In the past two years, the Law School has secured campus support and funding for a bold strategic plan that seeks to ensure our ongoing status as one of the nation’s preeminent public law schools. The plan contemplates, among other things, the Law School developing a national reputation in two contemporary, high-visibility areas: Globalization, with a focus on emerging economies; and Law & Science, with a focus on biotechnology.

Reading this edition of our newsletter, you will see our Strategic Plan at work.

As I write, the top law schools are seeking ways to become leaders in the globalization arena where much of the action will occur in the coming years. The UW Law School is in the fortunate position of having been actively involved in international issues and programs for decades. We are now able to use our faculty and alumni expertise, experience, and long-term relationships to provide overseas opportunities for students, develop new initiatives, and position ourselves as a major player in law and globalization.

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Our recent initiative in East Asia, which is described within these pages, is one example. The initiative is dedicated to improving the quality of corporate governance internationally, especially in emerging markets. The Law School has also partnered with the University to establish the Global Legal Studies Initiative, which supports research in international legal studies and will expand our connections with other scholars and institutions.

In the area of law and science, we hope to build and extend our interdisciplinary programs to take advantage of the university’s strength in the developing area of biotechnology. The biological sciences community at UW-Madison spans more than 60 different departments and research centers. Several UW-Madison biotechnology-related departments are ranked among the nation’s best, and graduate programs in biochemistry, molecular biology, molecular and general genetics, chemistry, computer science, and biostatistics all are ranked in the top 10 by the National Research Council. The university’s high profile position as a leader in stem cell research and as the home of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Stem Cell Bank make the area of law and science a natural for the Law School.

As noted in this issue, two of our tenured faculty members, Alta Charo and Pilar Ossorio, are nationally known experts in biotechnology. One of our newest faculty members, Stephanie Tai, brings a new view of law and science to the school with her Ph.D. in chemistry and her interest in environmental law, including comparative Asian environmental law. In addition, we have a remarkable resource on campus that provides the opportunity to see firsthand the intersection of law and science. We are excited about possible future clinical opportunities for our students to work with the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), the organization that patents the discoveries of UW-Madison researchers and licenses these technologies to leading companies worldwide.

This is an exciting time, and there are many reasons to take pride in what we are accomplishing. I look forward to sharing more about the Law School’s initiatives and the results of these efforts in the coming months.

— Dean Kenneth B. Davis, Jr.