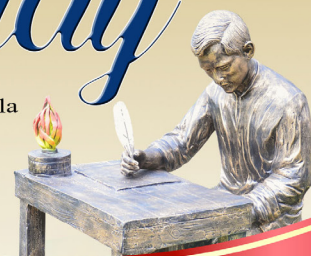




PLM Today

The Official Newsletter of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila



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Intramuros, Manila

October 2017

Student Inventor Sandra Mei Branzuela Wins Top Prize at DOST-RICE

By Kelly Vergel De Dios



Prize winning inventor Sandra Mei Branzuela

She singularly beat seventy-seven (77!) other 'new and innovative' projects/models by college students in the creative research category of the DOST Regional Invention Contest and Exhibits (RICE) during its October 3-5 run at the Technological Institute of the Philippines in Quezon City.

This diminutive girl (she stands 5'2" in her school shoes) with neatly-combed shoulder-length hair in black-rimmed nerd glasses took the top prize - a first for the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in this competition.

It was a giddy victory for this

unassuming girl who - even that Friday - spoke quietly while wringing her hands as she sat opposite me for this interview.

You wouldn't think, looking at her, that she almost smashed her device into smithereens halfway through its construction. She looked so calm and collected.

But ten minutes into the interview, her voice was breaking and that made me realize how arduous the process was over the year and a half that got her from there to here. Respect.

First of all, I needed her to explain her invention in words that someone who is not an expert (okay, okay an 'idiot') can understand. What exactly is a 'Flame Emission Photometric Determination of Iron via Digital Imaging Based Detection

(DIB-FEP) device? a flame-shooting camera?

Senior Chem student Sandra Mei M. Branzuela is politely suppressing a giggle at this point.

What it is - is an instrument for the detection of metals in liquids, a box photometer, she patiently explains.

Whoever said "necessity is the mother of invention" was right because the primary driving force for Sandra's device was PLM's lone AAS (atomic absorption spectroscopy) falling into disrepair through wear and tear.

I was told the AAS was shared by certain colleges in the PLM for the clinical analysis of metals in biological fluids and tissues such as -

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Faculty Development Workshop

By Dr. Mary Pauline Saquing

AIMED at encouraging a discourse on the management of curriculum change, the 2017 Faculty Development Seminar was held on October 10 and 11 at the Justo Albert Auditorium.

Executive Vice President Engr. Jose A. Silerio and Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs Arch. Gil C. Evasco formally opened and set the direction of the program. Then, as the highlight of the event, a lecture-workshop on Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) was facilitated by Dr. Evelina Maclang-Vicencio, Dean of the College of Education of the University of the East. She discussed the OBE framework and concepts, alignment of the syllabus to OBE, and OBE teaching for learning, among others.

During the two-day event, college officials facilitated the breakout sessions. On the first day, the faculty members worked on improving their respective

syllabi applying the OBE concepts and principles discussed during the guest speaker's lecture. Each college's best practices on OBE teaching strategies were creatively presented to the academic community thereafter. The workshop for the second day was designed to allow each college to determine the gaps between the current curriculum and the new Policies, Standards and Guidelines (PSGs) of the different programs they offer. Afterwards, college representatives presented their proposed plan of action to address the identified concerns.

By virtue of Pamantasan Administrative Order No. 21-ACA s. 2017, this year's Faculty Development Seminar Committee was created in line with the University's role to provide professional development to its faculty members with Prof. Lalaine Isip as Chairperson and the PLM Executive Committee as advisers. ■



2017 Administrative Staff Development and Teambuilding

By Lainna P. Ko

ON Friday, October 6, the Tanghalang Bayan looked like the grounds at a country fair. The open field was rife with all colors of the rainbow – there were shouts and cheers as if of children at play. What it was was the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila employees conducting the 2017 Administrative Staff Development and Teambuilding (ASDT) activity, its first in seven years. The program was opened by the Committee Chair Ms. Rita Lourdes Socorro Villadolid, who recognized the presence of PLM administrative personnel wearing their designated colors. She said she was reminded of a painter's palette: when these very same colors are placed on the canvas she said they come together to produce a beautiful painting.

