



Deryl W. Wynn '86

Alumni

Deryl W. Wynn believes in and is passionate about the institution of public education. "This institution forms the foundation of our society and is the most reliable vehicle for the advancement of our society," he said. "I fear that our neglect of public education, at all levels, will not bode well for future generations."

Mr. Wynn's interest in public education is reflected in his professional work. A leader in the field of education law, he led successful efforts of the Kansas City, Kansas, School District to end federal oversight of its desegregation order. He is a shareholder in McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips, P.A., and practices in the firm's Kansas City office.

In addition to his work in education law, Mr. Wynn's practice also includes not-for-profit law and labor-employment litigation. He is a frequent seminar presenter on employment and labor-related issues, and he writes and lectures about employee drug testing, work place violence, wage and hour issues, sexual harassment and disability law. He also assists health care industry clients in the development of corporate compliance plans.

"In my practice, it is important to be a counselor at law," Mr. Wynn said. "I advise clients on legal/policy issues and the long-term implications of the options selected."

A native of Altus, Oklahoma, Mr. Wynn remembers with fondness his years at Washburn University School of Law in the 1980s and his long study sessions with friends. "It was amazing how we were able to collaborate and work together and how supportive we were of each other," he said. Other memories include Labor Day barbecues at the Wynn home. "Grills lined the driveway and hungry law students were plentiful," he recalled. "We were content. It does not take much to satisfy poor law students." He received his law degree with Dean's Honors in 1986.

Following graduation, Mr. Wynn served as an Army Captain at Ft. Eustis and Ft. Story, Virginia, where he was Chief Trial Counsel for the U.S. Army Transportation Headquarters, Judge Advocate General. He also served as Special Assistant United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. He planned to return to Kansas to work for the U.S. Attorney's Office there, but phone calls from two Washburn classmates changed the course of his life. "They were working for the McAnany firm. I

met with the senior partner of the firm, who invited me to join him in his education law practice. I agreed," he said.

In addition to his professional responsibilities, Mr. Wynn is actively involved in his community. In 1998-99, he was chairman of the Board of Directors of the 760-member Kansas City, Kansas, Area Chamber of Commerce, the first African-American to lead the 101-year-old organization. He currently serves on the Kansas Board of Regents and the Boards of Directors of Civic Leadership Training Council, Kansas City, and Friends of the Library, Kansas City.

He views a career in law as a means to such accomplishments. "If you picture yourself someday making a meaningful difference in the affairs of your community, then you ought to be a lawyer," he said.

Mr. Wynn was recognized in 1998 as a distinguished business leader when Ingrams magazine included him among the "Under 40 Power Elite" in the Kansas City metropolitan area. He also received the Eagle Award from the not-for-profit National Eagle Leadership Institute. The Award recognizes and promotes the success of today's culturally diverse rising professionals. Companies that value their daily contributions nominate high-achieving African and Hispanic Americans who adhere to highest ethical principles to receive the Eagle Award.

"I've come to understand that despite the jokes, the public has a great respect and high expectation of lawyers. The ridicule that we often encounter, I believe, is more often a reflection of deep disappointment than actual contempt," Mr. Wynn said.

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