

WASHBURN LAWYER

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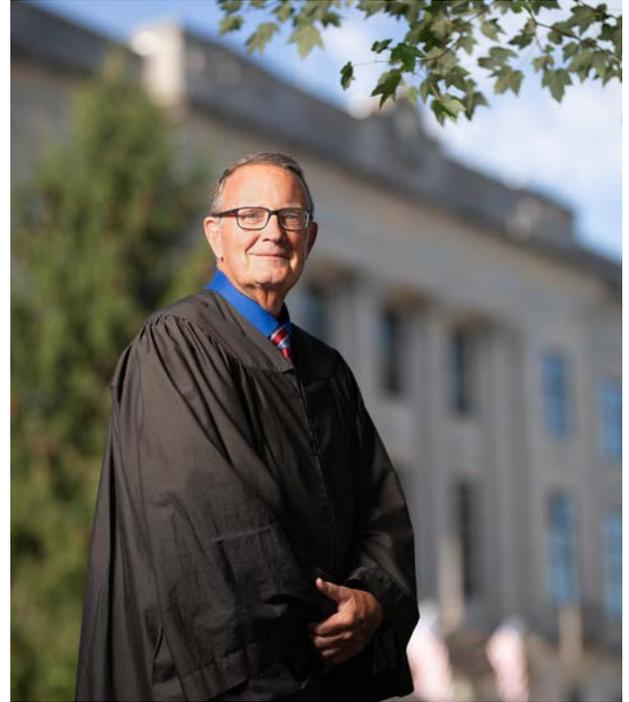


IMPACT ON THE JUDICIARY

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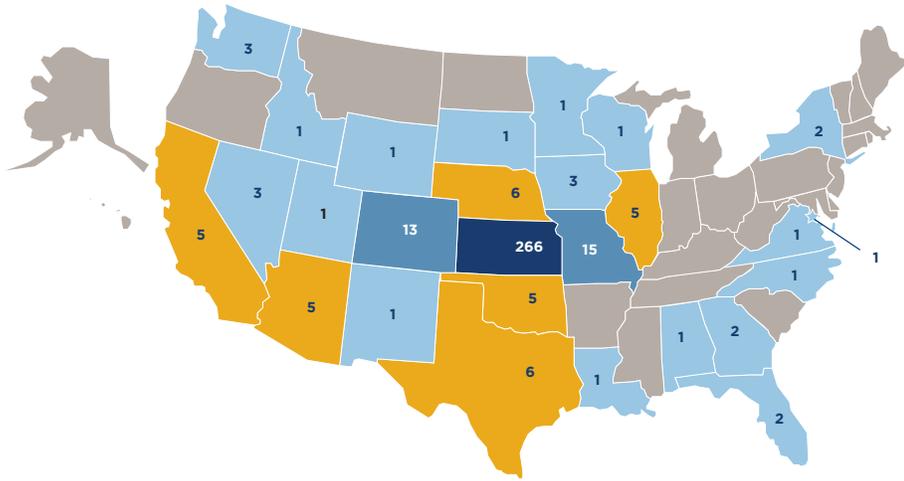


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Importance of Judges



WASHBURN LAWYER

We welcome your suggestions about this publication. Please write, phone, email, or visit our website. Letters to the editor and news of jobs and honors are always welcome. Please include your name, class year, address, and daytime phone number. Letters to the editor may be edited for length and clarity.

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The Rule of Law is central to our democratic system of government, and judges are salient to maintaining the Rule of Law. Judges across our nation strive to ensure the fair, impartial, and independent administration of justice. Judges work to ensure that each person who interacts with our judicial system is treated with the dignity and respect they deserve and experience equal protection of the law.

Judges have immense power in our system of justice not only at a structural level, but on an individual level as well. Judges not only shape the development of the common law, they also can have a significant impact on our daily lives. We entrust them to make some of the most important decisions that affect us. From the power to decide whether to create a family through adoption to the power to impose punishment for violation of the criminal law, judges impact the lived experience of millions of people every day. In doing so, judges protect our liberties and our fundamental rights. Without them, there is no rule of law, no justice, and no freedom.

In recognition of the importance of judges to our system of justice, this issue of the Washburn Lawyer celebrates the Washburn University School of Law alumni who serve our democracy as judges. The impact Washburn has had on the Kansas judiciary has been remarkable. Washburn alumni serve at every level of the court system in Kansas, including the highest court in the state – the Kansas Supreme Court. On the cover of this issue of the magazine we highlight Washburn Law alumna and Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court, Justice Marla Luckert. I hope you enjoy reading about this amazing lawyer and judge and her path to the highest position in the Kansas judiciary. We are so very proud to call her a Washburn Law alumna.

Indeed we are very proud of each and every one of our alumni who serve our nation as a judge. In this issue, we honor them for this service that makes them the living embodiment of Washburn's motto – *Non Nobis Solum* (Not for ourselves alone).

Sincerely,

Carla Pratt
Dean, Washburn University School of Law

Overcoming Challenges

The entire country has been impacted in a dramatic way by the onslaught of COVID-19. The nation's economy has been tested, our health care system has been under assault by this new and unpredictable virus, and the entire educational community has had to re-imagine how classes had to be taught. Students had to return home and connect via Zoom while professors adapted their curriculum to this distance learning environment virtually overnight. While we all hope and pray that this fall will mark the beginning of a return to some normalcy, we should be thankful that we had access to technology that allowed us to finish the semester in an orderly fashion.

We all should be grateful for the extraordinary efforts of the staff and faculty who were daily being called upon to make decisions and consider various scenarios dependent upon ever-changing information and a virus that has created challenges that even our experts could not fully anticipate.

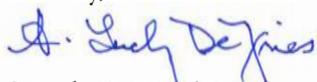
And while we must always confront whatever challenges are placed before us, we must never lose sight of the many things for which we should be thankful. Let me mention just a few. Of all the law schools in the country, Washburn University School of Law experienced the most dramatic improvement in the U.S. News and World Report rankings. And we are rapidly approaching the finish line with respect to the fundraising efforts for the new law school building. The initial renderings of the new building are creative, beautiful, and will afford us the opportunity to expand in the future. Also, we recently celebrated via Zoom the over 100 years of combined service provided by three of our distinguished professors. Professors James Concannon (and former long term Dean), David Pierce and Bill Rich leave behind a remarkable legacy that will not soon be forgotten. And while we are sad to see them retire, I would suggest that what drew them to Washburn Law, and what kept them here for well over 100 years, is what will sustain the Law School in the future.

In this issue of the Washburn Lawyer, we are recognizing the contributions that Washburn Law graduates have made within the judicial arena. And while I mentioned the challenges faced by our economy and our schools, the judiciary was impacted as well. Who could have imagined that we would experience the need to cancel trials for several months, suspend judicial deadlines and statutes of limitations. We should be thankful that the judicial branch was being guided by the steady hand of Chief Justice Marla Luckert, one of those we recognize in this issue.

Recently, Dean Pratt authored a thought-provoking and deeply personal letter about the state of race relations in our country. Topeka and graduates of Washburn Law School have been at the forefront of the efforts to achieve racial equality, and I hope we can continue to provide a platform, support, and leadership for the kind of thoughtful discussion that is so desperately needed.

Finally, it has been my privilege to serve as Board Chair the past two years, and I am pleased to be able to pass the torch to **Lynn McCreary, '94**, who I know will serve the Alumni Association exceedingly well. Please continue to stay connected to Washburn Law through your membership and generous support for our programs and events.

Sincerely,



S. Lucky DeFries, '78

Past Chair, Washburn University School of Law
Alumni Association Board of Governors



The Washburn University School of Law Alumni Association Board of Governors was first created in 1952. Our mission is to promote the interests of the Law School by engaging our alumni through service to the Law School and the Association, participating in alumni events and programs, remaining connected, and assisting to further scholarship funding. Appointments run July through June.

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Chief Justice

Uniquely suited for current role, Luckert seizes historic opportunities.

By Angela Lutz

From her third-story office in the Kansas Judicial Center, Supreme Court Chief Justice **Marla Luckert, BA '71, JD '80**, might just have the best view in Topeka. Outside the large plate-glass window behind her desk, the Kansas State Capitol sits proudly, its pointed, copper dome seeming to scrape the cloudless Midwestern sky.

“It’s a good reminder,” Luckert said, gazing at the iconic building. “I want to do everything I can for citizens of Kansas to make access to justice more than just a statement that we throw out. It’s something that’s real and meaningful.”

Initially appointed to the Kansas Supreme Court by Gov. Bill Graves in 2002, Luckert was sworn in as chief justice last December. She looks forward to hearing important cases that will have statewide impact and taking advantage of opportunities to address persistent shortages of funding and resources within the court system. Also on her list: taking another look at criminal justice reform, making the courts more efficient through digital case management, and addressing the root causes of criminal behavior to help break the cycle of recidivism.

“I think coming in new gives me the opportunity to re-examine things,” Luckert said. “Are there better solutions? I’m hoping

to challenge people to do that investigation in all of their jobs in all aspects of the court system, and I hope we are all open to seeing where that leads us.”

With a successful and varied legal career, Luckert is uniquely suited for her current role. Growing up in rural Kansas during the civil rights era, she knew she wanted to be a lawyer after reading “To Kill a Mockingbird” in grade school. As soon as she could, she joined the debate team and began honing her research and analysis skills. After graduating from Washburn University School of Law, she joined a Topeka firm where she specialized in health care law before being appointed to the Shawnee County District Court in 1992. She served on the district court bench for 10 years and became chief judge in 2000. Many of the cases she heard involved statewide concerns.

“When I first started, my firm had a philosophy of wanting their associates to have a diverse practice, which has proven to be a wonderful situation for me as a judge, where you do hear everything,” Luckert said. “My practice – because we did represent doctors and health care professionals across the state – led me to many courtrooms around Kansas. I feel like I know how their courts operate. I was in the courtroom frequently, which is also a good experience for a judge.”

As only the second woman to serve as chief justice of the Kansas Supreme Court, Luckert has arrived at an historic time: For the first time, Kansas has a female governor, chief justice, chief judge in the court of appeals, and Senate president. Throughout her career, Luckert said her gender has presented both challenges and opportunities in a traditionally male-dominated profession.

“I have faced many situations where I was the only woman in the room, but that often gave me a starting point where I was standing out,” she explained. “There were many people who took an interest in mentoring me, and they wanted to make sure I succeeded. At the same time, there were others who didn’t accept me. I was fortunate that none of those were total roadblocks or barriers to me and I was able to continue.”

Luckert also feels she’s been fortunate that her professional career has occurred in Topeka due largely to her connection with Washburn. Even 40 years later, she continues to cross



Photo submitted



The Hon. Marla Luckert sits in front of her view of the Kansas Capitol building which is a daily reminder to her to serve Kansans. Photo by Earl Richardson

paths with her former law school professors, who offer support and mentoring even today.

“Marla has always had a particularly positive attitude toward the school and toward the people she worked with at Washburn,” said Washburn University School of Law Professor Bill Rich, who taught Luckert’s research and writing class. “It’s similar to how she is in many other aspects of her life. She doesn’t take anything for granted. She’s always appreciative of others. She’s always respectful of others, and that makes us very lucky to have her as one of our graduates.”

In her professional life, Luckert has channeled her appreciation of others – particularly up-and-coming attorneys – into networks of support. She still keeps in touch with former students from her time as a Washburn law school professor, and she has worked in many organizations to start mentoring programs, which she said not only reignites her love of the law but strengthens the profession as a whole.

“I think coming in new gives me the opportunity to re-examine things. Are there better solutions? I’m hoping to challenge people to do that investigation in all of their jobs in all aspects of the court system, and I hope we are all open to seeing where that leads us.”
- Marla Luckert

“It’s fun to see people who are learning how to explore the law and finding their love for the law,” she said. “It inspires you and helps reinvigorate you. It has certainly helped me to have a network of support, and I hope we can have that for all attorneys. I believe we become stronger when we work together.”

Goal Setter

Plans shape next career decisions for Justice.

By Anglea Lutz

When it comes to setting goals, **Evelyn Wilson, '85**, is something of an expert. She became the newest Kansas Supreme Court justice in January, the pinnacle of a successful legal career that started with a lot of uncertainty about whether she would attend law school at all.

“After I went to college I wanted to go to law school, but I wasn’t sure I would be admitted because it’s competitive,” Wilson said. “My plan was to go into business if I couldn’t get into law school – but I did get in. My first goal was to get out of law school with passing – hopefully good – grades.”

Wilson not only met but exceeded expectations of this challenge, working on the Washburn Law Journal and graduating with honors. During her time at Washburn University School of Law, Wilson studied with professors who she described as available, supportive, and willing to help their students.

