

## Remembering Dean Jim Bond

*Joan Duffy Watt\**

I loved Jim Bond. Without question, the greatest gift of my professional career was the opportunity to work alongside such a remarkable man. From the office next door when we were in Tacoma to my office down the hall in Sullivan Hall, I was privileged to witness his impeccable leadership abilities each day. He possessed many attributes that made him such an engaging and effective leader: an incisive, penetrating intellect; an unbending dedication to providing a superb legal education for the students; a genuine affection and respect for faculty and staff; an extraordinary gift with words—both oral and written (in his case, penned long-hand on yellow, lined legal pads always at the ready on his desk); an enviable capacity to see the big picture and take the long view; and an intrinsic decency and kindness that defined his professional and personal interactions with all whose lives he touched.

Of Jim's many fine qualities, I especially appreciated his decisiveness—displayed routinely by his mastery of the art of delegation. Tasks to be accomplished in support of the law school he loved never languished on his desk for more than a proverbial minute. Indeed, they greeted my colleagues and me each morning in the form of handwritten (usually undated) “please handle” or “see me” notes scribed at the top of multiple missives stacked in our respective inboxes.

Looking back at those halcyon days, I like to think Jim and I made a good team. We sought with our colleagues to attract an ever-more talented and diverse student body, inspire ever-increasing alumni loyalty and support and, back in the mid-90s, secure significant funding for construction of Sullivan Hall—with the considerable assistance of notable alumni, like Stu Rolfe '78 and Richard Birmingham '78.

The two of us worked exceptionally well together, despite the fact that Jim's idea of being on time was arriving ten minutes early and mine was showing up ten minutes late. Indeed, when the two of us were scheduled to leave campus for solicitation visits with graduates, Jim would don his overcoat, pick up his briefcase, and pace back and forth in front of my office door some fifteen minutes prior to our appointed departure time while I dashed about, madly pulling together materials for the day's meetings.

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As I said earlier, Jim was a marvelous master of the written word. That said, I used to say that he was the only person I ever worked with for whom “edit my copy” meant expand—actually, yes, add to—the text.

His genius as an orator was even more memorable. Nowhere was that more clearly displayed than during his remarks at the Sullivan Hall dedication ceremonies back in October 1999. What he said then captures the best of Jim Bond and his unique and enduring contributions to the law school and university. And I quote:

I love Sullivan Hall. I love its exterior linearity because that suggests focus and direction, and we all need both. I love the massive concrete pillars that support the roof above us because they represent strength, and we all need strength.

I love the building’s openness—both its internal and external openness—because the one helps create a working community among ourselves and the other helps us build an intellectual community with the rest of the University, and we all prosper in community. I love the building’s transparency because it invites us to reveal our inner selves, and we should be more honest with one another.

I love the light that floods this building because we are all drawn to light, which has always represented the good; and we should all seek the good.

. . . [but t]he physical splendor of Sullivan Hall is, in the end, not what is important about this building. What is important is what we do [here], and what our graduates do after they leave it.

Teaching and learning are among the most complex and subtle activities in which we engage; and they can be . . . among the most enriching and ennobling.

The practice of law is a calling, no less than the ministry or medicine. At their best, doctors heal our bodies; priests save our souls; and lawyers preserve the liberties that make it possible for us to live our lives in health and grace.

But we cannot teach and learn, much less live our lives fully, without dreams and hopes. And that reality brings me back to this space.<sup>3</sup>

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3. Jim Bond, Dean, Seattle Univ. Sch. of Law, Remarks at Seattle University School of Law Dedication Ceremonies (Oct. 21, 1999), in *LAWYER*, May 2000, at 7, <https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=thelawyer> [<https://perma.cc/Z2ZD-G5JR>].

“Look up with me,”<sup>4</sup> he urged the capacity-crowd audience of alumni, colleagues, and friends who gathered on the ground floor and mezzanine levels of Sullivan Hall:

[T]his soaring space should inspire our hopes and dreams, the most enduring of which are embodied in faith and law. Faith sustains the hope that . . . each of us might yet learn to walk more humbly, share more generously, and love more purely. Law supports the dream that, despite our disappointments and failures, we might yet learn to live together in peace and justice.<sup>5</sup>

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4. *Id.*

5. *Id.*