

# Business & Transactional Law Center



Washburn University School of Law has strived, for many years, to prepare students for careers focused on counseling business clients and clients involved in sophisticated transactions. "Still, it was apparent to us, after surveying law schools throughout the region, that this was an area where legal education all too often failed to prepare students for the realities of business and transactional practice," said Professor Steven Ramirez.

To address that need, the Business and Transactional Law Center, directed by Professor Steve Ramirez, was created this fall at Washburn Law. "We are building on our earlier emphasis in this practice area and initiating new programs to produce the best business and transactional lawyers possible," he said. Faculty, students, and alumni are collaborating in the effort.

## STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

A new student organization, the Washburn Business Law Society, is energizing and involving students in all aspects of the Center's work. The Society's president, second-year student Greg Parker, and secretary, first-year student Tanya Bidwell, are spearheading student efforts to write the Society's constitution and by-laws. Plans for the Society include selection of a board of alumni advisors, hosting a general counsel institute, creating an annual program on interviewing skills and recent developments in hot areas of business law, and hosting an annual introductory event for incoming law students.

## CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION

"When we surveyed local business and transactional lawyers, we found that they often had difficulty in fulfilling their CLE requirements in subject appropriate areas," Professor Ramirez said. "We intend to end those difficulties."

To that end, the Business and Transactional Law Center in October sponsored a seminar on the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. "This act is the most sweeping 'reform' of business and transactional law in the United States since the Great Depression, and it promises to affect the work of virtually every business practitioner. We were able to provide a concise overview of the impact of the act, with a particular focus on new federal rules of professional responsibility which the act mandates for certain attorneys representing publicly held companies," Professor Ramirez said. An outline of the seminar presentation is available at [washburnlaw.edu](http://washburnlaw.edu).

"We will be offering more continuing education programs, because this is a way we can serve our students, our alumni, and the surrounding business community," Professor Ramirez said.

Professor Steve Ramirez



## ENRICHING THE CURRICULUM

Input from students and alumni is providing direction for transactional law curriculum expansion. Responses to inquiries indicate that these groups are particularly interested in acquiring transactional skills and participating in externships that emphasize transactional law.

The faculty was strengthened with the arrival of Dean Dennis R. Honabach, a noted author in the areas of securities law and director and officer liability.

## A TRANSACTIONAL LAW THINK TANK

"Our goal is for the Center to be a think tank for the regional business community," Professor Ramirez said. "We are seeking to wed our already prodigious scholarly output in business and transactional law to the most vexing programs facing the business and transactional legal communities."

High profile business leaders and scholars will visit Washburn Law to engage students and alumni. The first of these visitors will be Dean Mark Sargent of Villanova University School of Law. A nationally known scholar of the securities laws, Dean Sargent will be the Foulston & Siefken Lecturer, February 2003.

## ALUMNI INPUT NEEDED

"In the coming months, we will be contacting alumni with interests or expertise in business and transactional law with the hope they will lend us a hand," Professor Ramirez said. "We want to create and leverage a new market niche for Washburn Law; we want the School to be identified as a leader in providing legal education to those interested in business and transactional law."

The strength of this center rests on the strength of Washburn Law Alum. "We will be bringing in alum to mentor students, to speak at luncheons and, perhaps most importantly, to sit down with small groups of students and show them what it really means to be a great transactional lawyer. We need your help," Professor Ramirez said.

*Readers wanting to learn more about the Business and Transactional Law Center or to share thoughts about ways to better Washburn Law's programs in those areas are encouraged to contact Professor Ramirez at [steven.ramirez@washburn.edu](mailto:steven.ramirez@washburn.edu).*