

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 its graduates, their families and friends. Commencement 2008 was another memorable event – actually, a memorable series of events.

Kicking off the commencement season was a program sponsored by the Feinstein Institute for Legal Service, which recognizes students who have displayed leadership in an area at the very heart of our mission: public service. One highlight is an award given to the graduating student who displayed the greatest devotion to public service. This year’s winner, **Wendy Andre**, has a passion for defending the rights of immigrants. She helped to develop a project with the International Institute of Rhode Island for law students to offer rights education and individual counseling to immigrant detainees held at the Wyatt Detention Center in Central Falls, R.I.

In addition, **Michelle Gobin** was awarded the Pro Bono Collaborative Award for her dedication to the Affording Housing project and **Laura Corbin** received the Clinical Legal Education Association Award for her commitment to the clinics and public service.

Next up was an elegant affair at the Glen Manor in Portsmouth, R.I., a stunningly beautiful waterfront estate where a range of graduates were recognized, including the winners of the Dean’s Award, which goes to

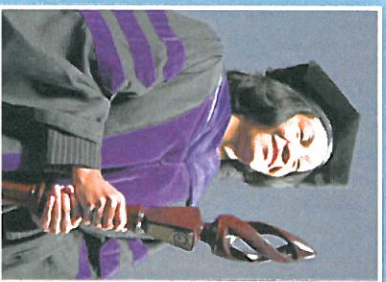
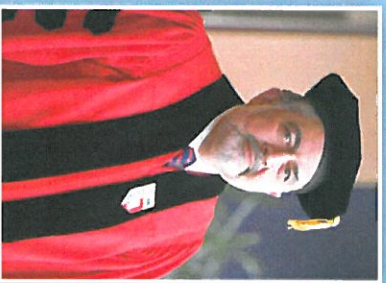
those students with the most improved grades in their second and third years. This year’s winners were **Jillian Beth Carpenter** (Day Division) and **Susan G. Pegden** (Extended Division).

The capstone, of course, is the Commencement Ceremony itself. The tradition of having the graduates’ “Professor of the Year” lead the faculty procession continued, with Professor Keeva Terry carrying the ceremonial mace. Highlights of the ceremony included comments from the Valedictorians, **Allyson L. Picard** (Day Division) and **Robert Douglas Coulter** (Extended Division).

Another important Commencement tradition is that of awarding honorary Doctor of Laws degrees to leaders whose careers reflect dedication to public service, and who thus are excellent role models for our graduates. Past honorary degree recipients delivering the keynote address have included the **Honorable Shirley Abrahamson**, Chief Justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, **Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy** of the United States Supreme Court, the **Honorable Bruce Selya** of the 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 wrapped up its “Supreme Semester” by recognizing **Linda Greenhouse**, who won a Pulitzer Prize for her coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court for the *New York Times*, who spoke on “A Lawyer’s Choice.” Also receiving an honorary degree was the **Honorable Phillip Rapoza**, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Appeals Court, a leading jurist and proponent of international human rights.

- 1 Honorary Doctor of Law Recipient, *New York Times* correspondent **Linda Greenhouse**
- 2 Honorary Doctor of Law Recipient, Chief Justice **Phillip Rapoza** of the Massachusetts Appeals Court.



- 3 Professor **Keeva Terry** carries the ceremonial mace.
- 4 **Allyson L. Picard**, Valedictorian, Day Division.
- 5 **Robert Douglas Coulter**, Valedictorian, Extended Division.

