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Herald Times

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Alum’s gift is IU Law School’s largest ever

$35 million donation to fund law scholarships; school to be renamed for Michael Maurer

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Try as she might, the dean of Indiana University’s School of Law could not hold back her tears when introducing the man who has made the largest monetary gift from an individual donor to the school in its history.

IU law school alumnus Michael “Mickey” Maurer has given the school $35 million for law student scholarships. The law school will be named the Michael Maurer School of Law. The gift and renaming were announced Thursday by IU President Michael McRobbie, Provost Karen Hanson and law school Dean Lauren Robel during a gathering in the school’s Moot Court Room, which was packed with students, faculty and IU administrators.

Robel said in addition to Maurer’s career successes in law, business and public service, the chairman of the board of both IBJ Corp. and The National Bank of Indianapolis is also “fearless.” He has climbed mountains, she said — literally, having tackled Mount Kilimanjaro. “I also want our students to know about your creativity and passion,” Robel said.

Michael “Mickey” Maurer and his wife, Janie Maurer, listen to Indiana University President Michael McRobbie after the announcement of Maurer giving $35 million to the IU School of Law, which will be named after him.

An Indianapolis native, Maurer earned his law school J.D. in 1967.

“At the IU School of Law, I learned to think,” he said from the podium after a standing ovation from the audience.

IU salary database

How much do administrators and other Indiana University employees make? Find out by searching the 2008-09 IU salary database at HeraldTimesOnline.com/data.
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He decided early on that "I would give something back as soon as I could," he said. Maurer said he credits IU with his professional success.

Maurer's gift will go to the IU Foundation, which will secure it in "income-producing investments," according to the university. The income from those investments will be used for the Michael and Janie Maurer Scholarships in perpetuity.

"It's about giving this institution another opportunity to be even better," Maurer said of the scholarships in his and his wife's names. Robel could not provide specifics on how the scholarships will be structured, including if they would give the winners a free ride or if the money would be earmarked for certain kinds of students. The funds will be matched by IU's Matching the Promise campaign, in effect doubling the amount available for scholarships.

A law degree is arguably the most expensive degree for students to earn, and these scholarships will ease the financial burdens for recipients, said second-year law student Ashlee Howton. A scholarship she received to attend law school at IU was a major consideration in her decision to come to Bloomington, she said.

Howton said some of her friends will finish law school $250,000 in debt. Many students borrow money to pay not only tuition, but rent and transportation, because they are too busy studying to work while enrolled.

"It's difficult to hold down a job," Howton said.

Another second-year law student, C.R. Davis, said he knows on a personal level what the Maurer scholarships can accomplish.

"I'm a product of people like Maurer," he said. IU offered him a substantial scholarship to attend law school, when he had other options. "They did a pretty good job of pulling me away" from Phoenix, his hometown, Davis said.

Administrators are planning a formal renaming ceremony at the law school this spring.

Lauren Robel, dean of the Indiana University School of Law, shows her gratitude to Michael "Mickey" Maurer during a Thursday news conference announcing his donation of $35 million to IU for law scholarships.