

3-21-2011

In Memoriam: Fran Conte, 1942-2011

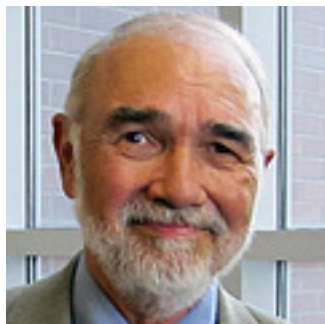
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Recommended Citation

"In Memoriam: Fran Conte, 1942-2011" (2011). *News Releases*. 967.
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In Memoriam: Fran Conte, 1942-2011

03.21.2011 | Law, Faculty

Francis J. Conte, the University of Dayton School of Law dean who spearheaded the school's move into \$20 million Keller Hall and the creation of the Program in Law and Technology died Sunday, March 20, at the age of 68.

Family will receive friends from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday, March 25, at Routsong Funeral Home, 2100 E. Stroop Rd. in Kettering, Ohio. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 26, at the Church of the Ascension, 2025 Woodman Drive in Kettering, Ohio.

Conte served as dean from 1987 to 2001. He helped diversify and increase the size of the faculty and student body, and develop a new curriculum, which included the Legal Profession Program and Legislation as a first-semester course. Conte also helped raise funding for the School of Law's first endowed faculty positions — the NCR Distinguished Professor of Law and Technology and the Samuel A. McCray Chair in Law.

In his School of Law profile, Conte said Keller Hall was one of his most important accomplishments during his tenure as dean: "We had to create a vision of what the school would look and be like in the future. The character of the facility is a reflection of that long-term vision."

In 2001, he returned to the School of Law faculty, teaching courses in constitutional law, European Union law, immigration law process and policies, and international law.

"He was an enthusiastic teacher who loved interacting with students, in class and beyond," said Lisa Kloppenberg, current School of Law dean who succeeded Conte. "He was an inquisitive scholar who began as a clinician and then retooled after his long service as dean and developed an expertise in European Union Law. Whether he was teaching in Keller Hall, in Ireland or on his Fulbright visit in Poland, Fran had a keen, open mind and cared deeply about human rights."

Recognizing Conte's contributions, the Dayton Law Alumni Association named him an honorary alumnus for his outstanding service to the School of Law and also created the Francis J. Conte Special Service Award, which honors an individual's extraordinary community service, as reflected in the School's Catholic and Marianist values, and support for the School of Law.

"Fran was a warm, generous person, extending a Marianist warmth of welcome to so many in our community," Kloppenberg said. "At his core, Fran was rooted in his faith and his family. In a deep and quiet way, his faith and family inspired his constant energy and great optimism."

Conte was born Aug. 16, 1942, in Salem, Mass. He graduated from Beverly High School in 1960, obtained his bachelor's degree from Pennsylvania State University in 1964 and received his law degree from the University of Texas School of Law in 1969.

After law school, Conte began his legal career with the Office of Counsel at the Department of the Navy.

Before coming to the University of Dayton, Conte also taught law at the University of Montana School of Law and Detroit College of Law, where he helped establish the Center for Canadian-U.S. Law.

During the 2008-09 school year, Conte taught at the University of Warsaw in Poland as a Fulbright scholar.

His wife, Kathleen McShane, and their children, Brendan, Clare, Ciaran and Fiona, survive him. Conte also is survived by his mother, Eleanor Conte, of Beverly Farms, Mass.; brother, Anthony Conte Jr.; and sisters, Joyce Hill and Cheryl Cropley, all of Massachusetts. His father, Anthony V. Conte, preceded Conte in death.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that gifts in Conte's memory be directed to the University of Dayton School of Law or Pancreatic Cancer Action Network.

For more information, contact Shawn Robinson, associate director of media relations, at 937-229-3391 or srobinson@udayton.edu.

