Unlocking Opportunity:
The Scholarship Difference
From the Dean

Dear Friends,

This issue of Sooner Lawyer is particularly meaningful to me as we celebrate the graduating Class of 2013. Three years ago, this class and I began at OU Law together. It has been a privilege to witness them grow from uncertain 1Ls to confident and talented graduates. And just as they have advanced our College, I am certain they will do much to benefit our noble profession. On May 11, we celebrated their graduation with keynote speaker Jerry Stritzke (’85), who currently serves as the president and chief operating officer at Coach Inc. Stritzke left the graduates with a very important challenge, “Go out and change the world.”

This issue is important because of its focus on philanthropy and scholarships. The generosity of our alumni and friends is essential to providing our students with an unsurpassed legal education, to thrive as the state’s premier law school and to be one of our nation’s great public law schools. In just the past three years, your generosity has more than doubled OU Law’s scholarship endowment. And for the first time ever, this year OU Law will distribute more than $1 million in private scholarships to our students. These scholarships enable our students to have a world-class legal education at a cost that enhances, rather than forecloses, opportunity.

I hope you enjoy the article featuring OU alumna Ginny Bass Carl, who has had an impressive legal career and now serves in the nonprofit sector. Ginny is committed to changing the world and knows what it is like to be a part of something larger than herself.

You will also see a fascinating feature on two alumni, a married couple, who after several years of practicing law in Oklahoma decided to move to Dubai. Michael Ridgeway now serves as general counsel of the Dubai Financial Services Authority. This highly influential position focuses on a unique financial district inside the opulent desert city. One of the lessons learned early in this adventure was how knowledge of Native American law could be utilized in understanding legal issues in a foreign nation.

I am excited to share with you that OU Law is launching a number of new and exciting programs and degrees, detailed on page 13. OU Law J.D. students may now pursue a specialized certificate in one of three areas: Energy and Natural Resources, Business Entrepreneurship, and American Indian Law. These certificates are designed to give our students a further competitive edge as they enter the profession.

In addition, OU Law has created a new Master of Legal Studies (MLS) degree designed primarily for non-lawyers. Beginning this fall, the MLS degree will focus on one of two areas: Energy and Natural Resources Law and Indigenous Peoples Law. The MLS degree can be completed part time, and the Indigenous Peoples focus is earned online.

OU Law continues to be forward-thinking and anticipating the future needs of the legal market. We will keep our tuition low, seek outside scholarships, continue to add expert curriculum, focus on strong job opportunities and stay connected with our alumni.

I appreciate your continued support of the University of Oklahoma College of Law.

Warmest regards,

Joseph Harroz Jr.
Dean and Professor
Fenelon Boesche Chair of Law
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When Frank Elkouri (‘47) and his wife, Edna Asper Elkouri, made their historic $6 million gift to the OU College of Law creating the Frank and Edna Asper Elkouri Endowed Law Scholarship, they cited the financial assistance they both received as law students as the motivation for their gift. In 2011, at the time of the announcement of the gift, the largest one-time contribution in the 104-year existence of the College of Law, Dean Joe Harroz said, “The Elkouri gift will provide many students with access to an exceptional legal education and inspire generations of excellence.”

Numerous other individuals and organizations have similarly been motivated to provide financial assistance to OU Law students, thereby providing the opportunity to access a legal education. Nearly 200 scholarships, fellowships and awards have been established and supported by alumni, friends and donors to benefit students, making a difference in their lives.

One of these scholarships, the William L. Bruce Scholarship, was established in 2005 by Oklahoma City attorney Robert H. Alexander Jr. to assist minority law students. The scholarship was named to honor William L. Bruce, a former vice dean of Harvard Law who mentored Alexander during his legal education there.

Having grown up in Oklahoma and graduated from Oklahoma City’s Douglass High School, Alexander was aware that since the 1949 admission of Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher as its first African-American student, the OU College of Law had played a key role in providing legal education to minorities. When he made the $100,000 gift to endow the scholarship, Alexander explained he made the gift to OU Law rather than his alma mater because the need for scholarships benefiting minority students was greater in Oklahoma.
Alicia Currin-Moore (’08) was among the first three recipients of the William L. Bruce Scholarship in 2005. Her path to and through law school was unlike most of her classmates, and she was very aware of the differences.

Currin-Moore, born in Detroit, lived in Michigan and Ohio prior to moving to Oklahoma, where she graduated from Putnam City North High School in Oklahoma City in 1990. When she began her undergraduate studies at the University of Oklahoma, her career focus was dentistry. However, a summer job at an inner-city summer camp changed all that as she discovered a passion for teaching.

In 1994, Currin-Moore earned a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education and embarked upon a 10-year career teaching kindergarten and first grade. Her first teaching job was in an inner-city public school in Oklahoma City, where 97 percent of the students lived below the poverty line and 46 percent had limited English proficiency.

Currin-Moore sought advice and guidance from seasoned teachers and eventually became involved in the district-level decision-making process for curriculum changes. Her hard work and dedication came to the attention of education leaders, and she was invited to speak to other educators at the state and national levels. Currin-Moore’s service to her profession and her students was publicly recognized when she was named the 2000-2001 Coolidge Elementary Teacher of the Year.

While working toward her master’s degree in educational administration and curriculum studies at OU, a class in education law planted the seed for another alteration to her life’s path. “I became intrigued by the way in which education intersected with the law,” said Currin-Moore. “At the time, law school seemed to be a far-fetched notion. Years after taking the class, my husband encouraged me to follow my newly found passion.”

But to do so would mean she would have to quit her teaching job. “Law school seemed unattainable because of the financial burden it would place on my family,” Currin-Moore explained.

However, with continuing encouragement from her husband, she applied to OU Law and was accepted into the Early Admissions Program for summer 2005. Currin-Moore changed roles from teacher to student and entered OU Law. She realized the uniqueness of her situation.

“I felt as though I had two strikes against me. I was at least 12 years older than my classmates, and I’d spent the last 10 years not working for a firm or a government official, but as a kindergarten teacher,” she said. “I was comfortable standing in front of 5-year-olds, but the thought of standing in front of some of the best minds in the state terrified me.”

The Early Admissions Program is designed to give a first look at law school to a small group of incoming first-year students with the purpose of allowing them to build experience and skills necessary to succeed in law school while providing the opportunity to earn law school credits during the summer. The program was a perfect fit for Currin-Moore. “Being a part of the program allowed me the opportunity to ease into law school,” she said. “I soon realized I had a unique skill set that gave me an edge in many situations.”
Curring-Moore’s concerns about her family’s financial condition were eased when she learned she had been selected to receive the Bruce Scholarship. In addition, she was awarded the Crowe & Dunlevy Scholarship and the Allie M. and Robert E. Stephenson Scholarship.

The Crowe & Dunlevy Scholarship also provides financial assistance to minority students. It was established in 2005 by the Oklahoma law firm of Crowe & Dunlevy to enable minority students to overcome economic barriers to pursuing a legal education and thereby allow the Oklahoma legal profession to reflect the diversity of the community it serves. Since its inception, the scholarship has been awarded to 16 OU Law students.

The Allie M. and Robert E. Stephenson Scholarship was established in 1997 by Malvina Stephenson, in memory of her parents, and is awarded to deserving first-year students.

Later in her law school career, Curring-Moore also received the Bess Zeldich Ungerman Scholarship and the T. Ray Phillips III Memorial Scholarship. The former is awarded to the outstanding third-year minority female student and the latter is presented to a second- or third-year law student with demonstrated financial need.

“I was truly blessed to receive the scholarships as a way to ensure financial stability. The scholarships I received helped me to fret less about finances and focus on my studies.”

Explaining the significance of the financial assistance she received, Curring-Moore said, “As an older, married law school student, I did not have the luxury to move back home or find additional roommates to share living expenses. I quit my job as a teacher to completely focus on law school, which placed a financial strain on my husband and me. I was truly blessed to receive the scholarships as a way to ensure financial stability. The scholarships I received helped me to fret less about finances and focus on my studies.”

Curring-Moore approached her law school career as she had her teaching career and became actively involved in law school activities. As a first-year student, she served as the community service chair for the Black Law Students Association and created a reading program, BLSA Book Buddies, which connected inner-city elementary schoolchildren with law students. She later served as the BLSA vice president and director of the regional moot court competition.

Additionally, Curring-Moore served on the OU Law Board of Advocates and was a member of the Students for Access to Justice (now known as the Public Interest Law Students Association), a student-driven organization that works to develop and sustain a culture of commitment to public service within the College of Law. In SATJ, she worked for two years as co-coordinator for the group’s pro bono program.

In the fall semester of her third year of law school, Curring-Moore’s life changed forever. She and her husband became first-time parents when their son Mason arrived two months early. He spent the first month of his life in the neonatal intensive care unit.

“In order to tend to my son, as well as my own medical issues, I made the decision to sit out of law school for a semester,” she said. Because scholarship distributions had already been made for the semester, Curring-Moore contacted Alexander and the Crowe & Dunlevy firm to make arrangements to return the funds. She explained the attorneys’ reaction, “They were adamant that I keep the scholarships. They were even kind enough to send baby presents! Words cannot express how grateful I was for their support.”

Curring-Moore returned to law school for the spring 2008 semester and completed the requirements for a juris doctor degree in December 2008. Two months later, she gave birth to Myles, the couple’s second son.
After her law school graduation, the family moved to Amarillo, Texas, to allow Currin-Moore to work for The Underwood Law Firm, where she had previously clerked. Her work there focused on education law as she represented several area school districts in matters dealing with student discipline, employment issues and First Amendment rights.

In 2011, Currin-Moore and her family returned to Oklahoma and she served as the executive director of teacher and leader effectiveness for the Oklahoma State Department of Education. She currently serves as the director of performance management and accountability for the Oklahoma City Public Schools. She is responsible for the new teacher and leader evaluation system and works closely with teachers, principals and central office staff to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. In addition, she deals with union negotiations and writes district policy dealing with evaluations.

