

Robert L. Gernon Award for Outstanding Service to Continuing Legal Education in Kansas

Established in 2005 and presented annually by Kansas Continuing Legal Education, the Robert L. Gernon Award for Outstanding Service to Continuing Legal Education in Kansas recognizes those individuals or organizations that have demonstrated a unique commitment to legal education for lawyers in Kansas and have provided outstanding service to continuing legal education.

The award is named for Kansas Supreme Court Justice Robert L. Gernon (1943 - 2005), whose career included tireless devotion to the training, education and professionalism of attorneys in Kansas and across the nation.

Award recipients include:

2019	Laura Shaneyfelt, Lawrence
2018	Stephen Angermayer, Pittsburg
2017	David E. Pierce, Topeka
2016	Foulston Siefkin LLP
2015	Jan Hamilton, Topeka
2014	Steve Obermeier, Olathe
2013	Robert M. Collins, Wichita
2012	Cynthia F. Grimes, Lenexa
2011	J. Nick Badgerow, Overland Park
2010	Jack Scott McInteer, Wichita
2009	Mira Mdivani, Overland Park
2008	Sheila Reynolds, Topeka
2007	Hon. Robert J. Schmisser, Pratt
2006	Philip Bowman, Wichita

Past Recipients

2019 – Laura Shaneyfelt, Lawrence



Laura Shaneyfelt, Lawrence, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2019 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Laura Shaneyfelt is CJA Resource Counsel with the Kansas Federal Public Defender Office.

Shaneyfelt was nominated by the Kansas Federal Defender Office. In their nomination letter, they highlighted the impact that Shaneyfelt has had on the legal profession in Kansas. “In just a few years, Laura has turned our office into a model training provider for federal defenders, state defenders, private criminal-defense counsel, and others.” In addition, Shaneyfelt has presented CLE programs around the state and country on a variety of topics and continues to work to improve and support the Kansas bar.

Shaneyfelt received her Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Kansas State University in 1982, and her Juris Doctor from the University of Kansas School of Law in 1985. She practiced law for 30 years in Wichita, Kansas before joining the Kansas Federal Defender Office in 2014. She previously served as president of the Wichita Women Attorneys Association, was honored with that organization’s Louise Maddox award in 2008, and was included in the Top 20 Women in Business by the Wichita Business Journal in 2013.

Justice Robert Gernon worked tirelessly to improve the training, education and professionalism of attorneys in Kansas and across the nation. Laura Shaneyfelt is an outstanding representation of what it means to be a recipient of the Gernon award. The award will be presented this October in Lawrence.

2018 – Stephen Angermayer, Pittsburg



Stephen Angermayer, Pittsburg, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2018 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Stephen Angermayer is an attorney with the firm of Fern and Angermayer in Pittsburg, Kansas.

Angermayer was nominated by John Mazurek and by Michael Gayoso of the Crawford County Attorney's Office. In his nomination letter, Gayoso highlighted the impact that Angermayer has had on the legal profession in the southeast area of Kansas. "He took it upon himself to organize monthly one hour continuing legal education (CLE) luncheons, although he was and is not on the board. Living in Southeast Kansas, it is difficult to obtain quality CLE's on a consistent basis and Steve strives to achieve this every month." In addition, Angermayer has presented CLE programs around the state on a variety of topics and served as a member of Kansas Continuing Legal Education for six years (two as chair).

Steve received his Bachelor of Science in Animal Science from Kansas State University in 1985, and his Juris Doctor with Honors from Washburn University School of Law in 1988. He is a member of the Kansas Bar Association, Southeast Kansas Bar Association, and the Crawford County Bar Association.

Justice Robert Gernon worked tirelessly to improve the training, education and professionalism of attorneys in Kansas and across the nation. Stephen Angermayer is an outstanding representation of what it means to be a recipient of the Gernon award. The award will be presented at the October 17 meeting of the Crawford County Bar Association.

2017 – David E. Pierce, Topeka



David E. Pierce, Topeka, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2017 Robert L. Gernon Award.

David E. Pierce is a Professor of Law at Washburn University School of Law in Topeka, Kansas. He currently teaches Oil and Gas Law, Advanced Oil and Gas Law, Energy Regulation, and Drafting Contracts and Conveyances. Professor Pierce received his B.A. from Kansas State College of Pittsburg in 1974 and his J.D. from Washburn University School of Law in 1977. Then in 1982, he received his LL.M. from University of Utah College of Law. He began his career as a solo practitioner in Neodesha, Kansas. He then worked in-house for Shell Oil Company in Houston Texas, Gable & Gotwals law firm in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Shughart Thomson & Kilroy law firm in Kansas City, Missouri.

