



### From Dean Dan

This Saturday, the William S. Boyd School of Law hosts its annual [Alumni Dinner and Awards Presentation](#) with a special recognition of classes from 2002, 2007, and 2012. We are grateful to have as our guest Representative Dina Titus, who will deliver welcoming remarks, and Professor Emeritus Christopher L. Blakesley, who will deliver faculty remarks.

The Alumni Dinner also gives us a chance to honor some of our many distinguished alumni, including: M. Daron Dorsey '01, Alum of the Year; Speaker Jason Frierson '01, Distinguished Service Alumni Award; Matt Morris '13, Young Alumni Award; and Robert W. Potter '02 and Becky Pintar '01, Alumni Volunteer Leadership Awards.

We owe special thanks to our sponsors Ainsworth Game Technology, Surratt Law, and the Boyd Law Alumni Chapter Board.

Boyd Nation is now over 2,000 strong. Together, they make up many of the leaders of the bench and bar in this city and this state and increasingly across the country.

The annual reunion is a chance to celebrate our grads, their achievements, and especially their contributions to their communities.

Dan  
Dean & Richard J. Morgan Professor of Law  
[daniel.hamilton@unlv.edu](mailto:daniel.hamilton@unlv.edu)  
[facebook.com/DeanDanHamilton](https://www.facebook.com/DeanDanHamilton)

### Faculty Spotlight: Joanna A. Medrano



*Joanna Medrano is the Director of Externships as well as an Assistant Professor-in-Residence.*

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

Right now, I am focused on learning about the Las Vegas legal community and the students here at Boyd. As director of externships, I am interested in building a program that responds to the needs and interests of our students. All of our placements offer students the ability to learn about legal practice in real world settings and I want to help students find their match(es) to make the most of their experience. Externships allow students to explore and build their own professional identity outside of the classroom.

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

One of our externship goals is to create practice-ready attorneys who are prepared to address issues in the legal community beyond the courtroom. We use the seminar as a way to allow our students to begin to reflect on the larger legal community. Our hope is to create reflective students who are ready to practice in an inclusive environment where they value their colleagues and clients.

### **How do you approach teaching your favorite topics? Your least favorite?**

Professional responsibility and the legal community are both topics that I have reflected on deeply throughout my career. I enjoy the different perspectives that our diverse law students bring to the table, and look forward to learning from them as well.

### **When students ask you what they should read or do outside the classroom?**

It is critical to keep up with legal news (especially in your area of interest) and to create networks. The law is evolving, especially in newer fields, and you want to start habits early that allow you to keep up with changes and stay involved.

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

I enjoy being able to teach law students about what I have learned from my years of practice. Law students, even those with previous professional experiences, are just learning the weight of being an attorney and how to navigate the cultures of a legal office. I honestly want to give the students the law school experience which provides them with the tools to build their own success.

## **Student Spotlight: Shannon Borden**



### **Tell us about your career as a professional Muay Thai fighter.**

I suffered a debilitating hip injury in high school. My doctor suggested that I work out in order to prevent relapse. I tried going to the gym but was quickly bored by treadmills, bikes, and aerobics classes. A friend suggested I try Muay Thai. I did, became addicted, and had my first fight three months later. I lost that fight to a Canadian who was a national champion. I never lost another fight and won two national Muay Thai championships.

### **And after your fighting career, you became a City of Henderson police officer?**

It was during my fighting career that I became a police officer. A friend asked me to test for the Henderson PD with her. I ended up making it through the testing process and became a police officer. I continued fighting while I attended the police academy and throughout field training after the academy. An on-the-job injury ended both my fighting and my police career in 2001.

### **How are you enjoying your studies in the dual JD/MBA program?**

I am really enjoying the dual JD/MBA program. I am meeting a very diverse group of people in both the JD and MBA programs. It is a broader range of experience and contacts than I expected. The MBA courses are interesting, and I have been learning to step out of my box when it comes to team projects.

### **How do you envision your career path following graduation?**

I would like to have a career as in-house counsel. The MBA will not only help me with an in-house counsel position — knowing the business aspect will help me give more tailored advice built around business considerations — but it will also come in handy if I ever decide to open my own practice.

## Alumni Spotlight: Patrick S. Opdyke '15



*Patrick is an Associate Attorney at Winston & Strawn LLP in New York City.*

### **Tell me about your decision to attend UNLV Law.**

I chose Boyd for several reasons. To begin, Robert, my older brother, is a Boyd Law Class of 2012 graduate. He spoke very highly of the faculty and the school. Its strong ranking among all law schools in its nascence was another factor. Because of his familiarity with many of the professors and the curriculum, Robert was a fantastic source of edification on the materials and discussion. I was also fortunate enough to receive a scholarship from Boyd, signaling the school's commitment to my attendance and keeping the cost of law school affordable.

### **What drew you to Winston & Strawn LLP, and what do you like most about your work at this firm?**

I met the head of Winston's summer program at that time at an event in Washington, D.C. My interactions with him, and subsequent interviewers, instilled in me a respect for the culture and personality of the firm. Following my experience as a summer associate, I was struck by the degree of collegiality and camaraderie among the attorneys. I found the same true when joining the firm full-time. Apart from this friendly environment, I most enjoy that I am able to work on all manner of assignments — spanning the full life of a case — and that the factual backgrounds among cases are so unique, even when the underlying law may be similar.

### **Any business advice you would give to someone just starting in the profession?**

I was introduced to Winston, and achieved my position in the summer program, due to networking and persistence. Upon joining the firm, I found that an upbeat and positive attitude, focusing on teamwork, augmented my acceptance and ability to work with others at the firm; and contributed to a higher quality for my work. In my experience, partners go out of their way to work with staff and attorneys with whom they enjoy working. Thus, my advice would be to network; to be persistent and patient; and to maintain an upbeat attitude.

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