

Nina S. Appel  
*A Tribute to a Remarkable Dean*

The School of Law of Loyola University Chicago recently celebrated the remarkable career of Nina S. Appel. Dean Appel's career at Loyola spans over thirty years on the faculty, including over twenty as Dean. Not yet finished, the faculty, students, staff, and alumni continue to applaud her as she assumes yet another vital role in the law school, that of Dean Emerita, a unique title with a significant mission within the law school.

Thus, it is with great pleasure that the faculty who authored articles for this special issue of the Loyola Law Journal on justice, and its editors dedicate the issue to Dean Appel. Given her absolute commitment to justice in all of its manifestations throughout her long deanship, it is singularly appropriate that she be recognized in this way.

Nina did her undergraduate work at Cornell, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa at the end of her junior year. Taking advantage of the opportunity to dual-enroll at Columbia Law School before obtaining her undergraduate degree, she did so in 1956. At Columbia, she was named a Stone Scholar for her superior academic achievement and received her J.D. there in 1959. The women of Columbia Law in that year were a remarkable group. They may have been few in number, but included, in addition to Nina, Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the U.S. Supreme Court and Marie Garibaldi of the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

Immediately taken with academia, Nina was an instructor at Columbia Law School in the year following her graduation, teaching legal method and a section of Property. After that year, she traveled with her husband to Stanford, in Palo Alto, California, where she administered a program for the Freshman Seminars and taught a seminar herself. She also worked as a research assistant to several faculty members in the law school there. Meanwhile, she devoted her most of her seemingly endless energy—very successfully—to raising her two children.

Nina came to the Chicago area in 1973 when her husband was awarded an academic position at Northwestern. Hearing of an opening for a law teacher at Loyola, Nina approached the dean at that time,

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Charles R. Purcell, who hired her onto the faculty immediately. Being a woman made no difference, even though Nina had experienced barriers earlier in her career on this ground.

In her tenure at Loyola, Nina has taught in the areas of torts, administrative law, products liability, and evidence. Her specific interests in torts law focused on third party actions, products liability, and law and medicine. In 1976 she was promoted to professor of law and, at the invitation of then dean Charles W. Murdock, to associate dean.

After an intensive nationwide search, in 1983 Nina was appointed the first woman dean of the School of Law by then-president of Loyola University, Rev. Raymond C. Baumhart, S.J.. Nina was the unanimous choice of the search committee despite being a woman in the still male-dominated field and a non-catholic at a Jesuit institution.

Her deanship was marked by well-deserved honors and awards as well as significant service to the profession and the community. She served as the Chair of Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar of the American Bar Association—the national accrediting body of law schools and the coordinator of American legal education—in its centennial year 1992–93. Nina was only the second woman to hold that singular position. In 2003, she received the Robert J. Kutak Award, the highest award of that ABA Section, in recognition of her long years of service on the Council of the Section.

Also in 2003 she received the Distinguished Columbian in Teaching Award from her alma mater. In 2002 she was named one of the 10 highly influential leaders in the twentieth century “hall of fame” by *Today's Chicago Woman* magazine.

In addition to her service with the ABA Section on Legal Education and other positions that demonstrate her nationwide reputation as a leader in legal education, she has actively participated in the professional community of Chicago. She was appointed to the Special Commission on the Administration of Justice in Cook County (the “Greyford” Commission) by then Chief Judge Harry J. Comerford, and she served as a member of the Long-Term Planning Committee of the Chicago Bar Association and on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Bar Foundation.

While Nina has served on a number of committees, panels, and programs of a wide variety of national and regional organizations of legal education and the practice of law, her one, main, abiding concern has always been for Loyola's School of Law. She has truly given her life and devoted all her efforts to this law school.

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The average tenure of a law school dean in this country is about three or four years, and in any given year perhaps a third of the ABA-accredited law schools are said to be looking for a new dean. There are only two ways that a law school dean can survive at one law school for over twenty years: she can either do nothing to offend anyone, particularly the faculty, and thus maintain the status quo, or she can be a dynamic force, moving the law school ahead, innovating, suggesting, cajoling, and encouraging. No one has ever accused Nina of being complacent. Her longevity has been marked by the most dynamic leadership.

In addition to enhancing the Law School's facilities and resources, Nina's leadership led to a number of programs and activities that were created and now thrive because of her personal involvement and initiative:

- the Institute for Health Law, consistently ranked one of the top health law programs in the country;
- the Civitas ChildLaw Center, a truly unique program offering the first comprehensive 3-year curriculum and activities for children-focused lawyers;
- the Institute for Consumer Antitrust Studies, a non-partisan, independent academic center designed to explore the impact of antitrust enforcement on the individual consumer and the public, and to shape policy issues;
- the Elder Law Initiative, a program designed to acquaint students with the unique legal needs of the elderly and to prepare students to serve the legal needs of the elderly throughout their careers;
- and a host of others.

More important has been Nina's absolute dedication to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism. Everyone who has dealt with her knows her exacting standards for probity. Nina has provided all of us with the best model of an ethical and caring professional.

Similarly, Nina has been passionately and consistently concerned about a universe of justice-related issues: access to the justice system, the availability of affordable legal services for the public, the firm belief in law as a public profession, and the need for all lawyers to accept responsibility for the obligations of the profession. During her deanship, she initiated a large number of initiatives to insure that every Loyola School of Law graduate would be well acquainted with the importance of public service by all members of the profession and the innumerable ways in which lawyers can fulfill their professional responsibility to society.

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As all of us who have had the good fortune to work with her over the years know, this is truly a unique woman, and we have all been blessed by her presence among us for these many years. It is thus most appropriate for the Loyola University Chicago Law Journal to dedicate this special faculty issue on justice to her.

*Thomas M. Haney*

PROFESSOR OF LAW AND ASSOCIATE DEAN

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO SCHOOL OF LAW