too technical; that lawyers are cold, greedy manipulators of arcane terms and concepts; and that the law and lawyers should generally be avoided but when absolutely needed are testy and inaccessible. If the above described scenario is not too far-fetched, it's easy to see why Shakespeare had the view of lawyers that he did. And it has not gotten much better over the years. Dickens called the law an ass in *Oliver Twist* and broadsided both the law and lawyers in *Bleak House*. Tolstoy paints the picture of a greedy, mocking lawyer in *Anna Karenina*. In his *Utopia*, Sir Thomas More, the man for all seasons said, "They have no lawyers among them for they consider them as a sort of people whose profession it is to disguise matters." Keats said, "I think we may class the lawyer in the natural history of monsters," and "L.A. Law" does not generally depict an image of our profession or our legal system that we would model ourselves after if we had the choice. Of course, there are literary exceptions like Atticus Finch and Perry Mason but, on the whole, we've got a pretty rotten image. How then can you help yourselves? What can you do to make yourselves an exception to the rule when and if Congress passes a statute based on Shakespeare's quote and makes practicing law a capital offense?

Let me return to Llewellyn for an initial observation. You'll recall the last sentence of the quote that I read to you: "It is not easy thus to turn human beings into lawyers." No it is not. But I submit to you—and I think Llewellyn would agree—that as difficult as it is, we, as law professors, might be too good at it. Perhaps when we have finished our intellectual sculpting, we sometimes forget that the job is not done. We leave the rest of the job to you but neglect to inform you of its importance. What, then, remains to be done? The most important thing of all is to turn you lawyers back into human beings. That is the job that now falls squarely on your shoulders. Let me continue with the passage from Llewellyn. After he says that it's hard to turn humans into lawyers, he continues:

Neither is it safe. For a mere legal machine is a social danger. Indeed, a mere legal machine is not even a good lawyer. It lacks insight and judgment. It lacks the power to draw into hunching that body of intangibles that lie in social experience. None the less, it is an almost impossible process to achieve the technique without sacrificing some humanity first. Hence, as rapidly as we may, we shall first cut under all attributes of homo, though the sapiens we shall

then duly endeavor to develop will, we hope, regain
the homo.²

If you succeed, you will be a better, more well-adjusted lawyer. If you fail, I have no doubt that your life either will, or should be, miserable. If you fail, you deserve the full force of Shakespeare's scorn.

From today forward you must make every effort to broaden your perspective. You must learn to live your life again. Throw off the blinders we have forced you to wear. You must learn to view legal issues both in the particular context in which they arise and from a broader societal perspective. Recall your sense of justice. The law exists for a much nobler purpose than insuring that you and I are employed. It exists to order our entire society. In order to keep the law responsive and acceptable to the nation, it means you, as lawyers, must be responsive to the people and values that make up that society. Thus, in thinking like lawyers, you must never forget to think like human beings, like the same people who came here three years ago. What can you do on a day-to-day level? Many things, but I have only the time or vision to mention a few.

Never forget to treat your clients like human beings. To you, their dealings with you are a routine fact of professional life. For many of them, dealing with a lawyer is one of the most threatening, traumatic experiences of their life. As one ancient Chinese proverb provides, "It is better to enter the mouth of a tiger than a court of law." Soften the blow for them; try to think how they must feel; place yourself in their shoes; explain to them both what you are doing and what they can expect from their adversaries. Hold their hand a little—they're paying for it. There will be times when even Job would strangle them, but you must demand more of yourself.

In this same vein, for the last three years most of what you have studied and heard about involves litigation or avoiding litigation. As a lawyer, it has no doubt become second nature for you to think that the most common way to solve any problem is to sue. But again, think of your clients. Is the tension and humiliation of trial always, or even usually, the best way? Only recently have we in America begun to examine less adversarial methods of settling disputes, such as final offer arbitration, mini-trials, and mediation. These are resolution mechanisms that may seem strange to us as lawyers but will be more natural for our clients. To save your skin, I suggest that you learn about these methods and use them. Otherwise your clients and neighbors will rightly look upon you and your profession as a bunch of troublemakers who rile up people and aggravate disputes.

