

This section focuses on alumni who are having early career successes that the pioneer alumni could have only dreamed of decades ago. These are alumni whose careers bear watching as they quickly maneuver through the public and private world to conquer the challenges that lie ahead and to encourage others to do the same.

Rising Stars Recent Grads on the Move



Joyce Grover '94

Joyce Grover never imagined where her life would take her after receiving her undergraduate degree in 1976. She joined the Peace Corps, waited tables, worked in a fish factory in Iceland and assisted refugees arriving in Los Angeles. She worked for a domestic violence program for eight years and found there were few attorneys available for victims of domestic violence. Even fewer were educated about the dynamics of domestic violence, which proved to be very frustrating. That is what drove Grover back to school to get a law degree after having been out of school for nearly twenty years.

After graduation from Washburn Law, Grover worked for the Kansas Court of Appeals and later as research attorney for Chief Justice McFarland '64 on the Kansas Supreme Court. In 2001, she accepted her current position as Legal Advocacy Coordinator at the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence. She felt like she had finally come full circle. Grover now uses her legal knowledge and experience to help victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. "My law degree has broadened my advocacy work with women and kids and has added a new dimension to my commitment. If I could have designed a job for myself right out of law school this would have been it, though my experience with the appellate courts was invaluable" said Grover.

As part of a national network of attorneys who work with Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions, she could see the impact of training attorneys on the issue of domestic violence. Grover was thrilled to be asked to teach Domestic Violence at Washburn Law and accepted the opportunity. "Having a good, compassionate, competent attorney is so very critical for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. Systems and professionals often re-victimize the people

who survive these crimes and it is my hope we can reduce the numbers of times that happens," said Grover.

"Because domestic violence and sexual assault permeates so many areas of the law, it is critical that lawyers understand it and think about it, whether they are practicing tort law, family law, or bankruptcy. I will always give my time to helping attorneys and students better understand these issues. Attorneys play such a critical role," emphasizes Grover.

"I have been working with and for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault for nearly twenty years. I am passionate about ending violence against women. The stories I heard twenty years ago still echo in my mind. The courage and strength of battered women and their children is amazing. I still carry the faces and stories of all of these women and children with me in my work today. When a rape victim is harassed and intimidated in a courtroom, it reminds me again of how critical this work is and why I must continue it. As Barbara Hart has said, 'I can't NOT do this work,' states Grover. ■



Tad C. Layton '03

Tad Layton's participation on the Trial Advocacy Competition Team when he was a law student directly influenced his decision to become an adjunct professor at the law

school. Layton teaches Trial Advocacy Competition Teams and in the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program. He enjoys developing genuine relationships with students who will someday become his colleagues. Layton hopes he is setting a professional example for students and brings practical expertise to the classroom. Apparently,



he has succeeded. Layton took the law school Trial Advocacy Competition Team not only to regionals but to nationals where they lost in the semi-final round. This was the only loss for the Washburn Law team during the entire year and the first time that a Kansas law school qualified for the national round of competition. The Washburn team ultimately took third out of 223 teams nationally.

Layton said Professors John Francis and Michael Kaye are responsible for him becoming an adjunct. "Professor Francis selected me for the Trial Advocacy Competition Team in my second year of law school. His training gave me the confidence to accept a position teaching mock trial at the undergraduate level. Professor Kaye approached me to consider teaching the law school trial teams," said Layton. Encouragement from both made Layton's decision to become an adjunct easy.

Layton has a few beliefs in his early career, "The most important thing for a lawyer is to have intellectual curiosity and sound technical and persuasive writing skills; legal pedigree is far less important than hard work and perseverance; anyone can succeed through hard work; don't be shy, ask the hard question; and honesty is the best policy." These are all things he tries to pass on to his students. Layton feels everyone has an obligation to teach and mentor those who are entering the legal profession. "There is something very special about working with a student and seeing that light bulb go on," said Layton.

Layton recently moved from the Topeka law firm of Coffman, DeFries & Nothorn to the offices of Lathrop & Gage, in Overland Park, KS, where he practices in the areas of estate, business, and tax planning as well as trust and estate litigation. He wants to continue to learn and develop in the practice of law with his sights on someday looking toward a career on the bench. ■



Terence O'Malley '95

In Terence O'Malley's earlier career, he served as press secretary to the Governor of Alaska and the House of Representatives in Alaska. He went

through the Exxon Valdez oil spill, an exercise in crisis management, which dominated his life for three years. Then with two year-old twins he decided to move to Topeka and attend Washburn Law. During law school he put to use his background and B.A. in English and his Masters in Radio-TV-Film and helped to produce several videos for the law school; two recruitment videos and the thirty-year anniversary of the tornado which destroyed the law school in 1966. He worked with Bill Kurtis '66 on that production. Incidentally, O'Malley also was awarded the Bill Kurtis Media Law Scholarship while in law school.

