



The new law school building will be built around the needs of a 21st Century education already being taught by Washburn Law faculty. The building campaign has seen tremendous momentum over the last year.

Challenges Accepted

Giving challenges increase participation in building project campaign.

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In the past year, the law school building project has seen an increase in participation thanks to generous giving challenges and match campaigns sparked by Cynthia Heath's \$1 million challenge launched in October 2017 and finalized in January 2018.

Two \$5,000 matches on the Day of Giving in February, and one \$25,000 match aimed at encouraging law school faculty and staff to give has increased the total amount given to *Ideal Place: The Building Campaign* for the Washburn University School of Law to \$8.5 million.

Heath, BA '71, and honorary lifetime member to the Washburn University School of Law Alumni Association, is delighted the campaign has gained incredible momentum in the last eight months.



Cynthia Heath, BA '71. Photo submitted

“I like to encourage others to think bigger than themselves,” said Heath, chair of the Washburn University Foundation Board of Trustees. “At the heart of my giving is honoring those who came before me, in particular my parents who sacrificed for me, and my husband, David, who encouraged me and believed I could succeed at anything. Giving to Washburn fulfills my commitment to them.”

With a goal of \$20 million to raise for the building, Heath knows it’s going to take the Washburn Law family to meet the goal.

Faculty and Staff Step Up

Martin Wisneski, assistant director and head of technical services of the Washburn Law Library, and a law school staff member since 1986, along with his wife, **Lisa Hammer, ’90**, took up the cause to inspire others to give as well through a “mystery donor” challenge to the law school faculty and staff.

Wisneski has been involved in the renovation of many areas of the current law building, including the law library expansion in the late 80s and early 90s, and knows it takes broad support to see a project through. Hammer shared that when traveling, they often stop at other law schools to check out their spaces.

“Times have changed,” said Hammer, who worked for the Kansas Court of Appeals and Kansas Social Rehabilitation

Services. “The competition for law students is keen — students are more aware of law school debt now, so they are more selective. You must put a good foot forward. You have to be sharp looking. We need to sharpen Washburn Law’s physical image.”

Wisneski noted the changing nature of legal education to more of a collaborative and group learning environment recently led the law library to refurbish its entry and reference areas to provide students with more inviting spaces to study and work together.

“Students have made great use of the refurbished areas, confirming our thought that many of these types of spaces are needed in the new building, and prospective students walk in and immediately see current students working together, a real positive,” said Wisneski.

Inspired by Heath’s challenge, Wisneski and Hammer issued their own fundraising challenge. In addition to giving back to the institution that has played such a major role in their lives, they hoped to encourage more faculty and staff to give to the new building.

“We wanted to make it a challenge, make it fun, and to tell law alumni the people who work here also support this project,” said Hammer. “It doesn’t matter what amount you can give, but that you demonstrate your support for the Law School.”



Washburn Law faculty and staff gather to present the check from their giving challenge. Photo by Jeremy Wangler

Both were surprised when the total was revealed this March at a celebration where they were disclosed as the “mystery donors.” By the completion of the challenge, more than 75 percent of the law faculty and staff had given more than \$107,000, exceeding the initial challenge by 300 percent. In total, law school faculty and staff have contributed in excess of \$425,000 to the law school building campaign since it began.

“The total amount was astounding to us. We didn’t know what it was until we saw the check,” said Wisneski and Hammer. “The generosity everyone showed by participating in our challenge truly touched us, and we appreciate all of the contributions.”

Day of Giving

Washburn’s annual Day of Giving helped build the momentum for the law school building campaign as it raised almost \$30,000 in gifts in the span of one day.



Judy Jenkins, BS '04, JD '07. Photo submitted

Judy Jenkins, BS '04, JD '07, and Washburn University Foundation trustee, issued a \$5,000 match that day with another anonymous donor doing the same. In total, more than 35 donors gave to the building campaign.

“I was happy to be in a position to both challenge and to remind my classmates to show their support for the school’s building project,” Jenkins said. “It was my hope my classmates would match my challenge,

exceed my goal or simply begin the conversation with the Foundation or the Law School to learn about the many ways to support the college, the current and future students. I felt it was my turn to begin paying it forward.”

Looking to the future

Heath said she is looking forward to the successful completion of the building campaign and to see a new law building on the southeast side of campus.

By the Numbers

Ideal Place: The Building Campaign for Washburn University School of Law has seen record momentum in the last eight months.

Here are the numbers as of June 1, 2018.

Total Raised: \$8.5 million

Total Donors: 743

Since October 2017:

\$2.5 million raised
more than 290 new donors

From Washburn Law Faculty and Staff Donors:

\$427,559 raised



The \$1 million challenge wrapped up in January of this year, and Heath said she was pleased with the great enthusiasm by the law school alumni, faculty and support staff, Washburn undergraduate alumni, and her fellow Foundation trustees who gave to meet the challenge and contributed more than \$1.3 million in less than three months.

Since the \$1 million challenge started, more than 290 new donors have given to the law school, an increase of almost 65 percent since the campaign initially started.

“The impact of our university and the law school on the local community, state, and the world should not be underestimated but celebrated at every opportunity,” Heath said. “No one can do this alone, and I always hope that others will join me in the opportunity to strengthen Washburn.”