

Professor Janet Thompson Jackson Connects Wellness and Law



Janet Thompson Jackson, Professor of Law, has been a member of the law faculty of Washburn Law School since 2004, where she directs the Small Business and Nonprofit Transactional Law Clinic, teaches Nonprofit Law, and is helping to lead the law school's new initiative, Third Year Anywhere™. Jackson's driving philosophy is that preparing students to be successful in the legal profession means helping them to manage the stresses inherent in law school and practice. She is a frequent speaker in the areas of wellness, nonprofit law and governance, and diversity and belonging.

When the pandemic hit, many individuals experienced levels of stress and anxiety like never before, and Jackson began unloading her toolkit. As an Executive Wellness Coach and certified yoga instructor who is pursuing certifications in the Science of Mindful Awareness and yoga therapy, she has the tools to help others manage their daily demands in healthy ways.

Since August, Jackson has led *Monday Meditations and Wellness Tips* over the lunch hour via Zoom for law students, alums, faculty, and staff. Monday meditations are a wonderful way to start your week *well*. Of

the many benefits of meditation, Jackson cites, “building skills to manage stress and anxiety, increasing self-awareness, focusing on the present, increasing patience and tolerance, and reducing negative emotions.”

Her recent presentations for the Washburn and Kansas legal communities include a two-day Lunch & Learn called *Healthy Minds*, in connection with KLAP, and *Understanding and Healing Racial Trauma through Radical Self-Care*.

Earlier in the year Jackson was just as busy spreading wellness in Kansas and beyond, both virtually and digitally. In May, she gave a Kansas CLE, *Wellness in the Legal Profession: Ways to Practice Self-Care and Achieve Long-Term Wellness*. Over the summer she was a guest speaker at Loyola Chicago where she spoke to students about, *Wellness and Self-Care for Law Students*, and during the AALS Virtual Clinical Conference, she presented on *Wellness and Law: Bringing Lawyering and Wellness Together*. Recently, Jackson gave a talk on her current scholarship project, *Wellness and Law: Reforming Legal Education to Support Student Wellness*. During the month of June, Jackson posted 30 *Daily Meditations for the Racial Justice Journey*. Three videos narrated by Jackson are posted to the law

school's new *Self-Care and Wellness* page, created in response to the pandemic. These videos focus on self-care for law students, but the lessons and tips shared in the videos are beneficial to everyone.

Jackson seeks to integrate self-care into her daily schedule and encourages her students to do the same. That can be as simple as taking five-minute breaks from screens during the day, meditating, journaling, or regularly connecting with friends, she says. The law school is fortunate to have our own mindfulness leader and wellness coach to help us navigate through the stress of being a law student, a law school faculty member, or staff member.