



From Dean Dan

This month, the Boyd School of Law and the [Brookings Institution](#) are partnering on an exciting conference on water law and policy to be held in Washington, D.C. The conference will feature Boyd School of Law and Saltman Center Senior Fellow [Patricia Mulroy](#), a leading authority on the critical public policy issues surrounding water, conservation and natural resources. At the conference, we will celebrate the launch of Pat's new edited volume, *The Water Problem: Climate Change and Water Policy in the United States*. The conference will focus on water regulation and geopolitics, featuring a keynote address from Bruce Babbitt, former Secretary of the Interior, and insights on domestic and global issues from many of the book's contributors and other experts, including Boyd Law Professor Bret Birdsong, who specializes in natural resources and water law. UNLV has long had strong ties to the Brookings Institution through [Brookings Mountain West](#), and this conference is a wonderful opportunity to highlight the great work of Pat and others on a national stage.

Also, please save the date for the [18th Annual Public Interest Law Association \(PILA\) Auction](#), March 23 from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the Smith Center for the Performing Arts. PILA is a non-profit, student-run organization created to raise awareness about public interest work and the opportunities available to law students. The PILA Auction is a great community event that promotes our law school's efforts to support students pursuing careers in public interest law. We hope you will join us to support this great cause and help PILA raise funds to finance summer internship grants for Boyd students working in public interest.

Dan

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Faculty Spotlight: Ian Bartrum



Professor of Law

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

I am collaborating with a mathematician on a project for a symposium at Pepperdine Law School, which focuses on ways to mitigate the current politicization of the Supreme Court.

First, we suggest a change to the appointment process rooted in what is called "fair division theory." Roughly, the President would "nominate" some number of potential justices (say 10), the opposing party in the Senate would then "advise and consent" to some partition of those candidates (say 5), and the President would then "appoint" one of the remaining options. We can offer a proof that this results in a higher number of "envy free" choices.

Second, we suggest that, instead of having all nine Justices decide every case, the parties might go before randomly selected three Justice panels. Appeals en banc would require a unanimous vote of the entire Court. The thought is that placing both the parties and the certiorari granting Justices behind a “veil of ignorance” would tend to suppress efforts to use the Court as a political shortcut.

What is the most significant issue facing your field and how should it be addressed?

It may go without saying, but these are interesting times for constitutional lawyers. I think the current administration is likely to test some of our basic constitutional assumptions, and it is incumbent on our profession to research, clarify, and justify the normative grounds for those positions. We need to be ready to make concise and compelling arguments in support of constitutional values we may have taken for granted. The Constitution, after all, is only as strong as the public commitments that it embodies.

What have you read, listened to, or watched recently that has influenced you or your work?

I just finished reading Pauline Maier’s book *Ratification*, which explores the history of the state constitutional ratifying conventions. Maier was one of the most important historians of the American founding, and I suggest that anyone who has an interest in the public history of constitutional ideas—what originalism *should* focus on—would really enjoy the book. It has inspired me to take up a project on the debates over Article III that took place in the Virginia convention.

Student Spotlight: Chelsea Stacey



You're from Arizona, did your undergraduate work at Arizona State, but chose to attend Boyd. Why?

ASU is a huge school; one of my classes had over 200 students. When looking for a law school I wanted a much smaller classroom environment where I would know more of the students and professors would actually know my name. I couldn't have made a better choice for myself in choosing Boyd!

You once had a summer internship with a winery in Napa. How fun was that?

My summer in Napa was incredible. The weather is always beautiful and I had the opportunity to learn a lot about wine and drink a lot of wine! I worked on a variety of different tasks from marketing to federal and state regulations for importing and distributing wine. I also had the opportunity to spend a day with a wine maker and hand bottle some wine! My hands were stained for a few days.

What are your plans following graduation in May?

Well first, pass the bar. Then I hope to return to Boyd as a fellow in the legal clinic and build a Kids' Court program for children who have to testify in immigration proceedings. Following that I will be returning to Phoenix and looking for a job that allows me to be in court as much as possible!

Crazy question -- what do you think you will miss about law school?

I am going to miss so much... I have such incredible classmates, friends, and professors who have helped me become the person I am today. I am going to miss the opportunity to explore different areas of law through classes and externships. And, I am going to miss the Kids' Court School program. Giving children the power of knowledge before they have to testify in court has been the most rewarding experience in law school.

