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NEWS

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UC Berkeley School of Law dean steps down amid health issues

By Katie Lucia

Some say Christopher Edley Jr. brought UC Berkeley School of Law into the 21st century. In the nine years that Edley has headed the premier public law school as dean, he spearheaded efforts to renovate the institution's facilities, expanded and upgraded its faculty and established an emphasis on experiential learning.

Known as a transformative leader in legal education, Edley stepped down Monday due to health reasons. His appointment officially ends Dec. 31.

"He's really a national figure," said Marjorie M. Shultz, professor emeritus at UC Berkeley School of Law. "I think he has tremendous vision about the profession of law and law schools so I think he's been a very positive influence at Berkeley. I'm sorry to have him step down."

Many anticipated Edley would not continue as dean at the conclusion of his term next year. But his early departure was a surprise, faculty said, because many didn't know the extent of his health issues or that he had any. According to a statement issued by the school, Edley had surgery for prostate cancer earlier this year. When he learned he needed more treatment, Edley decided to prioritize his health.

He described his health problems as "more than worrisome, but much less than dire."

"Chris Edley has done a terrific job being at Berkeley," said Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of UC Irvine School of Law. "In every way he has just been a model to all of us who are deans."

Professors say Edley's progressive vision for the school caused waves among faculty, causing the school to lose several key professors, according to published reports.

"He totally shook things up," said Melissa Murray, a law professor at Berkeley. "He was the first external dean [in many decades]. ... For him there were no sacred cows."

Among the more radical changes he implemented was a push to create law clinics to provide students with hands on learning, Shultz said.

"Boalt was slow to adopt clinical programs and various kinds of learning through experience," she said. "It was pretty divided on this issue. I think he just established very quickly that we were going to expand those offerings, and once there was a clear leadership vision in that direction people who had spoken against it [stopped]."

Edley also recruited more diverse professors, expanding faculty by 40 percent and dropping the student to teacher ratio from 18:1 to 12:1. He created a vibrant junior faculty, Murray said, with new and exciting people.

SPECIAL REPORT

Real Estate



Tuesday, August 20, 2013

California Supreme Court

State Supreme Court expands potential liability for law enforcement officers

Law enforcement officers can be liable for failing to conduct background checks or to call a psychiatric team preceding their use of deadly force, the state Supreme Court said Monday.

Education

UC Berkeley School of Law dean steps down amid health issues

Known as a transformative leader in legal education, Christopher Edley Jr. stepped down Monday due to health reasons. His appointment officially ends Dec. 31.

Bankruptcy

Howrey estate settles mega-clawback claim for \$37 million

The Howrey LLP estate on Friday agreed to settle claims against Baker & Hostetler LLP worth \$37 million over its recruitment of 11 former Howrey partners.

Litigation

Judge approves settlement, cuts legal fees in BAR/BRI litigation

A judge slashed the attorneys' fees award Monday while approving the final settlement agreement in a long-running antitrust class action accusing the purveyors of BAR/BRI bar review and LSAT preparatory courses of collusion.

Government

Private defense attorneys to get paid less due to government cutbacks

Private attorneys who defend indigent clients will have to work for less pay starting Sept. 1, the executive committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States decided last week.

Judges and Judiciary

Justice retires as Judicial Council

He also led dramatic upgrades to the school. Under his direction the campus's dated facilities were renovated and a new central building constructed to provide different kinds of classroom space, Murray said. The classrooms were overhauled and infused with technology.

"He was a brilliant dean with an extraordinary vision for public education at a time when public education was under siege," Murray said.

Like many public California law schools, Berkeley weathered unprecedented budget cuts. In the past five years, the University of California system has endured \$900 million in cuts, according to the UC website.

Before he became Berkeley's dean, Edley was a professor at Harvard Law School and served as an advisor to presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton.

"Over these years I suppose there may have been a few moments when I regretted coming to Boalt," Edley wrote in a letter to faculty and staff. "But I can't seem to remember a single one."

Professor Gillian Lester will serve as acting dean while the law school searches for a permanent replacement.

katie_lucia@dailyjournal.com

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committee chair after 17 years

State Supreme Court Justice Marvin Baxter will step down in September from an influential committee that advises judicial branch leadership about what positions to take on bills in the Legislature.

Litigation

Judge: Toyota CEO can face questions

A judge on Monday ordered Toyota Motor Corp.'s North American CEO to face questions about his company's brake override system during the first unintended acceleration case to go to trial in California state court.

Obituaries

Eugene Chatham Crew, 1931-2013

Influential San Francisco antitrust litigator Eugene Chatham Crew died Thursday at the age of 82. Senior counsel at Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP, Crew was a name partner at predecessor firm Townsend and Townsend and Crew LLP.

Mergers & Acquisitions

Dealmakers

A roundup of recent mergers and acquisitions and financing activity and the lawyers involved.

Judges and Judiciary

'Snapshot' judging

Verdicts and rulings are static: They rest on a "snapshot" of the facts and law at a specific moment in time. The question then becomes: Which moment? By **Brian M. Hoffstadt**

Litigation

The False Claims Act race to the courthouse

The first-to-file bar fulfills the FCA's first policy goal by triggering a "race to the courthouse" that incentivizes would-be relators to act quickly, lest they lose their chance at a reward. By **Matthew Benedetto**

Investments

Private equity firms may need to ratchet up 'passiveness'

In light of a recent circuit court decision, private equity firms may start to be - either in reality or at least in presentation - more in the back seat and less behind the wheel. By **Robert W. Wood**

Litigation

Are social media followers and connections a trade secret?

A factfinder has yet to determine that a social media account contains protectable trade secrets. By **Ellen P. Liu and Constance J. Yu**

Judicial Profile