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Leading scholar to join Harvard Law School

The Boston Globe

By Peter Schworm
Globe Staff / December 13, 2008

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Harvard Law School yesterday named renowned legal scholar Lawrence Lessig to its faculty, the latest in a series of big-name hires by the Cambridge graduate program.

Lessig, a law professor at Stanford University since 2000, will also serve as the faculty director of Harvard University's Edmond J. Safra Foundation Center for Ethics, law school officials said. He begins next summer.

Lessig is a widely acclaimed specialist in constitutional law, cyberlaw, and intellectual property and the author of "Free Culture: How Big Media Uses Technology and the Law to Lock Down Culture and Control Creativity." He has also represented clients in several high-profile cases involving the Internet.

"Larry Lessig is one of the most brilliant and important legal scholars of our time," Elena Kagan, Harvard Law School dean, said in a statement released yesterday. "His work has recast the very terms of discussion and debate in multiple areas of law, ranging from intellectual property to constitutional theory."

Harvard Law has hired more than 20 tenured or tenure-track professors in the past five years, often snatching them from their top rivals. Among them is former University of Chicago professor Cass Sunstein.

Before Stanford, Lessig taught at University of Chicago Law School and Harvard Law School.

At the ethics center, Lessig will launch a five-year project examining what happens when public institutions depend on money from sources that may be affected by the work of those institutions, such as medical research programs that receive funding from pharmaceutical companies whose drugs they review, university officials said.

Lessig said the project is "of enormous importance to our democracy."

Lessig holds a degree from Yale Law School, a master's in philosophy from Trinity College at Cambridge University, and a bachelor of arts in economics and a bachelor of science in management from the University of Pennsylvania.

Lessig clerked for Judge Richard Posner of the US Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit and US Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. ■

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