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We Are on the Ascent

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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

We are on the ascent

Once again, it gives me great pleasure to speak with you at a time of enormous activity and vitality at SUNY Buffalo Law School. Those words cannot be used to describe many law schools in the country. But yet, with your generous support and wise counsel, we are not only weathering the turbulence that has hit legal education and the legal profession, we are in fact on the ascent.

My belief is that the law school of the future must be global in orientation and outreach. American legal practice realized this fact long ago, but law schools have been slow to respond to globalization. We are taking steps to rise to this challenge. This year, I appointed Professor David Westbrook as director of global strategic initiatives. In this capacity, Professor Westbrook is working closely with me, the faculty and staff to elevate our international presence and create synergies between SUNY Buffalo Law School – the State of New York’s public law school – and downstate, the nation and the world. We need to claim our position as the affordable gateway to New York law –

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– Dean Makau W. Mutua

the global center of international finance and law. We need to build on our excellent New York City Program in Finance and Law.

But the game-changer for us will be in becoming a magnet for international students for both the J.D. and LL.M. cohorts. We have asked, and received approval, from the ABA and the New York Court of Appeals to offer a two-year J.D. for international students who already hold a first degree in law from their countries. We believe these



Law School Dean Makau W. Mutua, left, and UB President Satish K. Tripathi with cheerleaders at the festive Campaign for SUNY Buffalo Law School kickoff event on April 26

students will help globalize our school, create excitement among our domestic students and enrich our alumni. Already UB is ranked among the top 15 public research universities in the nation for international students. The Law School can harness these synergies with the rest of the University to become a premier international center for excellence in legal education.

The other enterprise that speaks to our vitality is the tremendous success of the Campaign for SUNY Buffalo Law School (www.law.buffalo.edu/campaign). We have just launched the public phase of the Campaign this April after reaching 60 percent of our total goal of \$30 million. What is most impressive is that your generosity has come through during the most trying period economically since the Great Depression. We are riding a great wave, including our celebration of 125 years of SUNY Buffalo Law School this aca-

demical year. That event in downtown Buffalo – the grandest in the history of the school – was attended by 1,000 strong. Thank you for your commitment, support and belief in our work together.

Finally, let me reiterate the growth in junior faculty over the last five years. We have hired 17 excellent new professors to cover our comprehensive curriculum, especially in black-letter law. We educate future lawyers with a conscience so that they can help the world entrench a culture of justice. We are grateful for the unstinting support of UB President Satish Tripathi and UB Provost Charles Zukoski in our campaign for academic excellence. I could not ask for a greater alumni community. You humble me – and the entire Law School – with your dedication.