² *Id.*

The subject of modern alternatives and change has substantive as well as procedural implications. You, as living lawyers, have a responsibility to the law. You have a responsibility to yourselves and the system to see that its development and content is fair and rational. You will not always succeed, but you must try. Why is this responsibility important? Because if you ignore it, the law will become piecemeal, overly technical, and difficult to understand. In short: lawyer's law. Can it get worse? As hard as it is to imagine, I'm sure that the answer is yes. What causes tension here? Isn't rational law just common sense? As you grow more experienced, you will become more efficient at doing things a certain way. You will have forms that only require you to fill in appropriate blanks. You will have non-lawyer assistants who can profitably do a lot of work for you. A change, even a good one, will, at least temporarily, reduce your profits. You will have to reinvent the wheel. At worst, it will put new lawyers fresh out of law school, who have learned new ways, at a practical advantage. From the perspective of your pocketbook, change would be bad. You must fight against that economic pressure. Look beyond your own world. Never be afraid to reexamine the law or its procedures.

Your own pocketbook will not be the only pressure you feel where substantive law is involved. Your clients will apply great pressure as well. Our legislative process is becoming more and more a jockeying for position and preference amongst special interest groups. You, as lawyers, must strive to look beyond the immediate impact on your clients of proposed laws and procedures. Examine them in light of what groups are behind them and what they propose to do. Analyze change, then, not in terms of whether your clients back it, but look at what effect it will have on the legal system. If you fail to make that effort, you will justly have earned the reputation of a "hired gun."

I would like to turn now to one final, but critical, reason why people think poorly of lawyers and what you might do about it. Ask ten people what the problem with lawyers is, and I bet at least seven of them would say they charge too much. It is my impression that this perception has led to a general feeling that lawyers are a greedy lot. Terms used to refer to lawyers—such as shysters—reinforce this feeling. What can you do to save yourself from this charge when the hangman comes looking for you? Most notably, you can charge less. Charge based on what your services are worth, not based on the size of the client or its worth. Just as importantly, recall that once you pass the bar you are part of an oligopoly. No one who is not licensed, as you will be, can compete with you. As such, it seems to me that you have an obligation to the society that grants you this competitive advantage. Pro bono legal service is something that you must do. There are many ways to satisfy this very weighty obligation. You could provide free legal services to your church, to youth groups, or to other community groups. Or you could choose, as

many lawyers in my firm did, to donate some portion of your work time to those who could not otherwise afford to pay for legal services. Agencies like Legal Aid and The Legal Services Corporation cannot do the job alone. They are understaffed and overworked. Private help is needed. The high cost of legal services is a problem you will all soon be partially responsible for. You cannot ignore it. As one of my professors once told me, this (lawyering) is a profession where you can do some good and still make buckets of money. Encourage your firms to require and reward pro bono service. Make them give some of what society has given to them back.

So where are we? I believe if you have the common decency and patience to take these simple measures, you will move a long way towards being better lawyers, and only because you will be lawyers who have retained or developed some of the qualities that make you, first and foremost, a human being. I believe that if you can succeed at that, you can avoid ever having anyone justifiably call for your skin. But the road will not be free of trouble. There will be tension at every turn, tension to give in to the greed that is unfortunately in all our hearts. Tension to think only of yourself and not of the system you represent. Tension to give in and be what your critics claim you are. If I can quote Llewellyn once again,

The unpopularity of our profession, the accusations against it, must not and cannot be permitted to hide its finer service from our eyes. We, and no others, carry the burden of making the law worth having—over the long run, and from day to day. I see so clearly the responsibility. But I see also very clearly the ease with which it can be shunted, and shunted, even in all ignorance of the shunting. I see so clearly this two-edged ethic, the balm and smugness which it baits invertebrates among us. The pressure to let the burden slide will fall so soon on you. As things stand, it is a pressure well-nigh irresistible. There will be few whose eyes it does not close. There will be very few of you who will resist it. But twenty years from now it will give pleasure, it will give foolish pride, it will give honor, to meet those few and take them by the hand.³

I hope then that in twenty years, when we meet, I can say that in this sixteen, Llewellyn's few became the many and each and every one of you developed and maintained a progressive and responsive philosophy of both law and life. Then

³ *Id.* at 150-51.

when someone shouts “Kill All The Lawyers” in your presence, perhaps they will be loudly shouted down.

