Speakers at Washburn University School of Law

Each semester, Washburn Law is fortunate to have numerous speakers at the law school. Most speak over the lunch hour to groups of students and faculty. Speakers are invited to the law school by various student groups, faculty members and other law school departments. Washburn Law appreciates all speakers who take time out of their busy schedule to provide a variety of expertise and insight in their respective field of practice or business. If you are interested in speaking at the law school on a certain topic, please contact Julie Olson, Director, Alumni Affairs, at 785-670-2013.

Dr. Francis J. Beckwith, Associate Professor of Church-State Studies and Associate Director of the J. M. Dawson Institute of Church-State Studies at Baylor University, spoke Feb. 9, 2006, sponsored by the Federalist Society. Dr. Beckwith delivered a lecture titled “The Court of Disbelief: Why the ‘Religious Motive’ Test Violates Religious Liberty.” Beckwith argued that courts applying the religious motive test should provide a distinction between motive and purpose. More than 70 students attended.

Senator Mary Groves Bland spoke February 1, 2006, sponsored by the Black Law Student Association as part of Black History Month. Bland discussed “Driven to Greatness: Overcoming Life’s Obstacles to Reach Your Full Potential.” Bland challenged the audience to get involved in their community so it will flourish and lead to change.

Nancy Boyda, a candidate in the 2nd Congressional District of Kansas and Paul Morrison ’80, a candidate for Kansas Attorney General, spoke March 13, 2006, sponsored by the Washburn Law Democrats. Both are running for office in the fall 2006 elections. Boyda spoke on a variety of topics, including agricultural and rural issues, education funding, corporate taxation, and her renewed vigor for the campaign trail. Morrison discussed his courtroom experience, including prosecuting death penalty cases.
Dan Crow '93, partner with the firm of Alderson, Alderson, Weiler, Conklin, Burghart, & Crow LLC, spoke March 9, 2006, sponsored by the Real Estate Law Society. Crow spoke on “The Life and Times of a Real Estate Lawyer. A real world glance at the legal issues facing a private practice real estate lawyer. Real cases. Real problems. Real solutions.” He also discussed the importance developing creative remedies in real estate disputes in an effort to avoid litigation.

Becky Norton Dunlop, Vice-President of The Heritage Foundation, spoke March 28, 2006, sponsored by the Federalist Society. Dunlop spoke on “Clearing the Air: Current Environmental and Natural Resources Challenges in the Context of Federalism.” Dunlop maintains that the best environmental policy is one based on principles that can be applied to ever changing situations. More than 25 law students attended.

Timothy Dupree '04, Assistant District Attorney for Lyon County, Kan., spoke Feb. 15, 2006, sponsored by the Black Law Student Association as part of Black History Month. Dupree discussed “Trial by Fire: Diving Head First into Your Legal Career.” Mr. Dupree provided insight into the life of a young attorney through first-hand testimony of the many challenges that can be faced and overcome. Dupree observed that whenever a mistake is made, whether it is inside or outside the courtroom, the practitioner must learn from it to become a better attorney.

Jeff Ellis '77, a partner at Lathrop, & Gage, spoke Jan. 19, 2006, sponsored by the Washburn Business Law Society. Ellis spoke about health care law and focused his presentation on managing hospital and physician competition. He described health care law as business law within a unique regulatory complex.

Bob Fox, attorney with Foulston Siefken L.L.P., spoke Feb. 16, 2006, sponsored by the Washburn Business Law Society. Fox spoke about the history of the telephone industry and some of the changes in the industry as a result of deregulation. He also discussed the Kansas Corporation Commission and the many roles they have in regulating utilities within the state.

The Hon. Gregory B. Gillis, Associate Circuit Judge for the 16th Judicial Circuit (Jackson County) in the State of Missouri, spoke Feb. 10, 2006, as part of Black History Month sponsored by the Black Law Student Association. Gillis discussed “African Americans and the Criminal Justice System.”

