The Wesleyan Lawyers Association (WLA) was thrilled to sponsor a WESeminar at 2010 Homecoming/Family Weekend and welcome speaker David S. Liebschutz, (JD/MPP) P ’11, who spoke on the courts' role in shaping public policy. Mr. Liebschutz's presentation, "Do The Courts Shape Public Policy: The Same Sex Marriage Debate," focused on the intersection of law and public policy in U.S. judicial history leading up to the same-sex marriage debate and California's enactment of Proposition 8.

A Public Service Professor at Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Administration at the University of Albany and a 25-year veteran of federal, state and local policymaking, Mr. Liebschutz lead the group in a lively discussion on whether courts should, can, or will act as agents of social change. After a brief historic account of the pressures and freedoms the courts operate under in the federal system, Mr. Liebschutz looked to same-sex marriage as a case study of the role the courts actually play in making lasting changes to social policy.

The WLA was elated to see such a large crowd for the event, with over 120 attendees gathering in the Russell House, many of whom were current Wes students and parents. The event provided an excellent opportunity for the Wes community to learn more about Association's activities and for current members to network.

Many thanks to our members who helped us put this event together, to our engaged attendees, to Mr. Liebschutz for a fantastic discussion, and to our alma mater - Wesleyan.