



*Alumni of Achievement*

*Dr. Curtis Bridgeman*

*B.A. Philosophy '96*

When it comes to The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH) Dr. Curtis Bridgeman has some very fond memories of the institution and professors, who "cared for me as a person and helped me through challenging times outside of class, too."

The UAH alumnus "knew about UAH" because he grew up in Scottsboro, AL, a scant 45 minutes drive away. Bridgeman "thought" his mind was made up about his career choice: He would pursue a business degree at UAH, and proceed to graduate school. But all it took was one required Philosophy class to make him "fall in love" with the Liberal Arts. "I took Introduction to Philosophy from Dr. Brian Martine (UAH Professor Emeritus, Philosophy) just to satisfy a general education requirement ... I did not even know what Philosophy was, and I absolutely loved it. From that point on I took all the Philosophy courses I could," said Bridgeman.

Another pleasant academic surprise was the university's Honors Program, "It was outstanding and it changed my life," Bridgeman said. "The Director was Dr. Ann Boucher (UAH Professor Emerita, History) and she lured me in the program with a scholarship. I was skeptical about the program, but honestly I needed the scholarship. While in the Honors Program I was exposed to so many academic areas that I never would have considered otherwise ... I had the opportunity to hear leading academics and other influential people speak on a wide array of topics," Bridgeman said. "And, the academic advising I got from Dr. Boucher was invaluable.

"Dr. Boucher also encouraged me to take Dr. Richard Gerberding's (UAH Professor Emeritus, History) Latin class, and he was enormously influential in my life. Through him I took six Latin classes and one history class, and became involved in UAH's Society for Ancient Languages, which exposed me not only to the beauty of ancient languages, but also the joy of making learning a lifelong pursuit, as so many of its members were no longer students in the formal sense."

Bridgeman noted that in addition to Gerberding being an outstanding classroom instructor, he taught students the value of all the things beyond the syllabus. "And, Dr. Andrew Cling's (Associate Dean and Professor) Philosophy classes were the most challenging and delightful classes I had in 10 years of higher education. The transition to graduate-level philosophy work at Vanderbilt was very smooth thanks to Dr. Cling."

UAH's College of Liberal Arts (now College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) prepared Bridgeman to read carefully, write clearly, and generally to think critically. "My UAH studies taught me the intrinsic value of philosophy, literature, history, languages, and the like, but grappling with these subjects has instrumental value as well. There is no doubt that these skills are absolutely essential for success as a lawyer, teacher, or administrator, the three career paths I have chosen, but also for most any worthwhile career path."

Since 2013, Bridgeman has served as Dean and Professor of Law at The Willamette University College of Law. Considered a leading scholar in the field of

contracts and commercial law, Bridgeman has published numerous journal articles in leading law reviews, and has been an invited speaker at law schools around the globe.

Bridgeman's previous faculty positions include The Florida State University (FSU) School of Law, where he received the University Graduate Teaching Award in 2009, and where law students selected him three times as "Professor of the Year." From 2011-13, he was the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at FSU.

"I am very grateful to be recognized by UAH, which was so influential in my life," Bridgeman said. "I am also grateful for the scholarship support I received along the way, without which I would not have been able to be successful. UAH makes a real difference in the lives of its students. While it is rightfully known for its outstanding STEM programs, its College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences is first rate."

Bridgeman attended Vanderbilt University, where he earned both a doctorate in Philosophy and his J.D.

