Senator Robert J. Dole Law Professorship

"Senator Dole’s outstanding career as a public servant embodies the goals of our newly-created Center for Law and Government."

Dean Thomas Romig

The Honorable Robert J. “Bob” Dole, ba and jd ’52, and honorary degrees ’69 and ’85, has enjoyed a lifelong passion for the law and government, and has dedicated his life and career toward the service of both. This enduring passion inspired Dole to recently establish the Senator Robert J. Dole Law Professorship in the Washburn University School of Law’s Center for Law and Government with a gift of $300,000.

“We are deeply appreciative of Senator Dole’s generous support of Washburn University School of Law,” said Dean Thomas Romig. “Senator Dole’s outstanding career as a public servant embodies the goals of our newly-created Center for Law and Government. The Center will parallel his career, educating students on all aspects of public service from local and state government to federal government. This significant gift will allow Washburn Law to prepare students as highly-qualified public servants for a broad range of careers.” Dole’s gift provides funding to recruit a faculty member to serve as director of the Center for Law and Government.

After graduation from Washburn, Dole practiced law and was an elected official at the local, state, and federal levels. His extensive public service includes the Kansas House of Representatives, four terms as Russell County (Kan.) Attorney, eight years as U.S. Congressman, followed by nearly 30 years as a U.S. Senator. Dole also served as chair of the Republican National Committee and as Senate Majority Leader. He was President Gerald Ford’s Vice Presidential running mate in 1976, was a Republican candidate for President of the United States in 1988, and the Republican nominee for President in 1996.

“Washburn has been home to many outstanding alumni throughout its history, and Senator Dole is certainly someone our entire nation can be proud of,” said Dr. Jerry Farley, President of Washburn University. “We are very fortunate to have the support of a Washburn graduate like Senator Dole who exemplifies a life of service.”

The Dole gift also qualifies for the Kansas Partnership for Faculty of Distinction funds, a legislative effort to ensure and promote high-quality educators in university classrooms. The partnership funds were designed to match the distributions on newly-endowed professorships of $300,000 or more.
Leading by Example: Recent Endowments

Polsinelli Shughart PC Diversity Scholarship

John “Jim” Bryan, bba ’65, and jd ’68, is a principal in the Topeka law firm of Bryan, Lykins, Hejtmanek & Fincher, P.A. Collectively, the firm has more than 100 years of experience in the practice of personal injury and workers’ compensation law. The firm’s attorneys have successfully tried thousands of civil trials and administrative hearings. Jim’s expertise is in workers’ compensation and personal injury claims.

“Helping people — that’s what being an attorney really means to me,” he said.

Jim grew up at a time when money for college was hard to find. He and Sharon lived on campus for seven years in married student housing. They worked full time while Jim worked toward his bachelor’s degree. He intended to become a CPA but in his senior year decided to take the LSAT. After getting his juris doctor, he found the perfect match of a career in the private practice of law. Sharon got her PHT (Putting Hubby Through) from Washburn Law Wives in 1968.

The Bryans have established the Jim and Sharon Bryan Law Scholarship to make it easier for students to attend Washburn Law.

Jim’s family — wife Sharon and daughters Kathi, Tami and Jennifer — is the center of his life. When asked how he wanted to be remembered, Jim said, “I’d like to be thought of as the person who made a difference in the lives of my family, friends, and clients.

“I’ve been blessed with the opportunity to do what means the most to me: helping those who need someone on ‘their side,’” Jim said.

“With the establishment of the Jim and Sharon Bryan Law Scholarship, their contribution helps secure a brighter future for our deserving students. We are grateful for their generosity,” said Dean Thomas Romig.

The Polsinelli Shughart PC law firm, a national practice with offices in 13 cities, including Kansas City, Mo., and Overland Park, Kan., has taken a significant step in advancing diversity at Washburn University School of Law and other area law schools.

The firm is in its third year of encouraging a greater diverse legal community by supporting talented minority law students. The Polsinelli Shughart PC Diversity Scholarship is matched by Washburn Law in its ongoing commitment to a diverse student body.

Dean Thomas Romig said, “The strong and generous support provided by Polsinelli Shughart PC helps to advance the quality of the legal profession by promoting diversity.”

