


5-7-2018

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Recommended Citation

Bowden, Michael M., "Honoring Professor Bruce Kogan (05-07-2018)" (2018). *Life of the Law School (1993-)*. 638.
https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life/638

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May 7, 2018

Honoring Professor Bruce Kogan

The RWU Law community gathers in Providence to celebrate the remarkable contributions of a founding faculty member and former dean, with a room dedication in his name.



The dedication of the Professor Bruce I. Kogan Clinic Conference Room in Providence was attended by members of the judiciary, elected officials, alumni, faculty, staff and friends.

Image Credit: Chelsie Horne/RWU Law

May 7, 2018

Michael M. Bowden

Founding faculty member, two-time interim dean, master mediator – Professor Bruce I. Kogan has been all these and more, and his name is now permanently ensconced at Roger Williams University School of Law's experiential campus in downtown Providence.

On April 26, 2018, the RWU Law community gathered in Providence to recognize Professor Kogan's remarkable contributions by dedicating the Professor Bruce I. Kogan Clinic Conference

Room at a ceremony and reception attended by members of the judiciary, elected officials, alumni, faculty, staff and friends.

“Quite simply, Bruce is the greatest 'giver' in the 25-year history of the law school,” said Dean Michael Yelnosky in remarks at the event. “He was interim dean not once but twice, he created our clinical externship program, he was the architect of our in-house clinical programs, he created and directed our mediation clinic. He’s also the one who first went out into the community and started to create the relationships that we still benefit from today. These may not be very sexy things, but you’ll notice what they all have in common is creating opportunity.”

Judge Debra DiSegna, associate justice of the Rhode Island Family Court, called Kogan “the consummate professional: low-key, dedicated, steadfast, reliable, humble and – most importantly – effective; a quiet, gentle force in the mediation arena.”

Alumna Erica Janton ’13 concurred. “I can honestly say that I am the mediator and the attorney that I am today because of Bruce Kogan,” she said.

Wearing Many Hats

Professor Andy Horwitz, RWU Law Assistant Dean for Experiential Education, reminded those gathered not to forget “what an incredibly gifted teacher” Professor Kogan has been over the years.

“There is not a kind of class you can identify in a law school curriculum that Bruce has not taught,” Horwitz said. “He has run the gamut from very large doctrinal classes to seminar classes to simulation-based classes to clinics, and in every single one of those arenas, Bruce was a master at his craft and an inspiration to the rest of us at the law school.”

Speaking for himself, Kogan noted, “I try to inspire in students a sense of responsibility as lawyers, as members of *any* community – our law school, the town we live in, our bar association. We have a responsibility, a citizenship of sorts, and we should feel that what we have contributed has been positive and constructive.”

They are words he lived by. In an application requesting emeritus status for Professor Kogan, Dean Yelnosky wrote: “Nobody has worn more hats at the law school than Bruce, and his performance in each of the many roles he took on was superb. He has always put the law school first, even when it meant he had to take on a new and difficult task. Whenever the law school needed him, he answered the call.”

Yelnosky added that the school’s Distinguished Service Professor of Law – an honorary title granted to a faculty member every two years – would henceforth be known as the Bruce I. Kogan Distinguished Service Professor of Law.

“Mediation is not easy work. It takes complete focus and the ability to process, in real time, everything that is occurring in a complex and rapidly changing interpersonal dynamic. It requires patience, persistence, objectivity and creativity to guide antagonists

away from focusing on a bad past history and help them look to the possibilities of the future.” ~ Professor Bruce Kogan

A Distinguished Career

Professor Kogan’s career has been dedicated to providing his students with practical opportunities to apply what they learn in the classroom, whether by mediating under his supervision in the Rhode Island court system or participating in local zoning board hearings.

Long active in the Rhode Island legal community, Kogan is a co-founder and past president of the first non-profit organization for mediators in the state, the Rhode Island Mediators Association. He is active as a volunteer mediator with the Center for Collaboration and Mediation of Rhode Island, and was a member of the transition team of Attorney General Peter Kilmartin ‘97, in addition to having served for the past fifteen years on the Bristol, R.I., Zoning Board of Review.

Kogan has authored numerous articles on topics ranging from the Americans with Disabilities Act, to taxation, to disciplinary and ethical issues in divorce and family law (included as a chapter in *A Practical Guide to Divorce in Rhode Island*, 2009). In addition to Dispute Resolution, Professor Kogan regularly taught Property and Trusts and Estates.

Prior to joining RWU Law, Kogan served as an appellate attorney in the Tax Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, and then practiced law for almost ten years in Pennsylvania, concentrating on taxation, business and estate planning, for-profit and non-profit corporations, and real estate. He holds a B.A. from Syracuse University, a J.D. from Dickinson School of Law, an LL.M. in Taxation from Georgetown University Law Center, and an honorary doctorate in laws from RWU Law.

All [gifts in honor of Professor Kogan’s retirement](#) will be used to help us recognize his remarkable contributions.