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THE SCHOOL OF LAW

The School of Law has been an integral part of the institution since 1866. In that year General Robert E. Lee, who had accepted the presidency of Washington College in 1865, invited Judge John White Brockenbrough to bring to the College his Lexington Law School, which he had established in 1849, and to continue at its head as Professor of Law and Equity. Judge Brockenbrough was joined in 1870 by the distinguished John Randolph Tucker, who succeeded him in 1873 as senior Professor of Law. After serving 12 years as a member of Congress, Mr. Tucker resumed his professorship in 1887 and in 1893 became the first Dean of the School. Tucker Hall, which is named in his honor, was erected in 1935 to house the School of Law.

Over the years, however, the School outgrew this building, and a new law building, Sydney Lewis Hall, was completed and occupied in the fall of 1976. Lewis Hall contains some of the nation’s most sophisticated facilities for law study and legal research, including an office-type study area for each student. The building was made possible by a gift of $9 million from Frances and Sydney Lewis of Richmond, Va.

In December 1989, retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr., an alumnus of both the College (1929) and the School of Law (1931), announced his intention to leave his personal and professional papers to the Washington and Lee Law Library. To house this generous gift, and to keep pace with new demands for additional faculty offices and clinical space, an addition to Sydney Lewis Hall was completed in 1992. The archival facilities will make available to researchers approximately 700 linear feet of Powell materials.

The law library contains more than 339,500 carefully selected volumes and microforms.

The School of Law has been a member of the Association of American Law Schools since 1920. The School also takes pride in the fact that it was one of the initial group of law schools rated as “Class A” by the Council on Legal Education of the American Bar Association in 1923.

The student body normally includes residents of more than 40 states and foreign countries and graduates of more than 180 colleges and universities.

The objective of the School of Law is to acquaint its students with the basic principles of law and to provide training in legal analysis and the application of legal principles essential to the practice of law. The study of law is also valuable in preparing students for careers in government, politics, and business. The members of the law faculty are freely available to the students for consultation and advice in connection with their studies. The opportunity for close faculty-student relationships is one of the most valuable features of law study at this School.

The record of accomplishment of the School of Law is reflected in the achievements of its graduates who have distinguished themselves in the private practice of law, as corporate counsel, in state and federal government service, and in business. In this connection it is worthy of note that five alumni of the School of Law have held the office of President of the American Bar Association. The achievements of the law alumni reflect the high standards of professional training received in the School of Law. In equal or even greater measure they are a reflection of that strength of character which is an attribute of Washington and Lee.

The separate Law Catalog contains information about the School of Law, together with details concerning admission, expenses and financial aid, degree requirements, and courses of study. For the Law Catalog and other information regarding admission, write to:

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