

Professor Linda Elrod



## Children & Family Law Center

The Washburn University School of Law Children and Family Law Center had a busy semester with child advocacy training, continuing legal education programs and student activities. The spring semester started with 28 students spending the first week in January learning how to represent children. The new multidisciplinary course involved psychologists Dr. Kathy Nichols from Lawrence and Dr. Milfred "Bud" Dale of Topeka, who educated students about how to interview children, the developmental stages of children and how to find "best interests" of the child. The course included training in case management, cultural sensitivity; the use of experts and ethical considerations for lawyers who represent children. Lawyers serving as guardians ad litem, Professor Lynette Petty and Kevin Cook '99 brought the "real world" into the classroom. In addition, Larry Rute '73 and Art Thompson trained students in how to hear the children's voice in mediation and how to keep parents focused on children.



Joseph W. Booth '95

The Children and Family Law Center sponsored several continuing legal education programs that students had the opportunity to attend. On March 2, two Johnson County attorneys, Joseph W. Booth '95, a partner in Nelson & Booth, and Lori S. B. Justice, with Short & Borth, presented an afternoon program on military law issues. They discussed the intricacies of jurisdiction when dealing with military clients, especially the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act, divorce, child support and pension jurisdiction.

Over one hundred people attended the "Indian Child Welfare Act in Kansas: Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going, and Where Do We Go From Here?" March 24, 2006. In addition to Washburn Law Professors Aliza Organick and Lynette Petty,

other featured speakers included Stacy Leeds, JAT, Supreme Court Justice from the Cherokee Nation; Dawn Masqua, ICWA social worker from Prairie Band Potawatomi Social Services; Regina Ott, Kickapoo Tribe; Michelle Levy, co-director of Native American Scholar Program at KU and Melissa Ness, President of Connections Unlimited,

Inc. Other presenters included Elizabeth Rosenbaum, sole practitioner and ICWA expert from Sioux City, Iowa; Larry Rute '73, partner with Associates in Dispute Resolution; Sarah Sargent, Assistant General Counsel with TFI Family Service; Carol Shoptesse, ICWA Independent Living Program Director for Sac and Fox Nation; and Nicki Unfred, permanency supervisor at KVC Behavioral Health Care.

The Center co-sponsored "Basic & Advanced Case Management Training," June 16-17, 2006, as domestic courts across Kansas have increasingly ordered "case management" as an intervention to meet the needs of high conflict parents and their children.

The workshop provided attendees with insight and training from experienced, highly-skilled case managers from across Kansas. The first day offered practical advice about starting and managing cases, including how to combine legal concepts with ideas about alternative dispute resolution and behavioral change. The second day focused on advanced issues, emphasizing the special clinical, legal and professional challenges case managers face.

Two new student editors, Amy Coppola '07 and Laura Findley '07, began working on the *Family Law Quarterly*, a publication of the American Bar Association Family Law Section, edited at Washburn Law. The issues this spring included the annual survey of family law in the fifty states and a survey of the literature and a special issue on third party custody and visitation issues. Students

are editing a special issue on father's rights due out summer 2006.



Elizabeth Rosenbaum

The Family Law Student Society, under the leadership of Dallas Bauer '06, Stefanie Benson '06 and Sara Martin '06 continued to get students interested in CASA of Shawnee County, volunteering in a number of ways. Over fourteen law students served as CASAs. Students also had special lunches, joining with the Women's Legal Forum, the Elder Law group and with other student groups to present speakers.

The Washburn Law Clinic offered 20 students "hands on" experience with family law cases and live clients. Professors Aliza Organick, Lynette Petty and Sheila Reynolds each supervised several interns working on family law cases.

A variety of opportunities were available to students to learn about and become involved in family law activities throughout the year. In addition to several family law specialty courses and the Washburn Law Clinic, students were encouraged to be involved watching court cases, attending continuing education programs and meeting with alumni and family law practitioners.

If you wish to learn more about the Center or if you would like to volunteer, please contact director, Professor Linda Elrod, at (785) 670-1838 or [linda.elrod@washburn.edu](mailto:linda.elrod@washburn.edu)