



From Dean Dan

We are grateful to the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada for providing an extraordinary opportunity for one of our students, Matthew Cook, who was named the inaugural Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellow. The Fellowship was created in honor of Melanie Kushnir, who dedicated her life to inspiring pro bono attorneys, law students, bar leaders, the judiciary, the community, and co-workers to donate their time, knowledge, and experience to those in need. Check out Matt's profile below for more information on him and what he'll be working on during his Fellowship. Matthew was selected from a very competitive field of applicants, and we hope his good work will continue to highlight all that Melanie accomplished.

Please join us this evening for the [Philip Pro Lecture in Legal History](#) with Professor Ajay Mehrotra, the Executive Director of the American Bar Foundation. Professor Mehrotra's talk on "Making the Modern American Fiscal State: Law, Politics, and the Rise of Progressive Taxation, 1877-1929" begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Thomas & Mack Moot Courtroom.

Next, please join me in congratulating Boyd students Emily Haws, Scott Cardenas, and Stephanie Glantz, who placed 1st at the Honorable Judge Lloyd D. George Bankruptcy Moot Court Competition this past weekend. Emily Haws also received the Best Oral Advocate Award. Next up, the Boyd team will represent the law school at the national Duberstein Bankruptcy Moot Court Competition in March. Many thanks again to all those who helped make the George Competition a success.

Finally, we hope that alumni and friends in Northern Nevada will join us for a reception recognizing the work of our legislative externs in Reno and Carson City this semester. On Monday, February 27, we'll be at Bella Fiore Wines in Carson City from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Samantha Leister at samantha.leister@unlv.edu or (702) 895-3654. This is a great opportunity for our students and alumni to meet our legislators, including the Boyd alumni in the legislature: Assembly Speaker Jason Frierson ('01), Senators Nicole Cannizzaro ('10) and Becky Harris (LL.M. '16), Assemblymen Elliot Anderson ('15), Edgar Flores ('12), James Ohrenschild ('09), and Keith Pickard ('11), and honorary Boyd alum, Senate Majority Leader Aaron Ford, who spent his final year of law school here at Boyd.

Dan

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Faculty Spotlight: Joe Regalia

*Law Clerk at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and Adjunct
Professor at the Boyd School of Law*

**What is it about being a law school professor that inspires
or motivates you?**



I was inspired to become a law professor because my law professors inspired me. People like professors Jeff Stempel, Sara Gordon, Stacey Tovino, Ngai Pindell, Keith Rowley, Chris Blakesley and Sylvia Lazos—to name but a few. Our professors at Boyd are not just inspiring because they are brilliant scholars (which they are) but because they are incredible lawyers and genuine people. It's hard not to dream of joining a group like that.

I am also motivated by the chance to play a small part in helping my students prepare for what I see as the most exciting revolution our profession has ever seen. Some law students and lawyers are concerned about changes in the legal market and how evolving technologies might impact our practice. But that's the wrong way to look it. This is an opportunity for us to redefine what it means to be a lawyer. It's an opportunity for us to find new ways that our unique skills can add value for our clients (and society). Do these changes bring challenges? Absolutely. But what people might miss is that these changes also bring incredible new opportunities. Opportunities to be entrepreneurs and to look at cases and our clients' needs in new ways. What motivates me as a professor is getting to help students discover what being a lawyer will mean for each one of them in this brave new world.

What's the most important thing you are working on right now?

I spend a lot of my free time developing the Pro Se Bootcamp—a program I run with our law students and several volunteer attorneys (including Boyd graduates Erin Gettel and Ramir Hernandez). The Pro Se Bootcamp helps folks who are facing legal troubles but can't find an attorney to help them. We are doing something with this program that I think is pretty special (and useful): instead of trying to find pro bono lawyers, we teach people how to be *their own* lawyers. We teach them how to write like a lawyer, we teach them how to speak in court like a lawyer, and we teach them the basics of legal research. So far, we've spent most of our time working with victims of domestic violence at the Shade Tree shelter. Not only do I think this work is important, but helping these woman has led to some of the most rewarding and fulfilling moments of my career so far.

How can students work to become great legal writers?

Something I've learned from brilliant legal writers (such as the Judges I have worked with: shout-out to Judge Bybee, Judge Dorsey, and Judge Gordon), is that you must be *committed* to life-long learning. There is never a point in your career as a lawyer where you can stop looking for new ways to get better. Judge Dorsey once commented to me that every time she looks back at something she wrote in the past, she sees ways that she could have written it better. Judge Gordon has often said something similar. And I think to hear that sentiment of still wanting to grow and learn, from the preeminent legal minds in our community, is inspiring.

So, I think the secret to being a top-notch legal writer is to never stop looking for ways to improve. No matter how good you think you are, there are new lessons to learn. And those lessons can come from *anywhere*. In my legal writing classes I often ask students to find tools we can use in our legal writing from sources that they might not expect—such as J.K. Rowling or Stephen King. And we find all kinds of moves that improve our technique.

