

**Remarks of Moliang Jiang '22 and Samarth Khanna '22 LL.M.
Introducing Professor Eric Talley,
Recipient of the 2022 Willis L.M. Reese Prize for Excellence in Teaching
Columbia Law School Graduation
Monday, May 16, 2022**

Moliang Jiang: Good evening, everyone. My name is Moliang Jiang.

Samarth Khanna: And my name is Samarth Khanna. We are honored to present—thanks—we are honored to present the Willis L.M. Reese Prize for Excellence in Teaching to Professor Eric Talley, a second-time recipient of this award.

Jiang: I first got to know Professor Talley in his corporation's class during my 2L year, when most classes were virtual. Despite overwhelming Zoom fatigue around that time, Professor Talley always managed to hold our full attention. He brought to class so much charisma and energy, it was hard not to feel our spirits lifted as well. On the last day of that course, over Zoom, Professor Talley played his guitar and sang a cover of Erroll Garner's song "Misty." But guess what. He put a Delaware twist on it, changing the lyrics to make them about the Delaware corporate code. This anecdote perfectly captures Professor Talley's teaching style: passionate and engaging with the right dose of humor and creativity.

Khanna: I waited to take Corporations with Professor Talley until the spring only because I had a conflict with the Corporations sections in the fall. But in hindsight, I'm sure glad I did. Apart from a stellar learning in corporate law, his course was also a crash course on 20th century America. From quirky cultural references to dressing up and playing '80s music, every day, like a child at a magic show, I would wonder, "What trick does he have up his sleeve today?" His energy and enthusiasm put many to shame, as I'd always ask myself, "What does he have for breakfast that I'm missing?"

Jiang: Many of us can probably agree on one thing: Professor Talley puts you to work. His classes are not easy, covering many topics from corporate debt, fiduciary duties and M&A in corporations, and learning about financial models, playing with Excel and digging into stock return databases in Corporate Finance. A master at PowerPoint, highly skilled in fancy sound effects and animations, he brought the cases and concepts to life with his PowerPoint slides. It's a tough task, to make corporate law simple and interesting, but we could always count on Professor Talley to break down complex issues into digestible pieces.

Khanna: It matters a lot to Professor Talley that beyond simple academic learning, we also get a flavor of real world practice and strategy. To that end, he invited incredible guest speakers to his class, from judges and lawyers to columnists. It is one thing to read judicial opinions from the

casebook and quite another to meet the authors or the lawyers who assisted the courts in the development of that opinion. Professor Talley also seems to have mastered the art of flexing. He'd send us emails at 12 a.m. and then drop in news stories at 6 or 7 a.m. That not only helped us connect doctrines to real world applications but also inspired me personally, though unsuccessfully, to wake up early in the morning. Our remarks here today would be amiss if we didn't also thank Elon Musk for a consistent supply of additional reading materials over the course of the last few months.

Jiang: Outside of class, Professor Talley goes the extra mile to make himself available and connect with students. He takes student ideas and concerns to heart and figures out ways to make learning easier for all. To many of us, Professor Talley is a passionate and devoted professor and a thoughtful and personable mentor. He helped us build a solid foundation in the law and trained us to think like well-rounded lawyers who think about both the legal and business sides of issues. Or, putting it in his own words, to “use our lawyerly Spidey-sense” and “put on our business hat.”

Khanna: Now it gives us great pleasure to present the Reese Prize to Professor Talley on behalf of Class of 2022. Please join us in congratulating Professor Talley and welcoming him to give us his last words of advice as we begin the next chapter of our lives.