The Judge Clarence A. Brimmer Scholars Program

The Judge Clarence A. Brimmer Scholars Program will honor Judge Brimmer’s long and distinguished service to the District of Wyoming, its bar, and its citizens as a Judge of the District Court. This program will ensure that Judge Brimmer’s renowned career is remembered and will serve as an inspiration for our students and the attorneys in Wyoming for many years to come.

We have established a goal of raising $500,000 in order to endow an annual award to an outstanding third year student. Our concept is based upon the Rhodes Scholarship program. Thus, students who have excelled during their first two years at the College of Law, whether it be in the classroom, on the Law Review, in service to the public, the law school, or the university, or in other areas will be permitted to apply for designation as their class’s Brimmer Scholar in the second semester of their second year in law school. Approximately five of these students will be chosen as finalists. The Brimmer Scholars Committee, consisting of a representative of the federal judiciary or bar, a representative of the Wyoming Supreme Court, a faculty member of the College of Law, the dean, a past Brimmer Scholar, and perhaps others such as a representative of the Brimmer family, would interview each of the finalists and select a winner. The Brimmer Scholar would receive a substantial scholarship stipend to defray the expenses of the third year of law school. We envision that this award would be the largest single scholarship in the College of Law, to signify its significance. We expect that it would be at least $10,000 on an annual basis. In exchange for this distinguished award, the Brimmer Scholar would make a commitment to service during the third year of law school. The Brimmer Scholars Committee could also decide to award scholarships in smaller amounts to other finalists, when additional funds are available.

In this way, the Brimmer Scholars Program would serve as an inspiration to excellence at the College of Law. The annual winner of the Brimmer Scholarship would not be the only student to benefit. Instead, we hope to leverage the program into an inspiration for excellence throughout the student body. We envision devoting a portion of our orientation program for incoming students to a discussion of Judge Brimmer and the Brimmer Scholars Program to give the students a goal to aim for in their time in law school. We also envision devoting a portion of our website to the Brimmer Scholars Program and to Judge Brimmer’s career. In this way, we can use Judge Brimmer’s outstanding career to inspire all of our students and alumni toward excellence and service in their own legal careers. We also see the winners of the Brimmer Scholarship serving as inspirations to future generations of students. It is our vision that Wyoming lawyers and others in the region will say “Sally is a Brimmer Scholar, you know” assured that their colleagues know that this means that Sally was a truly outstanding student and member of the bar, in much the same way “Rhodes Scholar” carries automatic distinction on a national scale.

To set it apart and appropriately honor Judge Brimmer, this program must be a unique one that awards a truly dramatic honor, in the form of a large scholarship award. Achieving our goal of raising $500,000 to establish an endowment will enable us to award Brimmer Scholarships annually in perpetuity. Admittedly, this is an ambitious goal, but we are committed to this campaign and enthusiastic about starting our efforts to raise these funds.

U.S. District Court Judge Clarence A. Brimmer is a Wyoming native born in Rawlins in 1922. After receiving his BA in 1944, he served in the U.S. Army Air Force during World War II from 1945-1946, and earned his JD in 1947 from the University of Michigan.

He served as Wyoming Attorney General from 1971 to 1974 and then as U.S. Attorney for the District of Wyoming in 1975. He was nominated by President Gerald Ford and became a judge in the U.S. District Court in 1975, and served as chief judge from 1986 to 1992. In 2006, he elected to take senior status.

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