



Building Communities, Changing Lives

Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic & Clinical Studies Program



“Our offerings in clinical legal education provide students at Boyd with extensive opportunities to work with faculty and community leaders focused on improving society and addressing its most vexing problems. Through these opportunities we emphasize the great responsibility lawyers have, as professionals, as privileged members of the community, and as officers of the court, to work for the betterment of their communities.”

John Valery White
Dean and Professor of Law



“If the purpose of a clinic is to give law students real world experience, the Innocence Clinic accomplishes that plus much more. Not only can Innocence Clinic law students represent real people in a real legal setting, but they can also work on reforming the legal environment in which they work.”

Lucy Flores

Class of 2010

“The law is often seen very differently when tested in court and when an individual’s freedom is at stake. The Boyd School of Law is a real world law school and the Juvenile Justice Clinic offers advanced students the opportunity to participate in real world controversies and show many of them a side of life where legal representation means the world to the young client.”

The Honorable Charles McGee

Nevada Senior District Court Judge

The mission of the William S. Boyd School of Law Clinical Studies Program is to offer students integrated academic and practice-based educational experiences, to teach them to be reflective practitioners and multi-disciplinary professionals, to improve the quality of and access to legal systems, and to provide service to communities in need of legal assistance in Nevada.



You're My What?

Juvenile Justice Clinic

Representing children who have been charged with crimes has its challenges, not the least of which is getting them to understand what it means to be their lawyer. Children can be distrustful of adults and often believe that their lawyers must tell the judge everything they disclose to them, even when the lawyers have told the clients a dozen times that the opposite is true.

Students in the Juvenile Justice Clinic must adapt to a wide range of unusual characteristics in their clients. For one student, this meant representing a nine-year-old child charged with setting his family home on fire and later being declared incompetent to stand trial, and then advocating for dismissal of three-year-old burglary charges belatedly brought against a 20-year-old who just wanted to get on with his life.

In between these extremes, students face an array of clients with problems for which the juvenile justice system once promised, but no longer offers, solutions. In the end, though, the clinic's clients come to know that they have someone on their side, and that "I'm your lawyer" is more than just an opening line.

Mending the “House Divided”

Mediation Clinic

Seated around a counsel table in one of the courtrooms at Family Court, clinic students have been working with this couple for three hours.

They have helped Mom and Dad find a visitation schedule they can both agree to and helped the soon-to-be ex-spouses divide up all of their debts and assets, but they're stuck on Mom's request for spousal support. The students decide to meet privately with each spouse, and during these meetings they use questions to help the parties find common ground.

When they get them back together, the couple agrees on the amount Dad will pay for a fixed length of time. One of the mediators makes a call and the room suddenly becomes a court. The clerk appears, along with the court officer and soon the judge makes her entrance.

The mediators have moved to the other side of the bar and watch from the gallery as the judge reads the agreement they drafted into the record and grants the couple the divorce they were seeking. It's only then that the student mediators truly realize how important their work was in helping this couple find their own settlement terms.





Appellate Clinic

Students in the Appellate Clinic work in teams on federal appeals in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals or state appeals in the Nevada Supreme Court.

Education Advocacy Clinic

Students represent children and parents in education matters in the Clark County School District, such as special education, suspension, expulsion, and English as a second language.

Family Justice Clinic

The Family Justice Clinic provides students an opportunity to explore the role of families in society, the strengths and weaknesses of state intervention into families, and the meaning of access to justice for children and parents.

Immigration Clinic

Students in the Immigration Clinic engage with immigrant communities through direct client representation and policy advocacy for vulnerable populations that are otherwise unable to obtain legal representation.

Innocence Clinic

The Innocence Clinic is a collaborative effort with the Rocky Mountain Innocence Center (RMIC), the innocence project for Nevada, Wyoming and Utah. Innocence Clinic students investigate claims of wrongful conviction referred by the RMIC on behalf of Nevada prisoners.

Juvenile Justice Clinic

In the Juvenile Justice Clinic, students engage in a lively Juvenile Court practice, representing children and teenagers charged with crimes.

Kids' Court School

Taught by law students and graduate students in education, the Kids' Court School employs an empirically-based curriculum to train children to testify in court.

Mediation Clinic

Students gain hands-on experience in family court with divorcing/divorced couples on asset/debt distribution, child/spousal support issues, and parenting plans.

Nevada Immigrant Resource Project

The Nevada Immigrant Resource Project provides immigration-related training and information to community partners, including local law enforcement agencies, government service-providers, and non-governmental organizations.

Externship Program

Students have the opportunity to learn under the direct supervision of attorneys and judges. Externship opportunities exist in the public sector, law offices, federal and state judicial chambers, the Nevada and U.S. legislatures, and offices of governmental and not-for-profit legal services agencies.

Clinical Studies Program Faculty



Mary Berkheiser
Professor of Law
Director of Clinical Studies
Director of Juvenile Justice Clinic



Fatma Marouf
Associate Professor of Law
Director of Immigration Clinic



Ann Cammett
Associate Professor of Law
Co-Director of Family
Justice Clinic



Angela Morrison
Legal Director of Nevada
Immigrant Resource Project (NIRP)



Martin Geer
Externship Director



Rebecca Nathanson
James E. Rogers Professor of
Education and Law
Director of Education Advocacy
Clinic and Kids' Court School



Katherine Kruse
Professor of Law
Director of Innocence Clinic



Raymond Patterson
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Elizabeth MacDowell
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