ESTABLISHING THE PATSY TAKEMOTO MINK CHAIR OF LAW AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
Undaunted Courage

PATSY TAKEMOTO MINK’S story is an American story. Although born in a small plantation village in Hawai‘i, and raised during a time when her race and gender foreclosed better opportunities, Mink was not afraid to challenge the status quo. During World War II, Mink, like all other Japanese Americans, was declared an enemy of this nation. But, that did not deter her drive for equality and her love of her country. She would overcome racial and gender discrimination and become the first Japanese American woman admitted to practice law in Hawai‘i. With the admiration and support of the people, Mink would be elected to the Hawai‘i legislature and subsequently to the United States House of Representatives, where she was the first Asian American woman of color to serve in the United States Congress. Over the course of her illustrious career in public service, Mink pushed for deep societal changes. From advocating for the expansion of public access to government information to ensuring the protection and conservation of the natural resources of the nation, Mink’s legacy has touched the lives of all Americans. Perhaps Mink’s greatest achievement was her advocacy for the Mink Legislative Fellowship and the Ulu Lehua Scholars Program—two projects of the Law School that embody Mink’s vision of access, equality, and justice.

“An American trailblazer, Patsy Takemoto Mink helped build a nation that lives up to its promise, and her example challenges us to make progress in our time.”

—PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA
for passage in 1972 of Title IX which guarantees equal federal support for women in both academics and athletics. In 2014, and because of her tremendous contributions to the United States, President Barack Obama posthumously awarded Mink the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor.

It is easy enough to vote right and be consistently with the majority. But it is more often important to be ahead of the majority and this means being willing to cut the first furrow in the ground and stand alone for a while if necessary.”

—PATSY TAKEMOTO MINK
Mink Legislative Fellowship

Funds from the endowed chair will be used to support the Patsy Takemoto Mink Legislative Fellowship, which provides opportunities for law students to spend time in Washington, D.C.

The Fellowship changed the course of my life and my pursuit of social justice. I often thought of what Mrs. Mink had done and would have done if she were available for counsel. Her work was often my guide, and it continues to be my guide today.

—VAN LUONG
Mink Legislative Fellow

For the first time, I was given a voice and the opportunity to make a real difference.

—SHERILYN TAVARES, Mink Legislative Fellow

We have a shared moral purpose and a shared sense of justice for those most vulnerable.

—KELLI LYMAN
Ulu Lehua Scholar

Ulu Lehua Scholars Program

Funds from the endowed chair will also be used to support the Ulu Lehua Scholars Program.

IN 1974, the Law School created what is now known as the Ulu Lehua Scholars Program as a manifestation of the school’s commitment to make legal education accessible to members of legally underrepresented and underserved groups in and beyond Hawai‘i. Each year, the Law School admits up to twelve students who have overcome adversity, have demonstrated leadership potential and commitment to social justice, and who have academic records that evince the persistence, dedication, and intellectual ability needed to succeed in law school and become members of the bar. Every cohort of Lehua Scholars represents Hawai‘i’s socioeconomic and ethnic diversity and also usually includes several participants from the greater Pacific. Over 300 Richardson graduates—many of whom are accomplished lawyers, judges, legislators, scholars, and community leaders—have launched their legal careers from the Lehua Program.

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For additional information about your gift or how to structure future gifts, please contact:

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