

# Passing the BATON

Retiring Dean Elizabeth Rindskopf Parker leaves Pacific McGeorge School of Law a decade to the day after she arrived. She ends a remarkable tenure of service to Pacific and closes the door, not so much on a job, but on what she describes as “a calling in life.”



*Dean Elizabeth Rindskopf Parker tips a welcome toast to Francis “Jay” Mootz, who took over as dean of Pacific McGeorge School of Law on June 1.*

“I’ve always thought I had the best job in legal education, so it’s a little bit bittersweet,” says Parker, the eighth dean of Pacific McGeorge and the first woman to hold the position in the school’s 88-year history.

“I feel very gratified that it has been a very successful 10 years. Our law school has made great strides under the leadership of Dr. DeRosa and Dr. Eibeck. Everyone on the Stockton and Sacramento campuses has pulled together.”



BY MICHAEL CURRAN AND JAN FERRIS HEENAN

“The students are what makes it fun,” Parker says. “I’ve watched them arrive in flip-flops and leave in dark suits, transformed into leaders in our society. The University can be very proud of the positive impact that Pacific McGeorge graduates are making on the legal profession.”



Though her immediate plans include a much-needed vacation, Parker shows only marginal signs of slowing down. She serves on numerous nonprofit boards, including the new Civilian Research Development Global Fund that works with emerging democracies. She also was recently reappointed to the Public Interest Declassification Board by President Barack Obama. This follows a six-month term on the same board during the George W. Bush administration.

“Elizabeth has been a transformational dean of McGeorge School of Law,” Pacific President Pamela A. Eibeck told the more than 600 friends who gathered at a March gala honoring Parker. “She is a leader with true wisdom, vision and moxie who has been incredibly successful at re-engaging McGeorge with its community, its alumni and its supporters.”

When she was appointed as dean by President Donald V. DeRosa in 2002, Parker seemed like an unusual choice for the position. Typically, law school deans come from inside legal academia. Parker, who would never be described as typical, brought a résumé that included service as general counsel to the 26-campus University of Wisconsin system and principal deputy legal advisor for the U.S. Department of State, as well as general counsel to both the National Security and Central Intelligence agencies.

When she arrived at McGeorge, Parker recalls often hearing the law school described as a “best-kept secret.” She, in turn, often joked that it was a secret “it was time to declassify.” A plan she made good on.

Her accomplishments at the law school include Top 100 national rankings, curriculum changes that emphasize

student immersion in the actual practice of law, a \$10 million Legal Studies Center and an expanded international law program that has drawn students from more than 30 countries. Recent *U.S. News & World Report* rankings give the school high marks in international law, trial advocacy, legal writing and student diversity. She believes the strides the law school has made to increase diversity at McGeorge extend well beyond race and ethnicity, also capturing an attitude of inclusion and unity.

Parker has supported collaborative efforts with the Stockton campus, including international programs in China and Latin America. She also helped spearhead law-themed pipeline charter schools in Natomas and Stockton along with Gladys L. Benerd School of Education Dean Lynn Beck.

It was a love affair for students, faculty and staff from the moment Parker arrived. Her vision and drive energized the McGeorge community. Her personal success and persona exuded the confidence to embrace difficult choices and challenges. She motivated students to do their best and became an inspiration to hundreds of female law students.

Parker and her husband, Bob, who greatly expanded the law school’s field-placement program, never tired of entertaining students at their on-campus home.

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#### Career Highlights

Principal Deputy  
Legal Advisor, U.S.  
Department of State

General Counsel,  
National Security Agency

General Counsel,  
Central Intelligence Agency

Expanded international  
law program, including an  
innovative, 23-volume  
“Global Issues” casebook  
series, widely used at  
schools across the U.S.