COLLEGE OF LAW HOODING CEREMONY – MAY 13, 1999
(WITH REAL AUTHOR CREDIT TO MARY ANN JAMES)

Welcome

Ladies and gentlemen, please be seated. Good evening. I'm Tom Galligan, Dean of the University of Tennessee College of Law; and on behalf of our students, faculty and staff, I welcome you to our annual Hooding Ceremony—the most important academic event of the year. This evening we will celebrate with you, our graduates and your families and friends, the successful completion of your academic training at the College of Law and congratulate you as you move on to the next stages of your professional careers.

As you all know, tonight's event is a ceremony. Now, the dictionary says that a ceremony is a "formal act or series of acts prescribed by ritual, protocol, or convention." The dictionary's definition of "ceremony" has a connotation about it that makes a ceremony sound somehow like merely going through some set of pre-ordained motions. In fact, one of the alternative definitions of "ceremony" in the dictionary I used makes it sound even worse. It says a ceremony is "an action performed only formally with no deep significance." Ugh!

Well, let me ask all of you who came here tonight with those "going through the motions" definitions of ceremony in your heads to please get rid of them.

Our hooding ceremony tonight is a ritual of sorts, but it is a ritual in which I hope you will all meaningfully participate, whether directly or vicariously. It is a chance for all of us to pause and consider the great accomplishment of those who will be hooded tonight. All of our graduates and many of you—their teachers, family, and friends—have been through a lot over the past several years of law school.

Every one of the graduates who will walk across the stage tonight to be hooded has their own individual story about law school. Each story involves hard work, dedication, personal difficulty of some sort, and great success. This has been no easy process for any of our graduates, and tonight each can bask in the glory of their individual success. Each of them tonight is a star, and we celebrate both with them and for them.

Tonight, I encourage you, our graduates, to think about the great things that have happened at UT while you were here. The College has consistently been ranked in the top fifty of American law schools. We moved into the new building, one of the great facilities for legal education in the world. One of the greatest people

you will ever meet, Dick Wirtz, stepped down after what will go down in history as one of the most successful and critical deanships in the history of the institution. And this year, you patiently and gently nursed along a new dean, for which I am very grateful.

I encourage you tonight to think not just of the past but of your future as well. Keep looking for what it is that makes you happy, and never settle for less.

Most importantly, sit back, take a deep breath, reflect upon the good work you all have done and on the fact that tonight you continue the grand tradition of a great institution: the University of Tennessee College of Law.

Introduction of James Hall

And now it is my honor and pleasure to introduce our principal speaker this evening, a distinguished alumnus of the UT College of Law, the Honorable James Evan Hall, Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board.

Chairman Hall has had a long and remarkable career in public service. After earning his law degree from the UT College of Law, he served as counsel to the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations for several years and also served on the staff of the late U.S. Senator Albert Gore, Sr., of Tennessee. He later maintained a private practice in Chattanooga and then subsequently served in Tennessee Governor Ned McWherter's Cabinet for five years as Director of the Tennessee State Planning Office, during which time he developed Tennessee's first comprehensive anti-drug effort.

Jim Hall returned to Washington in 1993 as Chief of Staff for Tennessee Senator Harlan Matthews and then became a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board later that same year. He has served as Chairman of the Safety Board since June of 1994. Since that time, the Board has experienced a period of extraordinary activity, including recent investigations into the crash of ValuJet Flight 592 in the Everglades and the explosion of TWA Flight 800 off Long Island. The Board has also issued studies on commuter airlines and on the dangers of passenger-side automobile air bags to children.

