Preparing to Be a Law Dean

Darby Dickerson, The John Marshall Law School
Get Out of Your Silo

- Degree programs
- Curriculum
- Policies
- Accreditation
- Departments
  - Admissions
  - Financial Aid
  - Student Life
  - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
  - Career Services
  - Library/Information Technology
  - Academic Support
  - Business Office
  - Communications
  - Development
  - Security/Maintenance
- Boards, councils, and associations
Learn How Universities Work

- Mission and Strategic Goals
- Funding Model
- University Leadership
  - Where Deans Fall in the Structure
  - How Colleges Relate to Each Other, and to Central Administration
  - Senate and University committees
  - AGB Resources
Follow Higher Ed/Legal Ed Events, and Read Widely
Understand the Law of Higher Education

- Higher Education Compliance Alliance, Compliance Matrix
- Stetson's Law & Higher Education Conference
- NACUA and Journal of College & University Law
- University General Counsel's Office
- AccessLex, Policy & Advocacy
Understand the Job

- Spend unstructured time with your dean
- Find mentors outside of your school
- Attend conferences
- ABA/AALS Site Teams
- Deanships are not alike
  - Review job descriptions
  - Headhunters' role
  - Know yourself
Gain Budgeting and Fundraising Experience

- Ensure you are involved in all steps of budgeting within your areas of responsibility
- Ask your dean for a special project to manage from start to finish
- Ask to attend budget preparation meetings and budget meetings with the Provost
- Ask to be assigned a roster of donors
- Attend the AALS Institutional Advancement Section programs in January
- Attend as many alumni events as possible
- Gain service on nonprofit boards
Cultivate Allies

- Be solution-oriented
- Don't delegate up, or sideways
- Volunteer for the hard, undesirable tasks
- Honor your word
- Get out and about
- Be present
- Value Staff
- Treat everyone with respect
- Because . . . Deaning is a team sport
Contact Information

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