Vanderbilt University
Law School

Firm Giving Representative
Handbook
Fiscal Year 2014
Dear Firm Representative,

Every year, the Firm Giving Program is instrumental in securing annual gifts and bolstering the law school’s alumni participation rate, and in the past few years, the program has been growing! Last year, 34% of all alumni donors participated in the Firm Giving Program. Furthermore, 14% of all alumni gift dollars last year can be attributed to alumni involved in the Firm Giving Program!

This handbook is designed to give you all the information you need to effectively carry out your fundraising responsibilities. Many of our Firm Representatives have requested that we supply them with news and updated statistics and rankings to assist them in their efforts to solicit their colleagues on behalf of Vanderbilt Law School. Therefore, we have assembled the following information about the Law School, annual giving, and your role as a Firm Representative.

The school owes a great deal to our Firm Reps for their leading role in expanding the connections between their firms and the school and reinvigorating the Law Annual Fund. Thank you again for your help as a Firm Rep. We look forward to working with you to ensure the continued success of Vanderbilt Law School.

Best,

Kathryn Carmody
Director of Alumni Relations & Annual Giving

Rachael L. Phillips
Annual Giving Coordinator

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Support

Firm Giving Representatives can rely on the Development & Alumni Relations (DAR) staff as a resource at all points in the process. Below is the DAR office contact information.

Vanderbilt University Law School
Development & Alumni Relations
131 21st Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37203
Phone: (615) 322-2606
Fax: (615) 343-5730
Email: alumni@law.vanderbilt.edu
Website: law.vanderbilt.edu/alumni
Physical location: The Baker Building, 110 21st Avenue South, Suite 1000

Firm giving program staff:

Kathryn Carmody
Director of Alumni Relations & Annual Giving
kathryn.carmody@vanderbilt.edu
(615) 343-1185

Rachael L. Phillips
Annual Giving Coordinator
rachael.l.phillips@vanderbilt.edu
(615) 322-0814

Websites

The following is a listing of websites which can also support Firm Representative efforts and provide up-to-date information about what is currently happening at Vanderbilt Law School.

law.vanderbilt.edu – VLS homepage (Contains links to current news and events)
law.vanderbilt.edu/alumni – VLS Alumni home page (View event details, class notes, update contact info, etc.)

VUconnect.com – Online Alumni directory (Search for most recent alumni contact info geographically or by name, school, or class year. Also, share news with classmates and network.)
Firm Representative Overview

The Firm Giving Program is a friendly competition that encourages financial support of Vanderbilt Law School by alumni at leading law firms and corporations. As a Firm Representative, you will be responsible for contacting other Vanderbilt Law alumni within your firm to explain the importance of alumni participation and to encourage them to make an annual gift to the Law School. We will provide you with support, sending you periodic giving updates and offering advice and tips on how to solicit your colleagues.

Responsibilities

1. Make an annual gift

Firm Representatives should lead by example and make a gift or pledge early in the fiscal year or when the program kicks off, in April. You will be in a much better position to ask for gifts if you have already made a contribution. While we don’t require a minimum level of giving, all Firm Representatives are encouraged to become members of the law school’s donor society, the Founders Circle, by making an annual gift of $2,500; graduates within the past 10 years qualify for membership with an annual gift of $1,000. Annual giving at this level sets a strong example for others to follow, and also includes certain recognition benefits and invitations to special events for leadership donors.

2. Solicit Colleagues

In May, we will begin sending you a list of all solicitable Vanderbilt Law School alumni working within your firm and we will indicate if they have made a gift to the Law School during the current fiscal year (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014). As always, you may choose to simply forward these emails to your colleagues, but please use discretion when making your colleagues’ giving histories available for others to view. To help protect the privacy of alumni donors, we have created an email template draft you may request and choose to send out to alumni within your firm.

Please direct your colleagues to make their gift online at law.vanderbilt.edu/firmgiving so we may accurately track gifts made through your solicitation efforts.