In looking back on her legal education experience, Currin-Moore expressed a sentiment similar to one articulated by one of her benefactors – Robert Alexander – when he established the William L. Bruce Scholarship to honor a beloved Harvard Law School administrator. She said, “Along with being thankful for the scholarships I have received, I am also thankful for the person who put me in the position to receive the scholarships. Assistant Dean Stanley Evans always pushed me to achieve despite difficult circumstances. He was always encouraging, not only to me, but also to so many others.”

Our most prestigious OU Law scholarship, the William T. Comfort Jr. and James T. Comfort Scholarship, was established in 1994 through a generous endowment from James T. Comfort and William T. Comfort Jr., brothers who graduated from OU Law in 1957 and 1961, respectively. Since its inception, the scholarship has provided more than $5 million in scholarships to almost 1,000 OU Law students. There are three additional scholarships funded by the brothers’ gift, two of which benefit incoming first-year students. The third fund provides scholarships to the top 10 students in the second- and third-year classes.

Jodi Warmbrod Dishman ('05) was awarded a Comfort Scholarship in 2003 as one of the top 10 students in her second-year class. She labels this scholarship and the others she received while a student at OU Law, “an incredible blessing.” Since her teenage years, Dishman had been aware of the harsh financial realities of obtaining a post-secondary education.

She was born in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1979. At the age of 3, Dishman moved to Edmond, Oklahoma, and attended school there, graduating as class valedictorian from Edmond Santa Fe High School in 1998.

Explaining how she developed her understanding of the financial burden of pursuing higher education, Dishman said, “My parents divorced when I was 2. Although I had a wonderful and supportive
upbringing, financially it was not always easy for my family, and I saw my parents sacrifice to make ends meet.”

She knew that to attend college and not be saddled with debt, she would need to earn scholarships. Fortunately, Southern Methodist University in Dallas, a school she loved, offered her a great financial aid package. She was excited to head south of the Red River to begin the educational journey that, according to her childhood plan, would eventually lead her to medical school.

However, that plan changed while Dishman was at SMU. “Sitting in organic chemistry one day my sophomore year, I decided – abruptly, according to my family – I no longer wanted to go to medical school or pursue a career in medicine,” she said. “Through my college experience, I found my passion was public service. I was active in student government in college and served as student body president my senior year at SMU. I enjoyed leadership, complex issues and working with people to find solutions. Practicing law was a natural fit for me.”

After earning a bachelor’s degree in marketing from SMU in 2002, Dishman entered the OU College of Law to begin what was to be a stellar academic performance. Her law school career was not, however, without some adversity. During her first semester, her father died from a heart attack and Dishman’s initial reaction was to drop out of law school.

It was her mother, a legal assistant since the early 1970s, who convinced Dishman to continue her legal education. “She told me I had to finish law school, and that is what my dad would have wanted to see,” Dishman explained.

She did continue and managed to use the adversity to achieve positive results. “We all cope with loss in different ways,” said Dishman. “Studying was my way to keep my mind off my loss and when I couldn’t sleep at night, I would use that time to study.” Her efforts paid off. Because of her class ranking, she earned a Comfort Scholarship.

“Because of others’ generosity, I feel compelled to make sure I ‘pay it forward’ and do for others what had been done for me.”

During the remainder of her three years at OU Law, Dishman continued to excel, receiving numerous accolades. In addition to the Comfort Scholarship, she also received the Doerner, Saunders, Daniel & Anderson LLP, Dickson M. Saunders Memorial Scholarship, awarded to a 1L who demonstrates academic excellence and selfless dedication to the improvement of OU Law; the McKinney & Stringer Scholarship for having the highest academic record after two semesters; the McAfee & Taft John McHenry Mee Scholarship for earning the highest grade in Corporations (now awarded for the highest grade in Real Estate Transactions); the Robert B. Looper Memorial Scholarship for maintaining the highest academic record after four semesters; and the Joel Jankowsky Outstanding Graduate Award, which recognizes a graduating student’s leadership, scholarship and service to others.

Additional recognition came to Dishman in law school, including the James F. Hawes Memorial Cup Award, presented to the outstanding 2L; the Oklahoma Bar Association Outstanding Law School Senior Student Award; eight American Jurisprudence Awards for earning the highest grade in eight different courses, and election to the Order of the Coif.

Commenting on the life-altering aspects of receiving a scholarship, Dishman said she was able to focus on her studies and not worry about how she would pay for her education. “It was also very freeing because it gave me the opportunity to pursue two federal clerkships, an experience that shaped me professionally and personally. I got to see firsthand how judges think about and resolve cases and how they view lawyers’ relationships with each other and
the court,” she said. “If I had been saddled with huge amounts of debt following college and law school, I might not have pursued those opportunities.”

Being a scholarship recipient also inspired Dishman to give back to the law school and community, both financially and with her time. “Because of others’ generosity, I feel compelled to make sure I ‘pay it forward’ and do for others what had been done for me,” she said.

Working hard has been a continuing theme in Dishman’s life. While excelling as a student, she also served as the president of her 1L class and was editor-in-chief of the Oklahoma Law Review. In addition, she worked as a research assistant for Professor Joe Thai and clerked for two different Oklahoma City law firms.

During her first year out of law school, Dishman worked as a judicial law clerk for the chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, in Houston. The following year, she held another clerkship with a different judge on the same court, based in San Antonio.

After completing her second clerkship, Dishman worked as a trial attorney with the international law firm of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, in their San Antonio office. During almost five years there, her practice involved class actions, securities litigation and insurance litigation.

Last summer, Dishman, her husband Brent, also a 2005 OU Law grad, and their two young sons, Cash and Rook, returned to Oklahoma. She took a job with McAfee & Taft, one of the firms for which she had clerked as a student. She serves as of counsel with a practice focused on trial litigation involving complex business matters, class actions, securities law and insurance, as well as appellate litigation.

Outside the office, Dishman finds time to serve as a trustee of the Metro Tech Foundation, which provides scholarships and other financial assistance to students at the Metro Technology Centers in Oklahoma. She also serves on the steering committee for the James E. Caswell Undergraduate Leadership Fellows Program, which provides leadership development grants to SMU students.

Dishman is quick to express her appreciation for the donors whose gifts benefited her at OU Law. “Their gifts have opened many doors and opportunities for me, and I will always be grateful,” she said. “It has also motivated me to continue working hard so I can make sure future OU Law students have the same opportunities and great experiences I did.”

She challenged other alumni, “Consider making a gift to the law school to support student scholarships. One of the biggest misconceptions about giving is that it must be some large amount to matter. Gifts of any size help, and it is important we all get in the habit of giving back to the next generation of lawyers and to show support for our law school.”

Christopher M. Staine (‘10) finalized his decision to attend law school during his junior year at the University of Oklahoma. While working to earn a bachelor’s degree in information studies, he realized he liked being challenged intellectually. That realization, coupled with the practical consideration of increasing his marketability in the job market, led him to decide to study law.

The first thoughts of a legal career had come to Staine as an adolescent growing up in Houston as the only child of Michael and Juanita Staine. After graduating from Cypress Creek High School in 2003, Staine came to OU, for what was to be seven consecutive years of study. “I did not take any time off between college and law school – either to gain practical working experience or simply to take a
break from academia,” he said. “That fact seemed to distinguish me from many of the students in my class.”

Staine distinguished himself further during his law school career, and as a result, was awarded the Joel Jankowsky Outstanding Graduate Award. The award, presented annually at the convocation ceremony for the graduating class, goes to the student whose combined leadership, scholarship and selfless service to others exemplifies a standard of overall excellence.

His leadership abilities were apparent in his involvement with the Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Chapter of the Black Law Students Association. As a first-year student, Staine developed a video presentation, “BLSA Voices,” for the OU chapter’s Black History Program and wrote a Sooner Lawyer article describing the short documentary. He also created an electronic newsletter to highlight the organization’s events and keep student members and alumni informed. In his final year at the College of Law, Staine served as BLSA president and garnered recognition for his academic excellence and leadership skills at the regional and national levels of the organization.

He was active in the competition program at OU Law as well. Staine competed in the National Moot Court Competition and the ABA Moot Court Competition, where he co-authored a brief that received the Best Brief Award at the Boston regional competition. In addition, Staine served as the scoring director for the Board of Advocates, the student organization that promotes oral and written advocacy through on- and off-campus competitions.

Staine’s other OU Law activities and honors included serving as an editor of the Oklahoma Journal of Law and Technology, receiving an Academic Achievement Award for earning the highest grade in Remedies, and being selected for membership in Phi Delta Phi International Legal Fraternity.

“If I had the opportunity to speak with the parties responsible for establishing and/or funding the scholarships and the award I received, I would say – ‘Thank you. Your generous contribution provided me access to an otherwise inaccessible quality legal education, and it inspired me to effectuate positive change in my community through my time and resources. For that, I am forever grateful.’”

—Christopher M. Staine
Nearly 200 scholarships, fellowships and awards have been established and supported by alumni, friends and donors to benefit students, making a difference in their lives.

His dedication to and performance in these student organizations and programs led to his selection for two scholarships – the Cole E. Adwon Memorial Scholarship and the Leon J. York Jr. Scholarship. The first is awarded to a second-year student who advances to the quarterfinals or beyond in the 1L Moot Court Competition. The second is presented to a student who demonstrates professional promise.

“These scholarships were fundamental in helping me attain an otherwise unattainable opportunity as they erased an omnipresent financial hurdle,” Staine said. “My gratitude for receipt of these scholarships motivated my desire to excel in my academic studies so that someday I would have the ability to provide this same opportunity to others seeking to pursue their goals.”

In addition to the financial relief provided by awards and scholarships, summer employment gave Staine some economic breathing room. He worked during both summers of his law school career with the dual purpose of advancing his legal education and easing the financial burden of that education. During summer 2008, Staine worked as a research assistant for Professor Stephen Knippenberg. The following summer, he served as a clerk in two different Oklahoma law firms.

One of those firms, Crowe & Dunlevy, hired Staine as an associate when he graduated. He is based in the firm’s Oklahoma City office, where his practice focuses on the areas of energy, natural resources, creditor’s rights, bankruptcy and other commercial litigation.

Explaining the duties of his job, Staine said, “My direct responsibility generally involves assisting clients in navigating through all phases of pre-trial litigation, including the drafting of pleadings and motions, conducting discovery and presenting oral argument at dispositive and discovery motion hearings.”

