

New dean looks to brag about NU law

Leader to focus on alumni help, fund raising

BY LINDSAY YOUNG
Senior staff writer

Nebraskans are "fairly modest." That is what native-Texan Nancy Rapoport believes, but she wants to change that in respect to the NU College of Law.

Rapoport, the new University of Nebraska law college dean, said one of her main goals as dean is to show the nation what the college has to offer.

In her position, "I have time to brag about it," said Rapoport, who is the first female law school dean in the state.

The college, she said, is "an incredibly good school," with both nationally and internationally-known faculty members.

Former law dean, Henry Perlman, who began his position in 1983, is a nationally known law expert, Rapoport said. Perlman announced his plans last September to resign as dean and return to teaching full time at the university.

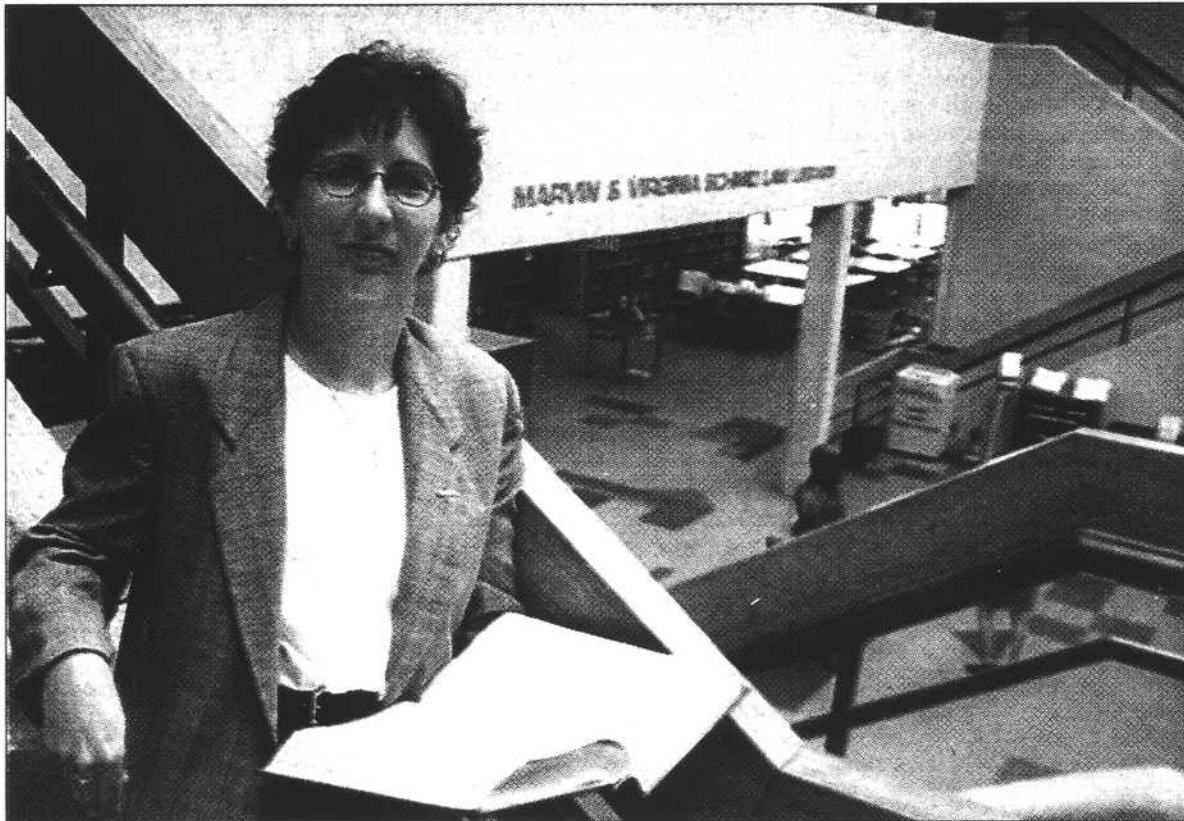
Also, the college is a technological leader, she said. Innovative advances include the use of computer-aided learning and wireless keyboards in some classrooms.

Rapoport said those attributes and others should encourage undergraduates to consider the college.

"What (the college) has is a bunch of talented people," Rapoport said.

A 360-degree view

To formulate a plan to continue this kind of success, Rapoport is working



NANCY RAPOPORT was appointed dean of the NU Law College this summer. She was previously a professor and associate dean for student affairs at Ohio State University.

NIKKI FOX/DN

with a strategic planning committee.