She also reminded participants in her opening remarks that *“as we go through the day's activities, remember to bring out the best in each one and to make your teams proud, to always come together as one and continue to make PLM your community, your home.”*

The Group I participants composed of 5 groups from the different offices were

stationed at the University Activity Center for the Team Building games in the morning while Group II was scheduled to attend the Communication Skills seminar / workshop at the Justo Albert Auditorium. The two groups switched activities in the afternoon.

The Office of the Guidance and Testing Services (OGTS) organized and facilitated the fun-filled teambuilding both for the AM and PM sessions. Initially the teams were asked to compose their own cheer. According to Ms. Peralta head of the OGTS, the objective was to bind the group and build in them esprit de corps or team spirit.

According to Ms. Peralta, the generic objectives embedded in the games were to establish short-term team goals, celebrate achievement, encourage leadership potentials, cooperation and teamwork among members of the teams, and provide an opportunity for relaxation and recreation.

It was followed by more games, like the Minefield in which participants were blindfolded and a coach directed the teams to avoid plastic cups along the way to the finish line. The fun part in this game

was that the participant can hear a lot of noise from the other teams but that he/she should focus only on the voice of his/her coach. Second was the Caterpillar Walk wherein 10 participants were given balloons to squeeze between their bodies, the objective is to avoid the balloons from falling until they get to the finish line. Third game was the Water Relay, followed by protect the egg. The Egg should be protected by the materials given by the facilitators: straw, packaging tape and paper. The idea is to build a protective shield around the egg, and the facilitator will try to break it by throwing it to the ground. The team with the egg that does not break is declared the winner.

Groups enthusiastically followed the instructions of the facilitators and gamely participated in each game.

The PLM through ASDT Committee also provided a 3-hour Communication Skills lecture for almost 430 PLM administrative employees. The Communication skills lecture was facilitated by Dr. Crecita Hernandez and Dr. Julieta Hernandez from the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences.

The whole day affair was concluded

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Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) Camp on “Journalism for Social Change”

By Concepcion Erquiaga

PLM received an invitation from the US Embassy to participate in a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) Camp on Journalism for Social Change offered by the University of California Berkeley, one of the top universities in the United States of America.

They wrote to us that, “Amid striking polarization, the rise of fake news and the degraded state of the mainstream media, producing trustworthy journalism is more important than ever. Through this free online course, students will learn the practice of solution-based journalism, wherein stories give equal weight to problems and their solutions. The course is designed to teach students of journalism, public policy and social work how to use journalism and media as an implement of social change. The MOOC Camp meet ups are intended to support, enrich, and validate the

participants’ online learning experience through interactive learning engagements.”

With the help of the Dean of CHASS, PLM has identified 40 lucky students with a moderator, who will participate in this joint venture. This venture consists of 5 separate events where some will be conducted both here at the PLM University and some at the US Embassy. Online Meet-ups are simultaneous meet-ups together with other students from Cebu, Cagayan de Oro and Zamboanga and the UC Berkeley’s MOOC professors via Digital video conferencing.

This will culminate with a graduation ceremony where university, participants will receive a certificate of completion from the U.S. Embassy in the Philippines in partnership with University of California Berkeley. ■

Legal Aid on Wheels

(The PLM College of Law's mobile Legal Aid Clinic)

By Atty. Marisol Anenias

THE PLM College of Law conducts a periodic mobile legal aid clinic to provide free legal advice and other related services to the constituents of the various barangays of the City of Manila. The mobile legal aid clinic forms part of the Legal Assistance Program of the College and operates as its continuing extension service to the Manila community.

The mobile legal aid clinic is a student organized, college assisted activity where the entire College of Law body participates. Starting in 2012, once or twice every year, the student body coordinates with a particular barangay and for half a day, undertakes a face to face consultation with constituent clients who have legal concerns.