Staine lives in Oklahoma City with his wife, Vivian, and is actively involved in the community. He serves on the board of directors of First Tee of Metropolitan Oklahoma City, a youth development program teaching life skills and leadership through golf. He is also an alumnus of the Leadership Oklahoma City LOYAL (Linking OKC’s Young Adult Leaders) Program, and a member of The Oklahoma Academy and the William J. Holloway Jr. American Inn of Court.

Staine serves as a pro bono attorney with Oklahoma Lawyers for Children and maintains memberships in the Oklahoma Bar Association, Oklahoma County Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association and the American Bar Association.

Among his favorite memories from law school, Staine counts traveling and competing in interscholastic and oral advocacy competitions, coordinating community service events through BLSA, and participating in final exam study sessions with his study groups. Reflecting on those memories, Staine said, “Through these events, I established a strong network of business professionals who will be lifelong friends.”

For a list of all the scholarships, fellowships and awards making a difference in the lives of our students, and made possible by the generosity of alumni and friends of the OU College of Law, see page 51.
Focus on philanthropy:

Being part of something larger than you

By Jonella Frank

From the day of their first-year orientation until graduation, students at the OU College of Law are reminded of the ideals and principles of service to clients and society. The message is received and embraced by the students, as evidenced by their participation in a variety of service events and projects.

The student-driven organization Public Interest Law Students Association is a concrete example of OU Law’s commitment to serving the public good. Founded in 2008, PILSA matches student volunteers with government agencies and nonprofit organizations. Since its inception, the organization has recognized student volunteer service totaling 57,000 hours.

Students also learn about working in the nonprofit sector from speakers hosted by the Office of Career Services in its Lunch and Learn series. The desire to improve communities and the lives of the people who reside in those communities motivates many people, lawyers included, to become involved with nonprofit organizations.

The OU Law alumna featured here was moved to dedicate her professional career to serving society. She works at a philanthropic nonprofit organization. Her story reveals what motivated her to utilize her legal education to focus on philanthropy.

Ginny Bass Carl (’86) was born in Indianapolis, where she lived with her parents, Jim and Kay Bass, for only three weeks before the family moved to Oklahoma to allow her father to attend law school. She grew up and graduated from high school in El Reno and came to Norman to attend the University of Oklahoma.

I finally understand what it means to change the world.
After earning a bachelor’s degree in accounting from OU in 1983, Carl continued her education at the OU College of Law, fulfilling her childhood desire to be an attorney. “From the fifth grade on, I knew I wanted to be an attorney,” she explained. “Practically all the working folks in my family – grandfather, father and uncle – were attorneys. I admired and respected them and was aware of the respect the community had for them. I thought being a lawyer meant I could change the world.”

Carl’s first job as an attorney was in Honolulu, working in the real estate department of the city’s largest law firm. The Hawaii Bar Exam was the first of three she would take and pass during her legal career.

After less than a year, Carl left Honolulu and moved to Dallas for what would be a 17-year period of her life. She took and passed the Texas Bar Exam, and began working in Dallas at a small firm, focusing primarily on civil litigation. Carl later had a corporate/small business and probate practice at another Dallas firm. While working in Dallas, her children, Collin and Rachael, were born.

After the birth of her second child, she stopped practicing law to be a stay-at-home mom and did volunteer work in church, school and nonprofit organizations. During a period of searching for a personal fulfillment that had eluded her in practicing law, she entered the seminary. Carl was hired by her church to train in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program, a Montessori-based approach to the religious education of children.

“I felt I was making a difference and it was wonderful,” Carl said. “I was happy and knew I was doing work that positively impacted others. Having a mission motivated me.”

However, financial considerations caused her to re-enter the legal workplace. She accepted a job managing a Dallas law firm, merging her business and legal interests and training.

In 2003, Carl moved back to Oklahoma as a single parent and began her first full-time job with a nonprofit organization. Utilizing her undergraduate degree, she worked for nearly five years as a senior accountant and financial analyst at Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation. Based in Oklahoma City and founded in 1946, OMRF is a nationally recognized nonprofit biomedical research institute.

During the time Carl worked in accounting at OMRF, her family expanded to four when she married Peter Carl in 2004. Three years later, with his support, she decided to take the Oklahoma Bar Exam – 21 years after graduating from law school! Although she didn’t know if she would ever practice law in Oklahoma, she was certain she needed to achieve this goal for herself and set an example for her children. She took bar review courses in the evenings and on weekends, studied at lunch, and took practice tests at night while still working full time and managing the busy schedules of her family.
Advice for lawyers considering a career with a nonprofit organization...

“Do it!! When and if it gets in your blood, you cannot imagine doing anything else. And the nonprofit sector needs well-trained, smart people to take them to the next level. There are 19,000 nonprofits in the state of Oklahoma. Oklahoma is one of the most generous states in the union. You are needed to bring these two together to serve those in need, to elevate our society, to brighten our world. Get involved. Find your passion. Even if it’s not a lifelong pursuit, you will be exposed to incredible people and learn so much about your community. People in nonprofits take networking to a whole new level. Consider trying it out, see if it’s a fit, and use your skills to make a difference doing something you love.”

— Ginny Bass Carl

After conquering her third bar exam, Carl said she was motivated to expand her horizons with a new career in the nonprofit sector. In October 2008, she went to work at the Oklahoma Heritage Association as its chief financial officer and in-house counsel. She worked there for two years before returning to OMRF as senior director of development, her current job.

Carl described her work as “the best job” and a great marriage of development and law. “My primary responsibility is planned giving, but we work from a team approach, so I also am active in major gifts, annual appeal, stewardship and tours,” she said. “I love giving presentations – on OMRF in general and planned giving in particular.”

When talking about the responsibilities of her job, Carl emphasized the importance of relationships. Through her active involvement in a variety of organizations, she is able to develop and maintain professional and social relationships. She is a member of the Oklahoma Bar Association and the Association of Fundraising Professionals, as well as a fellow of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation. She is on the boards of the Oklahoma City Estate Planning Council and the Oklahoma Planned Giving Council. She is the current president of the board of Sunbeam Family Services, vice chairman of the board of Friends of the Capitol and president of the Lambda Chi Alpha Parents Club at OU.

Carl also serves on the boards of Sunbeam Foundation, Educare and ReMerge. On behalf of the Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits, she teaches board governance in the Standards for Excellence series and conducts board trainings and retreats for other nonprofits. Additionally, she is a member of All Souls Episcopal Church, P.E.O. and Kappa Kappa Gamma Alumnae. In 2012, Carl was recognized by The Journal Record as one of “50 Making a Difference” during its Woman of the Year event.

Carl speaks in glowing terms about OMRF, where scientists are developing treatments for human diseases, including heart disease, cancer, lupus, multiple sclerosis and Alzheimer’s disease. The highlights of her OMRF job, she said, are the times when she hears a donor’s story or sees their eyes light up as they walk into a lab and begin to understand what a scientist is studying.

“I’m working for the greater good and there is no better feeling,” Carl said. “I feel I have my finger closer to the pulse of what is going on in our community. I meet and know some of the most amazing people who have performed acts of service that blow you away. They awe me, they inspire me. Sure, I want to be adequately compensated for my work, and I work very hard, but I know I am part of something that is larger than me. I am a better citizen, a better parent and a better person because I witness sacrifice and efforts to improve the lives of others. I finally understand what it means to change the world.” | SL |
New programs create greater opportunities

BY BRIAN KING

Students at OU Law have more choices than ever before, including what kind of degree they will earn.

Juris doctor students now have the option of pursuing a specialized certificate contained within their three-year degree. Other students are now able to earn an entirely new degree at OU Law, the Master of Legal Studies, which requires a shorter time commitment.

Specialized Certificates for J.D.
The specialized certificates, available starting this fall, are in Energy Law, Natural Resources Law, American Indian Law or Business Entrepreneurship. The new certificate programs are designed to enhance the J.D. degree and can be completed within the same three-year time period.

Master of Legal Studies
The Master of Legal Studies programs will help many students who have completed undergraduate degrees, but don’t plan to become lawyers. Following the advice of numerous companies, law firms and government agencies, OU Law introduced MLS degrees in Indigenous Peoples Law and Energy and Natural Resources Law. The MLS programs benefit individuals working with tribes, energy companies and other organizations that require a working knowledge of their legal issues, but not a license to practice law.

The Master of Legal Studies degree in Indigenous People Law will be earned through online courses and can be completed in two years of part-time study. The MLS in Energy and Natural Resources Law is achieved on campus and can be completed in one year of full-time study or two years of part-time study.

“We are developing new and dynamic classes and programs to ensure our students receive a world-class legal education, and will continue to be forward thinking to anticipate the needs of the evolving job markets,” Dean Joe Harroz said. “As the state’s flagship law school, it is our mission to provide an unsurpassed legal education at an affordable price to ensure our students can pursue the career of their dreams.”

With the JD certificates, masters’ degrees and LL.M. program, OU Law is proving its commitment to provide its graduates with significant, strategic advantages in the marketplace. | SL |
It’s happened to us all. Knowledge gained in the past, but untapped for many years suddenly springs forward in our mind when the need to access it arises. Perhaps it was while playing a trivia board game or watching a television game show, but for one OU Law alumnus, it was during a job interview. And that job would take him to another continent 8,000 miles away from home to a place where the geography, climate, culture and legal system represented a vast departure from his “normal.”

It was his knowledge of Native American law and its multitude of jurisdictional issues that benefited Michael Ridgeway (’94) and helped him land a job that would take him and his wife, Judy Ridgeway (’75), to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, for a three-year, life-altering adventure.

The Ridgeways had similar motivations for attending law school and becoming lawyers, but they were on very different timelines. Judy graduated from Northwestern Oklahoma State University in 1970 with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and sociology. For a year, she lived in New York City, where she worked as a social worker, “in the field on the streets, making sure welfare clients were still breathing before they got their benefit checks,” she said.

Her experience in that job led her to study law. “I decided most of the problems of the poor were legal, and they sorely lacked adequate representation,” said Judy. “As a social worker, I did not have enough power. Lawyers had the power to make a difference.” She entered OU Law in 1971, attending classes in Monnet Hall as Judith Anne Nieberlein, a self-described “all-American hippie,” whose political and social perspectives had changed by the time she earned her J.D.

