

Mr. Peter A. Allard, QC

Remarks at the Faculty naming announcement at Allard Hall.

January 22, 2015

Dear Law Students, Faculty and Honoured Guests,

As mortals, our time on this earth is short. The most basic and precious asset we have is our time, to treasure and respect.

As a consequence, our youth are a very valuable and powerful, though sometimes overlooked, group. It is you who must carry the torch of life, freedom, fairness, and stability of our legal system and economy, for those who follow. Contained within each of us is the power and spirit to do great good for our fellow human beings, or to do great harm. And it is incumbent upon us to equip you with the values, tools and motivations to do great good.

Through deleveraging and decreasing revenues over the past decade, governments are unable to fund all the demands that are made on them on a constant basis. It is a great privilege for me to be in a position to help this Law School, with the creation of three significant permanent endowments - for student support, faculty recruitment and retention, and student programming - together with further funding for the Faculty's Allard Prize for International Integrity.

My gifts are meant to support the long-term success of the Law School, and enable it to establish and maintain "pillars of excellence" in human rights and international integrity and ethics, and take a leadership role in supporting the values associated with the six criteria of the Allard Prize: courage, leadership, transparency, accountability, Rule of Law and anti-corruption.

These monies were created over three generations by my family, business associates and scores of advisors and professionals. My hope is that my gifts, with judicious and prudent long-term management, will grow over time to help make the Law School one of the best known and respected law schools in the world, in terms of scholarship and leadership, and to infuse the concept of integrity and ethics to strengthen the Rule of Law in a more powerful and definable way, in Canada and worldwide.

The legal profession has more impact on our society than any other, and my gifts are intended to support the education of, and help inspire, students and others whose responsibility it will be to ensure that the lifeblood of ethics and justice for all are carried forward. You must recognize your human potential to support long-term stability and sustainability, and collaborate and co-operate locally, provincially, federally and internationally in all that you do, to make a better world for all.

The challenges that are facing the world today are monumental, but not more so than those of the past. We live in a time of:

- constant communication

- numerous lobbyists at the doors of every politician
- self-interest and self-preservation
- too big to fail, too big to jail, too big to prosecute
- get-out-of-jail-free cards through issuances of immunity and pardons
- a willful blindness to recognize obvious facts, and a willful determination to distort them
- failure to balance our institutions of enforcement with appropriate rules and regulations
- failure by self-governing bodies to discipline appropriately
- failure to recuse for obvious conflicts of interest
- power over principle
- power of monopolies
- failure to account and be transparent at every level no matter the business, government body or bureaucracy
- concentration of our media damaging our freedom of speech
- gaming of the legal system with constant delays and legal strategies at the expense, both financially and emotionally, of the little guy who cannot possibly afford access
- prepared scripts of, and other controls on, elected parliamentarians
- failure of corporate bodies to penalize corporate incompetence and mistakes
- failure of investment and pension fund organizations to hold their people accountable
- failure to place management reward on the same level as the shareholder
- and failure of government regulatory bodies to enforce rules and give access to a level playing field.

As someone who loves and is fascinated by history, I urge you to read David McCullough's books on two US Presidents, John Adams and Harry Truman. The political behaviours we are witnessing today in terms of power over substance, blind ambition, personality conflicts, self-interest for the short-term, creation of uneconomic and unproductive jobs for votes, backstabbing, reckless adventures for war, etc. have existed for centuries, and occur everywhere in the world. What amazed me in the reading of these two books, was the strength of these two leaders, their character, their honesty, their dignity, their independence, and their respect for public monies. These two Presidents served out of a sense of obligation to a higher calling. The problems they faced were astounding, but that did not deter them - and they made a difference.

I also urge you to look to the inspiring stories of the first honourees of the Allard Prize in 2013:

- the recipient of the Prize, Anna Hazare, an Indian social activist who has led hugely popular and effective grassroots movements to increase government transparency, and investigate and punish public corruption; and the other honourees:
- Sima Samar, an Afghani women's and human rights advocate and activist who is currently Chair of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and who, at great daily personal risk, has established and maintains schools for girls; and
- Global Witness, an international NGO that works to address natural resource exploitation and corruption, and the resulting poverty and human rights abuses, worldwide.

These individuals and organizations are making a profound, selfless difference in our world.

In order to restore the checks and balances lost over the past two or three decades, which period was preceded by fifty years of relative financial stability, each and every one of you needs to honestly and actively believe that, by coming together and exercising your collective and collaborative efforts, using your imagination and power of youth and vitality, you can effect necessary changes in laws and regulations, and ensure solid enforcement, here and around the world.

I am concerned about the feeling of powerlessness on the part of some youth that can be seen in the fact that fewer and fewer of you are voting, in the belief that the system is rigged and controlled by money, power and party politics which are not directed long-term to sensible and equitable policy decisions, and that you cannot influence the system. Within us all is the power to effect change, and to help move and direct our colleagues and fellow citizens in the right direction. We must all take action to effect positive change, in ways small and large, each and every day.

Throughout the last four thousand years, all major civilizations, religions and philosophies of the world, including Ancient Egypt and the Greek and Roman Empires, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucism, and all the other Ism's, have embraced a simple concept called the Golden Rule: "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". This is what I believe is the moral and spiritual ethic that rests within each and every one of us, to see that our neighbours and citizens around the world are treated with humanity and dignity and that basic human rights are entrenched, maintained and increased as time evolves, with all of our collective efforts ensuring that our legal systems represent all persons.

Dean Mary Anne Bobinski and Assistant Dean, External Relations Kari Streelasky have been relentless in developing relationships with law faculties and other relevant organizations within Canada and internationally, and maintaining relationships with alumni wherever they might be. And they have wholeheartedly dedicated their belief and energies in the vision, and are indefatigable in their promotion, of the six criteria of the Allard Prize. To a great extent, my donation and this naming is a testament to their, my lawyer Geoff Lyster's, and my nephew Rob King's, persistence.

Universities are filled with the usual politics of any organization, but I can without hesitation say that this Dean and Assistant Dean, the faculty members and the rest of the Faculty team with whom I have had contact represent everything I can think of in terms of courage, leadership, transparency and accountability for the benefit and improvement of the Rule of Law.

And so, it is here, at UBC Law, that I see the possibility of inspirational leadership and a catalyst for profound positive change on a global scale for generations to come. May you all have the strength and courage to use your collective intellects and common sense, with humour and kindness, to improve, extend and rebalance the Rule of Law, and thereby provide fundamental rights, equality, justice, order and security for all, now and for the future.