

Washburn Law Clinic



Professor John Francis



The past year provided dynamic learning opportunities for over seventy students who enrolled in the Law Clinic between the summer of 2004 and the spring of 2005. The new clinical initiatives are off to a strong start and have added to an already strong program. Students working with Professor Nathan Webb in the Appellate Defender Clinic filed twenty appellate briefs on behalf of clients during the fall and spring semester. Among other new initiatives implemented by Professor Aliza Organick, students working under her supervision staffed a case-intake site at Haskell Indian Nations University. Through this ongoing program, qualifying Haskell students can receive representation or advice in a broad range of legal matters. While Washburn Clinic students gain valuable insight into issues that arise when representing Native American clients, the Haskell University students also get a glimpse into work done by law students. As part of the collaborative understanding between the law school and Haskell, Washburn Law admissions representatives talk to interested Haskell students about the admissions process, expanding the potential pool of applicants to the law school.

The Clinic's long standing practice areas have continued to provide Clinic interns with quality legal experience advocating on behalf of clients in and out of court. In addition to litigating in Shawnee County District Court and Topeka Municipal Court on a broad range of legal issues, students also engaged in lawyering work outside the courtroom. For example, students doing general civil law work with Professor Curt Waugh represented a neighborhood group during a proceeding before the Topeka Planning Commission. This work involved conducting and presenting insightful legal analysis of applicable housing regulations, which ultimately guided the Commission's decision. Professor Waugh's students also worked with an area non-profit cooperative, drafting a new set of by-laws for the group. Students working with Professor John Francis ventured into the legislative arena, providing written testimony to the Kansas State Legislature on a bill proposing that people convicted of drug offenses (under circumstances indicating no intent to traffic) receive substance-abuse treatment rather than protracted prison sentences. The written testimony provided overall support for the bill and made suggestions to amend specific language to clarify interpretation of certain provisions.



WASHBURN LAW CLINIC NAMED RECIPIENT OF THE LIBERTY BELL AWARD

The Topeka Bar Association recognized the Washburn Law Clinic's commitment to the community and the quality work done by Clinic interns, naming the Law Clinic recipient of the 2005 Liberty Bell Award. The award is granted for promoting better understanding of the Constitution, encouraging respect within the legal system and providing valuable legal service to the Topeka community. At a luncheon held on May 6, 2005, Professor Francis accepted the award on behalf of the Washburn Law Clinic. During his acceptance, Francis credited the dedication of student interns and support staff as the primary ingredient in the high quality of legal work conducted by the Clinic.



THANKS TO CURT WAUGH

The Clinic faculty and staff warmly thank Professor Curt Waugh for spending the past two years with us. Waugh joined our faculty as a Visiting Professor to help the Clinic serve as many students as possible during the years of increased law school enrollment. Waugh quickly became part of the Clinic's family, contributing his knowledge, talent and warmth to our law office. Students have consistently praised Professor Waugh's instruction, dedication and supervision. We wish him well in his next venture.

For more information on the Law Clinic, contact Director, Professor John Francis, at 785-670-1685 or john.francis@washburn.edu.