During her first job interview after law school graduation, Judy was shocked when the senior partner in a small-town Oklahoma law firm asked her how fast she could type. In no uncertain terms, she informed him that was none of his business. “I walked out and
opened my own office,” Judy said. “I never applied for another job and have been in private practice in Norman, Oklahoma, since.”

Michael, on the other hand, took a less direct route to pursuing the career to which he was drawn for the first time as a self-conscious seventh-grader with new braces on his teeth. In school he was repeatedly subjected to verbal abuse by one of his teachers. “Instead of calling me by my name, he called me ‘brace face’ or ‘metal mouth.’ I wanted my parents to sue the teacher for intentional infliction of emotional distress or something – anything – to punish him,” Michael said. “They chose a different method of dealing with the problem. Even though they did not even talk to a lawyer, I somehow got it into my head that lawyers could change the world and correct any form of injustice.”

But his passion for the law had cooled by the time he entered the University of Oklahoma as a freshman in 1976. After five semesters, Michael took an extended sabbatical from college. During that time, he worked as an insurance adjuster and later, as a private investigator. He met Judy during this period of his life when she hired him to conduct an investigation.

The couple married in 1988 and Michael returned to OU, after an absence of almost 10 years, and completed a degree in public administration in 1991. With his interest in the law rekindled, Michael entered OU Law and graduated in 1994.

After graduation, he worked in a small law firm and also as a solo practitioner. However, he wasn’t happy in private practice, and, in looking back on his days as an insurance adjuster, he thought he might enjoy regulatory law. He contacted the general counsel of the Oklahoma Insurance Department and submitted his resume. After not hearing anything for six months, Michael was called in for an interview and offered the job of assistant general counsel.

He worked at the Insurance Department for 13 years, serving in the administration of three elected insurance commissioners, and was named general counsel in 2005. However, when state voters elected a new insurance commissioner in 2010, Michael lost his job.

His original plan was to take some time off and build a greenhouse on the 50 acres of land east of Norman where he and Judy live, but much to his surprise, he was in great demand as a consultant and expert witness. Within a month, his work schedule was full and he was turning away business.

In early February 2011, Michael received an email “out of the blue” from a headhunter in Dubai retained by the Dubai Financial Services Authority to assist with a worldwide search to fill the position of general counsel. The DFSA is the consolidated regulator of all types of financial services conducted in or from the Dubai International Financial Centre, a specific geographic area within the Emirate of Dubai. In this free zone, the civil and commercial laws of the United Arab Emirates and Dubai do not apply. A comprehensive body of law is in place just for the DIFC.

“I called Judy and said, ‘You’re not going to believe this.’ I read the email to her and within minutes we decided it sounded like fun,” Michael said. “Of course, we knew it was probably a longshot, but it seemed like I could learn some things about myself and the recruitment process used by a well-known international financial regulator.”

The two-month-long interview process resulted in Michael being offered the job of DFSA general counsel. The couple’s discussions about the job began with the focus on enjoying the experience of the process, and had evolved into how they could wrap up their business and make arrangements for all their “stuff” that was to remain in Oklahoma while they would be in Dubai.

“We had visited Dubai and were impressed by the city and by Michael’s prospective co-workers. The
decision to move was easy,” explained Judy. “We decided Michael would go to Dubai ahead of me to find a place to live and get settled, and I would remain behind for about six weeks to take care of business and personal details in Oklahoma. Up to that point, the longest Michael and I had been apart during our 25 years of marriage was probably less than 10 days. That six-week period was lonely, and it involved letting go of a lot of things that had long been part of my daily life.”

June 28, 2011, was Michael’s first day as DFSA general counsel. He is the primary legal adviser for the DFSA chief executive and board of directors, but has no direct involvement in regulatory matters or administrative procedures. He has responsibility for a variety of matters, including drafting of legislation and organizational policies, participating in negotiations and discussions with officials from the Dubai and United Arab Emirates governments, and assessing and managing a variety of legal risks the DFSA might face.

The United Arab Emirates has a legal system of civil law. All official versions of legislation are enacted in Arabic, and court proceedings are conducted in Arabic. The DIFC has its own common law legal system and court system, where proceedings are conducted in English. Michael explained, “The DIFC is like a landlocked island within the Emirate of Dubai where English is the official language of the common law legal system.

“The DFSA regulates business within the DIFC, but in the rest of the United Arab Emirates the financial services are subject to federal regulation. This can result in jurisdictional questions where, for example, a DIFC-licensed firm is offering investments or advice to customers located outside the DIFC,” he continued.

It was this type of jurisdictional issue about which Michael was asked during the interview process. He was able to call upon his studies at the OU College of Law with nationally recognized Native American law expert Professor Rennard Strickland.
Michael, a former editor-in-chief of the *American Indian Law Review*, was able to respond when asked about cross-border activities and jurisdiction. “By explaining how similar jurisdictional issues involving Oklahoma’s ‘checkerboard’ of Indian Country have been resolved by the courts, I was able to demonstrate an understanding of principles that were relevant between the United Arab Emirates federal government and the ‘island’ of the DIFC jurisdiction,” he said.

When Judy joined Michael in Dubai in summer 2011, she was still in the process of closing her law practice of 36 years. “During the first year in Dubai I went back to the USA about every other month, completing pending trials and handling children and rental property,” she said. Judy has significantly curtailed her international travel. Her last trip home was in October 2012, when she and Michael were able to take in two OU football games.

Since her first and only interview for a job as a lawyer in 1975, Judy worked hard at building her law practice. During the first five years, she was often in the courtroom. She handled personal injury, product liability and mass tort cases – high stakes, high-stress legal work.

On April 10, 1980, Judy accepted that she was an alcoholic and a drug addict and changed her life’s course. “I joined a self-help group, and have been sober and active with helping others since that day,” she stated.

With a fresh view and new priorities, Judy made another change. “Custody trials became my passion. I returned to my natural ‘helping’ mode and usually chose the underdog, who at that time was fathers, alcoholic or drug addicted mothers, or mothers who had given up their children,” she explained. “My past became an asset rather than a hindrance. I could share my experience with others, and expose them to a different way of living. Working with Lawyers Helping Lawyers was a great gift to me.”

Since moving to Dubai, Judy has worked on “letting go of bossing” and is developing her helpmate qualities. “I have learned more about the meaning of marriage and the significance of the word ‘housewife,’” said Judy. “I also became aware of how much of my own self-worth was attached to my profession. Now my need for recognition is met from within.”

In addition to learning to be a terrific cook, helpmate and housewife, Judy has been teaching English to Emirati students and adults. She also is taking belly dancing lessons. And, she joked, “I am working on becoming a Dubai staple, ‘a high-maintenance wife.’”

Judy and Michael have three adult children and two of them have made the trip to Dubai, which takes 17 hours in actual flight time. The oldest, C.B. Payne, Judy’s son from a previous marriage, lives in Dallas with his wife, Cass, and their son, Zeb, born in...
November 2011. They’ve not yet made the trip, but in November 2013, when Michael and Judy celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary, the Paynes will meet the Rideways in London for a few days and then travel on to Dubai for the “iconic” family vacation.

Their second child, Charles Ridgeway, lives in Norman and works as a barber. He visited his parents in February 2012.

Amy Ridgeway, their youngest child, has racked up the highest total of frequent flyer miles. She visited in August 2011, shortly after Judy joined Michael in Dubai, and again in December 2011. After graduating from Princeton University, Amy made the trip for a third time in July 2012. She lives in Norman and has taken the Law School Admission Test. “After years of protesting that there was no way she would ever be a lawyer, she seems to be changing her tune,” Michael said.

Michael describes living in Dubai as “a bit like living in Disneyland.” Of the 100 tallest buildings in the world, 23 of them are in Dubai. One of them, the Burj Khalifa, is the tallest building in the world. More than a half mile tall, it is twice the height of the Empire State Building.

“We can go snow skiing or sledding at the Mall of the Emirates, four-wheeling in the desert, fishing in the Persian Gulf or visit the traditional markets,” Michael said. “Common sights are camels and camel crossing signs, as well as Ferraris, Lamborghini, Maserati and Porsches, which are as common as Toyotas in Oklahoma.”

In contrast to America, often described as a melting pot where immigrants’ cultures blend and merge into what has become American, Michael said Dubai is better described as a salad bowl where many different nationalities and cultures retain their unique flavors and coexist side-by-side.

But with that coexistence of cultures and languages, sometimes come communication difficulties. Michael told of bragging about the birth of his grandson to one of his Emirati co-workers. She asked the child’s name and Michael replied “Zeb.” She blushed upon hearing the name and when questioned, would only say that he should not say the name in public. Michael later learned that his grandson’s name is similar to the Arabic slang term for a male body part.

Judy also had an issue with language differences. When the Rideways were moving into their Dubai apartment, she was speaking with the security guard and the leasing agent, both Pakistanis. After unsuccessful attempts by Judy to communicate a point to the security guard, the leasing agent interrupted, suggesting that she would convey the message and said, “Miss Judy does not know how to communicate properly.” Later, Judy commented that this was a surprising comment about someone who earned her living for more than 35 years communicating in a courtroom!

Michael admitted that living and working in Dubai has been “a bit like law school in that the learning curve has been really steep.” For both Michael and Judy, some of the learning has been introspective.

During a visit to a camel farm near the Dubai camel racetrack, a trainer invited Judy to hop on.
After completing two-thirds of his commitment to the DFSA, Michael said he realizes he is part of a greater humanity, which includes people who had very different upbringings but still experience the same feelings. “People in America think of the Middle East as a violent, scary place,” he said. “People from Asia hear about school shootings and the Boston Marathon bombing and think America is a violent, scary place.”

Michael views his three years in Dubai as an opportunity to be an ambassador for Oklahoma and the United States. “People I meet may form their opinion of Americans based on their interaction with me. Because of that, I tend to focus on the positive traits and values of my home country and state,” stated Michael. “Most people still seem to have a positive impression of the United States, and I have been able to educate many people about the virtues of Oklahoma and its residents.”

