Mission Statement

The purpose of Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers is to develop better lawyers, enhancing lawyer competence and professional identity through innovative legal education dedicated to the highest standards of professionalism.

Aims of the Project

Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers seeks to facilitate a comprehensive approach to the analysis and reform of legal education. Toward that goal, the project will create a network of law schools committed to working and learning together to improve legal education. The project will sponsor gatherings of educators, researchers, and practitioners; document and publicize exemplary innovations; and provide a variety of resources for improving and assessing law teaching.

The project will build upon the framework proposed in Educating Lawyers, published in 2007 by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. That report described legal education metaphorically as three formative apprenticeships, all of which are essential to preparing for professional service in the law. The first apprenticeship consists of the intellectual training needed to learn the academic knowledge base important to legal thinking and practice. The second apprenticeship involves learning to practice law in various professional contexts. The third apprenticeship initiates students into the social roles, ethical standards, and responsibilities that underlie the fundamental purposes of the profession of law.

The overriding aim of legal education should be the preparation of professionals who have developed competence in both the academic knowledge base and skills of practice guided by a strong identity as a lawyer committed to the defining purposes of the legal system. The Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers Project proceeds from the base of the 2007 Carnegie Report. The Project will serve as a clearing house to disseminate detailed information about innovations in legal education, a forum to discuss such innovations, and a laboratory to assess and evaluate such innovations.

Organization of the Project

The new project will be based at the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System (IAALS) at the University of Denver. It will build upon the recent efforts by the group of law schools forming the Legal Education Analysis and Reform Network (LEARN) to develop a larger national consortium of institutions committed to reform in the spirit of the Carnegie Foundation report, expanding the LEARN group to an organization of fifteen to twenty law schools. Each law school will contribute
financially to the project in return for participation in a set of consortial activities and services described below.

Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers will have a director and small staff. William Sullivan, the Carnegie report’s first author, will serve as the first Director. Phase I of the project will include two outcomes:

1. A new web-based Survey of U.S. and Canadian law schools, asking for self-reports of innovation during the past three academic years. To be synthesized and published as an update of *Educating Lawyers* of 2007, the research would be conceived and carried out to both gain a clearer picture of the current situation of legal education and to strengthen interventions for reform. This Survey will be in the field in March of 2011.

2. A Website of Innovations. This website will be a clearing house for information about innovations in place in law schools around the country. The website will feature, at the outset, information from the Survey (1. above), but will also include curricular materials and articles about specific innovative approaches, as well as on-line discussion spaces in which posters and users can discuss posted innovations. Any law school will be able to tender material for posting on the website. The website will be managed under the auspices of IAALS by a full-time web master/librarian. The website will be data-driven, searchable and robust. The website will launch in summer of 2011.

Thereafter, Sullivan, the staff and a Board of Advisors will work to develop a strategic plan for the next phase of the project. That plan will focus on developing ideas, research, and implementation practices for the benefit of member schools, adding value to their efforts that they could not achieve on their own. In some cases, these programs would reach beyond the legal academy to involve the bar, bench and those who hire and use lawyers in efforts to promote better prepared legal professionals. From the start, the project will work to develop strong relationships with other groups concerned with improving legal education.

**The Institute for Advancement of the American Legal System**

Educating Tomorrow’s Lawyers is an initiative of the Institute for the Advancement of the American Legal System at the University of Denver. IAALS is a non-partisan organization, dedicated to improving the process and culture of the civil justice system. IAALS provides principled leadership, conducts comprehensive and objective research, and develops innovative and practical solutions—all focused on serving the individuals and organizations who rely on the legal system to clarify rights and resolve disputes. In this initiative, IAALS intends to work closely with the Sturm College of Law at the University of Denver.