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A Tribute to James Ferguson Hogg

J.M. Tostrud[†]

Jim Hogg and I arrived at William Mitchell at approximately the same time in 1985. Jim was the college's new Dean, and I was a new member of the Board of Trustees. During the intervening ten years, I have worked closely with him and I have great respect for his abilities and stewardship of the college.

What exactly has Dean Hogg brought to William Mitchell College of Law during his tenure? First and foremost, when Jim became Dean, the college was in danger of losing its ABA accreditation, primarily as a result of the woeful state of its library facility. In order that the needs of an expanding student body could be met, it was imperative that money be raised and a new facility be constructed. Dean Hogg, along with a dedicated committee of senior trustees, met this challenge head-on and the result is, of course, the outstanding Warren E. Burger Library.

Jim recognized early-on the need to hire a senior administrative staff to which he could delegate certain responsibilities in terms of the college's day-to-day logistical operations. If the college was to grow and enhance its reputation, it was absolutely necessary to attract first-rate people for these positions. Dean Hogg has not only hired well, but has allowed the senior staff to fully participate in the college's strategic planning process.

Dean Hogg also recognized that William Mitchell needed to expand its development and fund raising efforts. When Jim became Dean, alumni records were incomplete or nonexistent. Thus, the college was barely able to conduct its fundraising campaigns. Jim immediately recognized this problem and hired a professional development staff aimed at substantially increasing the college's endowment. Those efforts have paid off with quantum leaps. The amount of money raised by the annual campaign drive, and the amount of scholarship dollars going to William Mitchell students has increased dramatically under Jim's

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stewardship. While work remains to be done, Dean Hogg jump-started the process early in his time at William Mitchell.

Approximately five years ago, former Trustee Bob Burk led his law firm through a strategic planning process. Bob thought a similar process would make sense for the law school. Dean Hogg enthusiastically supported this idea and he brought all of the college's constituencies into the planning process. It was the most effective means of building consensus on the long-term issues facing the college that I have seen during my years on the Board.

Dean Hogg has never been afraid to make difficult or unpopular decisions. He has always taken a long-term view of what is best for William Mitchell and the future of legal education. Given his impeccable character and strong ethics, this is no surprise.

To summarize, Dean Hogg has elevated the reputation of the school! Major law firms now make regular recruiting trips to William Mitchell. We are indeed fortunate that this silver-haired, unfailingly courteous native of New Zealand will continue as a member of our community.