MEMORANDUM

Date: May 30, 2014

To: Marc Manganaro, Ph.D.
     Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: María Pabón López
     Law Dean and Judge Adrian G. Duplantier Distinguished Professor of Law

Re: Accomplishments of Academic Year 2013-2014 and Goals for Academic Year 2014-2015

Thanks so much for your guidance and mentorship throughout this academic year. It has been invaluable and is much appreciated, especially during these challenging times. This memorandum will serve as requested to report my accomplishments during this past academic year and to forecast my goals for the next academic year.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

National Jurist and Prelaw magazines recognized the College of Law among the top innovative law schools in the country for its new approach to legal education in having practice tracks for our skills courses. The Office of Law Skills and Experiential Learning is responsible for this work. This office also planned an inaugural conference entitled “The Future of Legal Education in Louisiana.” The conference took place last week, and there were faculty members of all the four law schools in our state present at the College of Law, discussing possible collaborations in experiential learning. I was a presenter at this conference.

We increased the number of externships undertaken by our students to an all-time high of 27 for this academic year and 23 this summer. During the spring semester we utilized the classroom component to assist students in developing professional networking and presentation skills. Each student was required to present to the class on an area of law and we invited attorneys and professors who worked in this area. This allowed for networking opportunities and challenged students to converse on the issue at a professional level. Students were very pleased and challenged by the presentation. Many have asked how they could now turn the research into a publishable piece. We are trying to form an informal writing group to foster student publications. Because of the increase in solo practice, assignments to further develop business skills were also incorporated. Students were required to submit a business plan as if they were to open their own solo practice, a biographical page and updated resume.

The College of Law became a member of the Alliance for Experiential Education, hosted by Northeastern University School of Law. The alliance promotes methods to ensure law graduates are prepared with the necessary skills and ethical and social values necessary to serve clients and the public interest. This membership, in addition to the fact that we are members of the invitation-only Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers consortium of 25 law schools nationwide shows we are leaders in experiential learning. Three faculty members participated in the conference of this consortium, held in Denver in the fall. As part of this effort, we held again a first year law student Professionalism Convocation. A federal Court of Appeals judge had the students swear a student professionalism oath, helping create their professional identity.
We finalized our College of Law Strategic Plan. This included hiring of the consultant, meetings with the law school Budget and Strategic Planning committee, the consultant, the faculty, including a faculty retreat, as well as meetings with staff, and the College of Law Visiting Committee, to accomplish this plan within one academic year. I met with law school Budget and Strategic Planning committee several times during this academic to discuss budget matters as well. Associate Dean John Lovett and Professor Trey Drury are to be commended for their hard work on this all year.

There are two new professorships at the College of Law this year. The first one, named after a local law firm, has been sent to the Board of Regents for a match. The other one, which will be named after a late Dean of the College of Law, needs final funding. The funding is expected before the end of the year. Three vacant professorships were awarded at the College of Law.

A new College-wide calendar system has been implemented and is in use by all. It ensures that there is no duplication or overlap in the scheduling of law school activities. This had been a goal in my previous reports to you.

After much consultation with University facilities leadership and elevator consultants, new elevators are in progress this summer at the main College of Law building. This is a very overdue update paid by the law school.

We have raised $660,008 for the College of Law as of April 30th. We have visited with 70 alumni through individual meetings and done meet and greet events at six law firms.

Faculty scholarly activity and research are ongoing, e.g. Professor Andrea Armstrong organized national Prison Law conference; Professors Gruning and Tooley –Knoblett published volume on Louisiana Sales and Leases, etc. We continued to have all faculty research posted online in the Social Science Research Network.