Alumni Spotlight: Marisa Rodriguez '13



Associate at Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn, & Dial, Las Vegas

What drew you to Weinberg, Wheeler, Hudgins, Gunn, & Dial (“WWHGD”) and what do you like most about your work there?

What attracted me to WWHGD was its national reputation as an exceptional trial firm. WWHGD is known to parachute into challenging cases at various stages of the litigation, including when trial is imminent. Also, as a new attorney, it was important for me to work with experienced and talented attorneys willing to show me the ropes. I am fortunate to work with brilliant legal minds who take the time to mentor me and have taught me how

to manage client relationships, including Fortune 500 companies. It’s very demanding work, but I love it!

What is the best moment of your career so far?

There are a number of successes my colleagues and I have achieved for our clients that come to mind. But one of my best career moments as an attorney is a *pro bono* case I took from the Thomas & Mack Immigration Clinic. The case included two minors who had escaped a horrific past in a Central American country and were seeking asylum. It was an uphill battle - for a number of reasons - with a slim chance of a positive outcome. When I received the order granting their asylum application, I was ecstatic! I will never forget the joy I felt when telling my clients the news. They cried. The 10-year-old promised me she will study hard to become a veterinarian.

I highly encourage everyone to take a *pro bono* case, regardless of the area of law—in the end, you will receive so much more than the time and energy invested.

Who do you admire and why?

I admire Justice Sonia Sotomayor. She is a strong woman who has reached the pinnacle of her legal career as the first Hispanic Justice to the U.S. Supreme Court. Not only does she have an exceptional legal mind, she is also a role model for all children with disadvantaged beginnings. While it is true that the starting line is not the same for all of us, she is the perfect example that with hard work and dedication, you can make your dreams a reality.

Recommend a favorite book or movie.

My Beloved World, Justice Sotomayor’s memoir and *Cathedral of the Sea*, a historical novel by the Catalan author Ildefonso Falcones. The setting is 14th century Barcelona at the height of the Inquisition. Both are excellent.

Community Member Spotlight: James Conway



Executive Director for Washoe Legal Services, Member of the Public Interest Advisory Board at the Boyd School of Law

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

I chose to serve on the Public Interest Advisory Board because as the director of a legal aid organization, I think it is quite important to have a strong connection to the only law school in our state. A cooperative relationship between Washoe Legal Services (WLS) and Boyd Law assists WLS with identifying law students who are passionate about public interest law and may someday want to

pursue that passion as a WLS attorney. Also, the professionals who are members of the Board are a valuable resource for me in identifying potential changes to our practice areas and identifying other ways in which WLS can better serve the community.

What was your first or most memorable job?

I've been lucky to have many interesting and enjoyable jobs, but my most memorable job was working as a "teacher/counselor" for a program called the Pressley Ridge School at Ohiopyle. Ohiopyle is a small town in the mountains of southwestern Pennsylvania, very close to the border of Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The school was a therapeutic wilderness camp for teenage boys in the juvenile justice system. These were all kids from the inner-cities of Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, etc., and they were all essentially sentenced to the camp by the juvenile court. The school was on about 1,200 acres of forest land, and the kids and the staff lived together in primitive campsites, where we slept in primitive cabins in the winter and tents in the summer. The boys were obviously a challenge to work with at times, but it was also wonderful to watch kids from the inner city experience the wilderness and all of the challenges associated with living in the woods for almost a year, and sometimes more. The school was divided into six different campsites where about ten to twelve boys lived for nine to fifteen months, depending upon how quickly they progressed through the program. Each campsite was named after a Native American tribe, and the children all referred to staff members a "Chief." I was Chief James in the Chippewa campsite, and to this day, many of my friends still get a kick out of calling me "Chief James." The job taught me more about empathy, patience, communication and conflict resolution than any other experience in my life, and I have a lot of great memories from my time there.

What is your favorite travel destination?

I rarely travel to the same location more than once, except to visit my family in western Pennsylvania. My favorite location thus far was probably Eastern Europe. I flew into Munich for Oktoberfest and then traveled through Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. It's less crowded, less expensive and more of a cultural experience than traveling through Western Europe, in my opinion. Also, my maternal grandfather's side of my family is from Slovenia, so I appreciated the opportunity to visit that part of the world.

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