Innovation in Legal Studies

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A new endowment at DePaul University College of Law will expand and strengthen scholarly and educational programs at a dynamic intersection of legal studies—intellectual property and health law. The $5 million endowment established by the Jaharis Family Foundation Inc. will create an endowed directorship for the college’s Health Law Institute, support a competitive internship program for up to 20 students committed to practicing intellectual property and health law, and fund a faculty fellowship program for scholars to create and disseminate research and curricula in these areas.

Michael Jaharis (JD ’58) is the founder of several pharmaceutical companies. For decades, he and his wife, Mary, have generously supported the students and programs at DePaul University’s College of Law. In recognition of their support, the Health Law Institute will be renamed the Mary and Michael Jaharis Health Law Institute.

DePaul’s intellectual property and health law programs are nationally ranked by U.S. News & World Report. As discoveries and innovations in fields such as genomics, nanotechnology and pharmaceuticals have accelerated, intellectual property challenges have created a demand for lawyers with credentials and expertise across these areas. The endowment will support the addition of curricula and research into interdisciplinary issues such as the law and economics of drug development for impoverished groups of affected individuals and the nexus of patent law, pharmaceutical regulation and international importation.

Law faculty leader Professor Wendy Netter Epstein recently was appointed the first Jaharis Faculty Fellow. Epstein, whose work has appeared in Cardozo University Law Review, American University Law Review and Case Western Reserve Law Review, has worked on curricular advances in intellectual property and health law for the College of Law and in partnership with Rush University Medical Center and Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science.

“As advances in medicine are brought to market, the interaction of health law and intellectual property will become more and more important to all of us,” says the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., president of DePaul University. “The new endowment will promote academic excellence and leadership in those important and dynamic fields.”