

Washburn Law Clinic



Professor John Francis



Since 1979, Washburn Law Clinic students have had the privilege of learning the practice of law under the supervision of Professor Sheila Reynolds. For nearly three decades, Reynolds has supervised Clinic interns with patience and wisdom, doing so from a wealth of experience. During Reynolds' time in the Clinic, the faculty supervisors have also had the benefit of her knowledge, steadiness, and ethical expertise.

This past year, Reynolds decided to enter phased retirement. While Reynolds will remain on the law faculty teaching Professional Responsibility and the Professional Responsibility Seminar, she will no longer supervise students in the Law Clinic.

Reynolds supervised Clinic students' representation of clients in family law matters. These matters included divorce, paternity action, adoption, and guardianship. In addition to giving students experience in the specialized area of family law, Reynolds also chose to use these cases as vehicles for students to develop broader skills and knowledge necessary to practice civil law, regardless of the specialized area. Reynolds philosophy of using specialized cases to teach broad-based lawyering skills is shared by the rest of the Law Clinic faculty.

Reynolds' rich background and important professional accomplishments have always been a tremendous asset to the Clinic. She was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at Harvard and graduated Order of the Coif from the University of Kansas School of Law. Before teaching she worked as a legal services

lawyer in Kansas and Missouri and developed legal services programs for the Kansas Department on Aging. Reynolds has served on the

Kansas Bar Association (KBA) Professional Ethics Advisory Committee since 1984, acting as chair from 1992-95. She has written chapters for three KBA practice handbooks, and in 1999 received the KBA Outstanding Service Award recognizing her as a distinguished authority and lecturer on legal ethics and family law. (She can attest that on many occasions, each of the Clinic professors has knocked on her door seeking guidance on complex ethical questions presented by cases.) In 2007, she received the KBA Pro Bono Services award for cases she handled for indigent persons through the Kansas Legal Services program.

Also of note, while Reynolds was teaching in the Law Clinic, for six years she also served as the associate dean of the law school. Maintaining these responsibilities concurrently is not a job for the faint of heart. The Clinic will miss having Reynolds supervise legal interns. Fortunately, she will keep her office in the Clinic, so faculty can still knock on her door, seeking guidance with legal ethics questions.

Irvine E. Ungerman Award

It's only fitting this spring's recipients of the Irvine E. Ungerman Award for Outstanding Clinic



Professor Sheila Reynolds

Washburn Law Clinic



Amy Coppola '07, and Maria Nieto '07

Students earned the award for work they did under the supervision of Professor Sheila Reynolds.

Amy Coppola '07, and Maria Nieto '07, were the co-recipients of the Ungerman Award for the outstanding clinical intern in the spring of 2007. Although they each handled several cases during the semester, they distinguished themselves in one particular case on which they were co-counsel, with highly competent and professional representation of a client seeking to adopt her great-grandson over the objection of the child's mother. The case required research and written memoranda on the legal issues of parental unfitness and consideration of the best interests of the child in an adoption proceeding, a motion, memorandum, and court argument to compel discovery, a pretrial questionnaire and hearing, and finally, a full day trial, with nine witnesses, including two expert witnesses. Coppola and Nieto demonstrated a wide variety of lawyering skills in the short span of the seven weeks they had to prepare for trial. Both gained the trust and confidence of the client and worked well with each other, and with others they encountered, during the representation. Throughout the representation, they worked diligently

and with enthusiasm and are most deserving of this honor. Coppola and Nieto won the case for their client, with the court finding the mother unfit and granting the adoption for their client.

Prof. Organick Shares Her Experience with New Mexico Students

Professor Aliza Organick shared her clinical teaching experience with law students at the University of New Mexico School of Law. This summer, Organick was a visiting law professor in the respected Southwest Indian Law Clinic at New Mexico. Organick is supervising New Mexico law students representing native clients in a broad range of cases.

Organick also co-organized a symposium and workshop at New Mexico Law School titled: "Indian Law Clinics and Externship Programs: Pedagogy, Methodology, and Curriculum Design" This is the first symposium to focus exclusively on the unique challenges of Indian Law Clinics. There are approximately a dozen Indian Law Clinics nationwide and several in Canada. This international workshop was designed for clinical law professors from around the country to discuss issues in the emerging area of Indian Law Clinics. Three clinicians from Canada participated in the symposium. Attendees explored and developed pedagogy and materials unique to Indian Law Clinics, began to develop scholarship in this clinical area, and created a network of professors teaching in Indian Law Clinics.

By Professor John Francis

If you would like to learn more about the Law Clinic, please contact director, John Francis, at (785) 670-1191 or john.francis@washburn.edu