



Boyd Briefs: October 24, 2013

From Dean Dan

The Nevada Bar Exam is one of the most difficult in the country, and over the years has ranked by various measures anywhere between the 5th and 7th most difficult in the nation. Boyd works hard, with our outstanding Academic Success Program and our excellent faculty, to make sure our students are prepared to do well on the exam and to enter the legal profession. The July 2013 bar exam results were announced on Tuesday and the school once again did very well. Bar exam results can be broken down in different ways, but the most straight-forward is to look at the percentage of those who take and pass the bar the first time. The passage rate for Boyd graduates taking the bar exam for the first time was 80 percent, the second-highest in the school's history. This is compared to an overall first-time taker rate in the state of 76 percent. This year's overall state pass rate (which includes those taking the test for the first time and all others) was 66 percent, down from the overall pass rate in July 2012 of 69 percent. Boyd's overall pass rate was 74 percent, well above the state overall rate. These numbers are strong and reflect hard work by our students, faculty and staff. We will continue to strive for all Boyd grads to pass this difficult test and will work with every graduate to reach this goal.

I want to very much thank Associate Dean [Frank Durand](#) and the [Academic Success Program](#) team, Director [Jennifer Carr](#) and Assistant Director [DeShun Harris](#). Congratulations to every new Boyd lawyer, I will see you when you are sworn into your new profession.

Dan

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Francine Lipman

[Francine Lipman](#) is a scholar and teacher with a background that brings credibility and sophistication to her work. Before she went to law school, Professor Lipman was a CPA and then a CFO. After law school, she was a tax lawyer in biglaw for seven years. Now she is a law professor with a passion for tax that is contagious. And she is a scholar whose work is widely recognized: one ranking, based upon the number of all-time article downloads on the Social Science Research Network, ranks her the sixteenth "most downloaded" tax professor in the country.

Professor Lipman's current research agenda is focused on a topic she calls access to tax justice. In a recent article, available [here](#), she begins with some sobering statistics about poverty and income inequality. In the United States, one of the richest countries in the world, there are 16 million children and 30 million adults living in poverty. On a recent survey of social justice, America ranked 27th out of 31 countries.

Poverty among working poor families with children would be much worse, she explains, but for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). She applauds the success of the EITC, both as a benefit and as an effective economic stimulus; yet she also advocates for more robust and targeted anti-poverty measures. She describes a pathologic mismatch in having a social benefit program distributed through the federal income tax system. The IRS is designed to collect revenue, not distribute resources. This mismatch creates an "access to tax justice" issue because low-income families have to file tax returns that many wouldn't otherwise need to file. If instead of a tax credit this were a wage subsidy or payroll tax offset, then beneficiaries wouldn't have to wait a full calendar year to receive current-year incentives, they wouldn't bear the significant administrative costs that the status quo assigns them, and they would be less vulnerable to tax preparers and others who take advantage of individuals with liquidity issues. Her scholarship engages scholars, practitioners and policy-makers. It is scholarship with impact.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Mackenzie Hanks

Casing oscillators. Clamshell excavation buckets. Steel reinforcement bars.

One would never expect such items to be discussed in a personal statement submitted with an application for law school admission. So when Mackenzie Hanks discussed such items in the personal statement accompanying her application to Boyd, our admissions committee thought, "Whoa! This is something different."

Mackenzie, you see, is a geotechnical engineer. Geotechnical engineering is a discipline within civil engineering that works in soils, specifically foundations and retaining walls. She earned a B.S. in civil engineering from Brigham Young University in 2005. While at BYU, she earned induction into Tau Beta Pi, Golden Key, and Phi Kappa Phi Honors Societies; was an officer in the American Society of Civil Engineers; and served as a teaching assistant for several sections of the Soil Mechanics and Surveying course.

Prior to her Boyd matriculation, Mackenzie worked for a civil engineering firm in Washington state. She found herself involved in some 40 projects annually, drafting recommendations for reports, performing design calculations, and carrying out initial site reconnaissance, soil exploration, and construction observation.

As one might guess, Mackenzie hopes to couple her engineering background and J.D. degree to pursue a career in intellectual property law.

"As a geotechnical engineer, I can bring a fresh perspective to the field of patent law," says Mackenzie. "I am excited to have the opportunity to learn about new innovations within the geotechnical construction industry and then to secure patents to protect the designers and their work."

Currently serving as Vice President of Boyd's Intellectual Property Law Society, Mackenzie is well on her way to achieving her unique career goals. And on top of that, she holds the distinction of being the sole individual to have parlayed talk of casing oscillators into Boyd admission.





ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Jeremy Aguero '03

Jeremy Aguero '03 is a principal analyst with Applied Analysis, a leading economic, fiscal and policy research firm based in Las Vegas. A fourth-generation Las Vegas resident, Aguero undertook a special course of undergraduate study at UNLV with the late Dr. Shannon Bybee. He graduated with honors from the William S. Boyd School of Law in 2003.

Aguero says that he never intended to study law. As he puts it, "Shannon made me promise him that I would go to law school. Like in most everything else, he was right; it has made all the difference in my professional and personal life." Aguero was named the Boyd School of Law's Alumnus of the Year in 2011, an honor he dedicated in memory of Dr. Bybee.

During the past 16 years, Aguero has been involved in a wide range of projects, many with far-reaching implications for the state. In 1998, he worked with UNLV's International Gaming Institute to prepare a report on the economic, fiscal and social impacts of Nevada's gaming and tourism industry that was ultimately submitted to the Federal Gaming Impact Study Commission. In 2002, he chaired Governor Kenny Guinn's Task Force on Tax Policy's technical working group, co-authoring its 1,400-page report and ultimately receiving a Good Government Award from the Nevada Taxpayers Association. In 2005, he served as the lead analyst for the Clark County Growth Task Force. In 2012, he worked with over 100 local governments to reform Nevada's Consolidated Tax formula.

Beyond these major projects, Aguero's company provides research and analytical services to companies ranging from the Ultimate Fighting Championship to the Regional Transportation District of Southern Nevada. Recently, Aguero has focused much of his time on the development of MyResearcher.com®, a web-based data portal scheduled for release later this year.

Aguero credits much of his success to his experience at Boyd, noting, "the only thing that helped me more than the education I received was the relationships I developed." Aguero cites Boyd's close connection to the community as essential to the school's success. Aguero continues to be active in the community. He has taught as an adjunct professor at UNLV, and he currently serves on the board of Nevada State Bank. He sits on the R&R Foundation board and is the second vice president for Opportunity Village's ARC Board. A father of three children, Aguero also coaches youth baseball and soccer.