

A photograph of a woman with brown hair, wearing a dark blue jacket over a light blue shirt, leaning on a wooden railing and looking down at a book or papers. She is standing in a large, arched brick structure, possibly a library or a study hall, with warm lighting. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape on the right side.

# S T R A T E G I C   P L A N

The University of Cincinnati **College of Law**

*Becoming the premier small, urban, public law school*



VISION:

*To be the premier small,  
urban, public law school  
in America, nationally  
recognized for its excellence,  
relevance, and impact.*



A **P R E M I E R** law school that is unstinting in its commitment to excellence in teaching, the scholarship of its faculty, its academic and professional life, its formation of strong and ethical leaders, and its engagement in the world.

A **S M A L L** law school that provides a close-knit and intimate educational environment while drawing on the resources of a major research university to offer a rich curriculum and an array of opportunities usually found only at much larger institutions. A supportive and collaborative community that is marked by an outstanding student-faculty ratio, strong and enduring relationships between faculty and students, personalized attention and mentoring, limited-enrollment classes, and diverse opportunities for each and every student.

An **U R B A N** law school that draws great strength from its vigorous engagement with a classic American city rich with opportunities and challenges, benefiting from partnerships and exchanges with vibrant legal, corporate, and civic communities as well as from its position within a leading urban research institution.

A **P U B L I C** law school that holds true to its commitments and traditions, dedicated to diversity, opportunity, advancement, and civic responsibility. A law school that is faithful to the role that lawyers, the legal profession, and higher education have in providing civic leadership, and which is determined to bring the very best to and draw the very best from its community.



## OUR MISSION:

To engage in superior, nationally-recognized scholarship and teaching while maximizing our unique benefits as a small, urban, public law school.

## OUR VALUES:

As members of a community that embraces the vision of the premier small, urban, public law school, we will:

- Strive for excellence in all that we do
- Provide a personalized approach to teaching and learning
- Nurture an engaged group of exceptional scholars who test concepts and theories with rigor and respect
- Communicate knowledge and ideas that further justice and the understanding of law and legal institutions
- Build a community of faculty, staff, and students diverse in background, perspective, and point of view
- Value the contributions of all members of the community
- Regard as vital our engagement with other disciplines, the bench, the bar, government, the business community, and institutions of civic leadership
- Uphold the highest ideals and ethics of the legal profession, including its commitment to public service
- Foster connections with our alumni, our University, our city, and the wider world
- Serve as trusted stewards of our traditions, culture, and resources
- Support one another as we carry out our vision

## AS ONE OF THE OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY OPER

the University of Cincinnati College of Law has a rich heritage and proud traditions. Throughout our almost 175 year history, our graduates have been leaders of the bench and bar, served in senior governmental positions, been active in the public service community, and succeeded in business, academia, and countless other fields.

It is from this rich heritage that we began our strategic planning process. We identified our strengths and challenges in an era when law schools actively compete for leading scholars and highly qualified students. We reached out to our community for counsel and ideas on where the legal profession and legal education are headed. And we fully understood and embraced the goals of the University's visionary academic plan, *UC|21: Defining the New Urban Research University*. *UC|21* lays out an ambitious set of goals and actions to define the role of the new urban research university in this dynamic new century—a role that emphasizes the University's capacity to educate, serve, and lead.

## ATING LAW SCHOOLS IN AMERICA,

This Strategic Plan builds on our strengths to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. And our strengths are many, including the scholarly influence of our faculty, the academic qualifications of our students, the reputation of our centers, institutes, and joint degree programs, the achievements of our alumni, and our relationships with the city and its institutions.

As we move forward, we face a number of challenges. Like most public institutions, we have seen a decline in public funding for our school that requires us to look to private sources for additional resources. This funding challenge is particularly acute as we must compete with other leading schools for the best faculty and students. Our faculty, while exceptionally qualified and highly productive, has lacked the financial support necessary to achieve the national visibility and reputation it rightly deserves. And we have not attained the diversity in our faculty or student body that we desire.

This Strategic Plan outlines our priorities and initiatives for the foreseeable future. Each section contains an overarching strategy and a series of action steps we plan to pursue. This Plan will serve as the guide to our decision making and a blueprint for a comprehensive campaign that will fund a number of our initiatives.

