

5-15-2014

Newsroom: Celebrating the Logan Deanship

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Recommended Citation

Roger Williams University School of Law, "Newsroom: Celebrating the Logan Deanship" (2014). *Life of the Law School (1993-)*. 383.
https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life/383

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Newsroom

Celebrating the Logan Deanship

More than 125 members of the Rhode Island bench and bar celebrate outgoing Dean David Logan as he completes his 11th year at the helm.



“In the world of law deans, David Logan is Larry Bird!”

The Honorable Bruce Selya, senior judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, hastened to add that he referred not to Dean David A. Logan’s Bird-like height, but rather to his ability to lead and inspire his team – in this case, the students, faculty, staff and alumni of RWU Law – to ever greater achievement and success.

“If they ever establish a Hall of Fame for law deans,” Selya declared, “my nominee is David Logan!”

More than 125 members of the Rhode Island bench and bar joined students, alumni, faculty and staff to celebrate Logan’s deanship as he completed his 11th year at the helm (making him one of the nation’s longest-serving law deans). On June 30 he will step down to return to full-time teaching.

Other speakers at the event included Dean Designate Michael Yelnosky, Roger Williams University President Donald Farish, RWU Law Board of Directors member Linn Foster Freedman, Esq., of Nixon Peabody, and alumni representative Jason Van Volkenburgh, Esq.’07.

A highlight of the event was the dedication of the David A. Logan Conference Room (formerly known simply as RWU Law Room 244). A signature space at the School of Law and one of Dean Logan’s favorite places to collaborate with students and colleagues, the newly refurbished room was named in his honor. Yelnosky noted that the room was originally an enclosed library space that Logan himself had opened up for a bright, airy teaching space.

“What a group has gathered here to honor you!” marveled Yelnosky in opening the event, jokingly adding: “In Bristol! On a Thursday! In the afternoon! In Rhode Island!”

Judge Selya told the gathered crowd that there were four types of law school deans: the egocentric, the alumni-centric, the faculty-centric and the student-centric. Without neglecting the first three, Selya concluded, Logan was most resolutely a student-centered dean. Along the way, he added, Logan elevated RWU Law to become a national leader in enhancing experiential legal education, while also improving student bar-pass rates and professional placements, and greatly “uplifting the stature, quality and reputation of the school.”

Linn Foster Freedman, a partner at Nixon Peabody and member of RWU Law’s Board of Directors, added that Logan had “instilled a strong culture of pro bono service’ at the school and that RWU Law was “blossoming when other [law schools] are wavering.”

“David walked the walk and talked the talk about making this a law school for everyone,” Yelnosky said, noting that the diversity of this year’s incoming 1L class was 25 percent and the school’s overall diversity was 20 percent. “This doesn’t happen by accident.”

In his personal style, Logan – who attended the event with his wife Jeanne Wine, sons Ben and Dan, and brother Wayne – was “a dean of hugs, smiles, high-fives, screams and loud music spilling out of his office,” added Yelnosky, who will become the fifth dean of RWU Law on July 1. “My only hope is that he can leave some of that enthusiasm for the poor sap who has to follow.”