

In Memory of Professor James E. Bond

*Garth Bond**

I want to thank the Seattle University School of Law—and especially Annette Clark—for honoring my father. I know that it would have meant a lot to him. When he first arrived in the Pacific Northwest to interview for the position of law school dean, a managerial role in higher education was not a career transition he had planned. The interview began with the question, “Do you have any administrative experience?” He had to confess that he did not. “Do you have any experience managing a large budget?” Again, his answer was no. To the third question, “Do you have any experience in fundraising?” he replied, “surely, I must have some qualifications for this job.” The interview improved from that point; though he did forget to bring his wallet to dinner and had to borrow money from the University President to pay for his parking.

From such acorns, the mightiest of oaks will sometimes grow. My father had a deep gratitude to the law school for the faith that it placed in him and the opportunity that it gave him to grow. He would be honored by the many memories that have been shared since his passing.

I think my father was particularly proud of being able to help shepherd the law school’s transition to Seattle University. Beyond gratitude, he had a strong sense of the value of community and an appreciation for the human connections that make it real. Building such a community between the law school and the university was a particularly special opportunity for him.

This was not just a work value. When I first posted about my father’s passing on Facebook, a number of my high school friends wrote about the role that my parents’ home played in creating a safe space for all of us as teenagers and the guidance and advice that my father had provided them at various key times throughout our youth.

My father’s commitment to making connections also showed me how one could be a Libertarian on a university campus. Though I do not think I fully understood until recently some of the pressures that he faced—pressures which played a role in his decision to leave Wake Forest University—I could see from the deep friendships that he developed with colleagues, both there and at Seattle University, that such a life was not

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only possible but worth pursuing. In the current political climate, this trait seems even more noteworthy.

When he was younger than I am now. My father was diagnosed with ALS and was told he had six months to live. His equanimity and grace in the face of that diagnosis, and later in the face of early onset dementia, were critical models for my own response to being diagnosed with leukemia a year and a half ago.

What I think of most when I remember my father, however, is the spirit of playfulness and joy with which he engaged the world on a daily basis, and the smile and twinkle in his eye when he told a joke or took part in a witty exchange. That playfulness remained even after ordered language left him. When my daughter Elizabeth and I visited him last May, his joy when hitting a balloon back and forth with us or telling a joke—the intention was clear, even if the words no longer served his purpose—was very much in keeping with his spirit. It is that joy that endures most clearly in my memory.