THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI’I ESTABLISH JOINT LEGAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Honolulu - The University of British Columbia and the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa have established a new joint legal education program that opens doors for graduates to practice law in both Canada and the United States.

The UBC Faculty of Law and the UH William S. Richardson School of Law will sign the agreement at a ceremony on Friday, July 17, 2009 at 11:30am in Room 254 at the Law School. The two schools will ratify one of the most promising legal education partnerships to link Canada and the United States.

“We are extremely pleased to partner with the University of Hawai’i William S. Richardson School of Law,” says UBC Associate Vice-President International Craig Evan Klafter. “This program will prepare students to pursue the practice of law in both Canada and the United States, and facilitate further economic ties between Canada and Hawai’i.”

The UBC and UH law schools will each accept up to five students per year, starting in 2010. All students enrolled in the program will be able to earn the law degrees required -- subject to admission and completion of the professional course requirements -- for law practice in an additional jurisdiction: Canada for UH students and the United States for UBC students.

The joint legal education program thus requires just one extra year of study, so that students who complete two years of course work at law school can become eligible to be admitted to practice law in both countries. The international nature of many legal transactions today has created a demand for lawyers who can practice in multiple jurisdictions. Such lawyers are prized by law firms and corporate law departments. The last 10 years have seen a rise in the number of joint legal education programs.

“This is an excellent collaboration between the UH William S. Richardson School of Law and UBC Faculty of Law,” says Prof. Mary Anne Bobinski, UBC Dean of Law. “UBC and UH share strengths in environmental, Asian, and indigenous law, and our students will benefit from exposure to a different jurisdiction and from UH’s wide range of clinical opportunities.”

“We are very excited at the opportunities created by this partnership,” says Avi Soifer, Dean of the William S. Richardson School of Law. “UBC is an ideal fit for us, and the program offers wonderful immediate possibilities for our students as well as possible cooperative ventures in the future between our faculty members and our two great universities.”
The University of British Columbia Faculty of Law

As one of Canada’s leading law schools, UBC's Faculty of Law offers a varied program of instruction in a broad array of legal fields to highly qualified and diverse law students in professional and graduate degree programs leading to the JD, LLM, and PhD. Faculty members are engaged with and connected to academics, practitioners, and policy-makers across the globe, and are committed to ensuring that their research makes a difference -- locally and globally.

The Faculty’s Centre for Asian Legal Studies is the largest group of academics teaching and researching Asian legal issues in Canada. The UBC Centre for Global Environmental and Natural Resources Law enjoys an international reputation for its research, courses, and environmental law moot court teams. The Faculty of Law is a leader in First Nations legal education in North America. Since 1975, over 180 Aboriginal students have graduated from the Faculty of Law. Many of those are now leaders who have helped to redefine First Nations legal issues in Canada.

Information about the Faculty of Law can be found at http://www.law.ubc.ca.

The William S. Richardson School of Law

The William S. Richardson School of Law in Honolulu, Hawai‘i is exceptional both for its location and its commitment to pluralism and diversity within the law, society, and academia. As the only ABA-accredited and Association of American Law Schools member law school in the Pacific-Asia region, it offers outstanding teaching and first-rate professional training by a talented and very accessible faculty.

Its student body is the most diverse in the nation and represents over 124 undergraduate schools. The curriculum offers the Juris Doctor (JD) and (LLM) degrees as well as a nationally-ranked Environmental Law Program, and concentrations in Native Hawaiian Law and Pacific Asian Legal Studies.

To read more about the William S. Richardson School of Law, visit: http://www.hawaii.edu/law/.

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