



Boyd Briefs: February 20, 2014

From Dean Dan

Here at Boyd we are dedicated not only to providing our students with a top legal education, but also to working with practicing lawyers to help them keep current in diverse areas of law. Through our thriving programs in continuing legal education, directed by [Associate Dean Christine Smith](#), our exceptional faculty and community partners work together to provide lawyers in Las Vegas and in Reno insight on where the law is going and access to policymakers who are at the forefront of legal change and innovation around the state.

Recently we hosted a well-attended panel discussion on [Substance Abuse in the Legal Profession and the Affordable Care Act](#) with Boyd Professor Stacey Tovino, Dr. Chad Cross (UNLV), and Dr. Melissa Piasecki (UNR). In the coming weeks we have four exciting CLE panels:

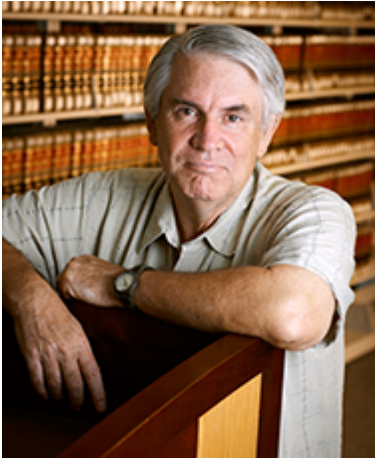
- **Feb. 21:** [Hot Topics in Nevada Sports Law](#) (Moderator: Boyd student Christian Spaulding) - Click [here](#) to register.
- **Feb. 28:** [Tax Season 2013 and Beyond: Updates, Tips, and Traps for the Unwary](#) (Moderator: Boyd Professor Francine Lipman) - Click [here](#) to register.
- **Feb. 28:** [Black History Month Municipal Law Panel](#) (Moderator: Boyd Professor Rachel Anderson) - This event is free and open to the public. Click [here](#) to register.
- **March 6:** [Is School Funding Fair in Nevada?](#) (Moderator: Boyd Professor Sylvia Lazos) - Click [here](#) to register.

In addition, we look forward to hosting a talk by renowned mediator Kenneth Cloke as part of the Saltman Center for Conflict Resolution's guest speaker series on **March 3**. Organized by Lydia Nussbaum, Director of the Mediation Clinic and Associate Director of the Saltman Center, this program offers both CLE and CEU credit and is free and open to the public. For more information and to register, go to law.unlv.edu/Saltman2014KennethCloke.

We are proud of the service we provide to practicing lawyers and look forward to continuing to offer top CLE programs around the state.

Dan

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Thomas McAfee

Thomas McAfee is one of the Boyd School of Law's longest-serving faculty members. He has been a law professor for 32 years, exactly half of which have been at Boyd. Professor McAfee is a constitutional law teacher and scholar who has earned the respect and admiration of his faculty and student colleagues.

Professor McAfee is a great storyteller. Accordingly, it seems appropriate for a faculty profile in Boyd Briefs to share a story about him. McAfee's first law review article as an academic was titled *Berger v. The Supreme Court—The Implications of His Exceptions Clause Odyssey*. The title of McAfee's piece referred to Raoul Berger, a law professor who taught at Berkeley and Harvard. McAfee's article suggested that Berger's historical analysis of the Fourteenth Amendment was slanted by personal bias; moreover, McAfee titled his own article with a play on words from one of Berger's earlier books. Raoul Berger then published an article responding to McAfee, and it is the title of that article that completes the story. Berger's article was titled *McAfee v. Berger: A Youthful Debunker's Rampage*. McAfee's career was off to a spectacular start! (Lest the wrong impression be drawn: critiques of Berger's thesis ultimately became something of a cottage industry in constitutional law scholarship, and responding to his critics became something of a cottage industry for Berger himself. Poking this hornets' nest was a coup for Professor McAfee.)

Although Professor McAfee is still very much a "debunker," it is hard to imagine "McAfee versus" anyone or McAfee on a "rampage." McAfee is now (and likely was even then) a careful scholar, a fair critic, a generous colleague, and a gentleman.