During every mobile legal aid clinic activity, depending on the density of the population in the area, there are around 25 to 80 individual legal concerns. The barangay administration sets up an area with 10 or more stations where a number of students sit together in each station to entertain the legal questions of the constituent



Mobile legal aid clinic mounted by the PLM College of Law held at Brgy 128, Balut, Smokey Mountain, Tondo, Manila

clients. The legal assistance provided is limited to advising. Follow thru of cases are done via referrals to government agencies, institutional legal aid clinics and pertinent non-governmental organizations that are capacitated to undertake the long term handling of indigent cases.

More than just an extension activity, the legal aid clinic implements a method

of practical teaching that aims to provide a hands-on experience to law students with the exposure to the practical and day to day issues of the regular people in the locality. As such, every law student looks forward to this activity and after each one, returns to the classroom with an invigorated spirit and a renewed motivation for the pursuit of the study of law. ■

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with a fellowship entitled PLM's Got Talent portion, wherein PLM employees went up against one another in a singing contest.

Four competed in the solo singing and two for the duet. This year's winners for the solo competition are from UCRES (Jerry Cruz) runner-up and from the Information Technology Center Office (Stanley Villareal) champion. For the duet competition, 2 winners from the Office of Legal Affairs placed as runner-up (Jerome Fajardo and Ma. Aurora Lalic) while for the duet category Accounting and Cash offices' (Hazel Porocalin and Shiela Rabago) emerged the winners.

PLM employees appreciated the one-day Administrative Staff Development and Team building as

they got a day of synergy of offices. The ASDT Committee reached its goals according to Ms. Villadolid, during the morning session as she went from one venue to another she noticed that the participants were all engaged in the activities. The energy level was high especially at the University Activity Center. Meanwhile, at the Justo Albert Auditorium she observed a semblance of a classroom atmosphere as some participants were called for recitation and oral reading in the communication skills lecture. Throughout the day and until the PLM's Got Talent program, she noted that everyone was fully invested in the activity.

Way to go, PLMayers! See you at the next ASDT seminar and games! ■

Happy Birthday!

OCTOBER 03



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OCTOBER 11

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ALLAN JAY C. NATIVIDAD
Assistant Professor II

OCTOBER 21

KaAREN L. LEYSON
Engineer V

Administrative Staff Development Teambuilding 2017





2017 Faculty Development Workshop

Student Inventor Sandra Mei Branzuela Wins Top Prize at DOST-RICE

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and I need to quote Wikipedia here – “whole blood, plasma, urine, saliva, brain tissue, liver, muscle tissue, semen...or analyzing water for its metal content.” The way it works is that the spectrometer uses the absorption of light to measure the concentration of gas phase atoms in the sample – the light that is focused into the flame from a hollow cathode lamp containing the sample and a battery changes color depending on what metal presence there is from the periodic table.

In the outside world, such a device is used in industries, laboratories. The AAS is so complex and so expensive (1.5M+) that once it stops working properly, you throw it out because it then becomes ‘unfixable.’ Such was PLM’s quandary when AAS went on the fritz. Their laboratory had to turn away students coming around asking to use the device. This is when Sandra’s shrewd mentor of a professor had a lightbulb moment.

Professor John Rafael Granada decided that she should build a low-cost alternative for PLM’s malfunctioning AAS from scratch as her senior thesis. So the unsuspecting Sandra got down to the business of constructing the device that took her the better part of eight months to accomplish. Five to ten-thousand pesos’ worth of materials into the project, countless nights of sleep deprivation, lugging around her materials like a mad scientist from school to home and back again and manually measuring her data by taking photographs of her various flames and feeding the information into her laptop at every minute stage – Sandra almost lost it. There were nights when she would wait for the entire household to go to sleep before she could tiptoe around and set up her gear to get back to her box photometer with only the aid of a smartphone and a digital camera for data gathering. She ran into a lot of glitches that she was almost always on the verge of tears and ready to give up until - one balmy crazy hair-tearing night at home – eureka! It all came together. The instrument finally worked.

Like the Mad Hatter in Alice in Wonderland, she almost did a Futterwacken or the crazy dance he did on Frabjous day after Alice slew the Jabberwocky, banishing The Red Queen to the Outlands. She was so happy that she fell on her



College of Science Dean Emielinda Sabando (left) with Sandra Mei Branzuela (middle) during their courtesy call on PLM President, Dr. Ma. Leonora V. De Jesus (right), to present Branzuela’s DOST-RICE award.

knees to thank what AAS gods there were and the Lord Jesus for the breakthrough. The next person she told was Professor Granada.

