

Dean Ward Farnsworth TLR Centennial Banquet Remarks

Being Dean gives you a perch from which you can see the entire life cycle of the Law School. You spend time with current students, with graduates who went here fifty or sixty years ago, and with everyone in between. At this banquet it's possible to see that entire cycle beautifully represented here in this one room. What variety there is among you!

Some of you attended the Law School when women made up less than 5% of your graduating class. The share of women in our entering class this past fall was 57%.

Some of you went here when Austin had about 150,000 residents and was an overgrown college town. Now it has 2,000,000 people, and it's still an overgrown college town.

Some of you had 600 classmates, some of you had 300. And you all have different politics, different careers, and different stories before and after your time at the school.

You're all so different—but then there are the remarkable things you have in common. First, talent. Most students come to law school wondering the same thing: will I make Law Review? Well, congratulations: you all made Law Review! You're a collection of our most talented students over many decades. You're the cream of the crop.

Second, dedication. You all chose to take those talents of yours and lend them for a little while to make our Law Review better—more excellent, more influential, more illustrious. The Law School benefited enormously. Our stature and prestige depends significantly on the quality of our flagship Law Review. You've all contributed to it, and so you've all helped to elevate the Law School and its standing in the world.

You've also contributed to an institution that has remained constant and important throughout a century in which so much else at the school, and in the world, has changed. I think of the Law Review like a long chain novel in which each of you has etched a few lines. The result lies in the hundred volumes of it that have been gloriously published over the last century, and in some of the stories that will be told here tonight.

Above all I want to convey my appreciation to all of you on behalf of the faculty, whose ranks I will soon join when I step aside from the deanship. The greatest joy of a professor's job is the chance to work with the outstanding students that all of you have been. We're so proud of all that you have given to the school, of the lawyers you have become, and of the lives that you have led. Thank you for making the University of Texas Law School such an inspiring place for our faculty to work and teach. And welcome back.