Professor Pierce was nominated by John W. Broomes of the Hinkle Law Firm, LLC, and Timothy E. McKee of the firm, Triplett Woolf Garretson, LLC. In their nomination letter, McKee and Broomes highlight the impact that Professor Pierce has had on the legal profession. “He has devoted innumerable hours to preparing and delivering continuing legal education through the Kansas Bar Association, The Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation, the Energy and Mineral Law Foundation, Washburn University School of Law and many other schools and institutions.” The nomination package submitted for Professor Pierce supports this statement by including over 20 pages of publications, articles, and presentations where Professor Pierce has devoted his time and energy into educating groups about Oil, Gas, and Mineral Law.

Justice Robert Gernon worked tirelessly to improve the training, education and professionalism of attorneys in Kansas and across the nation. Professor Pierce is an outstanding representation of what it means to be a recipient of the Gernon award. On both a professional and personal level, Professor Pierce is viewed with utmost respect and affection by his peers, colleagues, and especially his former students. This was evident when the award was presented on October 6 in Wichita, Kansas, at the Kansas Bar Association luncheon during the annual Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association meeting.

Professor Pierce is a past president of the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation and a member of the Kansas Bar Association and American Law Institute.

2016 – Foulston Siefkin LLP

Foulston Siefkin LLP, Wichita, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2016 Robert L. Gernon Award.

The firm has created high quality, low cost CLE ethics programs that are offered around the state. Kansas CLE recognizes the importance of providing a variety of quality CLE opportunities in the state.

A Kansas-based law firm, Foulston Siefkin was founded in 1919 in Wichita.

2015 – Jan Hamilton, Topeka



Jan Hamilton, Topeka, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2015 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Jan Hamilton has practiced law in Topeka since 1973, most of that in private practice until he was appointed as the Standing Chapter 13 Trustee for Topeka in 1998, an appointment he continues to hold today. Throughout his career he has been involved in providing quality continuing legal education to the legal profession throughout the state of Kansas.

Kansas CLE received many letters in support of his nomination, which underscore the impact Mr. Hamilton has had on the profession, especially the in the area of bankruptcy. The Honorable Cynthia Norton, a United States Bankruptcy Judge for the Western District of Missouri, writes in her nomination letter, “Kansas is blessed to have so many lawyers who give unfailingly of their time and knowledge in order to make our lawyers better. But Jan stands out even among these, in terms of his willingness and commitment to continue helping lawyers and judges, even after an otherwise lengthy and stellar career. In sum, Jan exemplifies what the Robert L. Gernon award is all about.”

On both a professional and personal level, Mr. Hamilton is viewed with utmost respect and affection by his peers and colleagues. We know that his work and service to the legal community will continue for years to come.

Mr. Hamilton graduated from Washburn University and received his juris doctorate from Washburn University School of Law. He belongs to several bankruptcy related organizations, including the National Association of Chapter 13 Trustees. He is also a Fellow in the American College of Bankruptcy.

2014 – Steve Obermeier, Olathe



Steve Obermeier, Olathe, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2014 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Steve Obermeier has practiced law in Olathe as an assistant district attorney since 1985. Throughout his career he has been involved in providing quality continuing legal education to the legal profession throughout the state of Kansas.

In his nomination letter, Daniel McCarroll, Director, Continuing Legal Education for the University of Missouri –Kansas City School of Law, states that, “Mr. Obermeier consistently receives outstanding ratings for his speaking presentations from seminar audiences. He always exceeds expectations as a speaker and author in that his presentations are thorough, engaging and entertaining. He is committed to not simply conveying information, but serving the bar by providing education of the highest quality.”

On both a professional and personal level, Mr. Obermeier is viewed with utmost respect and affection by his peers and colleagues. We know that his work and service to the legal community will continue for years to come.

Mr. Obermeier earned a Bachelor of Science from the University of Kansas and received his Juris Doctor degree at Washburn University School of Law. He is a member of the Kansas Bar Association, Kansas County & District Attorney Association, Johnson County Bar Association, Washburn Law School Association and is active in the Johnson County Feed the Need program.

