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Contact: Abby E. Dozier
Communications Specialist
PH: 817.212.4061

Alumni Association Honors Peers

FORT WORTH, Texas – The evening of April 19 brought together about 70 members of the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law Alumni Association for the annual alumni reception and dinner.

From the fourth floor rooftop patio of the Reata Restaurant in downtown Fort Worth, members of the alumni community gathered to reconnect and honor their peers. Nancy Jackson Carroll '97 was the chair of this year's dinner committee. Alumni association board president Ralph Swearingin '94 was the master of ceremonies.

The Honorable Kay Granger '65, United States Congress member and Texas Wesleyan University alumna, was the evening's keynote speaker. After being introduced by University President, Dr. Harold Jeffcoat, Granger shared stories about her role in the development of Fort Worth, and the unexpected path that led her to a career in politics.

"When I really got involved in building and planning, I saw where it all could go," Granger said. "For a community to work, people need to have the ability to work, learn, live, and play."

Citing the law school as one of the components that make Fort Worth a desirable place to live and work, Granger reflected on the law school's humble beginnings and its successful growth over the last 18 years. She said that the future of the school, and its people, is an exciting development to observe.

Following Granger's remarks, Dean Fountaine addressed attendees, sharing highlights of the law school's accomplishments over the last year, including the success of the annual fund and law review endowment fund. She also highlighted the school's 91.14 percent bar passage rate, and the moot court teams' successes and praised the alumni for their continued support and involvement in the law school.

The evening concluded with the presentation of the annual alumni awards. This year's recipients were as follows:

Professor Susan Ayres received this year's **Shirley Zabel Memorial Faculty** award. Named for former Texas Wesleyan law professor Shirley Zabel, the award is given to a faculty member in recognition of national scholarship, activities that enhance the reputation of the law school and its students, and extracurricular service. Ayres has been a member of the faculty since 1999 and teaches courses in criminal law, family law, gender, sexual orientation & the law, and law & literature seminar.

The Honorable Bonnie Sudderth, of the 352nd District Court of Tarrant County, received the **Distinguished Adjunct Faculty** award, which is presented to an adjunct faculty member in recognition of notable scholarship, continuing support of students and extracurricular service. A graduate of the University of Texas Law School, Judge Sudderth has taught Texas Trials and Appeals as an adjunct professor at Texas Wesleyan University School of Law since 1999.

Kellee Swanda '95 was the recipient of the **Distinguished Alumni of the Year** award. The award is presented to an alumnus or alumna of the law school who demonstrates excellence in achievement and community service.

Jennifer Wilson received the **Distinguished Service to the Law School** award. Wilson was previously the alumni relations coordinator for Texas Wesleyan University School of Law, and has a long-standing positive relationship with many alumni.

Interim Dean Cynthia Fountaine received the **Leadership Award**, which is given to someone generally affiliated with the school by attendance or occupation who has demonstrated qualities that go above and beyond outstanding leadership. Serving as interim dean since 2006, Fountaine has led the law school in various achievements including increased bar passage rates and greater community involvement and financial support.

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