

“FAREWELL, AND GO POKES!”

Dear Alumni, Faculty, Staff, Students, and Friends of the UW College of Law,

It has been a great pleasure to celebrate the graduation of the UW Law Class of 2024. As Dean, there is no greater joy than to preside over the ceremony recognizing the next generation of lawyers as they embark upon their journey into the legal profession.

My final time to preside at graduation provided a moment to reflect on the past as well and the many wonderful people who have been a part of the UW Law community. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as Dean of the University of Wyoming College of Law and to help transform our College’s physical infrastructure and elevate the many great programs we offer in Wyoming.

In the nine years that I have served in this role, we have experienced some exciting and challenging times together. Through an era marked by an extraordinary pandemic and two major budget cuts, we managed to achieve some remarkable things for the College of Law, including:

- * A \$38 million expansion and renovation of the College of Law facility and the creation of the Alan K. Simpson Center for Clinical & Experiential Learning;
- * Maintaining steady enrollments of approximately 225 students (despite a forty percent national decline in law school applications in the past decade) and successfully graduating over 95 percent of these students;
- * Raising our total bar passage rate above 90 percent in 2023 (100 percent on the most recent February 2024 bar exam) by implementing a required bar-prep curriculum for those who are struggling in law school;
- * The continued growth of our energy and natural resources law program by establishing the College’s first certificate program in energy, environment and natural resources law so that students can specialize in the field;
- * The expansion of our experiential education program in response to student and market demands to include a new Local Government Practicum and Business Law Practicum, which provides experiential learning opportunities in the transactional law space and utilizes private grant-funding to offer courses in Blockchain and Cryptocurrency regulation;
- * The establishment of the College’s first endowed professorship, the Greg Dyekman Endowed Professorship, to support clinical and experiential teaching;
- * The creation of the Firearms Research Center, the first of its kind among western law schools;

* The establishment of the Cambridge Summer Law Institute at Cambridge University in the U.K. and the Comparative Law in Chile course at the Universidad Adolfo Ibanez (UAI) in Santiago, Chile provides students and faculty the opportunity to explore the law in a comparative and international setting;

* The expansion of the curriculum to include new courses, including Banking Law, Bioethics, Comparative Contract Law, Contract Drafting, Firearms Law, Forensic Evidence, Health Law, International Environment & Natural Resources Law, International Trade Law, and Interviewing, Counseling & Negotiation, among other courses;

* The creation of several new scholarships to support our students at the point of entry into law school and during law school in the form of meritorious awards; and

* Increased programming to support continuing legal education and other services to alumni and members of the bar, mostly in Wyoming but also in Colorado and other states;

These are just some of the accomplishments my administration is most proud of and would not have been possible if it weren't for numerous individuals who donated their time and money to support the College of Law.

When I arrived in Laramie in 2015, it was my goal to simply leave the College of Law better off than I found it when I stepped down as dean. Today, I am pleased with what we have achieved, and I am grateful to many of you, especially those who served on the Board of Advisors and the many attorneys who have taught and volunteered for us through the years.

As I begin to look forward to the next chapter as a faculty member at the College of Law, I am reminded by the words of former UW law dean Robert Hamilton, who once remarked:

“Administrators “need a sort of traffic light — red to warn them of danger spots, green to say go ahead. We are on our way to rescuing many.”

Indeed, I hope we did rescue many, and I am excited about the opportunity to teach the next generation of law students and lead them into the future. I wish the best of luck to my successor, Julie Hill, and hope that you will give her the same level of commitment and support you have given me through the years.

Farewell, and GO POKES!

Klint Alexander, Dean
UW College of Law