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## TO BUILD A STRONGER AND MORE

In an era when practitioners, academics, and policymakers are turning to law schools increasingly for knowledge and guidance, the faculty members of the College of Law are ahead of their time. For many years, our faculty have been committed not only to excellence in teaching, but also in producing influential scholarship.

Although the College has experienced success in retaining many of its most productive professors as well as attracting a strong group of rising scholars, it faces increasing competitive pressure in the hiring process. Productive and promising scholars are in great demand among leading law schools. A significant goal of this Plan is to attract additional resources not only to make faculty salaries more competitive, but also to add chaired professorships and other recognition opportunities comparable to our peer schools.

As important as it is for our faculty members to conduct research and produce scholarship, it is equally important that they convey those ideas to the wider world. Through this Plan, we will strengthen the ability of our faculty to promote their scholarship through additional speaking and writing opportunities, attendance at colloquia, visits to other law schools, and involvement with the bench, bar, business, and government.

We pride ourselves on offering our students the benefits of a personalized approach to legal education that includes a rich and varied curriculum comparable to much larger schools. We are able to make this commitment by relying on an effective group of adjunct professors, often drawn from the Cincinnati legal community, who can offer students a “real world” perspective on specialized legal issues. Our goal is to continue to strengthen this aspect of our faculty plan.

Finally, our community can be further enriched by collaborating with a number of distinguished visiting scholars, lecturers, and experts. We plan to establish a regular visiting scholar program as well as to facilitate faculty exchanges with leading international law schools.

# ENGAGED FACULTY

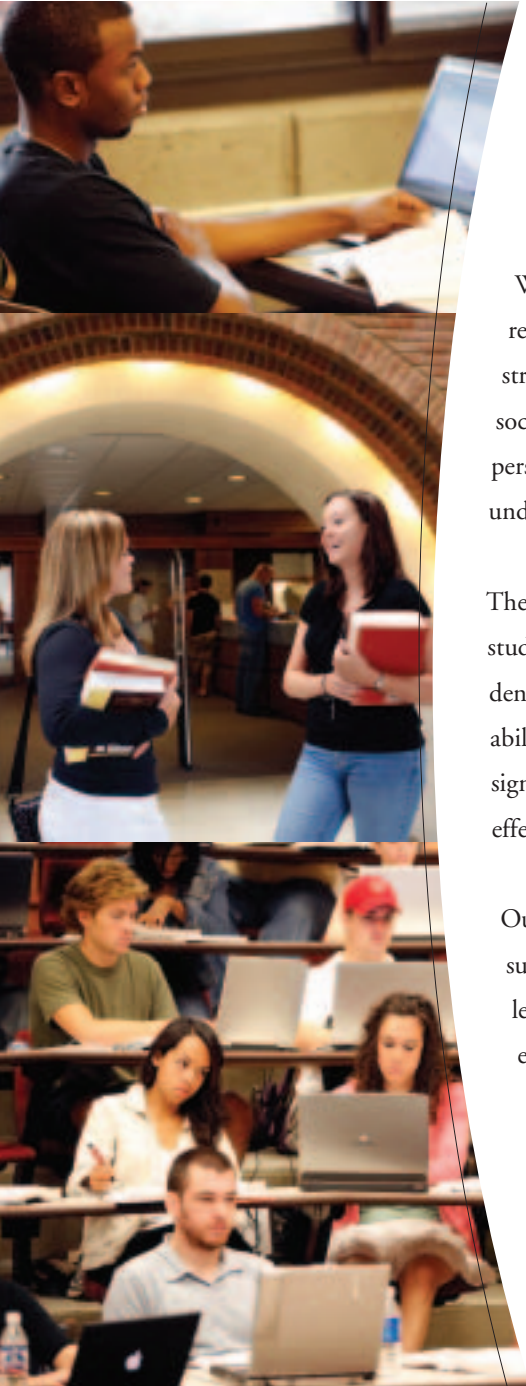
## ACTIONS

- **Continue to recruit and retain a faculty of outstanding and diverse scholars**
  - Focus on hiring faculty in areas that will achieve national recognition, produce synergy within the College and University, and enrich our centers, institutes, and joint programs
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- Bolster our faculty salary structure and establish additional chairs and other endowed professorships through funds raised as part of a comprehensive campaign
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- Develop, support, and showcase our scholars
- 
- Aggressively recruit scholars of diverse backgrounds and adhere to best practices for ensuring faculty diversity
- 
- **Establish coordinated faculties in curricular, scholarly, and practice areas by enhancing the resident faculty with exceptional adjunct and non-tenure-track faculty who are integrated into the academic and scholarly enterprise**
- 
- **Enrich the faculty by establishing and strengthening regular programs for distinguished visiting professors and international exchanges of scholars**





