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CONGRATULATIONS!



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT
AWARD
Dan Monnat



HOWARD C. KLINE
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD
Richard Schodorf

THE CONSTITUTION'S PROMISE: OUT OF MANY, ONE

2025 Award Recipients

Wichita Bar Association



The Lifetime Achievement Award is given for sustained superior performance that recognizably sets the recipient apart from peers. The recipient is one whose accomplishments have brought credit and recognition to the profession and who has demonstrated exemplary ethical standards and high personal values.

Dan Monnat For almost 50 years, Dan Monnat has been fighting in courtrooms for unpopular people, companies, and causes. In fact, after enduring his teenage years of drumming in rock and roll bands, when Dan's mother would later see him on TV defending one of his cases, she would exclaim, "Why I remember that kid when he was a respectable, long haired rock and roll musician!"

"Seriously," says Dan. "Through my entire life, I received unimaginable love, support, and, as you can tell, humor from my mother (Margaret), my father (Adrian), my brother, and my three sisters."

After high school, Dan moved to San Francisco, playing in bands in the Bay Area, and obtaining a degree in Creative Writing cum laude from California State University. Inspired by an attempt to write a short story about a lawyer, after college he enrolled in the Creighton University School of Law and graduated in 1976.

Dan then found his way back to Wichita and was privileged to begin practicing with criminal defense stalwarts Russell Shultz, Orval Fisher, and another young attorney and now, lifelong friend, Craig Shultz.

A few years later, Stan Spurrier, Dan's neighbor, former bandmate, and long-time friend, graduated second in his class from Washburn University School of Law. In 1985, Dan and Stan formed Monnat & Spurrier, Chartered ("M&S") and received much of the additional guidance and mentorship they needed from senior WBA members like Jack Focht, Charlie Anderson, Warner Eisenbise, and contemporaries Dave Rapp, Steve Robison, Cyd Gilman, John Vetter, and Kurt Kerns. But, in the late-'80s, Dan and M&S received an infusion of incredible energy, intelligence and, literally, Grace.

Kung Fu Master Grace Wu had been teaching high school in Shanghai, China. When the opportunity arose to immigrate to the United States, she seized it, eventually ending up in the Master's degree program at Wichita State University and teaching Chinese Martial arts. Grace and Dan were married in 1992. By that time,

however, Grace had already begun to shape Dan's successes in the courtroom by contributing her natural and cultural strategic thinking, wisdom, and elegant kindness. Grace has participated in Dan's jury trials for the last 33 years. She has also served for the last 26 years as the Office Manager of M&S while continuing to teach at her school.

While Dan is grateful for the WBA's Lifetime Achievement Award, he recognizes that whatever he has achieved "was only with the support of countless generous and tolerant others." In 2000, Dan obtained his degree from the Gerry Spence Trial Lawyers College. Dan attended his first seminar sponsored by the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL) in 1979 and is still an active student, member, and instructor. In 1994, when Dan espoused the NACDL's stance refusing, on Fifth Amendment grounds, to provide the IRS with the names of individuals making cash payments on behalf of clients, the NACDL Strike Force jumped to Dan's defense, eliciting federal Judge Kelly's endorsement that a lawyer's duty "is a sacred trust and should not be intruded in."

Cognizant of his enormous debt to his mentors and allies, Dan has always tried to serve the bar; particularly, the criminal defense bar. He has contributed to the Wichita Bar and its Criminal Law Committee for 49 years and taught on criminal defense topics at its CLEs. He has done the same as President of the Kansas Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (KACDL) and nationally, as a Director of NACDL. Dan and Grace have both lectured pro bono for the Kansas Board of Indigent Defense Services (BIDS), the National Defender Services for Criminal Justice Act Attorneys (CJA), and over 30 state criminal defense organizations, presenting their "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Kung Fu Strategies For Trial."