On behalf of Kansas CLE, Todd Thompson, Board Chair, presented the award to Steve Obermeier at the October luncheon of the Johnson County Bar Association.

2013 - Robert M. Collins, Wichita



Robert M. Collins, Wichita, Kansas, has been selected by Kansas Continuing Legal Education as the recipient of the 2013 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Robert M. Collins has practiced law in Wichita for the past 51 years. Throughout his career he has been involved in providing quality continuing legal education to the legal profession throughout the state of Kansas.

Mr. Collins' involvement in CLE predates mandatory CLE in Kansas by many years. Since 1970, he has served the Wichita Bar Association in many capacities. His CLE contributions for the Kansas Bar Association, Wichita Bar Association and other CLE providers, have been in the area of probate and elder law and real estate law. He generously shares his knowledge and expertise with attorneys on a state wide level.

In her nomination letter, Karin Kirk, Executive Director, Wichita Bar Association, states that, "when serving as a moderator and seminar organizer, Mr. Collins has relied on his legal experience when choosing topics that are timely and of importance to attorneys. As a presenter, he sets the bar for himself very high. He strives to make his presentation fresh and interesting while clearly communicating the applicable points of law. His strong personal ethics guide his presentation."

Donald Peterson, II, Wichita, also submitted a nomination for Mr. Collins. In his nomination letter he states, "Bob brings many great qualities to the (WBA CLE) Committee. He is wise, reasonable and level headed. Perhaps most importantly, Bob is generous with his time and in his spirit. I had the great fortune to work with Judge Gernon while I was serving as a law clerk for the Kansas Court of Appeals. Judge Gernon too was generous of spirit and with his time. I think Judge Gernon would have approved this award going to another 'Bob' who shares so many of the Judge's wonderful qualities."

On both a professional and personal level, Mr. Collins is viewed with utmost respect and affection by his peers and colleagues. While he has recently retired, it is evident by those that nominated him for this award, and others that know him, that his work and service to the legal community will continue for years to come.

Kansas CLE will present the award to Robert M. Collins at the October luncheon of the Wichita Bar Association.

2012 – Cynthia F. Grimes, Lenexa



Cynthia F. Grimes, Lenexa, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2012 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Cynthia F. Grimes is a partner with Grimes and Rebein, LC, Lenexa, Kansas. Her practice includes representation of debtors, creditors and trustees in bankruptcy and related commercial and litigation matters in Kansas and Missouri federal and state courts, including various Courts of Appeal.

Cynthia Grimes has recently been selected to be the new bankruptcy judge in the Western District of Missouri in Kansas City. She is expected to take the bench in February 2013 following the retirement of Judge Jerry Venters.

In her nomination letter, Michelle Suter, Commercial Law Group, Leawood, Kansas, states that, Cynthia has made a conscious effort over all of her years in practice to assist other attorneys both formally through presentations at continuing legal education (CLE) seminars and by writing on the subject of bankruptcy. She frequently consults with lawyers about ethical and disciplinary matters on a pro bono basis. Cynthia believes it is her duty, as a seasoned lawyer, to contribute to the continuing improvement of the profession.

In addition to the numerous CLE classes authored and presented and her experience teaching as an adjunct professor at KU Law School, Ms. Grimes has offered many services as a guest lecturer at local law schools. She has led a workshop for the Clerk's Office in the Bankruptcy Court in Kansas City, Kansas, on Chapter 11 cases from the lawyer's perspective. She has served as a debate judge in high school debate tournaments in Topeka and Lawrence, and as a practice-round judge at the Duberstein Moot Court Competition at both UMKC and KU Law Schools. Cynthia was also the recipient of the 2002 Roser Award for Excellence in Bankruptcy.

Cynthia's professional affiliations currently include the American College of Bankruptcy (Fellow), Kansas Bar Association, Kansas Bar Foundation (Fellow), American Bar Association, American Bankruptcy Institute – Kansas City Area Advisory Board, Midwestern Bankruptcy Institute, Kansas City Bankruptcy Bar Association, and Missouri Bar Association.

Cynthia graduated from the University of Kansas School of Law in 1984.

Kansas CLE will present the award to Cynthia F. Grimes at the October meeting of the Midwestern Bankruptcy Institute.

