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Remembering Harvey Goldschmid

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REMEMBERING HARVEY GOLDSCHMID

*David M. Schizer **

For me, Harvey Goldschmid and Columbia are inextricably connected. I can't think of one without the other. Harvey discovered his passion for learning as a student at the college and the law school. Only five years after graduating, Harvey returned to Columbia to join our faculty, serving for four and a half decades. When we add this time to his time as a student, it's fifty-two years. That's over 70% of his life.

But Harvey's connection to Columbia was not just long; it was deep. I can't count the number of graduates over the years who've told me he was the finest teacher they ever had. I've heard this from students in the class of 1973, the class of 2014, and classes in between.

Part of the reason Harvey was such an engaging teacher is that he himself was so engaged with the subjects he taught. Harvey did not just *teach* the law; he *shaped* it. For example, few have had the kind of influence Harvey had on capital markets regulation. He understood how important the markets are to all of us, and he was tireless and forceful in trying to make them better. Harvey knew that esoteric concepts like internal controls and analysts' calls contribute to a better life for ordinary people. To him, the securities law, corporate law, and antitrust law were the building blocks of the American dream. Making that dream attainable for more people was his life's work. I don't know anyone more public-spirited than Harvey.

I also don't know anyone more committed to Columbia. Harvey would never say "no" to the school. Even though he was always busy with his own teaching and writing, and with his work for the government and for Weil Gotshal, Harvey was never too busy to answer the school's call. During my years as dean, I was fortunate to have Harvey as one of the chairs of our advisory committee. I depended heavily on him, since one of the advisory committee's functions is to deal with especially difficult problems. It was always reassuring to lean on Harvey in those situations. He was wise, gracious, insightful, and generous. Harvey also exuded a sense of calm. However uneasy I felt in filling him in about the latest crisis, I always felt better after speaking to him. As nuanced as his thinking was, at some level Harvey's reaction was always the same: All would be well as long as we did the right thing. Our job was to figure out what that was.

For example, a few years ago, the university became concerned about faculty conflicts of interest. The media was focusing on faculty in other Columbia departments who had been compensated for doing research but had not disclosed this financial interest. The law school needed to take another look at our policy. Given Harvey's expertise in governance, he was the ideal person

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to do it. With a gentle but firm hand, Harvey steered the faculty to a consensus. He knew how to find common ground among competing positions, and how to concretize it with spare and precise language. This is not an easy challenge, and he was masterful. It was like watching Pete Sampras serve. Because this was such an important issue, I asked Harvey to discuss it also with the law school's alumni leadership, and with the university trustees. They understood, as I did, how extraordinarily effective Harvey's leadership was on this issue.

But as accomplished as Harvey was, he was thoroughly unassuming. Someone who achieved what Harvey achieved had a right to have a high opinion of himself, and to remind everyone that they should share that opinion. But Harvey never indulged that impulse. If you talked to him about the securities law, it was inevitable that you would come to a provision he helped to draft, given his service as General Counsel and as a Commissioner. But Harvey was understated about these things. Self-promotion was simply not his style. This is one of the reasons why we didn't just admire him; we loved him.

As painful as this loss is for Harvey's colleagues and students, it's even more acute for the people closest to him. Harvey simply adored his family. He and Mary were the perfect couple, and it was easy to see how devoted they were to each other. In addition to their many other contributions to our school, Harvey and Mary also sent all three of their sons to Columbia Law School. Harvey's sons were the light of his life, and for good reason. Anyone who had the pleasure of teaching Charlie, Paul, and Joe knows that the apple did not fall far from the tree. They share their father's intellectual gifts, and also his personal qualities. They made their father very proud.

In remembering Harvey, we celebrate a magnificent human being. We also have to acknowledge a great loss. Those of us who love Harvey—as so many of us do—miss him terribly. But I find a bit of comfort in knowing how much he taught me and so many others. We now have the opportunity to apply what we learned from Harvey, and to follow the path he laid out. As long as we do that, Harvey's legacy is secure. I can't think of a finer legacy than that.