Nine years after the 1969 acquisition of the Orange University College of Law, the Pepperdine University School of Law established its permanent home on the Malibu campus. Designed by Tony O’Keefe with the architectural firm of Neptune and Thomas, the new 77,000-square-foot Mediterranean-style Odell McConnell Law Center opened for the first time in August 1978. With spacious classrooms, a functional appellate courtroom, a full-service cafeteria, and the centrally located Jerene Appleby Harnish Law Library, Pepperdine law students enjoyed the benefits of a distinctive legal education in a beautiful new campus facility. Praising the building’s design, School of Law benefactor Odell S. McConnell noted, “The Law Center has beauty, utilitarian value, and location. It has a multimillion dollar view of mountains and sea, which I believe no other law school can equal. It's a combination of man's work and the work of Almighty God.”

The 1978 design and construction completed phase I of the comprehensive Odell McConnell Law Center plans. A desire to fulfill the architectural vision for the school, along with a steadily increasing enrollment throughout the 1980s led to the next stage of construction. Phase II completed in 1992 saw the addition of 43,500 square feet to the building’s footprint. Increasing the size of the law library; expanding spaces devoted to research, study, and technology; providing additional classrooms; a trial courtroom; a student recreation center; and increasing office space for student organizations and faculty members; the School of Law began the Fall 1992 semester with a significant 10-year construction goal realized.

More than two decades without a major construction project at the School of Law, the latest improvements are meeting the needs of our 21st-century law students and reinforcing a Pepperdine tradition of excellence. The recent 16-month renovation has revitalized the Henry J. and Gloria Caruso Auditorium and Lon V. Smith Atrium, and added a unifying design feature to our building with the new Hugh & Hazel Darling Foundation Grand Staircase. Integrating seamless technology and interactive student space at the heart of the School of Law, the refurbishments will serve students and strengthen our commitment to community for decades to come.
SCHOOL OF LAW RENOVATION BENEFACTORS

Rick (JD ‘83) and Tina Caruso
A renowned business innovator, dedicated civic leader and actively involved philanthropist, Rick J. Caruso is the founder and chief executive officer of Caruso®, one of the largest and most admired privately held real estate companies in the United States. His signature retail and mixed-use properties throughout Southern California include the Grove, Americana at Brand, 8500 Burton Way, and the soon-to-open Palisades Village and Miramar Montecito Beach resort. Proud parents of four, Rick and his wife Tina are advocates for education and community, supporting a variety of causes through the Caruso Family Foundation. Their continuing generosity to the School of Law, where Rick serves as a member of the School of Law Board of Advisors, has enriched our students, alumni, and faculty in tangible ways through the Caruso Loan Forgiveness Fund, the Caruso Family Chair in Constitutional Law, and the Caruso Research Fellows Program. We are deeply grateful to Rick and Tina for their recent generous support of the renovations to the Henry J. and Gloria Caruso Auditorium, bearing the names of Rick’s parents, as well as the enhancements to the Lon V. Smith Atrium. Extending the Caruso family’s tradition of commitment to Pepperdine Law, their son Alex (JD ’17) is a former Student Bar Association president and an active alumnus engaged in our mission of service.

Hugh & Hazel Darling Foundation represented by Richard and Linda Stack
The Hugh & Hazel Darling Foundation, represented by Richard Stack, has a meaningful history of support at the Pepperdine School of Law. The foundation, created by Hazel Darling in memory of her husband Los Angeles attorney Hugh W. Darling, has invested in a wide range of important Pepperdine programs and projects over the years—funding the Darling Chair in Law and the Darling Trial Courtroom and adding much needed student scholarship support, as well as providing significant support to the Pepperdine Legal Aid Clinic at the Union Rescue Mission. Contributing a significant gift to ensure the completion of the recent School of Law renovation, the new Hugh & Hazel Darling Foundation Grand Staircase honors the foundation’s commitment to Pepperdine and Christian legal education. We are delighted to recognize School of Law Board of Advisors member Richard Stack, and his wife Linda, on behalf of the foundation at today’s celebration. Pepperdine is blessed by the ongoing partnership of the Darling Foundation.
THANK YOU

Pepperdine University extends heartfelt appreciation to the following firms and individuals for their roles in making the School of Law renovation possible.

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