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“She’s a role model for not just women, but all lawyers.”



John Marshall Law School professor Ann M. Lousin gets a slice of cake as her niece, 1st District Appellate Court staff attorney Elizabeth Mirza Al-Dajani, looks on during Lousin’s 70th birthday party Thursday. Lousin is the Edward T. and Noble W. Lee Chair in Constitutional Law for the 2013-14 academic year. *Brian J. Morowczynski*

## This chair is just right

Lousin celebrates 70th birthday, assumes constitutional law chair at John Marshall

BY JENN BALLARD  
*Law Bulletin staff writer*

At a time when most law schools ignored state constitutions, Noble W. Lee, The John Marshall Law School’s dean from 1944 to 1974, insisted that every graduate pass an Illinois Constitution test.

“He made this law school the center of Illinois constitutional study and I am honored to continue that tradition in my own way,” said Ann M. Lousin, a John Marshall professor.

On Thursday, the school named Lousin as The Edward T. and Noble W. Lee Chair in Constitutional Law for the 2013-14 academic year during her 70th birthday celebration at the school.

Lousin will spend most of her time researching, writing and speaking on constitutional subjects, including the Illinois Constitution.

John R. Lee said Lousin provides the law school with knowledge, experience and commitment.

“She has a passion that I really admire,” said Lee, president of The John Marshall Law School Foundation.

“She’s a role model for not just women, but all lawyers.”

Lousin’s position is named after John Lee’s grandfather — Edward T. Lee — and John Lee’s uncle — Noble W. Lee. They worked at the law school for a combined 90 years, serving as the school’s deans for a total of 65 years.

“Ann is truly an expert in constitutional law and my grandfather was known as an expert on it in his time,” Lee said.

“Ann has always been a leader in school affairs. She has a reputation

that extends throughout the state on commercial law.”

The chair was established in 2010 to honor the contributions of the Lees to the law school and their shared interest in constitutional law.

“I can think of nobody else better to hold this chair,” John Marshall Dean John E. Corkery told the crowd at the birthday party.

Lousin said she was “quite overwhelmed” with the appointment because Noble Lee “kept the fires burning” about the importance of the constitution.

Lousin’s studies of the state constitution and government are part of her life’s work.

She studied at Grinnell College in Iowa, the University of Heidelberg in Germany and the University of Chicago Law School.

She was a research assistant at the sixth Illinois Constitutional Convention in 1970 and worked in the Illinois House of Representatives from 1971 to 1975 as staff assistant to the speaker and parliamentarian of the House from 1973 to 1975.

Since joining the law school’s faculty in 1975, Lousin was involved in bar associations, civic organizations and charitable societies in addition to her school duties.

Although she primarily teaches in the field of commercial law, especially sales transactions, she also has taught legislation and constitutional law.

Professor Michael P. Seng said Lousin generously gives her time to others and commits herself to the students.

“Nothing gets by Ann,” Seng said.

“She notices everything. If there are things she thinks need to be corrected — things that would be of benefit to the students and the school faculty — she always speaks up.

“She still has many students who she first taught that are very close to her.”

One of those students — Mary T. Nagel, an assistant professor at the law school — has her own story about the educational value of Lousin’s guidance.

“When I was studying for the bar, and I took another class,” Nagel said, “I threw my notes away because the notes I got from her class were so much better.”