

# SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL

3050 Wilshire Boulevard · Los Angeles, CA 90010-1106



September 2012

Dear Southwestern Alum,

These are exciting times for the law school. As we mark Southwestern's Centennial, launch our New Era capital campaign, and build on outstanding partnerships with renowned academic institutions, the future looks bright indeed. I write to introduce myself as the Interim Dean, to thank you for all that you do, and to ask for your continued generous support of the law school. ***I hope that you will consider a gift to our Annual Fund this year, making a strong statement to the community about the positive future you see for this institution. Your support is critical to our success.***

The momentum here is palpable in all our endeavors. The expansion of our campus including the construction of student housing, our deepening ties with the Claremont Colleges, our leadership in curricular innovation, the reinvigoration of our SCALE program and Biederman Entertainment and Media Law Institute, and our fabulous new faculty are all tangible indications that the school is on the move.

We are earning accolades, too. In its first-ever listing of "America's Top 10 Entertainment Law Schools," *The Hollywood Reporter* ranked Southwestern fourth in the nation—just behind Harvard (#3), and above Columbia (#5) and Berkeley (#6). *The National Jurist* also recently recognized Southwestern as one of the few law schools "pushing the boundaries of the traditional law school model and experimenting at a level that legal education has not seen for several years."

The impressive accomplishments of our students and alums are also strong indications of the momentum of the school. Over this past year, Southwestern students earned top awards for outstanding legal writing from the Grammy Foundation and the Burton Awards, as well as Outstanding Pro Bono Service honors from Public Counsel. Our interscholastic teams won eight first place team and best oralist awards at negotiation, trial advocacy, and moot court competitions around the country. In 2012, Southwestern alumni were named as Public Lawyer of the Year by the State Bar of California, both Prosecutor of the Year and Defense Attorney of the Year by the Los Angeles County Bar Association, and as Criminal Attorney of the Year by *California Lawyer*. Our alumni were also prominently represented in the *Super Lawyers of the Year* and *The Hollywood Reporter's* Top 100 Entertainment Lawyers.

These accomplishments build on others. The success and leadership of our alumni in the greater Los Angeles community and beyond proves the value of a Southwestern legal education. We have more graduates than almost any other law school in the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the City Attorney's Office, and in the city's best boutique firms and public interest organizations. For many years, the school had more graduates sitting as judges on the Los Angeles County Superior Court than any other law school, and we have some of the most highly respect attorneys in both the plaintiffs and the defense bar. This is not surprising. A recurring theme that we hear from both students and alumni alike is that they are more prepared and better trained than their colleagues from even the fanciest Ivy League schools.

As you can see, we are at a critical juncture. Your support now, more than ever, can make a meaningful difference in our ability to capitalize on this unprecedented momentum. For the past five years, the law school has worked aggressively on a number of initiatives designed to increase the national reputation of the school and the value of the Southwestern degree. With your support, those efforts are coming to

fruition and will ensure that Southwestern is positioned to take advantage of new strategic alliances, attract the most talented and inspiring faculty, and expand our programming and scholarships to meet the needs of students entering an ever-changing and challenging profession.

There is another reason why a gift now will have a particularly significant impact: It sends a clear signal that our alumni believe in the law school. It helps create a buzz in the legal community that things are happening here. Our graduates' pride, involvement, and investment in the school represent the most compelling evidence of that truth.

*I hope that you will join us in all of these exciting ventures by making your gift today.* As we commence our second century, the Southwestern community grows stronger and stronger. As the school's star rises, so does yours. Recently, we've seen tremendous progress, and I'm hopeful this year, with your support, we'll see even more.

On a personal note, I want to say thank you. It was an honor to be appointed Interim Dean, and even more so to hear from so many of you with well-wishes. I feel so privileged to lead this law school—the best place in Los Angeles by far, in my view, to study (and certainly to teach) law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Austen Parrish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

Austen Parrish  
Interim Dean