



Boyd Briefs: May 14, 2015

From Dean Dan

Tomorrow is convocation, and it is an exciting day at the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law. We congratulate the class of 2015 and we welcome the Honorable Justice Nancy M. Saitta as the commencement speaker. Justice Saitta is a long-time friend of the law school, and we are honored to have her speak to our graduates. Prior to taking the bench, she was a senior deputy attorney general where she served as the Children's Advocate for the State of Nevada. As a district judge, Justice Saitta was appointed by then-Governor Kenny Guinn to the Nevada State Juvenile Justice Commission. Her efforts have won her recognition, including the "For the Children" award presented by the Office of the Attorney General in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Nevada's children, the District Attorney Outstanding Service Award, and the Child Advocate of the Year (2001). In 2000, she was given an Angels in Adoption award by the U.S. Congress.

I want to congratulate all the graduates and especially their friends and family who have supported them throughout law school. Our graduates will join the nearly 2,000 Boyd alumni who do so much to serve the legal needs of our state and region, and who together have reshaped the bench and bar in Nevada.

Boyd School of Law Convocation 2015

Friday, May 15 | 10:00 a.m.

UNLV Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall

Tickets are not required | Seating is first-come, first-served

We are also proud to have recently hosted a successful CLE event, titled [Beyond Medicine -- The Legal Implications of Medical Marijuana in Nevada](#). We would like to thank our partner Vegas PBS, who will air the program soon, and our panelists and those who organized and moderated the discussion:

- Congresswoman Dina Titus
- Dominic Gentile (Partner, Gentile, Cristalli & Miller)
- Patricia Mulroy (Nevada Gaming Commission; Senior Fellow for Climate Adaptation and Environmental Policy, UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law)
- Brian Greenspun (President, Greenspun Media Group)
- Franny Forsman (former Federal Public Defender and Attorney at Law, Law Office of Franny Forsman, PLLC)
- William Horne (former Nevada State Assembly Majority Leader and Attorney at Law, Horne Law Firm)

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Nancy Rapoport

Professor [Nancy Rapoport](#) brings creativity, intelligence, and charisma into every room that she enters. What is especially noteworthy is that the rooms she enters include not only classrooms and courtrooms, but also boardrooms and ballrooms.

With a resume as unusual and as interesting as hers, one might carelessly overlook her impressive yet more conventional achievements. Professor Rapoport has thrice been a dean, including service as Boyd's interim dean in 2012-2013. She is one of the most productive members of our faculty; at any given time, she has multiple books and articles in various stages of the publication process. Her work has been cited more than 700 times in law reviews and journals; courts, too, follow her work -- frequently citing her books and articles as persuasive authority. She has been elected or appointed to professional organizations and boards that are too numerous to list; but any one of these memberships would be a capstone achievement for a mere mortal. She is frequently asked to opine to courts on ethics, bankruptcy, and corporate governance matters upon which she is uniquely qualified to testify. Her commitment to our law school and our University is exceptional; among other roles, she presently serves as Senior Advisor to the President of the University. Even the highlights of her outstanding career consume 29 pages of [text](#). And of course amid this whirlwind of responsibilities and accomplishments she is also a popular classroom teacher.

But in a profile such as this, we have the opportunity to emphasize the personal side of this wonderful scholar. Did you know that she has costumes, makeup, an exercise regimen, and a travel schedule to accommodate her hobby (read: second career) as a nationally ranked ballroom dancer? Have you seen her cameo appearance in *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room*? Professor Rapoport is as unique as she is brilliant. She is an ailurophile. She is an avid collector of Disneyana. She is obsessed with the history of the Titanic and with the U.S. space program. And you can enjoy her insights on anything that grabs her attention by reading her [blog](#).



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Alexandria Mendonca

It is simply impossible to overestimate the influence of The Beatles. To some degree or another, the Fab Four have touched just about all our lives. Talk to us, Alex Mendonca, about how (at least one of) the Boys from Liverpool had a hand in sending you down a ... long and winding road.

"I came to Boyd knowing that I had an interest in entertainment law because my dad is a musician -- a Paul McCartney impersonator -- and I spent a lot of time as a kid traveling with him and sitting in the back of showrooms, getting to know all the entertainers." So that's the deal on Alex's starting point. But you say you want an evolution?

"After expanding my interest to intellectual property law in general, I decided to take Professor Leslie Griffin's bioethics class. In that class, and while writing my student note as a junior staff member on the *Nevada Law Journal*, I fell in love with bioethics and patent law dealing specifically with scientific advancement." In her time at Boyd, Alex has completed papers on genetic rights, artificial intelligence and patent rights, and abortion rights in light of medical advancement. So what's Alex's next step in having her plans ... come together?

"I have decided to attend Oregon State University (OSU) in the fall to pursue a post-baccalaureate degree in biochemistry. OSU has amazing funding, so I will have many different research opportunities. After taking this first step, I plan to stay at OSU to pursue a Ph.D. My additional education will allow me to take the patent bar and will open up opportunities in cutting edge fields of law. It will also give me additional possibilities for future employment -- I would love to teach law or science at some point."

All together now ... good luck, Alex!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Nicholas Vaskov '02

Nicholas Vaskov, class of 2002, serves as System Counsel and Director of Real Estate Planning for the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). His practice focuses on real estate transactions and finance, construction, and land use -- but on any day can span almost any aspect of higher education law and policy.

"NSHE is unique. We are a constitutional entity of the State of Nevada, governed by an elected Board of Regents, funded by the taxpayer and our students -- charged with providing the full array of higher education opportunities to an incredibly diverse population. That means my practice sits at the intersection of law, government, academia, and public policy. This diversity makes my practice fun."

Nicholas started his legal career in private practice, representing businesses in a wide range of civil matters, including: construction litigation, commercial evictions and collection, eminent domain, and zoning/land-use litigation. He spent nearly seven years in local government as assistant and acting city attorney for the City of North Las Vegas. He returned to private practice with Snell & Wilmer, concentrating in commercial litigation, administrative law, and zoning before moving to NSHE in 2013.

"UNLV was very good to me; allowing me to earn an undergraduate degree (B.S. Biology '98), a juris doctorate, and most importantly, meet my wife Tiffany (B.S Elementary Education '97 and M.Ed. '01). Working for NSHE is my way of paying back a significant debt of gratitude."

Like most parents, Nicholas and Tiffany keep busy tending to their children (11-year-old fraternal twins Megan and Amanda, and 9-year-old Benjamin). Whenever possible, they look forward to sleeping in late on the weekend!
