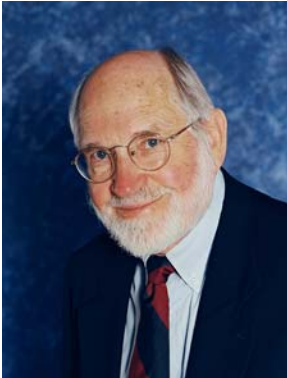


**Robert L. Gernon Award  
for  
Outstanding Service to Continuing Legal Education in Kansas**

**Past Recipients**



**2006 - Philip Bowman, Wichita**

Philip Bowman, Wichita, has been selected as the first recipient of the Robert L. Gernon Award. Established in 2005 and presented annually by the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Commission, 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.

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 Commission, 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.

## **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. Established in 2005 and presented annually by the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Commission, 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.

After graduating from the University of Kansas Law School in 1977, Judge Schmisser began his professional career in Pratt, Kansas. In 1986 he was appointed by Governor John Carlin as a District Court Judge representing the State of Kansas, District Court, 30<sup>th</sup> District.

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.



## **2008 – Sheila Reynolds, Topeka**

Professor Sheila Reynolds, Topeka, Kansas, has been selected as the recipient of the 2008 Robert L. Gernon Award. Established in 2005 and presented annually by the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Commission, 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.

During her career, Professor Reynolds has given over 75 CLE presentations to a wide variety of organizations and sponsors, focusing on the topics of legal ethics and family law.

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."

### **2009 – Mira Mdivani, Overland Park**



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

Established in 2005 and presented annually by the Kansas Continuing Legal Education Commission, 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.

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.