

CENTER FOR *Excellence in Advocacy*

TRIAL TEAM MEMBERS SELECTED

The 2010-2011 Washburn Law Trial Team was selected after volunteer coaches listened to prospective members present persuasive speeches showcasing the students' ability to argue using few notes, preparation skills, presence in front of others, and ability to follow specific directions.

Team members will hone their skills by practicing two to three hours, three days per week to prepare for American Association for Justice (AAJ) National Student Advocacy and the Texas Young Lawyers Association (TYLA) competitions in 2011.

ADVOCACY TEAM COMPETES IN MIAMI

The Washburn University School of Law Trial Advocacy Team traveled to Miami, Fla., to compete in the ABA Labor and Employment Law Section Trial Advocacy competition Oct. 30 and 31. This competition matches law students from across the nation in an advocacy competition focused on labor and employment law issues. This year's issue was about employment discrimination, centering on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The Washburn Law team of Alexandra Blasi, Ashley Dopita, Kevin Keatley, and Jonathan Zadina competed very well in both of its preliminary rounds, defeating a team from the University of Miami School of Law, Coral Gables, Fla., and the defending regional champions from the Florida Coastal School of Law, Jacksonville, Fla. However, despite winning both rounds, Washburn Law did not advance to the semifinals based on point differentials. The team was coached by **Jay, '07**, and **Danielle, '09, Hall**.

This strong showing has gotten the Washburn Law Trial Advocacy program off to another strong start that it hopes to continue during the spring semester at the Texas Young Lawyers Association and the American Association of Justice competitions.

ABA Employment and Labor Law Trial Team

Alexandra Blasi, 3L
Ashley Dopita, 3L
Kevin Keatley, 3L
Jonathan Zadina, 3L

TYLA Trial Team

Nathan Ansley, 2L
Laura Coughlin, 3L
Kevin Keatley, 3L
Erida Livingston, 3L
Andrew Newcomer, 2L
Letiffany Obozele, 2L
Ty Patton, 2L
Michael Rost, 2L
Vladimir Viaud, 2L

AAJ Trial Team

Laura Allison, 2L
Courtney Archdekin, 3L
Lizzie Bernhart, 3L
Alex Bezu, 2L
Caleb Biesterveld, 2L
Amira Brazley, 2L
Rhett Buckley, 2L
Matt Coleman, 2L
Michael Hinkin, 1L
Michael Hunter, 2L
Daniel Jacobs, 2L
Daniel Kennedy, 2L
Erin Kessler, 2L
Whitney Miller, 2L
Billy Patterson, 1L
Rebecca Sisk, 2L

KAYE AND MCRELL: FOURTH AMENDMENT ROUNDTABLE PANELISTS

Michael Kaye, director of the Center for Excellence in Advocacy and professor at Washburn Law, and **Larry McReil, '82**, chief public defender, Junction City, Kan., served as panelists for a Fourth Amendment roundtable discussion as part of the Dorothy L. Thompson lecture series at Kansas State University on Oct. 12.

The panel discussed situations involving search and seizure laws, including what rights citizens have when being stopped for traffic violations. Kaye spoke about the evolution of the amendment. "Courts and legislatures have had to face the fact that circumstances have changed," Kaye said.

Kaye and McReil were two of the five panelists who took part in the discussion. Other panelists were Barry Wilkerson, Riley County attorney; David Stutzman, judge for the Riley County District Court; and Allan Lytton, instructor at the Kansas Highway Patrol Training Academy.

BLASI NAMED FIRST RECIPIENT OF BYRON M. CERRILLO ADVOCACY LAW SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Alexandra Blasi, third-year law student, was named the first recipient of the Byron M. Cerrillo Advocacy Law Scholarship Fund. The endowed fund provides scholarships for Washburn Law students who have expressed an interest in the Advocacy Program, with preference given to students enrolled in the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program (ITAP).



Blasi originally had her sights set on completing a Business and Transactional Law certificate to complement her desire to work in health care. It wasn't until she met with **Professor David Pierce, '77**, during her first year that she realized becoming involved in ITAP, in addition to completing the certificate, would be integral to her education.

Washburn Law created the fund in honor of the late **Byron M. Cerrillo, '84**, to support outstanding students pursuing careers in advocacy. Cerrillo, a career public defender, died in 2006. He was an instructor for ITAP, and taught programs sponsored by the National Institute for Trial Advocacy and in the Washburn Law Outreach Programs for Public Service Lawyers.

"It was a real whirlwind but also one of the most educational experiences I've encountered," Blasi said about ITAP. "The level of mentoring, the involvement from participants, alumni, and Professor Michael Kaye; the whole experience was so organized. There was such a fluidity of teaching that the faculty could still reach everyone on an independent level," she explained.

Blasi, whose undergraduate degree from Washburn is in music, will be one of the first Washburn students to complete a JD and MBA through Washburn's new dual degree program.

