MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
LAW SCHOOL

January 12, 2025

Dear Future Marquette Lawyer:

Greetings as we begin the semester. An education in the law requires constant initiative, extending throughout one's career, so in school we should all welcome the clarity of a new academic term. I encourage you to seize upon it—for example, not to regard all of your established study and engagement practices as inalterable.

I write to update you concerning developments at the Law School and, incidentally, to provide some reflections and counsel. Foremost, we welcome the new Marquette University president, Dr. Kimo Ah Yun. To be sure, he is a familiar member of this community, even appearing in previous letters of this sort—as recently as last semester when he was the acting president and during the past six years as provost of the university. I have greatly valued the opportunity to work with Dr. Ah Yun and find his emphasis on the student experience in a Catholic, Jesuit university to be inspiring. You are welcome to "Get to Know" the new president in a program hosted by Derek Mosley, director of our Lubar Center, on Friday, January 17, at 12:15 p.m.—just as you are welcome at all Lubar Center programs.

While there is less personnel news during the middle of an academic year than at the beginning, permit me to note two departures. Catherine Bergman, office associate in our Career Planning Center, retired at the end of December. I am most grateful to Catherine for her work in the CPC with hundreds of future Marquette lawyers and countless employers, as she supported law students and alumni in job searches since 2006. John Novotny also has retired: as our assistant dean of development, he had a profound impact on the resources that we are able to devote to your legal education—including our very building, Eckstein Hall. To recall John is also gladly to remember and thank various vice presidents for university advancement, in whose "shop" he served, from Julie Tolan some years ago to my current colleague, Tim McMahon, an invaluable collaborator. We are one team at Marquette University.

We constantly strive to support your education and enrich our community. In this regard, it is a privilege to report that the longtime Milwaukee County District Attorney, John Chisholm, is joining us in a part-time faculty role. Professor Chisholm, as we may now call him, served as a leader in this region's criminal justice system for the past eighteen years, completing his final term just last week. A graduate of Marquette University High School and Marquette University, he attended the University of Wisconsin Law School, after his honorable discharge as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army in 1990. We look forward to Professor Chisholm's engagement through all manner of faculty activities when he comes onboard later this month.

Much of our work—yours and mine—is discretionary. There are certainly differences, but let us focus on you. It is for you to decide, largely, even how to approach your courses and, altogether, whether to embrace other opportunities, such as pro bono service, involvement with student organizations, and Lubar Center programs. Details of various offerings can be found in *Law News*, delivered twice weekly to your email inbox. Let me note here the first of this semester's distinguished lectures. Judge Michael Y. Scudder, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, will deliver our annual Hallows Lecture at 5 p.m. on Monday, March 3: His lecture, *Resorting to Courts: Article III Standing as the Guardian of Free Speech & Democratic Self-Governance*, will address the importance of our country's constitutional design as parties increasingly seek to resolve difficult social issues—today's so-called "culture wars"—in the courts.

I encourage you to join us. The Hallows Lecture is an important community gathering. One reason, as noted to me by a colleague some years ago, is that it is among the "things the Law School does to validate public service in the eyes of our students, as well as to promote respect for the office of judge." Chief Justice John G. Roberts, in his end-of-year report on the federal judiciary just a couple of weeks ago, emphasized the importance of such respect, as our very system of government depends upon compliance by parties with lawfully entered judgments. One might do well to read the entirety of Chief Justice Roberts's characteristically engaging report and, if one wishes, various reactions to it. Put me down among the admirers.

This seems a good point on which to conclude this letter: the value of admiration. Legal education is adept at engendering *skepticism* on the part of those involved in it, and crucially so: One should be persuadable on legal points but require *evidence*—the supporting logic and experience. Yet you—we—should also "collect" people whom you *admire*. Here, I will put forth someone whom I mentioned above: John Novotny.

I learned so much from John during the past two decades. This began early in our relationship: As he was considering joining us in 2005, I had occasion to share with him my beginning-of-semester letter. It is available online if you want a glimpse of the "old days," but my interest here involves something that John wrote in response, endorsing my message to the students: "A key aspect of Jesuit education is to learn the critical habit of reflection in order to evoke a general restlessness with the status quo and, with it, a stirring to do more. It is good for all of us to be reminded periodically of our broader vocational calling and responsibilities." I speak for the entire Marquette Law School community—including President Ah Yun and university colleagues, all law faculty and staff, and the ranks of Marquette lawyers that you will soon join—in encouraging you toward such reflection and in wishing you well as the semester begins.

Sincerely,



Joseph D. Kearney
Dean and Professor of Law