

Welcome Remarks of Dean McConnaughay  
STL 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Program  
April 13, 2019

It is wonderful to see so many of our graduates, students, faculty, and administrators join together today to celebrate STL's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We have enjoyed several months of lectures and conferences at the law school commemorating this milestone, but today is the culmination, bringing together so many people who have been responsible for STL's success. Welcome to you all.

I've been trying to think of ways to describe STL's first ten years and I keep coming back to two words. One of the words was used by STL's Founding Dean, Jeff Lehman, in a conversation he had with me several years ago; the other was used by the person who first conceived of STL, Professor Hai Wen, in conversations he had with STL's first students.

The word Dean Lehman used was **"IMPACT."** The conversation was almost seven years ago, and Jeff and I were talking about the possibility of me joining STL. I mentioned a couple other opportunities I was considering that probably would have bigger budgets, more faculty, and fewer challenges – this was not long after the ABA decided not to accredit law schools outside of the United States.

And I will never forget Jeff's reply. "Well," he said, "you need to do what makes you happy, but I can tell you this: **No law school in the world is going to have greater IMPACT than STL,** on China-U.S. relations; on the development of law and the legal profession in China; on transnational law and exchange; and on legal education worldwide.

"STL and its graduates will be leaders," he said, "and these are the contributions they will make to China and to the world. STL is the most exciting experiment in legal education today and this will be STL's **IMPACT.**"

His confidence was unshakable. And, it turns out he was exactly right.

STL's growing **IMPACT** is exactly what we are celebrating today, and what we will continue to celebrate for many, many more STL Anniversaries to come.

The other word that I think captures the essence of STL is one I am told Professor Hai Wen used when explaining to STL's first few classes of students what would be required of them to attend STL. **VISION.**

And this is exactly what Professor Hai Wen, Dean Lehman and STL's earliest students shared. **VISION.**

Ten years ago STL was simply an idea.

Today, STL graduates hold leading positions with world-leading law firms, multinational corporations, elite government offices, and NGOs.

When STL graduates pursue additional advanced degrees, they attend the world's leading universities.

Law faculties in China, Europe, the United States, Russia and elsewhere continually seek more information about STL and its innovative program.

The same is true of lawyers and law firms the world over.

Today, STL **is** "China's Most Innovative Law School in China's Most Innovative City." And, as law schools go, we're just getting started.

So, what might we be celebrating at STL's future anniversaries?

I'll mention **five** things that I hope will be part of STL's future.

**First**, I hope we will be celebrating STL graduates as leading members of STL's permanent faculty. No one is more qualified to contribute significantly to our unique program. The challenge in making this happen is the University's requirement of a Ph.D. for the appointment of tenure track faculty. The problem is that the University and Ministry of Education don't yet recognize that STL graduates already have one.

One thing that all of the top universities in the United States have in common – Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, the University of California, the University of Texas, Rice, Rochester, Pittsburgh and many others – is that they **all** have or have had as presidents leading US scholars whose terminal degree **is a J.D.**, long recognized in the U.S. as the professional equivalent of a research doctorate. STL's J.D. degree deserves similar recognition in China.

**Second**, I hope we will be celebrating Peking University's unequivocal commitment to the growth and development of the Shenzhen Campus. Just look around at the enormous growth of Tsinghua, H.I.T, SUSTECH, the University of Shenzhen, and the many distinguished foreign universities arriving in Shenzhen, all because of the enormous investment the Shenzhen Government is willing to make and is making in higher education in Shenzhen. Beida's Shenzhen Graduate School should be part of this. Our University leaders in Beijing hold the key.

**Third**, I hope we will be celebrating the development of a commitment to philanthropy among China's wealthiest and most fortunate, as well as a commitment within our University to the creation of a professional donor relations staff.

**Fourth**, I hope we will be celebrating greater management autonomy for China's leading universities, as well as greater management autonomy for each of the separate disciplines within each university. In my view, this is the key to fully unleashing the enormous creative capacities still within China's leading universities, which I suspect are unmatched elsewhere in the world.

**Finally**, I hope we will be celebrating, once again, the singular contributions of STL graduates to the emerging legal profession in China. I especially hope that STL graduates will lead the profession by their example of professionalism and high ethics. Nothing is more important to achieving the respect and prestige the legal profession in China deserves. This will be still another way in which the **IMPACT** of STL graduates will be immeasurably valuable to society.

So, these are some of my hopes for STL's future, and this concludes my introductory remarks. Welcome again to STL's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!