The Duquesne University School of Law trains lawyers to a high degree of professional skill with a special sensitivity to ethical and moral concerns and a profound calling to serve. Graduates know the law in a comprehensive fashion and in a range of specialized areas such as corporate law, tax law, litigation, environmental law, energy law, health law, intellectual property law and international law.

A Duquesne lawyer also understands the difference between what the law allows and what is the ethical course of action. In an era when such concerns are among the most important questions facing the legal profession, we train our graduates to recognize social needs and take action, making contributions to the world around us on a grand scale. For more than a century, the Law School has reflected Duquesne University’s Spiritan mission of justice and service to others.

All of this is achieved in the spirit of community. Our Law School is distinctively connected to the city and region we call home. More than that, our scholars, students, staff and alumni are united in a sense of responsibility and assistance to each other. Consistent with our call to service, our atmosphere is more cooperative than competitive, and we are sensitive to—and committed to—each other’s growth and success.

Recent years have been challenging for law schools nationwide. As the employment market for legal professionals has contracted, many schools have had difficulty sustaining enrollment, selectivity and revenue. Duquesne has fared remarkably well through these turbulent times, thanks to innovative leadership and its spirit of community, with alumni and friends making significant contributions.

Maintaining our momentum and achieving even greater levels of service will require increased levels of financial support. We are confident that generous benefactors will take advantage of the many opportunities to make a real difference by strengthening our pillars of academic excellence, ethics and professionalism, and lifelong service. We invite you to consider these vital funding priorities:

More
A Call to Service: Through Student Support
Helping students through every step of their academic careers—from enrollment to the Bar exam and beyond.

Ensuring access to the best and brightest applicants—regardless of financial circumstances—has been a hallmark of Duquesne University since 1878 and the Law School since its founding in 1911. The establishment of new endowed scholarships will extend this tradition for generations to come.

Duquesne's Law School already provides a high level of personalized student support. Our Academic Excellence Program offers skills-based workshops and courses, individual and group study sessions and peer-to-peer tutoring, and dedicated study space and resources to all students.

Our nationally-ranked Bar Preparation Program also extends throughout the entire Duquesne Law experience. Its success is evident: Duquesne graduates achieved a 91.96% first-time pass rate on the 2016 Pennsylvania Bar exam—second only to Penn and 10 points above the third-place school. Duquesne graduates have exceeded statewide passage averages in 10 of the last 11 years.

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Our Legal Research and Writing Program is also nationally ranked and provides more intensive courses and experiences than most other law schools, starting in a student's very first days. Expert instruction from four full-time faculty members and an array of practicing attorneys is augmented by the extensive facilities and resources found in our state-of-art writing center and law library.

Keeping these programs at the cutting edge requires continual investment. We envision, for example, offering more one-on-one assistance in our writing program, but require additional funding to do so.

Consistent with our Spiritan mission and mandate, we must always ensure that premium programs—such as intensive Bar exam preparation—are available to all students, regardless of their means.

We strive to provide a greater breadth and depth of service to students—for example, an enhanced pre-matriculation orientation experience, initiatives to build students’ personal and emotional skills, and outreach to diverse and disabled students are all possibilities, with increased financial support from alumni and friends.

And our concern extends beyond our current students to our graduates. Dedicated funding would help us open up new avenues of service and professional development to serve alumni everywhere.

A Call to Service: Through Curricular Enhancements
Fortifying our comprehensive program of studies.

The environment of legal practice is changing rapidly. We strive to provide a legal experience that prepares students for the real-world challenges of the 21st century workplace. Our service orientation compels us to fortify an already robust curriculum with content that addresses fundamental skills, best practices and emerging trends. Focusing on what the public expects of lawyers, initiatives in such areas as transactional work and governance and compliance in the non-profit and for-profit sectors are contemplated.

In addition, support for faculty research can help to guide curricular innovations, inform subject-level teaching and position our faculty as recognized experts in their fields.

A Call to Service: Through Clinical Legal Education
Providing students with real-world legal practice skills while addressing critical community needs.

Duquesne’s extensive offerings include eight clinic and practicum programs, seamlessly blending hands-on experience for students with Duquesne’s historic emphasis on community service.

Funding to establish new clinics and enhance existing initiatives is a key priority, with special attention on the Veterans Clinic. In keeping with University President—and former Dean—Ken Gormley’s focus on veterans’ issues, this clinic trains law students in a holistic approach based in problem-solving philosophies and recidivism-reducing techniques. Students prepare and present cases for disposition in the Allegheny County courts and stay in touch with clients to ensure that they are following court-ordered treatment plans offered as alternatives to incarceration.

This is your opportunity to enrich our School and our students by answering the call to service. Please feel free to contact Jeanine DeBor for more details about these priorities. Whatever your philanthropic interest, you can make a difference with a gift to Duquesne Law.