

Daniel Rodriguez to step down as law school dean

Led Northwestern Law's record fundraising campaign, launched new programs and curricular offerings at the intersection of law, business and technology

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CHICAGO - [Daniel B. Rodriguez](#), dean of Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, will step down as dean at the end of the 2017-18 academic year, Provost Jonathan Holloway announced today.

A nationally prominent scholar in administrative law, local government law and state constitutional law, Rodriguez is also the Harold Washington Professor at Northwestern Law, where he plans to rejoin the faculty full time.

"As dean, Dan Rodriguez has done an exceptional job of leading the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law with strength, innovation and passion at a pivotal time in the legal profession," Northwestern University President Morton Schapiro said. "He has done extraordinary work to transform the curriculum of the law school, ease the financial burden on law students and enhance the reputation of the school."

Rodriguez's announcement comes well into Northwestern Law's historic fundraising campaign, "Motion to Lead," launched in 2014, which has raised nearly \$220 million, including J.B. Pritzker and M.K. Pritzker's unprecedented \$100 million naming gift, the largest single gift ever to any law school. The campaign continues full steam ahead, toward a \$250 million goal.

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Jonathan Holloway
Provost

"I have a deep appreciation and admiration for Dan Rodriguez's six years of extraordinary service in leading the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law," Holloway said. "Under Dan's leadership, the law school has thrived. From the historic Pritzker naming gift to groundbreaking educational programs and new world-class faculty to record fundraising levels in the current campaign and a rising global reputation, the law school has never been stronger and its future has never been brighter."

Prior to his appointment as law school dean in 2012, Rodriguez was the Minerva House Drysdale Regents Chair in Law at the University of Texas School of Law; dean and Warren

Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of San Diego School of Law; and a professor of law at University of California, Berkeley. After graduating from Harvard Law School, he clerked for Judge Alex Kozinski of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Rodriguez informed President Schapiro earlier this summer of his decision to step down.

“We have accomplished much in the past few years, none of which would have been possible without the enormous energy of colleagues and the collaboration of faculty and staff within the law school and throughout the University,” Rodriguez said.

“I am proudest of mobilizing real change in educational programming, maintaining our commitment to excellence and rigor while also leveraging our great reputation to establish bold new models of professional education for a changing world. Our commitment to innovation has enabled us to move the needle, and I look forward with eager anticipation to the law school’s next chapter,” he said.

\$220 million raised by Northwestern Law toward its fundraising campaign during Rodriguez's tenure as dean

Rodriguez said he looks forward to returning to life as a full-time faculty member -- teaching, writing and serving the law school.

During Rodriguez’s tenure, Northwestern Law made enormous strides in reducing financial burdens to students, a signature goal of Rodriguez’s and the fundraising campaign. Other areas include making improvements to the learning infrastructure, completing capital projects, enhancing technology and improving the curriculum.

Northwestern Law has continued to enhance its reputation in the U.S. and abroad under Rodriguez’s leadership. Nationally, it sustained its position in placing students in the country’s leading law firms, as well as preparing students for diverse careers in business, the public sector and public interest settings. Abroad, the law school established new partnerships in different locations around the world and experienced meaningful growth in its non-U.S. student population and international curriculum. Simultaneously, the Bluhm Legal Clinic deepened its commitment to social justice issues globally via additional resources.

Rodriguez, who served as president of the Association of American Law Schools (2014), has been outspoken about the future of legal education and the need for law schools to innovate in the current legal landscape. This focus on innovation has been a cornerstone of his tenure. Two new curricular options – the Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship concentration and the Innovation Lab – were added in 2016, exposing students to the issues that drive the innovation process and to the role of technology in the modern economy. In the fall of 2014, Northwestern Law introduced a new and unique Master of Science in Law (MSL) degree,

designed specifically for professionals with backgrounds in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math) and medicine.

Rodriguez plans to take a one-year sabbatical during the 2018-2019 academic year and continue his work with a variety of professional organizations, including as a council member of the American Law Institute and a member of the advisory board of the ABA's Center on Innovation.

Holloway will oversee an international search to select Rodriguez's successor during the coming academic year.

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