

and minimize legal liability for school districts within the Greater Milwaukee area.

5. Two books were published, *Sports Law Practice* and *The Stadium Game*. *Sports Law Practice* was a practitioner-oriented book, with forms, to help attorneys negotiate professional player contracts as well as endorsement agreements. *The Stadium Game* was a “How To” book to help cities, states, teams, and facility owners negotiate the leases for many of the sports venues built in North America during the 1990s and beyond.

6. The institute hosted annual conferences focusing on topics such as sports facility legal issues, franchise values, and sports employment and endorsement agreements.

7. Internationally, the NSLI served as an inspiration for sports law learning. Some of its early partnerships included collaborations with the Anglia Ruskin University sports law program in England; the Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Association; the Griffith University sports law program in Brisbane, Australia; the University of Cape Town and the University of Johannesburg sports law initiatives in South Africa; and the Asser Institute in the Hague, the Netherlands.

8. The Master of the Game Award was created, recognizing the sport-based achievements and community leadership of Hank Aaron of the Milwaukee/Atlanta Braves and Milwaukee Brewers, Bart Starr and Bob Harlan of the Green Bay Packers, and Marquette’s Al McGuire.

Success is often measured by whether one left a place better compared to one’s arrival. Marquette Law School’s National Sports Law Institute has offered internationally recognized sports law education during the last 35 years and forged mutually beneficial relationships for those motivated by the pursuit of excellence. Getting out of the blocks quickly had a lot to do with the NSLI’s success. ■

Hon. William C. Griesbach

In Praise of Two Servants of the Law and Society

These are excerpts from remarks made by the Hon. William C. Griesbach, L’79, senior judge of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin, in presenting awards to George Burnett and Jim Sickel at the Eastern District of Wisconsin Bar Association’s annual meeting in Milwaukee on May 16, 2024.

Two of the awards that the Eastern District of Wisconsin Bar Association presents each year are named after judges who had deep ties to Green Bay, where I have the privilege to maintain my chambers. Judge John W. Reynolds, Jr., whose name goes with the Community Building Award, was born and raised in Green Bay. He practiced law there with his father, and even after ascending to the offices of attorney general and governor of Wisconsin and then of United States district judge here in Milwaukee, he never tired of introducing himself as John Reynolds from Green Bay. Judge Reynolds served on the court from 1965 to his death in 2002.

Judge Robert W. Warren, for whom the Public Service Award is named, wasn’t born in Green Bay, but he practiced law there and served as district attorney for Brown County and then as a state senator representing the area, before moving to continue his career in Madison as attorney general for the State of Wisconsin and then in Milwaukee as a federal district judge from 1974 to his death in 1998. Portraits of both of these esteemed men hang in my courtroom in Green Bay, where I have the privilege of being the first federal district judge to maintain chambers.

So let us agree that it is natural for me to present these two awards this year. For both of the recipients also have deep roots in Green Bay. I have known and admired these two lawyers for many years.

To be sure, I first met George Burnett in Chicago when we were both working for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. I was a staff attorney for the court, and George was a law clerk for Judge Harlington Wood, Jr. When we left the court’s service in 1982, I went to Green Bay, and George went to Milwaukee, where he briefly practiced before coming to Green Bay. Milwaukee’s loss was Green Bay’s gain. After a few years in Green Bay, George joined the law firm now known as Conway, Olejniczak & Jerry, as I was leaving that same firm to work in the district attorney’s office. George was a definite upgrade, and he has been there for almost 40 years, practicing general civil and appellate litigation.

During that time, George has helped lead the profession. He served as president of the State Bar of Wisconsin. He was twice elected to the board of



These portraits of the late Judges John W. Reynolds (top) and Robert W. Warren hang in the courtroom of Judge William C. Griesbach in the federal courthouse in Green Bay, Wis.

directors for the state bar's litigation section and served a term as chair. George coauthored the chapter on jury verdicts for the state bar's treatise, *Wisconsin Trial Practice*.

What one sees in George's extensive service to the Green Bay and Wisconsin legal community more generally is an incredible devotion to both the profession of law and the community. To put it straightforwardly, George is a workhorse who loves the law and who has used his extensive knowledge of the law and his gifts in writing and speaking to improve the profession and to contribute to the community. As one lawyer told me, George is often the lawyer who takes the difficult cases that no one else will, not because he's a glutton for punishment but because of his strong sense of justice and desire to help people. George is also one of those generous attorneys who have been willing to take on the representation of state prisoners pro bono, at the courts' request, to help justly resolve the various lawsuits against law enforcement personnel, prison guards, and correctional staff that fill the courts. There are many more things that could be said about George as a husband to his dear wife, Eileen, and as a father and grandfather to their children and grandchildren, as well as about his substantial contributions to various religious and charitable organizations. But with what I have said, I hope to have conveyed some sense of why I am honored to present Attorney George Burnett with the Judge John Reynolds Community Building Award.

