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## Different Venues - Consistent Legal Leadership: Introduction to Eulogies for Dean Alton Harvey

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# DIFFERENT VENUES—CONSISTENT LEGAL LEADERSHIP: INTRODUCTION TO EULOGIES FOR DEAN ALTON HARVEY

*Dean James Rosenblatt*<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1981, I was pleased to be reassigned to the Pentagon to work in the office of The Judge Advocate General (TJAG). An officer I admired was TJAG at the time—Major General Alton Harvey. I had long known of him, as his boyhood home was in McComb, Mississippi, some sixty miles east of my home of Fort Adams. He enjoyed a reputation as an outstanding leader and was well respected by the Army leaders of that era.

It is always good to have a rapport with one's boss. Not only did we share a geographical heritage, but also I had the occasion a few months earlier to serve as Mr. Vice (a master of ceremonies) for a formal military event (dining-in) at which General Harvey presided as the President of the Mess. You can imagine my surprise when three weeks after my arrival in the Pentagon, General Harvey announced that he was cutting short his position as the Army's top lawyer to become the Dean of the Mississippi College School of Law. With my limited perspective I could not imagine leaving that exalted position early to become the dean of a law school! Now I have a greater appreciation of why General Harvey was so excited to take on the challenges of leading a law school and returning to his home state of Mississippi.

Twenty-two years later, I retired from the Army after a thirty-year career and moved to Mississippi to succeed Larry Lee and Sid Moller as the Dean of the Mississippi College School of Law. I shared the same sense of excitement and anticipation as had General Harvey when he was preparing to leave the Pentagon. Sitting in the Dean's office I could feel General

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1. James Rosenblatt is Dean of Mississippi College School of Law. Born in Natchez, Mississippi and raised on a farm in Wilkinson County near the Mississippi River, he graduated cum laude from Vanderbilt University. He received his J.D. from Cornell University Law School. He was commissioned in the Army and entered service with the Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAGC) following his admission to the New York Bar.

His distinguished Army career included teaching at the Judge Advocate General's School, an assignment at the Pentagon with personnel duties, service as Deputy Staff Judge Advocate (25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii), Staff Judge Advocate (32d Army Air Defense Command, Darmstadt, Germany), Staff Judge Advocate (Engineer Center, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri), Commander (U.S. Army Claims Service, Fort Meade, Maryland), and Staff Judge Advocate (U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia). Retired from service in 2003 as a Colonel with thirty-plus years of service, he holds the Distinguished Service Medal and three awards of the Legion of Merit.

Dean Rosenblatt is a member of the bar in New York and Missouri, and he has been admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Tax Court, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, military courts, and the state courts of Missouri and New York. He is a member of the American Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association, and the Hinds County Bar Association.

His publications include James Rosenblatt, *Lessons Learned by a New Dean*, 36 U. TOL. L. REV. 151 (2004) and James Rosenblatt, *Law School Faculty as Mentors*, THE BENCHER, Jan.-Feb. 2006, at 10.

Harvey's presence and encouragement. During my interview process he had given me some practical advice on my selection of beverages during the luncheon when I was being given the "look-over."

Dean Harvey's influence remains today. During his tenure as Dean from 1981 until 1991, the law school received full accreditation from the American Bar Association and was approved for membership in the American Association of Law Schools. Seven members of our current faculty were hired during Dean Harvey's tenure. Hosts of improvements in curriculum and programs were instituted. The elegant portrait of Dean Harvey still watches over us in our Turnage Conference Room.

We are grateful for Dean Harvey's life, his service to the nation and to the legal community, and for his steady hand at the helm of the Mississippi College School of Law for ten years. In this volume we pay tribute to Dean Harvey's life with eulogies provided by Dean Richard Hurt, who succeeded Dean Harvey at Mississippi College School of Law, and by the Honorable William Suter, Clerk of the United States Supreme Court and a retired Major General of the JAG Corps, who worked with General Harvey over the course of his illustrious career. Dean Hurt shared his remarks at a memorial service conducted for Dean Harvey in Florida, while General Suter offered his remarks during the interment service with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

"Old soldiers never die," and Dean Harvey continues to live with us. Through this volume we share this tribute with his wife Jean, his daughters, and his many friends, relatives, and colleagues. In his memory we have established a scholarship fund, to which donations can be made by mail to the Mississippi College School of Law or online at <https://secure.ga3.org/01/altonharvey>. General Harvey and Dean Harvey, rest in peace knowing that you have done much, inspired many, and lived life!