



Boyd Briefs: September 24, 2015

## From Dean Dan

Next Friday we are delighted to present Legal Issues for Nevada Businesses, a one-of-a-kind public service event co-sponsored by the UNLV Boyd School of Law and the Association of Corporate Counsel (ACC) Nevada. Geared toward current business owners, people thinking about starting their own business, and seasoned entrepreneurs, this half-day event will feature a keynote address from local business attorney and Boyd alumna Gina Bongiovi '07, as well as interactive roundtable discussions. Special thanks to Professor Eric Franklin, who directs the law school's Small Business & Nonprofit Legal Clinic and ACC Nevada chapter leaders Sheila Bangalore, president; Tara Young, vice president; and Boyd alumna Eida Sidhu '01, director at large, for the opportunity to co-sponsor this unique event. The event will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Oct. 2 at The Innevation Center. To register for this free event, click [here](#).

Dan

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## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Eric Franklin

*Eric Franklin developed and directs the Boyd School of Law's clinic for nonprofits, small business, and community-based groups. His background in complex and varied business transactions is matched by his enthusiasm for encouraging pro bono work in the transactional lawyer's world.*

**1. What are you working on?** The Small Business and Nonprofit Legal Clinic is my top priority. Through this program, law students provide free transactional (i.e., non-litigation) legal advice to community members. We help small businesses choose appropriate legal entities, negotiate and draft contracts, and protect their intellectual property; and we help nonprofits form, apply for tax-exempt status, and draft employee and volunteer manuals. The clinic also works to combat the general misconception that there is no pro bono work for transactional attorneys. When I was a corporate associate, there were scant opportunities for transactional associates to engage in pro bono work, primarily due to a lack of imagination more than anything else. Transactional lawyers have a lot to offer a very needy population, whether it is providing legal advice regarding small business formation, or helping a local charity navigate the rather complicated legal regime governing nonprofits.

**2. Which of your recent articles should I read?** Most legal entities exist

by historical accident, and the outdated forms that exist do little more than cause confusion amongst entrepreneurs, attorneys, the judiciary, and the public. I address the problem known as entity proliferation in my most recent article, "A Rational Approach to Entity Choice," which will be published by the *University of Kansas Law Review*. At one time, forming a business in the United States was a reasonably simple decision. But this once-simple decision has grown substantially more complicated. Rather than simply choosing between a corporation or a partnership, an entrepreneur in most states will have more than a dozen different legal entity forms from which to choose, with more being added every year. This article is the first to express the problem of entity proliferation in both a qualitative and quantitative manner, and to propose a realistic means to address the problem.

**3. How has your scholarship affected your teaching and service?** Rather than my research and writing affecting my teaching and community service, the opposite is true. The idea for my most recent article is the direct result of teaching and directing the clinic. The proliferation of entities is baffling to both law students trying to learn the unduly complex legal entity regime and would-be business owners trying to start their companies. I've watched these struggles throughout my teaching and legal career, and the article is an attempt to directly address the problem.



### **STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Steven (JT) Washington**

At present, three Boyd School of Law alumni serve in the UNLV Office of General Counsel. Elda Sidhu '01 is the university's general counsel, and Debra Pieruschka '06 and Sepi Sayedna '10 are assistant general counsel. Currently working as a legal intern among these able Boyd graduates is third-year student Steven (JT) Washington.

"It's been such a privilege to intern with UNLV's General Counsel," says JT. "The attorneys are truly talented and committed to protecting UNLV's interests. Through working with the GC, I have had opportunities and gained insights I will definitely take with me into practice."

JT is a Las Vegas native, which some say is a rarity given the storied, perhaps exaggerated, transient nature of our fine city. His road to Boyd was paved significantly by his participation in the Canyon Springs High School Leadership and Law Preparatory Academy, an experience JT credits with providing him "a firm foundation for understanding the intricacies of the United States legal system." Of additional influence in JT's career direction were many years work at a local branch of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library. A love of books and passion for reading made law school seem a good destination.

In pursuit of his ultimate objective, JT studied political science at UNLV, earning his B.A. magna cum laude in 2012. He also committed much time during his undergraduate studies volunteering at the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy, which prepares students from underserved communities to excel and graduate from college. JT's good work garnered him the Thomas Wilson Community Service Award, presented to UNLV students of African heritage for outstanding community service and academic achievement.

At Boyd, JT has served as Student Bar Association treasurer and is an active member of the Black Law Students Association and the Public Interest Law Association.

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## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Melissa Waite '07

Melissa Waite '07 recently became a shareholder at one of the oldest local law firms in Las Vegas, Jolley Urga Woodbury & Little. Melissa's practice focuses primarily on business and real estate transactions. A significant part of her practice also is devoted to business and privilege licensing, including liquor, gaming, and medical marijuana establishment licensing.

Melissa graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 2003, with a degree in psychology. In 2007, she received a Master of Business Administration degree from the UNLV College of Business and a Juris Doctor degree from the Boyd School of Law. Melissa was one of the first students to graduate from Boyd with a dual J.D./MBA degree and uses the skills and knowledge acquired in that program on a daily basis. When evaluating law schools, the dual-degree program was an important factor, and Melissa believes it has played a key role in her professional success. While at Boyd, Melissa served on the *Nevada Law Journal* and was a student representative for the Academic Standards Committee. Her favorite courses provided exposure to the areas of law she practices in today: Contracts with Professor Rowley, and Property with Professor Grant.

Melissa has enjoyed seeing the law school's reputation continue to flourish under the leadership of Dean Hamilton. Melissa contributes to the future of Boyd through her participation in the Dean's Council and as a member in the Alumni Leadership Circle. Melissa enjoys spending time with her family and has two children: 12-year-old Bella and 4-year-old Jackson. In her free time, she also enjoys yoga and outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, and snowboarding.

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