



Jim Drennan Entering Phased Retirement

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Jim Drennan has elected to enter phased retirement beginning July 1, 2011, which means that he will work half-time for the next three years and then retire completely. Jim has earned the right to retire, but I don't have to be happy about it. I keep thinking about the major gap that will exist when he is no longer working here. Well, I prefer not to think about it, and so I'll just be in denial for the next few years.

I have asked Jim to continue in his role as Director of the Judicial College during his phased retirement. He was instrumental in creating the College and his leadership continues to be important, especially as we work through budget cuts that are hammering the Administrative Office of the Courts. We are working out Jim's other reduced responsibilities and making plans to reallocate some of his work to others.

There will be lots of time to recognize and appreciate all that Jim has meant to the Institute and the School. Let me just say that I will miss his rare combination of wisdom, commitment, respect, generosity, and kindness. Whenever I have struggled with a challenging issue, Jim is a person whose opinion matters to me. I can count on him to identify all of the issues and potential consequences. He also reliably focuses on the right question, and it inevitably flows back to our values. There is never any drama and it is never about him.

I encourage you to congratulate Jim on a wonderful career, which is not over by the way. Not yet. The School has a wonderful culture that includes a powerful sense of mission. Jim has been instrumental in strengthening and promoting our culture, and his willingness to put other people first has helped to promote positive morale. Notwithstanding his enormous contributions to North Carolina's court system, I find myself focusing as much on Jim's many and varied contributions to



the School. Mighty impressive for a Duke fan.

