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IU President Michael McRobbie holds up a key to the Michael Maurer School of Law as Michael Maurer, who made a $35 million donation to the school, looks on during Friday evening's ceremony.

Law School officially 'Maurer'

BY PETER STEVENSON
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IU's law school officially became the Michael Maurer School of Law on Friday in a ceremony attended by hundreds of alumni, University officials and students.

The renaming came in the wake of a $35 million gift from 1967 law graduate Michael Maurer and his wife, Janie.

"When I attended IU as a student, I received an academic scholarship, and I thought this might be something I should think about," Maurer said in an interview before the naming ceremony. "My scholarship was $2,000, so I think IU got a decent return on their money."

Maurer, an Indianapolis lawyer and businessman, announced the gift in December 2008.

The gift will be used exclusively for student scholarships at the law school, helping lower the cost of getting a legal education for potential IU students. The money will be invested by the IU Foundation, and returns on the investment will fund scholarships.

"It will allow the law school to attract the very best students and compete with the very best schools, of which we are now one," Maurer said.

The law school was officially renamed by IU President Michael McRobbie after remarks from trustees, law professor Fred Cate, IU Provost Karen Hanson and a keynote address from Judge Sarah Evans Barker of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana.

"Mickey's dedication and philanthropy to the Law School and Indiana University over the last three decades are truly exceptional," McRobbie said. "His gift for student scholarships will ensure that students from all backgrounds will have the ability to afford an outstanding legal education at one of America's best public law schools for many generations to come."

The Maurers' gift is one of the largest given to IU, following in the footsteps of Barbara and David Jacobs, after whom the music school was renamed following a $40.6 million gift, the largest gift by individuals in IU history.

Throughout Friday's ceremony, speakers were quick to mention the Maurers' giving spirit and loyalty. Barker, who described herself as a longtime friend of the Maurers, praised the lawyer for ensuring the education of Indiana law students, and said she hopes some of the best and brightest lawyers stay in southern Indiana.

Michael Maurer is the owner and publisher of the Indianapolis Business Journal, Court and Commercial Record and Indiana Lawyer, and he is chairman of the board for The National Bank of Indianapolis, which he co-founded in 1993.

Law School dean Lauren Robel said she "can't really describe how important this gift is," saying the money would "transform" the school into a national player.

"This particular gift sets a standard for our alums that is just inspirational," Robel said. "This gift has really put the school on the map with the national legal academy."