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## Dean's Message, September 11, 2001

Members of the New York Law School Community:

It is with great sadness that I write this message. As I look out of my office window I can see the smoke and debris from the Trade Towers. There is no worse feeling than the helplessness that comes from being close, but unable to help. Many of us have colleagues, family, and friends who work in the Towers. We are fearful that they may be lost, grateful for the escape of others, and thankful for the tireless efforts of the rescue workers.

Many of you have suffered a personal loss in this tragedy. Our hearts go out to you. The Law School will be working to find grief counselors to help ease your pain. To those who were at the Law School today, thank you for your calmness in the face of chaos and for your understanding as all New Yorkers and Americans try to sort through these events.

Today, someone asked me what we, as individuals educated and trained in the law, can do. We must pray that the rule of law be followed; that we use all of the force of a mighty nation to lawfully discover those responsible for this attack; and that we use every legal means available to us as a nation to punish those responsible to the full extent of the law.

Our country and profession will be challenged in unprecedented ways. Our emotions cannot and should not be checked. Rather we must channel them to do what is right. We will be challenged by changes in our civil life—security measures, inconveniences to daily living, fear, and pleas for revenge. My hope is for our leaders to show courage, and to respond swiftly and in a measured way. For the rest of us—New Yorkers, Americans, and all members of the legal profession—let us use every tool at our disposal to help bring our community together to respond to a shared national catastrophe.

Let all of us in this community work together and come back as strongly as we can.

## Dean's Message, September 14, 2001

Members of the New York Law School Community

Our world has been shattered. All of us have suffered incalculable losses—of family, friends, colleagues, and fellow citizens. The peace that we have come to expect as our birthright has been broken, perhaps forever. Nothing any of us can say or do can restore what was; we only can look forward and do what we can to come back stronger than ever. Our Mayor certainly has it right: Americans and New Yorkers are tough and compassionate people, dedicated to moving forward, rebuilding, and safeguarding our democratic values even in the face of the most difficult challenges.

The New York Law School family has many difficult days ahead, but we are fully dedicated to resuming our students' education as soon as possible, and to sharing our expertise with those who need our help. As distraught as our academic community is, we have come through these events in much better shape than others. It is our job to do what we can to help.

As most of you know by now, we have been without power, Internet access, and phone service since late afternoon on that horrific day of September 11. We have established a temporary Web site at <http://nyls.collegis.com>. Until we can resume our normal means of communication this will be the best way to find out about the law school. Please check our site frequently. If you would like to speak to me personally, I can be reached at 212-706-8558 or by e-mail at [smatasar@rcn.com](mailto:smatasar@rcn.com). We must be here for each other in this time of great need!

Friends, I have been meeting daily off-campus with the senior administration of the law school and our trustees. Our Student Life office has been calling student leaders; we have visited our students at the dormitory; and we are in constant contact with our faculty. New York Law School will do everything it can to respond to this crisis. We will do what we do best: use our classrooms

to address every legal and moral issue raised by this cowardly attack. We will become a forum for our neighborhood. We will offer our legal expertise to those directly affected by this tragedy who may have nowhere else to turn. Every member of our community will need a sense of security and our school will be a haven for all of us.

What separates our society from others is our extraordinary commitment to the rule of law. Over the next few months our most cherished beliefs will be challenged. We must resolve to double our efforts (and then double them again) to bring order out of chaos and use every legal means to find and then punish those responsible. More fundamentally, as members of a helping profession, we must do all we can to bring our community back as strong as ever. I often say that at New York Law School we "Learn Law and then Take Action." Now is our time to do both.

### Dean's Message, September 17, 2001

Colleagues, leaving the law school today I was bursting with conflicting emotions. I am so grateful to be part of a wonderful community of faculty and staff. So many of you found your way to the City and then to the Law School. I am proud of our commitment to give our students everything they deserve, to take account of their educational AND emotional needs, to do everything we can to help our neighbors and our city. At the same time, I am angry about the many serious inconveniences that we will face in getting back to normal, disgusted with the few sick individuals in our city who are interfering with the police and fire fighters, and worried about the many things that we cannot make right and the impossibility of making whole those irreparably harmed by the terrorists' acts.

For me these many thoughts are compounded during the high holidays. Walking into services through metal detectors with a significant police presence reinforces the conclusion that all is not right. Yet, reading texts that go back through the ages about the need for peace in our times and the need for personal accountability reminds me that none of us who have survived is completely a victim unless we choose to let ourselves fall into despair; none of us is fated to a future of someone else's making when we have the power to influence future events.

Thus, I leave this day with yet another emotion: determination that we come together as a community, press ourselves to accomplish all that we are capable of accomplishing, and create a future for ourselves and our students that will be vibrant and aware of our own power to make change. I look forward to working with all of you to take our place (and all of us as individuals) to the next level.

### Dean's Message, October 28, 2001

We join with our fellow New Yorkers in mourning the loss of thousands of lives and sadly acknowledge that among them were many relatives and friends of our students, faculty, and staff, and one of our own, Craig Lilore, Class of 1998. Our hearts go out to Craig's wife and son, his family members and friends. We are resolute in our commitment to move forward and achieve in their names.

The challenges of the months ahead can be daunting, but they should not prevent us from moving on. Challenges are also transformative; let's take them on, progress, rebuild, and create an even greater role for our profession.

To channel our efforts to help the many in our TriBeCa community who have suffered economic hardship and dislocation as a result of the bombing of the World Trade Center, we have established the New York Law School Community Fund. Contributions from faculty, staff, and students can be made through the purchase of the "New York Law School Cares" flagpins or by checks made payable to "New York Law School Cares." For more information, please see the announcement.

I thank you all for your perseverance and for the strength of your commitment to your Law School and to our common endeavor.

Richard A. Matasar  
Dean and President