

## Key Player: Alison Asti

Alison Asti never played baseball or football, but the management teams of the Orioles and Ravens know her well. The 1979 law school grad has hit a few home runs in her role as executive director of the Maryland Stadium Authority, including the national model for stadiums, Camden Yards. (“A fine combination of talent, dedication of those involved, and luck,” she says, deflecting the credit to those around her.)

When you take into account the negotiations making possible the renovation of Baltimore’s Hippodrome, the building of the Montgomery County Conference Center, the Ocean City Convention Center expansion, the new Sports Legends museum, and a host of other projects, her juggling skills become evident. (Not to mention the long list of roles she has assumed in national and local bar associations, as well as a seat on the UM Law Board of Visitors. It’s her way of showing that lawyers are dedicated, service-oriented types rather than the too-often-shown negative stereotype.)

Asti came to UM Law for its strong well-rounded foundation for law in all its aspects. “Some students come intending to specialize, but you never know what will come in the door and what you’re good at.” What’s important, she says, “is learning how to write, and think.”

In her case, that special opportunity landed on her desk on her first day back after maternity leave, when she was a junior partner with the firm of Gordon, Feinblatt, Rothman, Hoffberger, & Hollander. “My slate was clear, so I was available to assist Eugene Feinblatt in the sale of the Orioles to Edwin Bennett Williams.” She set



off to research every baseball lease in the nation. “I gained an expertise that changed my career,” she says. She spent years working with the Maryland Stadium Authority; now its executive director, she has branched out from sports team contract negotiations to numerous high-visibility public projects. She’s now in the throes of negotiating new extensive sports venues for Maryland—a \$100 million Coppin State sports center, a major equestrian center, another minor league baseball stadium, and a motor sports park.

It’s not the game that drives her, and it’s rare that sports heroes show up (though Cal Ripken did make an appearance to make a business point as only he could). Rather, it’s the fascinating details of these community projects and the “high-powered transactions with interesting people.” She also represents the MSA in legislative matters, so she can affect change from the micro to the macro, from food service contracts to orchestrating public funding in Annapolis.

It’s not unusual in law to be the only female, but it’s especially so in the male-dominated sports arena. “I’m oblivious to it,” Asti says. “When I look around the room, it’s just all of the guys—I don’t notice that it’s all of the guys and Alison.”

A fine member of the team.—Kathy H. Ely

Maximilian Franz/Maryland Daily Record

## Law School Big Hitters



Being tops in the country as litigators and advocates is one thing, but breaking into the Elite 8 in the law school softball championships two years in a row...now that really makes a student proud!

Professor Robert Percival is an international star in his environmental work, which may relate to how much he enjoys the greens of the baseball diamond. As coach of the University of Maryland Law School

co-ed softball team, he has led his most recent crew to a host of top honors in the last year. After winning the 2004 summer league, and the 2004 regional crown, this spring they made it to the final eight in the 2005 national law school competition. (They lost to rival and host school UVA.) A big bright spot was student Peter Nothstein coming in second in the home run derby, against more than a hundred competitors.

The recent graduate now says, “It’s been a particularly fun way to exercise my competitiveness. It’s fun being a part of a team, and succeeding together. It’s also great to play with Professor Percival, who is so passionate about the team.” Teammate Cortney Madea (’05) adds, “Softball and Professor Percival showed me that law school could be fun. Some of my closest friends and best memories came from our softball experiences.” Past players even come back regularly for the annual “Alumni All Star” tournament each October.

Percival knows that it’s important to provide a release, especially for “those recent graduates who are studying so intensely for the bar exam.” It also feeds that competitive streak so apparent in lawyers. “I think it does provide a useful lesson in the importance of teamwork,” he says. He always plays women, emphasizing “the keys to success in coed softball is not having a bunch of guys who can hit the ball far, but rather having women who are terrific players and playing great defense as a team.”

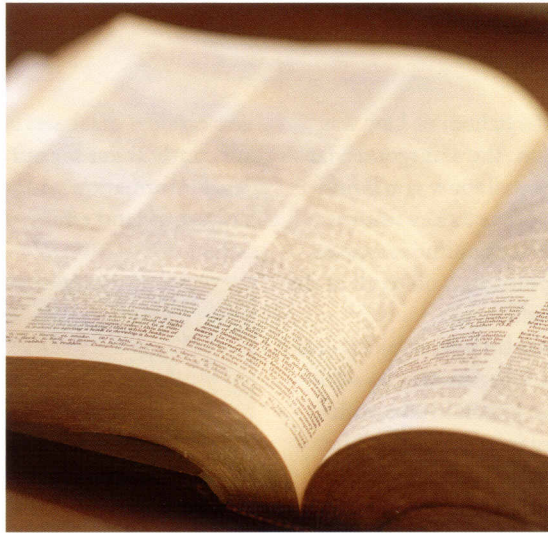
—Kathy H. Ely



# Fitting Tributes: Endowed Scholarships

What better gift is there to honor a loved one than a practical investment in the future? Endowed scholarships are one of the School of Law's highest philanthropic priorities, helping to support the next generation of leaders in the legal community. In recent years, numerous graduates and friends of the law school have endowed such scholarships to provide lasting legacies. Since July of 2004, the law school has added eight new endowed scholarships. Two of the newest full scholarships at the School of Law are the Catherine S. Edwards Memorial Scholarship and the William H. and Madeline W. Murphy Black Law Students Association (BLSA) Scholarship.

Chrystal Edwards, the mother of Cathy Edwards ('80), established the scholarship to honor her daughter, who passed away in 2003. An honor graduate and member of the *Maryland Law Review*, Cathy Edwards had a long career with the Civil Rights Office of the U.S. Department of Education in Philadelphia. Her mother saw this as a fitting memorial tribute, noting, "Cathy loved



the law school and valued her time there, particularly the time she spent as editor of the *Maryland Law Review* and the work she did as Professor Alan Hornstein's research assistant." The scholarship will support students who have a record of high academic achievement and financial need.

William (Billy) H. Murphy, Jr. ('69), established the William H. and Madeline W.

Murphy BLSA Scholarship to honor his parents following the death of his father, The Honorable William H. Murphy, Sr. ('46). Murphy remembers, "My father was an elegant, principled, and courageous man. His life was shaped by a strong family, a vibrant black community, the Great Depression, and a society that, for most of his life, consistently sought to devalue him as a black man. He was driven to greatness and to be a lifelong evangelist for excellence, ambition, high achievement, and justice in the black community." The scholarship honors these values by supporting students who

exhibit academic excellence, have financial need, and are members of the BLSA at the law school.—*Chris Molloy*

*For information on how to start an endowed scholarship, please contact Chris Molloy, assistant dean for Development and Alumni Relations at 410-706-2070 or [cmolloy@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:cmolloy@law.umaryland.edu).*

## Coming . . . November 4th

The University of Maryland School of Law  
**Business Law Conference**

**Twilight in the Zone of Insolvency:**  
Fiduciary Duty and the Creditors of Troubled Companies

For more information and to register:  
[www.law.umaryland.edu/conferences.asp](http://www.law.umaryland.edu/conferences.asp)

UNIVERSITY  
of MARYLAND  
SCHOOL of  
LAW