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HOFSTRA LAW SCHOOL MEMORIAL SERVICE
FOR PROFESSOR ALAN N. RESNICK:
NOVEMBER 17, 2016

*Eric Lane**

I spoke to Alan Resnick almost every day for the last five years, usually while each of us were driving to Hofstra in our separate cars. And the call would always start like this: I would say “ALAAAN,” and he would respond “ERIIC.” Then, he would provide a traffic report to me because he was always ahead of me driving out here, and we would launch into a discussion of the state of the Law School and whatever problems I was facing as its Dean.

On these calls, we would never speak about politics, sports, personal things like finances, family, or even fantasies. These topics we saved for our regular lunches at our Long Island haunt—the Coliseum Diner on Hempstead Turnpike. He would always look at the extensive menu of many items, consider some of them, but end up with eggs over easy or medium, sometimes with bacon. Then, an hour or so of wonderful conversation would ensue. Like Stuart Rabinowitz, Alan and I were friends for over forty years. We started at Hofstra Law School just after it was established, and our friendship was built around, at least at first, the many struggles we shared in trying to make Hofstra Law School the best that we could make it. Those were wonderful days filled with hard work, a go-for-it spirit, some inevitable anguish, and a lot of fun. We lunched together, played poker together, roasted each other, and retreated together for such important events as gambling in Puerto Rico, and as Stuart really described earlier, our famous Hofstra Law dance-off. Picture it—there he is: long hair, sideburns, bell bottom pants, in his best. And he had a really cool disco outfit, I can still remember it. Facing off against Professor John Gregory—bald—and looking ever so cool in

* Eric J. Schmertz Distinguished Professor of Public Law and Public Service, Maurice A. Deane School of Law at Hofstra University, Dean 2013–2016. This tribute, delivered before Professor Resnick’s family, friends, and colleagues, was adapted for publication by the *Hofstra Law Review*.

his best jazz wear. Actually, Stuart declared Alan the winner, but I declared it a tie. I already had these decanal qualities within me.

Not only did we work hard, but we also shared each other's work. We each felt the success of the other was our own success. But more importantly, Alan was my teacher. My rav. Through thick and thin he always wanted to know what was going on and if he could help me in any way. And he always could. No concern could be too small. Jill, Alan's wife, I'm sure laughed at the number of edits that he gave me even in a one-line email, and they were all the right ones. Since I became Law School Dean, his teaching of me only intensified. Despite my years in teaching, and in politics, I learned more from Alan about "dean-ing" than from anyone else. Patience, forbearance, clarity, honesty, respectfulness, institutional loyalty—he loved Hofstra Law School—and sometimes insistence were traits he most pressed—particularly when he sensed that those traits were abandoning me, or I them. I also learned a tremendous amount about family from Alan himself. For at the heart of every one of Alan's amazing successes, including his towering contributions to the field of bankruptcy law, and at the heart of all of his wise advice and wisdom, was the importance of family. Everything for Alan—everything—came back to family. As he once told me, his wonderful family was the foundation of his work, how he defined himself, and behind all that he did.

I still speak to Alan nearly every time I drive to Hofstra. Waze has replaced his traffic advice, but Siri cannot answer the many questions I have for him. But Alan can, and he does. No, I do not stop and channel his spirit from the other side, nor does he appear like Hamlet's father's ghost in the seat next to me. No, he talks to me like every master-teacher talks to his pupils: forever, through the lessons that the teacher has embodied, and embedded, in the mind of the student. Alan's way of thinking and his values will be with me forever. I feel blessed to have my friend, my teacher, my rav, in my head.