In addition to serving as the on-scene Board Member for a number of highly-publicized accidents, Chairman Hall has chaired the Board of Inquiry for public hearings on several major catastrophes, including the September 1994 crash of US Air Flight 427 near Pittsburgh. In fact, Chairman Hall was honored for his work on that investigation in January of 1996 by *Aviation Week and Space Technology* magazine, which presented him with an Aviation Laurel in recognition of his

extraordinary efforts to resolve what happened to Flight 427 and to address the concerns of the accident victims' families. Later that same year, Jim Hall was appointed by President Clinton to the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security.

Chairman Hall also has a distinguished record of military service. He served in active duty in the U.S. Army and was awarded the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service in Vietnam.

We are extremely honored to have him as our principal speaker this evening. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming Chairman James Hall.

—**Chairman Hall's Address**—

Thank you, Chairman Hall.

Background on Academic Regalia: Robes and Hoods

We now come to the conferral of the hoods. In this ceremony, the academic hood, symbolizing the Juris Doctor degree, is given to each of our graduates.

Much of American academic costume is derived from that worn at British universities, particularly Oxford. When Oxford University was granted a charter in the early thirteenth century, there was a close connection between the university and the church, and so its members wore clerical attire. Academic apparel for colleges and universities in America was first introduced at Williams College in the late nineteenth century.

The hood is the most important and distinctive feature of American academic regalia and was originally intended as a head cover and shoulder cape. The length of the hood and the width of the trim indicate the degree attained, the doctor's hood being the longest, with the widest trim. As you can see in your program, the colors of the academic hood signify both the wearer's academic discipline and the college or university in which the degree is earned. The brilliant orange and white in the fold of your hood signify the great university that is bestowing this degree. The outside of the hood is trimmed in purple velvet—royal purple—indicating that law is the supreme authority in our system of government.

Class, wear your robes and your hoods with pride—you have earned them!

Will the Marshals please take their places?

—Hooding Ceremony—

Presentation of Graduates

Would all of our graduates please stand? Ladies and gentlemen, may I present the University of Tennessee College of Law Class of 1999.

Recognition of Honors Graduates

We now come to the portion of the program in which we will give special recognition to the students who have had particularly distinguished academic records at the College of Law.

Honors - The College awards a degree with Honors to each graduate who ranks in the top third of the class and achieves at least a 2.8 overall grade point average. The names of those individuals are listed in your program. And now I would like to ask all of our Honors graduates to please stand so that we may applaud your exceptional academic achievement.

High Honors - In order to graduate with High Honors, a student must rank in the top 15% of the class and have an overall grade point average of at least 3.0. Again, those individuals are listed in your program. And now would all of our students graduating with High Honors please stand so that we may applaud your outstanding accomplishment.

Highest Honors - A degree with Highest Honors is awarded to each graduate who achieves an overall grade point average of 3.4 for three years of study at the College of Law. The names of those individuals are also listed in your program. Would all of our students graduating with Highest Honors please stand so that we may applaud your extraordinary academic performance.

Recognition of Graduates' Families

We have just recognized and congratulated all of our graduates and our honor students. Now it is appropriate for us to formally recognize and thank those who have helped them to reach the goal they have achieved today. Parents, grandparents, spouses, children, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, and many others contribute in so many ways to one's success and sanity during law school. Class, this is your chance to recognize and applaud all those individuals who are here tonight, or here in spirit, who have given their love and support to you during your three years of law study.

Introduction of Steven Elkins—Student Speaker

Each year, the Dean has the honor and pleasure of designating the student who speaks on behalf of the graduating class.

Our speaker this evening is from Smyrna, Tennessee, and earned a B.S. in Finance, *summa cum laude*, from the University of Tennessee in 1995. He has received numerous awards for his distinguished academic record at the College of Law, including the Knoxville Bar Auxiliary and West Publishing Company Awards for attaining the highest cumulative average during his first year of study, as well as top honors in several of his law classes over the past three years. He has also participated in a number of student activities and has provided exceptional service to the College in many capacities, including serving as a member of the Judiciary Committee of the Student Bar Association, volunteering his time for our Student Host Program, and representing the student body on the College's Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee.

