

DEAN BOB REINSTEIN AND PUBLIC INTEREST LAW

*Susan L. DeJarnatt**

In the decades of Bob Reinstein's leadership, Temple Law School has become a national leader in public interest law. Temple has a commitment to training public interest lawyers as well as an institutional ethos that the power of the law comes with a responsibility to do justice. Dean Reinstein has nurtured this commitment, making Temple a formidable presence in public interest law. He has done so by creating an environment at the law school that encourages and enables students and faculty to become involved in public interest endeavors. An eminently practical man, however, Bob understands that an environment of moral support is only part of the equation. So he has committed substantial resources, both financial and institutional, to the development of public interest law at Temple.

Under Bob's leadership, the law school has become a national leader in placement of graduates in public interest positions. In recent years, Temple has placed more graduates in public interest jobs than all other Philadelphia-area law schools combined, and more than twice the numbers of any other Pennsylvania or New Jersey law school. Numerous students have begun their legal careers in prestigious public interest fellowships funded by Equal Justice Works, the Skadden Fellowship Foundation, the Independence Foundation, and others. Bob initiated the development of the Office of Public Interest Programs, which provides targeted staff support for public interest at the law school.

In terms of practical support, one of the most important changes Bob made was to establish the Rubin program, which makes it possible for students to devote their legal careers to public interest law without incurring huge debt burdens. When Leonard Rubin of the Class of 1949 made a substantial bequest to the law school, Bob chose to honor Mr. Rubin by using the gift to create the Rubin Public Interest Scholars Program. This program, renamed the Rubin-Presser Public Interest Scholars Program to also honor Stefan Presser, funds three annual scholarships that provide significant support to students with a history of service and a commitment to public interest careers. Bob's choice to devote the funds to this program has enabled Temple to attract students with stellar public interest credentials and to support them through law school and into their careers as public defenders, international human rights advocates, legal services attorneys, public health policy lawyers, and advocates for children, to name just a few.

It is no surprise that Bob has so strongly supported Temple's public interest environment. He has a long personal history as a public interest lawyer. In addition to being a scholar and teacher of constitutional law, Bob has served as an attorney with the Civil Rights Division of the United States Justice

* Susan L. DeJarnatt is an Associate Professor of Law at Temple University's Beasley School of Law, where she chairs the law school's Public Interest Committee.

Department. He headed the litigation section, responsible for enforcing federal civil rights law. He has also fought racial discrimination as a consulting attorney with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Bob's tenure as Dean has made Temple a national center for public interest law and advocacy and a welcoming home for all students who want to contribute to the fight for equality and access to justice for all.