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University of Montana Law School Centennial Ceremony

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**Speech for UM Law School Centennial Ceremony
Senator Max Baucus
September 9, 2011**

INTRODUCTION

Thank you, John (Engen) for that kind introduction. It is great to be here tonight as we all celebrate the accomplishments of the University of Montana School of Law. UM Law holds a special place in my heart, and I am honored to be here with you tonight.

John F. Kennedy once said:

“Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education. The human mind is our fundamental resource.”

For 100 years, UM Law has cultivated our greatest resource, turning out some of the brightest legal minds of our time. And in the process, UM Law graduates have made our nation stronger.

UM LAW GRADUATES ON FEDERAL BENCH

There is no finer example of this dedication to our nation and the rule of law than those who have gone on to one of the highest honors bestowed upon those in our trade – a lifetime appointment to the federal bench.

Over the century, UM Law has produced 13 United States federal judges. I have had the opportunity to get to know many of these distinguished alums, and I consider them friends.

As Montana's senior Senator, I have also had the honor to recommend a number of UM Law graduates for appointment to the bench.

RECOGNITION OF JUDGE SIDNEY THOMAS

Judge Sidney Thomas graduated UM Law in 1978. Upon hearing of a vacancy on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1995, I recommended Sidney Thomas, 1978 graduate of UM Law, to President Bill Clinton to fill the seat.

Judge Thomas' leadership on the Court caught the eye of President Obama as he considered his nominee for the Supreme Court seat vacated by Justice Stevens.

While in the end the President selected Justice Elena Kagan, the Montana legal community celebrated the President's consideration of Judge Thomas and the recognition of the top-notch legal education at Montana Law.

RECOGNITION OF FEDERAL JUDGES PRESENT

Here with us tonight is Judge Richard Cebull (SEE-Bull), Chief Judge for the District of Montana. Judge Cebull graduated from UM Law in 1969 and was appointed to the federal district court in 2001. Judge Cebull took over as Chief Judge in 2008 and has served in this prestigious capacity with strong leadership and a passion for the rule of law.

Also here tonight is Judge Jack Shanstrom (SHANN-Strum) who graduated UM Law in 1957 and then served in the U.S. Air Force JAG Corps. Judge Shanstrom was appointed to the federal bench in 1990.

Also with us is Judge Charles Lovell (LUV-uhl). Judge Lovell served in the U.S. Air Force before attending UM Law, graduating in 1959. Judge Lovell was appointed to the bench in 1985.

Judges Shanstrom and Lovell took senior status but remain active and committed to their role on the bench.

HONOR JUDGE DON MOLLOY

And finally I would like to recognize Judge Donald Molloy.

As you all know, Judge Molloy notified President Obama that he would take senior status effective last month. And after 15 years on the bench and 35 years after his graduation from this fine institution, we look back and recognize Don for his service to Montana and the United States.

Don was born in Butte, America and raised in Malta. After high school, Don attended the University of Montana on a full ride scholarship to play football for the Griz.

Don completed the Naval Aviation Officer's Candidate School and served in the Navy. After leaving service, Don attended UM Law and graduated with high honors in 1976.

I was honored to recommend Don Molloy to President Clinton to replace retiring U.S. District Judge Paul Hatfield in 1995.

Upon hearing of this recommendation, Don called his family. And then, he hurried off to coach Little Guy football practice in Billings.

In his 15 years of service on the federal bench, Don has presided over more than 220 trials.

So tonight, I would like to recognize Judge Donald Molloy for his service to Montana and the federal bench. Please join me in thanking Judge Molloy and his wife Judy for their dedication to Montana and to the University of Montana School of Law.

CONCLUSION

Just this week, Senator Tester and I had the pleasure of introducing Dana Christensen to the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is without question that Dana will continue this tradition of excellence on the federal bench.

I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Senate to move his confirmation quickly.

This is an extraordinary track record for UM Law's first 100 years, and it is one that I am confident will continue. Congratulations to the University of Montana School of Law in achieving this significant milestone.