

\$20 million gift jumpstarts renovation at M Law's Lawyers Club

Berkshire Hathaway vice-chair Charlie Munger will enhance law students' housing

March 14, 2011

Contact: John Masson, 734.647.7352, jmasson@umich.edu or
Jared Wadley, 734.936-7819, jwadley@umich.edu

ANN ARBOR, Mich.—One of the largest gifts ever made to Michigan Law will help revitalize living spaces within the 86-year-old student-housing portion of U-M's iconic Law Quadrangle.

Pending the approval of the University Board of Regents at its March 17 meeting, the \$20 million gift from Berkshire Hathaway Vice Chairman Charles T. Munger (HLLD LAW '10) will pay for the majority of a renovation project inside the Lawyers Club housing complex. The remaining \$19 million of the estimated \$39 million cost to complete the work will come from central university investment proceeds and the Lawyers Club, which is run by a separately incorporated, self-sustaining nonprofit organization.

The project will bring badly needed upgrades that will transform student rooms and other living areas inside the buildings while preserving the historic Collegiate Gothic exteriors that make them an integral part of a law campus recognized around the world for its beauty. Taken in combination with the soon-to-be-completed \$102 million project to build the new academic building on the corner of State and Monroe Streets, along with the breathtaking Robert B. Aikens Commons, the Lawyers Club project will enhance significantly the student experience.

Munger's generosity stems from his long history as a university friend and adviser. As an undergraduate mathematics student at U-M in the 1940s, Munger appreciated the Law Quad's beauty. He went on to graduate from Harvard Law School in 1948 and founded the Los Angeles law firm of Munger, Tolles & Olson. He became vice chair of Berkshire Hathaway in 1978.

Munger never forgot about Michigan, or its Law Quad. In fact, this latest gift extends Munger's philanthropic relationship with the Law School, which began in 2007 with a uniquely practical \$3 million gift for lighting improvements in public areas of the Law Quadrangle. Now complete, that project has turned the formerly dim interiors of Hutchins Hall and the landmark Reading Room into showcases of Collegiate Gothic grandeur.

But Munger's relationship with Michigan has always been more than simply philanthropic. He has lectured at various U-M schools and has advised the university on its investments.

Like the gift for lighting, Munger's new gift is designed to improve fundamentally the student experience. While the buildings were described in 1930 as possessing "every modern convenience which has become known to architects and engineers," in those days such conveniences included luxuries like running water and showers—in all-male communal bathrooms. Planners are approaching the renovation project with the idea of taking the buildings into the future, while retaining their strong connection to the Law School's storied past.

The university already is at work on conceptual plans and feasibility studies for the project. In the two dormitory buildings—the Lawyers Club dorm and the east wing of the John P. Cook dorm

building, both on South University Avenue—the work will include extensive interior renovations, technology upgrades, new roofs, fire safety features and energy performance measures targeted to exceed national energy efficiency standards by more than 30 percent. In addition, the project will replace the roof and upgrade fire safety features in the Lawyers Club Lounge and dining hall, located on South State Street.

"Charlie Munger has a powerful vision of world-class facilities that will match a world-class law school at the University of Michigan. The Law Quad is an icon of U-M's excellence in legal education, and its prominence is now ensured for future generations because of Charlie's generosity," said U-M President Mary Sue Coleman. "I am particularly pleased because this gift directly benefits the living-learning experience for our law students."

Pending approval by the Regents at the March 17 meeting, the renovated residence portion of the Lawyers Club will be named "The Charles T. Munger Residences in the Lawyers Club" in honor of the gift.

"Taken together, this group of construction projects represents by far the most dramatic improvement in the student environment since the first part of the Law Quadrangle was dedicated in 1925," said Law School Dean Evan Caminker. "Our new academic building and Commons areas will enable us to provide contemporary educational and community space, while the residence renovations will increase comfort and convenience for law students who wish to live in the Quad. We're extremely grateful to Charlie Munger for his foresight and generosity in revitalizing the distinctive Lawyers Club."

The Lawyers Club and residences are two components of the Law Quad, built with a visionary gift from William Wilson Cook, which also includes the William W. Cook Legal Research Library and Hutchins Hall. Together, the Collegiate Gothic buildings of the Quad and its dramatic courtyard have become an integral part of the Michigan Law experience for generations of students.

Construction is expected to begin in early summer 2012 with a goal of completion by fall 2013. The university will appoint Hartman-Cox Architects in association with SmithGroup for the project.

END