

News Release

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Sturm College of Law receives \$3 million gift

Law school to enhance international business law program via historical gift

DENVER – A gift of \$3 million from the Roche Family Foundation and Robert W. Roche, JD’88, has been given to the University of Denver Sturm College of Law to establish the Roche Family International Business Transactions Program. This gift is among the largest of its kind in the law school’s history, and includes both outright and future cash commitments.

The Roche Family International Business Transactions Program will dramatically increase Denver Law’s capacity to provide comprehensive, internationally relevant transactional skills training for both LL.M. and J.D. students. The flexible nature of the gift allows the law school to provide generous financial aid to the best students, attract and hire the strongest faculty, and underwrite a robust set of international business law programming, such as national conferences and colloquia.

“The Roche Family Foundation and Robert Roche’s generosity to the DU Sturm College of Law is unprecedented,” says Dean Martin Katz when announcing the gift. “Their support has enabled the Sturm College of Law to leverage two areas critical to our strategic vision—international law and business law—and to build degree sequences and programming that will set the standard for international business law in the 21st century. We are honored by their vision and humbled by their generosity.”

“This program is a perfect match with our strategic plan,” Katz notes. “It builds on the synergies between our nationally-ranked international law program and our growing business law program, as well as the strengths of DU’s nationally ranked business school and school of international studies.”

“I feel very lucky to be able to help the students at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law prepare for careers in a field I have found to be challenging and rewarding,” says Robert W. Roche J.D.’88. “I have spent my professional life involved in international business transactions; helping the College of Law create a program in that very area is indeed fulfilling. After all, this is where I received all my training for my professional career.”

“The Roche family has been associated with the University of Denver for nearly 30 years,” he says. “My wife, Ritsuko Hattori-Roche spent a year studying at the University, so this new association is even more meaningful as the University has become like family.”

This is the second donation that Robert Roche has made to further an academic institution's mission. He also donated \$1 million to establish the Roche Chair at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan. Mr. Roche studied Japanese language and culture as an undergraduate at Nanzan and returned for a year of legal studies there while a law student at the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.

Robert W. Roche is an entrepreneur and investor working in China, Japan, and the U.S. He is co-founder and chairman of Acorn International (NYSE: ATV), one of China's largest TV shopping companies, and co-founder and chairman of Oak Lawn Marketing, Inc., the largest infomercial company in Japan, which is now part of NTT Docomo Group. Mr. Roche also founded URBN Hotels, China's first carbon-neutral hotel. He has been chairman of The American Chamber of Commerce/Shanghai since January 2010, and is director of the USA Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo. Recently, Mr. Roche was named to President Obama's Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

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