

April 7, 1992

Professor Ronald W. Staudt  
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565 West Adams Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60661-3691

Dear Ron:

In February I furnished you some general views on how NCAIR philanthropy might have greatest impact over the balance of this decade. My letter explained that my general views were very naturally reflected in personal and institutional plans here at Cornell.

You and your NCAIR colleagues have that letter which is preamble to this proposal promised at its conclusion.

Cornell Law School, working through myself, Tom Bruce, Director of Educational Technologies, and other faculty and staff affiliated with us propose to establish an institute of legal information technologies. With an NCAIR grant of \$100,000 for academic year 1992-93, the institute would undertake several interrelated projects. Each of the projects has independent value but the principal thrust of this proposal concerns the establishment of a center bringing together resources and individuals from the law publishing sector, from legal education, and from the profession. This first year would launch a five-year program designed to bring law faculty (including those teaching in a practice or clinical setting), technical staff, information specialists, and those with relevant experience in other disciplines together around a series of projects and conferences. The self-conscious aim will be to explore the forms of collaboration and the combinations of talent necessary to produce effective materials harnessing this new technology.

There are a series of projects now underway at Cornell that this requested NCAIR grant would help fund and help distribute. The grant would be used to free a portion of Tom Bruce's time from current administrative responsibilities, to pay for student assistants, to cover necessary software licensing fees, to facilitate distribution of materials created by the institute to educational and other non-profit entities (including the costs of establishing a server on the Internet). It would not be used for faculty salary relief.

The following projects would be aided by the proposed NCAIR grant:

- \* conversion of the Martin Social Security treatise from a LEXIS version to a version that can be distributed both on disk (CD-ROM) and through the Internet

- \* preparation of a collection of compatible statutory supplements for distribution to law schools using the FOLIO VIEWS software, licensing digital versions of the statutes where necessary from commercial publishers (FOLIO versions of the important Federal intellectual property statutes, licensed from Lawyers Coop, are currently distributed through the Cornell Law School LAN) -- the ultimate aim here as well being distribution both on disk and through the Internet

- \* experimentation with preparation of electronic versions of practice oriented material in other fields than Social Security beginning with manuals currently distributed in print from the Cornell Legal Aid Clinic to legal services offices throughout New York State

- \* working together with the law library staff to prepare electronic course and reference materials on key topics of legal research (the first materials to be developed for use in the fall of 1992)

- \* placing a work station on the Internet as a means of experimenting with electronic distribution of information about the school, with electronic publication of law texts, and with the exchange of expertise between academic and practicing lawyers

The latter project, together with the prior ones premised on Internet distribution, will involve more than simply creating useful materials and placing a server on the Internet. A principal focus of this proposal is on effective strategies for overcoming or outflanking current barriers. Developing the Internet (as well as parallel dial up server access) as an effective distribution path for materials of the sort we are creating at Cornell requires more than placing valuable material wrapped in capable software on the Internet. Those elements are critical; there must be strong incentive for access. But equally critical at present is good information or documentation immediately available to those who would/should be attracted by materials there. Currently, the principal source of documentation on use of the Internet is the Internet itself where it lies inaccessible to those for whom it is most important. This observation leads us to see a documentation or marketing function as integral to our exploration of the Internet as an important distribution path.

The activities funding by the proposed grant would not be in competition with CALI but involve close cooperation.

This proposal is submitted in the current form with the understanding that you and your colleagues are likely to have questions or to want more detail. Tom and I will be pleased to respond.

Sincerely,

Peter W. Martin  
Jane M.G. Foster  
Professor of Law

Thomas R. Bruce  
Director  
Educational Technologies

cc: R. Osgood