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Welcome

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Welcome

MS. VAUGHT: Good morning, everyone. My name is Laura Vaught. I am a third-year law student here at UT, and I am currently serving as the *Tennessee Journal of Law and Policy*'s Symposium Editor. On behalf of the Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution and the Journal, I would like to welcome you to the University of Tennessee College of Law. We are really glad you are here! At this time I'm going to introduce Alex Long. Alex Long is our Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Law. He is going to make a few remarks.

MR. LONG: Good morning, everyone. As Laura said, my name is Alex Long. I'm the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs here at the College of Law. Welcome to *A Look into the Field: Food and Agricultural Law and Policy*. Our new dean, Melanie Wilson, was scheduled to speak today here, but unfortunately she couldn't make it. The Board of Trustees is meeting today and there's a piece of law school business on the agenda, so she is attending that. I'm pinch-hitting for her.

I think one of the ways you can judge the vibrancy of an institution like this is by the number and quality of events like this that the institution holds. For example, just in the last few years, we've had multiple Supreme Court Justices come and talk to us. In the last year alone, we've had a former Solicitor General of the United States come speak, a couple of U.S. senators, numerous federal and state judges, multiple renowned scholars. We've also had multiple continuing legal education conferences and symposiums, not unlike this one. Just in the last year, for example, we have had continuing legal education programs on corporate governance, litigation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, forensic linguistics, representing

minors in immigration matters and disaster displacement and human rights, just to name a few.

Just last year, the *Tennessee Journal of Law and Policy*, which is cosponsoring today's event with the Center for Advocacy and Dispute Resolution, put on a day-long event on healthcare policy. As you can see, not only do we have a lot of events, we have got a lot of diversity within those events, all of which I think contribute to the intellectual vibrancy of this law school. Today's event on food and agricultural law and policy continues that theme, I believe.

I confess that when I first heard about this program today, my initial thought was that I probably know less about food and agricultural law than any area of the law out there, and there are lots of areas of law that I don't know anything about, so that's saying something, but when I looked at the program and I looked at the list of speakers, I realized pretty quickly that there are actually a few things I do know at least little something about. If I don't know something about them, most of the topics least appear interesting to me. I clearly see that they have some value and some use and should be interesting for anyone who is attending. For example, during the 1:00 session, I noticed we are going to have a couple speakers who are going to be discussing agricultural technology, including biotechnology, farm data and drones. I know at least a little bit about one of those things, I'm interested in another, and I can certainly see the value in the third, so I think it should be a useful event for everyone here. If you stick around long enough, stick around to the end of the day, you can also get some ethics credit from what I understand, so there should be something for everyone.

I'm especially pleased that this event grew out in

part from work being done by our students. Some students at the law school have been working on pro bono and other projects for the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture. Our pro bono group here, UT Pro Bono, formed a collaboration with the Institute of Agriculture last year. That work is going to make information and agricultural law issues more accessible to farmers and agribusiness through the UT Extension, and some of the material that is going to be presented at this symposium today is the result of work that is being done by UT law students, and so we are especially proud of that.

I don't want to take up too much time, but before we begin, I at least want to thank all the staff and students who have organized this event. One of the students, Laura Vaught, who you just met a minute ago, has been a driving force behind today's event and has really contributed to everything that is going to take place today. She and editors of the *Tennessee Journal of Law and Policy* have put together just an outstanding program featuring a distinguished group of speakers. We hope you enjoy your time at the law school. During the breaks feel free to look around. If you have any questions about anything, please grab someone. Someone we'll be happy to talk to you. At this time, I'm going to turn it over to Laura, and I hope you enjoy the rest of the day.

