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John Weaver

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Tribute to Professor Tom Holdych

*John Weaver**

Tom Holdych taught the very first class at this law school. The school was in a very different place both physically and institutionally in 1972. We were a new law school with only one teacher who had significant experience teaching in law schools, and most of us were as young as our students. There were 427 students in our classes then, and for each one of them, Tom Holdych was their introduction to legal education.

They could not have had a better start and neither could the law school. The law school became noted for fine teaching and academic excellence; it is still so noted. This reputation is part of Tom's legacy to us all today and to all of the future students of Seattle University School of Law.

Anyone who knew Tom as a professor knew that he was a demanding teacher with the highest expectations for his students, but Tom never demanded anything from his students that he didn't think they were capable of or that he felt would be unreasonable had the roles been reversed. He had those same high demands and expectations for all of his fellow faculty, and he created an ethic of teaching that is still part of this law school. The young teachers at this law school who today command the respect of the students and their peers do so because of the classroom quality left by Tom's legacy.

The *Seattle University Law Review* that contains this tribute is also a part of Tom's legacy. Tom knew that the kind of law school that we wanted to become needed to have a law review, and Tom knew how to get one started. Tom was the first editor of our law review, making him one of the few people to serve as the editor in chief of two law reviews.

When we made the decisions that shaped our law school, Tom was a clear and forceful voice for a rigorous legal education, but Tom was never really a true Kingsfield. No one had an affectionate nickname for Kingsfield, and he never described the penumbræ of the Bill of Rights with reference to a zone defense as Tom did. On that note, Tom also coached one of the law school's intramural basketball teams and led them to a campus championship.

When the faculty consisted of ten or so lawyers, you may well imagine that the discussions, debates, and arguments that accompanied the decisions we made on matters ranging from grades, to curriculum, to hir-

* Professor of Law at Seattle University School of Law.

ing could be intense. One thing that distinguished our law school was that there never seemed to be predictable voting blocs. We listened to each other's arguments and made our decisions on the merits of the points. When Tom spoke you might disagree with him, but you always knew that he had the best interests of the law school at heart and that he would support the position the faculty adopted whether it was his or not.

You always knew that Tom had thought through his position and that it was logically reasoned. The only time I doubted this was with respect to his continued belief that the Fighting Illini would win another Rose Bowl.

Tom was more than just a good teacher and a good colleague. His concern for our students' personal and spiritual growth helped organize the Christian Law Society; Tom was always active in helping those in need.

Tom and I were very different in a number of ways, but when Tom offered his hopes and prayers at a difficult time for my family, I knew that his would help if anyone's would. I can simply say that—more than anyone else I have ever known—Tom was a good person.