

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

In his famous essay entitled *The Talented Tenth*, W.E.B. DuBois spoke specifically to African Americans, detailing for them his theory that the burden of successfully carrying the race forward into the next era would rest upon the shoulders of the “Talented Tenth.” This is the name he coined to denote those few persons equipped with the precise level of education, drive, social awareness, and broad sympathy that would inspire and direct the growth of an entire race. DuBois writes that the “...training of men is a difficult and intricate task.” He notes, that if in training men we make “technical skill the object of education, we may possess artisans but not, in nature men.” He says instead, that “men we shall have only as we make manhood the object of the work of the schools – intelligence, broad sympathy, knowledge of the world that was and is, and of the relation of men to it – [for] this is the curriculum of that Higher Education which must underlie true life.”

DuBois’ words hold particular meaning for *The Modern American*. It is dedicated to the higher education that is not just important in the legal world, but in everyday life. On one hand, it provides an intelligent, frank yet healthy, discourse on legal issues affecting minority groups in the United States today. Yet, at the same time, it provides us all with that necessary dose of broader sympathy, “knowledge of the world that was and is and the relation of men to it” that we sometimes fail to acknowledge. In essence, unlike other publications, *The Modern American* asserts DuBois’ more holistic and necessary approach to a legal world and life that are continuously in a state of flux. For how can we truly become great legal advocates, educators or people unless we understand the plight, issues, and social systems that affect minorities - an integral part of our society?

As we conclude the 2006 publication year, it seems an opportune time to reflect on what has truly been a ground-breaking year for *The Modern American*. We have had the pleasure of being the first runner-up for the Henry J. Ramsey Jr. Diversity Award. Additionally, after putting forth what has proven to be one of our best received issues this past summer, commemorating the legacy of Judge Sylvia Woods, we anticipate making the summer issue an annual tradi-

tion. The acknowledgment from outside WCL and additional support from those within has also brought about the much needed addition of an office. Thus, we would like to say a special and heartfelt thank you to our faculty advisors, the WCL administration, and particularly Deans Jaffe and Grossman for providing us with a permanent location.

This year, we have also continued to expand our reader base. With the WCL Admissions Office’s use of *The Modern American* as a recruitment tool, present WCL students are now proudly coming forward to say that our publication played a role in their decision to attend the law school. Additionally, in an effort to reach an even wider audience and provide our writers with an opportunity to truly have their voices heard, we will be available on the Lexis Nexis database in the very near future.

However, regardless of our diligent efforts to reach all of those interested in our discourse on diversity and the law, inside and outside of the WCL community, WCL still plays a very important role in our publication’s present and its future. For this reason, our cover photo for this month continues our tradition of using models from within the WCL community. Yet, this month we did something a little different and chose to showcase an often overlooked portion of our WCL community – our custodial staff. On the cover you will find our tribute to these persons who work tirelessly to do the things we all often take for granted but could never do without.

In closing, we would also like to pay homage to our outgoing executive board members - LeeAnn O’Neill, Jennifer E. Jones, Chris McChesney, and Barbara Zektick. They are some of the steadfast members that have made *The Modern American* the success it is today. We honor them for the time and effort they have given to the publication and its noble cause over the years. Your vision, legacy and dreams for *The Modern American* will certainly live on and we will continue to bring them to fruition.

Sincerely,
The Executive Board
The Modern American

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