Kevin Hasson, founder of the Beckett Fund for Religious Liberty, spoke April 6, 2006, sponsored by the Federalist Society. Mr. Hasson spoke to more than 70 Washburn Law students and faculty about religious liberty. He asserted everyone has the “right to be wrong” because they have an innate right to choose to worship as their conscience dictates.

The Washburn Lawyer
Professor John O. McGinnis, Research Professor of Law, Northwestern University School of Law, spoke April 13, 2006, sponsored by the Federalist Society. Professor McGinnis spoke to more than 45 Washburn Law students and faculty about “International and Foreign Law in Constitutional Interpretation.” He asserted the view that international and foreign law should not be cited with any authoritative value and believes that using international and foreign law subverts the democratic process. Associate Dean and Professor of Law Bill Rich provided a counter perspective, arguing that international and foreign law are merely persuasive and can be cited like any other persuasive materials.

Michael Keefer, senior vice president, general counsel, and Secretary; Amy Lee, assistant vice president and assistant general counsel; and John Guyot, vice president, assistant general counsel, and assistant secretary, from Security Benefit Group in Topeka, spoke Jan. 26, 2006, sponsored by Washburn Business Law Society. Keefer focused on the responsibilities of in-house counsel, Lee discussed how to work with outside counsel and Guyot provided the perspective of an outside counsel working with in-house counsel.


Michael Massey, Vice President and General Counsel for Payless ShoeSource, Inc., spoke April 11, 2006, sponsored by the International Law Society. Massey discussed his career path and provided in-depth information about Payless itself, including stories behind the company’s expansion into Latin America and Asia. He also highlighted the legal implications that arise from manufacturing products in one country, importing them into the United States, and then exporting them to other countries.

Patricia Miller ’84, Senior Assistant Regional Counsel with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regional office in Kansas City and Yvonne Anderson ’86, Director and Chief of Legal Services with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), spoke Feb. 28, 2006, sponsored by the Environmental Law Society. They discussed their career paths, the day-to-day skills used in their respective positions, and current trends in the practice of environmental law. They also provided an interesting comparison between the KDHE and EPA regulations and how the agencies’ efforts complement each other.
Jeff Ungerer ’82, General Counsel of MRV, Inc, spoke April 19, 2006, hosted by the Washburn Real Estate Law Society. Ungerer spoke about various legal issues involved in commercial real estate development.

Professor Stephen J. Ware, University of Kansas School of Law, spoke March 9, 2006, sponsored by the Federalist Society. Ware spoke about “A Radical Libertarian Approach to the Court System.” He argued that a Libertarian philosophy is founded on the concepts of self ownership; property and contract; and that tort protects persons and their property from force and fraud. More than 50 students and faculty attended.

Dale Ward ’90 and Scott Pohl ’90 of Hinkle Elkouri LLC, spoke March 9, 2006, sponsored by the Washburn Business Law Society. Ward is the managing partner at the firm and practices in both the corporate transactions and real estate fields. Pohl is one of two recruiting partners at the firm and practices mainly in commercial real estate and bankruptcy. They entertained questions from those in attendance and provided a “real world” view of the practice of law as transactional lawyers.

The Hon. Deanell Reece Tacha, Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit spoke Feb. 21, 2006, sponsored by the Washburn Law Federalist Society. Judge Tacha spoke about “The Changes in the Courts and the Administration of Justice.” She pointed out that the country’s citizenship and work force has changed during the past 20 years. Consequently, the judiciary has reacted with a more diverse bench where women and minorities are significantly represented. More than 90 students and faculty attended.

Dr. Carmaletta Williams, Professor of English at Johnson County Community College, spoke Feb. 27, 2006, sponsored by the Black Law Student Association as part of Black History Month. Williams spoke on “Free Did Not Mean Welcome,” a discussion about the establishment of Kansas as a free state and the role that African Americans played. Dr. Williams talked about the true reality and repercussions of The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854.

The Washburn Lawyer