The analysis part of the exercise was peanuts compared to the hairy construction part. Sandra breezed through it although not without begging for an extension or two on her original 1.5 years deadline.

What she did not know was that Professor Granada knew full well that the assignment looked easy on paper but was very tough (no, toxic) to execute.

But he saw something in his student that maybe she did not yet know about herself at the outset: he saw potential. She found her inner feisty.

He would shepherd her through the most difficult part of the process (nay, ordeal would be a more fitting term) and set her back on track. He was the rocket fuel to her invention.

When asked what learnings she picked up from this entire exercise, Sandra said: “That Chemistry is just like life, when you are stumped, know that for every problem you run into, there is a solution. You just need to persevere until you find it.”

And to Sandra – what you start (no matter the mountains you have to surmount), you don’t quit, you finish.

So now PLM has a low-cost alternative to its broken AAS, a portable set up that employs a digital-imaging based method that is efficient, easy to construct, and low-cost.

There are plans to patent/copyright it because, not only will the PLM community benefit from it, but the world outside its walls as well.

The DOST gave her the sibol award because it symbolizes the potential of a young inventor (Sandra is 19, still a teen -ager really) and didn’t the Chairman of PLM’s Board of Regents Dr. Benjamin Espiritu just recently say those who are creative are the ones who lead the world?

And while she waits for the Nationals to come around in Manila in 2018, Sandra is not sitting on her hands. She is already thinking of improvements to her winning invention and making her mark in a world with which she will share her gift. ■

New At The U



- After remaining closed for more than two and a half years while the P250M Gusalang Emilio Ejercito, Sr. was under construction, the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila’s premier entrance, the gateway to the PLM campus along General Luna Street, was reopened on October 23.



- Proceeding on the belief that everyone should have access to restrooms that correspond to their gender identity, PLM has constructed new restroom facilities to accommodate transgender individuals. There are at present three

LGBT restrooms at the ground floor of the Don Emilio Ejercito Building, Gusalang Katipunan and Gusalang Villegas and there are plans to categorize and improve even more such restrooms at the property building and at the second and third floors of the Gusalang Bagatsing, Gusalang Villegas and at the Lacson Building.

- PLM just acquired some 4000 new high grade classroom chairs to replace the old ones as part of its on-going large scale upgrading.



Manila Sports Council Reels - Off 4TH Manila City Hall Inter-Department Sportsfest 2017

By Randy O. Nuñez

THE Manila City Hall Sports Council, led by its Chairperson, Philip Cezar, launched the 4th Manila City Hall Inter-Department Sportsfest 2017 on October 19, 2017 at the city hall grounds. The event kicked off with official opening ceremony on same day highlighted with a parade of athletes in their team jersey uniforms.

A total of 10 teams and 300 athletes from various city hall departments including Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) and Universidad de Manila (UDM) participated. The first event was Bowling on October 25 where PLM bowlers tirelessly rolled against 30 competitors, and all PLM bowlers except one were eliminated during this knock

out system one day bowling event. The remaining PLM bowler, Herminia Ramos, will try to make it in the next elimination round. Other sports events include Basketball, Volleyball, Chess, Badminton, Darts and Table Tennis.

The Sportsfest will be held in three

weeks, October 19 –November 9. Awarding ceremony will be held on tentatively on December 15, 2017. It is aimed at the promotion of healthy and active lifestyle and development of camaraderie and sportsmanship among the employees of the city government. ■

Event	Date	Venue
Chess	November 8 and 9	Andalucia Function Hall
Bowling	November 8 and 9	Robinson's Place
Badminton	November 9, 10, and 17	Andalucia Gym
Darts	November 6 and 7	Andalucia Function Hall
Table Tennis	November 15-17	Freedom Hall
Volleyball	November 8 and 9	San Andres Sports Complex
Basketball	November 8 and 9	San Andres Sports Complex

Guitar Graduate of Spain Mr. Rafael Ronquillo Meets Philippine Music Icon in Flute Dr. Santiago “Sonny” Yangco in Concert

By Harold Perfecto R. Galang

THE “Para La Musica” (PLM) Concert Series presented Mr. Rafael Ronquillo, a graduate of classical guitar music in Spain and Dr. Santiago “Sonny” Yangco - Philippine music icon in flute - in an “Afternoon of Guitar and Flute Music at the PLM Bukod Tanging Bulwagan on October 12, 2017.

