

Law Alumni Awards

Recognizing the Achievements of Our Graduates.

On October 15, 2022, Washburn University School of Law alumni gathered to celebrate and honor this year's Alumni Award recipients. Awards were presented by Lucky DeFries, '78, past chair of the board of governors. Honorees were joined by family and friends to accept their awards, recognizing their service, dedication, and support to Washburn and their communities. The following is a highlight of our award winners and a brief bio of each recipient.



Whitney Casement

Whitney Casement, BA '09, JD '12, was awarded the Graduate of the Last Decade (GOLD) award. This award honors recent Washburn Law graduates whose performance and commitment has set an example of professionalism and demonstrated leadership in the legal field, in their community, or to the School of Law. After graduating from Washburn

Law School in 2012, Casement started her legal career as an assistant attorney general for Kansas, serving in that position for five years. She has been in private practice in Topeka since 2017, first with Goodell, Stratton and most recently with Stevens & Brand. Whitney has represented government agencies and officials, businesses, and individuals in state and federal court and before administrative boards and tribunals. She has been recognized as One to Watch by Best Lawyers in America, a SuperLawyer Rising Star, and the Topeka Legal Professional Boss of the Year.

Casement is active with the bar and community. She has served as president of the Women Attorneys Association of Topeka, secretary for the Kansas Women Attorneys Association, as a board member for the Topeka Bar Association, and as secretary of the board for Communities in Schools of Mid-America. She has a passion for raising awareness for mental health issues and teaching mindfulness, including giving many continuing

education presentations on these topics. She is involved with the law school as a mentor through the Professional Development Office.



Joslyn Kusiak

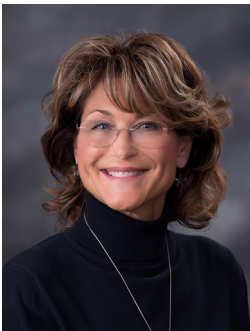
Joslyn Kusiak, '12, was also awarded the GOLD award. Kusiak is a graduate of Missouri State University and Washburn University School of Law. While in law school, she served as staff editor for the Washburn Law Journal, interned for the Honorable Steve Leben at the Kansas Court of Appeals, clerked with the Kansas Highway Patrol, and interned at the Washburn

Law Civil Litigation Clinic. Upon graduation, Joslyn spent three years practicing law in Wichita handling all phases of civil litigation before joining the firm of Kelly & Kusiak in her hometown of Independence, Kansas. She also currently serves as Independence municipal judge. In 2018, she was honored with the Kansas Bar Association Outstanding Young Lawyer Award.

Kusiak presently serves on the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Board as the vice chair, Kansas Bar Foundation board of trustees, and Kansas Bar Association board of governors as the Young Lawyer Delegate to the American Bar Association. She has been engaged in alumni activities and hosts alumni events in southeast Kansas.



Left to right: The Hon. Dan Biles, '78, Cameron V. Michaud-Drumright, '02, Greg Drumright, '02, Glenda Cafer, BA '83, Wendell "Bud" Cowan, '74, Whitney Casement, BA '09, JD '12, Joslyn Kusiak, '12, The Hon. Stephen D. Hill, '75. Photo by Jeremy Wangler



Glenda Cafer

Glenda Cafer, BA '83, was awarded the Honorary Lifetime Membership award. The recipient of this honor is someone who has provided exemplary service to his or her profession, community, and Washburn University School of Law.

Born in Missouri, Cafer has spent most of her life in Topeka. Her association with Washburn University started in 1967 when her father, Glenn Cafer, came to Washburn as the men's basketball and golf coach. Cafer received her bachelor's in 1983 from Washburn. After she briefly attended Washburn Law, she transferred to Louisiana State University, receiving her juris doctor in 1987. Now with Morris Laing in Topeka, Cafer has a depth of knowledge in public utility regulatory law that is second to none. Not only is she the only person to have served as both general counsel and director of utilities at the Kansas

Corporation Commission, but she also actively practices in the areas of both energy and telecommunications law. She is a former chair of the Administrative Law Section of the Kansas Bar Association, past president of the Women Attorney's Association of Topeka, former chair of the career development committee of the Kansas Women Attorney's Association, and current president of the Topeka Lawyers Club.

Cafer began serving Washburn University Foundation as a trustee in April 2007 and completed her term as board chair this past summer. She has been chair of the finance and development committees and also serves on the executive committee and the committee on directors and trustees. In her roles with the Foundation, she has been a vocal advocate for the law school, was a major gift donor to the new building, and helped the building campaign across the finish line. Cafer is such a champion for Washburn Law that many alumni are unaware that she received her law degree elsewhere.



The Michaud family. Photo by Jeremy Wangler

The Michaud family was honored with the Washburn School of Law Legacy Family Award. This award honors the families who have carried the Washburn Law tradition across generations. It is bestowed on a family in which two or more members of the family – generational or through marriage – are law school graduates, and who as a group have distinguished themselves through service to Washburn Law School, the legal profession, their communities, or public service. **Gerald L. Michaud***, BA '51, JD '51, H '86, **Patrick J. Michaud**, '76, **Cameron V. Michaud-Drumright**, '02, and **Greg A. Drumright**, '02, were the members of the family receiving this award.

