

Professor Linda Elrod



# Children & Family Law Center

The Washburn Children & Family Law Center got off to a good start this past year by establishing a Family Law Student Society with Andrea Prewitt, currently a 3L, as President. During the year, six to eight students attended a number of lunches with lawyers practicing in some aspect of family law. During these lunches, students were able to talk to and ask questions of the speakers regarding their practice area. Speakers included:

- Larry Rute '73, Associates in Dispute Resolution
- Nancy Freund '81, lawyer practicing family law
- Gwynne Harris Birzer '92, lawyer who practices family law
- Marty Snyder, former assistant disciplinary administrator and now an assistant attorney general
- The Honorable Dan Mitchell '73, judge of the Shawnee County Juvenile Court
- Dana Parks '87, lawyer in private practice in Kansas City, Missouri, who handles family law cases and has served as a guardian ad litem

## Moot Court Competition

Six Washburn Law students participated in the Domenick L. Gabrielli National Family Law Moot Court Competition in Albany, New York, February 26-March 2, 2003. One student took 11th best oralist in the competition.

## Curriculum Development

The Center continues to enhance the curriculum and educational offerings. In addition to the basic family law course, a family law seminar as well as divorce drafting, domestic violence and child advocacy are courses the center offered in spring 2003. This year, the law school will offer new courses in adoption, divorce practice, juvenile offender, and the financial aspects of divorce. In addition, about twenty students work on the Family Law Quarterly, the American Bar Association's scholarly publication which is edited at Washburn Law and the 15th most cited specialty journal.

The Center is working with the Washburn Law Clinic to expand clinical opportunities and is developing internship and externship possibilities so students can work with practicing professionals in public legal clinics, Kansas Legal Services and public prosecutors' offices. This past summer students had opportunities for externships with the Kansas Children's Service League. One student worked with the ABA Commission on the Elderly.

## Continuing Education

The Children & Family Law Center sponsored and co-sponsored several Continuing Education Programs this past year including:

- Sherri Goren Slovin, Cincinnati, Ohio, trained lawyers in the ways of "collaborative family law." In addition to the practicing bar, five faculty, one adjunct, and ten students participated in the February 14 program.
- The Center co-sponsored a program with the Kansas Trial Lawyers Association, on "Hot Topics in Family Law." Professor Linda Elrod discussed "There Must be Twenty Ways to Avoid Malpractice."
- A CLE on the Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Prof. Elrod and Prof. Ian Sumner from the Netherlands participated in the program. Prof. Sumner and Prof. Nancy Maxwell team-taught Comparative Family Law in the London summer program this June.
- The Center joined with the National Association of Counsel for Children to start a Kansas chapter with a day-long CLE program on May 9. The keynote speaker was Ann Haralambie of Tucson, Arizona, author of Handling Child Custody, Adoption and Abuse Cases, The Child's Attorney, and Child Sexual Abuse. Prof. Lynette Petty spoke on representing children transitioning out of foster care. Prof. Sheila Reynolds presented on the ethical considerations involved in child representation.



## Alumni

Washburn alumni have been invaluable in starting the Children & Family Law Center. Alumni volunteers have attended lunches, taught classes as adjuncts, and participated where they could to help the program. The Center continues to need talented alumni to direct, focus, support its work and help in specialized family law areas. Collaboration with alumni will enable the Center to respond to the needs of the legal community and the judicial system as it trains advocates to work within both.

To learn more about the Center or to volunteer to mentor students with a focus on the family law area of practice, please contact director, Professor Linda Elrod, at [linda.elrod@washburn.edu](mailto:linda.elrod@washburn.edu).