2011 – J. Nick Badgerow, Overland Park



J. Nick Badgerow, Overland Park, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2011 Robert L. Gernon Award.

J. Nick Badgerow is a trial lawyer who handles cases in the areas of construction, employment and professional responsibility. He is often called upon to serve as a mediator, as an expert witness and as a special master. Nick has developed a specialty in legal ethics and he lectures and writes frequently on ethics and responsibility topics. He is an author and co-editor of the Kansas Ethics Handbook, member of the Kansas Board of Discipline for Attorneys, member of the Kansas Judicial Council and Chairman of the Council's Civil Code Advisory Committee, member of the KBA Joint Commission on Professionalism, and Chairman of the Kansas Bar Ethics Advisory Opinion Committee.

Throughout his years of unselfish service, countless attorneys have benefitted from Nick's dedication and commitment to ethics and professionalism in the legal profession. He has presented nearly 200 seminars and published more than 30 articles, mainly on the topics of professional responsibility and ethics.

Nick was born in Macon, Missouri and received a B.A. degree (with honors) in English Literature and Business Administration from The Principia College in Elsah, Illinois in 1972. In 1975, Nick received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Missouri, Kansas City. He is Board Certified in Civil Litigation by the American Board of Trial Advocates, and is a construction arbitrator trained and approved by the American Arbitration Association.

Nick is a partner with Spencer Fane Britt & Browne, LLP in Overland Park, Kansas, where he serves as office partner-in-charge, as professional responsibility counsel and on the fee committee.

Kansas CLE presented the award to J. Nick Badgerow at the November 2011 meeting of the Johnson County Bar Association

2010 – Jack Scott McInteer, Wichita



Jack Scott McInteer, Wichita, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2010 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Jack McInteer is a business attorney and is nationally known as a respected negotiator. Jack has developed a specialty in legal ethics. He lectures and writes frequently on business and ethics topics. He is an author and editor of the Kansas Ethics Handbook, past Chairman of the State Ethics Advisory Committee, a member of the Wichita Ethics Investigation Committee, and a member of the Kansas Board for Discipline of Attorneys.

Jack is a twenty year member and past chairman of the Wichita Bar Association CLE committee and has organized or spoken at approximately a hundred seminars primarily for the Kansas Bar Association and Wichita Bar Association.

In her nomination letter, Karin Kirk, Executive Director of the Wichita Bar Association, states that, “as a presenter at a CLE seminar, Jack sets the bar for himself very high. He strives to make his presentations fresh and interesting, while clearly communicating the high standards set forth in the Rules of Professional Conduct. Jack generously shares his knowledge and experience with attorneys on a state wide level. Without question, Jack has, in a very positive way, directly and indirectly impacted the lives of many people and saved the careers of an untold number of attorneys.”

Jack was born in Kansas City, Missouri, and received a B.A. degree in mathematics and chemistry and a B.S. degree in physics in 1969 from the University of Missouri, Columbia, and a Juris Doctor degree in 1972 from the University of Missouri, Kansas City. He also did advance studies in economics at Wichita State University in the Master of Arts program and served on the faculty of that University.

Jack is a member of the Business, Real Estate and CLE committees and past member of the Board of Governors of the Wichita Bar Association, a member of the Kansas Bar Foundation, the Wichita Chamber of Commerce Aviation Task Force, the American Bar Association Forum on Air and Space Law and the Aircraft Financing Contracts Division, the National Transportation Safety Board Bar Association, and a past President of the Kansas Bar Association Aviation Section.

Jack continues his practice as a member of Depew Gillen Rathbun & McInteer, LC in Wichita, Kansas.

Kansas CLE presented the award to Jack McInteer at the October 2010 meeting of the Wichita Bar Association.

2009 – Mira Mdivani, Overland Park



Mira Mdivani, Overland Park, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2009 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Mdivani has introduced cutting-edge topics in her area of expertise, business immigration law. Her seminars have been attended by lawyers across Kansas and the nation.

She currently practices immigration law as managing partner of The Mdivani Law Firm, LLC. She also owns and manages I-9Seminars.com, LLC, a company that trains human resource managers and business lawyers in immigration compliance. In addition, she teaches immigration law at the University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law.

2008—Sheila Reynolds, Topeka



Professor Sheila Reynolds, Topeka, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2008 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Professor Reynolds practiced law for legal services organizations in Missouri and Kansas before joining the Washburn Law School faculty in 1979. She is currently serving as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Washburn Law School, a position she previously held from 1985-91. She taught in the Washburn Law Clinic for 28 years, supervising family law cases, and she currently teaches Professional Responsibility. She has been active on several legal ethics committees, including the KBA Ethics Advisory Committee and the Ethics 2000 Committee. She has contributed chapters to three KBA Handbooks, on Legal Ethics, Family Law, and Long-Term Care.

