

Justinian Society of Wisconsin  
Columbus Day Dinner  
October 9, 2009

Introduction of Daniel Blinka

1. Each year, at our annual CD Dinner, the JSL honors one individual as our “Jurist of the Year” for his or her exceptional contributions to the law -- in recognition of the legal roots of the JSL.
  - a. Black’s Law Dictionary defines jurist as “One who is versed or skilled in the law. A legal scholar.
2. Over the years, our “Jurist of the Year” has included:
  - a. CA judge – Rick Brown.
  - b. Numerous Circuit Court judges from Milwaukee, Waukesha and Racine.
  - c. Prosecutor – Bob Donohoo.
  - d. All individuals who have distinguished themselves in a specific area of the law.
3. This year, our honoree is truly a 21<sup>st</sup> Century “Man for All Seasons.” He has served as:
  - a. Prosecutor – Milw. Co. DA Office who handled the toughest Homicide, SA and White Collar prosecutions.
  - b. Special Prosecutor throughout the State when special expertise was needed in a particularly difficult case.
  - c. Consultant to some of the top Criminal and Civil trial lawyers in Wisconsin with respect to procedure and evidence issues.

- d. President of MBA.
  - e. Lecturer locally, statewide and nationally to attorneys and judges.
  - f. In particular, he is the “go to guy” for the Wisconsin Office of Judicial Education. This office has the reputation for having pre-eminent educational programs for judges.
  - g. Member of the Supreme Court Board of Bar Examiners – the “gatekeeper” to the legal profession.
  - h. Prolific researcher and legal writer on evidence, criminal and civil procedure and ethics.
  - i. Author of Blinka, Wisconsin Evidence, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition which is a treatise on evidence which every judge and trial lawyer has on his or her shelf. In fact, I believe that it is the most cited legal authority by the appellate courts in Wisconsin.
  - j. And, for the past 24 years he has been a faculty member at the MU Law School molding our future lawyers and judges.
  - k. This “Man for All Seasons” is our colleague and friend – Professor Daniel Blinka.
4. Dan was born and raised in Cudahy.
5. Dan was educated in Milwaukee and Madison.
- a. BA, MA and PhD degrees in U.S. History.
  - b. JD from UW Law School.
6. Dan is family man.
- a. Loving wife, Diane.
  - b. Four sons who are pursuing careers in the legal, financial and medical professions.

7. Dan has been recognized time and again for his outstanding legal mind and for his contributions to the fields of education and the law. Some examples include:
  - a. 2009 Law Professor of the Year by the Wisconsin Law Journal.
  - b. 2000 Robert and May Gettel Faculty Award for Teaching Excellence – a university wide award from MU.
8. However, of all the awards he has received, and there are too many to recount here, there is one that stands out to Dan; one award that means the most to him; one award that he has received 5 times in his life:
  - a. The Professor James Ghiardi Award for Outstanding Classroom Teaching, Student Body Support and Scholarship conferred by the MULS Student Bar Association.
9. Tonight, the JSL adds another award to the resume of Daniel Blinka.
10. However, before I call him up to make JSL presentation, I would ask that Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson and District One Chief Judge Jeffrey Kremers come up for special presentations they would like to make to Dan.
11. It is my distinct honor to present to Professor Daniel Blinka, who is my colleague and one of my best friends, the JSL “Jurist of the Year Award” for 2009.