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TRIBUTE

TO ANDRÉ HAMPTON: PROFESSOR OF LAW AND FORMER PROVOST

DR. CHARLES COTRELL*

André Hampton joined the full time St. Mary's University School of Law Faculty in 1994 after teaching health law as an adjunct.¹ His nearly three decades at the University have been broad in scope; his contributions are spread throughout the entire campus community. Before and after his arrival, his career has been remarkably full and varied. His experience includes serving as a community mediator, a practicing attorney in an Austin law firm, a law school faculty member and scholar, a law school associate dean, an elected faculty senate president, and the second university officer, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs of St. Mary's University.² Before joining the University faculty, he had practiced for nearly a decade in the Austin law firm of Graves, Dougherty, Hearon, and Moody in bankruptcy, commercial, and real estate transactions and health law.³

Before taking on responsibilities in law administration as an Associate Dean and then as University Provost, Professor Hampton taught his courses with an eye to what students would encounter later when taking the bar

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1. *André Hampton*, ST. MARY'S UNIV. SCH. OF LAW, <https://law.stmarytx.edu/academics/faculty/andre-hampton/> [https://perma.cc/YN8B-Z9LK].

2. *Id.*

3. *Id.*

exam and becoming practitioners.⁴ His student evaluations were uniformly high, due in part to his integration of legal principles as reflected in contemporary issues and film.

For his colleagues and students, Professor Hampton is a beloved individual, known for his sense of fairness and care for students, as well as integrity in his actions. He is also known for his self-effacing demeanor, with a well-developed sense of humor. One of his former students, a practicing attorney, describes him as “the best human being I have known.” One of his former law school deans, Charles Cantu, described him as “the perfect organization man.” His sense of fairness in decision-making and experience as a trained mediator gave him the predisposition to seek consensus and balance in assessments, disputes, and disagreements. These attributes are foundational to collegiality and vibrant institutional culture.

During his tenure as Provost of the University (2008–2015), Professor Hampton successfully undertook and resolved a number of major institutional issues. In a position that oversees eighty undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs in five schools, he led a revision of the entire undergraduate core curriculum, a task that requires extraordinary patience in reaching consensus throughout the entire undergraduate faculty. The Association for General and Liberal Studies recognized the process in that endeavor for Improvement of General Education and Exemplary Development of Faculty Ownership.

The University Provost is also responsible for the well-being and excellence of the entire University faculty, an authority shared with deans of the schools. He developed and led successfully to adoption the University's first Voluntary Phased Retirement program for all faculty, which established a process for faculty to choose their own timing for retirement from academic life.

The St. Mary's Mission calls a diverse community of students, faculty, and administrators to service, collegiality, trust, and respect for others. Professor Hampton was appointed Chair to the University's first President's Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in 2020. In that role, he worked with other community members to recommend strategies, policies, and practices that would insure implementation of these important principles, making them palpable in campus and community life. It was also in this position that his work led him to continue an intellectual and emotional personal journey of reflection on race in America, a journey that continues.

4. *Id.*

Until his retirement in May 2023, he remained in an advisory role to the newly established Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as it works to sustain the incorporation of these values consistent with the University Mission principles.

Through all of the positions, experiences, and contributions he has made, one prominent characteristic has prevailed in Professor Hampton's professional life at St. Mary's—the respect and affection held for him by students, colleagues, and friends his life has touched. This respect and affection will be his legacy for the University and the School of Law, truly “A Man for All Seasons.”⁵ His career is best summarized by Robert Whittington's timeless epithet: “[A] man who is ready to cope with any contingency and whose behavior is always appropriate to any occasion.”⁶ From the University community, bravo Andre Hampton.

After his twenty-nine years at St. Mary's, new adventures await Professor Hampton, his wife Santa, and children, Aivan and Savannah in the next part of their family life.

5. Robert Whittington, *VULGARIA*, 1520.

6. *Id.*

