Visit of Justice Elena Kagan

Marquette University Law School

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VISIT OF JUSTICE ELENA KAGAN

It has been this journal’s occasional practice to note the visit of a United States Supreme Court Justice to campus. This brief note thus memorializes Justice Elena Kagan’s visit to Marquette University Law School on April 3, 2012. Justice Kagan came to Eckstein Hall in order to judge the Jenkins Honors Moot Court Competition.

Justice Kagan’s day included a noontime question-and-answer session, exclusively for Marquette law students and moderated by Mike Gousha, distinguished fellow in law and public policy, in an overflowing Appellate Courtroom. She touched upon her time at the Court as well as her previous service as dean of Harvard Law School and as solicitor general of the United States. Her warmth and candor were evident from the beginning of the session, from her opening statement that Eckstein Hall seemed even to surpass the building that she had built at Harvard to a description of her unlikely hunting expeditions with Justice Antonin Scalia. “I pick up the phone,” she related. “He says, ‘Diana.’”

The afternoon included a reception hosted by Dean Joseph D. Kearney for members of the faculty and the judiciary in Wisconsin to welcome Justice Kagan. Those attending included members of the Wisconsin Supreme Court, the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, and the state’s circuit courts, in addition to various federal judges.

Justice Kagan returned to the courtroom in the evening to preside at the Jenkins Finals. The other members of the panel were Judge Diane S. Sykes, L’84, of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, and Judge William C. Griesbach, L’79, of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin. Here, again, the crowd exceeded the room’s capacity; others watched on screens in the Zilber Forum. Second-year students Ariane C. Strombom and Megan M. Zabkowicz argued for petitioner, and Sarah M. McNutt and Kristina J. Gordon for respondent. A reception and awards ceremony followed in the Forum.

Without doubt, Justice Kagan contributed to the education of the next set of Marquette lawyers.