He continued, “I have grown close to a number of people who appear on the surface to be very different than I am. However, I feel like a part of them, rather than apart from them. I feel faith in our similarities rather than fear of our differences.”

Judy expressed a similar sentiment. “I believed the American way was the best way. In Dubai, I’ve seen a system that has opened my judgmental eyes,” she said. “I feel safe in the Middle East. Safe to leave my purse in the shopping cart while I look at something down the aisle. Safe to leave my home door unlocked. Safe to walk alone in the evening. The most important lesson I have learned is that the individuals of all nationalities respect the beliefs of all others and their focal desire is to live in peace on a daily basis and improve the lot of their family.”

The Ridgeways have always loved traveling and seeing new sights and cultures, but before they had the opportunity to come to Dubai, the schedules and pressures of everyday life kept them fully occupied. “Dreams of visiting strange lands were discussed in future tense as something we would do together after we retired,” said Michael. “However, it worried us that our older lawyer friends never really seemed to retire – a better description might be that they downsized and eventually faded away.”

They both encourage anyone considering working outside the United States to do it. “Open-mindedness, patience and tolerance are key,” commented Judy. “If you don’t already have them, you will develop them.”

Michael added, “Do it. It will be an adventure and an opportunity to see things you never even knew existed. You will see the world through a new pair of glasses.”

A new pair of glasses enabled Michael Ridgeway to say, “If I had to pick one thing about law school that shaped the course of my life, I would have to say it was my experience with the American Indian Law Review. The jurisdictional issues that affect Indian Country opened my eyes to a better understanding of U.S. federalism, and now they help me understand how I can walk across the street in a foreign country and enter an Arabic language civil law system, leaving the English language common law system a few steps behind.”

And looking through those new lenses, Michael was reminded of something he first believed as a seventh-grader in braces. “Law school also taught me that lawyers really can change the world.”
News briefs

1950s

Richard Steed ('52) was honored in March by the Pottawatomie County Bar Association for 60 years of membership in the Oklahoma Bar Association.

George Lindsay Peters ('53), of Shawnee, Oklahoma, was recognized for 60 years of membership in the Oklahoma Bar Association at a March event hosted by the Pottawatomie County Bar Association.

Mickey D. Wilson ('56) was selected for induction into the Tulsa Historical Society Hall of Fame. He served on the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma from 1983 until his retirement in 1997.

1960s

C. Wayne Falkenstein ('60) joined RGG Law as of counsel attorney in the firm's Oklahoma City office. His practice is focused on Social Security disability.

Ralph G. Thompson ('61) was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Oklahoma at the 2013 commencement ceremony. He served for 32 years as a U.S. district judge for the Western District of Oklahoma and has held a variety of leadership positions within the federal judiciary and the university.

Norman A. Lamb ('63) received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Cameron University Alumni Association. He served in the Oklahoma Senate from 1971 until 1988. In 1995, he was appointed as the Oklahoma secretary of veteran affairs, a position in which he served until 2011.

Tom A. Lucas ('64) retired August 1 as district judge in Oklahoma Judicial District 21, which includes Cleveland, McClain and Garvin counties. Prior to being elected district judge in 1994, he was in private practice for 30 years and also served as a municipal judge for the City of Norman, Oklahoma.

Sheppard F. “Mike” Miers Jr. ('66) received the Rick Kells Outstanding Tax Professional Award from the Oklahoma Society of CPAs. He is a shareholder of GableGotwals, where he works in the Tulsa, Oklahoma, office. His areas of practice include tax law, employment law and estate planning.

Joel Jankowsky ('68) was named to The National Law Journal list of “The 100 Most Influential Lawyers in America.” He is a partner at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP, based in Washington, D.C., where he represents clients on a variety of public policy matters, with an emphasis on entertainment, telecommunications and technology-related issues.

E. Elaine Schuster ('68) received the 2012 Sweet Briar College Distinguished Alumna Award. She practices law in Oklahoma City.

Charles G. Tate ('68), of Ardmore, Oklahoma, was appointed to the Oklahoma Historical Society board of directors. He is president of Hatak Shaw!, a company that performs historical research for the Chickasaw Nation. He has previously been in private practice and served as a special judge in Carter County.

John D. Groendyke ('69) was selected for induction into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. He is chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Groendyke Transport Inc. in Enid, Oklahoma.

1970s

Greg Meier ('73) was elected secretary-treasurer of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Bar Association. He is the managing partner of Meier & Associates in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where his practice focuses on litigation and Indian law.

Steven A. Novick ('73) associated his practice as of counsel at the law firm of Smolen, Smolen & Rytman PLLC, Tulsa, Oklahoma. His practice focuses upon plaintiff’s employment matters, disability rights, plaintiff’s civil rights cases and plaintiff’s personal injury.
G. Blaine Schwabe III ('74) joined GableGotwals in the firm’s Oklahoma City office. His practice areas include business litigation, bankruptcy and commercial law.

Robert D. Long ('78) was appointed to the Oklahoma Board of Bar Examiners representing the fifth judicial district. He is a partner in the Ardmore, Oklahoma, firm of Fischl, Culp, McMillin, Chaffin, Bahner & Long LLP.

Charles Rogers ('78) was named a senior assistant attorney general. He has served as a prosecutor in Oklahoma for 28 years, serving as an assistant attorney general in the Oklahoma attorney general’s office, as well as an assistant district attorney for Payne, Logan and Oklahoma counties.

Lee Wilkins ('78) received the 2013 Grahovac Award for his commitment and service to Meritas, a professional services global network of business law firms. He is the partner-in-charge of the Dallas office of Cantey Hanger LLP, where he practices corporate, real estate and banking law.

Graydon Dean Luthey ('79) was elected a general member of the International Masters of Gaming Law. He is a shareholder of GableGotwals, based in the Tulsa, Oklahoma, office.

Edgar “Jed” C. Morrison Jr. ('79) was selected for inclusion in the 2013 edition of the Chambers USA: America’s Leading Lawyers for Business guide. He is a partner at Jackson Walker LLP in San Antonio, Texas, where his practice focuses on health care law.

1980s

Mark D. Christiansen ('80) joined McAfee & Taft and will practice in Oklahoma City as co-leader of the firm’s energy and oil and gas group.

Reggie N. Whitten ('80) was selected for induction into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. He is a partner in the Whitten Burrage Law Firm in Oklahoma City.

Kenneth R. Farley ('81) was named associate district judge for McCurtain County. Prior to his appointment, he was in private practice in Idabel, Oklahoma, and served as assistant district attorney in McCurtain County.

Deirdre O. Dexter ('84) formed Deirdre Dexter PLLC in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. Her practice includes alternative dispute resolution, employment law and human resource issues.

Richard D. Nix ('85), shareholder of McAfee & Taft, was elected by the firm’s board of directors to a third term as the firm’s managing director. Based in the Oklahoma City office, his practice focuses on employee benefits.

G. Calvin Sharpe ('85) was named a shareholder of Phillips Murrah PC in Oklahoma City. His trial practice focuses on medical malpractice and personal injury cases.

Angela Ailles-Bahn ('86), of Oklahoma City, was elected vice president of the Oklahoma Association of Defense Counsel. Her firm serves as in-house counsel for State Farm.

Kyle E. Goerke ('86) was promoted to brigadier general in the Oklahoma National Guard, where he serves as assistant to the judge advocate general of the U.S. Army. As a civilian, he practices law in Watonga, Oklahoma.

Bill J. Hart Jr. ('86) joined Mayer Brown as a banking and finance partner in the firm’s Houston office. He was previously a partner with Baker Botts in Houston.

Kim Korando ('86) was recognized by Chambers USA: America’s Leading Lawyers for Business guide for labor and employment law. She is a partner at the Raleigh, North Carolina, firm of Smith Anderson, where she leads the employment, labor and human resources practice group.

Tom Q. Ferguson ('87) was named to the executive committee of Doerner, Saunders, Daniel & Anderson LLP. Based in the Tulsa, Oklahoma, office, his practice emphasizes civil and commercial litigation in state and federal courts.
Rob Robertson (‘87) was named a director of GableGotwals. Based in the Oklahoma City office, his practice primarily consists of complex litigation in a wide variety of areas.

Scott Meacham (‘88) was named president and chief executive officer of i2 Inc., an Oklahoma City not-for-profit corporation focused on growing technology-based Oklahoma companies. He continues as a director of Crowe & Dunlevy, where he represents banking and financial clients.

Debbie Maddox (‘89) was named general counsel for the Tulsa, Oklahoma companies. Based in the firm’s Tulsa, Oklahoma, office.

1990s

Robert L. Garbright (‘90) was elected to the board of directors of McAfee & Taft. Based in the firm’s Oklahoma City office, he is a commercial transactions attorney who previously served as leader of the firm’s real estate group.

Paula Inge (‘90) was appointed district judge for Atoka and Coal counties. She previously practiced law in Atoka, Oklahoma, and was chief financial officer for Mathis Brothers Furniture.

Catherine L. Campbell (‘91) was named a shareholder of Phillips Murrah PC in Oklahoma City. She focuses on state and federal appellate practice.

Richard M. Carson (‘91), of Tulsa, Oklahoma, was elected to serve as secretary of GableGotwals. His clients consist primarily of public energy companies, large and small businesses in various industries, and financial institutions.

Malinda S. Matlock (‘91) was elected president of the Oklahoma Association of Defense Counsel. She is a partner at Pierce Couch Hendrickson Baysinger & Green LLP, based in the Tulsa, Oklahoma, office.

Sharon Voorhees (‘91) was elected 2013 chairperson for the Oklahoma Community Service Commission, on which she has served since 2002. She is a partner in the Shelton Voorhees Law Group in Oklahoma City.

Paul E. Vrana (‘92) was elected to membership in the Fellows of the Texas Bar Foundation. He is a partner in Jackson Walker LLP, based in the firm’s Fort Worth, Texas, office, where he is co-chair of the energy practice group.

Michael McBride (‘93) received the inaugural Justice Rudolph Hargrave prize for outstanding scholarly article at the Oklahoma Supreme Court Sovereignty Symposium in Oklahoma City. He is a director of Crowe & Dunlevy, and chair of the Indian law and gaming practice group in the firm’s Tulsa, Oklahoma, office.