Gerald Michaud, BA '51, JD '51, H '86 (deceased, 2005), was a world-class medical malpractice lawyer who never forgot his alma mater, Washburn University. Some of Michaud's ground-breaking cases resulted in the reduction of estrogen in birth control pills, the introduction of safety precautions at gasoline pumps to reduce the risk of cancer from benzene and the reformulation of tampons connected to toxic shock syndrome. He retired in 1995, only to come out of retirement in 2002 to help one of his daughters, **Cameron V. Michaud-Drumright**, '02, advance her career in law. He retired again in April, 2015, saying he thought she was ready to practice on her own. Michaud was awarded an honorary doctor of law from Washburn in 1986 and was given the Distinguished Service Award in 1997.

Patrick Michaud, '76 (son), practiced law until the age of 40 when he retired. Upon retirement, he invested his time in serving communities where he resided. Living in Maui for over 10 years, he was heavily involved in his children's athletics, coaching soccer and little league baseball, ultimately managing baseball and umpiring, and becoming a chief umpire in a program that taught high school students to umpire games. Michaud moved his family back to Kansas, enjoying retirement for a few years while spending time with ailing relatives, including his father. After the passing of his father, he relocated to central Florida where he

volunteered in a project to restore a historic building that had been ruined in a hurricane, ultimately becoming the construction manager. He and his wife intended to become "snowbirds," but loved their next home in Spokane, Washington, so much that they decided to stay there for several years before retiring again to Gold Canyon, Arizona, where they reside permanently.

Cameron V. Michaud-Drumright, '02 (daughter), upon graduation from law school, joined Morris Laing to work with her father, Gerald L. Michaud. Her areas of practice include not only medical malpractice, product liability, and wrongful death cases, but also semi-truck and major motor vehicle collisions. Michaud-Drumright concentrates most of her practice on personal injury cases and has developed strategies to mitigate the impact of the "tort reform" attitudes held by many jurors. She has served on the board for the Wichita Women's Attorneys Association, Junior League of Wichita, and the Wichita Collegiate Alumni Association. She has been recognized as the Kansas Association for Justice Thomas E. Sullivan Award recipient and the Wichita Business Journal's Women Who Lead Legal Honoree.

Greg Drumright, '02 (son-in-law), within Wichita's legal and business communities is known as a skilled litigator representing clients in corporate matters, including contract disputes, construction law, products liability, agricultural law, and general commercial liability. He has litigated in state and federal courts throughout the country. Drumright is a graduate of the International Association of Defense Counsel Trial Academy at Stanford Law School, is a member of the Wichita Area Manufacturers Association, and the Kansas Association of Defense Counsel. He and his wife are both active members of the Washburn School of Law Alumni Association and have supported the new law school building.



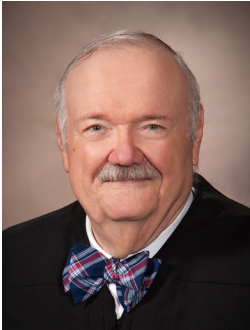
The Hon. Dan Biles

The Hon. Dan Biles, '78, received the Lifetime Achievement Award. This award is bestowed on graduates whose careers have been highly distinguished, and whose achievements and contributions are widely recognized as significant and outstanding in their field of endeavor, whether it be in the practice of law, the judiciary, business, public service, education, or otherwise.

Justice Biles, a native of El Dorado, Kansas, earned a journalism degree at Kansas State University. During law school, he also worked as an Associated Press reporter in Topeka. After graduation, he served as an assistant attorney general, attorney for the Kansas Board of Education, and general counsel for

the Kansas Turnpike Authority. He then worked in private practice before being appointed to the Kansas Supreme Court in 2009.

In addition to his service on the bench, Biles has also served as an adjunct professor at the law school as well as a visiting professor at K-State. Biles has a long-standing reputation as being a friend to the law school and can be counted on as an engaged member of the school's alumni.



The Hon. Stephen Hill

The Hon. Stephen D. Hill, '75, received the Lifetime Achievement Award. Born in Fort Scott, Kansas, Hill grew up in Wichita but spent most of his legal career as a lawyer, county attorney, and judge in the 6th Judicial District. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas and a law degree from Washburn Law. After

serving 22 years as a district court judge, he was named to the Kansas Court of Appeals in 2003.

Hill previously served as the chair of the Kansas Judicial Council Pattern Instructions Advisory Committee and is a past member of the Kansas District Judges executive committee. He participated as a speaker, in numerous continuing legal and judicial education events in Kansas and at the Judicial College in Reno, Nevada. Judge Hill remains connected to the law school and is a regular lecturer in the classroom.



Wendell "Bud" Cowan

Wendell "Bud" Cowan, '74, received the Distinguished Service Award. This award is given to graduates of the School of Law who have particularly distinguished themselves and brought recognition to the school through their service to Washburn Law, the legal profession, their community, or public service.

A native Topekan, Cowan recently retired as partner from Foulston Siefkin in Overland Park. He practiced litigation and employment law, with special emphasis in employment litigation and human resource advice and counseling. He has litigated hundreds of trials and administrative hearings, defending businesses and municipalities in discrimination, wrongful discharge, and civil rights cases. He presented numerous risk-avoidance seminars and provided consultation to various business groups, employers, and attorneys on personnel law issues concerning discipline and claims.

He was honored as 2021 Lawyer of the Year in Kansas City, Kansas, for insurance law in Best Lawyers in America. He and his wife, Peggy, are lifetime members of the Law School Alumni Association, have established a scholarship fund at the law school, and made a gift to the new building.