We also conducted a mandatory training in multiple choice test writing for all faculty in the fall. We invited a professor from Wake Forest University School of Law, who writes bar exam questions at the national level. This should inure to the benefit of our students, who will be tested now in multiple choice format on the Louisiana bar exam for the first time. We continue our concerted effort to prepare law students for the bar exam by offering additional bar activities throughout the year. In fact, our bar passage number continues to rise in comparison to last year.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (“VITA”) Program has received the following recognition:

- In early April, a WWL radio featured an interview discussing the program and how it helps low income community members.
- On April 14, the day before Tax Day, Prescott Stokes of NOLA.com featured an interview about last minute tax filing preparation
- The Asset Building Coalition of Southeast Louisiana and the United Way recognized Loyola’s primary VITA site at the College of Law for completing in excess of 500 tax returns at one site
- Additionally, Public Service Announcements ran on various media outlets including WWL-TV, WWL Radio, the Times Picayune, NOLA.com, the Uptown Messenger, the St. Bernard News and the St. Bernard Voice newspapers.
We are continuing the reorganization of College of Law staff in light of staffing reductions. Positions have been consolidated and some have gone unfilled. We continue to have our regular staff meetings and a staff retreat at the College of Law, creating a collaborative community workplace and boosting morale.

We brought and welcomed in an incoming class of 242 first year law students and five LLM students. I participated in the university and law school commencement, as well as Mass of the Holy Spirit, Convocation, Law School Commencement Mass and University Commencement Mass.

The law school curriculum has been revised after two years of intensive analysis and debate. The changes include additional credits added to the first year writing courses, and the addition of two new certificates. One of the certificates in in Law, Technology and Entrepreneurship, and the other one is in Social Justice. The feasibility of a certificate in Health Law is being explored.

I attended numerous student events throughout the year including: Meet the Deans, Law Review Banquet, Barrister’s Ball, Black Law Students Ball, Moot Court Banquet, Journal of Public Interest Banquet, Maritime Law Journal Dinner, Graduation reception, etc. I met numerous times with Student Bar president and other student leaders throughout the year. We handled emergency matters regarding student safety and other sensitive concerns.

I collaborated with Dean Maria Calzada to establish links in Panama and the Dominican Republic in order to attract qualified applicants from these countries. We met with government officials and university leaders of these countries. I signed an agreement with the Universidad Latina of Panama, and started a summer program for U.S. law students in Panama. It is the first ever, and is in the process of being approved by the American Bar Association (“ABA”). Of the 20 students who attended, four are doing internships in placements such as the General Counsel office of the Panama Canal, an arbitration organization and a private law firm. Other summer programs that continue this summer are the one in Spetses, Greece (going on second year, having obtained ABA approval last year), Vienna (twenty first year) and Budapest (likely final year.) I established links with the University of Salzburg and the University of Nicosia in Cyprus. These may yield future collaborations and L.L.M. applicants. Similarly, sites in India, Colombia and Brazil were visited by College of Law representatives for the same purpose.

We held alumni events in Lake Charles, LA and Panama City. We organized College of Law Centennial events, including the Official Kick off for all faculty, staff, and students. We held Centennial Law Alumni Luncheon. We premiered the Law Centennial Video at this event. I had commissioned this video last year. We are planning at least three Centennial on the Road events in Houston, Washington DC and Miami. We also intend to visit parts of Louisiana we have yet to reach such as Alexandria, Monroe and Shreveport. These efforts are all to outreach and engage our alumni during our Centennial year. We also organized a Centennial Mardi Law parade, where we revived the custom of law students selecting a King and Queen professor. Student organizations paraded in costume. Three groups were chosen winners by a faculty-staff committee. Alumni and neighbors joined us for this very festive event.

I attended the Louisiana State Bar Association Annual Meeting in Destin Florida, where I held a reception for all our alumni attending the meeting. I am scheduled a featured panelist on a law dean’s panel on the future of legal education at the same Annual Meeting next week. Also attended the Southeastern Law Schools (“SEALS”) Annual Meeting, where I was a featured panelist on a law dean’s panel as well.
I participated in Law Visiting Committee and Law Alumni Board meetings. I also interacted with Board of Trustees present and emeriti and other potential donors in visits and lunches, including Ted Frois, Donna Fraiche, and Anne Gauthier. Attended reunions for several classes of Loyola law graduates and also attended Heritage Society events.

