
AN OCU LEGEND: VICKI LAWRENCE MACDOUGALL

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I am honored to participate in this Tribute to Professor Vicki Lawrence MacDougall. It is a challenging task, to be sure—there are numerous aspects of her remarkable career that deserve our recognition and respect. To name a few, Professor MacDougall served Oklahoma City University School of Law (“OCU”) as a professor of law, Faculty Advisor to the Law Review, and Director of the Health Law Certificate Program. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and it does not even begin to adequately cover her lifetime of other impressive accomplishments, accolades, and acts of service. I highly recommend the other tributes in this issue wherein those topics receive the attention they deserve. Here, I will focus on her role as Faculty Advisor to the Law Review.

From 2015 to 2016, I had the privilege of serving as Editor in Chief of the Oklahoma City University Law Review. Being an editor on the Law Review was one of the most challenging but rewarding experiences I had as a law student at OCU. It was a comfort to know that Professor MacDougall, someone with such a rich history with the Law Review, was just steps away in her corner office overlooking downtown Oklahoma City. It was not uncommon for students to gather at her door after class trying to glean tidbits of wisdom and advice. Students lucky enough to have had her as a professor knew how devoted she was to excellence at OCU, and those of us crazy enough to take on the additional rigors of Law Review learned how deeply she cared for the institution’s Review.

I am confident that my enduring fondness for the Law Review and the principles it taught me derives in large part from my time working under the tutelage of Professor MacDougall. Her deep devotion to the Law Review was contagious, and it was displayed not only in how she talked

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about it but also in how she dedicated her time, expertise, and energy to it. Professor MacDougall served as Faculty Advisor for more than a decade. When she took over the role, the Law Review was six issues behind and was sorely in need of established bylaws. For someone who worked on the inaugural volume of the Law Review (back when each piece was prepared on a manual typewriter—no spell check, no cut and paste) this was unacceptable, and she stood firmly with the Board of Editors in taking on the challenge of catching up. If you have ever been involved in the preparation of just one issue, you understand what an indescribable task it would be for an editorial board to complete six *extra* issues. Our Board was certainly grateful to have inherited the Law Review *after* Professor MacDougall had helped get it back on solid ground.

Professor MacDougall's wisdom and guidance were calming and reassuring to me. She drew from a deep well of expertise and experience. Nothing could rattle her. She had been there, done that—first as a managing editor herself and then later as a professor, advisor, and mentor. She truly understood the perspectives of authors and editors. She had seen many different editions of *The Bluebook*. She saw the Law Review through innumerable changes in technology and processes. She understood when to stand firm on editorial guidelines and/or tradition, and when to defer to the wishes of the authors. But she never for a moment waived in her insistence on quality in the publication and principled leadership in academic service.

Professor MacDougall also regularly contributed to the content of the Law Review. In addition to producing scholarly academic pieces, it was of utmost importance to her that the Law Review properly honor the legacy and leadership of her colleagues. She put countless hours into planning and organizing fitting tributes. She insisted that we learn from the lives, lessons, studies, and careers of those that came before us; this, in and of itself, was a priceless education. She taught by example—an example of shining light on others. She coordinated, wrote, edited, and oversaw numerous tributes to her colleagues. You can learn a tremendous amount about her character and intelligence by reading what she took significant time and energy to write about others. I was privileged to have had the opportunity to work with her on her tribute to Professor Charles L. Cantrell. She wanted every detail to be correct; every memory to be treasured.

Professor MacDougall was certainly invested in her literary work and

was committed to quality (legend has it that she may have literally arm wrestled a prior editor in chief over proposed edits). But she was equally committed to protecting and honoring the student-run nature of the Law Review. She insisted that each editorial board firmly take the helm in guiding each unique group of members so we could grow as editors, authors, leaders, and practitioners. She counseled all members to learn from their mistakes and through their struggles. She empathized as only one with experience could. She knew that it was only through our own struggles that we would truly excel. She provided comments and advice on edits, but she always let us make the ultimate decision and then, with great intention, worked to bolster our confidence by providing her complete support. It was a pleasure to work with her and learn from such a talented author.

I greatly admire and respect Professor MacDougall. Her service to the Law Review was a service to OCU as a whole. She cared deeply for the individual needs of each student, and she proved it with her actions—whether they were to correct our blind spots or to cheer us on. The entire institution owes her its gratitude, not just for her devotion to the Law Review but for a career of dedicated service and for the legacy she has left for future scholars. She is definitely an OCU legend.