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TRIBUTE

DOING WELL BY DOING GOOD: REMEMBERING ROBERT H. MCKINNEY

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When I started thinking about how to begin this dedication, one image kept coming to mind. It was from late 2011. Everyone in Inlow Hall had been invited to a special ceremony for a surprise announcement, held in what is now the Tuchman-Bobrick Atrium. The atrium has been the center of activity for our law school since Inlow Hall opened, so there is usually a lot of bustle there. But on that day, it was packed from top to bottom, with students hanging over the railings, waiting to hear the special news. That was the day we learned that what had been the Indiana University School of Law–Indianapolis for more than 60 years would have a new name. Because of an extraordinary act of philanthropy, we would be known going forward as the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law.

That meant a lot to us at the law school. At the time, I think we saw ourselves as a bit of an underdog. We sometimes felt in the shadow of our cousin in Bloomington, the Maurer School of Law, and our evening program did not always get the attention it deserved. So, for someone to make a legacy gift and put his name on *our* school—that meant something.

However, as was pointed out to me right away by my friend and colleague, Gene Tempel, it was not merely that the school got *a* name. It was that we would bear *Bob McKinney's* name. Gene told me that was something I would come to appreciate, and he was absolutely right.

I became dean of the McKinney School of Law in 2013 and served in that role for seven years. That gave me the privilege not only of getting to know Bob personally, but of understanding why having his name attached to our school was so meaningful and how it had the ability to transform an entire institution.

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Bob explained to me—and he said this publicly too—that his commitment was about more than just giving back. He was also making an investment—an investment in this community and state, where so many graduates of our school go on to make a difference in the lives of others.

When I was dean, I used to rattle off all the impressive roles our graduates held—from judges to legislators to U.S. vice presidents. But because of what Bob taught me, I could explain that it was much more than that. More important than dignitaries, this school educates the majority of lawyers practicing throughout Indiana. This means that for so many people, whether it's a business matter, a family or estate issue, a regulatory issue, or even a question of personal freedom, the outcome will depend on someone educated at the Robert H. McKinney School of Law. Truly, it is hard to overstate the impact this law school has on the quality of life across the community. And it is hard to overstate how much Bob's commitment meant—and continues to mean—to the school, and by extension, this city and state.

I also loved helping students understand what it means to have the McKinney name attached to their degrees. As they learn, Bob was not just an excellent lawyer and businessperson. He served his country in the U.S. Navy, and later as Chair of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board in Washington, D.C. He devoted his time to our local community through more organizations than I can name. He served our university as a member—and president—of the Indiana University Board of Trustees. He supported so many causes with his philanthropy. *“Doing well by doing good.”* Bob lived by that motto, and he inspired many, many others to do the same.

Bob certainly inspired me. Part of my motivation to do my best at Indiana University was to make Bob McKinney proud, and he had high standards. I will admit, I was sometimes nervous before meeting with him. When we were both in town, we would often meet here at the school or at Meridian Hills Country Club. Each winter, I traveled to Florida to meet with him at his home there, usually with his wife, Shelley, and his daughter, Marnie. I always prepared carefully for those meetings because Bob was engaged and asked tough questions. But I left every one of those conversations feeling supported and uplifted. I always looked forward to the next opportunity to tell Bob something good about his school and to leave again with his motto fresh in my mind: doing well by doing good.

Like many others, I miss seeing and talking with Bob. But I am grateful that my life intersected with his. When I look at my professional career, I am immensely proud that a large part of it took place at an institution that bears his name. I know the same is true for the hundreds of people who packed the atrium back in 2011. It is true for the students who congregate in the atrium today, often posing for selfies with the bust of Bob in front of the library. And it will be true for generations to come. I am honored to celebrate the life of a remarkable person who made a difference in the life of a very special institution.