3. Follow up with colleagues

If a colleague is not responsive to your email, you may want to consider following up in person. If that is not possible, try a personal phone call or email. You can also recruit your alumni colleagues that have already given to help drum up support, especially if they have a closer relationship with a colleague that isn’t responsive to your requests or is hesitant to give. If the alumni within your firm are spread out geographically, consider recruiting a co-representative in another office.
Benefits and Recognition

Participation in the Firm Giving Program comes with a host of benefits. Your firm receives recognition for their commitment to and support of Vanderbilt Law School’s mission to provide a superior legal education. If your firm achieves a place on our Firm Giving Honor Roll, your name will appear alongside your firm’s name on signage displayed in the Law School’s Office of Career Services as well as in the Law School during local events and Reunion festivities, where it will be seen by hundreds of Vanderbilt alumni and students. The Firm Giving Honor Roll will also be posted online and published in our monthly e-newsletter, *Law@Vanderbilt* and in *Vanderbilt Law*, Vanderbilt Law School’s alumni magazine. Additionally, those firms who participate in on-campus interviews will find their interview suites decorated to recognize the achievement of reaching 100% participation among the VLS alumni at the firm. This recognition will demonstrate to current law students and other visiting firms that the alumni in your firm have a strong affinity and commitment to Vanderbilt.

Fast Facts and Friendly Tips

1. **Consider the Culture** – Every firm and organization is unique. Approach your colleagues in ways that are most appropriate for your office/firm culture.

2. **Stay Updated** – We will send you giving updates regularly, and you can request one at any time. You can also track your firm’s participation (updated weekly) on the Participating Firms page of the Firm Giving website: [law.vanderbilt.edu/firmgiving](http://law.vanderbilt.edu/firmgiving).

3. **Visit or Call** – Email is fast, easy and convenient, but nothing beats a personalized face-to-face conversation. If that is not possible because a colleague works in a different city, then a phone call is great too. It will provide you with an opportunity to strengthen your relationships with your colleagues, as well as hear objections or to answer questions related to the Firm Giving Program or giving to Vanderbilt Law School.

4. **Follow Up** – Since people are busy, you may need to follow up a couple times (and in different ways) with those who don’t respond to your initial requests.

5. **Say Thanks** – Let your colleagues know how much you appreciate their support. Every donor will receive a gift receipt as well as a thank you letter from either the Dean or a senior member of the Development staff (depending on the level of support). A personal note, phone call or email from you will also mean a great deal. If your firm makes the 100% Honor Roll, let your colleagues know.

Things to Keep in Mind

- If someone has a question you can’t answer, check the *Objections to Giving Overruled* on pages 13-15 of this handbook or contact your Development & Alumni Relations contact.

- Online gifts are encouraged, not only because it saves paper and postage, but it also saves time. They are recorded in our system much faster (within 2 days), which means your firm participation rate and updates from us are more accurate and the donor can be thanked in a timely manner.
Guide to Making a Gift

The Firm Giving Program website contains all the information a donor needs to make a gift to Vanderbilt Law School. Please encourage all prospective donors to visit:

law.vanderbilt.edu/firmgiving

Ways to Give

1. Mail
The Firm Giving Program website contains a downloadable gift form which can be printed and mailed with check or credit card information to:

Vanderbilt University Law School c/o Gift Processing Office
PMB 407727
2301 Vanderbilt Place
Nashville, TN 37240-7727

2. Online
Online giving is quick, convenient and environmentally friendly. The Firm Giving Program website giving links contain appeal codes which help us track the gifts made from this website. Please direct potential online donors to law.vanderbilt.edu/firmgiving.

3. Phone
All donors are welcome to make a gift by calling our office at: (615) 343-1915.

More Giving Options

Matching Gifts
Many employers and companies will match their employees’ contributions. Your generosity to Vanderbilt could be doubled or even tripled. To find out if your firm/company has a matching gift program, either ask an HR representative or visit http://www.matchinggifts.com/vanderbilt/.

Gifts of Stocks and Securities
Visit https://giving.vanderbilt.edu/givingstocks.php for information on transferring gifts of stock and securities. Please e-mail stockgifts@vanderbilt.edu or call Debbie Ton at (615) 875-1155 with questions.

Planned Gifts
For information on bequests, beneficiary designations, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, charitable IRA rollover, estate gifts, and more, please visit the Planned Giving website at https://giving.vanderbilt.edu/plannedgiving/ or contact the Planned Giving office at (615) 343-3113. You may also contact Anthony Barclay, Director of Development for Planned Giving, directly at anthony.barclay@vanderbilt.edu or (615) 936-5518.