Three decades later, Professor McAfee is still writing. His most recent article will appear in a forthcoming symposium issue of the Nevada Law Journal that celebrates the sesquicentennial of Nevada's statehood. The article is titled *Nevada Public Policy and Higher Education: The Roles of the Legislature and the Board of Regents Under the Nevada Constitution*, and it is co-authored with his son Justin James McAfee. The McAfees argue that the Nevada Constitution permits the legislature to create tax-supported schools of higher education that are not also governed by the Nevada Board of Regents. This thesis directly challenges a state attorney general opinion and some commentary that suggests the opposite conclusion. Tom McAfee, ever the youthful debunker.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Brittne Watkins

Soon Brittne Watkins will graduate with her J.D. as well as a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. To say that Brittne has been something of a force of nature since enrolling at Boyd would be a bit of an understatement. She has taken on many endeavors and challenges, making the most of her time and opportunities as a law student. Let us examine the evidence...

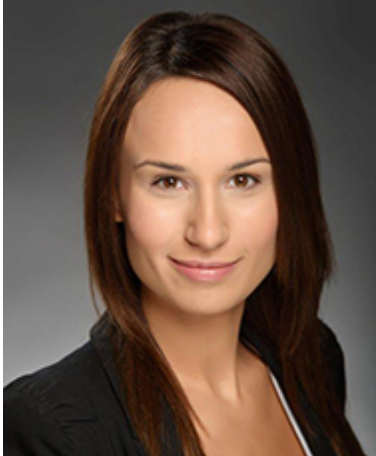
For starters, Brittne has been active and has held offices in many student organizations. By way of example, she has been a member of the Nevada Law Journal, Vice President of the Public Interest Law Association, Marketing Coordinator for the Child Advocacy Law Association, and President of the Black Law Students Association. On top of that, she has participated in the Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition (where her team advanced to the national level), the Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition, and the Clark County Moot Court Competition. She's also a Boyd Public Interest Fellow.

But wait, there's more. Brittne has been a real "go to" person at the law school, particularly in the area of student recruitment. She has been a tremendous help to the law school's Office of Admissions in reaching out to admittees and encouraging them to take advantage of the opportunity

to attend Boyd and avail themselves of all it has to offer as she has.

And did we mention that Brittne is a proud mom to son Braylyn, age 6?

Awaiting Brittne this fall is a clerkship with Nevada Supreme Court Justice Michael Douglas, and she can't wait: "Although unique challenges are certain to be forthcoming as a judicial clerk to the Nevada Supreme Court, I look forward to them with confidence, knowing that I have received a uniquely robust legal education from an institution that is second to none."



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Tara Popova '10

Tara Popova '10 was born and raised in Bulgaria. She received a B.A. from the Amsterdam School of Business and came to Nevada with the dream of becoming a lawyer. She selected Boyd because it was reasonably priced and, at the time, she received a small partial scholarship. Tara arrived in the United States for the first time only a few weeks before classes began. As a student, Tara received the State Bar of Nevada Professional Development Fellowship and the Outstanding Student in Mediation community service award.

Tara had the opportunity to complete an externship with the Honorable Elissa Cadish of the Eighth Judicial District Court in Las Vegas. She assisted Judge Cadish with handling a docket of more than 2,500 cases. Later, she became a law clerk at a national firm, where she worked on commercial litigation matters for some of Nevada's largest gaming companies and developers. "I could not be happier that I came to the United States and chose the Boyd School of Law. I graduated prepared for the real world, having gained knowledge, practical experience, and having already secured my first job – all thanks to my law school."

She is an associate attorney with the law firm of Fox Rothschild in its Las Vegas offices, where she practices commercial litigation. "I would describe myself as a happy lawyer – coming from another country, going through law school, and passing a bar exam in a foreign language. I started far behind what most people consider 'starting from zero.' I worked very hard to get where I am today and feel fortunate to have accomplished my dream."