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February 9, 2009

Contact: Abby E. Dozier
Communications Specialist
PH: 817.212.4061

Challenge Gift Starts Good Habit for Recent Alum

FORT WORTH, Texas – The law degree had barely been in his hands for a month when Matthew Wright '08, along with his wife, Andy, decided to give back to the institution that had played such a substantial and positive role in each of their lives over the last few years.

But they didn't stop there. They want fellow alumni to give back, too.

The Matthew and Andy Wright Challenge Gift began on Feb. 1, and will continue through May 31. The Wrights have offered a challenge gift to the law school's Advocacy Endowment Campaign: for every \$2 donated through May 31, they will match with \$1 of their own, up to \$5,000.

"We saw there was an opportunity, [because] Texas Wesleyan has such a strong oral advocacy program," Wright said. "It was the right time."

Supporting Texas Wesleyan University School of Law is nothing new to Wrights. During his years as a student, Matthew, who currently works as the director of corporate and foundation relations for Scott and White Healthcare, and Andy, who works as an emergency room nurse, donated to the law school on a regular basis. They saw the time following his graduation as the perfect opportunity to begin donating from their new roles as part of the alumni community.

"It needs to start the minute we graduate," Wright said. "Supporting an organization is a habit that needs to be formed."

Wright also asserts that it is the act of giving, not the amount, that is important.

"Giving, regardless of the amount, is doing something for the school, for the students," Wright said. "It's not about how much you give, it's that you just give something."

Dean Frederic White said that Matthew and Andy's determination to see the law school become a better place for each new class of students is inspiring and humbling, considering how new Matthew is to the alumni community.

"Matthew's dedication to the law school is a wonderful gift," Dean White said. "He is consciously committed to making the school better for each successive generation of students, and he and Andy have chosen to get involved and give back in order to see this happen. By offering the advocacy endowment challenge gift, they chose to give back in a way that encourages others to support the school as well."

As a student, Wright was deeply involved in the law school's advocacy programs and received several team and individual honors in local and state-wide competitions, including: First Place Honors at the 1L in-school moot court competition; First Place Honors at the Richard Gershon Competition; Best Closing Argument Honors for an in-school mock trial competition; and team State Champion Honors at the 2007 Texas Moot Court Competition the Texas Young Lawyers Association.

Wright is passionate about the importance of good communication in the legal profession, and he and Andy both view oral communication as an extremely important skill that needs to be understood by law students.

Funds raised for the Advocacy Endowment Campaign will benefit each of the advocacy programs at the law school, which include moot court, mock trial and alternative dispute resolution. Donations are necessary to help offset the costs incurred through competitions, such as travel expenses and training, and those generated through intramural competitions which the school hosts.

The advocacy endowment campaign is just one of many branches of the law school's annual fund campaign. You can learn more about giving opportunities by visiting the "Make a Gift" page on the alumni web site at <http://alumni.law.txwes.edu>.

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