“I feel extremely fortunate to have gotten my law school education from Washburn,” she said. “They were so approachable. I think that really shows how personally brave they were. In order to be so approachable, you must have the courage to be seen as a person and not just a professor. Because they were not just willing to share their brilliance but also their humanity, that is what makes Washburn extra special.”

After earning her law degree, Wilson took a job in Oberlin, Kansas, where her next goal was to be a good country lawyer – and later, when her husband’s job moved their family to Topeka, she worked her way up to managing partner at a prestigious law firm. When she saw an opening for Shawnee County district judge, she went for it – and then she set her sights on becoming chief judge. When **Justice Lee Johnson, '80**, retired from the Kansas Supreme Court last fall, Wilson started thinking about the qualities she’d like to see in the person who succeeded him.

“I thought I’d really like for that person to have a good idea of what it’s like to be a lawyer in the trenches,” she said. “I’d really like to see someone who has been a district judge and



Evelyn Wilson, '85. Photo submitted

been able to see all different kinds of law. I started thinking – I have some of those experiences that I’d like to see in the next justice.”

After running it by some trusted friends, Wilson decided to apply – a good decision, to be sure. Having achieved her highest ambition, she now regularly speaks to students about how to set and accomplish goals. She urges young people to keep an open mind and do the things that interest them. Above all, she hopes to encourage them the way others supported her along her journey.

“Being appointed to the Supreme Court is a very humbling experience for me personally,” Wilson said. “It’s a great honor. I want to do everything I can to make all of those people who helped me proud.”



Dean Jackson is sworn in as justice of the Kansas Supreme Court with Professors Ahrens and Bartlett in attendance. Photo from “The Ideal Place... for the Establishment of a Great Law School” History of Washburn Law School, 1903-2003 by James M. Concannon

Washburn Law and the Judiciary

Students are prepared as leaders in the judiciary.

Information compiled from “The Ideal Place... for the Establishment of a Great Law School”

History of Washburn Law School, 1903-2003 by James M. Concannon

It would be impossible to discuss the history of the Washburn University School of Law without also discussing the judges and justices who have shaped jurisprudence after graduating from the institution.

Throughout the 20th century and into the 21st, alumni have earned seats on the bench—in trial courts and appellate courts, state and federal, throughout Kansas and outside the state—where they have demonstrated that a Washburn Law education is a great preparation for leadership in the judiciary.

Since its earliest days, Washburn Law alumni have served as judges throughout Kansas trial courts, in other states, and abroad. Currently, just over 350 Washburn Law graduates are on the bench, or are retired from the bench, including in every one of Kansas 31 judicial districts and in trial courts in 17 other states. They oversee courtrooms in numerous practice

areas, including tribal, family, bankruptcy, probate, municipal, administrative, criminal, and civil courts. These judges rule on cases every day that impact the lives of people in communities around the state and across the nation, and that impact jurisprudence on the practical level, shaped by the foundations they received at Washburn Law.

The Kansas Supreme Court has boasted a significant number of Washburn Law alumni on its bench. Despite opening 25 years after the University of Kansas Law School, Washburn Law boasts the first three graduates of a Kansas law school to serve on the Kansas Supreme Court – **John Dawson, 1906**, **William A. Smith, 1914**, and **Edward Sloan, 1906** – two of whom, Dawson and Smith, would go on to become Chief Justice. In 1977, **Kay McFarland ’64** was appointed to the Court by Gov. Robert F. Bennett, the first woman to be named to the Court. In 1995, she became the first woman to serve as Chief Justice until her retirement in 2009.

In all, 21 graduates of Washburn Law School have served as a Kansas Supreme Court justice, more than any other law school. Currently, four of the seven seated justices are Washburn Law alumni – **Chief Justice Marla J. Luckert, '80, Eric Rosen, '84, W. Daniel Biles, '78, and Evelyn Wilson, '85.** In recent years, the justices have decided cases regarding school funding, caps on civil damages, voting rights, and most recently, the governor's authority during a pandemic. Through their actions, they continue to affect the Kansas judicial landscape, using their Washburn Law educations to shape jurisprudence in Kansas and the experience of future attorneys coming after them.

Washburn Law has also had a presence on the Kansas Court of Appeals since its founding in 1977. Out of the initial seven judges on the Court of Appeals, four of them – **D. Jerome**

Harmon, '35, Bob L. Abbott, '60, Sherman A. Parks, '55, and Corwin A. Spencer, '39 – graduated from Washburn Law, with Harmon serving as Chief Judge. Since then, many of the judges on the Court of Appeals have been Washburn Law alumni, including five of 12 sitting judges – former **Chief Judge Thomas E. Malone '79, Stephen D. Hill '75, David E. Bruns '84, Anthony J. Powell '91, and Kim R. Schroeder '82.** Two of the 14 seats awaited appointment and senate confirmation as of this article's writing. The numerous judges who have filled Court of Appeals seats over the years have helped set a body of case law within Kansas that has informed how Washburn Law students approach the law during their studies and once they enter their own practice.

On the federal level, Washburn Law alumni have served on U.S. District Court benches in Kansas and elsewhere. Currently,

WASHBURN LAW JUDGES HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Washburn Law boasts the first three graduates of a Kansas law school to serve on the Kansas Supreme Court – John Dawson, 1906, William A. Smith, 1914, and Edward Sloan, 1906

1931

1977

Kay McFarland, '64 was appointed to the Court by Gov. Robert F. Bennett, the first woman to be named to the Court.

nine Washburn Law alumni are judges in federal trial courts. Four alumni – **Sam Crow, '52, John Broomes, '03, Tom Marten, '76, and Eric Melgren, '85** – serve as district judges for the District of Kansas. Another three – **Kenneth Gale, '80, Gwynne Harris Birzer, '92, and Kelly Mahoney, '02** – also serve in the District of Kansas as magistrate judges. **Robert Berger, '86**, serves as a bankruptcy judge for the District of Kansas, while **Dennis Dow, '78**, is a bankruptcy judge for the Western District of Missouri. These judges represent Washburn Law on a national level in a way that shows the best of what the school has to offer.

In 2014, **Nancy Moritz, '85** was appointed by President Barack Obama to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals. Prior to her appointment, Judge Moritz served on the Kansas Supreme

Court from 2011-14 and the Kansas Court of Appeals from 2004-11. With this history of experiences, Judge Moritz has been a great example for the last 16 years of how Washburn Law impacts the judiciary.

At every level, Washburn Law has had the chance over the last century to create a lasting impression on how the law is interpreted, and applied. Beyond that, these judges provide another great benefit, providing Washburn Law students and recent graduates with opportunities to learn from them through internships and clerkships that impart invaluable experience while helping ensure that Washburn Law will continue to impact the courts across Kansas and around the nation.

Kay McFarland would subsequently become the first woman to serve as Chief Justice until her retirement in 2009.

1995

2014

Nancy Moritz, '85, was appointed by President Obama to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals.

Bringing Experience to the Court

From the debate team to the 10th Circuit, Moritz finds earliest lessons valuable.

By Angela Lutz

For Nancy Moritz, BBA '82, JD '85, pursuing a legal career might not have seemed like an obvious choice. Growing up in a small town of 350 people, she did not know any attorneys as a child, and she didn't meet a lawyer until many years later. But Moritz discovered she had a natural affinity for arguing a case when she joined the debate team at Sacred Heart High School after her family moved to Salina, Kansas.

"I absolutely loved everything about debate – the research and development of a written plan, the oral presentation of written materials, and the cross-examination of and by the opposing team," Moritz said. "I discovered that I loved being an adversary, and I thrived on the intellectual challenge and competition. That led me to believe that I would like to be a

lawyer, so I set about achieving that goal. I never looked back and I never regretted that decision."

In 2014, Moritz received a lifetime appointment as a federal judge for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit after being nominated by President Barack Obama. Located in Denver, the 10th Circuit hears appeals from Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wyoming. Appeals courts consist of three judges hearing challenges to district court decisions as well as appeals from decisions of federal administrative agencies. For Moritz, becoming a federal judge has been the highlight of her career.

"In my six years as a circuit judge, I have found the work to be consistently challenging and rewarding," Moritz said. "I have come to know and appreciate all of my colleagues, and I cherish the friendships I've made on the court. For me, the most important aspect of my role on the court is to give every single case the attention and effort it deserves and to constantly strive to 'get it right.'"

Before her appointment to the 10th Circuit, Moritz was appointed to the Kansas Court of Appeals in 2004 and the Supreme Court of Kansas in 2010. She also previously served as appellate coordinator for the U.S. Attorney's office and spent six years as a litigation associate at Kansas City-based firm Spencer Fane Britt and Browne. During her private practice years in the early 1990s, she also became a mother to two daughters. Juggling the demands of work and family, she found it challenging to continue the extra activities she found meaningful, such as teaching at seminars, writing for legal publications, and serving on bar committees.

"I loved my job and I loved being a mom, but I found it difficult to find the time to remain involved in the profession in a meaningful way," Moritz said. "I eventually found a balance that I could live with, although that balance often involved burning the candle at both ends."

Even with her impressive resumé, Moritz counts her early professional experiences among her most meaningful, including



Nancy Moritz was recognized as a Washburn University School of Law Alumni Fellow in 2019. She is pictured with President Jerry Farley at the awards luncheon. Photo by Peggy Clark



Nancy Moritz, BBA '82, JD '85. Photo by Earl Richardson

her time working for two Washburn University School of Law graduates: She served as a research attorney to Judge Harold Herd of the Kansas Supreme Court and as a law clerk to Judge Patrick F. Kelly of the U.S. District Court in Wichita. When Moritz applied to be a judge on the Kansas Court of Appeals, Judge **Kelly, '53**, and Justice **Herd, BA '41, JD '42**, supported her application – and they both sat proudly in the front row at her swearing-in.

“Both men had very different demeanors and styles, but I thoroughly enjoyed working for each of them,” Moritz said. “I honestly can’t imagine a better professional experience than clerking. It provided me with insight into the inner workings of the court and gave me much-needed confidence in my research and writing skills. On a more personal side, both judges treated their clerks like family, and I remained in contact with Judge Kelly and Justice Herd throughout their lives.”

Moritz also cites Washburn University School of Law Professors **Linda Elrod, BA '69, JD '72**, and James Concannon as instrumental to her success, as well as her experiences working on the Washburn Law Journal. In addition to solidifying her love of legal writing and boosting her confidence, Moritz said her professors at Washburn demanded attention to detail and encouraged her to seek new challenges throughout her career – and the University even convened a special ceremony at White Concert Hall to highlight her official investiture as a federal judge.

“I not only had many family and friends in the audience, but I was privileged to share the day with many former classmates, professors, and staff – both from my undergraduate and law school days,” Moritz said. “I have never been more proud to be a Washburn alum. When I look back over my 35-year legal career, it is evident to me that the best choice I made was my first choice – to attend Washburn Law School.”

Serving Northeast Kansas

Weingart regularly sought after to mentor others.

By Angela Lutz

As a district judge in rural northeastern Kansas, **John Weingart**, '77, logs a lot of travel time. The 22nd Judicial District comprises four largely rural counties: Brown, Doniphan, Marshall, and Nemaha. Weingart estimates he spends 200 hours per year on the road traveling to hear cases.

“One of the biggest challenges is getting to all of the various courts and getting the cases heard,” Weingart said. “Weather often presents a challenge. But it’s satisfying because we work with many different court professionals on a daily basis. I quite honestly feel I’m blessed to be in this judicial district. My 20 years have just flown by.”

“Washburn is totally responsible for my career preparation. I was fortunate that I went to a good office and had good mentors, but I was prepared in terms of theory and knowledge from Washburn. I’m very grateful to the law school, and I’ve been blessed in my career. The only thing I’m upset about is that it went too fast.” - John Weingart

In his role as a district judge, Weingart hears a wide variety of cases, including felonies, civil suits, medical malpractice, and domestic issues such as divorce and child custody. At its core, Weingart said the role of a trial judge is not complicated: “You follow the law as best you can and take care of your cases,” he explained.

“I think my most important role when I go into court is to treat all people well and make sure all of the litigants feel like they’re being heard,” Weingart added. “Then of course an important part of our relationship with the bar is that

we’re consistent. If we’re consistent, the experienced attorneys understand that. They’re able to take that consistency and talk to their clients and let them know what to expect.”