The committee, which will be made up of faculty members, staff and students, will decide where the college is at and where it wants to go.

Rapoport said a 360-degree view will make it easier to make decisions regarding the college's future.

She also wants to encourage alumni to volunteer in the school, she said.

The volunteers would be like an "army of recruiters," Rapoport said.

The new dean also wants to concen-

trate on fund-raising.

The law school plans to have an addition to the building, said Steven Willborn, who was chairman of the law dean search committee.

When looking at applicants, Willborn said, one criterion was the way the applicant could work with alumni to raise money.

Another criterion the committee looked for was the ability of the new dean to be an academic leader.

Willborn said Rapoport was well-

known for her scholarship and had won numerous teaching awards while employed at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio.

Rapoport received high recommendations from the dozens of people the committee called, Willborn said.

Rapoport said qualifications she had for the position included a strong problem-solving ability, her experience as an attorney and having "a fair amount of energy."

"Energy is not a problem for me,"

she said.

Willborn said as well as having those attributes, the people in the law college were satisfied with the choice.

"She was very well-received by the students," said Willborn, a professor of law.

"We're all excited about her being here."

Diverse interests

The last wooden board Rapoport broke in tae kwon do sits on the counter in her office in McCollum Hall on East Campus.

She also has various autographed pictures from astronauts and a few from some sports stars.

Ballroom dancing awards adorn the top shelves of her desk, and a selection of her compact discs sits next to her computer, while a CD by Austin Lounge Lizards, a Texan band, plays on her stereo.

She is slowly setting up her collection of Disney paraphernalia as well, which she said represents relaxation and happiness to her.

After growing up and living in Texas for 21 years, Rapoport moved to California to go to the Stanford University law school in Palo Alto, Calif.

After graduating in 1985 from Stanford, Rapoport worked as an associate for a San Francisco law firm. In 1991, she went to Ohio State University, where she was a law professor and associate dean for student affairs.

Rapoport wanted to work in Nebraska because of the quality of the law college, she said.

After her phone interview for the dean's position, she said, she told her husband, Jeff Van Niel, she knew where she wanted to go.

"What made me fall in love with Nebraska was the people."

Businesswoman relishes new CBA role

Dean will focus on having stronger ties to community

BY JESSICA FARGEN
Staff writer

When a subject piques her interest, Cynthia Milligan pursues and reads about it intensely.

Until she finds a new topic. The new College of Business Administration dean once read six volumes of a biography of Thomas Jefferson just out of curiosity. Another time, books about Saudi Arabia were her passion.

The close proximity of her second-floor office to Love Library impresses her, because she's constantly near to her true love.

All those books - "It is perfect," she said.

Her book smarts, coupled with her academic, business and government experience, led to Milligan becoming UNL's first female CBA dean.

In June she replaced John Goebel, who took the post in 1995.

A hands-on approach
Milligan wants to bring students closer to the business community, so she has spent time talking to Lincoln businesses about how to enrich that relationship.

The 52-year-old also wants to know students well. For instance, she plans to invite about 100 students from the CBA residence hall learning community floors to her home for dinner.

She went to Oxford University in England, this summer to check out UNL's business program that goes there.

She has been meeting with student groups such as Students In Free Enterprise and the CBA student advisory board.

Though Milligan enjoys meeting

students, she wants them to meet professionals in the business community as well.

Milligan said one of her goals is enhancing the student-business community relationship through more internships, guest lectures or job shadowing.

"One of the greatest concerns is how to have access for students to jobs," she said.

A winding career path
Pulling the business world and the education world together is important for Milligan, because she dwelt in both. She has been active among Lincoln's businesses for 20 years.

She has been gaining work experience since she earned her bachelor's degree in French from the University of Kansas in Lawrence and her law degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., in 1970.

