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3-25-2003

Law School Appoints First Female Dean

Adam Aasen
Indiana Daily Student

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Recommended Citation

Aasen, Adam, "Law School Appoints First Female Dean" (2003). *Lauren Robel (2002 Acting; 2003-2011)*. 20.

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Maurer School of Law
Bloomington

Indiana Daily Student 03-25-03

Law school appoints first female dean

Trustees expected to approve new dean, former IU student

By Adam Aasen
Indiana Daily Student

Many IU students talk about how their professors or the administration should do things differently. Few students actually receive the opportunity to make the changes.

Former IU law school student, Val Nolan law professor and law school Interim Dean Lauren K. Robel will be given that chance.

She has been named dean of the IU School of Law at Bloomington, pending approval by the board of trustees at its monthly meeting.

Robel will be the 15th dean of the law school and the first female one. She succeeds Fred Aman, who was dean from 1991 to 2002. She has been acting as interim dean since Aman left.

"It is a real honor to be able to continue to serve the school as dean," Robel said in a statement. "I look forward especially to continuing to work with the outstanding faculty and students at the law school, and to the support of our wonderful alumni both

in Indiana and around the world."

After receiving her undergraduate degree from Auburn University, Robel attended IU, where she studied under the same professors who she will now preside over.

Law professor Terry Bethel, who taught Robel in a summer contracts law class, said he is impressed with Robel and has fond memories of her.

"I always say that was one of the best classes I've ever had," he said. "I talked to one of the students from that class the other day, who is a prominent lawyer now, and told them that Lauren is the new law school dean, and they were excited. Everyone has

been."

Bethel said it is terrific Robel received the job. He said it is unique that a former student of his is now in the leadership position.

"I think it's a little unusual," he says. "It feels weird to see a former student of mine behind the desk as the dean because it's hard to imagine. But she is great for the job, and I know she will do an excellent job."

IUB Chancellor Sharon Brehm said Robel's experience as a student will help her relate to IU law students and network with alumni.



Lauren Robel
Newly appointed dean of the IU law school

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LAW SCHOOL: IU alumna appointed dean

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"She will work with alumni a lot, so it's great that she is an alum herself," she said. "During alumni meetings when she is asking for support from them, she can say, 'Hey so, and so, remember when we were in that class together?' and that is a great way to work with them."

Brehm added that Robel's experience as a professor also provided her with skills for her new dean position.

"It's also important that she is not only an alum but a professor as well," she said. "She has filled all of the roles and understands all aspects of the school."

Robel, who teaches courses in

civil procedure, federal jurisdiction and constitutional law, understands how to communicate with faculty, having worked with them for years.

"I think she will be a wonderful dean," law professor J. Alexander Tanford said. "There is nobody else who has proven themselves as much as she has. The professors love her, and she has a great connection with them."

Brehm also noted that Robel's historic barrier-breaking adds to the excitement of the occasion.

"I think it's very exciting to have our first woman as a dean," she said. "We did an extensive search, and Lauren was the best person for the job."

Law professor Julia Lamber said she applauds the administration for

choosing a female dean, saying, "I think it's about time."

The other two finalists for the position were University of Pennsylvania law school professor Charles W. Mooney, Jr., who has recently served as interim dean there and University of Illinois law professor Thomas S. Ulen, who serves as the director of the Master of Arts in Public Administration Program at Illinois.

For her work as a law professor, Robel has received the law school's Gavel Award, the Wallace Teaching Award and the Indiana Bar Association's Pro Bono Publico Award.

Robel could not be reached for comment at press time.