



Boyd Briefs: April 21, 2016

From Dean Dan

Last night, we held our annual awards dinner to recognize the contributions of the *Nevada Law Journal*, the *UNLV Gaming Law Journal*, and the *Society of Advocates* (SOA). Our students, faculty and alumni joined together to celebrate another successful academic year and to recognize the achievements of these student organizations. I want to congratulate the three award winners. The *Nevada Law Journal* gave its second annual Judge Elissa Cadish Award for Outstanding Student Note to **Cassandra Ramey** for her article "Inheritance Rights of Posthumously Conceived Children: A Plan for Nevada." The *UNLV Gaming Law Journal* gave its third annual Anthony Cabot Award for Best Student Note to **Christopher Blandford** for his article "Sharks and Whales: An Outline of the Growth of Fantasy Sports, the Future of Gambling in the United States, and Why DFS Needs Regulation Regardless of Whether It Is Skill Based." The SOA gave its third annual Franny Forsman Award for Excellence in Advocacy to **Katherine Frank** for her dedication to the student organization, and her overall performance in all things SOA—written and oral advocacy in LPIII (the advanced appellate advocacy course reserved for SOA students) and at the National Animal Law Moot Court Competition hosted at Harvard. Katherine competed at the animal law competition two years in a row—last year she won best brief and this year, Katherine and teammate Aleem Dhalla (who won best oral advocate) were nominated for best advocate thanks to the support of coach and Professor Jennifer Carr.

Congratulations to all the award winners, and special recognition and thanks to friends of the law school and award namesakes Judge Elissa Cadish, Anthony Cabot, and Franny Forsman. I'd also like to thank the leaders of these student organizations for their excellent work all year long: *Nevada Law Journal* Editor-in-Chief Hayley Miller, *UNLV Gaming Law Journal* Editor-in-Chief Stephanie Getler, and SOA President Chelsea Lancaster. Thanks, finally, to Boyd Associate Dean for Student Affairs Frank Durand and Administrative Assistant Kelly Boan.



From left: Dean Dan Hamilton, award recipient Cassandra Ramey, award namesake Judge Elissa Cadish, Nevada Law Journal Editor-in-Chief Hayley Miller, award recipient Christopher Blandford, UNLV Gaming Law Journal Editor-in-Chief Stephanie Getler, award namesake Franny Forsman, award recipient Katherine Frank, and Society of Advocates President Chelsea Lancaster

In faculty news, please join me in congratulating William S. Boyd Professor of Law [Francine Lipman](#) on her [appointment](#) by Governor Brian Sandoval to the Nevada Tax Commission. Francine joins the eight-person Commission -- tasked with supervising the overall administration and operations of the Department of Taxation -- with immediate effect and will serve one term through October 2019. An accountant, attorney, professor and scholar, Francine has been a valuable member of our faculty since 2012. This well-deserved

recognition speaks volumes about Francine's expertise and work in the field, and we are confident she will serve with distinction.

Dan

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Ruben Garcia

*Professor **Ruben Garcia** writes and teaches in the field of labor and employment law, drawing on his prior experience as an attorney for public and private sector unions and employees.*

What's the most important thing you are working on right now? There is a good deal of discussion right now about minimum wage law and policy. I am interested in the historical and normative reasons why we have minimum standards legislation and some of the legal ramifications for courts and legislatures into the future. My goal is to discuss why we have minimum wage laws, and why we continue to raise the minimum wage set in those laws even when debates about their impact and effectiveness will continue. It has to do with our normative commitment to workplace standards since the New Deal as well as the constitutional underpinnings of minimum standards legislation.

Which of your recent articles should I read? My recent article titled *Politics at Work After Citizens United*, published in the *Loyola of Los Angeles Law Review*, addresses the question that I have had for some time: How do workers change law for their own benefit in an atmosphere of increasing corporate consolidation of politics after *Citizens United*? The recent fight for \$15 per hour protests show one way of accomplishing these goals, but I want to look at other ways that laws and court decisions can expand the voice of low-paid workers in the political system. It is a theme that I intend to keep exploring.

What have you read or listened to this year that has made a real difference to you? I am a lifelong fan of Bruce Springsteen, and I had the opportunity to see him again in concert in Los Angeles on March 17. If I could put the same kind of productivity and positive voice into my academic writing that he puts into his songs, and the passion, energy, and life lessons that he puts into his live shows into my teaching, and the social justice vision and spirit that he displays as a member of this community, I would be doing my job well. It is an ongoing process, of course, but as "The Boss" sings in *Born to Run*: "Someday . . . we're going to get to that place where we really want to go" It's the search and the striving for improvement of the law as a positive force in people's lives that make me glad to come to work at Boyd every day.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Betsy Reed

You are a special education teacher with the Clark County School District. **What are the biggest challenges in your work?** By law, the education of each student who receives services must be tailored to her/his needs through an annual meeting that includes the student, a



parent/guardian, a special education teacher, and an administrator. Although each member is committed to providing the student with an education that provides a free and public education and meets her/his needs, different team members often have different ideas about what that looks like, and which services a student needs. Achieving consensus among the members is the greatest challenge.

Athletics have played a big role in your career path, yes? I spent 12 years in positions related to intercollegiate athletics, usually providing academic and other support services to student-athletes, or ensuring NCAA compliance. I also have served as a track and field official for competitions at every level, including national and international events.

What are your plans following graduation in a few weeks? This summer I will be a lead official at the U.S. Olympic Trials for Track & Field in Eugene, Ore. at the beginning of July, and hope to attend a program sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Come August, I plan to continue working for the school district and will take the bar exam in February.

What will you miss the most about the evenings you have spent at the law school the last four years? The people I have been lucky enough to have as classmates. Everyone brings something unique to each class, and the diversity of backgrounds and experiences has been wonderful. Also, because the part-time evening program is cohort based, we all know each other fairly well, so watching people's lives develop has been very special.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Martin Melendrez '01

Martin Melendrez '01 is the Managing Partner at Hawkins Melendrez, Las Vegas.

When did you know being an attorney or working in the legal field was for you? Although I have daily interactions that reinforce my passion for the legal field - from mentoring associates, to analyzing clients' problems, to representing individuals in court - I knew this career was for me after taking part in my first contested hearing during my first year of practice. I lost the hearing, but the adrenaline and excitement of being in court, challenged by opposing counsel and the judge's questions, triggered in me the belief that I was in the right place.

Tell me about your decision to attend the Boyd School of Law. I moved to Las Vegas in 1990 and, early during that time period, I knew I would call Las Vegas home. So when the William S. Boyd School of Law opened, I knew this was where I wanted to live and it was a natural fit.

Do you have certain memories about law school that you want to remember? Law school was a great experience, especially because as a charter class member, we all shared a real sense of purpose and community. I look back on that time fondly.

Any memories you want to forget from your law school days? Tax.

What community nonprofits are you involved with? I'm a board member for the Nevada Conservation League. We work in the political realm of the environmental community and focus on holding decision makers accountable for the choices they make when it comes to protecting our air, water, land, and public health.





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