



## Press Release

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## **Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation Announces Honoree**

### **Jerome T. Wolf to Receive Liberty & Justice Legacy Award at 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Gala**

Jerome T. Wolf, a Partner at Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP, is the recipient of the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation's 2009 Liberty & Justice Legacy Award, according to Patricia Secton, President of the Foundation. The award is given in recognition of the recipient's dedication to the principles of liberty and justice through exemplary professional, civic and community service. Presentation of the award will be made at the foundation's annual dinner Saturday, November 7 at the InterContinental Hotel on the Country Club Plaza.

Jerome T. Wolf grew up and went to high school in a small town named Austin, Minnesota. He attended college at Yale University, where he graduated in 1959 *Magna Cum Laude* and Phi Beta Kappa. Wolf then obtained his law degree from Harvard Law School in 1962. He was in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General Corps from 1963 to 1966 where, for the most part, he ran the defense and legal assistance office at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

After leaving Fort Leonard, Wolf came to Kansas City where his grandparents and cousins resided—his grandfather and uncle were in the cattle business in Kansas City for years. He spent 28 years at Spencer Fane Britt and Browne, where he was one of the managing partners and chaired the litigation section. In 1994, Wolf had the opportunity, along with two other partners at Spencer Fane Britt and Browne – Mark Johnson and Dave Gatchell – to open the Kansas City office of the national law firm, Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP. Wolf was the founding managing partner, and he worked with the architect to design the offices and recruited many of the key lawyers who are at the firm today—including Jim Heeter, Curt Woods, John Marvin, Bob Fisher, Jim Moeller, Bruce Davison, Michelle Stark Kaufman, Mike Van Dyke, Marty Moderson and many others.

Wolf served as chairman of the law firm's Centennial Committee which was celebrated in 2006 in their offices around the country. He administers the Sonnenschein Scholars Foundation, which was a Centennial Project that provides stipends to first year law students in 25 law schools across the country to work in public service during the summer between their first and second years. He also serves on the law firm's Pro Bono Committee and assists Vietnam era veterans in filing their disability claims for PTSD. Wolf is currently handling two death penalty cases in Alabama, one of which he won in Federal District Court for the District of Alabama by proving that the defendant, who has been on death row for 25 years, was mentally retarded. The case is now on appeal.

Sonnenschein isn't the only group to benefit from Wolf's participation. He is a Past President of the Yale Club of Kansas City, the Phi Beta Kappa Association of Kansas City, and was the Chairman of the Jewish Community Relations Bureau, American Jewish Committee for two separate terms. Wolf is co-chairman of the Justice for all Campaign for Legal Aid of Western Missouri, and is currently Chairman of the Board of the Friends of Chamber Music which brings world class chamber music ensembles and pianists to Kansas City.

Wolf says he is very humbled by receiving the Liberty & Justice Legacy Award. "Liberty and justice turn on the fairness of our judicial system. I have given my best effort to make a personal contribution to these values, including working with Legal Aid and personally handling a number of pro bono cases. I don't know that I have lived up to what this award stands for, but I certainly believe liberty and justice turn on what we individual lawyers do to preserve them."

Several organizations have awarded Wolf with various recognitions over the years. He has received the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation Founder's Award, the Legal Aid of Western Missouri President's Award, the Legal Leader Award from *the Daily Record*, and the Jewish National Fund Tree of Life Award.

"The Foundation is thrilled to add Jerry to the outstanding list of Legacy Award recipients," said Patricia Sexton, KCMBF President. "His commitment to the legal community, and particularly to Legal Aid, is exceptional. He sets an excellent standard for the rest of us to try and follow."

The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Foundation, in partnership with the KCMBA Public Service Committee, has also announced the Third Annual Constitution Day Essay Contest for high school students who will graduate in 2010. A \$5,000 college scholarship is being awarded by the law firm of Bartimus, Frickleton, Robertson & Gorny, PC and will be given to the author's choice of educational institution for the best essay. The scholarship recipient will be introduced at the Gala on November 7.

All currently enrolled seniors within the Kansas City Metropolitan area were invited to participate. The 1,000 word essay must answer the following question: "The purpose of the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is to protect the privacy and security of individuals against random searches by government officials. Do you think that the Fourth Amendment should apply to students at school?"

Funds raised by the event will support the mission of the Foundation: To create, support and fund public service programs which promote education and the ideals of justice in the Kansas City

metropolitan community. Samples of these programs include the “Voice of Justice Program” which provides high school students with the opportunity of a mock trial experience and interaction with the legal process held within court, the an annual Interdisciplinary Domestic Violence Conference, and Summer Law Internship Program giving economically disadvantaged high school students an opportunity to explore careers in the law.

This year will mark the first year that KCMBF will make grants to programs that serve the Foundation’s mission to create, support, and fund public service programs which promote education and the ideals of justice in the Kansas City metropolitan community. The initial grant cycle will award up to \$30,000 to local organizations whose programs and services fall within the Foundation’s mission.

Table sponsorship and individual tickets for the Liberty & Justice Gala are available by calling the Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association at (816) 474-4322.

***Photo Available Upon Request***

The Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association serves approximately 5,000 members in the nine-county Kansas City metro area: Johnson and Wyandotte counties in Kansas and Cass, Clay, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri. The mission of this Association is to serve our members and our community by promoting justice, professional excellence and respect for the law.