Let me turn to the other honoree, who has the advantage, as I see it, of having received *both* his undergraduate and law degrees from Marquette University (George attended Marquette for college). U.S. Magistrate Judge James Sickel is also a person with deep Green Bay roots and a strong commitment to the law and other people, especially the



R. George Burnett and James R. Sickel in front of the federal courthouse in Green Bay, Wis.

Andy Menis

less fortunate. Jim was born and raised in Green Bay and can tell you anything you want to know about the history of the community. After graduating from college in 1967, he volunteered to join the Peace Corps, which sent him to teach and work in Colombia, where he became fluent in Spanish. After three more years in Milwaukee, for his law studies, he returned to his hometown and began practicing law in 1974. Since 1975, he has been with the law firm of Hinkfuss, Sickel, Petitjean & Wieting.

Jim's law firm has been known over the years as the place where recent immigrants would go to find legal representation. In part, this was due to the fact that Jim was one of the few attorneys in the area who were fluent in Spanish. That also led to the local courts' tapping Jim to represent Hispanic individuals who were accused of crimes. Although criminal law was never his primary area of practice, Jim would take on the representation of many such persons,

in one case winning an acquittal of a man accused of murder. Because of the involvement of one of Jim's partners with the Hmong community, Jim's firm also provided representation for many members of that community as well, often for little or no pay. Over the years, Jim has developed a practice in the areas of business law, including the organization and operation of corporations and limited liability companies, estate planning, probate, and real estate. He also represents town governments in various matters and has appeared for clients before commissions, boards, and municipalities in northeast Wisconsin. His deep roots in the community and his understanding of the difficulties of running a small business have served him well in his practice. He has also served as the part-time federal magistrate judge in Green Bay since 1991, which until I arrived on the federal bench in 2002 meant that he handled all the initial

appearances and detention hearings for federally charged defendants in the northeast part of the state. His service has continued. Yet all of that is only part of Jim Sickel's contribution to the community. One of his partners told me that Jim is the most generous person he has ever known. Jim's commitment to the poor, reflected in his willingness to represent non-English-speaking litigants in the criminal and civil courts of the area, is also seen in his community involvement. Jim served as president of the board of Legal Services of Northeast Wisconsin, a provider of legal services for the indigent, and as a member of board of directors of the Wisconsin Equal Justice Fund. He is a former president of the Brown County Bar Association.

Jim's contributions have also extended to preserving the historical significance and beauty of the Green Bay area. In addition to his involvement with the Brown County Historical Society, he was a charter member and fundraising chair of the Allouez Beautification Committee, a board member of the Heritage Hill Foundation, which operates Heritage Hill State Historical Park, and chair of the Hazelwood Restoration Committee,

They—both the awards and, far more, the awardees—remind us of the important role that the members of our profession play in a healthy, flourishing society.

which restored the home of Morgan L. Martin, chief draftsman of the Wisconsin Constitution.

Here, too, there are many more things that could be said about Jim, as a husband to his dear wife, Kathie, and as a father and grandfather to their children and grandchildren, as well as about his notable work in support of civic and other organizations in our community. But hopefully from what I have highlighted, together with his service to the court as the part-time magistrate judge, for now going on some 33 years, you have some idea why I am deeply honored to present the Judge Robert W. Warren Public Service Award to U.S. Magistrate Judge James R. Sickel.

Permit me this final observation. In considering these remarks, I reflected on how often, as a judge, I am called upon to talk about the actions and qualities of a particular person who

appears before me. Usually, this is at a sentencing hearing, when I am required to impose a punishment for a crime. This, of course, is not that kind of occasion. But I have sometimes said to the defendant at a sentencing, "Reading your presentence report about your upbringing and your past criminal history is like reading your obituary before you die." I also tell these defendants, "Fortunately, it's not the end of your life, and there is nothing to prevent you from making a better ending."

How much more enjoyable this sort of occasion is. We present honors such as the Reynolds and Warren awards to people who have demonstrated the qualities of character and professionalism to which we should all aspire. They—both the awards and, far more, the awardees—remind us of the important role that members of our profession play in a healthy, flourishing society. ■

Joseph D. Kearney

Some Observations on Jesuit Education, the Law, and Even Commerce

On April 4, 2024, Marquette Law School Dean Joseph D. Kearney spoke to the Business Honors Seminar at Loyola University Chicago's Quinlan School of Business, at the invitation of Professor Bjorn Berg, L'07. His opening remarks touched on some themes that may be of broader interest.

My thanks to Professor Berg for inviting me and to all of you for welcoming me today. My own background or experience is in civil litigation, yet I am familiar enough with the law generally (and with Latin) to know the criminal-law term "right of allocution." It is a defendant's prerogative to address the decision-maker before sentence is announced. I rather doubt that I will remember my time with you today that way, but lawyers have a tendency

to imagine the worst, so that we may try to ward it off. Primarily, I am looking forward to the Q&A, as we may call it, which I very much hope will prove a genuine conversation. Yet let me take up three things at the outset, and hopefully not merely for the sake of some obligatory upfront throat clearing to mark the beginning of a conversation.

First, I come by this maroon-and-gold tie honestly—or, if you prefer a less metaphorical but still true statement,