Remarks by Dennis Hyatt when receiving the Westling Award
May 2004:

I am humbled to receive the Wayne Westling award.

For the past few weeks I’ve wondered how can this recognition can come to me when I know there are many people in the University in this room today who give more time and talent on a regular basis to build our community than I ever have.

I’m hoping to keep my nervousness in check today long enough to say what an inspiration the University community has been to me throughout my career and to say thanks to everyone for creating an atmosphere a culture of caring where each of us is encouraged to contribute what we can to make our community and our University a better place to work and live.

To my deans, thanks for your kindness and patience. I’m sure you must have been tempted from time to time to suggest that if I really, really wanted to help perhaps I should try to be in my office more often.

To the Law Library staff, thanks for your dedication and hard work and talent in running the Law Library and who from time to time over the years suggested that if I really, really wanted to help, perhaps I should try to be out of my office more often.

To my colleagues in the Law School, in the Library, and throughout the University You are my mentors and leaders. You are your own best examples for the art and joy in giving back to the community that gives so much to us. My congratulations to the Senate for the important work you do in faculty governance that enriches the lives of us all in the University. As examples for each other, we need to recall that students take their cues from us, and I believe it is vitally important for students to see the amazing amount and types of work that can be accomplished by volunteers in a supportive, nurturing environment. When faculty and staff engage in work and projects around the campus, around the city, around the State, we must make every effort to include our students. I truly believe I am merely a mirror held to the University community, and this recognition award is more truly a reflection of you than of me.

I have been blessed throughout my professional and personal life. I cannot imagine better work for me than working as a law librarian. I cannot imagine a better institution to work for than the University of Oregon. I cannot imagine a better city in a better natural setting than Eugene in the Willamette Valley. My personal life has been blessed as well, most especially by my wife Patricia. She is the quintessential spouse of a compulsive volunteer and she has given literally thousands of hours of work and talent to projects that I ‘accidentally’ commit her to before she learns of them. We are high school sweethearts married 37 years ago, and I love her very much.
I knew Wayne Westling from the first year he came to the University of Oregon. I am doubly honored to receive an award established in his memory. He was a citizen of the world who brought his wit and charm, his clear thinking, and his prodigious advocacy skills to the work of the University Senate. We are all beneficiaries of his example and accomplishments. When I was elected to the Senate as a representative of the Library Faculty in the mid-1980s I served as parliamentarian. And after Wayne was elected as a representative of the Law Faculty he became interested in the fine points of parliamentary procedure. So I loaned him my copy of Robert’s Rules of Order. Contrary to good practice as a bibliophile, I had written my name in the inside front cover not that I ever expected to get the volume back. Two years ago as I was engaged in the bittersweet task of helping move materials out of Wayne’s office, I came across that copy of Robert’s Rules of Order. Inside the front cover, Wayne had written his name below mine. I do feel especially connected to Wayne through that book, and now also through this award.

I thank the Senate for this great honor.

Remarks by W. Andrew Marcus, President of the University Senate, May 25, 2004:

It is my great pleasure today to present The Wayne T. Westling Award for University Leadership and Service to Dennis Hyatt, Director of the Law Library at the Knight Law Center. The Westling Award was established by the University Senate in 2001 to honor faculty or staff who have provided long-term leadership and service to the university community. The two criteria for the Wayne T. Westling Award are:

1) Exemplary service over a period of years to the University through participation in committees, advisory bodies, or faculty elective positions, and

2) Inspired leadership and commitment to the principles of faculty governance, participatory decision making, and fostering a campus climate of inclusiveness and respect.

It is appropriate that we meet in the Law School today, because not only is the recipient of the award – Dennis Hyatt – a member of the Law Faculty and Library Officers of Administration, but also, the award is named in honor of Professor Wayne Westling, a Professor of Law. It is Professor Westling who set the standard by which we make this award. Wayne published 4 books, several book chapters, and a large body of articles in both scholarly journals and the popular press. As a teacher, Professor Westling provided inspirational lectures, while still making time to be available on an individual basis with students. He also practiced law as a deputy district attorney in Los Angeles and Douglas County.
Professor Westling thus set high standards as a scholar and teacher. Remarkably, he set even higher standards as a university citizen. He:

- served as a 12 year member of the University Senate and its President for one year,
- participated in almost every existing Law School committee,
- chaired many Law School and University Committees, including the University’s Affirmative Action Task Force, Protection of Human Subjects Committee, and Senate Budget Committee, and
- was the senior author of the White Paper on Faculty Salary Improvements, a paper that guides our budgetary thinking to this day

In giving this award, we acknowledge and remember the remarkable contributions that Wayne Westling made to our university.

Given this history, it is enjoyable to see this year’s award go to a member of the Law Faculty. Moreover, in this year especially, it seems appropriate that the award is going to a member of the Library faculty. The libraries represent the center piece of a liberal arts education, being the special place on campus where scholarship, teaching, and service merge into a seamless whole. And it is librarians, of course, who manage this endeavor, guiding us – teaching us – in our conduct of research, our compilation of teaching materials, and our presentations of these products – all while balancing the requirement to serve over 25,000 often very needy students, staff, and faculty. In our present climate of onerous budget cuts, it is remarkable that the libraries can continue to serve and support all segments of the campus community at such a high level of performance. This exemplary service, this inclusiveness, this leadership – all are at the heart of what we acknowledge with the Wayne Westling Award. Were it in my power, we would give every member of the library staff such an award, and on a daily basis. We applaud your contributions.