## 2 TO ATTRACT A STRONG, DIVERSE, ENGAGED, AND ACCOMPLISHED STUDENT BODY AND



The College has regularly attracted an exceptionally talented student body. The academic credentials of our entering class have consistently been among the highest among our peer schools, and the LSAT and GPA medians of our entering class have placed us either first or second among all Ohio law schools for the past decade.

We must continue to attract these academically strong students while making renewed efforts to enhance the diversity of our student body. Diversity is a strength. Our school benefits when people from different racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as those with different points of view and perspectives, come together to seek knowledge, engage issues, deepen understanding, and solve problems.

The College's relatively affordable tuition has helped enable us to attract these strong students. As we face increased competition for talented students, particularly students of color, we must be mindful of the impact of tuition increases on our ability to compete. Through a comprehensive campaign, we also will seek to significantly increase our scholarship resources so that we can compete more effectively.

Our Plan also calls on us to enhance the student experience. Not only will we support students in their professional development, we will expand the number of learning experiences so that every student can take advantage of a journal experience, externship, or internship suited to his or her intellectual and career interests.

Finally, because a College of Law education prepares students for success anywhere, we must broaden their horizons in terms of career prospects. We want to encourage more students to look at a broad array of locations and employment sectors and for others to consider judicial clerkships, which often are springboards to a successful career. We also want our students to be employed at percentage rates and in positions comparable to our peer schools, both at graduation and nine months out.

# TO ENHANCE THEIR CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

## ACTIONS

### *Admissions*

- Strengthen the academic profile of the entering class as measured by LSAT scores and GPA through intensified recruiting and marketing efforts

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#### • Enhance the diversity of our student body

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- Heighten efforts to recruit students of diverse backgrounds, working in cooperation with the bench, bar, professional associations, and other institutions

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- Support and help lead initiatives to increase the number of minority students who apply to the College
- 

- Increase the number of international students studying at the College
- 

- Ensure that our unique educational environment remains affordable to all qualified students
- 

- Through a fundraising campaign, build an extensive scholarship endowment so that we can effectively compete for the students we desire as well as ensure that we continue to provide an exceptional education to future leaders at an affordable cost that does not saddle students with prohibitive debts

### *Support and Counseling*

- Provide a wide range of programs and services to help students in their personal professional development
- 

- Provide a broad array of journal, externship, internship, and other learning experiences so that every student is afforded opportunities suited to his or her intellectual and career interests
- 

- Expand our pro bono opportunities for students and encourage full participation by all in recognition of the obligation that all lawyers have to contribute in the public interest
- 

- Strengthen our Academic Success Program to better support students in reaching their full potential
- 

### *Placement*

- Increase career pathways for students by opening up more geographical markets and sectors
- 

- Increase the number of students who secure judicial clerkships
- 

- Establish a loan repayment assistance program to help alleviate the financial burden of students who choose to work in the non-profit or public interest sectors



### 3 TO CREATE A THRIVING ACADEMIC ENTERPRISE



The College of Law provides the benefits of a small law school with the curriculum and opportunities of a large one—a powerful combination that sets the College apart from other law schools. We will continue to develop a superb curriculum rich with intellectual challenge, interdisciplinary inquiry, experiential learning, skills training, and capstone offerings, as well as centers and institutes that evidence the College’s and University’s strengths and vibrant intellectual life.

The practice of law has changed rapidly in recent years. Early in their careers, graduates must be prepared to demonstrate competence and the ability to relate to and counsel clients. While we will always provide our students with a solid foundation in law and legal reasoning, we also must provide opportunities for them to develop the skills they will need to succeed in today’s environment.