Having an extensive interest in media law, O'Malley approached the law school administration about teaching a course. They gave him the opportunity and he taught Media Law for five years. O'Malley believes, "Washburn Law, without great fanfare, humbly educated thousands of people... giving them a solid education at a reasonable price. It needs everyone's help to continue to do so." He also believes contributing to the education of young people makes this a better world.

O'Malley clerked for the Honorable Dale E. Saffels '49, who was a true mentor and "simply a great man." He worked for several law firms in Kansas City for four years as a litigation associate, then worked for Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, who employs over 750 lawyers nationwide. O'Malley currently is Assistant Legal Counsel for Fidelity Security Life Insurance Company. "I wanted the experience of working within a smaller context," said O'Malley.

In his spare time, O'Malley is a piano player and has produced several music CDs. He plays blues, boogie-woogie and swing. He is also producing a documentary entitled *Nelly Don*, about a woman who had the largest dress manufacturing company in the country for fifty years. It includes fashion, glamour, politics, crime and the American success story. ■



Keenan Post '94

After graduating from Washburn Law and finishing an LLM in tax from Florida, Keenan Post took a position with the Newbery and Ungerer law firm in Topeka. Post comments both Dave Newbery and Jeff Ungerer '82 had a huge impact on his professional career, teaching

him how to apply in the real world the knowledge gained in law school. While working at the firm, Dave Newbery stopped teaching as a Washburn Law adjunct and Post expressed his interest in taking over the course. It went from a passing thought to a reality when then Associate Dean Easley agreed. "I love Washburn and it is an honor to teach the up and coming attorneys of our state and country. It provides a good break from the normal stresses of an active legal practice," said Post.

Post teaches Taxation of Estates and Gifts and Trusts, and has been teaching since the fall of 1998. His class has grown each year. "I believe it is important to teach students not only the textbook law and statutes, but the practical, real life application of the law to real clients I have dealt with," said Post. He believes the full time professors at Washburn are great, but adding real life problems and cases makes the learning process that much better.

Post is currently a solo practitioner in Overland Park, KS, in the areas of estate planning, probate and trust administration, probate and trust litigation, business formation and transactions and real estate. In addition he owns a small real estate title company. He hopes to continue to build the title business and eventually retire from the active practice of law so he can continue teaching and focus on taking a more active role as an adjunct professor at the law school.

"Working hard, being honest and never looking at a client as a paycheck is important; offer your client solutions you would offer a family member," says Post. "I have learned that what we do for our clients can make a difference in their lives. Too many lawyers don't take the time to get to know their clients in order to really be able to meet their needs and gain their trust. I try my best to focus on building good, caring relationships with clients to build good professional and trusting relationships with them. A client who truly trusts his/her lawyer is always a better client than one who is not sure," claims Post. ■



Duston Slinkard '03

Duston Slinkard was impressed with the commitment of the adjunct faculty at Washburn Law while a student. When the opportunity presented itself for him to teach, he wanted to try and repay the commitment, assistance and attention he received as a student. Slinkard has been teaching in the Intensive Trial Advocacy Program (ITAP) and Trial Advocacy course since May 2004. "I enjoy the ITAP programs because they are so focused and time-compressed that you can see the students advancing so far so quickly over the course of a single week," said Slinkard. As an adjunct, Slinkard said it is important for him to remember that students learn things at their own pace and in their own way. "I think it is critical to remember my role is not to make them do things the way that worked for me, but to try and help them figure out what will work for them," said Slinkard.

Slinkard currently serves as a judicial law clerk to U.S. Magistrate Judge K. Gary Sebelius. During law school he participated in *Washburn Law Journal* and the Washburn Law Clinic. The law journal proved helpful in his writing skills and provided him with exposure to accomplished outside authors. "The law clinic provided a great opportunity for introductory exposure to the real world, and much of the knowledge I find useful in my present position came from my experiences working in the clinic," said Slinkard.

There are several words of encouragement Slinkard gives to current students, "Have confidence in your ability to handle anything as long as you stick to the basics. Often a challenge arises that seems insurmountable, but anything can be reduced to manageable, understandable pieces."

"I greatly enjoyed my law school experience and wanted to try and help others to have a similarly enjoyable and productive learning experience. I derive a great deal of satisfaction from seeing the 'light go on' in students' eyes when I have helped them to understand a new concept," said Slinkard. ■