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Dean's Scholars Program

Georgia State University College of Law

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Georgia State University
College of Law
The Dean's Scholars' Program

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Georgia State University
College of Law

introduces the 1993 scholarship recipients:

William D. Gaither
Susan Hargus
Noel Hurley
Howard Jackson
Katherine McLaughlin
Michael Mehrman
Keith Porterfield
Susan Swinson
Georgia State University
College of Law

The Dean's Scholars' Reception
September 9, 1993

Left to right: Noel Hurley, Michael Mehrman, Howard Jackson, Katherine McLaughlin, Susan Hargus, Dean Marjorie L. Girth, Susan Swinson and William D. Gaither. (Not pictured: Keith Porterfield).
Ms. Swinson was born at Robins Air Force Base in middle Georgia. Her father's military career took the family to various parts of the world. She returned to Georgia to attend the University of Georgia where she graduated Magna Cum Laude, and was named to Phi Beta Kappa. Sue used her degree in psychology to begin a career in personnel administration, holding positions at the State Merit System, the Medical College of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and Georgia State University.

The scholarship was a factor which enabled Sue to give up her job and begin attending Georgia State College of Law as a full time student.

Ms. Swinson's comments:

This is the third time I've had an opportunity to thank the sponsors of the Dean's Scholarship. As we congratulate the newest recipients, I can't help but note how very different it feels to be near the end of law school, as opposed to the very beginning of law school. Two years ago, I considered myself to be a personnel manager, because that had been my career for ten years. Last year, I felt like a law student. I'm still a law student. I can't lay claim to the label of attorney, but that is what I identify with now. I'm proud to be joining this profession. I'd like to thank the Dean's scholarship sponsors for encouraging academic potential in a personnel manager, and to thank the Georgia State University College of Law for turning that potential into a...soon to be...attorney.
Michael J. Mehrman

Mr. Mehrman began Law School at Georgia State in the fall of 1991 in the night-school, part-time program. He has accelerated his education so that he will now graduate in 1994, just one semester behind a full-time schedule.

Mr. Mehrman currently works at Southern Engineering Company specializing in electric utilities in the areas of regulatory affairs and economic studies. He earned both his undergraduate and M.S. degrees in Electrical Engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology.

Mr. Mehrman's comments:

My legal education has helped me immensely in my career as an electric utility consultant. Over the past three years, I have become increasingly active in regulatory and legislative activities on behalf of my clients. I've served as a member of the Transmission Task Force of the National Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, participated in development of the Electricity Title of the Energy Policy Act of 1992. In addition, Southern asked me to lead an effort to develop international markets for our services and software products. After a year of intense effort, we anticipate receiving a grant (at the request of the Polish Government) from the U.S. Agency for International Development to install a training center in Poland.

The funding provided by the Dean’s Scholarship was instrumental in allowing me to pursue my education here, in Atlanta. I was seriously considering attending law school full-time elsewhere, or not at all. The night program at Georgia State has allowed me the best of both the working and academic worlds. It is a wonderful opportunity.
Mr. Gaither, originally from Thomasville, Georgia, is a part-time third year law student at Georgia State College of Law. He is currently employed by IBM Corporation as a software designer. He has a M.A. in English from the University of Georgia and an M.S. in Computer Science from Georgia Institute of Technology. His interest is in copyright and patent law.

Mr. Gaither's wife, Suzanne Sellers Gaither, originally from Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, is a part-time third year law student at Georgia State as well. They have a twelve year old son, Jeff.

Mr. Gaither's comments:

I am a part-time (night) student and beginning my 5th semester at Georgia State College of Law. I would like to express my gratitude to the firms who contributed and to the School of Law for making this scholarship opportunity available to me. Although I have 5 semesters before I graduate, at this stage in my law school career I find that I have a clearer sense of direction and more control over my studies. In my encounters with students, faculty and administration, I feel grateful and excited to be attending law school here.
Noel L. Hurley

Mr. Hurley received his B.S. in Mathematics at the University of Georgia on an academic fellowship. After graduation he taught math at the Richmond County Alternative Center. He taught for one year then moved to Atlanta where he began working with Delta Air Lines as an Analyst in Personnel. He continues to work at Delta while attending Georgia State College of Law.

Mr. Hurley has a daughter, Arianna.

Mr. Hurley's comments:

I want to thank the sponsors for supporting the Dean's Scholars' program, and the committee who helped select the recipients. Given the high standards required for admission to law school in general, it is a real honor to be singled out for this scholarship. The law school program is difficult enough, especially working full time while trying to spend time with my daughter regularly. The scholarship helps relieve some of the financial obligations. I know several students who have not been fortunate enough to receive such a scholarship, and the planning and worrying takes its toll on their concentration and mental energy.

Again, thank you. I plan to do everything I can to merit the honor granted.
Mr. Porterfield is a native of Glendale, California. He graduated from Glendale High School and continued his education at Columbia University School of Engineering and Applied Science. After graduating with a BS in Electrical Engineering he worked for two years as a telecommunications engineer for Unocal Corporation. He then returned to Columbia and obtained his MS degree, focusing on voice and data networks. While attending law school Keith is currently employed by Oglethorpe Power Corporation where he is designing and implementing a statewide data communications network.

Mr. Porterfield's comments:

The Dean's Scholar program has been a tremendous benefit for me. Deciding to go to law school while simultaneously balancing the requirements of work and family was an extremely difficult decision. Having the additional financial burden substantially removed was a key factor in making and sticking with my decision. Attending Georgia State University College of Law has been extremely challenging, exciting, interesting, and tiring. I am extremely grateful to the firms that have funded this program, for making it possible through the assistance they have given me.
Katherine McLaughlin

Katherine is a first year part-time evening student in the College of Law. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. While there she was Head Student Defender in the BYU Attorney General's Office and editor of the Pi Sigma Alpha Review, a political science journal. She presently works full-time for Arnold & Anderson.

Ms. McLaughlin's comments:

I am grateful for the opportunity that the Dean's Scholarship has given me to attend law school. Without it, I would not been able to attend. I hope to live up to the expectations that the award of such a scholarship presents. I am proud to follow in the footsteps of previous Dean's Scholars, and I hope that I can say in my final year of law school...as Susan Swinson, a third year Dean's Scholar, has said...that I feel more like an attorney than a law student.
Susan Hargus

Ms. Hargus is a graduate of the University of Missouri. She was awarded numerous scholarships and honors while at Missouri. After graduation, she worked for six years as a senior consultant in Financial Institution and Litigation Support Services for Ernst & Young. She is currently a senior investigator with the FDIC/RTC in the damages determination and litigation support areas with responsibility for eighty institutions in the Southeast in addition to being a first year law student at Georgia State University.

Ms. Hargus’ comments:

In my fourth year of higher education I was “burned out”, but I did not give up my goal of law school. I decided to work for Ernst & Young because I could travel and gain work experience while I regained some enthusiasm for higher education. In 1992, I was selected as one of three professionals from Ernst & Young to serve as damage expert in a professional liability suit against the firm over an audit at a failed bank. I found the in-trial experience exhilarating and exhausting, but it confirmed my desire to pursue law as a career.

The Dean’s Scholarship has allowed me to return to school in 1993-4 which was otherwise impossible for financial reasons. The opportunity that this scholarship provides to study law while applying my classroom study to “real life” litigation matters as a full time professional is unmatched by any school or scholarship program in the area. I deeply appreciate the forethought shown by the sponsoring firms in including part-time students who bring special skills to Georgia State University and to the profession upon graduation.