Polsinelli Shughart PC employs more than 30 Washburn University School of Law graduates. Pictured here are some of those graduates: (front row, left to right) Anthony Springfield, ’02; Heath Anderson, ’01; Lynn Trevino-Legler, ’08; (back row) Frank Ross Jr., ’78; James Bird, ’80; Patrick Woolley, ’93; William Schutte, ’73; and W. Terrence Kilroy, ’77.
Leading by Example: Recent Endowments

Edgar W. Dwire Scholarship

Edgar “Ed” William Dwire, BA ’61, and JD ‘63, grew up in El Dorado, Kan. After graduation from Washburn University and the School of Law, he became a partner in the Wichita law firm of Malone Dwire & Jones. During his distinguished law career of nearly 45 years, he was active in numerous professional organizations, including serving on the Board of Governors of the Kansas Trial Lawyers Association from 1974 to 1981. He was a Wichita municipal judge and an assistant attorney general for the State of Kansas.

Ed gave countless hours of service through the Wichita Bar Association, serving on the bench and bar, civil practice, family law, grievance, nominating and probate practice committees.

Dwire passed away on December 9, 2007, at the age of 71. Thanks to the generosity of his family and friends, and commitment by the Clifton Square Foundation, the Edgar W. Dwire Law Scholarship will provide support for students in the years to come.

“This is a fitting testimonial to Ed’s distinguished life,” said Dean Thomas Romig.

Brian J. Moline Memorial Scholarship and Library Gift

The commitment of Brian Moline, ’66, to public service remains a lasting impression. Following graduation, he served in the Kansas Legislature, became director of Wichita Legal Aid, and was cofounder of Kansas Legal Services. Moline served as general counsel for the Kansas Corporation Commission, where he oversaw the Wolf Creek rate case, one of the largest and most complex cases to come before the Commission. He and his staff also successfully directed a component of the deregulation of the AT&T system. Moline taught for 27 ½ years as an adjunct professor at Washburn Law. In 2003, he was honored as an adjunct professor of the year.

He loved books and the conversations he had with their authors. To Brian, books were the foundation stones of our society. The ideas and systems, there conceptualized, were the very essence of our civilization. At Brian’s passing on September 29, 2008, his wife, Kathy Sparks, donated his beloved collection to the Washburn Law Library.

Brian was born in England and later became a naturalized U.S. citizen. He once said of his beloved country, “For decades, America has symbolized opportunity to break the shackles of destiny defined by caste, class, race or religion. And while the streets may not be paved with gold...America has always...represented opportunity; a place where initiative and individualism is valued, and where hard work, family solidarity and determination are valued.”

“Brian was incredibly devoted to Washburn University School of Law,” said Dean Thomas Romig. “The Brian J. Moline Memorial will remain as a tribute to Brian’s life and provide support in perpetuity for the new Center for Law and Government.”

Contributions to the Brian J. Moline Memorial Scholarship may be sent to the Washburn Endowment Association, 1729 SW MacVicar, Topeka, KS 66604.
Leading by Example: Recent Endowments

The Honorable David Debenham Scholarship

The Honorable David Debenham, ’80, worked in government for decades as a criminal prosecutor until he was appointed to the Shawnee County District Court last year. His wife, Glenda Cafer, bba ’83, started her legal career as an attorney with the Kansas Corporation Commission and still practices primarily in the area of public utility law. Both feel a debt of gratitude to Washburn for the excellent education they received and the opportunities made available by virtue of their education.

“It is important to us that top performing law students consider careers at the local, state, and national levels of our government,” said Debenham. “The students attending Washburn today are our future leaders, and they will soon be the ones establishing public policy for us all. The Center for Law and Government provides a strong foundation for those interested in public service — and for those who choose a career working with government agencies — to be efficient and effective practitioners. In today’s economic and cultural environment, the decisions rendered in our public sector affect us individually, but can also have a global impact. Our hope is when those decisions are made by Washburn Law graduates, the impact will be positive.”

He continues, “Glenda and I are fortunate to be able to give something back to Washburn Law in appreciation for all that it has given us. We view our endowment to the Center for Law and Government as an opportunity to assist Washburn students in obtaining exposure to the legal and policy issues facing our society so as to prepare them for the positions of leadership they will eventually, and inevitably, hold.”

Dean Thomas Romig said, “David and Glenda’s support of the Center for Law and Government will allow us to train students as our future government leaders. We greatly appreciate their very strong dedication to Washburn Law.”

Wm. David Byassee Law Scholarship

David “Dave” Byassee, ba ’67, and jd ’74, received a bachelor’s degree in history at Washburn. He then served as an Air Force pilot in Vietnam before returning to earn his juris doctor degree from Washburn Law. Dave spent 16 years with the Air Force Judge Advocate General’s Department before moving to Denver, Colo., and working his way up to partner with Jackson Kelly, PLLC.