Another challenge Weingart faces as a district judge is the sheer volume of cases he hears. In Weingart’s district, child support enforcement alone has approximately 1,600 open cases – and when Weingart started 20 years ago, there used to be a paper file for each one. Paperless electronic files have made managing a dense caseload easier and allowed Weingart remote access to cases in all four counties, though he said learning how to use the technology was a bit of a transition for him and some other longtime judges.

“I get probably 200 notices of electronic filings on a daily basis,” Weingart said. “I don’t see how we could do the number of cases we do as efficiently as I think we do them without electronic filing and improvements in technology.”

Having worked at a private practice in Hiawatha, Kansas, for 24 years before being elected judge, Weingart is well known and respected in the community. “My general practice was pretty much a county seat general practice,” he said. “We did a substantial amount of real estate work, some family law, some criminal law. As small town lawyers do, we did a little bit of everything.”

His expertise is sought after in the legal realm as well. In 2018, the Kansas Supreme Court appointed him to the Judicial Education Advisory Committee, which recommends and organizes education and training for appellate judges, district judges, and district magistrate judges in the state. The Kansas Supreme Court has also called on Weingart to assist with deliberations and decision drafting on more than one occasion.



John Weingart, '77, in Hiawatha, Kansas. Photo by Nick Krug

Weingart credits his time at the Washburn University School of Law with setting him up for career success, especially since he attended the school at what he calls an exciting time. During the 1970s, Washburn saw an influx of veterans coming out of the Vietnam War, as well as the emergence of gender equality and more women enrolling at the law school. Several long-term Washburn professors were also getting started at that time, including Carl Monk, **Linda Elrod, BA '69, JD '72, David Pierce, '77** (as Weingart's classmate), and James Concannon. Weingart and his classmates worked hard, of course – but they had a lot of fun, too.

“I was in a pretty ornery class,” Weingart recalled. “One of our classmates took his final exam for himself and submitted another final answer booklet on behalf of a fictitious student. It

drove Professor Concannon nuts. He even wrote it left-handed so it couldn't be traced back to him. That was our class. But the professors were very approachable and concerned about us learning – and some of them are still there.”

Weingart has also stayed connected to Washburn over the years, especially in one very important way: His daughter is also a Washburn University School of Law graduate.

“Washburn is totally responsible for my career preparation,” Weingart said. “I was fortunate that I went to a good office and had good mentors, but I was prepared in terms of theory and knowledge from Washburn. I'm very grateful to the law school, and I've been blessed in my career. The only thing I'm upset about is that it went too fast.”

Changing Children's Lives

Gilbert hopes to protect the most vulnerable, impact lives for the better.

By Angela Lutz

Growing up in Macon, Georgia, **Quintress Gilbert, '88**, wanted to be a doctor – but as an African American female living in the Deep South during the civil rights era, she wasn't encouraged to follow her passion. As a teenager, she was one of only a handful of Black students attending a formerly all-white high school, and she was told chemistry was for boys. This setback ended up changing her whole life's trajectory – and today, as a judge at the Juvenile Court of the Macon Judicial Circuit in Georgia, she calls it a blessing in disguise.

"I started thinking about how unequal everything was at the time, and I would walk down Mulberry Street where both the federal and county courthouses sit and wonder, 'What do they do in those buildings?'" Gilbert said of her formative years. "Later on I found out that's where they hold court, and I started to get the notion that maybe I should go into law."

"If I can help one child then I would have succeeded. I would have changed a life, which would have in turn changed another life. If you put a child on the right road and show them they can make something of themselves, they are more apt to follow that lead. I've had several come back and say, 'Thank you for putting me on the right path.'" - Quintress Gilbert

She went on to become the first Black female federal prosecutor in the Middle District of Georgia and later the first Black female juvenile court judge in the Macon Judicial Circuit.

"That idea of going into medicine would not have served me well anyway because I don't like the sight of blood," she laughed. "It was sort of fortuitous in a sense because of the way things turned out."

Gilbert may have found her calling in a legal career, but her journey to law school wasn't easy or straightforward. When she first applied to a school in her hometown in 1972, she received correspondence from the institution addressed to "Mr. Quintress Gilbert." When she went to tour the campus, she received even more discouraging news.

"The dean of that law school was to give me a tour of campus, and I was so excited I could hardly contain myself," she said. "I wore my Sunday best only to be told by the dean at that time that they had nothing for me there. I was devastated."

But Gilbert was determined, and she knew she had a noteworthy legacy to honor: In Savannah, Georgia, the Ralph Mark Gilbert Civil Rights Museum is named after her grandfather, who helped elevate the civil rights movement in the state. Gilbert's mother was a nurse who had always encouraged her daughters to excel in school. Fourteen years after her initial attempt, she applied to law school again – this time at the Washburn University School of Law.

"One of the reasons I chose Washburn was because *Brown v. Board of Education* came out of Topeka," Gilbert said. "Then I came to Topeka on a visit and saw how closely it resembled my hometown of Macon. A river runs through it, and Macon has a river that runs through it as well, giving a semblance of home hundreds of miles away. Washburn really cares about its students, and they gave me a scholarship. It was a perfect match. My dream was coming to fruition."

At Washburn, she found her professors and classmates to be helpful and welcoming. She also honed her critical thinking skills using the Socratic method and even worked on a juvenile case, which she found both rewarding and challenging. As an added bonus, she discovered the law in Kansas was very similar to the law in Georgia.

Gilbert ultimately chose to work in the juvenile court system because she thought she could be more impactful in the lives of children who were still impressionable. Juvenile courts do not have a jury, and the proceedings are quasi civil and criminal.



Quintress Gilbert, '88. Photo submitted

For this reason, juvenile offenders are either adjudicated or found delinquent instead of not guilty or guilty, and they receive a disposition instead of a sentence, which might include counseling, curfews, drug treatment plans, community service, house arrest, or confinement. As in traditional courts, the results of psychological, psychiatric, and medical examinations can play a role in the outcome of a case.

“Children learn their behaviors from their surroundings, particularly from their parents and guardians, and sometimes they live in poverty and have poor familial relationships and negative friend choices and haven’t internalized the concept of boundaries,” Gilbert said. “Courts are sometimes the last resort,

and that place can reach them before they turn into hardened criminals.”

In her 23 years as a judge, Gilbert said she believes she has been successful at her primary goal: protecting vulnerable children in a just, safe, and understanding environment.

“If I can help one child then I would have succeeded,” Gilbert said. “I would have changed a life, which would have in turn changed another life. If you put a child on the right road and show them they can make something of themselves, they are more apt to follow that lead. I’ve had several come back and say, ‘Thank you for putting me on the right path.’”

Giving People Their Day in Court

Kuckelman strives to be fair, enjoy everyday aspects of justice.

By Anglea Lutz

When **Jerry Kuckelman, BA '81, JD '85**, looks back on his legal career, there isn't much he would change. It all began with a childhood fascination with history and biographies of United States presidents who were also lawyers, like Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. Several years later, while attending the Washburn University School of Law, Kuckelman secured an internship at the Wabaunsee County Attorney's office, solidifying his interest in the criminal justice system.

"I was able to try two jury trials that year along with numerous bench trials," Kuckelman said. "I was in the courtroom arguing cases from day one. It was really great because you learn a lot in the classroom, but when you're actually in the courtroom doing it, that's really beneficial as a law student. I couldn't overstate how valuable that internship was to me."

Working in a small community, Kuckelman also got to witness the full scope of the legal process, including the responsibilities of police and probation officers in addition to judges and attorneys. He went to labs to see how they do their testing and visited crime scenes – "all the CSI stuff – the real deal," he said.

"Everybody wants to go to the big prestigious firms, but in a small place like Wabaunsee County, I was in the front row," Kuckelman added. "I was able to see law in action."

Upon graduation, Kuckelman worked as an assistant attorney general in the criminal division for the state of Kansas, which allowed him to travel around the state and try cases. Then he returned to his hometown of Atchison, Kansas, where he had a general law and criminal defense private practice for 13 years before becoming the Atchison County attorney, a position he held for 18 years. He was named the Kansas Prosecutor of the Year in 2011.

"I had the opportunity to see the justice system from both the prosecution side and the defense side," Kuckelman said. "I always enjoyed having real people for clients, as opposed to a big firm practice. I got the opportunity to help real people with real problems."

After 33 years practicing law, Kuckelman was appointed as a judge in the 1st Judicial District of Leavenworth and Atchison Counties by Kansas Gov. Jeff Colyer in 2018. Kuckelman



Jerry Kuckelman, BA '81, JD '85. Photo by Earl Richardson

said the most important part of his role as a judge is being fair and arriving at correct legal decisions, adding that his well-rounded legal experience has helped him greatly in his current occupation.

As Kuckelman settles into the next phase of his career, he is grateful for the many ways he has been able to serve his clients and uphold the law over the years. As a judge, he takes special care to give everyone their day in court, which he said can be challenging in busy courtrooms with crowded dockets.

"I have always enjoyed every aspect of the practice of law," he said. "I hear so many colleagues say they're burned out, and I never hit that. I've enjoyed every day of it, and I still do."

Focused on Community

Boehm serves as youngest district judge in Kansas.

By Sarah Towle, BA '07

In her relatively short tenure since graduating law school in 2012, **Courtney Boehm** has had a storied and varied career leading up to becoming the youngest district court judge in Kansas. She served as a public defender from 2012-14, worked with Brooks and Dame, and started her own practice, Cottonwood Law Group with her husband in 2016 before she was elected Marian County Attorney in 2017. In 2019, she became a district court judge, and she discussed what it is like to serve at that level. Her husband **Joshua Boehm, '12**, works as an attorney with Weary Davis in Junction City, and they have a 5-year-old son, Declan.

What led you to your current position as a district judge? I had been a public defender and prosecutor and enjoyed being in the courtroom. As a judge you get to look at everything, apply it, and reach the decision which is very different than how a lawyer assumes the role in the courtroom. It's enjoyable to not take one side or the other and give everyone a chance to argue before the court and then make my decision.

At the age of 33, you are the youngest district judge in Kansas. What advice do you have for law students who want to go in the same trajectory? Getting in the courtroom and getting the experience of thinking on my feet helped me as a judge because I know what it's like to be a lawyer. I also made community involvement a priority – whether it was the Kiwanis, starting a young professionals group, or serving as president of a local business chamber. This helped me get to know others in the community and it got my name out there.

You originally set up to practice law as part of the Cottonwood Law Group in Hillsboro. Why did you choose that location in central Kansas? As my husband and I went through law school together, we knew we could really see the use of technology in our practice in a positive way, so we started a regional practice where we could be paperless. Ultimately, my husband was able to grow the firm and do work in numerous counties. It was cost efficient for clients to do some things remotely and use technology. We also hired **Joe Aker, '18**, and he had quite a bit of the rural law education that Washburn Law now provides such as oil and gas and agriculture. When I became a judge, my husband was commuting over an

