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## Judge Schuman, an Appreciation

Judge Schuman improved the world by fulfilling the two roles of government that meant the most to him: preserving the rule of law and teaching about it. Through his eyes, those roles never seemed to be all that different from one another. Our respect for the law keeps us accountable to each other and to the principles we enshrine into laws. Learning the law helps us know what it means to be accountable. Everyone who benefited from Judge Schuman's influence knew that appreciating the law required grappling with it, challenging it, and refining it.

One of the most enduring lessons from my clerkship with Judge Schuman was less about the law as it appears in constitutions and cases (tremendous as his contributions were to our understanding of those sources) and more about how one's character is a form of governing law. It is a personal law code and constitution that should be subject to improvement and should make us accountable. A person's character should not display virtues for the sake of showing that they are there or privilege one virtue over another. It should summon virtues to add to what is good in the world.

I can tell you what I mean by that. Judge Schuman once gave a talk to Phi Beta Kappa undergraduates entitled, "There are seven kinds of smart, and you're only one of them." Good grades were one thing, but these students had to use their gifts to build character, reach out to others, and think an original thought. By sharing your gifts with others, he explained, you multiply them. All of us who knew Judge Schuman can see how that is true. Reading his opinions, sitting in his classroom, sharing a coffee, or working shoulder to shoulder on some noble thing: that was where all seven kinds of smart showed up. Surely, all seven kinds of smart cascaded out, through interactions between those whom Judge Schuman influenced and the next circle, and then the next. In that way, he helped us build and preserve character, our own governing

law. He taught it by showing it. Person by person, he created a better community.

Being so very improved just by knowing someone is a wonderful thing and so very difficult to reduce to words in an essay of appreciation. An idea that Judge Schuman loved and shared helps me to reflect with gratitude on his service. Many readers of this journal know about it because they know Judge Schuman and have read his work. The idea is communitarian thought. In truth, communitarian thought is something that we are born knowing about and few of us ever put a word to it. It means that we as individuals are products of community relationships, not just our own personal characteristics. We are who we are because we interact with others. You can read about this in Judge Schuman's law review articles. But it is more than that. For him, it was an operating principle—a North Star.

In so many beautiful ways, community animated Judge Schuman. Why else would a native of suburban Chicago teach English not at a typical university with water coolers and elbow patches, but at Deep Springs College, on a ranch not so far from Death Valley, where getting by meant that you, too, had to butcher the cattle and repair the tractor? In a place like that, the community takes up residence in the heart of every individual.

No wonder his path ever since told a story of service: government attorney, law professor, Deputy Attorney General, Associate Dean, Judge, Director of FOOD For Lane County, and then law professor again. Each role was devoted to a community. Each improved a community. Each meant sacrificing high pay—or any pay—for principle. Each meant giving all day, then during the sixteen hours between work days, doing more: carpooling with students to Opportunities for Law in Oregon programs, helping a recent alum who is still trying to pass the bar, reaching out to a lawyer who wants to become a judge, or giving a pep talk to colleagues at legal aid. For Judge Schuman, each was done with joy and a searching desire to do more.

The luckier ones of us saw it up close. Appellate lawyers knew him as a kind judge, but so did nervous high school students from the Classroom Law Project. Either way, Judge Schuman turned the tables and found ways to learn from them, sparking moments of surprise and delight on both sides. Judge Schuman mentored generations of law students, helped them create fulfilling careers, and even traveled far and wide to officiate their weddings. Just by showing up, he let us know how easy it can be to give back. Not only did he make million-dollar

decisions on the FOOD For Lane County board, but he also ran the industrial pallet jack in the warehouse like he just might have been to trucking school. In the summertime, he did not leave his volunteer shift without double-checking the milk cartons to make sure there was enough for all the kids who were without school lunches. Moreover, by all accounts, at the law school, Judge Schuman made the job of associate dean seem like fun.

These qualities might sound like the qualities of a great role model or a true friend, and if that is the case—perfect. Judge Schuman’s qualities show something else, too: that serving the community begins with accepting, one at a time, the opportunities to love, to help, to show moral courage, and to invite others to do the same thing. The sum total of these—Judge Schuman’s leadership in public service across the arc of a truly extraordinary career—speaks for itself. But look for the threads connecting that public life with the thousands of quiet moments when someone’s needs were met. To recognize those quiet moments is to see how Judge Schuman’s character improved the rest of us, and it is to see how the community, in turn, made him complete. It inspires us to nourish the communities we inhabit. It gives us a North Star.

A communitarian would say not only that our communities shape and define us but that they create shared ideas of what is good in the world. It is very important that this community has come together to commemorate Judge Schuman’s service. As a community, we know what is good because we say so together. Judge Schuman, in this volume of *Oregon Law Review*, we say it is you.