Given the high standards already set by Wayne Westling and by the Library staff, it is therefore all the more remarkable that one individual has made such major contributions to the university that the faculty of the Law School and the Libraries have nominated him for special recognition.

The Westling Award is the one annual award given by the University Senate. It represents our appreciation of those leaders who have committed their intellect, skills, passion, and considerable time to the betterment of the University. As the only standing award made by the University Senate and given the remarkable standard set by Wayne Westling, we treat the award process and its designation with formality and reverence – we do not bestow it lightly.

Your contributions, however, are so deep and so broad that there was never a moment of hesitation in the Senate’s decision to bestow upon you the Wayne Westling Award for University Leadership and Service. I hope you will indulge me as I cite just some of the many accomplishments and contributions you have made in your career. (I should note
that many of the following comments come directly from letters of nomination – I hope the writers will forgive me if I do not acknowledge each of them by name.)

Dennis Hyatt joined the University of Oregon as Associate Law Librarian in 1976, and became its Director in 1981. In 1986-1988, he served on the University Senate and was that body’s Parliamentarian for the 1987-1988 term. Critical to the Library Faculty has been Professor Hyatt’s service as a four-time elected member and as chair on the Library Faculty Personnel Committee, a position that is central to insuring that Library personnel are judged fairly. His knowledge of university governance procedures and his unfailingly fair and thoughtful comments landed him on the Library Faculty Standards Review Committee, which revisited and modified the promotion process and standards for all Library Faculty throughout the university.

The list of committee service extends far beyond these positions. As Dennis said to me on the phone, his dual appointment on both the Law School Faculty and the Library Faculty allowed him “double the meetings”, “double the fun”. As Dennis will soon to be emeriti, I look forward to offering Dennis many more opportunities to join in the “fun”.

Rather than dwell on each committee position, allow me to briefly enumerate – with occasional comments – the many committees inside and outside the university to which Dennis has contributed his time and leadership:

- The Library’s Grant and Award Committee which allocates funds to foster the participation of younger Library faculty in professional meetings. Dennis has regularly contributed to this fund as well;
- The Law School Graduate Teaching Fellow’s Committee;
- The Law Library Policy Committee;
- The Building User Group for the School of Law, which helped plan the Knight Law School;
- The Law School Facilities Improvement Committee;
- The Museum of Natural History’s Governing Board (where he was recognized as Volunteer of the Year in 2002); and
- The Eugene Concert Choir, where he served as co-chair of the Development and Fund-raising Campaign.

Of particular note during the last decade has been Professor Hyatt’s efforts (and successes!) in bringing the entire Law School into the internet age. Dennis anticipated this need in advance of the trend and before many were aware of how essential these tools would be to our present day workplace. Multiple nominators note that Dennis, through his inclusive style, was able to bring faculty, administration and staff alike to collaborative decisions that made the Knight Law Building as electronically advanced as it is today. Two writers note that “Dennis is responsible for almost single-handedly creating within the law school shared governance on matters relating to information resources and research.”
To view Professor’s Hyatt’s leadership and service contributions as coming only through committees, however, is to miss the direct one-on-one contributions that Dennis has made to so many individuals on this campus. In letter after letter, nominators speak of Dennis Hyatt’s “humanity”, “compassion”, “kindness”, “caring”, and “true commitment to the well-being of others”. One letter writer notes how Dennis “acknowledges the achievements of others and honors each individual”. An external evaluator of the Law School commented on the “cooperative spirit that Dennis has fostered across campus”, a spirit that is “unique” to this campus.

Many individuals speak to Dennis’ role as a mentor, someone who taught people “how to value one’s career, strive to perform exceptional work, and at the same time not lose sight of their proper place in the context of one’s life”. This mentoring role has extended to students, faculty and staff, whether it be through guiding undergraduates to law careers, helping library personnel develop professional portfolios, or provide in-depth editing to a faculty member’ draft manuscript for a book.

Dennis’ leadership and service contributions are thus critical to the day-to-day functioning of the entire Law School, the built environment in which Law School personnel live and work, the promotion and retention criteria and process for all Library Faculty, and the well-being of individuals across our entire campus. The outcomes from Professor Hyatt’s leadership service thus go beyond “exemplary” and “inclusive” – the wording in the Westling Award – to a level where his contributions cannot be separated from the weave of daily university life. He has helped build the loom, he has helped design the patterns, and he has helped weave the threads. There is no service contribution that can be more fundamental, more profound, more useful than this. Dennis has influenced our lives across this campus, even when we are not aware of it. His contributions form much of the fabric of what we are as an institution and who we are as individuals. We are better people, and a better place, because of Dennis’ presence in our lives.

It is therefore with great pleasure and deep appreciation, that on behalf of the University of Oregon Senate, I present Dennis Hyatt with this year’s Wayne T. Westling Award for University Leadership and Service.