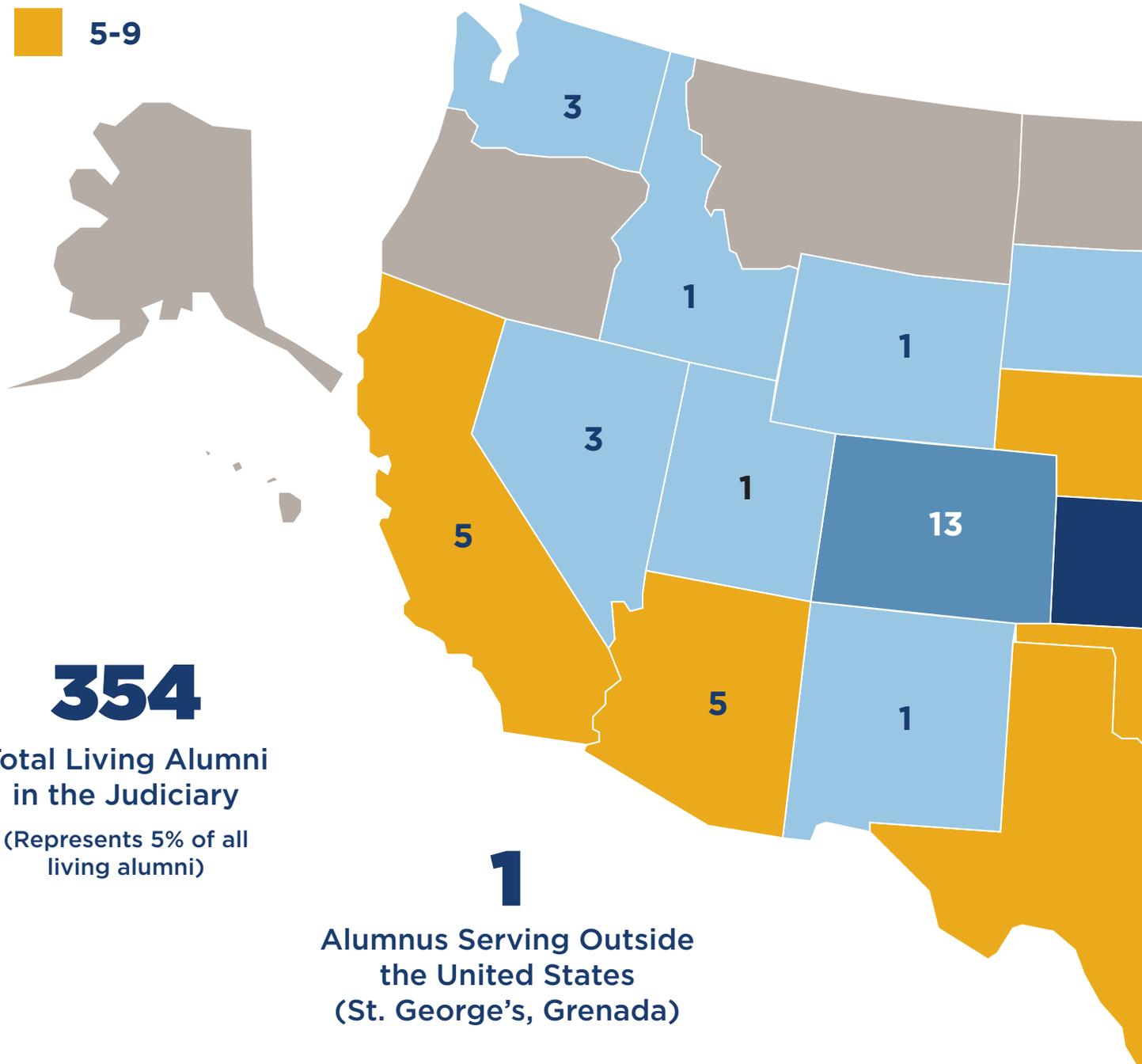
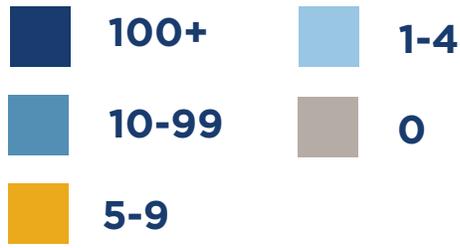
hour though to Hillsboro, so he has closed the practice.

As a district judge, you see a wide range of cases. What do you enjoy tackling the most? I hear the child in need of care case docket, which has been a challenge. There are so many cases, and so the days go long and we have a lot of people in the courtroom. There are two roads which I've enjoyed – when parents can pick themselves up, make improvements, and kids can go back home. If the kids are not able to go back home, I'm able to do adoptions. It's emotionally draining, but also emotionally rewarding. I also hear the federal criminal docket and the domestic docket as well.

What's important to you as a judge in how the community views the courts? I want to always show as a judge that I'm not playing favorites, everyone has the opportunity to say their piece and make their statements and arguments in a respectful way. Even if they don't win their case, I want them to know they were still heard. I don't want them to feel like it was rigged or that one side always wins.



Courtney Boehm, '12. Photo submitted



354

Total Living Alumni
in the Judiciary

(Represents 5% of all
living alumni)

1

Alumnus Serving Outside
the United States
(St. George's, Grenada)

100%

Percentage of Kansas District
Courts (31) Represented with
Washburn Law Judges

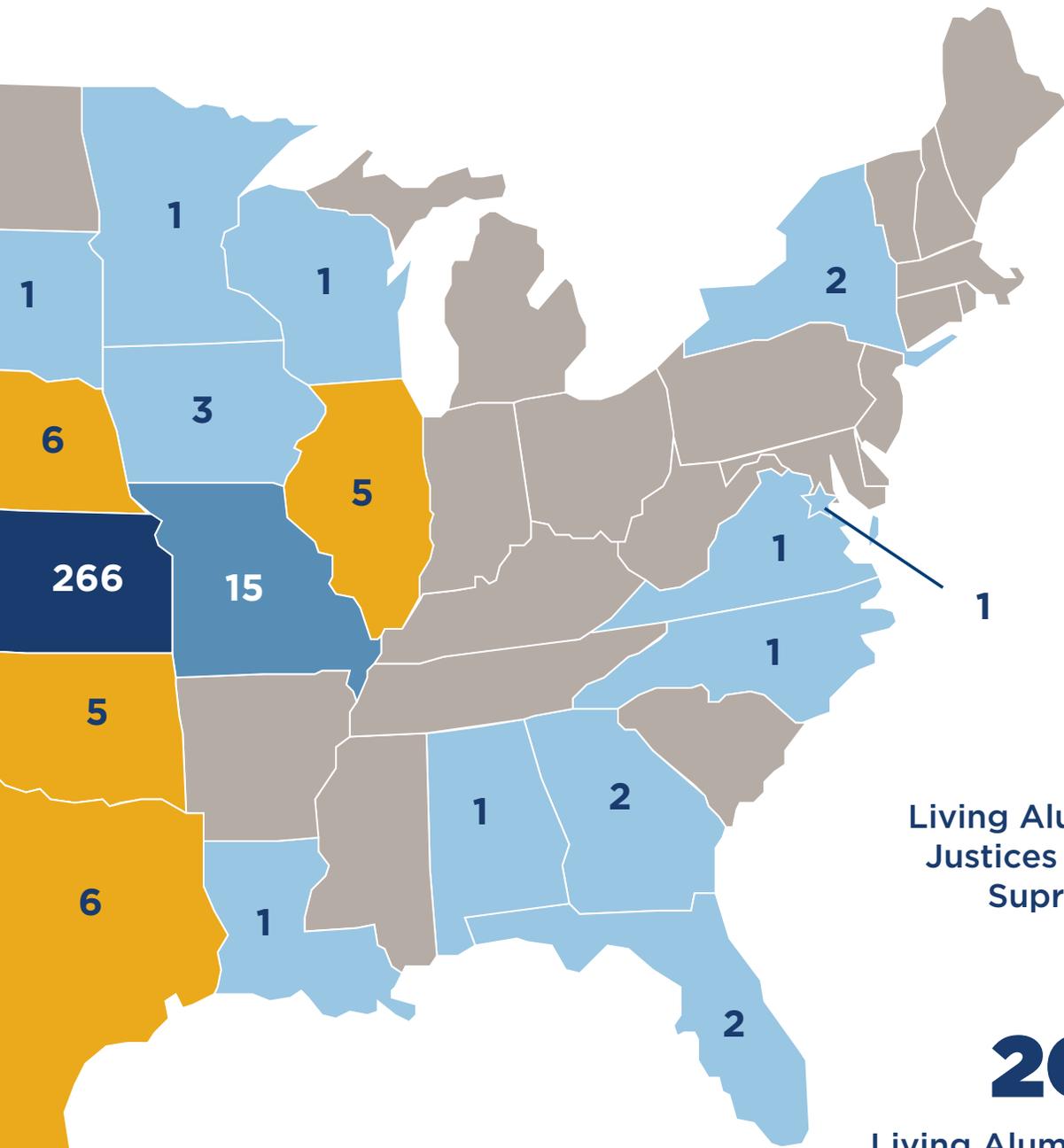
77

Number of Washburn Law
Women in the Judiciary
(Represents 22% of total living
Washburn Law judges)

WASHBURN LAW JUDGES

BY THE NUMBERS

Pulled from information provided by alumni and public records



14

Living Alumni
Appointed to a
Federal Court

7

Living Alumni Serving as
Justices on Their State
Supreme Court

203

Living Alumni Serving or
Retired From State District
Courts (or Equivalent)

Other types of service include
Administrative, Appellate, Bankruptcy
Federal, Municipal, and Tribal

CLASS OF
1978

Highest Number of Class
Members on the Bench (23)

Additionally, there is consecutive
representation of at least one class
member from the classes of 1964-2010



Les Ching, '82. Photo submitted

Tribal Jurisdiction

Tribal customs are often applied in Ching's court.

By Annie Flachsbarth

“Most young law students don’t know what they’re interested in really,” Les Ching said. “You have your goals and your ideas, but tribal law certainly wasn’t my foremost choice.”

Like it is for many students, the route to finding a niche after law school isn’t always a straight line – and tribal law usually isn’t even on the radar. But for the past 24 years, **Les Ching, '82**, has had the unique opportunity to serve as a tribal judge in Olympia, Washington, for the Squaxin Island Tribal Court.

Born in Hawaii and growing up in a military family, Ching’s father was stationed at McChord Air Force Base in Washington when he was in grade school. They moved back to Hawaii when he was in high school, and he received his undergraduate degree at the University of Hawaii. He attended his first year of law school at the University of Dayton in Ohio, before transferring to Washburn University School of Law.

“I had several choices, and I thought that Washburn would be a good choice for me being in the middle of the U.S.,” said Ching. “I chose Washburn Law, and I didn’t regret it. I was impressed

with the quality and friendliness of the professors. It is a great law school and I enjoyed going there.”

Ching noted he was the new kid on campus but the students were so nice that he had a whole group of friends by the end of his first week. He was even asked to join the law school student basketball team – a group that beat the faculty team in a game two years in a row.

After graduating, Ching wanted to get back to the west coast. His first legal job out of school in 1983 was as a deputy prosecutor in Washington. After five years, he opened his own private practice in Olympia, Washington. During that time, he held contracts and was the city attorney and city prosecutor for Tumwater, a small town outside of Olympia. He eventually served as the municipal court judge for 10 years before they disbanded the court entirely and unified with the county court. That experience is what led him to interview with Squaxin tribe in 1997.

Culture Shapes the Future

Being of Chinese, Filipino, and Japanese descent, Ching had no connection to the Squaxin tribe prior to obtaining the judgeship, but that wasn't a requirement of the job. The court is set up differently than a traditional court – with a built-in flexibility that allows tribal customs to be considered as part of the decision-making process and outcome of the case.

“Aside from the law we've adopted, there's also a tribal ordinance which dictates things like divorce, criminal law, fishing, and hunting,” Ching said. “We look at what has been the custom of the tribe over the last several decades or centuries to determine what rights are given.”

The process is more informal than other courts. When violations are made like hunting in certain places or clamming – or even when couples divorce and they are deciding on child support or custody – tribal customs are often considered. Anyone can raise their right hand and explain how it was done in their family and those customs are taken under advisement.

“I like it because it's smaller and it's friendlier. It's like a small town, you get to know all of the people,” Ching said.

Ching hears about 20-30 cases per month ranging from workers compensation and employment discrimination at the

local casino all the way to hunting and fishing. The gaming violations are so huge that they often have to work with the state of Washington to enforce those tribal hunting and fishing laws, but also state laws.

“Sometimes outsiders come onto the reservation land and they hunt and fish illegally, so we have to work with state authorities because we have no criminal authority over those who are not Indian. We work with the state of Washington fish and wildlife to make sure they get prosecuted,” Ching said. “Likewise, when Indians are caught violating laws off of the reservation, they throw those cases to our court.”

“I had several choices, and I thought that Washburn would be a good choice for me being in the middle of the U.S. I chose Washburn Law, and I didn't regret it. I was impressed with the quality and friendliness of the professors. It is a great law school and I enjoyed going there.” - Les Ching

Half of Ching's docket is fishing, clamming, and hunting violations – for example, when someone is catching too many fish, harvesting too many clams, fishing in enclosed areas or hunting off season. Usual penalties for these violations include fines and forfeiture.

“We don't usually put them in jail because that would be counterproductive. But what we usually do is take their nets, rifles, and fishing equipment,” Ching said. “All that has to happen is for them to get caught a couple of times and lose thousands of dollars in equipment – it helps them learn to toe the line.”

The maximum sentence Ching's court can give is a one-year sentence for misdemeanors and gross misdemeanors. Anything more serious than that, and they refer to the department of justice.

In 2016, he decided to hang up his private practice and mostly retire, but he continues to be the judge of the Squaxin tribe – work that he truly enjoys.

Federal Court

Mentors, dedication to work were key to judges' success.

By Angela Lutz

Growing up in a single-parent household in Kansas City, Kansas, **Gwynne Birzer, BA '89, JD '92**, always worked hard for what she had – but by the time she reached junior college, she still hadn't settled on a career path. Then she found her calling while watching her favorite television show.

"The Cosby Show came on and I saw Clair Huxtable," Birzer said. "I saw someone on TV who looked like me, and she was so sharp and businesslike, and she was a lawyer. That's what planted the seed. I'm not sure I ever met a lawyer growing up, but I thought – maybe I can be a lawyer. And off I went."