This concert is the third of a series produced by the Intramuros Administration (IA) and the Department of Tourism (DOT) in partnership with the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM) through its Office of the Vice President for Public Affairs (OVPPA) and the Presidential Committee on Arts, Culture and Sports (PCACS).

Both Ronquillo and Yangco delighted their audience with a choice selection of French, Brazilian, Mexican, Panamanian, Filipino, and Italian classics and contemporary music.

Highlight of the program was guitarist Rafael playing in his element when he performed Rolan Dyens’ solo guitar transcription of the famed bossa nova song A Felicidade by Brazilian composer A. Jobim and V. de

Moraes. He played a fiery rendition with clean delineation of melodic lines vis-à-vis a difficult and challenging crisp rhythmic accompaniment. Incidentally, Rafael finished his master’s degree: Master Oficial en Enseñanza Artísticas: Interpretación e Investigación de la Música from the Conservatorio Superior de Musica “Oscar Espla” in Alicante, Spain where he studied under Prof. Ignacio Rodes.

Both performers regaled the audience with their essaying of nostalgic Latin music duet pieces such as Perfidia, Solamente Una Vez, Historia De Un Amor and Manha de Carnaval. Dr. Yangco’s melodic tones were warm and appealing filled with deep pathos while Rafael gave a very good rapport with lilt of Spanish flavor in his guitar accompaniment.

Appealing to the Filipino psyche, they played four popular Kundimans: Pena’s Iniibig Kita, Cuenco’s Nahan and Abelardo’s Kundiman ng Luha and Bituin Marikit. Dr. Sonny Yangco played the beautiful and haunting melodies with tasteful rubatos and poignancy. This affirms his great artistry as one of Asia’s best flutist having studied at the

Guildhall School of Music in London under a British Council scholarship and becoming a much sought after soloist, conductor, and chamber musician for his sensitive and highly artistic interpretations of pieces.

The concert ended with the vivacious Sonata Concertata composed by the Italian violin virtuoso and composer Niccolò Paganini. Playing the first and third movement of the Sonata, with the pieces placing the guitarist and flutist in equal footing in essaying beautiful melodic lines and tackling challenging passages, they whirled to a rousing and strong finish to the great delight of the audience!

Present at the concert were Ms. Sheena Botiwey of the Intramuros Administration, Mr. Leland Ronquillo, PLM consultant and father of Rafael, and Assistant Vice President Ms. Concepcion M. Erquiaga who gave the opening remarks. PLM Senior High School students filled the hall alongwith tourists and special guests of the performers.

All told, it was a great concert of two great artists sharing beautiful music to a much elated audience! ■

RAISING THE BAR: Justice Hector L. Hofileña

Dean of the Graduate School of Law of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila

By Kelly Vergel De Dios

IT wasn't till he retired from the bench after a forty-two year old practice that he rejoined the academe, coming full circle by returning to his alma mater (Ateneo de Manila) where he graduated *magna cum laude* with a bachelor of arts degree in 1951 and a bachelor of laws degree *cum laude* in 1954 – and where he started teaching law in 1958, except for the years when he was in the Court of Appeals.

But Saturdays will find him in another tree-shaded campus elsewhere in the Metro but whose law students are of no lesser mettle: The Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in Intramuros where he is the present Dean of the Graduate School of Law and concurrent professorial lecturer for both the College of Law and the Graduate School of Law since 2002.

The PLM College of Law has consistently placed in the top ten most outstanding law schools in the country and on July 7, 2004, acting on the mandate to advance the cause of social justice through legal education, the PLM Graduate School of Law was launched with legal and judicial luminaries present.

