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DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

The *Clark Memorandum* is a unique law school magazine. This issue, like all issues, will be shipped far beyond the alumni of BYU Law School to members of the J. Reuben Clark Law Society and to other friends all over the world. The Law School also publishes an annual report, which focuses on our alumni, but the *Clark Memorandum* has always had a broader purpose to provide its readers with some of the most thoughtful efforts by LDS lawyers and lawyers of other faiths to grapple with how to integrate a life of religious faith with commitment to professional ideals. Over time, the pages of this magazine have built up quite an architecture of ideas.

This building project, not only in the *Clark Memorandum* but also in the traditional legal scholarship that the BYU Law School faculty produces, is at the core of the Law School's mission. As lawyers, we understand that writing is a critical part of the thinking process. I've always appreciated the story of the man who, when asked what he thought about a particular topic, responded, "I don't know. I haven't written about it yet." Most of us have had the experience where a particular brief or letter just won't write because our ideas can't survive the discipline of the clear exposition demanded by the written word.

Legal scholarship, with all of its footnotes that sometimes drive us crazy, is a high form of this process of thinking by writing. Producing a published article that grapples with a complex legal theory or policy problem demands a level of analytical rigor that simply isn't required in even the most sophisticated conversation. Even brilliant oral arguments are fleeting and transitory. Oral argument may carry the day in a particular setting, but it is unlikely to have influence beyond the original circle of listeners.

Recognizing the power of memorializing ideas in writing, it will not be surprising that one of our goals as a law school is to produce influential and enduring legal scholarship. I am proud of our faculty's record in that regard, and I was pleased that, at our annual Founders Day Dinner in August, Elder Dallin H. Oaks praised the "professional and public impact" of the faculty's scholarly work. The last couple of years have seen an impressive array of faculty publications appearing in some of the top law journals in the country. Even more satisfying than stellar placements, faculty scholarship is being cited and, as Elder Oaks noted, is influencing the trajectory of law and policy.

If you have a minute, I'd encourage you to visit our Law School website and take a look at the faculty's scholarship. A full list of publications can be viewed through the "Faculty" tab of the website under the "Faculty Research" link. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the writing and thinking in this issue of the *Clark Memorandum*.

Warm regards,



JAMES R. RASBAND