While pursuing an undergraduate degree in criminal justice at Washburn University, Birzer also worked the night shift at Frito Lay, and later during law school she became the legal guardian for her niece after the death of her older sister. She frequently became overwhelmed by the enormity of her

responsibility paired with her ambition – but she always had Washburn University School of Law Director of Admissions Dottie Harder cheering her on.

"She gave me so much hope," Birzer said. "She encouraged me to continue to try, and she introduced me to the Council on Legal Education Opportunity. She was a friendly face. She knew I could do it – even when I lost my sense of hope sometimes, she gave it back to me. Washburn felt like a family."

After a well-rounded career including time in a private practice and service as an assistant public defender, assistant district attorney, and assistant attorney general, in 2015, Birzer was appointed to the U.S. Court for the District of Kansas as a magistrate judge. She considers this the ultimate highlight of her career.

"In the federal system, a U.S. magistrate judge is the first face of authority people see when they come to court," she said. "Federal court can be scary. The cases are not only complex but also very serious, and there are a lot of rules involved. I hope that I have the ability to let litigants know they are going to be heard and treated fairly, even if the matter is not resolved in their favor."

Across the state on a cattle and wheat farm, **Eric Melgren, '85**, also never met a lawyer growing up, but he and his sisters were encouraged to pursue higher education. As an elementary school student, Melgren developed an interest in the law and the Constitution.

"Even before I was a teenager, I knew I was going to go to law school," he said. "I liked the orderliness of the legal system. I've always had a strong sense of justice – wanting wrongs to be made right and people who had been wronged to get relief."

After becoming one of the first people in his family to attend college and earning his law degree at Washburn, Melgren was accepted for a federal clerkship with Judge Frank Theis, not knowing what a boon this position would be to his burgeoning career. Following a successful tenure as partner at Foulston



Gwynne Birzer, BA '89, JD '92. Photo submitted

“Even before I was a teenager, I knew I was going to go to law school. I liked the orderliness of the legal system. I’ve always had a strong sense of justice – wanting wrongs to be made right and people who had been wronged to get relief.” - Eric Melgren

Siefkin in Wichita, Melgren was appointed U.S. attorney for Kansas in 2002 and as a district judge for the U.S. Court for the District of Kansas in 2008, where he now sits in Theis’ chambers.

“One of the things I love about being a judge is I can look at a situation and do the right thing,” Melgren said. “It’s very satisfying in this job to say that this is what I think the law supports and justice requires, so this is what I’m going to do. It goes full circle to what attracted me to the law as a child.”

Thomas Marten, BA ’73, JD ’76, also grew up in a rural Kansas town, but he did have a legal professional in the family – former U.S. District Court and Court of Appeals Judge **Delmas Hill, ’29**, who Marten just called Uncle Buzz. Hill encouraged Marten to pursue a legal vocation, and the incentive paid off – after a long and varied career that included more than 20 years in Uncle Buzz’s chambers, Marten took senior status in the U.S. Court for the District of Kansas in 2017.

Despite his many successes, Marten said the best moments in his legal practice “were nothing you’d hang a banner about.” He recalled with pride the divorce cases where he helped women through difficult times or when he assisted someone accused of a crime as they attempted to navigate the legal system. In recognition of his many accomplishments, Marten received Washburn Law’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2016.

“I never went for the grades,” Marten said of Washburn. “I was always more interested in experiences. One of the things Washburn did for me is that while they value academic success, they also established that what you do with your life is much more important. Washburn was central to my understanding that there’s a huge world out there, and you ought to plunge in and choose to make a positive difference.”



Eric Melgren, '85. Photo by Jeff Tuttle



Thomas Marten, BA '73, JD '76. Photo submitted

Running the Courtroom

Early exposure sparks career for Mason.

By Chris Marshall

Survey any group of 13-year-olds about their dream jobs, and the responses will be all over the board. Entering their teenage years, some still hold onto hopes of becoming a professional athlete or movie star. The most ambitious set sights on something that's never been done before.

When **Rhonda Mason, '96**, was 13, there had never been a Black judge in Johnson County, Kansas. The same was still true three years ago. But Mason is one of the few who set an unprecedented path for herself in middle school, then spent the next three decades following it to fruition.

There were plenty of stops in Mason's career before she was sworn in as a Johnson County District Court judge in 2017, but the lessons she learned along the way are what turned her dream of running a courtroom into reality.

Legal Education

Mason's love of the law began at first sight, when a middle-school field trip to the Wyandotte County Courthouse provided a blueprint she never deviated from.

"I just remember the judge having a very quiet, overpowering presence, the way he spoke and had complete control of the courtroom," Mason said. "Many times, people come to court seeing the judge as the enemy or a scary figure, but at that time, I learned while the job is to enforce rules, they can also be compassionate."

In college, when many begin to face harsh realities about achieving their childhood dreams, Mason's belief she could become a judge was reinforced. After graduating from Oakwood University in Alabama, the Kansas City, Missouri, native returned to the Midwest to enroll at Washburn University School of Law School. The Law Clinic, then run by Sheila Reynolds, was especially transformational for the confidence it provided.

"I've always had such a quiet, laid-back personality, so Professor Reynolds was concerned how I would do," Mason

said of the professor who retired in 2010. "But I just went up there and did it, and she was like, 'She just did it!' She was very encouraging and impactful in my career. When you go to court, you may be scared, but you just get up there and do it."

As Mason progressed at Washburn, others on campus turned to her for guidance of their own, whether they needed it or not. A fellow Kansas Citian named **Scott Mason, '97**, who was a year behind Mason in law school and would later become her husband, frequently asked her for help, and she soon found out why.

"As it turned out, he didn't need to be tutored at all," she said. "He just wanted a way to talk to me. It was great. We still laugh about that today."

The Masons celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary on June 3. They have two boys, Brice and AJ. Scott who also graduated from Washburn Law and is now an attorney for the Olathe school district.

Professional Development

Following graduation, Mason built her case for becoming a judge by practicing in as many fields as possible. Working as a law clerk for the Hon. Thomas Newton provided firsthand guidance on how to operate a courtroom fairly and efficiently. She was a prosecutor in Jackson County, Missouri, from 1999-2003, then handled personal injury and homeowners insurance claims for Allstate until 2006.

The following three years at Foland, Wickens, Eisfelder, Roper & Hofer law firm in Kansas City, Missouri, opened her up to an even broader range of cases. For two years, she ran a private practice, Mason Law Firm, then was managing attorney for GEICO from 2011-17. Altogether, she handled cases in 57 different counties.

"I thought that path was necessary because it gave me a wide variety of experience to bring to the bench," Mason said. "All of that gave me the opportunity and the knowledge to fit in."

She was one of three finalists for a judicial position in 2014, only for then-Gov. Sam Brownback to make a different selection. The rejection hurt at the time, but even that, in retrospect, strengthened Mason's desire to push forward.

"Persistence is one of the biggest characteristics I had," she said. "Never give up and keep moving forward, no matter what happens. The first time around most definitely hurt, but I knew I had the skills to do the job."

Brownback agreed in 2017, when Mason was sworn in as a judge, the culmination of a goal she set as a 13-year-old.

The Next Goal

Three years later, the job has been everything Mason hoped for, giving her the opportunity to apply the values and lessons learned throughout her career.

"Everyone who comes into my courtroom starts on an even ground," she said. "Even if I make a decision against one party, there's no outside influence other than the law. Whether someone was successful in their claims or not, I hope they feel like they got a fair day in court."

In the United States, 73% of judges are white and 67% are male. By defying the odds, Mason hopes she projects the same sense of possibility she experienced the first time she entered a courtroom.

"I think I am a walking example that, no matter where you're at, you can do it if you put your mind to it," she said. "I reflect a portion of the community that had not been represented. The impact I may have in the courtroom is that, if this is what you want to do, you can do it."



Rhonda Mason, '96. Photo submitted

Judge of the Year

Bryson works to build community trust in courts.

By Angela Lutz

Like many native Midwesterners, **Kyle Bryson, '88**, doesn't like talking about himself. But with a thriving legal career that led him to be appointed presiding judge of Pima County Superior Court in Arizona, he definitely has a lot to say about the importance of working hard, providing mentorship, and ensuring justice is served.

His dedication to honorably upholding the law was recognized by the Arizona Supreme Court last summer when the institution named him its Judge of the Year, a distinction given to an individual who helps improve public trust and confidence in the state's courts. Bryson said the people who really earned the award are the more than 1,000 people who work in the Pima County court system.

"A leadership mentor once told me the key to success was hiring smart, dedicated people you trust, getting them the tools they need to thrive, and then letting them get to work," Bryson said. "That's really all I've done here. The award honors them."

Though he has certainly found success in the role, Bryson never dreamed he would become a judge. If it weren't for the support of friends and colleagues, he likely never would have applied for the job. He was working as a partner in a small general litigation firm in Tucson, Arizona, when he was invited to apply for a court commissioner position in 2000. In that capacity, he presided over family law trials and probate, civil, and criminal matters, and he was happy doing that until he was encouraged to become a retained judge. The governor appointed him as a retained judge in 2010, and he began his sixth year as presiding judge in July.

"In my nearly 20 years on the bench, the overarching focal point is and has been the privilege of service," Bryson said. "It is an honor each and every day to represent the people in our judicial system and to serve our community and our state. I am truly humbled to be a member of our bench and of the judiciary as a whole."

Bryson also cites his Washburn University School of Law professors' influence on his management and communication skills, as well as his ability to handle many different types of cases during an era when specialization was becoming the norm.



Kyle Bryson, '88. Photo submitted

"The professors did all they could do to maximize each student's chance to prosper, focusing not just on the black-letter law or rules, but emphasizing a more holistic approach to the law," Bryson said. "To this day, I often quote or express a philosophy one of my professors said when I'm giving presentations or speaking. Their collective impact has been lasting and meaningful."

To pass on the gift of mentorship, Bryson regularly speaks to students about the tremendous responsibility that comes along with the privileges of being an attorney.

"Being a lawyer is an honor," he said. "When I speak to law students and young lawyers, I remind them practicing attorneys aren't just representing clients' interests but are part of something much larger, an ideal first conceived by brilliant minds over 250 years ago."

Faculty Updates

The following faculty updates are from Aug. 1, 2019, to March 15, 2020.



Rory Bahadur – Published “Newsworthiness as an Internet-Era Mitigant of Implicit Bias,” 88 UMKC Law Review 1 (2019) (lead article).
– Presented “Increasing Engagement in Law School Classrooms by the Implementation of Active Learning,” University of South Carolina School of Law, Columbia, South Carolina, Jan. 2020.



Andrea Boyack – Moderated “Restrictive Zoning and the YIMBY Movement,” American Bar Association Section on Real Property, Trusts and Estate Law (ABA-RPTE) Professor’s Corner webinar, Nov. 12, 2019.
– Served as panelist “Achieving Greater Economic Justice as a Means of Achieving Greater Racial Justice,” Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Annual Meeting, Section on Socio-Economics, Washington, D.C., Jan. 5, 2020.
– Presented “Legal Responses to the Opioid Crisis,” Addiction and Recovery Conference, hosted by the United States District Court for the District of Kansas, Wichita, Kansas, Oct. 13, 2019.
– Presented “No Choice Contracts: Status in Lieu of Assent,” Central States Law Schools Association (CSLSA) Annual Scholarship Conference, University of Toledo College of Law, Toledo, Ohio, Sept. 21, 2019.
– Participated in the Uniform Law Commission’s Drafting Committee meeting for the Economic Rights of Unmarried Cohabitants Act (ERUCA), San Francisco, California, Feb. 7-8, 2020.
– Elected secretary of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Section on Property, 2020-2021.
– Elected chair of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Section on Real Estate Transactions, 2020-2021.
– Elected president of the Central

States Law Schools Association (CSLSA), 2020-2021.



Gillian Chadwick – Served as panelist “Immigration, Citizenship, and Family Law,” University of Denver Law Review Symposium on Immigration Law in Shifting Times, Feb. 7, 2020.
– Quoted “House Weighs Adopting Presumption of Equal Time in Child Custody,” Topeka Capital-Journal, March 9, 2020.
– Testified before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary in support of SB 404 on behalf of the Kansas Judicial Council and its Family Law Advisory Committee, Feb. 20, 2020 (SN 404 protects rape victims who become pregnant as a result of rape from having to coparent with their rapist).



