

# Making Legal Education Accessible

In the 1970s and earlier, a student could graduate debt-free from William Mitchell College of Law... without a scholarship or financial aid. The cost of tuition and books could typically be covered by working part time or full time. Little to no debt meant that a student could take the risk of starting a solo practice or take lower-paying legal work in the public sector.

Today, this is no longer possible. The high cost of everything from tuition to books to rent is threatening access for students who have the ability

to succeed in the legal profession. Most Mitchell students today work to finance their education and most also have to borrow money. The average debt on graduation? Nearly \$80,000 (which is less than the national average for law school debt).

For this reason, Mitchell has made scholarships a top fundraising priority. The goal is to significantly increase the number of students receiving privately funded scholarships (60 in 2007—2008) and to boost the average award provided by philanthropic dollars (about \$2,300).

**"I read whenever I can. I never miss class. I try to limit my late nights at school to two nights per week, and the rest of the time I try to be home at least by bath time for my son. Without the scholarship, the loans would not cover the tuition. It also gives added incentive for me to carry through during the harder times."**

**– Gregory Bittle, part-time Mitchell student, full-time father, and recipient of the Peter Popovich Scholarship**



## New Match Program

For those interested in setting up a **named scholarship endowment** (minimum \$25,000, payable for up to 5 years), a special matching gift program has been created that will double the impact of your gift. The gifts are invested and 5% of the total value of the endowment is paid out every year in perpetuity to fund the scholarship. For those interested in making an **annual gift** to scholarships, this can be designated through your gift to the annual fund every year. In addition, you can designate a **bequest or other future gift** for scholarships.

To talk with someone about making a scholarship gift, please contact: Lisa Barton '97, director of development, at (651) 290-6357, [lisa.barton@wmitchell.edu](mailto:lisa.barton@wmitchell.edu).

**“The rising cost of a law school education is a local as well as a national problem. This raises heightened concerns at Mitchell, a college with a tradition and commitment to ensuring access — from the part time working student to the gifted student who cannot afford law school tuition. We are committed to ensuring access to those students who can succeed in the law. That’s why I have made scholarships a top fund raising priority for William Mitchell College of Law. Scholarships will not only help Mitchell’s competitive rankings but, importantly, they change students’ lives.”**

**Eric S. Janus**  
president and dean



## Average Scholarship Awards Mitchell vs. Other Regional Law Schools

School	Average Scholarship Awards
University of Iowa	\$27,571
University of Wisconsin	\$24,203
Northwestern University	\$22,263
Drake University	\$19,226
University of Minnesota	\$16,665
Hamline University	\$15,799
University of St. Thomas	\$13,560
William Mitchell College of Law	\$9,661

Source: American Bar Association, 2005-2006 academic year