Annual Giving: A Law School Tradition

The Vanderbilt Law School Annual Fund represents the steady stream of unrestricted gifts from alumni and friends each year. This annual support helps bridge the gap between student tuition and the law school’s actual operating costs, allowing the law school to recruit and retain high-quality faculty and provide financial assistance to deserving students.

Tuition alone does not cover the costs of educating a student at Vanderbilt Law School. Alumni support makes up the difference. By making annual unrestricted gifts, alumni can moderate the rising cost of tuition, support current students and continue a valuable and generous legacy of giving.

Participation in the Annual Fund is an important measure of alumni attitudes toward Vanderbilt Law School and factors into many nationally published rankings. While the school’s alumni participation rate is not a measure directly factored into the US News & World Report rankings for graduate schools, annual gifts from alumni serve as a continuing endorsement of Vanderbilt, strengthening its visibility and prestige worldwide.

Each year, Vanderbilt Law School’s unrestricted dollar goal increases in order to keep up with inflation, as well as compete with other top 20 law schools that consistently raise well over a million dollars in unrestricted gifts annually. Last fiscal year (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) the law school received just over $1.4 million in unrestricted gifts.

Why your Annual Gift is Important to the Law School

Gifts to the Annual Fund are available for immediate use, giving Dean Chris Guthrie the flexibility to meet the school’s most pressing needs. The law school encourages all alumni and friends to contribute to the Annual Fund each fiscal year to ensure a dependable and ongoing source of support to provide for the law school’s annual operating budget and other important needs, including but not limited to:

- Student financial aid and scholarships
- Faculty retention and recruitment
- Student organizations, activities and journals
- Facilities maintenance and upgrades
- Computing and library resources for students, faculty and staff
- Curriculum development