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# Starting Act II: Assistant Dean Audrey Koscielniak Steps Down as Career Services Chief

UB Law Forum

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# Faculty:

# Starting ACT II

Assistant Dean

**Audrey Koscielniak**

steps down as career services chief

“There are no second acts in American lives,” Mark Twain once said. Audrey Koscielniak is proving him wrong. After a 38-year career at UB Law School that began when she was fresh out of high school, Koscielniak – director of the Career Services Office and a UB Law assistant dean – is leaving O’Brian Hall for new horizons.

Behind her stretch UB Law alumni numbering in the thousands whose first jobs in law came through her efforts.

Says Law School Professor William R. Greiner, president of UB, “Although Audrey Koscielniak is much younger than I am, she actually has been here longer than I have. Her extraordinary length of service alone is a reason to praise her and her loyalty to UB. But there is so much more.

“She is a highly skilled professional and a pillar of the Law School. Generations of Law School faculty members and students are indebted to her, for her efficiency, her loyalty, her good humor and her great style. We wish her all the best for many happy years ahead.”

Vice Dean Alan S. Carrel, with whom she worked for 22 years, describes her as “an extremely talented person who built and maintained one of the best career services offices in the country. An outstanding administrator and a highly skilled professional, she created and produced an extensive array of materials and programs.

“Her numerous seminars, newsletters, workshops, handbooks, panel discussions and interview programs, combined with her countless hours of individual counseling, enabled thousands of students over the



years to successfully launch their legal careers.”

Looking back, Koscielniak says, “There are always interesting people in a class who can be impressive and a lot of fun. As you get to know them, they start to establish more of an identity, a personality. UB Law students are a very nice group overall. Other placement directors have met our students in different settings and have de-

scribed them as easy to work with and very nice people.”

The school, of course, is a very different place than it was in 1962 when Koscielniak settled in at 77 W. Eagle St. There were about 40 students in the senior class that year, she recalls, and she was one of three do-it-all staff members, covering tasks ranging from reception to faculty support, from switchboard operator to

quasi-acquisitions librarian. "You knew every student by name," she says. "There was a lot of one-to-one contact because of the way the building was designed – the classrooms were on the first floor, as were our offices."

Then, in 1965, came a move to the Prudential Building, an architectural gem that nonetheless Koscielniak remembers for its cockroach infestation. "I got really good at stepping on them," she laughs. She became a secretarial supervisor and office manager, and helped manage the Law School's move to the wilds of Amherst in 1973.

"There were no roads, just dirt," she remembers. "It looked like the Kenyan back roads I recently traveled. You parked right next to the building – there were no parking lots, and no air con-

ditioning. The rule of thumb was, always give the right of way to the earthmover.

"I still have a master set of blueprints of O'Brian, because I had to show everyone where their offices were."

It was in 1978 when the previous career-services officer, Jay Carlisle, left UB, and former Dean Thomas Headrick offered Koscielniak the job. "It was the one area I knew nothing about," she says. But she learned quickly, and ran the office along with now-Vice Dean Alan S. Carrel.

Since then, she has participated in law placement's growth as a professional specialty. "It is an industry now," she says, "an industry that did not exist 30 years ago."

She attended her first National Association for Law

Placement meeting in 1978 with "a couple of hundred people," Koscielniak says, "and now something like 1,000 people go to the conferences. Now it is a standard for accredited law schools to have an in-house career services office."

Under Koscielniak, the Career Services Office (the name was changed from Career Development Office just two years ago) has developed such events as the one-day career fair that introduces first-year students to different sectors of legal practice, and panels for first-years to help them prepare for post-graduation employment. It can be difficult to get students to think that far ahead, Koscielniak acknowledges, but "if I am running a program on a topic, it is because they need to know this now. The Career Ser-

vices Office is an educational office. We are teachers. We are not here to get students a job. I saw my job as introducing students to their world of employment options and then help them get the best job they can."

Having started work right out of high school, Koscielniak is also proud to have completed her own education, all on a part-time basis while she worked full time. She earned associate's and bachelor's degrees from UB (the latter magna cum laude in history), then earned an M.Ed. in college counseling and student personnel from UB's Graduate School of Education.

And for her "second act"? It starts with "painting, cleaning and decorating my house," she says. "And then I will decide what to do from there." •

## Employment and Salary Survey — 1999 Graduates are 99 Percent Employed

### Employment as of March 1999

Number of 1999 graduates	220
• Employment status known	215
• Number of graduates employed or in advanced study	201

### Employers

Law Firms	106 (52%)
Self-Employed	3
Very Small	42
Small	21
Medium	3
Large	7
Very large	28
Size Not Identified	2
Public Interest	16 (8%)
Legal	13
Non-Legal	3
Business & Industry	27 (13%)
Legal	12
Non-Legal	15
Government	26 (12%)
Judicial Clerkships	9 (5%)
Military	1
Academic	16 (8%)

### Salaries Reported

	LOW	HIGH
<b>LAW FIRMS</b>		
Very Large (101-501+)	\$56,000	\$108,000
Large (51-100)	\$35,000	\$80,000
Medium (25-50)	\$38,000	\$45,000
Small (11-25)	\$28,000	\$60,000
Very Small (2-10)	\$20,800	\$54,000
<b>Business &amp; Industry</b>		
Business & Industry	\$20,000	\$80,000
Government	\$25,000	\$75,000
Public Interest	\$17,460	\$42,000
Judicial Clerkships	\$39,000	\$54,000
Academic	\$38,000	\$38,000

### Geographic Locations

Northeast region	167 (83%)
Buffalo	73
New York City	32
Rochester	30
Other New York State	24
Midwest region	5
Southeast region	20
West region	8