

John and Louise Hamilton

LAW SCHOLARSHIP

John R. Hamilton, '65, is a native Kansan who grew up in Augusta. He completed his undergraduate studies at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., in 1962 and returned to Kansas and earned his law degree in 1965 from Washburn University School of Law.

John is the senior partner of the Topeka law firm of Hamilton, Laughlin, Barker, Johnson & Watson Attorneys at Law. He has practiced law since 1965.

A noted authority and national expert, John authored the chapter, "Eminent Domain-Practice and Procedure" in the *Kansas Real Estate Practice and Procedure Handbook* published by the Kansas Bar Association in 2009. John co-authored the Kansas Chapter on "Law and Procedure of Eminent Domain in the 50 States" for the Litigation Section of the Condemnation Land Use and Zoning Committee of the American Bar Association also in 2009. He is listed in *Best Lawyers in America* and the only attorney in *Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers* under the field of Eminent Domain.

John has contributed to his profession as an advocate, litigator, and author. He is a member of the Topeka, Kansas, and American Bar associations, Owners' Council of America, and American Board of Trial Advocates. His active litigation practice has earned him the respect of his peers, and he was a member of the Kansas Association for Justice serving as its vice president for Legislation in 1981. Notwithstanding all of his professional duties, John has given generously of his time and talents to Washburn Law. He has served on the Washburn University School of Law Alumni Board of Governors and has been a long-time member of the Dean's Circle.

John also is a strong family man. He and his wife, Louise Brock Hamilton, often host their adult children and grandchildren at relaxing vacation sites around the country, with the most recent in Branson, Mo. The couple also enjoys John's passion for fine antique touring cars. Friends and family often receive holiday cards with a picture of John and Louise in one of their beautiful vintage cars.



Louise has been just as involved with Washburn having served on the board of directors of the Friends of the Mulvane Art Museum. Her interest in the arts has also been actively expressed in her support of the Topeka Art Guild. The couple has supported Washburn in many ways and over many years. They have given to such diverse projects as the White Concert Hall renovation, the construction of the Living Learning Center, the development of the Mulvane Sculpture garden, and the enhancement of the Washburn Art department student travel fund.

Amidst all of their activities, John and Louise continue to make a difference at Washburn. Recently they took their commitment to a new level by establishing the John and Louise Hamilton Law Scholarship funded by a charitable gift annuity. John and Louise receive income during their lives, and Washburn Law receives a wonderful student scholarship later.

"We are so fortunate to have an outstanding law school at Washburn," said Louise. "John and I are happy to give back with our scholarship."

"I received a quality legal education at Washburn that prepared me for a rewarding career practicing law," said John. "Louise and I are pleased to support the law school and the fine arts department. We want deserving students to have the benefit of financial assistance."

"Washburn Law is fortunate to have devoted alumni and friends like the Hamiltons who support our students through their generous gifts" said Dean Thomas J. Romig.

If you would like to establish an endowed fund or make a planned gift to Washburn Law, please contact Martin Ahrens, senior development director, (785) 670-2781, mahrens@wufoundation.org.

John and Maureen Collins Law Scholarship Fund



John M. Collins, '91, and his wife, Maureen, Shrewsbury, N.J., moved from the East Coast so John could attend Washburn Law. At the time, neither knew their move to Kansas would be one of the most significant decisions to date.

“My wife, Maureen, often likes to say that ‘we’ went to law school together; and indeed, we did. We were newlyweds when we picked up and moved halfway across the country from the East Coast so that I could attend Washburn. It was a move that proved to be one the most transformational decisions of my life. The faculty, students and entire Washburn community supported and nurtured us as only a close-knit community can do.” Maureen, a graduate of Penn State, worked at KTKA Channel 49 as a statehouse reporter and news anchor during the couple’s time in Topeka.

The enthusiasm John and Maureen have for the law school community is matched by John’s appreciation for the education he received at Washburn Law and the long-lasting effects it has had on his career. John is vice president and senior counsel-insurance with American Express in New York City, where he has worked since 2007. “Washburn provided me with a superior legal education and limitless opportunities to apply what I learned outside of the classroom. It prepared me to meet the myriad of legal challenges that would come my way. But most importantly, it provided an education firmly grounded in the Midwestern values of honesty, integrity, and responsibility; values that have served me well throughout my legal career. Maureen and I are honored to give back to the community that gave so much to us and to help provide similar opportunities for future Ichabods.”

“We thank John and Maureen for ensuring future students have the opportunity to experience our exceptional law school community and educational environment,” said Dean Romig.

