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Dedication to Professor Margaret P. Currin

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Dedication to Margaret P. Currin

Margaret Currin just stopped by my office. She came to say hello and to hand over some externship documentation as she cleaned out her office following her retirement. I happened to be writing this dedication; I scrambled to close the Word document on my computer and hide the documents on my desk without appearing suspicious. During our conversation, she asked how old my children are now. I responded,

Maegan is four-and-a-half and Nolan will be thirteen tomorrow. Thirteen years ago tomorrow, I called you as Dean of Administration to tell you I wasn't sure I could take my Contracts exam, scheduled for the next day. I was headed to the hospital in labor (ten days early). As always, you assured me everything would work out just fine; and as always, you made sure everything did.

She smiled, remembering back to one of the countless times she helped a student navigate the difficult task of balancing law school with life.

Margaret has been my professor, my dean, and my colleague; she is my predecessor as Director of the Externship program and my friend for life. She has profoundly impacted me as a role model and a mentor with her unwavering faith, commitment to her family, dedication to helping others, and achievement of excellence in the practice and profession of law. The editorial staff of the *Campbell Law Review* could have chosen no finer personification of the ideals and traditions of the Campbell University School of Law to honor with the Dedication of this Issue.

Margaret was the first student to be accepted into Campbell University's brand new law school in the fall of 1976. She proceeded to distinguish herself as a student, attorney, dean, and professor. She graduated second in her Campbell Law class, *cum laude*, in 1979. She then served as a legislative assistant and counsel to U.S. Senator John Tower. She returned to Campbell Law in 1981 as an assistant dean and associate professor.

Margaret was the first female U.S. Attorney in North Carolina, appointed in 1988 as the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina. Following her five-year tenure, she returned to Campbell Law and

resumed teaching. She later became associate dean overseeing academic, student, and administrative affairs. During her thirty years in legal education and law school administration, Margaret taught countless students in the areas of government litigation, federal crimes, scientific evidence, election and lobby law, administrative law, and professional responsibility.

Margaret was a trail blazer in legal education, establishing the Campbell Law Externship Program in 1990 and single-handedly building it into a nationally recognized program. During her twenty-five years as Director of the Externship Program, she worked with more than 1,500 students as they gained valuable, hands-on experience in public service, non-profit, corporate, and pro bono environments. Under her guidance, eighty-five percent of recent graduates completed one or more externships as a part of Campbell Law's signature program. Because of her efforts, newly-minted Campbell Law attorneys have had the ability and experience to practice law from the moment they passed the bar.

Margaret gave generously to the cooperative faculty governance of the law school—serving on and chairing numerous committees, including the pro bono committee and the awards committee. In her role as chairperson of the awards committee, she helped draft an Awards Cookbook with fellow inaugural Campbell Law classmate and current Law Library Director Olivia Weeks, detailing the qualifications for receiving and timelines for submitting applications for each award. Hundreds of pages in length, this Cookbook helps ensure future chairs and committee members can easily administer the awarding of the hundreds of awards bestowed on Campbell Law students each year.

Margaret has been a leader in numerous civic, professional, and public service organizations. She was president of the National Association of Former United States Attorneys, served on and chaired the Wake County Board of Elections, served as General Counsel for a state party and other political committees, and served on the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Committee with the North Carolina State Board of Elections. She has also represented political committees before the Federal Election Commission.

Margaret has served as chairman and first vice chairman of the North Carolina Rules Review Commission, a commission to which she was appointed in 2011, and reappointed in 2013 and 2015. She serves on the North Carolina Bar Association's BarCARES Board of Directors and on several North Carolina Bar Association councils. She was elected to the Wake County Bar Association/Tenth Judicial District Board of Directors in 2015.

In recognition of her exemplary service to the State of North Carolina and her community, Margaret was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine

in 2015, one of the most prestigious awards conferred by the Governor of North Carolina.

Margaret's professional accomplishments are truly remarkable, but you would never learn about any of them from her; she is humble and unassuming. Margaret lights up, however, when talking about her family—her husband Sam, an accomplished attorney and judge, and her son Thomas, a 2010 *cum laude* Campbell Law graduate and successful family law attorney. The Currins are a close family. They often attend Campbell Law and North Carolina Bar Association events together, and Thomas is inclined to tease his parents in his Facebook posts, much to their amusement.

Just as she delights in her family, Margaret relished the opportunity to make a difference in students' lives. She knew each student by name, and her door was always open, literally and figuratively. A line of students frequently formed outside her door—and benches were placed in the hall next to her door accordingly—waiting to talk to her about classes, externships, life, or the balancing of all three. Innumerable Campbell Law graduates have Margaret to thank for giving them just the proper nudge or nugget of wisdom they needed to survive law school.

I was fortunate enough to inherit Campbell Law's Externship Program from Margaret. I often introduce myself to externship site supervisors as the "new, unimproved Margaret." They laugh—and agree with me. Her shoes have been impossibly too big for me to fill alone. Fortunately, just as Margaret was with me through my law school career, she has been with me through my transition to Externship Director. She provided me with her meticulously organized program files—honestly, more organized files I have never seen before nor will ever see again. She paved my way with each site supervisor, assuring them (and me) that our transition would be seamless. She answered my every phone call, my every email, and my every text message immediately, even the one she received on the beach during her family vacation when I needed her guidance. As always, she assured me everything would work out just fine; and as always, she made sure everything did.

People will soon forget what a person says and does but they will forever remember the way a person makes them feel.¹ Margaret transcends that notion, having woven herself into the very fabric of the feeling one takes away from the Campbell Law experience. One simply cannot think of

1. Paraphrasing Maya Angelou.

Campbell Law without the warm, steady presence of Margaret Currin. For that, all of us at Campbell Law are forever in your debt. Thank you.

*Allegra Collins**

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