Jalen Lowry, Topeka, who nominated Professor Reynolds for this award, said that "her audience can always count on her presentations to be well-researched, with excellent supporting materials. She is well-organized and professional in her presentation style, with appealing dashes of examples and humor. The legal experience of Professor Reynolds gives her presentations a wonderful combination of scholarly research and practical application. She is patient and clear in presenting the fundamentals to beginning attorneys, and sophisticated in exploring fuzzy areas with experienced attorneys."

2007 – The Honorable Robert J. Schmisser, Pratt

The Honorable Robert J. Schmisser, Pratt, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2007 Robert L. Gernon Award.

Judge Schmisser has been active with legal education, presenting at seminars and coordinating CLE for a variety of legal organizations, for many years. He was an active participant in revitalizing the Southwest Kansas Bar Association, organizing the September CLE for a number of years. In addition, he has organized the annual recreational law CLE for the Kansas Bar Association at Flint Oaks in Elk County. Judge Schmisser believes in the social aspect of continuing education. He continues to share this philosophy as he coordinates programs in cities around the country.

Judge Schmisser may perhaps be most well known as the host of the annual Ski CLE event. He organizes the CLE programming for the Ski CLE and related social events almost single-handedly, devoting hours of time to every detail each year. In visiting with Judge Schmisser about the Ski CLE, you will quickly discover that he believes that the value of this CLE program lies not only in the substantive legal information shared with the participants, but also, and perhaps more importantly, in the interaction that occurs between the attorneys in attendance. As a representative of the Southwest part of our state, where attorneys are spread across a wide geographic area and may have few opportunities to interact with other members of the bar on a regular basis, his commitment to the promotion of a CLE program that advances collegiality among the members of the bar is extremely important. Judge Schmisser recently stated, “Lawyers don’t socialize enough with their peers. If they get to know each other better, they try harder to resolve a case before going to trial. By doing so, the lawyers create a more civil, more efficient and more economical use of the judicial system.”

He was awarded the Kansas Bar Association’s Outstanding Service Award in 1997 and the Southwest Kansas Bar Distinguished Service Award in 2006. In addition, the local school district awarded Judge Schmisser with the Friends of the Education award for his work with high school students.

Judge Schmisser is married and has three children and one grandchild. He enjoys spending time outdoors hunting and fishing.

2006 - Philip Bowman, Wichita



Philip Bowman, Wichita, has been selected as the first recipient of the Robert L. Gernon Award.

Phil has been active with legal education, presenting at seminars and authoring publications for a variety of legal organizations, for nearly thirty years. He is a partner at Adams & Jones in Wichita.

After graduating from KU law school in 1961, Phil began his professional life in Bushton, Kansas, as a jack-of-all-trades; vice president of the local bank, insurance agent, tax return preparer and lawyer. After a year of practice in Bushton, he joined Adams & Jones in Wichita. During his 44 years of practice – all with Adams & Jones – Phil worked on all kinds of matters, but eventually settled into real estate, banking, insurance, and commercial litigation. Recently he has spent more of his time arbitrating disputes for the American Arbitration Association. He is listed in *Best Lawyers in America* for Real Estate.

He has been active in continuing legal education as a presenter at seminars and authoring publications for nearly thirty years for the Wichita & Kansas Bar Associations and other legal organizations. In 1996, he was appointed by the Kansas Supreme Court as a member of the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Board, serving for six years, two as its Chair. The Kansas Supreme Court Nominating Commission nominated him to the Governor for the Kansas Court of Appeals three times, but he was not appointed.

He was awarded the Kansas Bar Association's Professionalism Award in 1998 and the Wichita Bar Association's Howard C. Kline Distinguished Service Award in 2000.

He is a member of Wichita Bar Association (President, 1985-86), Kansas Bar Association (Board of Governors, 1988-94), American College of Mortgage Attorneys (President, 1989-90), American College of Real Estate Lawyers, American Arbitration Association (Commercial Arbitrator Panelist), Kansas Bar Foundation (Trustee, 1995-98) and Kansas Real Estate Appraisal Board.

Phil and his wife Barbara, a career science professor and university administrator, have been married for 49 years and have three children and five grandchildren. His partners value his enormous contributions to the firm, not least his sense of humor.