John Collins will return to Washburn Law on February 23, 2012. He will be joined by J. Brent Hooker of ACE Latin America, one of the world’s largest insurance and reinsurance providers, as Business and Transactional Law Center Practitioners in Residence. During their time on campus, Collins and Hooker will visit classes and make presentations to students and faculty.

Allison L. Herr and Dr. John J. Donohue Law Scholarship Fund

Allison L. Herr, '90, Henderson, Nev., graduated with a firm understanding that Washburn is a different kind of law school. She believes that what sets Washburn apart “is that Washburn has always been good about meeting people where they are and bringing them up to where they need to be rather than assuming people come in with a background ready to live the life of the law.”

Herr didn’t plan to practice law but instead thought she would use her law degree as a solid foundation for a career in hospital administration, the undergraduate degree she earned from Wichita State University. However, while at Washburn Law, she encountered what she described as “incredibly talented professors who, in my mind, opened up the world to me. I didn’t come from a background of having lawyers in the family. It was a life changing event.”

Herr now has a solo practice in family law and believes it is important to give back to the school that expanded her horizons and set her on a new course in life. She is hopeful that the Allison L. Herr and Dr. John J. Donohue Law Scholarship will provide students with an opportunity to understand what it is to be a lawyer, the same opportunity she was afforded. “You learn to be able to take this mass array of facts and line them up and focus on what is important.”

“Allison’s and John’s generosity will help open up new opportunities for deserving students,” Dean Romig said.

The Honorable Marla J. Luckert and S. Ken Morse Law Scholarship Fund

Justice Marla Luckert, '80, and Ken Morse, '80, Topeka, believe the practical skills they learned at Washburn Law opened up opportunities that otherwise they may not have received. Justice Luckert worked in private practice and as an adjunct professor at Washburn Law before her appointment to the bench in 1992. In 2003, she was appointed a member of the Supreme Court of Kansas. Ken served as general counsel for Hill's Pet Nutrition for 25 years before recently retiring.

"We both feel like our degrees from the law school opened up some tremendous opportunities that we never imagined could happen," Ken said. "We hope that by creating the Luckert and Morse Scholarship we can open up those opportunities for future students."

They also want to encourage students to recognize how quickly opportunities can come up and how they can change your outlook and practice. "Don't let yourself get entrapped into thinking, 'Today is what has to be my life.' A lot of things can change during your three years in school, and a lot of things change during the three to five years after school," Ken said. "Keep an open mind and stay flexible."

Dean Romig said, "This scholarship generously established by Justice Marla Luckert and Ken Morse will offer brighter futures for our deserving students."

Ronald W. Nelson Law Scholarship Fund

Ronald W. Nelson, '81, Lenexa, Kan., spent most of his life pursuing a dream of becoming a veterinarian. It was only in his third year at Kansas State University that he realized he didn't enjoy the sciences nearly as much as the constitutional law and political science courses he was taking "for fun and enjoyment."

"Follow your heart, and do what you feel passion for" is the advice he followed when deciding to become a law student. He shares this advice with students currently at Washburn. "Go with your passion, rather than merely where the most money is," he said. This is what he hopes his scholarship will allow future law students to do.

Nelson, a sole practitioner in family law, never planned to be a family law attorney either, but six years after graduation he decided to focus on what he most enjoyed—and the areas of law for which he had passion. The time he spent at Washburn Law gave him the tools needed to succeed in any legal field. "My overall Washburn experience is that the professors were truly concerned with teaching the students," Nelson said. "They wanted everyone to understand the law; not just merely know what the law was."

"Ron Nelson's scholarship will help ensure that deserving students who are following their dreams are supported financially in their law school studies," stated Dean Romig.

T. Michael and Sheryl W. Wilson Scholarship Fund

When T. Michael Wilson, '72, Wichita, graduated from Washburn Law, he didn't plan to practice family law but rather intended to become a certified public accountant. Regardless of his original intentions, he never felt like he was unprepared for the challenges of law practice. Wilson praises the law professors for teaching practical skills that have served him well. "They were not just giving us theoretical legal teachings, but practical everyday applications of law."

It's that practical legal education that has prompted him to give back to Washburn through the T. Michael and Sheryl W. Wilson Law Scholarship. "I wanted to share the success I've had practicing law with someone else who may have the same interest."

His secondary reason for establishing the scholarship is to encourage students who want to study law despite today's challenges. He believes law students should "not get discouraged from what they may hear about job prospects when they graduate, because, after all, they are getting a valuable education. Even if after graduation they don't immediately get a job, they've acquired a legal education that makes them much more flexible in the job market."

"We thank Michael and Sheryl for including the needs of Washburn law students in their estate plans," Dean Romig said.

