

## In Practice

*For Jim Slattery, a \$250,000 building donation is the practical choice.*

It's not uncommon for lawyers to go into politics. However, running for state office during your first year of law school is almost unheard of. But that's exactly what **Jim Slattery, BS '70 and JD '74**, did. He was just 23 years old while managing his campaign for the Kansas legislature — on top of juggling a full course load and his National Guard obligations. But he knocked on doors, day and night, canvassing the Topeka community in 1972. It worked. So began a political career that went national and lasted more than 20 years.

Slattery, you see, is not much for theory. The six-term U.S. congressman is all about practice — going out and doing the thing you want to see happen. That's precisely why he loved Washburn Law.

“One thing that is unique about Washburn Law is that they do a wonderful job of teaching the law with a practical application. The faculty always focuses on the basics, like doing the hard work necessary to be prepared to advocate for your client. This means knowing the facts and applicable law,” Slattery, partner in D.C. law firm Wiley Rein LLP, said.

He has applied that same practical approach throughout his career. When he didn't like what was happening with interest rates, inflation, and the national debt in the 1980s, he ran for U.S. Congress so he could change it. Post-political career, when he was troubled by the conflict in the Middle East and its potential nuclear implications, he traveled to Iran as part of an ongoing faith-based dialogue.

There was little question how Slattery would respond to Ideal Place, Washburn Law's campaign for a new building. He and wife Linda made a \$250,000 gift, because from his perspective, the law school needs it.

“The existing law school building was just a couple years old when I enrolled. The facility, at that time, was very nice. But that was 40 years ago. The needs of the students have fundamentally changed, given the reliance upon technology and the different methods of research today,” he said.



“The Washburn Law community will make a very powerful statement with this new building. We will make it clear that alumni are committed to ensuring that Washburn Law is a world-class institution. Linda and I support this project because we believe in the law school's ongoing mission: training lawyers to pursue justice. That's really what the new building is all about.”

For Slattery, nothing could be more practical than that.