

Name: Katrina S. Rogers, PhD

Contact: kr Rogers@fielding.edu; Tel. (203) 874-0005

Date: May 7, 2017

Year(s) of Graduation and Degree(s): MELP, 2015

Statement of interest answering/addressing the following:

- **What is your vision for VLS in the next five years?**

Vermont Law School is an independent institution that occupies a special niche in higher education. The strength of VLS is that it offers students a high quality flexible education, individual attention, and strong programs that are distinctive in serving the needs of the profession and for social action. Independent institutions, however, are facing challenges in higher education as competition has increased. For law schools, in particular, students are more debt adverse given declining job prospects. Many small schools have closed, been consolidated, or are under increased scrutiny by accreditors and the public alike. Within this context, VLS has a strong vision that will stand the test of time: to prepare students for serving their communities and more broadly to make a positive social difference in the world. One component of this vision is to strengthen alumni engagement over the next five years by deepening participation in the intellectual life of the school and expanding regional networks to foster excitement about the vision. In addition, the strategic plan sums it up nicely—transcending geography so that our unique educational model is accessible all over the world. This is smart in that it positions VLS in a competitive landscape and it is just, as our education promotes positive social change.

- **What skills do you bring to the VLSAA to accomplish these priorities?**

I am currently serving as President of Fielding Graduate University, which is an institution similarly situated to VLS. Fielding Graduate University was founded

in 1974 with a focus on adult learners who were seeking doctoral and master's degree in the social sciences, namely clinical psychology, organization development, educational leadership, and infant and early childhood education. All of our programs are in service to our mission, which is to promote graduate education as an activator for people to engage in social justice in their communities. Our learning model is predicated on flexibility, quality, and community in a distributed environment. Long before the internet, we created degree programs delivered both face to face and using available technology. One reason I was attracted to VLS is that the mission and vision are similar to Fielding, and I knew that the MELP curriculum would be aligned with these values. In a trustee role, I will bring my experience on strategic planning in higher education, alumni engagement, market research, and development to bear in positioning VLS for long-term success.

- **How would you galvanize the energy and enthusiasm of alumni to increase participation in VLS events and giving?**

Alumni engagement is built over time through relationships. There seems to be a burgeoning strategy with creating regional networks, which is an activity that Fielding has also had success with these past several years. Alumni are generally excited about events from their alma mater that re-connect them to their learning, engage the faculty, and help build their professional networks. There are many ways to accomplish these goals. As just one example, one idea to generate positive energy could be to create one hour virtual webinars that can be recorded and shared broadly with alumni. Over time, these webinars form a basis for generating participation in VLS-related activities. At my institution, these webinars have been a low cost strategy to reach our alumni who are disbursed around the world.

- **List and describe your alumni service.**

I am a recent graduate of the on-line program and have not served the alumni community to date. As part of my job responsibilities, I oversee alumni engagement at my institution and work closely with alumni for development and as a component of our life-long learning community. In the past, I worked closely with the alumni network at Thunderbird School of Global Management, where I was faculty and program director for many years. Thunderbird is also a graduate-only institution so I have a great deal of experience in this arena that could serve VLS well.

- **List your activities as a VLS student.**

As a member of the online community, I did not have an opportunity to participate in the life of the community in Royalton. I think, however, that my experience as a student will help me to understand the intellectual needs and professional goals of the students in online programs. As a student, I worked closely with my student colleagues and have a good understanding of the challenges and advantages of working in a distributed learning environment. I am also a non-traditional student, which is a growing segment of the market and can offer insight into what is attractive to this particular demographic.

- **List any appropriate professional and community activity and please describe how that experience would serve you as a Board member.**

My professional experience includes working in environmental organizations and higher educational institutions for over twenty years. In the course of this work, I have been responsible for fundraising, direct program work, teaching, and held a variety of positions. I have been a trustee on several boards, most recently the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and Partners in Education. Both of these organizations are based in Santa Barbara. The Foundation has international reach, spearheading the lawsuit on behalf of the Marshall Islands against the United States for breach of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

- **Having reviewed the [standing committees](#) on the VLSAA Board, which committee(s) would you choose to serve on and why?**

My first choice would be to serve on the Development Committee. I have raised funds for conversation organizations and for a university for over twenty years. This experience included working closely with conversation donors and participating in implementing strategies related to alumni engagement. Development works best at an institution when trustees model the way; even if their financial obligations are modest, it is important that 100% of the board give to VLS on an annual basis. I am also clear about the distinction between oversight (a board responsibility) and management (a leadership responsibility). Within this framework, I would enjoy working in development for VLS.

As a second choice, I think my skills would be of use on the Ad Hoc Environmental Master's committee. As an alumna, I'd be proud to serve the committee that is involved with that curriculum as well.

- **Discuss whether you have the resources and ability to make the Board a priority over the next three years. Board responsibilities**

include quarterly in-person Board meetings, regular committee meetings and projects, alumni outreach and community initiatives, and providing thoughtful consultation to alumni and the law school.

Yes, I have the personal resources and the commitment to serve as a consistent participant and advisor as appropriate. It would be a great pleasure to do so on behalf of our current and future alumni.