IN 1985, HOMER O. BLAIR BECAME THE CENTER’S FIRST DIRECTOR and the school’s first David Rines Professor of Intellectual Property Law and Industrial Innovation. At the time, Blair was vice president of patents and licensing for Itek Corporation, Lexington, MA, a position he held for nearly two decades.

Prior to joining Itek, Blair had worked as a patent attorney for several of the nation’s major corporations, including Celanese Corporation, NY; Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical
trademark protection, creative technology arrangements and seminars addressed such topics as licensing of technology, commercialization of technology in the public interest, the climate for improvement through training and research, the climate for policy studies. In keeping with the Center's initial mission of Developing Countries. " During that same year, Blair also participated in a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland in 1977, and the only U.S. participant at the United Nation's World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) meeting on "Trademarks and Developing Countries. " During that same year, Blair also participated in a meet...
KARL F. JORDA, was selected as the Center’s director and the school’s second David Rines Professor upon Blair’s retirement in 1989.

“With over 30 years of corporate practice in intellectual property and licensing behind me, and after heading up CIBA-GEIGY’s intellectual property operation for 26 years, the question of whether or not to take early retirement had crossed my mind,” says Jorda. “The obvious alternatives were retiring, leaving to join a law firm as ‘of counsel,’ or staying on at CIBA-GEIGY for several more years.”

“But the very best alternative of them all, namely, to become an ‘academic’ and teach what I had practiced, did not occur to me at all, until Homer Blair asked me to consider replacing him as the David Rines Professor,” explains Jorda.

“What an interesting and challenging position this turned out to be!”

“Two realizations made it all easier,” says Jorda. “One, I could talk about something I had done for over 30 years, and two, teaching—teaching inventors, R&D staffs, management, members of the Patent Department and examiners of the Patent Office, etc.—is an important part of running an intellectual property operation.

Teaching at Pierce Law is great fun; students are dedicated and committed; the faculty and staff are cooperative and supportive,” says Jorda.

Prior to joining Pierce Law, Jorda served as corporate patent and trademark lawyer at Miles Laboratories (now Bayer) in Indiana, and the chief intellectual property counsel at CIBA-GEIGY Corporation (now Novartis) in New York. Jorda’s formal education includes a BA from the University of Frankfurt, Germany and the University of Great Falls, Montana, and MA and JD degrees from the University of Notre Dame.

At Pierce Law, Jorda teaches Technology Licensing during the fall semester and at the Intellectual Property Summer Institute, and Intellectual Property Management during the spring semester.

As head of the Center, Jorda directs the Center’s mission to act as a round table for the exchange of innovative ideas and concepts which draws an international audience of lawyers and administrators. Conferences held under its auspices address such topics as advanced licensing techniques, intellectual property litigation, environmental technology transfer, international patent cooperation, and the valuation of intellectual property.

To date, sixteen Advanced Intellectual Property Practice Symposia have been held at Pierce Law.
This year, the Center will host its seventh Basic Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) Seminar on Friday and Saturday, April 21 and 22, in cooperation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) of Geneva, Switzerland. Designed for patent attorneys, patent agents and patent administrators, the seminar provides in-depth knowledge and understanding of the Patent Cooperation Treaty.

On July 17–21, the Center will hold its fifteenth Advanced Licensing Institute. "Began in 1992, it was an instant success," explains Jorda. "It features 16 lectures by top talent in the licensing world and provides comprehensive, in-depth coverage of topical licensing subjects."

In addition to these programs, the series of Intellectual Property Systems Major Problems Conference, started by Blair in 1987, will continue with the eighth conference to be held in March 2006 and will deal with patent law reform proposals.

"The Germeshausen Center has a record of solid accomplishment over the past 20 years, reflected by the many-faceted activities, and will endeavor to continue to preserve and enhance Pierce Law's national and international standing as a powerhouse in intellectual property education and training," says Jorda.

In 1999, Jorda was appointed for three two-year terms as U.S. representative to the Confidence Commission (Commission on the Settlement of Disputes Relating to Confidentiality) of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), located in The Hague, Holland. Among his many honors, Jorda received the 1996 Jefferson Medal. Presented annually by the New Jersey Intellectual Property Law Association, the Jefferson Medal is the highest award in the intellectual property field. It is given for exceptional contributions to the American intellectual property law system, and only two other law professors have ever received this recognition.

Under Jorda’s vision and guidance, Pierce Law continues to gain worldwide recognition for its intellectual property faculty and programs, ranking among the top ten law schools in the nation for the study of intellectual property law. Jorda has hosted delegations of U.S. patent counsel at Japanese Patent Office meetings, served as consultant to Indonesian and Bulgarian Patent Offices, and participated in World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) symposia around the world. In 1993 and 1994, he conducted WIPO’s annual two-week academy for officials from developing countries.

In addition to teaching classes at Pierce Law, Jorda served as adjunct professor at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Medford, MA, teaching international intellectual property law from 1993 to 2003. In 1997 and 1998, he served as co-director of a joint degree program in intellectual property law with the Gulf Institute for International Law, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where he taught Patent and Trade Secrets, International Intellectual Property Law and Intellectual Property Licensing/Technology Transfer.