He is an outstanding member of this graduating class. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Steven Elkins.

—Steven's Remarks—

Presentation of Dean's Citations

The Dean's "Special Citations" are a means for expressing special appreciation to a few students who have been of tremendous service to the College of Law during their three years of study and who might have otherwise gone unrecognized. I have four citations to present this evening.

Heather White

Our first recipient has made many contributions to the life of the law school over the past three years. During her first year as a law student, she became very actively involved in Tennessee Law Women and served as President of the organization last year. She was instrumental in the implementation of several of the organization's projects, including rewriting the Law Women constitution to include as many students as possible in the organization's decision-making; publishing a Law Women newsletter; organizing a Law Women work day during the construction of a Habitat for Humanity house; rejuvenating a mentor program for women students; and bringing the Law Women 25th Anniversary Conference to the UT Campus in March of 1998—all of which significantly enhanced the organization's presence and

reputation on the campus. She has also practiced as a student attorney in our Legal Clinic, working tirelessly on behalf of her clients, providing outstanding legal representation. She has also been on the staff of the Tennessee Law Review for the past two years and served as Managing Editor this year. And she also served as Vice-President of the Environmental Law Association and was also active in the International Law Society. She brings a tremendous spirit and devotion to everything she undertakes, to her friendships, and to the lives of all of those around her, and it is with great pleasure that I present the first Dean's Citation this evening to Heather White.

Marjorie Bristol

Our next recipient has been heavily involved in public service work throughout her law school career. For the past three years, she has participated in our Student Pro Bono Project, a program in which law students work with local attorneys to provide counsel to persons in the community who otherwise would not have adequate legal representation. This year, she took on additional responsibility as Co-Director of the program. Under her leadership, the program instituted several new components. Most significantly, students and lawyers now visit local homeless shelters on a bi-weekly basis to provide advice, counsel, and, if necessary, legal assistance. Students also regularly participate in the Knoxville Legal Aid Society's Saturday Bar Program and do volunteer work at the KLAS office. And in cooperation with KLAS and with grant support from the U.S. Department of Justice, the Pro Bono Project has established a program to provide representation to victims of domestic violence in civil proceedings.

During her first two years, she was a student volunteer in the Legal Clinic. Under the direction of Professor Jerry Black, she took on significant responsibility in a first degree murder case. The matter is still pending, and her commitment to the case and to the client continues.

And over the past two years, she has made significant contributions to our Moot Court Program. Last year, she co-coordinated the Ray Jenkins Trial Competition; and this year, she served as Vice-Chair of the Moot Court Board, co-coordinated the Advocates' Prize Competition, and also coordinated arrangements for Docket Day. And she has also been on the Tennessee Law Review for the past two years and served as a Student Materials Editor this year.

Ladies and gentlemen, for all this and much more, it is with great pleasure that I present the second Dean's Citation to Marjorie Bristol.

Melanie Stovall Murry

Our next recipient has also provided exemplary service to the College in numerous capacities. She, too, has demonstrated a strong commitment to public service. During her first year, she participated in the Knoxville Legal Aid Society's Saturday Bar Program; and during her second year, she handled a case through the Student Pro Bono Project. And as a student attorney in our Legal Clinic, she has been an outstanding advocate on behalf of her clients.

She has also made significant contributions to our Advocacy Program. For the past two years, she has not only represented the UT College of Law as a member of our National Trial Team but has also competed in both the Advocates Prize and the Jenkins Competitions. And she assumed additional responsibility this year as Chair of our Moot Court Board.

She served as Co-Chair of the Class of 1999 Development Council, a student fund-raising effort for the benefit of the College of Law. This graduating class has chosen two gifts: the first gift is designated for an endowed scholarship for an entering law student, based on financial need; and the second gift will fund a series of commissioned oil paintings for the College of Law Building.

