

LOYOLA LAW REVIEW

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IN MEMORIAM

HONORABLE MICHAELLE PITARD WYNNE

1945-1994

*Adrian G. Duplantier**

In the Ignatian tradition, Loyola University endeavors to develop students into a generation of leaders who possess a love for truth, the critical intelligence to pursue it, and the eloquence to articulate it. The goal of a Loyola education is not mere technical competence but wisdom and social responsibility.¹

In both her tragedy-shortened professional career and personal life, Michaelle Pitard Wynne proved that the educational goal of Loyola University is achievable. Thus, it is fitting that the

* Senior Judge, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana; Chair, Visiting Committee, Loyola University School of Law, New Orleans, Louisiana.

1. Statement of Educational Purpose, Loyola University, New Orleans.

Law Review should honor one of its own on the twenty-fifth anniversary of her service as a member of the Law Review by dedicating this issue to the memory of Michaelle Pitard Wynne.

Shortly after her graduation from Loyola Law School in 1970, Michaelle Pitard Wynne became part of a new "generation of leaders." The Lord allowed her only a brief twenty-four years to demonstrate her Loyola-instilled qualities: "a love for truth, the critical intelligence to pursue it, and the eloquence to articulate it." Those of us who were blessed to know her well became aware long before the tragic accident which ended her life that she possessed "not mere technical competence but wisdom and social responsibility." In every respect, she was a paradigmatic Loyola graduate.

In her myriad professional accomplishments and personal achievements, Michaelle Pitard Wynne brought honor to our law school. Her first professional assignment, traditionally merited by one of the law school's top graduates, was as a law clerk for the judges of the Orleans Parish Civil District Court. She then became an Assistant United States Attorney, rising within a few years to head the civil division. She began her judicial career in 1978 as an Administrative Law Judge with the Department of Labor. In 1982, she was appointed a Magistrate Judge by the judges of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, a position which she held with great distinction until her untimely death.

Michaelle Pitard Wynne had many talents, one of which was very rare: She excelled at her profession, while always putting her role as a wife and mother foremost.

Her professional and family commitments would have overwhelmed many lesser persons. Yet her devotion to her law school was such that she always found time to serve it. Her close relationship to her alma mater was well known, but few people realized the depth of her attachment to and efforts on behalf of Loyola Law School. She taught trial advocacy courses to senior students, participated in numerous continuing legal education programs, and helped organize (and soon thereafter became president of) Loyola's Thomas More Inn of Court. At the time of her death, she was serving as a member and active leader of the law school's Visiting Committee.

Shortly after her death, a committee was formed to consider an appropriate memorial to her at her law school. The Michaelle Pitard Wynne Endowed Professorship of Law is the result. Contributions to the fund came from many sources, local and distant. The total exceeded the goal by over 100%. Other memorials have also been established. In her memory, each year the Louisiana State Bar Association offers five Michaelle Pitard Wynne tuition waiver scholarships to newly admitted attorneys to attend its Bridging the Gap Institute, at which she was a frequent speaker. The Attorney Conference Center in the federal court in New Orleans now bears her name and her portrait. An entire issue of the local Federal Bar Association's quarterly publication was dedicated to her.

Whatever and whoever Michaelle touched, all are better for having been touched by her: her church parish, her high school, Loyola Law School, the United States Attorney's Office, the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, countless lawyers, especially young lawyers and law students, for whom she was a respected role model. The list is endless.

Whenever she was asked to be of service to others, whether through Loyola Law School or numerous other causes which benefitted from her wisdom and energy, Michaelle never said "no" or "can't." Those words were not in her vocabulary. And whatever she did, she did exceptionally well.

I consider it a distinct honor to pay tribute to a great person.