Electronic Bank Draft
To set up an electronic bank draft, call the Development & Alumni Relations office at (615) 343-1915 or use the printable electronic bank draft form at https://giving.vanderbilt.edu/ways-to-give/VU-EFT-form.pdf.
The Annual Fund: Why Annual Gifts Are Important

The Annual Fund represents this steady and ongoing, unrestricted support from alumni, friends, parents, faculty, staff, law firms and businesses 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, 2012 – June 30, 2013) the law school received just over $1.3 million in unrestricted gifts.

The following information provides reasons why it is important for alumni to donate to the Annual Fund each year. This information is helpful when approaching potential alumni donors and responding to questions about unrestricted gifts or pledges to the Annual Fund.

- Annual unrestricted gifts are available for current use and provide much-needed resources that enhance the overall experience for students. This includes: student financial aid and scholarships, faculty retention and recruitment, facilities maintenance/upgrades, technology enhancement, curriculum development, library collections and support for student organizations.

- Tuition 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 the 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 US News & World Report rankings for graduate schools, annual gifts from alumni serve as a continuing endorsement of Vanderbilt, strengthening its visibility and prestige.

The Founders Circle

Founders Circle members are invited to an annual dinner each spring with Law School administrators, faculty and special guests to celebrate their generosity. In addition, they receive invitations to exclusive regional events with the Dean and other area alumni and friends of the Law School. An annual gift of $2,500 or more to Vanderbilt Law School guarantees membership into the Founders Circle, while graduates within the last 10 years are eligible for recognition with an annual gift of $1,000. Donor society membership runs from July 1 to June 30.
Why the Firm Giving Program?

The Firm Giving Program is helping to continue the culture of alumni involvement and philanthropy for which the school is known. It also serves as an ideal way for alumni at law firms to support the Law School while showcasing their respective firms and strengthening the alumni networks within and between participating firms. The program serves three critical purposes:

1. Increasing Annual Fund Dollars and the Alumni Giving Participation Rate

The vast majority of gifts received through Firm Giving solicitation efforts are not restricted by the donor for a particular purpose or fund (although all gifts to the Law School, restricted or unrestricted, count in overall Firm Giving participation rates and totals). Annual gifts help preserve the character, collegiality, and excellence of the Vanderbilt Law School experience while at the same time demonstrating the personal commitment and professional gratitude alumni hold for the school.

In addition, the Firm Giving Program greatly impacts the Law School’s overall alumni participation rate. Increasing the alumni participation rate signals alumni support for the Law School that may influence assessment scores given by legal professionals as well as peer law school administrators and faculty that are taken into account when calculating US News and World Report law school rankings. As you can see in the chart below, many law schools have higher giving participation rates among alumni who participate in firm giving programs compared to the participation rate of the school’s entire alumni base. Vanderbilt Law School is proud of the support provided by our alumni and we are eager to expand upon this support.
2. Building and Improving a Network of Mutual Support

The Firm Giving Program aids in the building of a network between the Law School and its alumni at the nation’s best law firms and businesses. Firms and corporations benefit by strengthening their presence at Vanderbilt Law School, where some of the nation’s best and brightest students are being equipped to become practicing lawyers. Your firm’s 100% participation shows your fellow alumni, potential recruits, and your competitors that you are committed to Vanderbilt Law School and that your firm is one that works together in support of a common cause.

3. Alumni Networking

Furthermore, the Firm Giving Program benefits alumni at participating firms by building camaraderie within the firm and vitalizing alumni networks in the larger community. This program has proven to be a success due to the fact that our alumni aspire to reconnect, not only with the Law School, but also with one another in support of an important mission. The program fosters a cadre of caring alumni who enjoyed their law school experience, value their Vanderbilt Law degree, and want to get involved and give back.
Vanderbilt Law School
A Legacy to Believe In

For more than 125 years, Vanderbilt Law School has trained outstanding students to pursue careers serving every sector of society around the world. Vanderbilt Law School combines the advantages of a top-tier faculty, a rigorous academic program, a small, carefully selected student body, and a stimulating and diverse university community in a vibrant, livable city. Known for offering a challenging academic program in a collegial and supportive atmosphere, Vanderbilt attracts law students and faculty seeking a first-rate academic institution that also affords an excellent quality of life.

