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## Well Done, Professor Linda Eads

Harriet E. Miers

*Locke Lord*, hmiers@lockelord.com

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## WELL DONE, PROFESSOR LINDA EADS

*Harriet E. Miers\**

**A** hearty well done, Linda Eads, is what she deserves. She has used her talents and her time to help others have better opportunities and to inspire those coming after her to seek and achieve excellence.

I have had the privilege of knowing Professor Linda Eads for many years now, as we both were lawyers here in Texas. I have also had the opportunity to observe this well-known and admired lawyer as she has used her abilities to contribute in broad-ranging venues. Linda forged her legal career beginning on the East Coast with distinguished service to the United States Department of Justice. The awards and recognitions she received there would not be her last, as we are aware. I will not recite, but hope others do, the numerous recognitions of Linda's excellence in her teaching and other aspects of her professional life.

Linda's bold nature has served her well as she came here to the SMU Dedman School of Law to begin her teaching, researching, and writing. At that time, women were not the norm on law faculties. Not fazed by challenges, but seemingly inspired by them, Linda settled into teaching a variety of subject matter. As aptly stated by one of her former students, now a successful lawyer in a prominent firm, "Professor Eads has been such an incredible gift for SMU Dedman School of Law and its students. Her passion for teaching and for ensuring that each student was engaged and following the material was evident from the first class." In teaching classes such as Trial Advocacy, Evidence, and Professional Responsibility, she has been a mentor and role model for students interested in pursuing legal careers in trial work, especially women.

Linda again took a break from her professorship at SMU to enter public service. She moved to Austin to head the civil litigation department for the Texas Attorney General's Office, a much sought after and esteemed position. She served with distinction in the Attorney General's Office. Her effectiveness and hard work there and wherever she has served have been constants and recognized. After her service with the Attorney General's Office, she returned to the law school.

Eventually, Linda was asked to assume the position of Associate Provost of SMU, where she agreed to take an administration position of great significance for the university as a whole. Among her responsibilities in the Provost's Office, she served as director of the prestigious Hunt

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\* Partner, Locke Lord LLP; Former Counsel to the President of the United States.

Leadership Scholars program at the university that has brought exceptional students from across the nation to the SMU undergraduate schools.

Linda also served as the interim director for the one-of-a-kind, bipartisan Presidential Leadership Scholars program sponsored by the Presidential Centers of George W. Bush, William J. Clinton, George H.W. Bush, and Lyndon B. Johnson. Anyone observing Linda has seen an individual determined to leave her mark on the institutions she has served by enhancing the institution and advancing opportunities for others through it. Each of her quite diverse activities were assumed by Linda with apparent ease.

Wherever she has been, Linda has sought to focus upon high ethical standards, doing her best to strengthen this bedrock principle for the legal profession. The Supreme Court of Texas appointed Linda in 2004 to lead State Bar efforts to improve lawyer disciplinary rules. We can all agree that trying to develop rule changes in the realm of ethics and lawyer discipline requires hard and skillful work to ensure the suggested professional rules embody the highest standards while acceptable to a wide variety of stakeholders. The need to lead when there can be much opposition to well-conceived revisions can be a daunting task. Linda's willingness to undertake this task once again showed her courage in the face of potential challenge. She was up to the challenge and received deserved recognition for her meritorious work. It seems that one person or group of great import after another has called upon Linda Eads to be part of their team or to lead it.

Her election as President of the Faculty Senate for SMU was another example of her receiving a call to service. Her presidency of the Faculty Senate underscores her leadership abilities and the trust others have in her advocacy abilities. She became only the fourth law school faculty member at SMU to serve as President of the Faculty Senate since the early 1960s.

Linda believes in mentoring as a way of concretely bringing about change for the better, either in one life or in a society. I had the privilege of serving with Linda as one of the mentors in the inaugural group to work with Egyptian women in the Women's Initiative Fellowship Program sponsored by the Bush Institute. No one in our group more than Linda was interested in seeing positive, concrete change for women in a country like Egypt, rich in history and position. Linda brought to bear in that program, and with her mentee, all of her expertise and experience to provide nurturing and guidance.

As part of the program, we traveled to Egypt at a time that became more tumultuous than expected. Linda had planned to participate to the end of the program in Egypt and then had planned to meet her daughter and take a trip down the Nile with her. Warned that the timing for such a trip for tourists may not be ideal given unrest in the area, Linda was undeterred because she had promised the trip for her daughter. As we were preparing to return home to the United States, she left the group to set

out for her Nile adventure. That trip was a metaphor for how Linda lives her life. She was fearless, both in this instance and, as she has demonstrated, in approaching her several career adventures.

Linda stands (not too tall of course) as a stalwart of women lawyers navigating the waters of a profession with potential obstacles for women of her time. Over her career, she has been a role model to whom younger women especially could look for comfort that they too could be successful.