Over the years, Dan has built a national reputation through a successful array of murder, sex, and white-collar acquittals and dismissals, and his cases have garnered major media attention. Dan's cases have been covered in The New York Times and the Los Angeles Times, and featured on CBS 48 Hours. He has provided national legal commentary on NBC's Today Show, CNN, CBS Morning News, CBS 48 Hours, Fox News, and local TV.

Dan is a Fellow in the American College of Trial Lawyers and the International Academy of Trial Lawyers. Dan was named five times to the Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers® "Top 10" list and listed in Best Lawyers in

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America® for over 35 years. Through it all, Dan has continued his passion for singing and drumming either with a group of public defenders and other lawyers, named The Crime Doctors, or his current trio of longtime friends, The House Band.

As M&S approaches its 40th anniversary, Dan, Stan, Grace, and the teams at M&S are proud that through the artistry of the law, music, and all other disciplines available to them, they continue to positively transform lives. Together they have been privileged to become a part of many wonderful families as M&S stood by them and their loved ones in some of their darkest hours.

Dan is very grateful to the WBA and its members for this generous award. When asked to comment on his work and the passage of years, Dan simply quotes with reverence the master musician, Louis Armstrong, "And life, whatever came out, has been beautiful to me, and I love everybody."



The Howard C. Kline Distinguished Service Award recognizes members who, through the years of their practice, have exemplified integrity, professionalism, and service to the bar. The recipient is one whose accomplishments have brought credit and recognition to the profession and who has demonstrated exemplary ethical standards and high personal values.

Richard Schodorf **Security 1st Title Company**

- Work on solving title and closing problems for a company the closes between 40,000 to 50,000 real estate transactions a year.
- Teach real estate law classes to attorneys, title professionals and realtors, including:
 - Wichita Area Realtors Association 2011
 - Career Education Systems 2008, 2009, and 2012
 - Wichita Bar Association Real Estate Law Committee 2007-2020 (presented monthly legal updates) Continuing Education Course on Real Estate Law May 2017, 2021, 2022.
- NBI National Continuing Legal Education Seminars 2009
- Courses approved by the Kansas Real Estate Commission 1985-1990
- Institute of Financial Education 1987
- Courses approved by the Kansas Insurance Commission 2012-present

Sunflower Title Company **President - January 2008 to 2012**

- Built company from one office and an 11th ranked market share to six offices and a 3rd ranked market share.
- Editor of monthly Real Estate Case Briefing, publication that went out to real estate professionals, lenders and attorneys

United States Department of Justice **Assistant United States Attorney** **January 1995 to 2007**

- Chief, Affirmative Civil Enforcement Unit for Prosecution of fraud against the United States of America.
- Supervised work of agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office of Inspector General and Secret Service.
- Developed nationally recognized proactive investigations into healthcare fraud, drug abuse, food stamp fraud and pell grant fraud.
- United States Department of Education; Special Achievement Award.
- United States Department of Health and Human Services; Integrity Award.
- United States Retirement Board Office of Inspector General (OIG); Retired Badge. (Third time award has been given out in history of OIG)
- Special Commendations; United States Department of Agriculture, General Services Administration, Drug Enforcement Administration.

District Attorney's Office **Director, Consumer Fraud and Economic Crime Division** **1990 to 1994 & 1976 to 1980**

- Supervised 12 investigators, attorneys and staff in the prosecution of consumer fraud and economic crime cases.
- Created national automotive repair fraud sting investigations for District Attorney Offices across the United States.
- Created nationally recognized and award-winning crime prevention programs.
- Hosted weekly radio and television programs.
- Provided advice to CBS, 60 Minutes, NBC, 20/20 on setup of consumer investigations.
- Authored education booklets selected as "Best New Consumer Education materials in the United States" (National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators, NACAA 1991)
- Created Mature Adult Fraud Prevention Program chosen as "Best Innovative Program" (NACAA 1992)
- Created Public Service Commercials selected as "Best Electronic Media" (NACAA 1992)