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### UM panelists urge law students to get involved in public service

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# University of Montana

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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UM PANELISTS URGE LAW STUDENTS TO GET INVOLVED IN PUBLIC SERVICE

MISSOULA--

Speaking at a panel discussion at the University of Montana on "Public Service and the Practice of Law," four distinguished graduates of the UM law school voiced concern Oct. 23 that lawyers are moving away from the arena of public service.

R.H. "Ty" Robinson, a 1948 graduate and partner in the Missoula firm of Garlington, Lohn and Robinson, told about 30 law students and faculty that the majority of the founding fathers were lawyers who were motivated to serve the country out of a sense of public duty. Today, he said, there are only three attorneys serving in the Montana House of Representatives.

Robinson said many things would not get done in the community if it were not for lawyers volunteering their time to service organizations and public-interest groups.

"It's clear that the House doesn't function as well with only three lawyers," Robert Corette, a 1934 graduate and senior partner in the Butte firm of Corette, Smith, Pohlman and Allen, said.

Both Corette and Robinson are recipients of this year's Distinguished Alumnus Awards. Also serving on the panel were two 1981 Young Alumnus award recipients, Gregory Hanson, class of '71, and partner in the Missoula firm of Garlington, Lohn and Robinson; and Daniel Kemmis, class of '78, 1981 House minority leader and partner in the Missoula firm of Kemmis and Jonkel.

(over)

UM PANELISTS-- add one

Corette cited money and the 90-day Legislative session as reasons why there has been such a drop in the numbers of lawyers serving in the Legislature.

"Lawyers simply cannot afford to leave their firms for \$75 a day," he said.

Kemmis said that at some point a person's "got to choose whether he wants to be a politician or a lawyer." He said being gone for four months poses problems because clients expect to have their attorneys when they need them. Also, he said, there is tremendous competition among lawyers and lawyers can't afford to be gone that long.

Cutting down to a 60-day session would make the situation "a little more manageable," Corette said.

Kemmis said many students study law out of an interest in public service. He said in a democracy, the power of the law rests in the people and that lawyers have a duty to "do whatever is possible to make people aware they are the source of the law."

Hanson said lawyers have something special to offer to public groups and organizations because their legal training makes them knowledgeable of the "rules of the game." He said lawyers should become more involved in the educational field by serving on school boards and assisting universities and private schools.

Corette said he was critical of lawyers who are too busy with their work to get involved in public service. "It takes a lot of nights and meetings," he said, "but it pays off financially and personally."

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