

Sooner Lawyer Archive

Volume 2017 | Issue 2
Fall 2017/Winter 2018

2017

Faculty News

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/soonerlawyer>



Part of the [Legal Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2017) "Faculty News," *Sooner Lawyer Archive*: Vol. 2017: Iss. 2, Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.ou.edu/soonerlawyer/vol2017/iss2/9>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sooner Lawyer Archive by an authorized editor of University of Oklahoma College of Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact Law-LibraryDigitalCommons@ou.edu.

Faculty additions

▶ New faces and titles



Zach Schmook joined the faculty as assistant professor in the Legal Research and Writing Program. He previously served as deputy director and managing attorney for the Metropolitan St. Louis Equal Housing Opportunity. He also worked at Washington University School of Law as an adjunct professor teaching

mediation and legal writing and as clinical supervisor for the Civil Rights, Community Justice and Mediation Clinic.



Rebekah C. Taylor ('07) began at OU Law as assistant professor of clinical legal education. She teaches and supervises interns in the criminal defense division of the OU Law legal Clinic. Her prior legal experience includes maintaining a private practice involving civil and criminal matters, and serving as an assistant

district attorney in Cleveland County.

Faculty honors

▶ Aswad honored as global citizen

Evelyn Aswad received the World Experiences Foundation's 2017 Global Citizen in Law and Politics Award in September. The foundation annually celebrates individuals, organizations and businesses that have made significant contributions as global citizens.

Aswad joined the OU Law faculty in 2013 after serving for 14 years as an attorney in the legal bureau at the U.S. Department of State, most recently as the head of the Office of Human Rights and Refugees. She has developed an innovative international curriculum that combines international law and practice, current events and a focus on vulnerable communities abroad.

Aswad has helped students obtain internships in the U.S. State Department, the United Nations and with international human rights groups. She founded and directs the Center for International Business and Human Rights, which is the first center of its kind at a U.S. law school.



Professor Evelyn Aswad is pictured at the World Experiences Foundation event with former and current students. Left to right: Jason Hubbert ('16), Rebeca West ('16), Brooke Hamilton ('17), Evelyn Aswad, Sam Merchant ('16), Katherine Trent and Dan Sloat.

Aswad also provides advice on human rights matters to the U.S. Department of State through her service on its Advisory Committee on International Law as well as its Stakeholder Advisory Board on matters of responsible business conduct abroad. She consistently uses her countless service positions within the international community as learning opportunities for her students.

▶ Richter elected to ALI



Liesa Richter was elected to The American Law Institute, an independent scholarly organization working to clarify the law through restatements, principles and model penal codes.

Richter joined the OU Law faculty in 2001. She teaches Evidence and Civil Procedure. Her research focuses on

federal evidentiary policy and rule-making, and her articles have appeared in journals such as the *Fordham Law Review*, *Wake Forest Law Review*, and *William & Mary Law Review*.

Richter was recently selected to be the academic consultant to the Judicial Conference Evidence Advisory Committee. She also serves on the Evidence Drafting Committee for the National Conference of Bar Examiners, which drafts and reviews the evidence questions for the Multistate Bar Exam.

▶ Kershen honored by AALA



Professor Emeritus **Drew Kershen** was honored with the Excellence in Agricultural Law Award at the American Agricultural Law Association Annual Conference held in Louisville, Kentucky, in October. The AALA particularly emphasized Kershen's creation, compilation and update of an Agricultural Law Bibliography that now contains

almost 8,000 entries. Kershen's quarterly updates of the bibliography have been published in the *AALA Agricultural Law Update* periodical since the mid-1990s.



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA
College of Law

HIRE OU LAW

Get customized recruiting services from Oklahoma's #1 Law School

- Post jobs online for OU Law students and alumni
- Identify qualified applicants specific to your hiring needs
- Schedule interviews on campus, in your office or via video-conference

To hire the best, go to the best.
Ranked #1 in Oklahoma by *U.S. News & World Report*. For nine consecutive years, *National Jurist* magazine has ranked OU Law as a national Best Value Law School.

(405) 325-4717 | placement@law.ou.edu

The University of Oklahoma is an equal opportunity institution. www.ou.edu/eoo

Beyond the classroom

▶ Palomar speaks to mortgage attorneys' group



Professor Emeritus **Joyce Palomar** spoke at the annual conference of the American College of Mortgage Attorneys in Asheville, North Carolina, in September. She explained “The Effect of Full Credit Bids and Failure to Pursue Deficiency Judgments on Lenders’ Title Insurance.”

Palomar, in her 30th year at OU Law teaching Property, Real Estate Transactions and Land Use, is a frequent lecturer at national conferences on those topics. She is the author of *Title Insurance Law* and *Patton & Palomar on Land Titles*, as well as of many law journal articles.

▶ Backus, Thai appointed to civil rights committee



Professors **Mary Sue Backus** and **Joseph Thai** have been appointed to the Oklahoma Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. The commission is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the president and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing an annual federal civil rights enforcement report.

The commission maintains 51 state advisory committees, one for each state and the District of Columbia. Each is composed of citizen volunteers familiar with local and state civil rights issues. Committee members conduct reviews and produce reports and recommendations concerning local civil rights issues, including justice, voting, discrimination, housing, education and other important themes.



Backus teaches Criminal Law, Education Law, Evidence and Civil Procedure. Her recent scholarship focuses on reforming Oklahoma law in the areas of juvenile competency and virtual charter schools. She joined the OU Law faculty in 2004 after serving as a visiting assistant professor of law at William and Mary School of Law.

