

LAW



José Bahamonde-González, the newly appointed Assistant Dean for Administration, is eager to take on this challenge. “It will require extensive planning and attention to detail. But, it is all very worthwhile,” says Bahamonde-González. He sees the next three years as exciting times for the future of the law school. He is also aware of his responsibility to provide the law school community with the best possible environment in which to operate during the construction period of the new building.

Toward this goal, Assistant Dean Bahamonde-González recently hired Deni Tabor as Director of Administrative Services. Among her responsibilities, Tabor (above) will coordinate all the details related to the renovation and the move to the Law School at Campus Center. “I am confident that, together with Tabor, we will successfully accomplish this task,” he says.

Moving—

in terms of human experiences—is right up there with pulling teeth, choosing a burial plot or loaning money to your shiftless brother-in-law. Everybody faces these things sometime, and nobody likes them. For most of us, moving is at or near the bottom of the list of least-favored activities.

Still, if you’re going to grow, change and succeed, usually a move is required. This fact holds true for the School of Law as it does for any individual. So,

just like a college graduate taking that first big job, beginning this summer the school (and the Thurgood Marshall Law Library) will pack its bags and leave its Baltimore Street home to live in the center of campus—specifically the former Health Sciences Library and the recently constructed 515 Building next door—while the current site is dismantled and a new, improved school rises in its place.

SCHOOL

at Campus Center

Pulling up stakes to continue growing roots

BY CHRIS HART

Sounds daunting, doesn't it? Imagine moving an entire school—all the books, the papers, the furniture—not to mention the hundreds of folks who happen to study, work and interact there every day. Then, just when you're really settled in, you have to move back to your old stomping grounds. Who in their right mind would want to head up that task?

Meet Deni Tabor, newly appointed Director of Administrative Services and the unfortunate soul who is in charge of the cross-campus expedition.

"Well, we're going to get an industrial shredder and go from there," Tabor says with a wry smile. Tabor has established an operations center in her second-floor office, where she is putting together the extensive plan to inject the school into two linked "surge" buildings two blocks south on West Lombard Street for two, or perhaps, three years. As of this writing, she and the school's leadership have reduced the downtime created by the move to a bare minimum—a one-week closure for the Alumni Office, less than a week for the library, and a handful of summer classes to be held in the School of Social Work. Other than the fact that everything is going into boxes for a while, the school will continue to function as a major hub of legal education and a center for lawyering in its new "apartment." Even the phone numbers will stay the same.

How will they do it?

Since February, support teams from each floor of the school worked with professional movers to pack files, equipment, furniture, books and coordinate its delivery. By Commencement, the building's contents should largely be ready to haul. Trucks will then take everything to Lombard Street, where work crews will have modified the buildings to better accommodate the teachers, students, administrators and staff.

As with any move, however, there are certain items Tabor expects to leave behind: "Some faculty have big old couches from home in their offices, and we're asking for that furniture to be sent home or recycled," she says. "That's why we're bringing the dumpster around."

Given the growing infrastructure of the University as a whole, those who consider themselves part of the family appear to be getting used to pulling up stakes. Just this past winter, for instance, the School of Nursing quietly left the 515 Building to take occupancy of its new home farther up West Lombard. Almost overnight, hundreds of people left the building with a minimal amount of fuss and muss.

Tabor is confident the move-in will go just as smoothly, although campus may have a hard time adjusting to the reality of brilliant law students practicing the art of argument in what is traditionally the contemplative setting surrounding Davidge Hall.

And then there's the question of who gets an office with a window...

So, Dean Donald Gifford: Is all of this hard work worth it?

"When you consider that the end result will be a world-class facility for teaching and practicing law in a public setting, when you see the phenomenal response we've had from alumni and friends to the idea of creating a new law school, the answer is a resounding yes. I know we're doing the right thing. It's our way of making our own destiny."

Meanwhile, Tabor is gathering up empty boxes while her colleagues figure out what to keep and what to throw away.

Destiny, it seems, takes a U-Haul.