

## TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR DEBBIE BELL

*I. Richard Gershon\**

I am grateful to have a chance to celebrate my friend and colleague Professor Debbie Bell. Professor Bell's work and accomplishments at the University of Mississippi School of Law are truly remarkable, but she was always humble and kind and would never tell you about all of the things she has given to the law school.

Professor Bell fought for and created the Civil Legal Clinic at a time when there was little support for clinical programs. She had to piece together the financial support to make this mission happen.

When I became dean of the Law School, Professor Bell was considering retirement. No one at the law school wanted her to retire; we all knew what a great asset she was. I knew Professor Bell had a passion for working with students to create a pro bono program, and I was thrilled when she created the Pro Bono Initiative, which continues to prosper today.

When I returned to full-time teaching, Provost Morris Stocks asked who should be appointed interim dean. It was clear to me and Dr. Stocks that Professor Bell was the perfect choice. She graciously took on that challenge. It is not surprising that Professor Bell brought her usual quiet strength and humility to that role.

While we miss having Professor Bell in the building on a daily basis, her impact at the law school will endure, and the students and faculty—and the profession as a whole—will continue to benefit from all of her hard work.

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\* Professor of Law, University of Mississippi School of Law.