A cornerstone of our strategy relates to our centers and institutes. For instance, the venerable Urban Morgan Institute for Human Rights and our newer Lois and Richard Rosenthal Institute for Justice, which includes the Ohio Innocence Project, are a source of pride for the College as they enhance scholarly potential, enrich the educational experience for our students, span disciplines, and engage society. Moving forward, we will maintain and strengthen the vibrancy of these and other centers and institutes through the development of criteria to manage and advance them more effectively.

Finally, as law and business become increasingly global, so too must legal education. We plan to expand our reach to attract additional international students and to develop exchanges to provide international opportunities for our students. And we will ensure that our curriculum remains responsive to globalization and the ways it is transforming economic, business, legal, and political relationships.

# ACTIONS

- **Expand the experiential and “real world” learning opportunities available to our students**

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- Bring our experiential learning offerings together in an integrated clinic that affords opportunities for students with diverse interests across the spectrum of legal practice
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- Further develop and strengthen the Domestic Relations/Domestic Violence Clinic
- 

- Develop a clinic in business, transactional, or entrepreneurial work
- 

- Establish distinctive capstone courses that ready students for practice and deepen intellectual inquiry
- 

- Expand our curriculum with “mini-courses” and other flexible offerings that expose students to more subjects and a broader range of professors and instructors
- 

- Develop a sophisticated, integrated curriculum of courses in professionalism and skills training by expanding and supporting our Center for Practice in Negotiation and Problem Solving
- 

- Seek additional financial support for our clinics and skills programs through a comprehensive campaign
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- **Strengthen our centers, institutes, and joint degree programs**

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- Establish clear goals and plans and seek endowment support to provide a solid financial and administrative base for our centers, institutes, and joint degree programs
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- Continue to strengthen the scholarly and educational activities of the Urban Morgan Institute for Human Rights, the Lois and Richard Rosenthal Institute for Justice, the Center for Corporate Law, the Glenn M. Weaver Institute for Law and Psychiatry, the Center for Practice in Negotiation and Problem Solving, and our premier joint degree program in law and women’s studies
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- **Establish educational programs, geared to our scholarly strengths, that take advantage of the globalization of legal education, attract students and scholars from around the world, and provide opportunities for our students**

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- In cooperation with the University, forge relationships with law schools in China and elsewhere around the globe
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- Introduce an LL.M. program for foreign lawyers
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- Continue to develop student exchange and study abroad programs, such as our successful collaboration with the University of Canterbury in New Zealand



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TO ESTABLISH A FULL AND ACTIVE  
PARTNERSHIP IN THE UNIVERSITY'S MISSION  
AS A VIT

Through its ambitious UC|21 academic plan, our University is making major strides as a vibrant urban research university. We expect to be a full partner in that effort and to reach out to our colleagues in other disciplines. Problems and issues that lawyers help resolve in today's world are not just "legal", but cross-disciplinary, involving fields such as business, medicine, and the social sciences. Fruitful collaborations with other fields of inquiry are critical to empowering our students and ensuring a well-rounded educational experience.

As importantly, our location in a classic American city with all the opportunities and problems found in any major metropolitan area beckons us to play an ever larger role in reaching out to our community. We must be in the forefront of the University's commitment to actively engage the city, the state, the region, and the world. In fulfilling that responsibility, the College must embody a deep sense of community, responsiveness to the needs of its own and others, and an acute desire for relevance.

Indeed, our centrality to Cincinnati, the University, and the region provides us with a significant competitive advantage. Our legal, business, professional, and civic communities offer us knowledge, experience, opportunities for collaborative research and study, and a window to the future. Our ties with those communities have run deep through the years, and we expect to deepen and strengthen them.

# ION TO ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY AL URBAN RESEARCH INSTITUTION

## ACTIONS

- **Undertake interdisciplinary endeavors that benefit students, faculty, the University, and the community**

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- Establish new joint degree and other collaborative programs that enhance interdisciplinary study

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- Continue to develop and expand our premier joint degree program in law and women’s studies, a national leader in the interdisciplinary examination of law and its effect on the lives of women

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- Pursue scholarly projects that address “real world” problems collaboratively with colleagues and students from a variety of disciplines and practice

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- **Develop deeper and more extensive relationships and partnerships with the bar, the bench, the business community, and other bases of leadership**

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- Establish a greater “downtown” presence with special programs for the benefit of the bench, bar, and business community

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- Expand our judge-in-residence and distinguished visiting practitioner programs

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- **Serve as the public square where the University community and the city expect to gather for programs, lectures, debates, and conversations about the law-related events of our times**



5

TO DEVELOP THE INSTITUTIONAL  
STRENGTH NECESSARY TO  
SUPPORT THE

While building and maintaining an infrastructure is not at the heart of this Plan, we must have the support necessary to accomplish our goals if we are to succeed. Ideally, our programs will be backed by an excellent library, first-rate technology and information services, a physical facility that supports our mission and draws our community together, dedicated and involved alumni and supporters, communications strategies that foster recognition widely, and solid financial resources.

