Dedication - Ronald R. Davenport - The Pursuit of Excellence

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An advisor to a law review is a representative of the faculty and administration of the law school. In my role as advisor I must communicate to the editors and staff of the *Duquesne Law Review* the major concerns of my colleagues. These concerns range from standards of membership and scholarship to perfection of publication schedules. One might anticipate that Dean Davenport, as chief administrative officer of the Law School, would limit his attention to the operation and production of the Review. In my experience, however, his concerns ranged far beyond the demands of efficiency.

Dean Davenport was constantly concerned with the quality of the *Duquesne Law Review*. He expected students to perform to the best of their abilities, without excuse. Over the years of the Dean's tenure, members of the Review occasionally petitioned the faculty for extended privileges. Some students believed that the only way to motivate individuals to make the sacrifices necessary for improvement of the Review was to grant an increased number of academic credits for participation. The Dean, however, demanded better performance. Impatient with incentives, he loathed indolence and commended industry.

Although he understood the modalities of practical success, the Dean was adamant in his belief that intellectual labor was a higher good which brought its own rewards. He knew that growth and success are impossible without a mature acceptance of personal responsibility.

It is very difficult these days to maintain a high-quality law review. Membership on a law review often does not carry the prestige it did in years past. The counterpressures on law students are substantial. A student offered the more tangible satisfaction of practical employment is distracted from the more

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enduring benefits of mental discipline and development obtained through scholarly legal writing. Effective leadership in such circumstances is critical. Members of the Review must be able to believe that legal scholarship is valued by those who direct the fortunes of the Law School. Ronald Davenport provided that leadership. He will be missed by all who believe that the pursuit of excellence is of supreme value.