The other surefire way for getting better is to seek out great mentors. I have made my career decisions based on one criteria: will I be able to learn *a lot* from my bosses and coworkers? (See the judges I mentioned above). I encourage students who are looking for summer experiences or their first jobs to consider whether the position will come with great mentors. If not, they're probably not going to get any better.

Student Spotlight: Matthew Cook

You're the recipient of the inaugural Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellowship. What is your reaction to that distinction?

Receiving the Melanie Kushnir Access to Justice Fellowship is truly an honor. Melanie Kushnir worked to provide access to justice to the underserved. She ensured that they had a voice. Most importantly, she gave people hope when they had none. I hope to keep her spirit alive.



This summer, I plan to launch a Google Adwords marketing campaign that will reach Nevada's 2.9 million residents. The campaign will raise awareness for Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada's legal services, encourage volunteerism, and promote charitable giving.

Tell us about someone who has been influential in your professional development.

I would like to thank everyone that believed in me and helped me along the way, especially my sister Angela (Boyd '13). She has continued to guide, encourage, and inspire me. Without her, I would not have made it this far.

What do you like to do in your free time?

Being a full-time law student keeps me busy. This is especially true when I am studying for the GMAT to attain a dual JD/MBA. But in my free time I enjoy writing, painting, 30 Seconds to Mars, Dark Souls, Bloodborne, sushi, and music festivals.

What are your career plans following law school?

I am currently interested in pursuing a career in gaming law. I plan to assist clients in attaining gaming licenses, bolster the integrity of the gaming industry, and increase public confidence. In doing so, I hope to positively impact Nevada's economic development. My efforts will help generate revenue for the state, decrease unemployment, and raise the poor out of poverty. After law school, I also plan to continue my involvement in public interest work by taking on pro bono cases.

Alumni Spotlight: Rachel Silverstein '08



Corporate Counsel at Zappos.com, Inc.

What do you wish you would have learned at the beginning of your career?

Ultimately, like many areas of life, the legal profession is largely about building relationships. At some point I started to treat my clients and professional mentors like close friends, and they responded well. When I would meet clients for the first time, I would tell them personal tidbits about myself and ask them questions about their lives. I started joking around with them (when appropriate, of course) and creating relationships that are

professional but also adding a personal touch.

What is the best moment of your career so far?

Getting hired at Zappos is certainly the highlight at this point. I was a customer and a big fan of Zappos for many years, so to work here is a dream for me. I love being a small part of an organization constantly trying to do the right thing by its customers, its employees, its community and its vendors. Additionally, the legal work we do here is very wide ranging, so I love that I've been forced to learn new skills and will always have a new challenge to tackle. By and large, the people here are friendly, happy and passionate, so coming to work is a pleasure. I also don't think my personality was all that well-suited for a stuffy, traditional law firm environment like some of the places I've worked. I like to joke around a lot and not take myself too seriously. And yeah... the discount doesn't suck.

Do you have a motto and what is it?

"It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy."

What is your biggest pet peeve?

I get really tired of constant complaining, something at which many lawyers excel. I firmly believe that negativity is like cancer, it eventually spreads and infects everything around

you. I've worked in a couple offices with lots of negative people and, after interacting with those people, I found myself questioning whether I was actually happy in my position like I thought. In other words, listening to them lament brought me down. While I am always down for a quick venting session, I think it's really important to focus on the positive. Likewise, if you are in a job that you hate, change it. Life is too short to be miserable all the time.

Community Member Spotlight: Elana T. Graham



Deputy Director & CFO at Southern Nevada Senior Law Program, Member of the Public Interest Law Advisory Board at the Boyd School of Law

Tell me about your decision to serve on the Public Interest Law Advisory Board and what makes Boyd Law's mission meaningful to you.

As Deputy Director and CFO at Southern Nevada Senior Law Program, I am aware of just how important public interest law is and how important Boyd Law's mission and presence in the community is. Knowing those facts, I was delighted to be able to step up to the plate and serve on the Advisory Board. I'm very interested in making a difference in the area of public interest law.

What was your first or most memorable job?

My most memorable job was my first law clerk position while I was still in law school. I began learning about how the law really works outside of school and how, as a lawyer, you can make a tremendous difference in people's lives. What made it most memorable was the idea that I could truly help people in this profession.

What advice would you give to current Boyd Law students?

I would advise law students to, of course, study diligently, but also to participate in every opportunity that the law school gives you that is in your area of interest. You will begin to start defining what you would like to do when you graduate from law school, and that's very important. However, for me, it wasn't until after law school that I discovered my true calling.

What is your favorite travel destination?

My favorite travel destination is Paris, France. We went at Christmas, and it was magical. If you can, you should definitely go at Christmas time because there aren't a lot of tourists, it's mostly the locals that are out.

Tell me something you've read that has made a real difference to you.

I've read the U.S. Constitution, and it truly made a difference to me. That ancient language still has meaning and importance to us as U.S. citizens today

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