



Brooklyn Law School

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**“The Pride of Brooklyn Law: Our Continuing
Singular Impact and Bold Aspirations”**

Remarks by

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Brooklyn Law School

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IN MY JOB I AM FORTUNATE EVERY SINGLE DAY TO FIND MANY REASONS TO BE PROUD OF THE IMPACT AND ASPIRATIONS OF OUR GREAT LAW SCHOOL. YESTERDAY, FOR EXAMPLE, SEVERAL OF US ATTENDED A PROGRAM FOR HUNDREDS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO WERE ENTHRALLED, SIMPLY SPELL BOUND, BY AN INTERVIEW WITH JUSTICE SONIA SOTOMAYOR AND HER LAW CLERK, OUR GRADUATE SPARKLE SOOKNANNEN CLASS OF 2011. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR AND SPARKLE OFFERED A CLEAR AND COMPELLING CASE EXPLAINING WHY WHAT LAWYERS DO MATTERS. THEY SPOKE ABOUT THE POWER OF LAW TO CHANGE AND IMPROVE THE WORLD. OUR SCHOOL, WHICH JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR VISITED RECENTLY, GOT SOME NICE MENTIONS AND I AM SURE WE WILL HAVE SEVERAL APPLICANTS FROM THE LARGE MOTIVATED AUDIENCE.

NOW TODAY, I SHARE WITH ALL OF YOU OUR TREMENDOUS PRIDE IN OUR HONOREES. OUR ALUMNI OF THE YEAR: **BILL GLADSTONE**, CLASS OF 1955; **SUSAN KARTEN**, CLASS OF 1983. AND OUR RISING STARS, **ANNE DEL CASTILLO** CLASS OF 2011; AND **ERIKA LORSHBOUGH**, CLASS OF 2012. MORE ABOUT THESE ALUMNI STARS IN A FEW MINUTES.

FOR NOW LET ME SIMPLY SAY TO OUR HONOREES, YOU INSPIRE YOUR FELLOW GRADUATES, AND YOU INSPIRE OUR STUDENTS. YOU EXEMPLIFY THE GREAT BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL TRADITIONS OF EXCELLENCE, SERVICE,

AND DEDICATION TO USING THE POWER OF YOUR LEGAL EDUCATIONS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

CONGRATULATIONS!

AND MANY THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS FOR THE LUNCHEON:

- **STACY KANTER AND ERIC KORNBLAU-** BOTH OF THE CLASS OF 1984
- DUANE MORRIS – AND I SEE FRED COHEN AND MICHAEL GROHMAN AMONG OTHERS HEADING THE DELEGATION FROM THAT FIRM
- ERNST & YOUNG
- KRAMER LEVIN NAFTALIS & FRANKEL
- TITLEVEST
- VIRGINIA & AMBINDER

PLEASE JOIN ME TO RECOGNIZE THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HERE TODAY. PLEASE STAND. OUR BOARD IS INCREDIBLY HANDS ON AND HARD WORKING. THEY HAVE THROUGH CONSIDERABLE EFFORT AND BY EXERCISING EXCELLENT JUDGMENT SKILLFULLY GUIDED OUR SCHOOL THROUGH EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT TIMES.

SEVERAL GRADUATING STUDENTS ARE HERE. OUR 2017 CLASS CHAMPIONS ARE LEADING THE CHARGE TO SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF THE LAW SCHOOL THROUGH THE DEAN'S ANNUAL GIVING CHALLENGE. EVERY YEAR FOR THE

LAST FOUR YEARS IT HAS BEEN OUR NEWEST ALUMNI IN THE GRADUATING CLASS WHO ACHIEVE BY FAR THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE RATE OF GIVING OF ANY ALUMNI CLASS. THIS YEAR THE 2017 CHAMPIONS CLASS HAVE A SHOT AT PERSUADING AN ASTOUNDING 66 PERCENT OF THEIR CLASS – 2/3'S OF THE CLASS - TO DONATE, A PARTICIPATION LEVEL THAT DWARFS OTHER CLASSES. WILL THE CHAMPIONS PLEASE STAND SO WE CAN APPLAUD THEIR EFFORTS AND THANK YOU IN ADVANCE.

YOU ALL NO DOUBT HAVE BEEN READING ABOUT THE EXCITING NEW FACULTY JOINING BLS IN RECENT YEARS. THREE ARE HERE WITH US THIS AFTERNOON:

- **PROFESSOR HEIDI BROWN**, DIRECTOR OF THE LEGAL WRITING PROGRAM, A PROLIFIC SCHOLAR, AUTHOR, AND EXPERIENCED ATTORNEY.
- **PROFESSOR ALICE RISTROPH** WILL JOIN US JULY 1. HER EXPERTISE IS IN CRIMINAL LAW, CRIMINAL PROCEDURE, AND CONSTITUTIONAL LAW.
- **PROFESSOR ALEXANDER STEIN**, A PREEMINENT AUTHORITY IN THE AREAS OF TORTS, MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, EVIDENCE, AND CRIMINAL LAW.

