

# A Letter From Dean Harold Hongju Koh



Dean Harold Hongju Koh confers with former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor at Commencement.

## Dear Graduates and Friends of Yale Law School,

During the academic year just ended, Yale Law School made brisk strides toward the goals that will preserve our uniqueness in the generation ahead. As this issue of the Yale Law Report chronicles, we have begun the process of rejuvenating the faculty with five stellar faculty appointments and the arrival of numerous junior fellows.

Through your extraordinary generosity, we have built a Campaign Nucleus Fund of more than \$100 million. We have made major strides toward solving our space needs by obtaining assurances regarding a second site only minutes away from our existing building. We continue to press our globalization agenda and our efforts to build closer ties to the professions. And if you visit our vibrant new website, [www.law.yale.edu](http://www.law.yale.edu), you will see that, in time, cyberspace can only knit our community even closer together.

This issue of the *Yale Law Report* examines our commitment to public service by gazing back on our history, exploring the Law School's myriad ties to a recent Supreme Court decision, and envisioning what the future will be like for our next group of graduates. An excerpt from Laura Kalman's book, *Yale Law School and the Sixties*, provides us with historical perspective on a tumultuous time for our School. Challenges to authority that were then sweeping the country eventually served to move the Law School—and the country—in new directions.

But student activism for social change does not reside in the past. The Supreme Court's landmark ruling in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* illustrates our community's continuing impact on the most pressing issues of our day. More than twenty of our students and several faculty members assisted Professor Neal Katyal '95 and Lt. Cmdr. Charles Swift in researching the complex issues and filing the briefs that led this past June to the Supreme Court's 5–3 watershed ruling.

In a year in which Justice Samuel Alito, '75 assumed a seat on the Supreme Court and Cory Booker '97 became mayor of Newark, N.J., our current students worked to address the ravages of Hurricane Katrina, successfully pressed the University and the State of Connecticut

for divestiture from corporations doing business in Darfur, and gave public service worldwide through Liman, Bernstein, and Heyman Fellowships. While China's President Hu Jintao made his historic visit to Yale, Law School conferences examined human rights abuses in China, the excesses of executive power in the United States, and global barriers to access to knowledge. How all this gets done is no mystery. Our photo essay about a day in the life of third-year student Alvaro Bedoya reveals how our students "multitask," creatively juggling classwork with clinics, journals, rehearsals, and political activism.

In short, our School has been, and remains, a voice for change. The 21st Century Yale Law School must always look at its future through the lens of the past, preserving enduring values while adapting to new challenges. As politicians, leaders of the bar, law professors and deans, CEOs, entrepreneurs, and humanitarian crusaders, our graduates relentlessly change the landscape of the law.

Looking ahead, we bear an immense responsibility to keep inspiring our graduates to place service above self. At the same time, we must show our students that public service need not come at personal expense. This fall's Alumni Weekend, October 13–15, 2006, will consider the challenges of *Crafting a Life: Private, Public, and Professional*. John Ruskin once wrote, "The primary reward for human toil is not what you get for it but what you become by it." Please join us for a memorable weekend that will provide you with a rare opportunity to meet and socialize, to get to know our current students and faculty, and to reflect a bit on what you have become.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harold".

Harold Hongju Koh