

Extraordinary Commitment by Robert Baker '59

Will Help Return Residential Living to the Law School



A \$25 million gift commitment to Yale Law School by Christina and Robert C. Baker '56 BA, '59 LLB to secure and renovate the nearby building at 100 Tower Parkway and return dormitory living to Yale Law School was announced by Dean Robert C. Post in November.

With this leadership gift, the building will be renamed Robert C. and Christina Baker Hall at Yale Law School.

"This is an extraordinary gift," Dean Post said, "Christina and Robert Baker's generosity will enable us to return residential life to generations of Yale Law School students."

For years, dormitory living was an essential part of student life at Yale Law School, and it remains a memorable experience to scores of alumni. Today, the spaces once allocated to house students within the Sterling Law Building, constructed in 1929–1931, are used to house the academic centers and clinics, faculty and staff, student organizations and journals, that are so necessary to a modern law school. Thanks to Baker's gift, Yale Law School will be able to begin the process to re-establish residential life within steps of the Sterling Law Building.

Once renovated, Baker Hall will become a 137,000 square foot, four-story mixed-use facility. The building will be home to Yale Law students living in furnished two-bedroom suites with en suite bathrooms, galley kitchens, and shared community areas. Students will reside in a fully refurbished space that will also house some administrative offices, classrooms, and meeting spaces.

Plans call for the Law School to acquire the building from the University in 2018, with renovations slated to begin later that year.

"Robert Baker's commitment to making on-campus living once again possible for law students is generous and visionary, and will allow future generations to know the benefits of a community where living and learning are closely connected," said Yale University President Peter Salovey.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for Yale Law School to acquire from the University a facility which is only one block away from the Sterling Law Building," said Mr. Baker. "I hope my gift will inspire other alumni who appreciate the importance of residential living to the student experience to support this project."

Robert Baker is the founder, chairman, and CEO of National Realty & Development Corp (NRDC). His commercial real estate career spans half a century. He is an expert in property acquisitions, financing, management, and construction. His innovations and investment strategy have led his company to become one of the country's largest private development and ownership firms. The NRDC Portfolio consists of some seventy-six shopping centers in sixteen states, as well as several office and industrial buildings, aggregating about twenty-two million square feet. Baker is a major owner of a private equity group that purchased Lord & Taylor and Hudson's Bay Department Store chains. Hudson's Bay recently purchased Saks Fifth Avenue and now owns and operates approximately 200 department stores in North America.

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A graduate of Yale College and Yale Law School, Baker established the Nathan Baker Professorship of Law in honor of his father. The Baker family has strong ties to Yale: son Nelson Baker graduated from Yale College in 1985 and Yale Law School in 1988; daughter Ashley Baker earned a B.A. from Yale in 2004 and a J.D. in 2007; and Baker's brother, Gerald Baker, is a member of Yale Law School's Class of 1967. Y

The building at 100 Tower Parkway (left) will be renovated to feature student residences, shared community areas, classrooms, administrative offices, and conference rooms—and is located one block from the Sterling Law Building.

Photograph (opposite) by Michael Marsland, (inset) courtesy of Robert Baker, and (right) Harold Shapiro