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Minority Law Teachers Conference

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MINORITY LAW TEACHERS CONFERENCE

“Nurturing Young Scholars: The Mission of Minority Law Teachers in the 1990s”

This issue of the St. Louis University *Public Law Review* is dedicated to papers presented at the 1990 Minority Law Teachers' Conference. This is the first time since 1986 that the papers from this annual conference are collected in one review. Unfortunately, as pointed out in Professor Haines' history of the Minority Law Teachers' Conference, while minority law teachers have met regularly since the early 1970s, there are few written records of the work produced at those meetings. As a result, if this issue did nothing but help preserve our history, that alone would be enough to make this volume unique. Fortunately, Professor Haines' history is but one of many ways in which this issue, and the conference it represents, sets a standard. In these pages there is something for everyone of every race who is involved in legal education or who would like to be.

First, the 1990 conference was entitled “Nurturing Young Scholars: the Mission of Minority Law Teachers' in the 1990s” because it was dedicated to dramatically increasing the number of minority law professors before the year 2000. This was done by reaching out to over 15,000 practitioners throughout the country and inviting them to attend the conference in order to learn about law school teaching and the mechanics of entering this often closed field. As a result of this outreach, the 1990 program was the most heavily attended of any Minority Law Teachers' Conference. Over three hundred people from thirty states and the Virgin Islands attended. More than half of all American law schools were represented. Even now, six months after the Conference took place, I still receive letters from as far away as Africa, Asia and New Zealand asking about how to enter law teaching. As a result of the Conference, the number of minority attorneys in the 1990 law teaching “pool” doubled almost overnight and it seems that our hope of substantially increasing the number of minority law teachers will be realized.

Because of this emphasis on bringing young scholars into the fold, the readers of this volume will find that the papers contained here reflect the sort of enthusiasm that can only come when we consider the blessings that our profession provides and then share those musings with others. You will further find that these papers cover a wide range of issues confronting minority professors many of which have never before been compiled in one volume. Thus, this review serves as a primer on a variety of challenges facing minorities in the law school envi-

ronment whether they come to the institution as professor, administrator or student. In this regard, this volume provides a lasting resource for solving the issues facing every American law school as it enters the twenty-first century.

Standing alone, the papers devoted primarily to those wishing to enter teaching give minority attorneys and others astute enough to review these pages, a handbook for entering law teaching like none other available. Whether the question is: "Why enter teaching at all;" "How do I tap into the hidden market;" "What will I face at an in-house interview;" or "How can an advanced degree help my job chances;" you will find the answer here. Yet, even with these attributes to its credit, this issue has more to offer still.

Another way in which the 1990 Conference, and the papers from it, is unique is that this was the first time that administrators were asked to prepare panels as part of the overall conference theme. What is most obvious to those of us already in legal education is that almost all minority professionals whether professor or administrator, are "the only one" at their law school. As a result of this token status, minority professionals are forced to become experts on a wide variety of subjects which our majority colleagues can easily ignore such as admissions, placement, bar passage, and ways to remedy or, better still, forestall minority students' academic problems. Yet, at the same time that we are forced to be experts, our isolation leaves us with no idea about where to begin to develop programs or challenge wrong minded assumptions about minority students and applicants.

To the rescue came administrators from throughout the country. Under the direction of Associate Dean Robert Clayton and Hilda Taylor, this talented group prepared two panels for us on all aspects of administration as they effect minority students. We learned about the significance of the LSAT, the newest information on bar passage strategies and a wide variety of ways to enhance academic performance. Thus, this issue gives its readers an excellent start in addressing the problems faced by every school while also introducing us to the wonderful talents of people often ignored by faculties. This issue reminds us once again that administrators are the foundation on which law schools rest.

Administrators come in many forms the most obvious of which is the law school dean. Once again, the 1990 Conference broke ground by inviting deans to address us on their perspectives on the recruitment and retention of minority faculty. In these pages, Dean Conte, of the University of Dayton, gives us his views on the recruitment of minority faculty. Dean Smith, of Capital University, weighs in with his perspective on "A Dean's Role in Supporting Minority Faculty Members," and Dean Quick and Associate Dean Lollis, both of Ohio Northern University, tell us how they confront the failure to presume competence which plagues minority faculty.

Teaching, scholarship and community service are the triumvirate that govern all law teachers' careers. At the 1990 Conference we were blessed to have comprehensive panels on all of these topics many of which resulted in papers contained in this issue.

Professor Alfred Yen's piece on "Art Resting on Craft," uses music as a metaphor for developing into a successful teacher. Readers will find much to learn from his insights. Tapes of the presentations given by Professors Baier, Haddon and Harris are available for those who wish to hear the entire program.

