

# The Lincoln Law School Story

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This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lincoln Law School of Sacramento. The story began in 1968 when Victor Bertolani and Andy Smolich, two young Sacramento law partners, watched as McGeorge School of Law was applying to be approved by the American Bar Association. Victor was a professor of Torts in McGeorge's evening program. Andy had graduated from that program years earlier. The two young men realized that this A.B.A. move would create a problem for students who wanted to attend a high quality, yet moderately priced, evening law school. Until that time, McGeorge was the Sacramento evening law school program for those who found it necessary to continue their existing career while attending law school. However, ABA approval would mean higher tuition and an emphasis on a full-time three-year day program.

On January 27, 1969, Victor and Andy decided to solve the problem. They founded Lincoln Law School of Sacramento. Their hope was to create what that other program had been; a school of opportunity for working adults who did not have the finances or the luxury of time to attend a full-time day law school program.

In order to assist their efforts, the two men sought help from Lincoln Law School of San Francisco, an established evening law program institution. That school later opened a branch in San Jose, which exists to this day. The original Lincoln Law School of San Francisco later ceased

operation and only its San Jose campus remains. Nonetheless, our school was in "charter affiliation" with the San Francisco school when the Sacramento program began in 1969. The first class of students consisted of eighteen hopeful future lawyers. The group grew to twenty students and became the first graduation class

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in June, 1973.

In 1978, Lincoln of Sacramento became accredited by the State Bar of California. Such accreditation amounted to the recognition of the quality of the school's legal education. In fact, Lincoln of Sacramento attained accredited status before the school who helped it at the start, Lincoln of San Francisco. Despite the similar names, today there is no connection between Lincoln of Sacramento and Lincoln Law School of San Jose.

Victor Bertolani and Andrew Smolich were not only law partners and co-founders of our school. They had been childhood friends growing up in Sacramento.

In 1985, the law partners ended their business association. At that time, Andy and Marilyn Smolich became the sole proprietors of the school. Marilyn became the business manager and through her efforts the school has always been on sound financial footing. Andy became Executive Dean of the school and currently serves as its President. Victor served as the school's first Dean and made accreditation by the State Bar possible.

Throughout its forty years, Lincoln has stayed true to its mission: "to offer an excellent and affordable legal education taught by a stellar faculty". Its professors are practicing lawyers and judges who excel in their field. The school has produced over 1200 attorneys who help make a name for our program. They include eight judges in four different counties, four elected district attorneys, three former district attorneys, chief counsel for various state and county agencies including the Executive Officer of the Franchise Tax Board.

At the time when the price of higher education, including law school, has become prohibitive, Lincoln Law School of Sacramento remains as an institution where future attorneys can realize their dream without incurring outrageous debt. The dream is available because of the efforts of two men whose foresight and dedication to principle gave this gift to others. They are responsible for forty years of excellence.

*Anthony Dicce*

Dean of Lincoln Law School

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS HIGH SCHOOL  
ARCHIVES INFORMATION

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BIRTH DATE 6-18-34 YEAR GRADUATED From CBS/ARMSTRONG 1952 - CBS

# of CHILDREN 4 GRANDCHILDREN 6 GREAT GRANDCHILDREN \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ATTENDED University of Santa Clara

LAW SCHOOL ATTENDED University of Santa Clara School of Law/graduated 1960  
Member of the California State Bar - California Trial Lawyers from 1961 to present

LAW SPECIALTY Civil - Litigation

MILITARY or WAR TIME SERVICE Honorably discharged/U.S. Army active &  
reserve as a Captain.

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT Self RETIRED Semi-retired

LIST YOUR HOBBIES Travel and reading

LIST ANY SPECIAL AWARDS/RECOGNITION RECEIVED University of Santa Clara  
School of Law, First in Graduating Class in 1960 and recipient of Chargin Award;  
Outstanding Professor Award McGeorge University of Pacific 1968; Santa Clara of the  
Year from Santa Clara Sacramento Alumni 1978; Honorary Degree for Distinguished  
Service as founder and Dean 1968-1986 Lincoln Law School; Served on University of Santa  
Clara Athletic Board 1978 & 1982; Jesuit High School Board of Trustees 1977 - 1989;  
Member of Alpha Sigma Nu and National Jesuit College Honor Society

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INFORMATION. THANK YOU.