I WAS ABOUT TO SAY THAT EACH OF THESE NEW FACULTY ARE “BEST IN BREED.” BUT THAT SOUNDS WRONG. SO ON THIS SUPER BOWL WEEKEND I

SIMPLY WILL SAY EACH OF THEM WERE THE NUMBER ONE DRAFT CHOICES IN THEIR FIELD.

WE ALL CAN BE PROUD OF OUR EXCEPTIONAL FACULTY OF SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS WHO INCREASINGLY ARE DRAWING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO OUR SCHOOL AS A CENTER FOR LEARNING HOW TO USE THE POWER OF LAW FOR THE BENEFIT OF PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY, IN OUR NATION, AND GLOBALLY. WILL ALL THE MEMBERS OF OUR FACULTY OF SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS PLEASE RISE AND BE RECOGNIZED

WE ALSO HAVE A HERO WITH US TODAY: **ANDREW J. DELL'OLIO**, CLASS OF 1993. LAST MONTH, ANDREW CAME TO THE AID OF A WOMAN DISTRAUGHT OVER LOSING CUSTODY OF HER CHILDREN IN FAMILY COURT WHO SET HERSELF ON FIRE ON STATE STREET, NEAR FEIL HALL. IT WAS A HORRIFIC INCIDENT. ANDREW SAW THE FLAMES WHILE WALKING TO WORK AND RAN ACROSS BOERUM PLACE TO HER AID. HE USED HIS BODY AND HIS JACKET TO SMOTHER THE FLAMES. A SCHOOL BUS DRIVER NEARBY THEN PRODUCED A FIRE EXTINGUISHER TO DOUSE THE FLAMES. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, EMERGENCY SERVICES ARRIVED AND TRANSPORTED THE WOMAN TO WEILL-CORNELL BURN CENTER. SHE SURVIVED. ANDREW AND THE SCHOOL BUS DRIVER AND A BUILDING CUSTODIAN WHO ALSO HELPED WERE EXAMINED AND HELD AT THE HOSPITAL FOR OBSERVATION BECAUSE OF INHALATION OF

THE EXTINGUISHER FUMES AND BURNS. OUR HEARTS AND SYMPATHIES GO TO THE TROUBLED YOUNG WOMAN. IT IS COMFORTING AND A MATTER OF PRIDE THAT OUR LAW SCHOOL IS IN THE HEART OF A COMMUNITY WHERE PEOPLE HELP OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED AND WHO LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER. I ASK ANDREW TO RISE AND BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

OUR HONOREES AND EVERY GRADUATE SITTING IN THIS ROOM—YOUNG, OLD, OR NOT WILLING TO SAY—BEGAN AS A STUDENT. REMEMBER? YOU ALL HAD THAT FIRST DAY OF LAW SCHOOL, BUTTERFLIES IN YOUR STOMACH, HEART FILLED WITH NERVE-WRACKING ANTICIPATION; SOME MIGHT SAY TERROR, OF WHAT WOULD COME. BUT THOSE FIRST DAY JITTERS SOON FLED, AND YOU PERSEVERED, FINDING SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST LESSONS IN THOSE CLASSROOMS. WAS IT PASSION? EXCITEMENT? INTRIGUE? DETERMINATION? ALL OF THE ABOVE? AND BEFORE YOU KNEW IT, THERE YOU WERE, ON THE STAGE, IN CAP AND GOWN. IT GOES BY FAST.

WHILE YOU WERE HERE YOU DID AMAZING THINGS, JUST AS OUR STUDENTS ARE DOING TODAY.

OUR STUDENTS ARE A CONSTANT SOURCE OF INSPIRATION. THEY GO ON—IN THE GREAT BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL TRADITION--TO USE THE POWER OF LAW TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE, TO HAVE A LASTING IMPACT, JUST AS YOU DO IN YOUR CAREERS.

JUST LISTEN TO SOME – A VERY SMALL SAMPLE - OF THE IMPORTANT AND URGENT WORK OUR STUDENTS ARE DOING.