James Concannon – Testified on behalf of the Uniform Law Commission before the Kansas House Judiciary Committee on HB 2713, Feb. 19, 2020 (which would replace existing Kansas law with the Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts (2018)).
– Testified on behalf of the Kansas Judicial Council before the Kansas Senate Judiciary Committee, in support of SB 334, Feb. 12, 2020 (which amends the Kansas Evidence Code provisions on authentication and the original writings rule).



Linda Elrod – Published Child Custody Practice and Procedure. 2020 edition (Thomson Reuters, 2020).
– Published “The Need for Confidentiality in Evaluative Processes: Arbitration and Med/Arb in Family Law Cases,” 58 Family Court Review 26 (2020).

– Submitted written testimony on Senate Bill 157 to the House Judiciary Committee for the hearing, March 9, 2020 (SB 157 would establish a presumption of equal parenting time at the time of filing for divorce).
– Testified for the Kansas Bar Association in favor of adopting the Uniform Family Arbitration Act, House Bill 2533, in the House Judiciary Committee, Feb. 6, 2020.



Michelle Ewert – Interviewed “Washburn Law Clinic Community Ready to HELP Topeka Hospital Employees,” WIBW News, May 1, 2020.
– Interviewed, “Washburn Law Clinic Helping Local Hospital Workers,” KSNT News, April 28, 2020.



Emily Grant – Published “Assessment in Online Law School Classes,” TaxProf Blog (March 25, 2020).



Marsha Griggs – Co-authored “The Bar Exam and the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Need for Immediate Action,” Ohio State Public Law Working Paper No. 537 (2020).
– Co-authored “Courts Should Look to 3 Bar Exam Alternatives during Crisis,” Law360 (April 23, 2020).
– Co-authored “Diploma Privilege and the Constitution,” 73 SMU Law Review Forum 168 (2020).
– Co-authored “Licensing Lawyers in a Pandemic: Proving Competence,” Harvard Law Review Blog (April 7, 2020).
– Published “Sorry, Not Sorry: Temporary Practice in A Pandemic,” NULR Of Note (May 11, 2020).



Jeffrey Jackson – Co-authored “Legal Writing: A History from the End of the Civil War to the 1930,” 24 *Legal Writing: The Journal of the Legal Writing Institute* 81 (2020)
 – Published “Tiered Scrutiny in a Pandemic,” 12 *ConLawNOW* 39 (2020) (Symposium: Pandemics and the Constitution).

– Published “Legal Writing: A History from the End of the Civil War to the 1930,” 24 *Legal Writing: The Journal of the Legal Writing Institute* 81 (2020) (co-authored with David Cleveland).



Craig Martin – Published “Atmospheric Intervention? The Climate Change Crisis and the Jus ad Bellum Regime,” 45 *Columbia Journal of Environmental Law* 331 (2020).

– Published “On Iranian Gunboats: Beware Conflating American and Mainstream Views of the Law,” *Just Security*, June 2, 2020

– Presented “Atmospheric Intervention? The Climate Change Crisis and the Jus ad Bellum Regime,” *Columbia Journal of Environmental Law Symposium*, Columbia University Law School, New York City, New York, March 3, 2020.

– Presented “Defining the Climate Rogue State,” *Law and Society Association Annual Conference on Rule and Resistance*, virtual conference, May 29, 2020.

– Served as chair and discussant for a panel on “Rule and Resistance in Asia,” *Law and Society Association Annual Conference on Rule and Resistance*, virtual conference, May 30, 2020.



Roger McEowen – Presented “Ethical Issues of Client Records, Securing Client Data, Disclosure and Use of Client Information, and Fees,” *Tax Law Practice Ethics CLE*, Washburn University School of Law, Topeka, Kansas, Dec. 13, 2019.



Lori McMillan – Published “Independent Contractor vs. Employee: Getting It Right with the IRS,” 88:10 *JOURNAL OF THE KANSAS BAR ASSOCIATION* 72 (Nov./Dec. 2019) (with Lindsay Bayles).

– Published “Noncharitable Nonprofit Organizations and Tax Policy: Working Toward a Public Benefit Theory,” 59 *Washburn Law Journal* 301 (2020).



Carla Pratt – Published “Sisters in Law: Black Women Lawyer’s Struggle for Advancement,” in *GENDER, POWER, LAW & LEADERSHIP* (Hannah Brenner, Renee Knake, authors) (West Academic Publishing, 2020).

– Selected as 2019 honoree for significant contribution to the Topeka community during Black History Month program, Feb. 16, 2020 (Topeka Religion Roundup: Church to Honor Key Contributors to Community on Sunday).

– Selected as keynote speaker “The Color of Justice,” 28th Annual Black History and Scholarship Banquet, Kansas City, Kansas, Feb. 1, 2020.

– Selected as keynote speaker “Living

The Dream Recognizes Topeka Leaders that Continue Dr. King’s Legacy,” *Martin Luther King Jr. Luncheon*, Topeka, Kansas, WIBW-TV, Jan. 17, 2020.



Thomas Sneed – Published “When YOU are the Change,” in *THE LIBRARY WORKPLACE IDEA BOOK: PROACTIVE STEPS FOR POSITIVE CHANGE* (Heather L. Seibert, Amanda Vinogradov and Amanda H. McLellan, eds.) (ALA Editions, 2020).

– Presented “Whole-Building Approach to Leadership Development of Law Students: Role of Librarians,” *Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Annual Meeting*, Section on Leadership, Washington, D.C., Jan. 3, 2020 (based on paper, “Leadership and Librarians: A New Pedagogical Direction”).



Frederic Sourgens – Published “The Paris Paradigm,” 2019 *University of Illinois Law Review* 1637 (2019).



Amy Westbrook – Published “Snapchat’s Gift: Equity Culture in High-Tech Firms,” *FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW* (2019) (with

David A. Westbrook).

– Selected as an inaugural Fellow of the Quality Shareholder Initiative at the George Washington University Law School (GW) Center for Law, Economics and Finance (C-LEAF), 2020.

News Briefs

Washburn Law Responds to COVID-19

When the pandemic first made its impact known in March, 2020, Washburn Law was quick to make adjustments. Faculty and staff all worked closely together to create new grading policies, provide training in online platforms, and provide support to students so that they could finish out the year with as little interruption as possible.

Students, understanding how unprecedented the situation has been, adapted well to the new accommodations as classes, meetings, and events headed online. By all faculty accounts, the students performed as well as could be expected under the circumstances, highlighting the impeccable quality of scholars that Washburn attracts.

As the pandemic continues, the Law School has continued to adjust, allowing for online and hybrid options for class delivery, creating socially distanced practices and facilities, and requiring the use of masks while in the building. While none of these measures create an ideal environment, Washburn Law has made

it a top priority to ensure a continuity of education that will maintain production of top-notch legal talent.

Alumni similarly rallied around the school during the pandemic. A swell of support in the spring allowed the Alumni Association to provide technology support to students who needed it to continue their classes. When closures to businesses, firms, and organizations continued into the summer, many students found themselves with canceled opportunities for summer employment or internships. Alumni stepped up there, too, providing chances for students to gain experiences by offering up projects and positions in their offices. Alumni support has even continued into the fall, with donations allowing the Alumni Association to assist with technology expenses in the classrooms that will help create a more in-person feel for students attending online. Through all these acts, Washburn Law continues to show that its alumni network is second-to-none in its generosity and accomplishment.

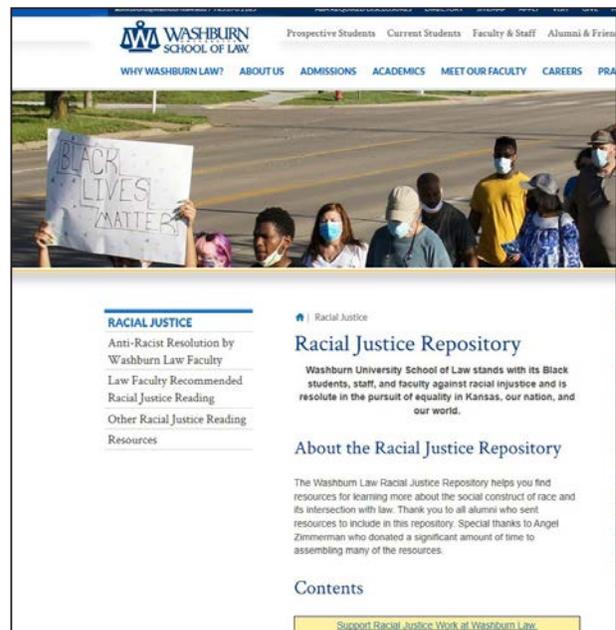
Washburn Law Launches Racial Justice Repository

As protests swept the nation over the summer in response to the killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, Washburn University School of Law reiterated its commitment to education and its support of Black students, faculty, and staff by creating a Racial Justice Repository on its website.

The Washburn Law faculty unanimously approved a resolution underlining and defining its efforts to increase diversity, provide accountability, establish equitable values, and encourage students to engage with multiple diverse perspectives. The resolution can be found in the repository.

In addition, each of the faculty members provided a list of recommended readings that can assist in developing a better understanding around issues of race, justice, and the law in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The Racial Justice Repository can be found at washburnlaw.edu/racialjustice.



The Racial Justice Repository home page at www.washburnlaw.edu/racialjustice.

Answering the Call

WashCall students step up to find donors to meet matching gift challenge

Like nearly every other educational institution, Washburn University School of Law has had to make changes to deliver courses in multiple ways during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students stepped up this spring to find donors to offset those costs.

The school incurred significant expenses to supply proper technology for faculty, students, and staff to function remotely, and that has included cameras, microphones, and internet capabilities. Those funds came from the school's budget normally used for scholarships to reward returning students. WashCall chairs Brigid Markey and Paige Reese, both 3Ls, thought they could help by calling alumni from home this spring.

“Paige wondered whether there was anything we could do to help,” Markey said. “When she pitched the idea, I was all for it. After all, we were going to be at home for a long while, so I figured that time could be put to good use.”

“I felt compelled to ask how WashCall could help,” Reese said. “Through all of it, we were just committed to making sure the scholarship program would be available for fellow students who are so deserving of those funds.”

Cynthia Heath, BA '71, and honorary lifetime member of the Washburn University School of Law Alumni Association, heard about this effort and offered a matching gift. Altogether, donors gave \$65,000 – enough to fund the \$30,000 in scholarships plus more to help recruit incoming 1L students this fall.

“Nothing is more important to me than providing opportunities for Washburn Law students to succeed, whether with scholarships, programs, or a new building,” Heath said. “Despite the Covid-19 situation, the law school could not put a pause on recruiting and retaining students.”

Reese and Markey became friends during their first few months of law school and they started working WashCall together. Donations they raise and the conversations they have with alumni inspire them.

“Once I started WashCall, I just couldn't stop,” Reese said. “I got my first large donation, and it was just so thrilling to me that alumni would give their hard-earned dollars for students' use. I find a lot of joy in talking to fellow Ichabods who care so much about Washburn Law and its students. I love hearing stories from their time at Washburn Law and about



Washburn University School of Law students benefited from donors' generosity this past spring. Photo by Jeremy Wangler

the professors they have that I have now. It is so funny to hear how, even as decades pass, many things remain the same. I have never had so many people be so generous with their time and treasures as I have seen with WashCall.”

They have both received scholarships and understand the importance of alumni giving back to a place like Washburn Law that has shaped so many individuals.

“Washburn alumni are so kind,” Markey said. “They want to know who you are, what area of law you're interested in, and what has changed at Washburn. You gather pieces of history from your conversations. I think about how fortunate I am to receive a scholarship, and it fuels me to help bring that kind of relief to others.”

Heath wanted to make sure other students experience what Markey and Reese are experiencing.

“The size of the first-year class determines the size of the 2023 graduating class, and that opportunity could not be missed,” Heath said. “I was moved by the compassionate act of granting scholarships to keep current students who already had made financial sacrifices to go to the law school. These efforts squarely represent the University's founding principles of 'Non Nobis Solum,' 'Not for Ourselves Alone.'”

The need to raise scholarship dollars and cover other expenses continues, and so will the efforts of WashCall students. Be ready to receive a call from them this fall.

Class Actions

The following alumni are those whose updates were reported to the school from Nov. 2019 - June 30, 2020. Update your address at alumni@washburnlaw.edu and submit your news at washburnlaw.edu/alumni/classactions.

1966

Daniel W. Forker Jr., Hutchinson, Kan., was inducted as a fellow in the American College of Bankruptcy. Forker is a member of the American Bar Association, the Kansas Bar Association and the Reno County Bar Association. He has served as chairperson for Real Estate, Probate, and Tax Section of the Kansas Bar Association as well as two terms as chairperson of the Bankruptcy Section of the Kansas Bar Association.

