



David A. Logan
Dean and Professor of Law

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Commencement is a special time in the life of a university, and especially for the graduates, their family, and friends. Commencement 2007 was another memorable event (or actually a memorable series of events).

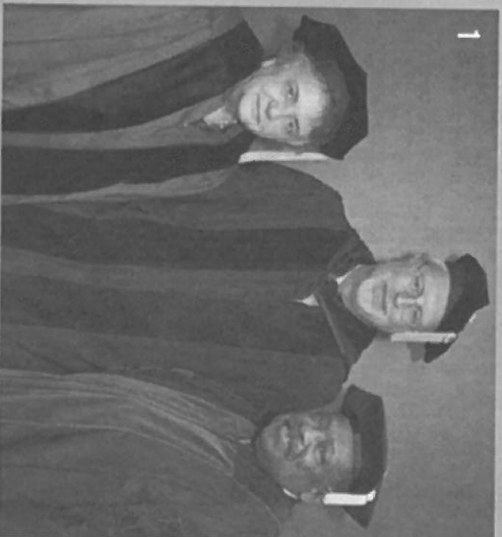
Kicking off the season was the program sponsored by the Feinstein Institute for Legal Service that recognizes students who have displayed leadership in an area at the very heart of our mission: public service. One highlight is the award given to the graduating student who displayed the greatest devotion to public service. This year's winner, Casey Williams, led our "Pro Bono Collaborative," a precedent-setting alliance of leading law firms, community organizations, and the School of Law.

Next up was the elegant affair at the Glen Manor in Portsmouth, a stunningly beautiful waterfront estate where a range of graduates are recognized, including the winners of the Deans' Award, which goes to the students for outstanding grades in their second and third years. This year's winners were Holly Jean Ciampa - Day Division and Susan E. Lackey-Mello - Extended Division.

The capstone is, of course, the Commencement Ceremony itself. The tradition of having the "Teacher of the Year" lead the faculty procession continued, with Anne Lawton (once again) carrying the ceremonial mace. Highlights of the ceremony included comments from the Valedictorians Brian Keith Koshulsky - Day Division and Matthew G. Jill - Extended Division.

Another important Commencement tradition was continued: awarding Honorary Doctor of Laws Degrees to lawyers whose careers reflect dedication to public service, and who thus are excellent role models for our graduates. Past Honorary Degree Recipients who delivered the keynote address have included Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court Anthony Kennedy, the Hon. Bruce Selya (United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit), and Rick West, founding Director of the National Museum of the American Indian. This year the School of Law recognized a path breaking Rhode Island lawyer, Walter Stone and the Honorable Shirley Abrahamson, the long-serving Chief Justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, who spoke on "A View from the Bench."

After the ceremony came the "Passing of the Blackberry," as the beloved Dean of Students Dennis Tonsing, who is retiring, officially handed over the device that keeps the RWU deans on their toes 24/7, to his successor Lorraine Lalli.



1 The Honorable Shirley S. Abrahamson, Dean David A. Logan, and Walter R. Stone
2 "Passing of the Blackberry," from retired Dean of Students Dennis Tonsing to his successor Lorraine Lalli



3 Graduates (l-r): Rebecca Robinson, Eliana Levine Weissmann, Jennifer Maynard
4 Graduates (l-r): Thomas Thomasián, Christopher Smith, Andrew Neehran
5 "Teacher of the Year" Professor Anne Lawton