While our building has its virtues, it is not as effective as we would like in facilitating the way law is learned and taught today. We will continue to work with the University to develop long-term solutions while at the same time pursuing feasible short-term facility improvements.

We also will reach out more effectively to our donors and friends. Our alumni have made remarkable commitments to the College in terms of time and money. We need to keep them better informed of the activities at the College, seek their counsel more often, and recognize their contributions even more.

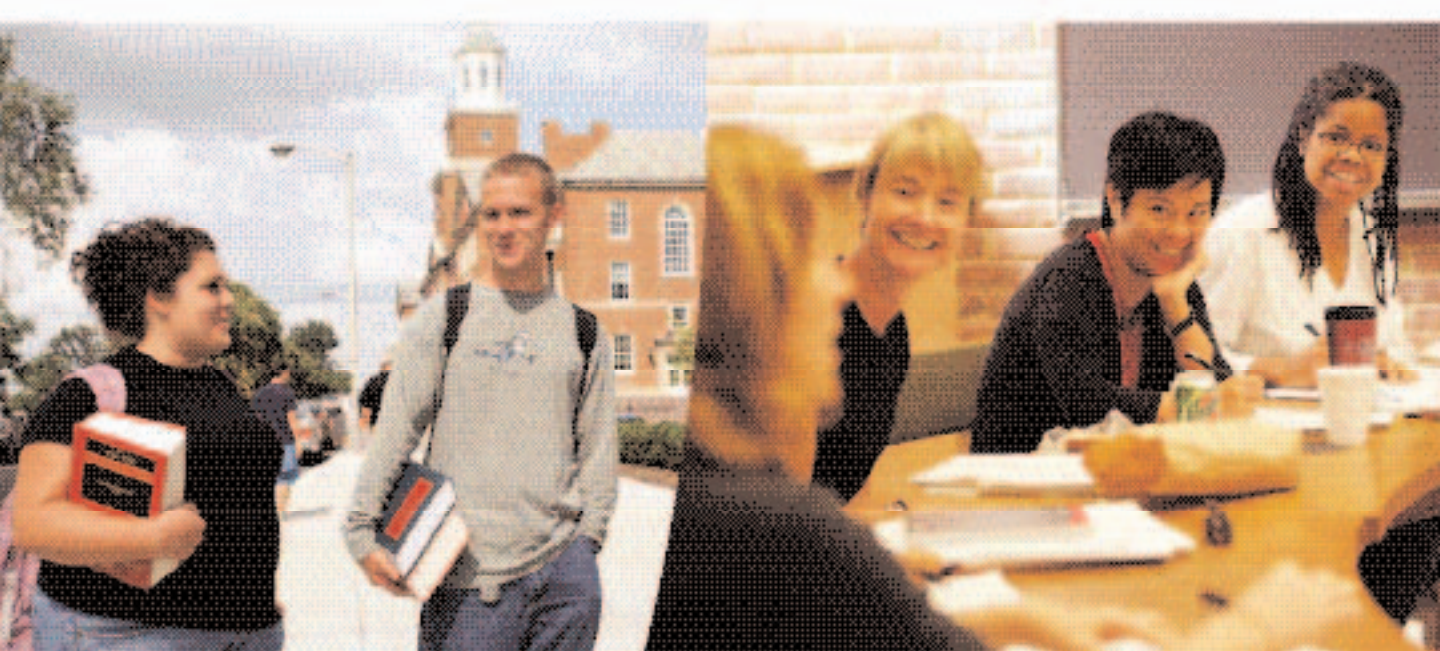
Expanding our outreach to alumni is but one part of an expanded communications program that we will undertake. We need to share our vision and story with all of our key audiences – alumni, applicants, students and staff, as well as the wider world.

