Greetings from Michigan State University College of Law! As we change through another exciting year, I wanted to take an opportunity to thank and recognize those of you who make a difference to MSU Law during 2011.

With your help, we continue to attract the most talented students, recruit expert faculty, and offer a rigorous education that prepares the next generation of attorneys to achieve great things for their clients and communities. Your support makes our accomplishments possible.

In just the past few months, we launched plans to commemorate our rich Detroit College of Law history with an impressive new building entryway, renamed our Tax Law Clinic after its beloved founder, the late Professor Alvin Storrs, and established the Lori E. Talbry Center for Human Rights of Women and Children. We also created two new study abroad offerings—the 21st Century Law Practice Summer Program in London and the Intellectual Property Summer Institute in Croatia—that together put MSU Law at the forefront of cutting edge developments in the field of law. We applauded our students’ dedication, academic achievements, and remarkable performances at regional, national, and international advocacy competitions.

Every gift matters as we continue to provide programs that enhance the quality of our legal education, advance the reputation of the Law College, and strengthen important links among our alumni. The leaders within our philanthropic community who are highlighted in these pages inspire us all. Most importantly, they remind us of the impact we can have when we look beyond ourselves.

Your generous gifts of time are equally vital. Your participation as event hosts, recruitment and career panel members, competition judges, student mentors, and employers is integral to our success and to that of our students.

I am pleased to present the list of donors who made a gift, pledge, or pledge payment in 2011, as well as the stories of just a sampling of those who made a difference during the year. Exercising times, about the Law College, and I am very proud of your dean. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jow W. Howarth
Dean and Professor of Law

---

Preserving Our Legacy

When the Detroit College of Law (DCL) building on Elizabeth Street in downtown Detroit was razed to make way for new development, generations of alumni understandably ---with profound sense of loss. Through extended conversations with DCL alumni, a vision emerged that would provide a renewed sense of place for the thousands who graduated during the Law College’s days in downtown Detroit.

The new DCL Commemorative Plaza will honor our rich heritage and reinforce the deep connection our DCL graduates have with their alma mater. The DCL Plaza, designed to improve the aesthetics of the front of the Law College, will feature a new canopy entrance, much needed outdoor seating, and a cornerstone and granite seal.

Features of the new canopy entrance will include a statue of Professor Storrs’ Lifelong Friend Trustee Emeritus David Sparrow’s College of Law name to the building.

In addition, the Plaza will house a new DCL Plaza, designed to improve the aesthetics of the front of the Law College, will feature a new canopy entrance, much needed outdoor seating, and a cornerstone and granite seal.

The Plaza will also offer an opportunity to thank and recognize the alumni who made a difference to the Law College.

To learn more about the DCL Commemorative Plaza or to make a gift, please visit the Law College website or contact Tina Kashat Casoli at casoli@law.msu.edu or 517-432-6840.
Getting Involved & Giving Back

Trustee Morris Gives Back

Trustee Michael Morris, ’81, recently pledged $100,000 to create the Morris Family Scholarship. “Finding this important scholarship will help relieve some of the financial burden that rising tuition puts onto students,” Morris said of his gift.

Professor Storrs’ Lifelong Friend Makes Gift in His Memory

Sydney Ross, a lifelong friend, colleague, and business partner of the late Professor Alvin Storrs (far right), recently made a $100,000 pledge to help rename the Law College’s Tax Law Clinic and create a scholarship in Storrs’ name. The gift memorializes Ross’ passion for tax law.

Trustee Emeritus David Sparrow’s Daughters Honor His Wishes

Before Trustee Emeritus David Sparrow passed away in January, he shared his wishes to support the planned DCL Plaza through a $100,000 gift. His daughters are pleased to honor his wishes.

“David Sparrow was an exceptionally decent and gracious person,” said Dean Howarth. “MSU College of Law was graced by his leadership, and I was privileged to know him as a friend. His wish to support this effort to honor the founding of our great Law College is much appreciated.”

A proud graduate of Detroit College of Law, Sparrow was an integral member of the Board of Trustees since 1985. He served as treasurer from 1989 until mid-2001. He chaired the MSU College of Law Foundation and served as its president until 2007. He also supported the Law College as a past chair and member of the MSU College of Law Development Council.

Trustee Sparrow, a Detroit native, received his Juris Doctor degree from Detroit College of Law in 1951 and a Doctor of Laws degree from the Law College in 1995. A prominent real estate and property development attorney, he founded the firm of Revin & Sparrow with the late Gerald Revin in 1972. The two practiced together until 2001. Sparrow was the first member of the MSU Law community to pledge financial support toward building the DCL Plaza. His generosity and dedication to the Law College will be permanently commemorated on the plaza’s donor wall.

Professor Johnson Inspires Students, Gives Back

Professor Emeritus Clark Johnson, LL.B. ’62, has inspired students for nearly 40 years of teaching at the Law College. Also an inspiration within the philanthropic community, Professor Johnson recently pledged $100,000 in support of the DCL Plaza. Professor Johnson, a beloved professor to literally thousands of graduates, makes it a point to develop special connections with his students, who he also encourages to contact him for support as they move on from law school.

Edward Littlejohn Creates Charitable Gift Annuity

Edward Littlejohn, 70, pledged $250,000 to the Law College several years ago in the form of a bequest. He recently paid some of his gift early by creating a charitable gift annuity, which pays him a fixed, guaranteed stream of income for the rest of his life. At his passing, the balance of the gift will be directed to MSU College of Law.

In honor of his generosity, the conference room in the dean’s suite was named the Edward Littlejohn Conference Room. The room features two pieces of art and a sculpture that Littlejohn recently donated. Charitable gift annuities qualify for a tax deduction in the year in which the gift is established, and much of the annual income may be received tax-free. For more information, contact Tina Kashat Casoli, director of the MSU Law Office of Advancement, at casoli@law.msu.edu or 517-432-6840.

Law Firm Challenge

Alumni “compete” for the highest participation rate among firms in the Law Firm Challenge, which now is in its third year at MSU College of Law. One alumni, David Hart, ’91, (at left) has served as a team captain for Maddin Hauser Wartell Roth & Heller for two years in a row. Thanks, David!

A Voice for Human Rights

MSU College of Law has established the Lori E. Talisky Center for Human Rights of Women and Children and an endowed professorship in international human rights law, thanks to the generosity of alumnus Lon Talisky, ’96, and his wife, Susan. 

The Center will serve as a leading voice for international human rights and provide opportunities for MSU Law students to do this important work around the globe,” Talisky said. “Professor Bitensky’s impact in the classroom and dedication to international human rights law while supporting the couple’s goals of improving life outcomes for women and children who suffer—or are at risk of suffering—human rights violations.”