**Fast Facts & Figures 2013/2014**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tuition</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J.D. Program Tuition</td>
<td>$47,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Cost of Attendance</td>
<td>$71,944</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Debt per J.D. student upon graduation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan Amount an individual may receive</td>
<td>$61,500</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Faculty</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenure/Tenure Track Faculty</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term &amp; Clinical Faculty</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Faculty</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated/Adjunct Faculty</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Scholars/Fellows</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Writing Faculty</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emeriti Faculty</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Unique Total</td>
<td>168</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Students</strong></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class of 2016</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,296 Applicants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 percent Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 percent Minority Students</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7 percent Advanced Degree Holders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Median GPA 3.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median LSAT 167</td>
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<td>Class of 2015</td>
<td>184</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class of 2014</td>
<td>204</td>
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<tr>
<td>LL.M. Class of 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint Degree Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visiting/Special Students</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Unique Total</td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Vanderbilt Law School Rankings

16th US News (2014)
7th National Jurist 2013 Best Law Schools
15th Above the Law (2013)
5th Quality of Life; Princeton Review (2014)
17th National Law Journal (2013) based on % of graduates at NLJ 250 firms
8th National Law Journal (2013) based on number of partners at NLJ 250 firms

News You Can Use

Applicants
Nationwide, there has been a drastic decrease in the number of law school applications since 2010. It has been predicted that this year the number of law school applications across the country will be the smallest it has been in more than 30 years. With numbers this low, many law schools will have trouble filling their incoming class, and as a result, the qualifications of many 1L classes will be much lower than in past years.

At Vanderbilt Law School, we are also experiencing a drop in applications. However, our application numbers reflect those we saw 7-8 years ago (rather than 30 years ago). We still receive well over 3,000 applications a year. Furthermore, because we are committed to maintaining the quality and excellence of our students, we reduced the size of our incoming class from 195 to 174 in 2012-13 and in 2013-14.

Financial Aid & Tuition
With the number of law school applications down nationwide, it is now more important than ever that we be able to provide competitive assistance to well deserving applicants. Currently, 89 percent of our students currently receive scholarship support. The median scholarship award is $20,000 per year; this means that the median scholarship recipient receives about a 40-45 percent discount on tuition and fees.

In addition, VLS continues to increase funds reserved to support student public interest work. In 2012, we provided $1.1 million to support students in the public interest sector. In 2013, 71 students received summer stipends to support volunteer legal work, an increase from 59 students in 2011. In recent years, the amount of resources devoted to students and graduates seeking to do public interest work has more than tripled.

We have also worked to hold tuition increases to a minimum. From 2010-11 through 2013-14, Vanderbilt Law tuition increased by 2.7%, 1.9%, 1.4%, and 2.9% over the prior year. By keeping tuition increases at the lowest percentages in recent history, Vanderbilt went from being the 13th most expensive law school in 2007-08 to the 35th most expensive law school in 2012-13. Our ability to hold down tuition increases and offer generous financial aid makes a critical difference to our students, but we need help in order to do this.
**Peer Benchmarking**

According to the FY 2013 Northwestern Peer Benchmarking Survey, Vanderbilt Law School’s Annual Fund (comprised of unrestricted giving) is modest in comparison to competing law schools (see chart below). Many of our peer schools consistently raise more in unrestricted and overall gifts. While this shows us there is a need to improve in this area, it also clearly demonstrates sound financial management. These schools are our competitors, yet we are competing with far less financial support while still recruiting top students and faculty and maintaining our signature collegial environment.

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**Job Market**

As many of you know, our recent graduates continue to face a daunting job market. Although our graduates’ success in securing good legal positions compares very favorably with graduates of other law schools, the stark reality is that fewer positions for new law graduates are available. In 2009, over 90% of graduates had secured full-time, long-term, legal employment 9 months after graduation. Today, just over 70% of our graduates have secured full-time, long-term, legal employment 9 months following graduation.
Thanks to the growth of the Public Service Initiative, we have been able to subsidize student public interest work following graduation for a determined amount of time. Despite such a challenging legal market and due in large part to this initiative, roughly 93% of our 2013 graduates were employed at graduation. Furthermore, 37% of the graduates in the class of 2012 who took advantage of the Public Service Initiative were able to find full-time, long-term, legal employment within the 9 months following graduation. The Public Service Initiative allows graduates to gain real-world work experience and to network and develop contacts, helping to bridge their transition from law school to the legal employment market.

![Employment at Graduation](image)

**Objections to Giving, Overruled**

During follow-up contacts, Firm Giving Representatives may come upon alumni who have specific reasons *not to give* to Vanderbilt. Many volunteers have found that the following responses to those objections can help turn a “no” into a gift or pledge.