Dave has handled construction defense and government contracts, as well as civil and commercial litigation. He has tried more than 150 civil and criminal jury trials to verdict, in addition to handling nearly as many administrative hearings and arbitrations.

Byassee fondly remembers his time at Washburn Law. Because of his great memories and the solid education he received at Washburn, he established the Wm. David Byassee Law Scholarship.

Dean Thomas Romig said, “We are fortunate to have extremely dedicated alumni like Dave Byassee who not only support our efforts to shine the light on Washburn Law, but also assist in student recruitment by establishing generous endowed scholarships.”
Irvine E. Ungerman Award for Excellence in Clinical Practice

When her father, Irvine E. Ungerman, ’30, passed away in 1980, Rowena Ungerman Iola Galerston thought it appropriate to honor him and reward those students who demonstrate excellence in clinical practice. “I didn’t want him to be forgotten, and I know he would appreciate it,” said Galerston. Ungerman came to Washburn because his cousins, Lou and Shaol Pozez, lived in the area. His wife, Hannah, also attended the School of Law. Ungerman’s Tulsa, Okla., law firm became one of the most respected in the area. His son, Maynard, also earned a law degree, and he encouraged his daughter, Rowena, to do so as well; however, as a widow with three young children, she was unable to make this dream a reality. Her sons, Mark and Randall Iola, decided to make this endowment permanent.

The Iola brothers clearly recall playing in their grandfather’s law office and library and hearing stories of Ungerman’s Washburn days. It was Ungerman’s hope they would return to Tulsa to join the family firm and practice with him and their uncle. Sadly, Ungerman passed away before this was possible. The Iola brothers did join the firm and practiced with their uncle for a number of years before leaving in 1998 to join Stanley, Mandel and Iola, L.L.P., in Dallas.

Ungerman and his wife remained positive influences on the Iola children, who lost their father at an early age. They provided for their education, and were a strong and consistent presence in their lives.

Randall Iola said, “Our grandfather was a generous man who touched a lot of people. He always supported Washburn University. We felt this was the least we could do to carry on his tradition of caring.”

Dean Thomas Romig said, “Because of their generosity, the Irvine E. Ungerman Award for Excellence in Clinical Practice is a permanent award and honors the life’s work of a caring man and respected trial attorney.”
McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips P.A. Scholarship

McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips, P.A., is one of the oldest law firms in the Midwest, now with more than 45 attorneys practicing in Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Nebraska.

Frederick Greenbaum, president of McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips, P.A., appreciates that Washburn Law gave him an excellent foundation and prepared him for a career in the law. He said, “We are pleased to provide scholarship support for Washburn Law students and to provide opportunities for those wanting to enter the legal profession.”

Many firms find that law scholarships help to encourage students considering studying the law and provide much-needed financial assistance.

Dean Thomas Romig said, “We are grateful for the support of McAnany, Van Cleave & Phillips, P.A. This scholarship will allow Washburn University School of Law to recruit some of the most deserving students.”

During World War II, Elliott served as resident legal counsel for the DuPont Corporation and the Atomic Energy Commission at the Hanford Works, in Richland, Wash. In 1947, his family returned to southwest Kansas, working in wheat farming and private practice. Eight years later, he went back to Tacoma to rejoin the law firm of Eisenhower, Hunter & Ramsdell, which was later known as Eisenhower and Carlson. He practiced until his retirement in 1985. To his great satisfaction, Merton’s son, Guy, became a partner in the firm. Merton Elliott passed away on March 3, 2007, at the age of 96, in Tacoma, Wash.

“This scholarship recognizes Merton Elliott’s lifetime commitment to the legal profession,” said Dean Thomas Romig.

In honor of her brother, Merton Elliott, ’35, Eltrude Elliott Hall created a scholarship for western Kansas students studying law at Washburn University.

“I am delighted to establish the Merton Elliott Law Scholarship at Washburn University. I, too, attended Washburn for two years following graduation from Sublette (Kan.) High School, a small community in the southwestern part of Kansas. I have many fond memories from my years as a piano accompanist in the School of Music,” Hall remarked. “I hope many young people will be made aware of these funds, and take advantage of the opportunities provided by Washburn University.”

Merton Elliott graduated from Sublette High School in 1927. He graduated from Wichita University (now Wichita State University) in 1930. Elliott continued his education at Stanford University, receiving a political science degree in 1932. He later enrolled at Washburn University School of Law, graduating with the class of 1935. He was admitted to the Kansas Bar and to the Bar in the State of Washington, where he practiced law and made his home in Tacoma.