She also served as Vice President of Law Women and Parliamentarian of the Black Law Students Association; she co-chaired the College's Student Advisee Program; participated in several panel discussions for the benefit of our entering students; and she represented the student body on the College's Admissions and Financial Aid Committee and on our Committee on the Law School Community.

No matter what we've asked of her, she has tackled every responsibility with an energy and a dedication that is unsurpassed, and it is with great pleasure that I present the third Dean's Citation this evening to Melanie Stovall Murry.

Laura Steel

Our final recipient of a Dean's Citation also has an exceptional record of service to the College of Law. Although she was not an elected officer of Law Women, she took on the responsibility of chairing the Planning Committee for the Law Women 25th Anniversary Reunion Conference, held here in Knoxville in March of 1998. Beginning in the Summer of 1997, she spent countless hours contacting prominent women from all over the country, encouraging them to get involved in the endeavor; finding resources for funding; identifying faculty to teach in the CLE Seminar; organizing materials; finding resources for mailing lists; and much, much more. As a result of her hard work and dedication, the conference was an

outstanding success, and Law Women's presence on the UT Campus was greatly enhanced.

This year, she also played a vital role as one of the two student members on the Search Committee to fill the position of Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, requiring her to read and evaluate a significant number of resumes and attend numerous committee meetings. She was also responsible for arranging meetings for our students with each of the candidates who interviewed on campus and then soliciting feedback and presenting the students' views to the committee. She took her responsibilities seriously, provided thoughtful counsel, and represented the student body with distinction.

As Co-Chair of the Class of 1999 Development Council, she also helped to coordinate fundraising efforts for the class gifts. And as this year's President of the Student Bar Association, she has been instrumental in strengthening many of our student programs and services and has met every challenge with poise, wisdom, and dedication, including the education of a new day.

She is an individual with the spirit, imagination and positive energy to make things happen, and it is with great pleasure that I present the final Dean's Citation this evening to Laura Steel.

Outstanding Graduate

I have one final presentation to make this evening. Each year the College selects one student to be recognized as THE outstanding graduate of that year's class.

This year's honoree is from Morristown, Tennessee, and earned a B.S. in Business Administration, with a major in Finance, from the University of Tennessee in 1993. Currently ranked first in his class, he has received numerous awards for his superior academic performance, including highest honors in ten law classes during his first year's study. Over the past three years, he has also participated in several activities and has provided outstanding service to the Law School in many ways. He has been on the staff of the Tennessee Law Review for the past two years; he was also a staff writer for the Tennessee Business Law Journal. He served as Treasurer of the Business & Tax Law Association; he donated his time to our Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program; and he also served as a second-year representative and as Vice-President of the American Bar Association Law Student Division.

In recognition of his extraordinary scholastic achievement, his participation in co-curricular activities, and his support and service to the College of Law, this year's outstanding graduate is Michael McKinney.

Announcements, Acknowledgments, and Conclusion

Ladies and gentlemen, would you please join me in another round of applause for all the members of this year's graduating class.

Immediately following this ceremony, there will be a reception honoring our graduates in the Grand Ballroom of the Holiday Inn, and we hope very much that all of you can join us.

I would also like to remind you that the University will hold its Commencement exercises in the morning at 9:00 a.m. at the Thompson-Boling Arena. Students who are planning to participate in Commencement should plan to gather at the Arena at 8:30 a.m. to form the processional.

Before we conclude our program, I would like to extend our thanks to the students who served as marshals for the ceremony and to the members of our staff who have provided assistance to our graduates and guests this evening.

Particularly, I would like to thank Teresa Peterson, CJ Ottinger, and Amy Cooper. As always, I want to thank Mary Ann James, without whose hard work no event would ever happen and the Dean would not know what to say.

Finally, I would like to recognize and extend a special thanks to the person who, for many years, has planned and coordinated the arrangements for our Hooding Ceremony—the person who makes hooding happen—Peggy Goodman, Assistant to the Dean and Business Manager for the College of Law.

Once again, thank you all very much for coming; and if you will, please remain seated for the recessional.