_“Vanderbilt should not buy into the *US News & World Report*’s supposition that there exists a direct causal link between alumni donations and educational satisfaction of alumni.”_

Although it may be an imperfect means of measuring alumni satisfaction, it is true that alumni with strong affection for their alma mater will be more likely to give back on a regular basis. Peer assessment scores as well as assessment scores by lawyers and judges are factored into *US News & World Report* rankings, and alumni participation is one thing that those asked to give an assessment may consider when formulating scores. In
addition, grant-making organizations also look at alumni participation when making funding decisions.

“I do not agree with the University’s enforcement of its nondiscrimination policy.”

Publicized in the media, Vanderbilt’s nondiscrimination policy has received a lot of attention recently. Following an investigation prompted by a student’s complaint that they had been discriminated against by a student organization, Vanderbilt conducted an audit of all registered student organizations (“RSO”) to deem whether or not the organizations were within the parameters of the University’s nondiscrimination policy. Following the audit, the University revised the language of the policy to ensure its clarity.

Vanderbilt University maintains that the scope of its nondiscrimination policy has not changed. It has been, and remains, an "all comers" policy, under which all students are presumed to be eligible for membership in RSOs and all members of RSOs in good standing are eligible to compete for leadership positions.

As of September 21, 2012, more than 480 student groups had complied with the policy and had been conferred registered student organization status. About 15 religious student groups have chosen not to comply. Our recently named university chaplain, Mark Forrester, continues to reach out to these groups to be sure that they can interact with and be a part of our student community without compromising the university’s commitment to providing a welcoming environment for all who visit, live and work at Vanderbilt.

Agreement over Vanderbilt’s nondiscrimination policy has not been widespread, and the University does regret that many students, alumni, and friends of the University have been disappointed by the enforcement of the policy. However, Vanderbilt’s nondiscrimination policy is based on and is central to the University’s goal of educating future leaders who respect each other. Please encourage your classmates to remember that the University is committed to continuing the conversation concerning the nondiscrimination policy. For more information on Vanderbilt’s nondiscrimination policy, please visit http://vanderbilt.edu/about/nondiscrimination/.

“I am really angry about the Chancellor/Dean’s decision on something, or that my child was rejected admission, so I refuse to give to Vanderbilt.”

Although you cannot control the Chancellor’s/Dean’s actions or choices, or overturn admissions decisions, try to remind them of the excellent education and experiences Vanderbilt Law School provided them. Their gift should be an expression of their gratitude for the time they spent here as well as a declaration of intent to ensure the ongoing success of the law school. Try to encourage them not to let a single controversial issue influence their giving to the Law School.

“I get solicited too much and give enough to Vanderbilt. I already support the National Commodore Club (athletics) and pay my Alumni Association dues annually.”

Alumni are certainly encouraged to give to those activities and places which helped to define and enhance the Vanderbilt educational experience for them, personally. However,
the Law School Annual Fund directly supports the Law School’s most current needs, enabling the Law School to achieve a balanced budget and provides students with critical resources. The Firm Giving Program is a perfect opportunity to show your gratitude for the legal education received you at Vanderbilt which carried you to the firm you are at today!

“I don’t feel that annual unrestricted contributions create a meaningful gift; a direct gift to a Vanderbilt organization or an endowed fund would be more effective.”

On the contrary, small unrestricted gifts do make a big difference because they can be used immediately at the Law School in whatever way they are most needed, as opposed to giving to an endowment where the money is reinvested. Also, remember that each gift an alum makes increases the overall alumni participation rate, and thousands of relatively small gifts add up to a significant number of dollars.

“I don’t want to give until a donation is large enough that it really makes a difference.”

If everyone waited until they had enough money to make a major gift, or gave only to specific organizations, donations from alumni would be sporadic at best, and daily life on campus would suffer from a shortage of funding. The lack of steady income from year to year would limit the activities and resources available to students at Vanderbilt Law School. Every donation, no matter what size, makes a difference and establishes a pattern of annual giving that ensures the continued growth of the school. Also, a larger gift can be pledged and paid over a five year period.

“This year, my charitable giving went to (Name of Specific Charities).”

The alumnus/a clearly understands the importance of charitable giving. Donations to the Law School are important and vital to ensuring that we provide students with the best education possible. Recognize that there are many worthy charities and urge your classmate to consider including Vanderbilt Law School as one of their top three annual charitable contributions.