In deciding what types of community service to engage in, see Professor Greene's article on *Serving the Community*, also Professor Jones' "Warning: Community Service May be Dangerous to your Academic Health," and to Professor McQueary Smith's "A Time to Every Purpose Under the Heavens: Service — The National Bar Association Model." Each of these pieces presents the irony faced by minority professors. Many of us entered law teaching because we wanted to serve and yet, often, our service to others disserves us when it comes to promotion and tenure. This dilemma is starkly presented in the drama prepared by Professor Haines and acted out by his Community Service panel, a transcript of which appears in this volume.

Law Professors live and die on their scholarship. Without "sufficient" scholarship as defined by each professor's home institution, there is no tenure and, therefore, no opportunity to remain within the academy. Even after tenure, one's place within an individual law school and the larger academic community is often defined by the quality and quantity of one's published words. Thus, it is not surprising that the largest number of papers contained in this volume concern scholarship.

Do minority professors produce different types of scholarship than their majority colleagues? The answer to that question is yes and no. Every professor, of whatever age or number of years in teaching, must have a scholarship agenda whether that agenda includes "practical" works that can be used by attorneys and courts, student oriented pieces such as case books or classroom materials, attempts to influence legislation or an effort to change the direction of legal discourse. But where do we begin? How do we come to understand ourselves, our institutions and our profession to the point that what we write satisfies both us and our audience? In this issue, you will find at least three answers to these questions in the works of Professors Burr, Knight, and Motomura.

In recent years, Critical Race Theory has become a "hot" issue in academic circles. Many minority professors have found that the explicit introduction of race consciousness into legal scholarship enriches both the author and the reader. Yet, as Professor Espinoza points out, the attempt to label scholarship as "feminist," "race critical," or by some other term may, in the end, be more restrictive than liberating. In an attempt to serve all minority professors, whatever their scholarship interest, the 1990 Minority Law Teachers' Conference did not focus di-

rectly on Critical Race Theory. Instead, through the works of Professors Carrasco and Culp, we were introduced to an analysis of a variety of methods of practicing scholarship from the minority perspective. These methods and critiques are necessarily informed by race and racial subordination as is all legal scholarship from whatever source even when not falling under the heading of "Critical Race Theory."

As with any conference, there were many people who contributed to the success of our gathering who were unable to provide papers for publication. These people are no less responsible for the quality of the experience we shared in October of 1990.

Because we wanted to make the Conference accessible to as many people as possible, we kept the fees for attendance extremely low. Thus, we were forced to solicit contributions from a number of sources. Those providing monies to sponsor the conference include: University of Akron, C. Blake McDowell Law Center, Black Lawyers' Association of Cincinnati, Capital University Law School, Case Western Reserve University Law School, Cincinnati Bar Association, University of Cincinnati College of Law, Cleveland State University, Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, University of Dayton School of Law, University of Kentucky College of Law, University of Louisville School of Law, National Bar Association, Northern Kentucky University, Salmon P. Chase College of Law, Ohio Northern University Pettit College of Law, The Ohio State University College of Law, University of Toledo College of Law and all the panel members who paid their own way to attend the conference.

This Conference could not have taken place without the help of many people who went above and beyond the call of duty to make sure that everything about the conference met the highest professional standards. These people include: Professor William D. Bell, Professor Kenneth Dau-Schmidt, Professor John Murphy, Professor Inyeai Ororokuma, Professor William Rands, Professor Alphonse M. Squillante and a host of students from the University of Cincinnati College of Law all of whom went out of their way to make sure that our guests were welcome at this historic event.

In addition, there were those who spent many a long and frustrating day coordinating the Conference. Lisa Dowd and Brenda Hurst, Connie Miller, Reference Librarian Mariano Morales, Assistant Dean Jim Schoenfeld, and, finally, Associate Dean Barbara Watts.

Associate Dean Watts deserves more than a mention, sentence or paragraph. She was the lifeblood of this Conference. Without her, there would have been no conference and I would have been happily ensconced in a mental institution. With her, the Conference was the triumph that you see before you in these pages.

Finally, I must thank the St. Louis University *Public Law Review*, its Editor-in-Chief, Jose A. Baez and its faculty advisor, Professor Leland Ware who had the foresight to know that the Conference pa-

pers deserved publication. As you read through these papers, I know that you will thank them too.

As I complete this introduction, the passover season is upon us. Passover, with its theme of the exodus from slavery, is an appropriate holiday during which to reflect on what we accomplished with this Conference. The seder is the telling of a story as was this conference. A story of how a people faced great obstacles in its pursuit of a vision of a better world. At the end of the seder we say "This year there are those still in slavery. Next year, may all people be free." What more is there to say but amen?

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