Justice Hofileña is himself a legal luminary, an abogado de Campanila, so who better to hold the deanship and shepherd the newbies – including judges, prosecutors, practitioners and those just starting their practice in the government and private service – and guide them through the graduate program of Master of Laws and prepare them for the professional challenges of globalization than him?

The GSL and its roster of distinguished professors have turned out intellectual and highly principled lawyers with advanced legal training in law and jurisprudence who rose to higher callings with commitments to be of service to the country and the Filipino people.

It counts – among its graduates and students who have risen to the challenge of serving as stewards of the country's judicial and prosecution system – an Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals, three Regional Trial Court Judges, a Municipal Trial Court Judge, a Metropolitan Trial Court Judge and at least two prosecutors.

And while Justice Hofileña announced recently that the PLM GSL Program is now accepting enrollees with a minimum qualification of an LLB degree (he does not believe passing the Bar should be a requisite to earning it) – he is still convinced the program is more traditional and more beneficial and therefore, a must for all law graduates and new lawyers. Yes, including – as he puts it – Bar flunkers who are desirous of earning an LLM while waiting to pass the Bar.

While he concedes that new law grad-



uates and Bar passers can easily land permanent roles in law firms, the government service, the academe and the Judiciary – he believes an LL.M. qualification can do so much more for them.

They can, for instance, specialize in a particular field like criminal and civil litigation or commercial law and taxation that professional schools do not always provide.

For those wishing to switch specializations into high-demand areas, the one-year LL.M. program and the GSL's dedicated staff and distinguished faculty can help them get there and even get their research papers and theses published along the way.

It will also qualify them to teach in Colleges and Universities should they choose to join the academe.

And acquiring it from a prestigious institution like PLM is their ticket to a Judiciary appointment, a higher post in government and eventually – a top law firm.

In millennial parlance, the program at this University, can turn them into rock stars!

To the uninitiated, it might seem that Dean Hofileña loves teaching more than practicing law: he has been teaching since he was a law student, and except for a break from 1994 to 1999 to work as Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals, he has been at it for more than fifty years.

He, however, explains that practicing law gives him more satisfaction in that it is more creative.

When a lawyer handles a case, especially in the Supreme Court, he is actually

participating in the creation and development of the law – he points out.

So how do you reconcile his years of practicing law (with the CA, law offices, the IBP, government service, his private practice) with his years of teaching it? To read what his Harvard-educated son Joey wrote about him, his childhood memories revolve around an image of his father sitting in the terrace of their home, poring over blue exam booklets while plucking the hairs on his chin in deep thought with his briefcase overflowing with stacks of class cards held together by rubber bands.

It appears that teaching grounds him, it is his basis for making sure that he helps turn out honorable and principled lawyers. You could say that it is his vocation.

In private practice, he has a reputation for industriousness, intellect and unquestioned integrity.

In the Judiciary, of personal uprightness, purposefulness and a fully cleared docket of cases.

And as an academician, he is known for devotion, dedication, someone who always carries an air of gratification and serenity about him.

These days, at age 88, he says he is beginning to feel the burden of his years but still manages to play 9 holes of golf once a week when invited and takes advantage of holidays to go home to his home province of Silay City, Negros Occidental, to relax.

He now also takes time to 'stop and smell the flowers,' play with three of his grandchildren (two others are living abroad) and a great granddaughter who is a source of great pride and joy.

But he is far from 'hanging up his cane' – (which he sometimes employs to help him get around) – and you might just catch him somewhere on campus plucking the hairs on his chin while planning how to develop curricula for the GSL with majors in fields of law that are more socially aware like Labor Law (he is an arbitrator at DOLE) as well as developmental like trans-national law.

And to new lawyers and Bar passers everywhere he imparts this, his two cent's worth, on the practice of law: "It is a noble profession. Live up to its ethical rules and you will be participating in the establishment and preservation of the Rule of Law."

Justice Hofileña has just raised the bar and law graduates and practitioners looking to get into PLM's prestigious Graduate School of Law better measure up if they even hope to become half as good a legal eagle as he is. ■