- STUDENTS IN OUR EXI THAT IS EXONERATION INITIATIVE INNOCENCE CLINIC HELPED TO FREE A WRONGFULLY-CONVICTED MAN WHO'D SPENT *20 YEARS* IN A NEW YORK PRISON.
RICHARD ROSARIO HAD BEEN DENIED HIS RIGHT TO EFFECTIVE COUNSEL WHEN HE WAS ORIGINALLY CONVICTED OF A 1996 MURDER. BUT WITH THE HELP OF OUR STUDENTS AND CLINIC DIRECTOR **GLENN GARBER**, A JUDGE VACATED ROSARIO'S WRONGFUL CONVICTION AND RELEASED HIM.
- ANOTHER GROUP OF STUDENTS SPENT PART OF THEIR WINTER BREAK IN SOUTH TEXAS TO HELP PROVIDE LEGAL SERVICES AT AN IMMIGRANT DETENTION CENTER FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN. OVER THE COURSE OF THREE SLEEPLESS DAYS, THE STUDENTS WORKED WITH 97 CLIENTS ON THEIR ASYLUM APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING A LAST-DITCH APPEAL BY A MOTHER WHO HAD JUST BEEN DENIED AN OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR ASYLUM WHILE HER CHILDREN HAD BEEN APPROVED. THE CHILDREN WERE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE THE DETENTION CENTER THE NEXT DAY, AND THE STUDENTS HAD LESS THAN *30 MINUTES* TO CONDUCT RESEARCH BEFORE A JUDGE WOULD DECIDE THE FAMILY'S FATE. THANKS TO THE WORK OF OUR STUDENTS, THE JUDGE VACATED

THE DENIAL OF THE WOMAN'S APPLICATION, AND THE FAMILY WAS KEPT INTACT. AND A SHOUT OUT TO OUR **PUBLIC SERVICE LAW CENTER** FOR SPONSORING THE STUDENTS.

- MEANWHILE, AT OUR **CENTER FOR URBAN BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP** (OR CUBE), STUDENTS IN THE NATION'S BEST KNOWN TECH CLINIC - OUR "BLIP" CLINIC - PROVIDED SERVICES TO 20 BUSINESSES, FOR A CUMULATIVE 3528 HOURS OF LEGAL SERVICES. THEY DRAFTED FOUNDERS' AGREEMENTS, BETA AGREEMENTS, IP ASSIGNMENTS AGREEMENTS, CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENTS, NON-COMPETES, AND OPERATING AGREEMENTS AND FOR THEIR CLIENTS. CUBE DRAWS MANY OF OUR MOST ENTREPRENEURIAL AND TECH-SAVVY GRADUATES BACK TO CAMPUS FOR PROGRAMS AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS.
- WE ALSO ARE EQUIPPING OUR STUDENTS FOR THE INCREASINGLY HIGH-TECH WORLD OF LEGAL PRACTICE. **PHIL WEISS**, CLASS OF 2011, IS LEADING THE EFFORT TO LAUNCH AND EXPAND A "CODING CURRICULUM" FOR LAWYERS. THIS IS QUICKLY BECOMING AN ESSENTIAL SKILL FOR NEW LAWYERS.

PHIL IS HERE WITH US TODAY. YOU CAN ASK HIM IN PERSON TO EXPLAIN WHAT A CODING CURRICULUM IS. HE IS A JUNIOR PARTNER AT THE FRIDMAN LAW GROUP, A FUNKY TECH STARTUP LAW FIRM WITH ITS

OWN ART GALLERY. A STAR IN HIS OWN RIGHT, PHIL MAKES THE TIME TO COME BACK AND TEACH AT THE LAW SCHOOL. HE HAS ALSO HIRED A FEW GRADUATES OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. HE IS A FANTASTIC EXAMPLE OF HOW YOU, OUR EXTRAORDINARY GRADUATES, GIVE BACK TO MAKE THIS LAW SCHOOL SUCH AN INSPIRING AND DYNAMIC PLACE TO LEARN.

I KNOW THAT MANY OF YOU ALSO GIVE BACK TO THE LAW SCHOOL. SOME OF YOU TEACH AND SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE IN THE CLASSROOM. OTHERS MENTOR AND OPEN UP YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK. AS WE ALL KNOW, ONE OF THE BEST GIFTS YOU CAN GIVE A GRADUATE IS A JOB, AND SO MANY OF YOU HERE ARE ON OUR ACES (ALUMNI CONCERNED FOR EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS) HONOR ROLL, WHICH HAS GROWN TREMENDOUSLY SINCE LAST YEAR. AT YOUR PLACES YOU WILL SEE THE CURRENT LIST OF GRADUATES ON THE HONOR ROLL.

AND MANY OF YOU GIVE BACK BY DONATING FINANCIALLY, WHICH ENABLES TALENTED AND PROMISING STUDENTS TO HAVE ACCESS TO A BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL EDUCATION. HUNDREDS OF NEW DONORS CONTRIBUTED TO THE ANNUAL FUND THIS YEAR, INCREASING ALUMNI PARTICIPATION BY 75 PERCENT OVER LAST YEAR. THIS IS THE BIGGEST LEAP OUR ANNUAL FUND HAS EVER ACHIEVED. THESE GIFTS FUND SCHOLARSHIPS, ALLOW US TO RECRUIT FACULTY AND PROVIDE EVEN MORE ENRICHING CLINICAL

PROGRAMS TO OUR STUDENTS, PAVING THE WAY FOR MORE ROBUST
ADVOCACY.