She credits Washburn faculty members and their focus on students as individuals for jumpstarting her desire to create a Health Law Society for other law students interested in the health care field. The group met for the first time in the fall.

"I am certainly honored to receive this scholarship," she said. "His (Cerrillo's) commitment to defense work for the underserved put him in a position where he understood the disparity of treatment. He dedicated his life to serving in this way. It's a strong representation of his character, and I hope I can represent this in my own professional career."

Blasi would like to run a hospital in the future and plans to begin her career in areas closely tied to health care, but nothing is set in stone. "My faith basis is that there is a plan. We don't always know what it is, but if I do the hard work I hope it gets me on the right path."

LUNCH AND LEARN

The following events were hosted by the Center for Excellence in Advocacy. Presentations are open to all students and qualify as "Extracurricular Course of Study" for students interested in obtaining a Certificate of Concentration.

OCTOBER 20, 2010

Imagining Drug Legalization

James B. Jacobs, the Chief Justice Warren E. Burger professor of Constitutional Law and the Courts and director for the Center for Research in Crime and Justice at New York University School of Law, debated broad-based legalization of drugs with Topeka physician Eric Voth. The evening event was co-hosted by the Washburn Federalist Society and held at the Bradbury Thompson Alumni Center.

SEPTEMBER 29, 2010

Current Judiciary Topics and Private Practice Perspectives

Peter Jouras, '87, an attorney from the Kansas City area, and Senator **Tim Owens, '74**, who also has a private legal practice in Kansas City, provided their insights about current and future potential changes in the legal system.



APRIL 27, 2010

About Trial Advocacy:

Trial Team to Trial Lawyer

Participating on the trial advocacy team substantially increases students' likelihood of obtaining trial lawyer positions upon graduation. Trial Team membership demonstrates to employers a student's interest, skill, and commitment to trial lawyering. First-year students attended this special presentation to meet former and current team members, including **Todd Hiatt, '05, Danielle Hall, '09, Jay Hall, '07,** and law students Kevin Keatley and Ben Long.



MARCH 26, 2010

Panel Discussion: Municipal Advocacy

Panelists included **The Honorable Steven Ebberts, '93,** administrative judge of the Topeka Municipal Courts; **Todd Love, '88,** Topeka city attorney; and **Kevin Cook, '99,** Cook & Fisher.

MARCH 9, 2010

Jury Selection

Ron Pope, '84, is a partner with the Topeka law firm of Ralston, Pope & Diehl. He practices in the areas of general trial work, medical malpractice, personal injury, and products liability.



FEBRUARY 23, 2010

Environmental Advocacy

Robert Eye, '80, explained the difference between Environmental Advocacy and Environmental Law. He also discussed the major challenges facing environmental lawyers in the future as well as the means by which to advocate for a client that include lobbying, litigation, and grass roots awareness.



FEBRUARY 13, 2010

Panel Discussion: Compassion and the Litigator

The Center for Excellence in Advocacy presented this panel discussion at the ABA Law Student Division 10th Circuit Spring Meeting and Governor Election. Panelists included **Danny Baumgartner, '99, Todd Hiatt, '05, Bill Ossmann, '77, Rebecca Woodman, '87,** and Gary Foiles. The panel was moderated by Professor Michael Kaye.

NOVEMBER 5-6, 2009

Practitioner in Residence: Patrik Neustrom, '77

Neustrom was the Fall 2009 Practitioner in Residence. He spoke to several classes and presented a Lunch & Learn program, "Taking the Case: Settlement, or Going to Trial?" He also presented a CLE, "Winning Damages in the Era of Tort Reform." Neustrom, a partner with Neustrom & Associates, Salina, Kan., since 2005, focuses his practice on general civil trial with emphasis on personal injury litigation, traumatic brain injuries, wrongful death, medical malpractice, products liability, nursing home, workers' compensation, and exotic torts.



OCTOBER 21, 2009

Panel Discussion: Street Law

Panelists in this lunch-time discussion on street crime included **Jason Belveal, '07,** criminal defense lawyer; Professor Mary Kreiner Ramirez; and Kyle Smith and Captain Peggy Fox, Topeka Police Department. The panelists were given two scenarios based on actual police investigations and asked for their views on whether evidence obtained through search and seizure in these cases would be admissible in a criminal prosecution.

OCTOBER 13, 2009

**Demonstrative Aids:
Cutting Edge v. Tried and True
Displays**

Scott Logan, '80, discussed the effective use of demonstrative exhibits, emphasizing that both high-tech and traditional formats can be extremely effective at trial. He used exhibits from his trial practice to demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of both "static" and electronic exhibits.



OCTOBER 6, 2009

**First Tuesday:
Advocating Before the
Supreme Court**

Rebecca Woodman, '87, and **Jared Maag, '95,** spoke about their experiences with the Supreme Court. Woodman has been a Kansas capital appellate defender since 2002, arguing death penalty appeals. Maag is with the Office of the United States Attorney, handling prosecution of federal crimes ranging from drug distribution to immigration fraud.

