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Tribute to Rex Perschbacher

Antonia Bernhard

I was the dean of students at King Hall for six years. Rex served as the faculty dean for five and a half of those six years. We both worked under Dean Bruce Wolk. This was before the law school underwent major renovations, so the three of us were in close quarters down a short hallway. Our offices were steps away from each other. We made a great team; I can't recall any of us speaking harshly or thoughtlessly to each other.

I depended on Rex. He was always available to me personally and professionally. When I was having a particularly rough day, or wanted to consult on a student issue, I could go to Rex's office knowing I'd be greeted with warmth and wisdom. Those years in the Dean's Office were the most fulfilling of my career, in large part due to Rex.

When I returned to teaching in 1998, Rex became the Dean. Three years later, I contracted what appeared to be an acute viral infection, but it turned into a debilitating chronic illness. After taking a semester off, I forced myself to return to King Hall on a part-time basis, determined to try and continue a career that I loved dearly. Rex did everything he could to accommodate my illness, from letting me choose when to teach, to replacing some of my classroom duties with administrative ones that I could perform from the bed with my laptop. I will always be grateful for his support and compassion during those difficult (and scary) years for me.

In my view, there is no higher calling in life than helping others. Rex did this in small ways and in big ways, from giving generously of

his time when faculty or students came to see him, to his tireless efforts to preserve access for everyone to a public legal education.

He was an example to us all. His personal and professional legacy at King Hall will never be forgotten.

Antonia Bernhard

Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, 1992–1998

Faculty member, 1982–2004