In order to create summer job opportunities for our students, we continued partnerships with other local nonprofit and government potential employers. These partnerships resulted in the placement of several students this summer. Continued meeting with recent unemployed graduates to assist in career placement. I led the Career Development Office to obtain new software, Symplicity, to better perform its operations. We have also applied for an ABA grant to create an incubator program for recent graduates to assist them in their solo practices. We have been exploring the feasibility of an incubator program for the past year.

We have established close ties with local bar associations and other legal institutions such as the Louisiana Law Institute, Hispanic Bar, Martinet Society, Francophone Section of the Louisiana Bar, etc. by attending their events. I attended local legal events such as the Justice for All Ball, the Red Mass, and the Louisiana Bar Foundation Annual Gala. We have also formed close ties with the business and local community by attending Hispanic Chamber of Commerce events and delivering keynote speech for Hispanic Heritage Month at the US Department of Agriculture.

The Puerto Rican Academy of Jurisprudence and Legislation honored me as a Corresponding Academic. I am one of three academics in the U.S. with this distinction. I also participated in the honorary degree presentation of the Hon. Sonia Sotomayor at the University of Puerto Rico as a visiting dignitary. This has led to close ties with the faculty there, potentially leading to potential L.L.M. students to apply to our law school. We are also exploring starting faculty exchanges with the University of Puerto Rico as well.

I participated in main campus committee assignments including Faculty Handbook Committee, University Budget Committee. I participated in the Provost’s Retreat, Provost Council Meetings, and other meetings such as Emergency Preparedness and Dean’s and Chairs meetings.

I participated in meetings with the Louisiana Supreme Court to discuss attorney licensure and bar examination matters. Also attended meetings of its historical society and the Louisiana Bar Association Diversity Committee, both of which I am a member. I am currently on the board of the Louisiana Supreme Court Historical Society, the Metropolitan Crime Commission and the New Orleans Opera.

I met with Dillard University president and their prelaw advisor several times. We have a draft articulation agreement with them in the works. I presented to national honors advisors conference alongside one of our graduates, a local Court of Appeal judge, on the topic of “Is law school worth it?.”

I completed representing Loyola in nationwide Ignatian Colleagues program. I attended the closing event for the program in Florida. I participated in online workshops, phone conferences, and several meetings with Fr. Ted Dziak and members of my ICP cohort. I did a silent retreat in January.

We continued implementation of recycling, safety and austerity measures at the College of Law. We continued to implement needed policies and procedures at the College of Law. We started entrepreneurial activity for the College of Law, which resulted in $20,500 in revenue for the rental of our facility to the Columbia Teacher’s College and BARBRI for the summer months. Additional incidental
revenue to the University should flow from Cabra dormitory rentals, parking permit purchases and Jazzman’s food revenues for a total of approximately 250 students when both tenants are here.

I wrote two law review pieces of varying lengths which are scheduled for publication in two law journals. I did book presentation/signing events about my book, Presumed Incompetent, one at the Mexican Consulate here in New Orleans, and one at Penn Law School. I was a keynote speaker at the Latcrit conference held in Chicago last fall, and also keynoted for the ABA Real Property Section Annual Meeting as well. At both, I discussed diversity in the legal profession. I was also a featured speaker at the Florida Appellate Judges conference, where I taught Immigration Law and the Rights of those who are not U.S. citizens to judges from all over Florida. I also served on a panel for the National Association of Women Judges Annual Conference on Immigration law topics.

I taught course in Scholarly Writing to second year law students last fall.

I served on an ABA site inspection team that inspected a law school in Ohio. This was good practice for the inspection we will undergo this coming academic year. One of our assistant deans is scheduled to do another inspection this fall.

GOALS

Prepare for site visit and receive continuing ABA accreditation.

Continue to strengthen the admissions credentials of the incoming first year student class and stabilize the size of the class.

Continue to undertake in fundraising activity.

Continue to increase bar passage rate of our graduates.

Continue to address US News and World Report ranking.

Continue to address student debt burden and rising tuition concerns.

Continue to create job opportunities for our students and graduates.

Increase LLM student numbers and strengthen program.

Optimize entrepreneurial activity for the College of Law.