



Boyd Briefs: September 17, 2015

## From Dean Dan

On Oct. 16 and 17, the Boyd School of Law will host the **2015 Alumni Weekend**, complete with a golf tournament, pancake bash, and dinner. Terry Pollman, Professor of Law at Boyd, and Jerry Nadal, Senior Vice President of Cirque du Soleil, will deliver remarks at the event. We will also honor this year's alumni award recipients. The Honorable Linda Marquis '03 will be named Alumna of the Year for the Boyd School of Law, and Nadin Cutter '08 will be honored as Alumna of the Year for the UNLV Honors College. Kelly Dove '07 will receive the Distinguished Service Alumni Award. Derek Armstrong '10 will be honored with the Young Alumni Award. Joe Cain '01 and Daron Dorsey '01 will receive the Alumni Volunteer Leadership Award. The Alumni Weekend is one way we are working to make sure this accomplished and growing group of rising lawyers stay in touch with their law school and with one another. Please RSVP online [here](#).

We are delighted to host a great new moot court competition, the inaugural **Frank A. Schreck Gaming Law Moot Court Competition**. [Frank A. Schreck](#) has played an important role in shaping the gaming law field. He is chair of the Gaming Law Group at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck and serves on Boyd's Gaming Law Advisory Board. The competition will be held April 1-3. Students from law schools across the country will be eligible to participate, and we will seek volunteers from the gaming law community to judge the competition. For more information about the Frank A. Schreck Gaming Law Moot Court Competition, click [here](#). Contact Gaming Law Moot Court Competition Chair Stephanie Getler at [Schreck\\_MCC2015@law.unlv.edu](mailto:Schreck_MCC2015@law.unlv.edu) with any questions.

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## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Leslie Griffin

*Leslie Griffin is Boyd's nationally known and widely respected expert on law and religion. Her work can be found in books, articles, and briefs, and on her frequently visited blog, [Hamilton and Griffin on Rights](#).*

1. **What have you been reading?** I've read many swimming books, but none as good as two I discovered this summer: Sheila Taormina's new *Swim Speed Strokes for Swimmers and Triathletes: Master Freestyle, Butterfly, Breaststroke and Backstroke* (2014) and her earlier book, *Swim Speed Secrets for Swimmers and Triathletes: Master the Freestyle Technique Used by the World's Fastest Swimmers* (2012). Taormina starts with high theory -- explaining physics, lift and drag, and the competing theories of swimming propulsion. Through magnificent pictures showing top swimmers at various stages of their strokes, Taormina illustrates that the elements remain the same from swimmer to swimmer and stroke to stroke -- high elbow, good body position,

strong kick. Swimming is a technique sport, so the reader learns that even the best swimmers have to practice, practice, practice.

**2. Which of your recent books should I read?** My new casebook, *Practicing Bioethics Law*, uses a similar approach to encourage innovative learning. My co-author (Professor Joan Krause of the University of North Carolina School of Law) and I developed the book so that students could learn the theory and practice of bioethics law at the same time. The book's special feature is a companion website that includes the practice and teaching documents that traditional casebooks lack, including pleadings, complaints, briefs, oral arguments, and videos. Like swimmers, our students practice, practice, practice; numerous complex practice exercises are distributed throughout the book so that students become problem-solvers who can navigate their way through diverse legal settings.

**3. What are you working on?** In my books, law review articles, and briefs, I try to give my readers a different perspective on the Constitution's protection of religious freedom. Right now the dominant account of religious freedom encourages religious believers to disobey the law by, e.g., refusing contraceptive insurance to women employees or wedding services to LGBT customers. In my most recent article, *Hobby Lobby: The Crafty Case that Threatens Women's Rights and Religious Freedom*, 42 *Hastings Const. L.Q.* 641 (2015), I argue that religious freedom is best protected when everyone obeys the same neutral laws. This means that *all* employers should provide contraception under the Affordable Care Act and *all* businesses should serve LGBT customers. Although I sometimes feel like I am swimming upstream, Taormina reminds me to look straight ahead and to use the water's resistance to propel myself forward.



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Janine Lee

Now in her fourth and final year in Boyd's part-time evening program, Janine Lee is looking ahead to opportunities in Las Vegas and California. The past three years of study and full-time work as a senior paralegal, primarily managing corporate and complex individual bankruptcy filings at the Las Vegas law firm Schwartz Flansburg PLLC, have been challenging and something of an adventure, which is entirely in keeping with Janine's journey to law school.

"I started an associate program in applied computer science in my early 20s," Janine recalls. "I did not complete it because I was a software instructor, and specific computer certifications were much more valuable." Things were going well, but then took an unexpected turn. "When I was 28, I had a skiing accident and had the first of several back and neck operations soon thereafter. I was physically unable to teach, so I went into real estate, as I felt it was something I could physically do while going back to school."

Ever driven, Janine moved forward. "Because I was a single mom and working full-time, I obtained a four-year paralegal degree online while selling new homes, with the intention of applying to law school upon graduation in 2007. By the time I graduated, however, I decided to wait until my sons, Joshua and Jacob, were out of high school to apply."

Apply and gain admission, she did, and excel, she did, as well. Janine has earned placement on the Dean's List each semester, is a member of the Nevada Law Journal, and has published several articles in the *American Bankruptcy Institute Journal* and other periodicals.

"I have a lot on my plate," Janine acknowledges, "but I know the challenges I've overcome have given me more of an appreciation for the

opportunity to be here."

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## **ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Matt Knepper '12**

Matt Knepper '12 is a member of Akerman LLP's Consumer Finance Litigation Practice Group. His practice concentrates on representing financial institutions and mortgage companies in a variety of residential and commercial litigation matters. He primarily defends federal causes of action brought under the Bankruptcy Code, the Fair Credit Reporting Act, Truth in Lending Act, and Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. He also defends state causes of action concerning mortgage related fees and services, origination, pooling and servicing agreements, loan repurchases, and homeowners association lien disputes.

Matt received his undergraduate degree in Communication from San Diego State University, where he played NCAA Division I Volleyball on an athletic scholarship. Following his time at SDSU, Matt was a professional waiter, working with some of the most respected chefs in the world. In 2004, Matt moved from San Francisco where he opened Restaurant Gary Danko, to Las Vegas to open Mix Restaurant for Alain Ducasse. Soon after marrying his wife, Jennifer, Matt went to law school part time, while working at Mix full time.

Matt's time at Boyd brought him the great fortune of meeting Professor Nancy Rapoport whose mentoring drove his decision to practice financial litigation. That decision was sealed when Bankruptcy Judges Bruce Markell and Mike Nakagawa took him under their wings as student, extern and law clerk.

Following his clerkship at the bankruptcy court, Matt joined U.S. District Judges Andrew Gordon and Jennifer Dorsey as their shared law clerk during their inaugural years on the bench. Matt is grateful to his judges who profoundly influenced his legal thinking and writing, and inspire him to push always for a higher level of execution.

When he is not at work, Matt relishes time with his wife and two daughters: Sydney, who is 7, and Makayla, who just turned 3.

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