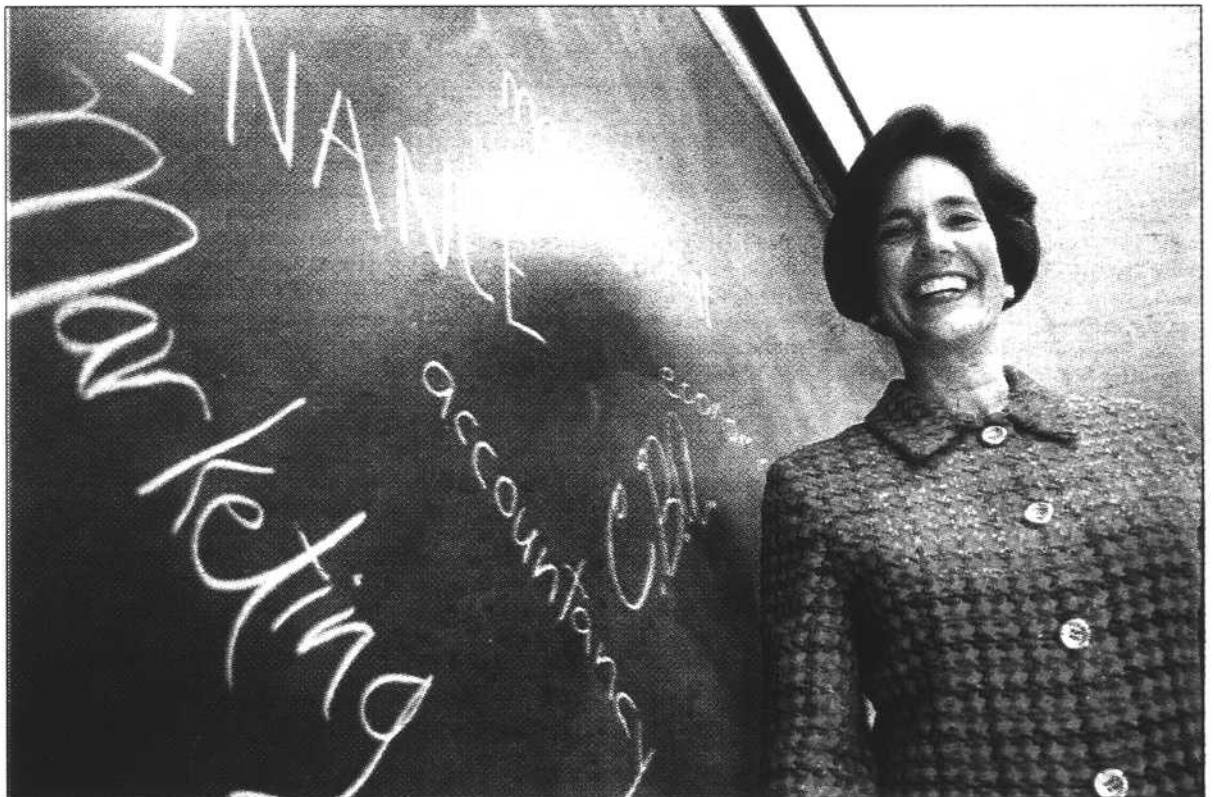
"I am interested in lots of different things, which has led to my career path being more varied than most people's," she said.

Milligan practiced law for seven years in Washington, D.C., and for 10 years in Lincoln. She has been an adjunct law professor at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She founded Cynthia Milligan and Associates, a Lincoln banking consultant firm, in 1991.

On top of that, she was education adviser to former Gov. Kay Orr and director of the Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance from 1987 to 1991.

"All (the jobs) have been challenging and interesting and exciting and then you bring to the next position all that you've had," she said.

Though it may seem Milligan is



JONATHAN HOUGHTON/DN

CYNTHIA MILLIGAN, the College of Business Administration's new dean, now oversees the college's five main areas - economics, finance, accountancy, management and marketing. Milligan, who became dean in June, formerly worked at Cynthia Milligan and Associates, a local bank consulting firm she founded.

married to her career, she actually is married to Bob Milligan - for 30 years.

Sky-high aspirations
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Rick Edwards said the college was looking for a candidate who demonstrated strong leadership and high goals.

"The main thing that attracted us was her high level of aspiration for the college and for what she wanted to see the university achieve," Edwards said.

"She's very ambitious for her college and has the vision and the energy and determination to see great things happen."

Milligan has been to more than

seven countries including Great Britain, Israel and China. Edwards said her experiences there will benefit students and add to the several student programs abroad.

Milligan said she decided to take the leap from business to education because it is a rewarding profession.

"I think those who are involved in education can know at the end of the day that what they do makes a difference," she said.

Plus, Milligan just enjoys working in a college atmosphere.

"A college campus is really a wonderful, vibrant place to be," she said.

She cherishes the daily, routine sights on campus, such as the NU

marching band scurrying to practice in the morning or a student sitting in a quiet corner reading a book.

Business legacy
Milligan is not the first of her family to play an important role at UNL.

Her father, Clifford Hardin, was NU chancellor during the 1950s and 1960s. Milligan said she wants to leave her mark in the college as one who gave opportunities to students.

"I hope students come back and say I opened the door for them in their career," she said.

"I hope students look back and say the education we gave them here really made a difference in their lives."