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Dedication - Ronald Davenport

Henry J. McAnulty

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RONALD DAVENPORT

*The Reverend Henry J. McAnulty**

I have known Ron Davenport since he first joined Duquesne's law faculty as an Assistant Professor in 1963. He came to Duquesne shortly after earning a Master's Degree in law at Yale University, where he won the highly prestigious Francis Kellor prize for a paper on international law. As a student at Temple University School of Law, he won the Robert Lamberton Award for the highest grade in constitutional law as well as the Nat N. Wolfsohn Memorial Award for the highest grade in real property. After graduating from Yale, Ron wrote a brief for the NAACP in defense of the Reverend Ralph D. Abernathy, who was arrested during an integration drive, and defended the University of Mississippi's first black law student when the student was expelled from school.

Ron Davenport's record indicates that he was a bright young man when he joined the faculty seventeen years ago. Courted by countless firms and organizations, he had great potential and the ability to enter almost any field of law he desired. Ron elected to pursue the field of legal teaching and research, often the least lucrative alternative available to a young attorney. Ron once told me that he chose teaching and research for the intellectual freedom and challenge it offered, enabling him to become involved in the issues of the day—and the 1960's were fraught with many issues indeed—from the balanced perspective of a teacher and scholar.

Seven years after joining the Law School faculty, Ron so impressed his fellow faculty with his contributions and leadership that he was unanimously elected Dean. Five years later the faculty again unanimously named Ron to the post. When he was first appointed Dean, Ron was the youngest law school dean in the country and the first black person to assume the deanship of a predominately white university.

* C.S.Sp., D.Ed. Father McAnulty is Chancellor of Duquesne University. He served as the University's President from 1959 to 1980.

Ron Davenport brought widespread recognition to Duquesne's law faculty and students as a result of the high standards of academic achievement and performance established during his tenure. Through contacts with the community, he developed renewed appreciation among Pittsburgh's corporate and civic leaders for the countless contributions made by Duquesne law alumni in this city. He is a tremendously important role model for our own minority students at Duquesne and a valuable asset to the city's black community. Ron also was an important force in realizing the new School of Law facility currently under construction.

I know all too well the many mixed feelings one has when the time comes to move to a new role. I wish Ron Davenport my very best and hope that he will find new strength in the challenges that lie ahead for him. He was very good for Duquesne, and we profited by his leadership. As the University's President during many of his years as Dean, I am grateful for all that Ron did on Duquesne's behalf.