Carrie L. Palmer (‘93) was elected secretary of the Oklahoma Association of Defense Counsel. She practices in Oklahoma City with Resolution Legal Group, focusing on general business litigation and general business consulting, strategic planning and crisis management.

Christine “Chris” Larkin (‘94) was named vice president and general counsel of A. H. Belo Corporation, a Dallas-based newspaper publishing company. She previously worked for an affiliated television broadcasting company as assistant general counsel and was a partner in a Dallas law firm.

Todd A. McKinnis (‘94) joined the Edmond, Oklahoma, law firm of Rubenstein & Pitts PLLC. His areas of practice include real estate, commercial law and charitable and nonprofit organizations.

Nicole Scott (‘94) was inducted into the Oklahoma Conservation Hall of Fame in recognition of her outstanding service to rural America and the continued conservation of natural resources. She is the majority staff director of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee.

Becky Dias Borthwick (‘95) was appointed as a municipal court judge in Springfield, Missouri. She is a managing partner with insurance defense firm Franke, Schultz & Mullen, based in the Springfield office.
**2000s**

**Adam Childers** (’00) was named to the board of directors of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Employer Council. He is a director at Crowe & Dunlevy and co-chair of the firm’s labor and employment section.

**Erik Johnson** (’00) was named assistant district attorney for Coal County. He previously was in private practice in Ada, Oklahoma.

**Caroline Drummond** (’01) joined Drummond Law PLLC and is based in the firm’s Pawhuska, Oklahoma, office. Her practice is focused on general civil, domestic and criminal defense law.

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**Leah T. Rudnicki** (’01) joined Reed Smith LLP in its Houston office as a partner in the commercial litigation practice group. She previously practiced with Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP.

**W. Joseph Pickard** (’02) was elected to the board of directors of the Oklahoma Association of Defense Counsel. He is managing partner of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, office of Sweet Law.

**Lindsay J. McDowell** (’03) was elected to the board of directors of the Oklahoma Association of Defense Counsel. She is an associate with Rhodes Hieronymus in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

**Spencer B. Housley** (’04) founded Housley Law Group PLLC in Oklahoma City. The firm’s practice will focus primarily on personal injury, medical malpractice and family law.

**Adam J. Strange** (’04) was named director at Jones, Gotcher & Bogan PC in Tulsa, Oklahoma. His practice includes litigation, commercial transactions and construction law.

**Daniel P. Johnson** (’05) was named a director of Crowe & Dunlevy in the firm’s Oklahoma City office. Focusing on employment litigation, he represents employers in work-related matters.

**David B. Mahaffey** (’05) was elected shareholder of the Oklahoma City firm of Mahaffey & Gore PC. His oil and gas practice includes title examination, probate and commercial transactions.

**Rania Nasreddine** (’05) became a shareholder of GableGotwals. She works in the Tulsa office, where her practice focuses on litigation, real estate and energy, oil and gas law.

**Matthew D. Jankowski** (’06) was elected as a new shareholder at Mahaffey & Gore PC in Oklahoma City. His practices focuses on title examination and oil and gas transactional matters.
Justin Pybas ('06) was named partner of Conner & Winters. He works in the firm’s Oklahoma City office representing financial institutions and corporate clients.

Rick L. Warren ('06) was named partner with Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville of Oklahoma City. His practice includes business law, private placement securities offerings and sports franchises.

Andre Caldwell ('08) was named to the board of directors of Positive Tomorrows, a private, tuition-free elementary school in Oklahoma City that works to meet the educational and social service needs of homeless children and their families. He is an associate at Crowe & Dunlevy.

Kristin Huffaker Greenhaw ('08) was named associate general counsel for Sonic Corp. of Oklahoma City. She previously worked as a senior attorney for AT&T and as an associate with Crowe & Dunlevy.

Brent S. Howard ('08) was appointed as a member of the board of regents of Western Oklahoma State College in Altus. Areas of focus for his Altus law practice include estate planning, business planning, real estate and tax return preparation.

Jeff Virgin ('08) was named special judge for McClain and Garvin counties in Oklahoma Judicial District 21. He previously worked as an assistant district attorney in the same counties.

James Wylie ('08) joined the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s Office of Regulations in Washington, D.C. He previously worked for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Fair Housing Division in Washington, D.C.

Richard D. Johnson ('09) joined McAfee & Taft in the Oklahoma City office, where his practice will focus on business and commercial transactions. He previously worked as a state and local tax accountant for a large oil and gas company and maintained a private law practice.

Blake Lynch ('09) co-founded Wagner and Lynch, a law firm with offices in McAlester and Wilburton, Oklahoma. He has practiced law in that area of the state since graduating from law school.

Megan Brooke Tilly ('09) was named chief of the Oklahoma attorney general’s Oklahoma multicounty grand jury unit. Prior to working in that unit as an assistant attorney general, she served as an assistant district attorney for Logan and Payne counties.

2010s

Sofia Nagda ('10) was named to the “Lawyers of Color Hot List,” which recognized junior or mid-level attorneys in the legal profession. She is an associate with Fellers Snider in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where her practice focuses on general litigation, utility regulation and employment matters.

Aaron C. Parks ('10) joined the Edmond, Oklahoma, law firm of Rubenstein & Pitts PLLC as an associate. His practice includes civil and business litigation, real estate and corporate law.

Adam L. Wilson ('10) became an associate at Robinett Murphy & Shrier of Tulsa, Oklahoma. His practice will focus on civil litigation.

Kayna Stavast-Piper ('11) joined the Office of the Attorney General of Texas as an assistant attorney general in the antitrust section of the consumer protection division in Austin, Texas. She previously served as staff attorney in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

Isaac B. Helmerich ('12) joined Newton, O’Connor, Turner & Ketchum PC, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, as an associate attorney. His practice focuses on business and corporate law, estate planning and commercial transactions.

Haley Hopper ('12) became an associate of Pierce Couch Hendrickson Baysinger & Green LLP. She works in the firm’s Oklahoma City office, focusing on general civil litigation and insurance defense law.
Anne Sickles Maguire (’12) joined Latham, Wagner, Steele & Lehman PC in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Her areas of practice include Workers’ Compensation defense and Workers’ Compensation self-insurance.

Mitch McCuistian (’12) joined the law firm of Evan & Davis as an associate in the Edmond, Oklahoma, office. His practice focuses on general civil litigation, estate planning and business organization and succession planning.

Jessica Speegle (’12) joined Pierce Couch Hendrickson Baysinger & Green LLP as an associate in Oklahoma City. Her areas of practice include general civil litigation and insurance defense law.

Trista E. Wilson (’12) joined Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma Inc. as a staff attorney in the Norman, Oklahoma, office. Her area of practice is foreclosure defense.

Ashley Powell (’13) joined the Oklahoma City firm of Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville. She previously served as a summer associate for the firm.

Luncheon honors Colbert and Lewis

OU Law alumni, faculty and students gathered for a luncheon April 18 at Devon Tower to honor Tom Colbert (’82) and David Lewis, who have made history through their judicial service on Oklahoma’s highest courts.

In January, Colbert was sworn in as the first African-American chief justice of the Oklahoma Supreme Court, and Lewis was sworn in as the first African-American presiding judge of the Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals. Each was the first African-American to serve on their respective courts when they were appointed, Colbert in 2004 and Lewis in 2005.

“We are honored to count Chief Justice Colbert and Presiding Judge Lewis among our alumni,” said OU Law Dean Joe Harroz. “Not only have they shaped history through their leadership, but also they exemplify the highest degree of public service.”

Pictured (above) at the luncheon are OU Law Student Bar Association President Camal Pennington, Presiding Judge David Lewis, Chief Justice Tom Colbert and OU Law Dean Joe Harroz.
Class of 1963 reunites

The Class of 1963 held a reunion April 26 and 27. On the first evening, class members enjoyed a reception and dinner in Monnet Hall, where they attended law school.

Twenty-eight members of the Class of 1963 pose for a group photo.

Pictured at the reception in Monnet Hall are classmates Tom McDaniel, W.F. Parish, Brian Upp, Robert W. Collier, James Hardwick and Larry Derryberry.

The second evening of the event was held in Coats Hall, where class members and spouses attended a reception in the Sneed Lounge and Boren Atrium and dinner in the Chapman Reading Room of the Donald E. Pray Law Library. Here, Andy Coats, 1963 graduate and OU Law dean emeritus, addresses the group at the reception.
BLSA hosts alumni event

The Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Chapter of the Black Law Students Association invited alumni to return to the College of Law April 19 for a dinner recognizing four alumni. Honored at the Trailblazers Dinner were Oklahoma Supreme Court Chief Justice Tom Colbert ('82), Oklahoma Court of Criminal Appeals Presiding Judge David Lewis ('83), John E. Green ('57), former U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Oklahoma and Stan Evans ('03), former OU Law dean of students.

Following dinner in the Boren Atrium, the students and their guests moved to the Bell Courtroom for a performance of a play dramatizing Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher’s struggle to be admitted to study law at OU.

We remember

- Richard O. Battles ('50)
- Kenneth R. Coe ('75)
- J. William “Bill” Conger ('70)
- Frantz C. Conrad ('50)
- Sandee Coogan ('87)
- Joel Kelly Crumpley ('79)
- G. Howard Dearing ('51)
- Alan Curtis Durbin ('72)
- Frank Elkouri ('47)
- Scott L. Graham ('63)
- John C. Harrington Jr. ('55)
- Margaret Ann Jones Bailey Hartzog ('74)
- Ralph B. Hodges ('54)
- Karen Elisabeth "Kay" Huff ('74)
- Peter Michael Keltch ('71)
- Warner Earl Lovell Jr. ('70)
- Michael Raymond McKee ('71)
- Lloyd G. Minter ('43)
- Gary Lucas Neal ('75)
- Michael Ronald Neda ('95)
- Edwin Price Ramsey ('52)
- Horace G. Rhodes ('55)
- D.B. “Barry” Rooker III ('69)
- John R. Smith ('59)
- Thomas H. Trower ('42)
- Rodney D. Watson ('83)
- William J. Whistler ('55)

Stan Evans, one of the alumni honored, visits with Jared Gaither and Courtney Hilliard at the BLSA Alumni Weekend Trailblazers Dinner.
Staff changes

New faces and titles

Kasey Hendrix was named director of annual giving and special events. She will coordinate special events within the law school and assist with development activities. Before joining the OU Law staff, she was assistant director of the OU President’s Associates Program and the Women’s Philanthropy Network.

