

To our Friends and Graduates:

The end of 2008 was dominated by four E's: the election, the environment, the energy crisis, and the economy. This issue of the *Yale Law Report* highlights all four, and the role that our Law School and its graduates have played in each.

Many of these pages focus on perhaps the greatest challenge of our time: conserving and renewing our energy resources, while sustaining our environment. As the alumni profiles that follow show, members of our community (including, prominently, Dean **Gus Speth '69** of the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies) helped to spawn the environmental law movement in the 1960s and 70s. In the last few years, we have seen a dramatic rebirth of **environmental scholarship and consciousness in all parts of the Law School**. Dan Esty has jumpstarted our Center for Environmental Law and Policy. Our students have worked closely with their counterparts from the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies in building an Environmental Clinic (taught by Dale Bryk) and the Yale Environmental Law Association, and in assessing environmental performance in China. Exciting new faculty, such as new tenured professors Tom Merrill and Doug Kysar and visiting faculty Jed Purdy, have come to join Dan Esty, Bob Ellickson (who was recently honored for his pathbreaking property scholarship), Carol Rose, Don Elliott, Bruce Ackerman and Susan Rose-Ackerman in reenvisioning environmental, property and natural resources law. And our staff and students have pioneered a series of sustainability initiatives to reduce our School's carbon footprint, even as our Campaign plans call for our acquisition of additional dormitory space—which we plan to keep “green”—within the next few years.

This fall, as an historic election loomed, panels at our Alumni Weekend (which you can view on video at www.law.yale.edu/reunion08) focused on the daunting challenges facing the incoming administration. As former Prime Minister **Tony Blair** taught in our classrooms, former President **Bill Clinton '73** returned for his 35th reunion with a sweeping speech diagnosing the emerging challenges of globalization. On Election Day, students, faculty and staff fanned out across the country: canvassing, conducting election protection, getting out the vote, and working on the full range of policy issues dividing the candidates. After the nominating conventions, the economy cracked and a new set of pressing regulatory issues emerged, as we struggled to understand the financial crisis and to brainstorm about how to fix it. On **election night**, our students and faculty blogged, and a packed student lounge cheered as each state, and finally the election itself was called. And our first-year students enjoyed a remarkable experience: only days after entering law school, they heard in successive weeks from more than a dozen constitutional court judges from around the world (including Justices Stephen Breyer and Anthony Kennedy), as well as hearing arguments in our own auditorium from both the Connecticut Supreme Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, the first time in this century that either of those courts have sat within our halls.

Finally, this past fall was an occasion for looking back and celebrating: at the remarkable contribution of the late Jay Katz to law and medicine; of Mirjan Damaška, who retired as Sterling Professor, to our understanding of comparative law; of Judge Ralph Winter '60 to Corporate Law; and of the past heroic public service of graduates like former Attorney General **Nick Katzenbach '47**, who wryly recalled that *Some of It Was Fun*.

Our year ended on a high note: the studios announced that Shia LaBeouf, the young actor who motorcycled last fall through the streets of New Haven and the corridors of Yale Law School in *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, had been signed to play the starring role in *The Associate*, as a young Yale Law School graduate depicted in a forthcoming novel and movie by John Grisham. However somber our real life-challenges may seem, Hollywood has a way of finding the solutions inside “The Temple of Legal Realism!”

With warm wishes, and looking forward to a happy and exciting 2009,



Harold Hongju Koh

