



2006

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### Recommended Citation

John B. Attanasio, *Charles O. Galvin: Dean, Scholar, Leader, Innovator*, 59 SMU L. Rev. 431 (2006)  
<https://scholar.smu.edu/smulr/vol59/iss2/2>

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# CHARLES O. GALVIN: DEAN, SCHOLAR, LEADER, INNOVATOR

*John B. Attanasio\**

IT is an honor to be a part of this symposium issue dedicated to Dean Charles O. Galvin. Twenty years passed between the time Charley concluded his fifteen-year tenure as dean and I began my deanship at this law school. Twenty years is a long time by any measure; memories fade or become distorted—especially those of former deans! Not so with Dean Galvin; he is one of those rare people who can inspire great stories and fond recollections at the mention of his name.

When I was considering the offer of whether to become dean of the SMU School of Law, one of the first people whom I called was my mentor Norman Redlich. I was privileged to serve as Norman's research assistant for two years while he taught constitutional law and served as dean of the New York University School of Law. We now coauthor two constitutional law books. The first words out of Norman's mouth about SMU were, "That's where Charley Galvin was dean." Norman noted that he and Charley served as law school deans at the same time. He stated that Charley was a true national figure both as dean and in the field of taxation. Although my field is not taxation, I already had known Charley Galvin by reputation for many years, both as an eminent tax professor and an eminent dean.

Soon after my arrival at SMU, Charley and his gracious wife Peggy were extremely welcoming to both Kathy and me. The four of us went out to dinner together long before I started the job; at that dinner, I sought Charley's advice. I have sought Charley's advice many times since. He is always careful with his advice, never giving any unless it is sought. His advice always displays the wisdom that he exhibited as dean. Although he is 86 years young, Charley's mind is still quick as a whip. His memory is truly amazing, and I wish I had as many "senior moments" as he does.

As my eminent tax colleague Hank Lischer will discuss Dean's Galvin's tax scholarship, I will confine this brief essay to Charley's achievements as dean, which are many.

Charley's deanship spanned one of the most challenging periods in our nation's history. Between 1963 and 1978, we witnessed seismic shifts in our culture and our social and political landscape including the Vietnam

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War, the assassinations of prominent leaders, the civil rights movement, the cold war, political unrest in many countries, and rapid advances in science and technology. Dean Galvin understood the profound challenges these and other significant contemporary events imposed on the law and legal education. Reflecting his characteristic blend of intellect and pragmatism, Charley conveyed his thoughts about how law and the training of lawyers must respond to these events through his annual reports to the University Board of Trustees, his hooding ceremony addresses, and his fall convocation remarks. In his 1965-66 dean's report, Charley wrote:

Law is a technical discipline, and our task must continue to be the effective training of the student over a broad range of subjects to give him the fullest exposure to the methodology and thought processes of this technical discipline. More than that, the law must be relevant to the social, political, and economic institutions that make up our culture. Still further, we must know the law in perspective, examine it against the background of human history, and strive always for its reform and renewal. So rapidly is the store of technical knowledge expanding that we hear much about the scientific revolution. So rapidly is social change taking place that we characterize it as a social revolution. The word 'revolution' connotes disorder and disarray. How important, therefore, that the wisdom and prudence of lawyers be employed to channel these revolutionary forces for the betterment of the common welfare.

Building on the accomplishments of his predecessors, particularly Dean Robert Storey, Charley set his sights on moving SMU from a respected regional law school to one that would begin to ascend toward the national prominence that Charley himself had already attained. Prior to becoming Dean, Charley had been a member of this faculty for eleven years and had also served as Associate Dean. Owing to his deep academic instincts coupled with his keen business sense, Charley was able to navigate the difficult waters that often can impede the growth of an institution and moved this school forward in significant ways.

Perhaps the crowning achievement of his deanship was the construction of the magnificent Underwood Law Library, which opened in 1971. At the time, it was the second-largest law library in the country in square feet. More than thirty years later, it is still among the largest and most beautiful law libraries in the United States. The gift for the library was given by George and Nancy Underwood. George and Charley grew up together in University Park. In fact, Charley inherited George's paper route and they both attended SMU together as undergraduates.

Another major achievement of Charley's magnificent deanship was the establishment of the Hatton W. Sumners scholarship. A substantial gift established this full scholarship and generous stipend to attract to SMU students who otherwise would not be likely to come here. The track record of the program in attracting top students is well-known, and the

scholarship must rank as one of the pre-eminent such awards in all of legal education.

Yet another major accomplishment of Charley's leadership was the formal establishment of the law school's tax LL.M. program in 1978. At this time, the tax LL.M. was among the first graduate tax programs in the United States. This program has helped SMU's Dedman School of Law to attain national prominence in the field of taxation. Charley's work provided the foundation for what continues to be one of the strongest tax programs in the country. Our prominence in the field of taxation has helped the law school to attract other prominent professors in this important field, including our current tax faculty of Regis Campfield, Jack Mylan, Hank Lischer, and Christopher Hanna.

Yesterday, the Dedman School of Law celebrated another legacy of Dean Galvin's—our majestic graduation ceremony. Charley designed one of the most magnificent graduation ceremonies I have ever witnessed—one that is so beautiful that we still use it 35 years later. The ceremony even included trumpeters on the roof of the new Underwood Law Library. While we still have trumpeters, we no longer place them on the roof of Underwood. A few years ago, the Student Bar Association asked to move the trumpeters from the ground back to the roof. I replied that the Law School would pay the trumpeters, if the SBA paid the insurance! This, however, is one of the few aspects of Dean Galvin's ceremony that does not remain today.

While he was dean, the eclectic Dean Galvin remained active in a variety of other activities. Of course, he continued to be a major scholar in his beloved field of taxation. He also was one of the founders of Legal Services of North Texas, and served on many boards of nonprofit concerns. Throughout his life, charity has been a key part of Charley's endeavors.

These are but a few of the many contributions for which we will always be grateful to Dean Galvin. Charley received his undergraduate degree at SMU before attending law school at Northwestern. At SMU's 2005 commencement, Charley was awarded an honorary doctorate by his alma mater. This is an extremely unusual and high honor which encapsules the kind of career that Charley has had. SMU has a wonderful tradition of prefacing the award of every honorary doctorate with an academic conference about the work of the recipient. In Charley's case, our tax faculty organized the conference and delivered a series of outstanding papers in his honor. The conference was attended by Charley and alumni from all over the country who were his former students.

Several years before, the entire law faculty also recognized Charley by unanimously voting him the unusual accolade of distinguished professor emeritus. To my knowledge, this is the first time that the law faculty has awarded such an honor. The Texas Bar Association honored Charley for more than fifty years of service. He has also been given the Equal Justice Award from Legal Services of North Texas and the John Rogers Award

from Southwestern Legal Foundation. The fact that people who know Charley well have recognized him with so many honors and awards speak volumes about his achievements, his reputation, and the kind of human being that he is.

This tax symposium represents the latest salute that Charley has received from his own colleagues who admire him so much. The symposium represents another in a series of outstanding tax symposia organized primarily by Professor Christopher Hanna. The outstanding contributions in this volume made by some of the leading tax people in the country are not only a fitting tribute to Dean Galvin, but also demonstrate the Dedman School of Law's continuing leadership in the field of taxation which Charley was so instrumental in building.