Terri Ray joined the Office of Career Services in January. She assists students with career searches and contacts employers to market OU Law students. She previously served as a paralegal for more than 30 years, 21 of which were with Fellers Snider Blankenship Bailey & Tippens PC.

David W. Dye (’09) was named director of graduate and international programs in February. He previously served as the associate director of the John B. Turner Master of Laws (LL.M.) Program. His expanded duties will include directing the master of legal studies program.

Casey Delaney (’05) was promoted to assistant dean of external affairs in May. She will be responsible for alumni and development, public relations and the Office of Career Services. She previously served as the director of the CSO, worked in the career office at Pepperdine Law School, and was a litigator with Fellers, Snider in Oklahoma City.

Blane Anderson joined the staff as director of financial services. Before coming to the OU College of Law, he served for nine years as director of finance and operations for the Michael F. Price College of Business.

1Ls and 2Ls attend networking event

The Office of Career Services invited all first-year and second-year students to a March 6 networking event, sponsored by Goolsby, Proctor, Heefner & Gibbs PC. The law firm also invited attorneys from 30 other law firms to attend the reception at Bricktown Brewery in Oklahoma City.

Enjoying the networking event are David Proctor II (’08), 2L Zach Lee, Dean Joe Harroz, David Proctor (’90) and 3L Dylan Edwards.
Career Development Night exposes students to variety of law practices

Learning about various types of law practice from attorneys currently practicing with a corporation, a law firm and a governmental agency provided first-year students with valuable information to be used for planning their futures. This was the focus of Career Development Night, coordinated by the Office of Career Services and sponsored by Crowe & Dunlevy and Devon Energy Corporation on January 17 at Coats Hall.

The students rotated through three 25-minute sessions to hear speakers representing Devon Energy Corporation, the U.S. Attorney’s Office and Crowe & Dunlevy provide insight into some of the many career paths available for attorneys. At the conclusion of the third session, a networking reception in the Boren Atrium provided students with an opportunity to meet and talk with presenters.

BLSA chapter receives recognition

OU Law’s Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher Chapter of the Black Law Students Association, whose membership is pictured here, was recognized at the national level for having the unique program of the year. The Pop Tabs Project collects soda pop tabs, which are sent to impoverished Ugandan women, who use them to create and sell purses and other fashion accessories. In addition, the chapter was named the mid-sized chapter of the year for the Rocky Mountain Region of the BLSA, and the production of the play “I’ll Do It!” was recognized as the region’s best program of the year. The play, written by Professor Cheryl Wattley, depicts the struggle of Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher, the plaintiff in landmark desegregation litigation in the 1940s, to gain admittance to the OU College of Law.

PILSA event brings employers to students

The ninth annual Public Interest Law Students Association Pro Bono and Public Interest Career Fair brought employers from government, nonprofit and military organizations from Oklahoma, Texas and Missouri to OU Law on February 19. Representatives from more than 20 employers met with students in the Kerr Student Lounge and shared information about their services.

The fair provided an opportunity for students to learn about public interest law while honing their networking skills. Several employers, who collected resumes prior to the event, interviewed students during the fair. The College of Law has a strong commitment to public service and the career fair is one of the means by which students are encouraged to serve.
Professionalism Night teaches students professional skills, etiquette

The 155 members of the University of Oklahoma College of Law’s first-year class attended Professionalism Night on January 30 and heard leading lawyers and recognized experts speak on professionalism. The event, coordinated by the Office of Career Services and sponsored by McAfee & Taft, was held in downtown Oklahoma City, on the 50th floor of the Devon Tower. McAfee & Taft lawyers presented important topics such as business etiquette, professional dress and professionalism in the workplace. The event, which also included a networking session, is an element of the CSO comprehensive programming to prepare OU Law students for the job market. Employer participation in the CSO on-campus interview program tripled in 2012. “We created this event as part of our efforts to educate the next generation of lawyers on the critical importance of professionalism,” OU Law Dean Joe Harroz said. “In addition to teaching our students the substantive knowledge required to practice law, we want students to understand the importance of always presenting themselves with the highest degree of integrity and ability in the practice of law. We appreciate McAfee & Taft, who helped make this evening possible.”

3-member team wins competition

The 1L Moot Court Competition began with 153 students competing, and several weeks later, a three-member team was named the winner. The final round of the competition, held April 15 in the Dick Bell Courtroom, resulted in Mary “Alex” Shipley, Jeff Vogt and Nicole Lynn (pictured at left) being named the winning team.
In the early months of 2013, OU Law received two additional accolades from national rankings after being ranked No. 15 out of 200 law schools nationwide and given a grade of “A+” on the National Jurist list of “Best Value” law schools released in September 2012.

In February 2013, the OU College of Law was recognized in the top 15 percent of “Best Law Schools” in the country by National Jurist magazine. The magazine staff created the list as an alternative to the the U.S. News and World Report’s annual law schools ranking by focusing “on what students find most important – quality teaching, cost efficiency and post-graduate success.”

When the U.S. News & World Report 2014 list of “Best Law Schools” was released in March, OU Law had jumped 14 places. The College of Law ranked as the 68th best law school in the country in the new survey.

“While we don’t put too much weight on any one survey, we are encouraged by these national rankings that recognize the special things happening at OU Law,” Dean Joe Harroz said. “We believe students are seeking a first-class legal education at an affordable price so they may pursue the careers of their dreams, without being limited by excessive student debt.

“It is only appropriate that emphasis be placed on the student experience and career development. With recent results including more than a tripling of employers in our spring recruitment program and with the addition of innovative, new programs that give our students a competitive edge in the marketplace, we are more excited than ever about the future of our students at OU Law.”

Every spring, each academic publication holds an end-of-year celebration, where students’ participation is recognized and the incoming editorial board is introduced.

The American Indian Law Review Annual Banquet was held April 4 at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. The outgoing editorial board is pictured above.

The students responsible for publishing the Oklahoma Journal of Law and Technology gathered in the Sneed Lounge April 23 to celebrate another successful year. At left, Lark Zink, editor-in-chief, presents Courtney Blackwell with a certificate acknowledging her work on the publication.

The Kerr Student Lounge was the site for the Oklahoma Law Review Honors Banquet on April 17. The 2012-13 editorial board is shown here.
2013 Henry Lecture features UCLA professor

Author and University of California, Los Angeles Professor Eugene Volokh delivered the 2013 Henry Lecture March 8 in the Kerr Student Lounge. Volokh, a nationally recognized expert on the First Amendment, spoke on “Foreign Law, Religious Law and the American Legal System.”

Volokh, who previously clerked for Justice Sandra Day O’Connor on the U.S. Supreme Court and for Judge Alex Kozinski on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, teaches free speech law, criminal law, tort law, religious freedom law, and church-state relations law at UCLA School of Law.

The Henry Lecture Series is an annual event established in 2000 by the Henry family, which, in two generations, had five of its members graduate from OU Law. By bringing noted legal scholars to speak at the College of Law, the event helps inspire and educate future generations of scholars, lawyers and public servants.

Students network with energy industry professionals

OU Law continues to be a leader in energy and natural resources law, with many alumni enjoying successful careers in the oil and gas industry, rising through the ranks to hold key leadership positions in their organizations. The Office of Career Services coordinated a networking event March 28 at the Myriad Botanical Gardens in downtown Oklahoma City to enable students interested in the industry to meet with professionals working in the energy and natural resources business.

Meet the Energy Industry was sponsored by six industry leaders — Anadarko Petroleum Corporation, Chesapeake Energy Corporation, Continental Resources Inc., Devon Energy Corporation, Mahaffey & Gore PC and SandRidge Energy Inc.
Student to serve in national office

University of Oklahoma College of Law student Roy Brown was elected vice president for the National Native American Law Student Association at the Federal Bar Association Indian Law Conference held in April in Santa Fe, New Mexico. As vice president, Brown will administer the 22nd Annual NALSA moot court competition, to be held at OU Law next year. The competition typically attracts more than 100 student competitors from law schools across the country.

Brown, who is interested in Indian and public interest law, is a Northern Arapaho from the Wind River Indian Reservation in Wyoming. He has extensive experience in leadership and organization both as a professional and as a student.

PILSA recognizes 14,500 hours of pro bono service

The Public Interest Law Students Association honored students, faculty and staff for 14,500 hours of pro bono service and announced fellowship recipients at an event in the Sneed Lounge on April 18.

Since the 2004 founding of the pro bono program, 57,000 hours of service have been donated by the OU Law community. This year, 93 students were recognized for providing more than 25 hours of pro bono service. The student with the greatest number of hours from each class was recognized. Taking those honors were Zachary Bidner, 3L; Ally Simon, 2L; and Eric Warner, 1L. Courtney Carter was honored for having the highest three-year total in the 2013 graduating class.

“We awarded $20,000 in summer public interest fellowships to 18 students,” said Professor Elizabeth Bangs, PILSA faculty director. “We have a new fellowship this year, sponsored by GableGotwals, which provides $2,000. And we have partnered with the John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellowship Foundation to provide two $5,000 fellowships for each of the next five years.”

The recipients of the David Boren and Molly Shi Boren Public Service Fellowship, pictured above, were introduced at the event.
Class of 2013 enjoys May 10 graduation reception

Photos by Norman Party Pics
Coach Inc. President Jerry Stritzke ('85) delivers 2013 convocation address
Faculty changes

New faces and titles

Rodney D. Ring was named visiting assistant professor of clinical legal education in January. He will supervise OU Legal Clinic interns in criminal cases in Cleveland and McClain counties. He joined the faculty after retiring with almost 20 years of judicial service as a special judge and later, as a district judge, in Cleveland County.

Faculty appreciation event honors retiring professors

Professors David Swank ('59) and Mark Gillett, who both retired at the end of the spring semester, were honored April 25 at a faculty appreciation event in Monnet Hall.