Thai joined OU Law in 2003 and teaches Constitutional Law, Supreme Court Theory and Practice, First Amendment, and Criminal Procedure. He also has co-taught a “mind-bending” course on morality, law and science on OU’s main campus. He writes about the Constitution and the Supreme Court, and frequently comments in local and national media.



▶ Ehrman chairs workshop for natural resources law profs

Monika Ehrman organized and chaired the inaugural Natural Resources Law Teachers Workshop in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Mineral Law Foundation’s 63rd Annual Institute in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in July. The workshop encouraged the work of scholars in the fields of natural resources law and policy through exchange of ideas and feedback on works-in-progress. The event was sponsored, in part, by the OU Law Oil & Gas, Natural Resources, and Energy Center.

Pictured at the event are (front row, left to right) Karen Bradshaw, Arizona State University; Robin Kundis Craig, University of Utah; David Pierce, Washburn University; Monika Ehrman, University of Oklahoma; Jason Czarnecki, Pace University; (back row) Blake Hudson, University of Houston; Zachary Bray, University of Kentucky; Vanessa Casado Pérez, Texas A&M University; James Coleman, Southern Methodist University; and James Hopkins, University of Arizona.

► **Kuntz Conference draws record crowd**

The 2017 Eugene Kuntz Conference on Natural Resources Law and Policy, held November 17 at the Cox Convention Center in Oklahoma City, set a new attendance record with 615 attorneys and landmen present to hear of recent developments and issues of importance to the oil and gas industry.

The conference is named for former OU Law dean and renowned oil and gas professor, Eugene Kuntz. Sponsored by the University of Oklahoma College of Law in conjunction with the Oklahoma Bar Association Energy and Natural Resources Law Section, the event is the largest conference focusing on oil and gas law in the nation.



R. Clark Musser ('70) was surprised to also be honored at the reception for his many years of involvement with the Kuntz Conference and his dedication to the College of Law. He is pictured above with Dean Joe Harroz and Professor Monika Ehrman.

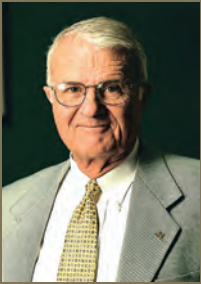
Gregory L. Mahaffey ('75), shareholder and president of the Oklahoma City law firm Mahaffey & Gore PC, was honored with the Eugene Kuntz Award at a reception the evening prior to the conference. The award recognized Mahaffey's many contributions to the energy industry and to oil and gas law in particular.

Mahaffey co-founded Mahaffey & Gore PC in 1980. He concentrates his law practice on Oklahoma Corporation Commission matters and oil and gas litigation. He is past president of the Oklahoma City Mineral Lawyers Society, and he has presented papers and lectures to various bar associations and oil and gas landman associations in Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas.



After being presented with the 2017 Eugene Kuntz Award, Greg Mahaffey speaks to reception attendees.

In remembrance



Robert Barr Smith

1933 – 2017

For 26 years, **Robert Barr Smith** taught courses on legal research and writing, oral advocacy, paralegal studies, advanced appellate advocacy, lawyering and trial techniques at OU Law. Born

in San Francisco and educated at Stanford University, as an undergraduate and law student, Smith retired from the U.S. Army as a colonel in 1981 after serving more than 20 years in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. During his civilian legal career, he also served as deputy attorney general of the state of California and as an associate with the San Francisco firm of Bronson, Bronson & McKinnon.

Smith was named director of the College of Law's legal research and writing program in 1983. Five years later, he became associate dean for academics, holding that position until 2003. Smith retired from full-time faculty status in 2008, but continued to teach until moving to Missouri in 2013.

He was the author of more than 20 books and 100 magazine articles on legal writing and military and western history.



Barbara Buchanan Lewis

1938 – 2017

Barbara Buchanan Lewis taught tax law and estate planning at the University of Oklahoma College of Law from 1975 to 1982 and served as interim dean from 1980 to 1981. The Kentucky native

returned to her home state in 1982, becoming the dean of the Brandeis School of Law at the University of Louisville, where she had earned her undergraduate and law degrees. Missing the daily interaction with students, she returned to the classroom in 1990 until her retirement in 2006. After about two years, she returned as an adjunct professor and taught on a part-time basis until 2014.

Prior to her career in legal education, Lewis worked as an attorney for the U.S. Corps of Engineers, a probation officer for the Jefferson County Juvenile Court and a teacher in Honduras and Guatemala. Her true passion was the law and education, and following her graduation from an LL.M. program at William and Mary, she taught at Cumberland School of Law before coming to OU.



Joseph C. Long

1939 – 2017

Joseph C. Long retired from the OU College of Law in 2001, concluding 31 years of distinguished service. He taught courses on agency and partnerships, corporations and state and federal

securities regulation.

Long began his legal education career in 1966 as an assistant professor at the University of South Dakota. He was appointed graduate fellow at the University of Virginia in 1968 and was named an assistant professor at Stetson University in 1969, finally joining the OU Law faculty in 1970.

During his tenure at OU Law, Long also was special counsel for the North American Securities Administration Association Inc. He is the author of *Blue Sky*, a treatise, published in two volumes in 1985 by Clark Boardman Co., and numerous teaching materials and law review articles.

Long was admitted to the Missouri Bar and Illinois Bar in 1963. He was admitted to the Oklahoma Bar in 1975. He is former associate general counsel and consultant for the Oklahoma Securities Commission and former co-reporter for the Revised Uniform Securities Act, National Conference of Commissioners of Uniform State Laws.