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Festschrift for Michelle Simon

Harriet R. Feldman
Pace University, hfeldman@pace.edu

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Festschrift for Michelle Simon

Harriet R. Feldman, PhD, RN, FAAN*

Michelle and I first met in our respective roles as interim dean and dean. We often sat next to each other at Deans' Council (DC) meetings . . . not always a good idea since we sometimes were a bit rowdy. Sitting across from her wasn't always good either, as eye contact and eye rolling weren't always assets to our meetings. Agendas were endless, and we would barely get through half. Michelle was, to her credit, pretty patient with the majority of the focus on undergraduate academic matters, and often came up with good ideas based on her own life experiences as student and parent. Off-line, the women deans had some dinners to commiserate and simply enjoy hearing our individual stories, personal and work. We did have fun! Although Michelle periodically missed DC meetings, I don't think she missed a dinner.

In June of 2012, I was asked to shift to the role of Interim Provost. I believe it was soon thereafter that Michelle was appointed dean. So not only did our work roles shift, so did our working relationship. I became her "boss" (if that is even possible! ☺). I learned a great deal about the good, the bad, and the ugly of the Law School (I'm sure you know all exist in any system). For me, it was a great learning experience and a great opportunity to make changes at the University. I believe Michelle could say the same of her time as Dean of the Law School. We still had fun at Deans' Council meetings, but that is because we were a terrific working group. Agendas were infinitely shorter, we stuck to them, and 90%+ of the time we completed them. Michelle's contributions were insightful and valued by her colleagues.

While Interim Provost, one of the outstanding ideas Michelle came to me with was to establish the Pace Community Law Practice. The practice would have a dual mission, to employ and continue to build the skills of a select

* Dean, College of Health Professions and the Lienhard School of Nursing

group of graduates and to provide quality, affordable legal services to individuals in need. In view of the employment situation overall and specifically as it affected those new to the profession of law, I thought this was a great idea. I quickly gave my endorsement to move forward. This has become a respectable operation and one that has great merit for all involved. In my opinion, it is one of the major highlights of Michelle's leadership as dean.