With 50 years of service to the University of Oklahoma, Swank has held numerous titles. He began in 1963 as OU legal counsel and assistant professor of law. Other positions include associate professor, professor, associate dean, dean of the College of Law, director of the Law Center and interim president of the university.

Prior to coming to OU, Swank was a partner in the law firm of Swank & Swank in Stillwater, Oklahoma. He later served as assistant county attorney and county attorney for Payne County.

Swank has been active in the Oklahoma Bar Association and the Oklahoma Trial Lawyers Association. He is a fellow of the Oklahoma Bar Foundation and the American Bar Foundation. Swank was the OU faculty representative to the Big Eight Conference and the National Collegiate Athletic Association, in which he served in a variety of capacities. In 1994, he was named by College Sports magazine as one of the most influential people in college sports. Swank was inducted into the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame in 2011.

Gillett was admitted to the Iowa State Bar Association in 1978 and practiced law in Muscatine, Iowa. He was a partner in Stanley, Lande and Hunter law firm there before he joined the OU Law faculty in 1987.

Gillett was the author of estate practice software, originally published by Shepard’s/McGraw-Hill in 1985, and later by the West Group. More recently, he released the Gillett Estate Management Suite, which prepares federal estate and gift tax returns and fiduciary accountings.
Faculty honors

- **Backus, McCall receive faculty recognition**

  Professors Mary Sue Backus and Brian McCall were honored at the University of Oklahoma campus-wide Tribute to Faculty on April 18 in the Sandy Bell Gallery of the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. Backus was named the Robert Glenn Rapp Foundation Presidential Professor and McCall received the Merrick Foundation Teaching Award.

  Presidential professorships are awarded to faculty members who excel in all their professional activities and who relate those activities to the students they teach and mentor, exemplifying the ideals of a scholar to students and colleagues.

  Backus joined the OU Law faculty in 2004 and teaches Criminal Law, Education Law and Evidence. She taught as a Fulbright Scholar at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in Guangzhou, China, during the 2012-13 academic year.

  The Merrick Teaching Award is given to the faculty member who is considered most outstanding in bringing to students a better understanding and appreciation of the economic and political basis of American society.

  McCall began teaching at the OU College of Law in 2006, following nine years in private practice with an international law firm. He teaches classes in Contracts, Payment Systems, Secured Transactions and Corporate Finance.

- **DaVinci Institute recognizes Wattley**

  Cheryl Wattley was one of five winners of a 2013 DaVinci Fellows Award presented at a March 29 banquet at the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City. Presented by the DaVinci Institute, an Oklahoma nonprofit organization, the award recognizes higher education faculty whose accomplishments reflect a creative approach and a high degree of innovation to complex issues and have made a significant contribution to their academic discipline.
Beyond the classroom

Election law is focus of symposium

Focusing on legislative issues in election law, the annual symposium of the Oklahoma Law Review was held February 15 in the Dick Bell Courtroom. The symposium was sponsored by McAfee & Taft and featured experts on election law from around the country.

Edward Foley, professor of law at Ohio State University and longtime leading figure in election law, started the presentations with “The Possibility of a Fair System of Election Laws.”

Other speakers included Nicholas Stephanopoulos from the University of Chicago, Charles Stewart from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Joshua Douglas from the University of Kentucky, and Michael Pitts from Indiana University.

Assistant secretary of Indian Affairs participates in symposium addressing tribal issues

The Overcoming Barriers Symposium, which focused on legal issues facing Native American tribes, was presented March 7 at the OU College of Law. The event was sponsored by the American Indian Law Review, Student Bar Association, Native American Law Student Association and OU Native American Studies program.

Noted scholars and practitioners exchanged ideas on resolving intratribal conflict and defining jurisdictional boundaries. The keynote addresses were given by Kevin Washburn, assistant secretary of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, and Barbara Smith, chief justice of the Supreme Court of the Chickasaw Nation.

Symposium participants also had the opportunity to tour Coats Hall to view Native American art displayed throughout the building and to enjoy musical entertainment by Native American musicians.
Advisory Committee on Civil Rules meets at OU Law

Judges and lawyers from around the country gathered at the OU College of Law April 11 and 12 for the spring meeting of the U.S. Judicial Conference Advisory Committee on Civil Rules. This committee oversees the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and develops proposals for new and amended rules.

The spring meeting drew special attention from the bar this year as the advisory committee agenda included several hot-button topics ranging from discovery reform to spoliation sanctions for the loss of electronically stored information.

The two-day meeting was hosted by OU Law and organized by Professor Steve Gensler, who served as a member of the advisory committee from 2005 to 2011. “This was a tremendous opportunity to bring some of the most prominent judges and lawyers in the country to the College of Law,” said Gensler. “In addition to helping them with their work, we were able to expose our students to a vital area of legal reform and show our visitors some of the great things we have going on here.”

In recognition of the event, President David L. Boren hosted a special reception at the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art and a dinner at the newly renovated University Club in Oklahoma Memorial Union.
On January 18, the OU College of Law community lost a very special and dear friend. Professor Emeritus Frank Elkouri was an outstanding scholar and a nationally recognized authority in arbitration. His book *How Arbitration Works* is still widely referenced today in courtrooms and classrooms. Professor Elkouri was an equally talented educator, inspiring students and faculty alike, during his 58 years teaching at OU Law. As an undergraduate at OU, Professor Elkouri Frank excelled in playing clarinet as part of an OU big band, which he also managed.

After learning of Professor Elkouri’s passing, OU President David Boren said, “In the entire history of the OU College of Law, no faculty member has been more dedicated to his students and more generous to the school than Professor Frank Elkouri. I will always feel fortunate to have been able to study under him when I was a law student and to benefit from his international expertise in his field.”

Professor Elkouri graduated from OU Law in 1947, and he never forgot the financial support he received that enabled him to attend law school. He and his wife, Edna Asper Elkouri, gave generously to the College of Law, including a major gift in 2002 to endow the Frank and Edna Asper Elkouri Professorship of Law. In 2010, the emeritus wing of the law school was named the Frank and Edna Asper Elkouri Emeritus Wing to recognize their remarkable contributions.

In 2011, he and Edna gave the largest one-time gift ever given to the College of Law, with the entire gift going to endow student scholarships. This $6 million gift touched us deeply, not only because of the opportunities it provided to current and future law students, but also because of the spirit in which it was given. It truly was a gift from the heart.

A *Sooner Lawyer* article and video were produced during that time, honoring the Elkouris, their remarkable careers, and their legacy. I have posted links to both items in remembrance of Professor Frank Elkouri. We miss him greatly.

— Dean Joe Harroz

Sooner Lawyer article: http://bit.ly/nRuIKo
Tribute Video: www.law.ou.edu/video?page=1
OLR article: http://bit.ly/12iMrQo
“In the entire history of the OU College of Law, no faculty member has been more dedicated to his students and more generous to the school than Professor Frank Elkouri.”

— PRESIDENT DAVID L. BOREN
Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville establishes endowment to support internship

A gift of $115,000 from the Oklahoma City-based law firm Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville established an endowment fund to benefit OU Law students interning at the U.S. Department of State, Office of the Assistant Legal Adviser for International Claims and Investment Disputes in Washington, D.C.

In the fall of 2012, the OU College of Law and the State Department created an exclusive OU Law internship allowing one student from OU to intern full time with the State Department every fall, spring and summer.

“We are honored and excited to provide funding that allows OU Law students to participate in the prestigious State Department internship program,” said John D. Robertson, managing partner at Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville. “The establishment of this internship provides a great opportunity for OU College of Law students at the federal government level and introduces them to the inner workings of Capitol Hill and the United States Department of State.”

“The U.S. State Department internship is truly special, providing OU Law students a unique opportunity to work on international law matters on behalf of the United States government,” said Dean Joe Harroz. “There are only a few law schools in the country that have such a program. This generous gift from Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville continues their partnership with the law school and helps expand opportunities for our students. We are grateful to the firm.”

In addition to this new donation, Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville contributes to the OU College of Law by sponsoring the Hartzog Conger Cason & Neville Scholarship, participating in OU Law’s fall and spring recruitment programs, hiring OU Law interns and new associates, and hosting a networking event for first-year law students every year.

Book signing benefits Opala scholarship fund

Author Bob Burke (seated) autographs a copy of his book, Opala: In Faithful Service to the Law, during a reception held January 30 in the Sneed Lounge. Proceeds from the event were donated by the publisher, Oklahoma Heritage Foundation, to the Justice Marian P. Opala Scholarship Fund, which was established in honor of the late Oklahoma Supreme Court Justice to benefit OU Law students. Also attending were Professor Lindsay Robertson, Dean Emeritus Andy Coats (’63) and Allen Harris, chairman of the scholarship fund committee.
Fellowship funding doubles with two new programs

OU Law doubled its funding that supports students working in public interest fellowship positions with the addition of two new fellowships, the Justice John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellowship and the GableGotwals Public Service Fellowship.

The Justice John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellowship provides $10,000 annually, with two students receiving $5,000 each summer. The GableGotwals Public Service Fellowship awards $2,000 to one student annually.

The John Paul Stevens Public Interest Fellowship Foundation, which funds the fellowship program, was established by Justice Stevens’s former law clerks to honor and extend the retired U.S. Supreme Court justice’s legacy of public service. One of his former clerks is OU Law Professor Joseph Thai, who is co-sponsoring the OU Law fellowship with his wife, Theresa Thai.

“Part of what makes law a noble profession is that we not only represent paying clients, but we also serve the public as guardians of the rule of law for those who cannot afford to pay,” Thai said. “Students often enter law school with lofty ideals, and we hope to encourage a career of public service by supporting fellowships that enable students to engage in public interest work while in school.”

Other OU Law fellowships include the David L. Boren and Molly Shi Boren Public Interest Fellowships, the Marjorie P. Maute Memorial Public Service Fellowship, the Cindy Foley Memorial Fellowship, and the Coats Fellowship for Summer Public Service.

The number and amount of fellowships are determined on the basis of available funding in any given year. In 2012, OU Law awarded $12,500 in summer fellowships. In 2013, OU Law will award $25,000. All fellowships require students to complete 200 hours of work and submit a report to the sponsors at the end of the summer.
Thank you to our donors
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