1969

Col. Jack S. Bender III, Halstead, Kan., was presented the Marquis Who's Who Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award. Bender has devoted nearly 50 years to his distinguished legal career. Shortly after acquiring his law degree in 1969, he served as an assistant attorney general for the state of Kansas. Joining the Boeing Co. in Wichita, Kan., in 1974, he served as an assistant secretary, a senior attorney, acting division counsel and in construction management for 25 years until 1999. Bender subsequently operated a private practice in Halstead, Kan., for nearly 20 years. In addition to maintaining his practice, he served for seven years as the wing legal officer for the Kansas Wing of the Civil Air Patrol from 2011-18.

1971

Darrell L. Warta, Wichita, received top-tier rankings in the London-based Chambers USA 2020 Guide. Warta was recognized in Kansas in the practice area of general commercial.

1975

Dennis D. Kirk, Falls Church, Va, is the United States Office of Personnel Management's new associate director

for employee services, Kirk brings decades of public and private sector experience to this role. At OPM since May 2018, Kirk has served as both senior advisor to the CIO and as senior advisor to the director, working with OPM leadership, SES, employee services, and the accountability and workforce programs areas.

James D. Oliver, Overland Park, Kan., received top-tier rankings in the London-based Chambers USA 2020 Guide. Oliver was recognized in Kansas in the practice area of General Commercial.

1976

The Hon. Donald R. Noland, Pittsburg, Kan., was appointed to the Kansas Court of Appeals Nominating Commission.

1977

The Hon. Timothy J. Chambers, Hutchinson, Kan., will retire from the bench after 20 years. He spent two years with a large law firm in Kansas City before he decided he didn't like the big city or that type of law and moved back to the central Kansas area. Chambers was assistant Reno County attorney from 1978-81 and then ran for county attorney. Chambers was first elected to the bench in 2001.

1978

The Hon. Bruce T. Gatterman, Larned, Kan., has been elected president of the Kansas District Judges Association, an organization open to all state district court judges. Gatterman is chief judge of the 24th Judicial District, composed of Edwards, Hodgeman, Lane, Ness, Pawnee, and Rush counties. He has served as a district judge and chief judge in the 24th Judicial District since 2003.

Cydni K. Gilman, Wichita, received a Kansas Bar Association 2020 Pro Bono Certificate.

Timothy E. Troll, Dillingham, Alaska, is the executive director of the Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust in Alaska. He was recently recognized by the Alaska Federation of Natives with the Denali Award. The Denali Award is given to a "Non-Native person who has demonstrated strong commitment, dedication, and service to the Alaska Native Community and to Rural Alaska." The land trust he founded and directs has also received the National Excellence Award by the Land Trust Alliance for its work protecting wilderness in remote rural Alaska.

1980

The Hon. Richard D. Anderson, Topeka, was appointed by the Kansas Supreme Court as chief judge of the 3rd Judicial District, which covers Shawnee County. Anderson was appointed a district court judge for the 3rd Judicial District in 1999. Before becoming a judge, Anderson was a trial attorney in private practice with an emphasis in labor, employment, and construction law. He has served as an adjunct professor at Washburn University and as a board member of the Kansas District Judges Association. He is a member of the Topeka and Kansas Bar Associations and has served on several bar association committees.

Joseph E. Cosgrove Jr., Austin, Texas, published the featured article in the ABA's Infrastructure and Regulated Industries Section's Winter 2020 periodical. The article was entitled "Net Neutrality: Take 4!" Cosgrove was then interviewed about the article for the section's first podcast released on May 27, 2020. Cosgrove is an adjunct professor at the University of Texas School of Law in Austin teaching Internet and Telecommunication Regulation.

*Names in blue indicate Alumni Association members.

Shannon S. Krysl, Andover, Kan., was inducted into the Wichita Business Journal's HR Professionals Hall of Fame in February 2020. Krysl retired as chief human resources officer in July 2020 from Wichita Public Schools after 15 years of service.

The Hon. Marla J. Luckert, Topeka, received the Kansas Bar Association 2020 Christel Marquardt Trailblazer Award.

1981

Kevin E. J. Regan, Kansas City, Mo., of the Regan Law Firm, L.L.C., was recently elected to serve as a trustee with the Missouri Bar Foundation board of trustees. Regan was also recently made an honorary life member of the Special Forces Association, Bull Simons Chapter, a rare honor bestowed upon a civilian by Special Forces soldiers.

Mark A. Shaiken, Denver, Colo., is the author of a newly released book, entitled: "And... Just Like That - Essays on a Life Before During and After the Law." With humor and self-deprecation, poignancy and bite, this book presents observations on his life before the law, his 38 years in the law, and his life after he left.

1982

Deena M. Hyson Bailey, Wichita, received the Kansas Bar Association 2020 Diversity Award.

Michael R. Heim, Lawrence, Kan., received the Kansas Bar Association 2020 Distinguished Government Service Award.

The Hon. E. Leigh Hood, Dodge City, Kan., has retired. Hood was the Ford County 16th Judicial District chief judge. With more than 20 years as a judge, Hood was first elected as a district judge in 2000 before being appointed as chief judge in 2019. From 1982-89, Hood was an assistant county attorney in Ford County before becoming county attorney.

1983

Douglas L. Hanisch, Wichita, received top-tier rankings in the London-based Chambers USA 2020 Guide. Hanisch was recognized in Kansas in the practice area of employee benefits & executive compensation.

Nancy A. Goodall, Topeka, has retired from CoreFirst Bank & Trust. She was the senior vice president and trust officer. Goodall had been a trust officer with CoreFirst Bank & Trust for 15 years, where she administered personal trusts, investment agency accounts, and probate accounts. Goodall is active in the community, in particular at the Topeka Civic Theatre, where she has been the music director for countless performances.

1985

Richard L. Marquez, Garden City, Kan., was appointed to the Kansas Court of Appeals Nominating Commission.

The Hon. Evelyn Z. Wilson, Topeka, was appointed to the Kansas Supreme Court. Wilson has served since 2004 on the Shawnee County District Court, rising to chief judge in 2014. Wilson previously worked at a Topeka law firm for 12 years and in private practice in Oberlin for seven years.

1986

Terri L. Savely, Christiansted, St. Croix, VI, is now the career law clerk to The Hon. Wilma A. Lewis of the District of the Virgin Islands.

William R. Wood, Wichita, received top-tier rankings in the London-based Chambers USA 2020 Guide. Wood was recognized in Kansas in the practice areas of corporate M&A and real estate.

1987

Kevin J. Arnel, Wichita, received top-tier rankings in the London-based Chambers USA 2020 Guide. Arnel was recognized in Kansas in the practice area of Tax.

Daniel B. Bailey, Westminster, Colo., was appointed executive vice president, general counsel, HGS North America, HGS, Inc. on June 1, 2020. He also serves on the Mesa Verde Foundation Board of Mesa Verde National Park.

1989

The Hon. Tony Martinez, Kansas City, Kan., was elected as a Wyandotte County District Court judge.

1990

The Hon. Christopher D. Sanders, Garden City, Kan., was appointed to the district court seat that opened in December. Sanders has been a magistrate judge for Finney County since late 2004.

Brian A. Tillema, Kansas City, Mo., was appointed as the Jackson County Circuit Court deputy probate commissioner. Tillema started his own law practice in May 1993 as a solo practitioner. Fifty percent of his practice was in the Jackson County Probate Division. Prior to 1993, he served as a law clerk to Probate Judge John A. Borron, Jr. and Circuit Judge Donald L. Mason, both of the Jackson County Circuit Court.

1991

Kathleen A. Hart, Bridgewater, N.J., has joined Weiner Law Group as partner and chair of the firm's workers' compensation department.

1992

Danielle D. Dempsey-Swopes, Topeka, was appointed to the Kansas Court of Appeals Nominating Commission.

R. Scott Seifert, Plano, Texas, has joined Spencer Fane as a partner. Seifert has represented both sides in a range of business disputes, including contracts, shareholder and lease disputes, trade secrets, nondisclosure agreements, breach of fiduciary duty, and construction cases.

1994

Lisa A. McPherson, Wichita, has joined Triplett Woolf Garretson, LLC.

The Hon. Teresa L. Watson, Topeka, was appointed by the Supreme Court as the chair of the Language Access Committee.

1995

The Hon. Penny R. Moylan, Topeka, was appointed to fill a district court vacancy in the Shawnee County 3rd Judicial District. Moylan was a deputy disciplinary administrator for the Kansas Disciplinary Administrator's Office.

1996

Joseph E. Donovan, Washington, D.C., has joined the firm of Clark Hill as a member in the Environment, Energy & Natural Resources practice. Donovan is a leading energy lawyer with more than 20 years of experience across all energy platforms on an international scale.

The Hon. Steve A. Stockard, Parsons, Kan., was appointed a judge in the 11th Judicial District. Stockard was a partner at Wilbert & Towner P.A. He is a former attorney for the Kansas Department of Revenue and was a part-time prosecutor of juvenile offender and child-in-need-of-care cases in Bourbon and Crawford counties.

1997

Luther L. Ganieany Jr., Topeka, was appointed to general counsel of the Kansas Highway Patrol. Prior to that, Ganieany served as a senior attorney in the city of Topeka's legal department for 18 years and as a police legal adviser for Topeka Police Department.

Joseph S. Passanise, Springfield, Mo., has been appointed to the state's Tourism Commission. He is past president of the Missouri Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and is a member of the National College of DUI Defense and the National Child Abuse Defense and Resource Center. He was included in the National Trial Lawyers Criminal Defense Top 100 for 2019. He has received recognition from Best Lawyers since 2007 and Super Lawyers since 2006. He is also the recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award from America's Top 100 Attorneys.

1998

Patricia A. Voth Blankenship, Wichita, received top-tier rankings in the London-based Chambers USA 2020 Guide. Voth Blankenship was recognized in Kansas in the practice area of real estate.

Christopher S. Conroy, Des Moines, Iowa, is the 2020 chairman of the National Association of Fixed Annuities. Conroy previously was head of annuity sales at North American Company for Life and Health Insurance.

Deborah Frye Stern, Topeka, retired from the Kansas Hospital Association as senior

Kansas Governor appoints two Washburn alumnae to fill district court vacancies



Monique Centeno, '05

to fill a vacancy in the 10th judicial district.

Prior to her appointment, Centeno served as a trial attorney at Wall Huntington Law Firm in Wichita. She also served nine years as an Assistant Public Defender in

Gov. Laura Kelly appointed Monique Centeno, '05 to fill a vacancy in the 18th judicial district and Jacquelyn Rokusek, '93



Jacquelyn Rokusek, '93

Law in Shawnee and had been in private practice since 2004. Prior to starting her own firm, she spent two years as a Special Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Kansas and six years as an Assistant District Attorney in Johnson County.

the Sedgwick County Public Defender's office.

Rokusek served as managing partner of Rokusek Stein

vice president of clinical services and general counsel. Prior to joining KHA in 2002 as a nurse/attorney, she was employed at the Alderson Law Firm, Stormont Vail Health and the Menninger Foundation. She is past president of the Womens Attorneys Association of Topeka and as a member of the Topeka Bar Association, Kansas Bar Association, the Kansas Women Attorneys Association and the Greater Kansas City Society of Healthcare Attorneys.

1999

Jason K. Ward, Kansas City, Mo., is now a partner at Shook, Hardy & Bacon. Ward assists clients facing discovery-related challenges in complex product liability matters. He has extensive experience advising clients on document management procedures and best practices for defensible disposition of records, document collection, review, and production.

2001

Michael J. Fleming, Leawood, Kan., was appointed to the Kansas Court of Appeals Nominating Commission.

2002

The Hon. Amanda K. Bundren McNelley, Saint Louis, Mo., was appointed an associate circuit judge for the 21st Judicial Circuit, which covers St. Louis County.

2003

Jeremy J. Crist, Manhattan, Kan., has joined Realty Executives Weis Real Estate Company as a member of the Linda B. Weis listing and sales team. From 2007 until May 2019, Crist served Riley County as assistant county attorney.

Jennifer M. Hill, Wichita, was recognized as one of the Wichita Business Journal's 2020 Women in Business Award winners. This award recognizes women business professionals in the Wichita area who have created successful careers and improved their companies and their community.

The Hon. Jeremiah C. Humes, Price, Utah, was appointed as a judge for the 7th District. For the past year, Humes has served as the attorney

for Carbon County. He established his own practice in 2004 where he practiced municipal law. He also practiced at Johnson & Stone from 2003-04.

2004

The Hon. Laura H. Lewis, Dodge City, Kan., was appointed chief judge of the Ford County 16th Judicial District. Lewis was named to the district court in 2019.