OUR GREAT SCHOOL CERTAINLY ALWAYS HAS BEEN A SPECIAL PLACE, IN THE
VANGUARD OF EXCELLENCE, INCLUSIVENESS, AND CHANGE IN LEGAL
EDUCATION. I'VE BEEN THINKING A LOT ABOUT WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT
BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL, AND WHAT OUR INCREDIBLY DIVERSE ALUMNI OF
THE YEARS FROM 1901 TO NOW MIGHT HAVE IN COMMON. I THINK THAT ALL
OF YOU WOULD AGREE THAT WHAT YOU SHARE IS THIS: NO MATTER WHERE
YOU CAME FROM, AND WHAT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES, AT BROOKLYN LAW
SCHOOL YOU WORKED HARD AND RECEIVED AN OUTSTANDING LEGAL
EDUCATION, SECOND TO NONE, ALONG WITH EXPERIENCE AND CONFIDENCE
TO USE YOUR LEGAL EDUCATION TO GOOD ADVANTAGE. UPON GRADUATION,
ARMED WITH YOUR BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL EDUCATION AND YOUR
DISCIPLINE AND WORK ETHIC YOU CAUSED OTHERS TO TAKE NOTE AND YOU
HAVE CONTINUED TO STAND OUT, NOT SO MUCH FOR WHO YOU ARE OR
WHERE YOU CAME FROM, BUT BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU HAVE
ACCOMPLISHED. THAT SHARED TRADITION CONTINUES TO THIS DAY. I WANT
YOU TO KNOW THAT YOUR LAW SCHOOL, WHICH ALWAYS HAS BEEN STRONG,
IS TODAY IS EVEN MORE RECOGNIZED THAN EVER BEFORE AS A LEADING
LAW SCHOOL AND IT IS ALSO KNOWN AS ALSO AN INSTITUTION THAT HELPED
BUILD AND SUSTAIN OUR GREAT CITY – AND COUNTRY - AND OUR INFLUENCE
IS GROWING.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? WE HAVE HIGH ASPIRATIONS – TO BE NOTHING LESS THAN THE VERY BEST WE CAN BE IN THE FIELDS WE TRULY CAN BE AMONG THE BEST ANYWHERE. BUT WE CANNOT GET THERE WITHOUT YOU. WE NEED YOUR WISDOM, YOUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT, AND YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT. YOU CAN HELP US WRITE THE NEXT CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF OUR GREAT LAW SCHOOL.

I WANT YOU TO BE PART OF THIS CONVERSATION. OUR GRADUATES ARE OUR BEST AMBASSADORS AND WE CANNOT REALIZE OUR GOALS FOR THE LAW SCHOOL WITHOUT YOUR SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT.

WE NEED YOU MORE THAN EVER TO BE AN ACTIVE AND ENGAGED MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY. WE CANNOT DO IT WITHOUT YOU, THE FUTURE OF THE LAW SCHOOL IS IN YOUR HANDS. TOGETHER, WE CAN CONTINUE TO MAKE THIS LAW SCHOOL AN INSTITUTION THAT IS THE BEST OF ITS KIND AND SECOND-TO-NONE.

AS EVENTS IN RECENT WEEKS HAVE SHOWN US, WHAT LEGAL EDUCATION IS MORE IMPORTANT AND NEEDED MORE THAN EVER. LAWYERS ARE, ONCE AGAIN, THE HEROES ON THE FRONT LINES OF DEFENDING OUR CONSTITUTION AND THE RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS, REGARDLESS OF WHERE OR TO WHOM THEY WERE BORN.

LET ME LEAVE YOU WITH A QUOTE FROM ONE OF BROOKLYN'S OWN—WALT WHITMAN.

HE WROTE, IN THE *BROOKLYN EAGLE*, "THERE IS NO WEEK NOR DAY WHEN TYRANNY MAY NOT ENTER UPON THIS COUNTRY, IF THE PEOPLE LOSE THEIR SUPREME CONFIDENCE IN THEMSELVES, AND LOSE THEIR ROUGHNESS AND SPIRIT OF DEFIANCE. TYRANNY MAY ALWAYS ENTER, THERE IS NO CHARM, NO BAR AGAINST IT—THE ONLY BAR AGAINST IT IS A LARGE RESOLUTE BREED OF MEN [AND WOMEN]."

I WOULD ADD THAT THE LAW IN AND OF ITSELF IS NO BAR AGAINST TYRANNY. IT IS THE MEN AND WOMEN OF BROOKLYN LAW SCHOOL WHO NEED TO BE RESOLUTE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL ENSURE THAT THE BLESSINGS OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE WILL CONTINUE TO BE EXTENDED TO ALL.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HONOREES TODAY!