



DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

Before the rise of law schools, lawyers were trained through apprenticeship. Such training involved learning the law the way we expect someone to learn woodworking: in the workplace as a craft and practical trade. One learns woodworking by working with, observing, and imitating an experienced master. We often think that kind of teaching and learning is from a bygone era, but, as explained by my colleague Brett Scharffs in an article entitled “Law as Craft,” published several years ago in the *Vanderbilt Law Review*, the idea of experienced masters imparting their knowledge to beginners is alive in the law. It is also alive and well at J. Reuben Clark Law School.



Our faculty continues to enjoy a reputation as remarkable classroom teachers, but their influence and training extends well beyond the classroom to taking students to lunch, to our “Fridays” (the Friday noon hour spent with students in the new student commons), and to the hundreds of office and hallway discussions with students each semester. Faculty mentoring, of course, is not limited to the academic or the social. It also takes the form of quiet, faith-filled conversations in faculty offices and unspoken examples that deep religious faith is fully compatible with rigorous analytical inquiry. My view has been that the relationship between faculty and students is at the heart of what makes J. Reuben Clark Law School distinctive.

Once students leave law school, the mentoring continues. In good law firms new lawyers work with more experienced lawyers, usually partners. The partners supervise, guide, and correct—with both words and actions—working closely with new lawyers and teaching them how to be true professionals.

Spurred on by the energy and ideas of one of our alumni, BYU Alumni Association Board of Directors member Jon Hafen has designed a new mentoring program for our students. Replacing our prior program that matched entering 1Ls with a mentor, this new program, focused on 2L and 3L students, allows a student to select a mentor based upon practice area and geographic location. Our hope is that, paired with our extraordinary externship program, this new Alumni Mentor Program will help students in the critical goal of finding employment within their target legal community and also begin a process of lifelong apprenticeship and mentoring. Within our alumni and our friends in the Law Society there are leaders in the public and private sectors throughout the world. Your generous support and mentoring of our students can make a real difference in their lives and careers. If you would like to learn more about the Alumni Mentor Program, please feel free to contact Beth Hansen at hansenb@law.byu.edu.

I am truly grateful for all that the readers of the *Clark Memorandum* do to mentor, teach, and train our students. I hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine, which has an abundance of thoughtful material. Please make the Law School one of your stops if you happen to be in Provo.

Warm regards,

JAMES R. RASBAND