2005

Kimbra D. Caywood McCarthy, Mountain View, Calif., is now the Mountain View city manager. McCarthy was previously the assistant city manager for Administrative Services for Redwood City and a former deputy city manager for Mountain View. McCarthy has more than a decade of experience in senior roles in local government, including her two-year stint in Mountain View between 2014-16. She began her career in government working as a fiscal analyst for the Kansas State Legislature and then moved to a policy analyst position with Santa Barbara County where she moved up to director of administration and finance.

Jason R. Griess, Lincoln, Neb. is now director of firm operations of Rumboldt Ludtke, LLP. He previously served as vice president for Investors Title Insurance Company and president of Nebraska Land Title and Abstract Company. Griess serves on the board of directors for the Lincoln Children's Museum, the HUB and the Nebraska Humane Society.

Jeffrey N. Lowe, Wichita, has achieved board re-certification as a family trial advocate for The National Board of Trial Advocacy.

Carolyn L. Payne, Jefferson City, Mo., was promoted to chief risk officer at FCS Financial.

2006

Angel R. Zimmerman, Topeka, received the International J. Reuben Clark Law Society Women in Law Service Award. Women in Law is just one of the many committees of JRCLS, which is divided into regions throughout the world. Zimmerman is the first regional area director of the newly reorganized US Central Region.

2007

Karen M. Couch, Salina, Kan., is the new executive director of the Salina Emergency Aid Food Bank. Couch most recently served as director of family strengthening services for Catholic Charities of Northern Kansas. Her legal career has provided the opportunity to hone communication and interpersonal skills and working in the non-profit sector has enhanced her leadership skills in grant writing, fundraising, and managing staff.

Claudia J. Dawson, Olathe, Kan., is now an attorney at SafeHome.

Mark A. Dupree, Kansas City, Kan., was appointed to the Kansas Sentencing Commission.

Keron A. Wright, Dallas, is now the managing partner at Wright Legal Services, PLLC.

2008

Laurel A. Klein Searles, Topeka, was appointed to the Kansas Human Rights Commission. The commission seeks to eliminate and prevent discrimination and assure equal opportunities in the state for employment, housing, and other opportunities in public accommodation and housing.

Nicholas J. Zluticky, Kansas City, Mo., has been selected as one of American Bankruptcy Institute's "40 Under 40," ABI's annual program that recognizes 40 of the top insolvency industry professionals under the age of 40. Zluticky writes frequently on recent court decisions in the bankruptcy field, publishing on JD Supra and in the Journal of Corporate Renewal, and he presents regularly at conferences for ABI and the National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees.

2009

Danielle M. Hall, Topeka, has become director of the Kansas Lawyers Assistance Program. The Kansas Lawyers Assistance Program helps lawyers seek treatment for physical or mental illness, substance abuse, or emotional distress. It was created

in 2001 and operates under the direction of the Kansas Supreme Court. Hall previously served as deputy disciplinary administrator and diversion coordinator in the Office of the Disciplinary Administrator.

Elizabeth J. Lay, Columbus, Neb., has joined Jarecki Maul PC, L.L.O. Lay previously worked for the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and most recently served seven years as a deputy Platte County attorney.

Timothy R. Woods, Dodge City, Kan., is the Kansas 25th Judicial District's new magistrate judge.

2010

Maryann M. Hon, Jenks, Okla., is now with the Whitten Law Firm.

Jodi E. Litfin, Topeka, was elected secretary of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka for the 2020-21 term. Litfin is an assistant solicitor general with the Office of the Kansas Attorney General.

Margaret E. Robertson, Wichita, has joined Hinkle Law Firm LLC as of counsel. Robertson's practice focuses on business formation and planning, estate planning, asset protection, and trust services. She also provides counsel on business succession planning, equity agreements, and contracts.

Patrick M. Vogelsberg, Topeka, is now the manager of government affairs at Kansas Gas Service. Vogelsberg will be chief political and lobbyist liaison for the Kansas Legislature and local government officials. He has lobbied for more than 10 years in Kansas, recently as in-house legal counsel and lobbyist for the Kansas Association of Realtors.

2011

Morgan L. Richards, Dallas, Texas, started a new position as director of gift planning at Southern Methodist University.

2012

Jennifer A. Cocking, Topeka, was elected president of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka for the 2020-21 term. Cocking is vice president and associate general counsel for Capitol Federal Savings Bank.

Michael P. Hinkin, Manhattan, Kan., was selected by Riley County commissioners to fill the vacant attorney spot on the indigent defense panel. Hinkin has a solo practice but previously worked at Clark & Platt. The indigent defense panel in Riley County comprises of six attorneys who serve as "independent contractors" for the county.

2013

Kali M. Hague, Washington, D.C., was promoted to partner at Jetlaw, LLC.

Colin W. Holthaus, Topeka, has been selected to serve as the director of Kansas Correctional Industries. Holthaus has previously held positions at the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers, BNSF Railway, and Frito-Lay.

India E. Keefover, Atlanta, started a new position as an associate at Deming, Parker, Hoffman, Campbell & Daly, LLC.

2014

Jennifer L. Ouellette, Topeka, was elected treasurer of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka for the 2020-21 term. Ouellette is a staff attorney with the Kansas Insurance Department working with the Kansas Workers Compensation Fund.

2015

Craig D. Hulse, Shawnee, Kan., has been appointed to the Washburn University board of regents.

Brett A. Shanks, Kansas City, Mo., has accepted a position as a trial attorney with the U.S. Commodity Futures Trade Commission.

2016

Tomas S. Ellis, Garden City, Kan., has accepted a position with the Calihan Law Firm. Ellis has a background in prosecution along with an emphasis in agricultural law, water law, oil and gas law, and real estate law.

2017

Victoria K. Gordon, Leawood, Kan., has joined Mann Tucker Muir, LLC.

Alosha Moore, Dayton, Ohio, has joined the U.S. Air Force as an international contract specialist.

Kelly W. Puckett, Trenton, Mo., was appointed Grundy County prosecuting attorney. Puckett has served as the interim prosecuting attorney for Grundy County since January 2019.

Evan M. Schodowski, Kansas City, Mo., joined Baty Otto Coronado, P.C. as an associate. Schodowski previously worked at Lewis Brisbois.

Morgan L. Simpson, Kansas City, Mo. has joined Baty Otto Coronado as an associate. Simpson previously worked at Lewis Brisbois, LLP.

2018

Joseph R. Aker, Salina, Kan., has joined the law firm of Hampton & Royce, LC as an associate attorney practicing in the areas of agricultural law, estate planning, probate and trust administration, real estate law, business law, and tax planning.

2019

Ashley E. Franden, Topeka, joined Stange Law Firm, PC as a junior associate attorney, serving Shawnee County and the surrounding area. Before joining Stange Law, Franden spent time as a social worker as a permanency case manager helping children in foster care find permanent homes.

Colin T. Halpin, Saint Louis, Mo., has joined Lathrop Gage, LLP's tax and employee

benefits team, focusing his practice on real estate and tax credit financing. He works on matters involving new markets tax credits, historic rehabilitation tax credits, opportunity zones and low-income housing tax credits, as well as other federal, state, and local tax credits and incentives.

Steven N. Letourneau, Topeka, is now a trust officer at Capitol Federal Bank.

Kacey S. Mayes, Wichita, has joined Triplett Woolf Garretson, LLC.

Jason D. Steele, Austin, Texas, is an assistant county attorney at the Williamson County Attorney's Office.

Elias M. Underwood, Wichita, has joined Foulston as an associate attorney. Underwood is a member of Foulston's transactional practice group, where he advises corporate clients in the area of tax law. Before attending law school, Underwood, a CPA, was a senior assurance auditor at with PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP, in its Kansas City, Mo., office. He primarily served clients in the insurance and reinsurance industries as well as assisting with audits in the asset management and business transaction services industries. He also led on-site inventories with manufacturing clients across Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

Issac M. Wright, Larned, Kan., has joined Smith, Burnett & Hagerman, LLC.

2020

Jacob G. Holly, Topeka, has joined Foulston as an associate. Holly will be on the firm's northeast Kansas transactional team, counseling clients in the areas of business and corporate, administrative, estate planning, and real estate law. Prior to joining Foulston, Holly clerked at the Shawnee County District Court where he assisted with a wide range of court-related matters, including a number of Kansas Administrative Agency actions.

In Memoriam

Washburn Law mourns the passing of the following alumni whose deaths were reported to the school from Nov. 2019 - June 30, 2020.

Robert E. Hendrickson, '42, Denver, Colo., on April 15, 2020, at age 101

Arvella D. Whitmore, '46, Minneapolis, Minn., on March 13, 2020, at age 97

Dilver W. Fellers, '51, Newland, N.C., on Jan. 16, 2020, at age 97

William T. Davitt '55, Wichita, Kan., on May 14, 2020, at age 91

Ralph E. Skoog, '59, Topeka, Kan., on Dec. 13, 2019, at age 89

M. Wayne Davidson, '60, Mission Hills, Kan., on May 11, 2020, at age 87

Philip C. Peterson, '60, Lake Bluff, Ill., on Dec. 29, 2019, at age 88

The Hon. Jan W. Leuenberger, '61, Topeka, on April 13, 2020, at age 83

Gerald J. Letourneau, '62, Topeka, on Dec. 13, 2019, at age 82

David W. Craig, '63, Topeka, on Dec. 4, 2019, at age 82

Jack N. Powell, '65, Kenosha, Wis., on Jan. 3, 2020, at age 81

Edward B. Soule, '65, Topeka, on April 23, 2020, at age 79

W. Robert. Alderson, '67, Topeka, on June 5, 2020, at age 80

George B. Engle, '68, Westerville, Ohio, on Nov. 17, 2019, at age 80

George E. Burket, '72, Kingman, Kan., on Oct. 31, 2019, at age 77

Ernest H. Moulos, '72, Wichita, Kan., on Dec. 8, 2019, at age 74

Richard L. Dickson, '73, Wichita, Kan., on Oct. 13, 2019, at age 71

The Hon. Christel E. Marquardt, '74, Topeka, on March 8, 2020, at age 84

Derek J. Shafer, '75, Topeka, on April 1, 2020, at age 71

Charles B. Hill III, '77, Knoxville, Tenn., on April 12, 2020, at age 67

The Hon. Terry L. Pullman, '78, Wichita, Kan., on Nov. 27, 2019, at age 66

Timothy E. McCoy, '81, Tulsa, Okla., on Oct. 19, 2019, at age 65

Stuart A. Haney, '83, Potomac Falls, Va., on April 25, 2020, at age 62

Robert A. Levy, '83, Garden City, Kan., on Feb. 19, 2020, at age 66

Thomas J. Whalen, '83, Kansas City, Mo., on May 25, 2020, at age 64

William I. Schawo, '84, Berryton, Kan., on Oct. 25, 2019, at age 76

Major Brian S. Banks, '87, Clarksville, Tenn., on Sept. 13, 2019, at age 64

Craig S. Rarrick, '87, Topeka, on Dec. 27, 2019, at age 59

Rita J. Bicknell, '95, Pittsburg, Kan., on April 24, 2020, at age 68

Kurt L. James, '96, Topeka, on June 3, 2020, at age 68

Nathan D. Leadstrom, '01, Topeka, on Feb. 26, 2020, at age 43

Remembering Christel Marquardt



Christel Marquardt, JD '74, H '12, passed away March 8, 2020. She was 84.

Marquardt worked for Cosgrove, Webb, and Oman in Topeka, becoming a partner, and then started the law firm Palmer, Marquardt and Snyder. She was named one of the Top 10 Business Women in America by the American Business Women's Association in 1985. In 1986, she became the first woman to be

president of the Kansas Bar Association. She was later appointed to the Kansas Court of Appeals where she served as a judge for 17 years. She served as a chair of the Washburn University board of regents and chair of the Washburn University School of Law Alumni Association board of governors. She created the Honorable Christel E. Marquardt Endowed Scholarship to assist law students interested in government or public service.

Join us for the upcoming Washburn Law virtual happy hours and game nights. Watch your inbox for more details each month including the Zoom link.

WASHBURN LAW
Wednesday

November 11

December 9



November 19

December 17

SAVE *the* DATE

U.S. Supreme Court Swearing-In

WHO: Washburn Law alumni and friends

WHAT: U.S. Supreme Court Swearing-In trip

WHEN: Sunday, May 15, 2022 - Tuesday, May 17, 2022

WHERE: Washington, D.C.

More details coming soon.
Email alumni@washburnlaw.edu to reserve your spot.

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Alumni Association

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