

# PUBLICATION

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## Commitment to Community: Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law

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**It is well known that Leo Bearman was an outstanding lawyer and advocate. He was an integral part of the foundation of the Memphis legal community. Leo was also an outstanding law professor and mentor to our students at the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. Professor Bearman taught Products Liability, an advanced Torts class, for over 25 years. He was committed to his students and the law school. Leo's students both feared him and adored him. He was truly a model for teachers and attorneys alike.**

One of Professor Bearman's students, Charles W. Gilbreath II, summed up how many Memphis Law students have felt about him over the years in a touching op-ed penned after Professor Bearman passed. In it, Gilbreath opines the loss of his mentor and friend, while noting that "Leo was a man that accomplished more than most lawyers, yet he was always humble, always willing to help others in need," said Gilbreath. "That he was gracious enough to take time from his busy days to help guide this lawyer on his path when he was young and lost will never be forgotten."

That sense of dedication and attitude of service and professionalism is one that has been echoed by generations of former students, faculty and staff at the law school. Many felt that Professor Bearman best epitomized what a lawyer truly should be – intelligent, congenial, ethical, and always willing to lend a helping hand or give some friendly advice.

Longtime Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Professor David Romantz, dealt directly with dozens of adjunct professors like Professor Bearman in his role overseeing the law school's academic program. He knew that Professor Bearman was in a class of his own. "When I hired new adjunct professors, I encouraged them to watch Professor Bearman teach," said Professor Romantz. "He was an outstanding communicator and taught the course with just the right amount of his own practice experiences to make the class material come alive."

"He recognized well the importance of mentoring the next generation and spent countless hours mentoring and advising our students," said Professor Romantz.

And that ability to teach and mentor will be his most impactful legacy. Generations of law students looked up to him and learned from him. Having the ability to do so from a true legend of the Memphis legal community was a rare opportunity indeed. His impact will be felt for years to come. The law school community will miss him.