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2000]

DEAN REUSCHLEIN—THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

DAVID F. GIRARD-DICARLO\*

**I**T is a distinct honor and privilege to offer my remarks in tribute to Dean Harold Gill Reuschlein. He was a singular man of distinction who made a positive difference in all that he did and who influenced positively the lives of so many, many people.

I do not know how many of you have seen or are familiar with the recent movie “Sliding Doors.” “Sliding Doors” is a British film produced by Sydney Pollock. The premise of the movie is the differences that occur in the life of a young woman who, having been fired from her job, seeks to return to her home by taking the London underground. The movie tracks her life along dual paths—one path taken results from her making the subway train; the other path taken results from her not being able to make the train because the sliding subway doors close before she can enter.

The movie depicts how different her life turns out by that seemingly unimportant event.

How many of us would have had a very different life, and I submit, a less enriched and successful life, had we not had the blessing of being touched by Dean Reuschlein?

Permit me to share with you the profound impact the Dean had upon me. During my law school days, I confronted a very difficult personal challenge, a challenge that created serious doubt about my ability to continue in school. I was without adequate financial resources. And, with great anxiety and apprehension, I made an appointment to see the Dean to inform him that I could not return to school. Upon visiting with him and having explained my circumstances, the Dean reassured me and told me “not to worry, young man” and that he would get back to me.

A short time later, at the Dean’s request, I returned to visit with him again. At that second visit, I was informed that I was the recipient of what I later learned was the first Reuschlein Scholarship.

I have never forgotten the lesson learned that no matter what one accomplishes in life, somebody helps you. No one succeeds on their own.

In the Book of Matthew, there is this passage:

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on the hill can not be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the

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house. Let your light so shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.<sup>1</sup>

Harold Gill Reuschlein was a man whose shining light guided so many. We celebrate his life and his accomplishments. But, we will miss his intellect, his humor, his compassion and his faith—his faith in God and his faith in the goodness of people.

Those of us who are charged with playing a role in assisting the law school to reach new levels of achievement and success must do so with a keen awareness of the high standards set by Dean Reuschlein. Even though he will no longer be available to us for counsel as we struggle to meet each new challenge, we realize that his presence lives on through us.

Therefore, while it is fitting and proper that we mourn his passing, it is nonetheless fitting and proper that we celebrate the gift he gave us—the gift of having been touched by greatness. We are all the better because of him. And that, my friends and colleagues, is worthy of celebration.

Thank you very much.

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1. *Matthew* 5:14-16.