Finally, we will need additional financial support to reach our goals. Like most public law schools, we have seen a decline in public funding to support our existing programs, let alone resources for new programs. Through a comprehensive fundraising effort, we will convey our vision and opportunities to donors for their support.

# PREMIER SMALL, URBAN, PUBLIC LAW SCHOOL

## ACTIONS

- With the University's cooperation, expand and upgrade our facilities
- Ensure that the Robert S. Marx Law Library provides the support, including technology and information services, that is necessary to sustain outstanding research and teaching and a thriving academic enterprise
- Strengthen the infrastructure supporting our development and alumni relations efforts
- Involve our alumni and supporters directly in our work through active and engaged advisory boards and other opportunities for participation
- Develop and implement an integrated communications and marketing plan
- Conduct a comprehensive campaign to strengthen the endowment and provide financial resources for the initiatives in this Plan



# ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION

We expect this Strategic Plan to be a living document that charts our course for the future. We are committed to regularly reporting to the community on our progress in implementing this Plan and moving toward our goals.

To that end, we will be developing a series of measurements of our progress that will include an analysis of our performance against other law schools, allowing us to assess our progress in comparison to our peers. Some measures are relatively simple to define, such as median LSAT or GPA or placement rates. Others will require more care, such as faculty influence and productivity. We will certainly take into account, but not be directed by, various rankings of law schools.

Our goal will be for continual improvement in all that we do. For example, we will be measuring our success at attracting and retaining faculty, as well as their productivity and influence. Similarly, we will look to increase the academic qualifications of our students and improve their ability to obtain the positions they seek upon graduation.

We already have begun to implement a number of the action steps and each future annual operating plan of the College will be tied to this Strategic Plan. We also are setting the stage for a comprehensive campaign to raise the funds necessary to implement the actions that require additional financial support. At every step of the way, we will involve our community and keep you informed.





## FROM DEAN LOUIS BILIONIS

When I was honored to be selected as Dean of the College of Law at the University of Cincinnati, I was well aware of its many strengths, including its long tradition of educating world-class lawyers, a productive and influential faculty, students with high academic qualifications and expectations to match, and alumni of broad accomplishment and deep commitment. I knew, too, of *UC|21*, the ambitious academic plan to make the University of Cincinnati an engaged, thriving, powerful urban research institution for this new century. I believed that these strengths would provide a strong foundation for the College of Law's future in a challenging time.

Working from this solid base together with all members of our community, we now have the opportunity to build on our strengths, attract new resources, and achieve our vision of becoming the premier small, urban, public law school. This Strategic Plan sets forth a series of initiatives that will lead us to that goal.

Elsewhere in this Plan, we have elaborated each of the elements of our vision and outlined the actions we will take to achieve it. I welcome the work ahead. But I also enjoy picturing the law school as it will be when we have accomplished our undertaking. In my view, the premier small, urban, public law school is characterized by:

- A strong and engaged faculty, nationally recognized for its scholarship, its teaching, and its productive service
- An academically talented, diverse, engaged, and accomplished student body ready to practice anywhere and everywhere
- A thriving academic enterprise with small classes, personalized attention, an energetic, rich, and sophisticated curriculum, centers and institutes that bring research, teaching, and practice together, and a vibrant intellectual life
- Powerful and productive relationships with the University through interdisciplinary programs
- Close ties and partnerships with the city and its legal, professional, business, social, cultural, and civic life
- An influential role in the University's civic engagement and public mission
- Contributions and presence on the state, national, and international fronts
- A strong foundation and infrastructure, with an outstanding library, including technology and information services, and a solid and substantial financial base
- Alumni and supporters who are engaged, involved, and excited

We are well on our way to becoming this law school and this Plan will advance us further. Some of our actions can be implemented with a change in outlook or priorities. Others will require additional financial resources. This Plan will form the basis of a comprehensive campaign that will appeal to our alumni and friends to continue and increase their generosity to the College through annual and major gifts. With this support, we can become the law school that we all envision.

The community here at the College of Law has truly joined together to move our law school forward. There is great enthusiasm for this Plan and excitement for the future it holds. We at the College are ready to get to work and welcome your support in helping to make this vision a reality.



