



Boyd Briefs: January 16, 2014

From Dean Dan

Here at Boyd we are excited to launch this semester a Policymaker in Residence Program, bringing leaders with significant policy making experience to the law school to meet with students, faculty, alumni and the community. This spring, the Honorable Shelley Berkley will visit Boyd several times over the course of the semester as our first Policymaker in Residence. Ms. Berkley, a UNLV alumna, and past student body president, represented Nevada in the U.S. Congress in the 1st Congressional District, from 1999-2013. Before that she was a member of the Nevada Assembly and served for eight years on the Nevada Board of Regents, including a term as Vice Chair. She continues to work on important issues facing higher education; and in January 2014, Ms. Berkley was named the new CEO and Senior Provost of Touro University's Western Division, overseeing medical schools in Las Vegas and California. With a remarkable career as a prominent lawyer and public servant, and her long service to Nevada, Ms. Berkley has much to teach our students, and we are grateful to her for helping launch this new initiative.

Dan

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Elaine Shoben

There may be only a dozen or so law professors in the country who are widely recognized as experts in the field of Remedies. The Boyd School of Law is proud that [Elaine Shoben](#) is one of them. Remedies is an especially difficult field to master because it requires expertise in contracts, torts, property, injunctions, juries, restitution, contempt, attorneys' fees, punitive damages, and more. Professor Shoben is the lead author on a leading casebook that is published in the most exclusive series of legal textbooks; her casebook, [Remedies: Cases and Problems](#), is now in its fifth edition. As a casebook author, Shoben influences not only how students learn the subject, but also how teachers teach it. In fact, it is the teaching of this subject about which she wrote in her most recent essay, titled [Of Carts and Horses: Organizing Remedies for the Classroom](#).

Remarkably, however, Remedies is not the only field in which Professor Shoben is well-known. She is also a highly respected scholar in the field of employment law. In fact, her numerous articles and books in the areas of employment law, employment discrimination, and human resources are even more frequently cited in the literature than are her many important works in Remedies.

Professor Shoben's scholarly work exhibits qualities in unusual combinations: her work is brilliant yet accessible; theoretical yet practical; and provocative yet measured. Her leadership and authoritative voice has played an instrumental role in establishing the faculty's reputation for first-rate scholarship. And her leadership, wisdom, perspective, and insight within the law school have contributed significantly to its solid foundation and grand ambition.



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Shannon Phenix

At its annual Pro Bono Luncheon this past December, the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) named Shannon Phenix its Public Interest Law Student of Distinction. This award is richly deserved, as Shannon has truly excelled in carrying out her commitment to serving those in need of capable representation.

Shannon is in her final year of the dual Juris Doctor and Master of Social Work degree program. During her time at Boyd, she has taken advantage of practically every public interest opportunity. Upon her matriculation, she became a charter Boyd Public Interest Fellowship recipient. She completed an externship in the Domestic Violence Project at the LACSN, traveled on Boyd's first Alternative Spring Break trip to northern Nevada, participated in Grassroots Lobby Days during the Nevada legislative session, volunteered at Community Law Day, and has been active in the Public Interest Law Association (PILA). This year, she is PILA's Executive Vice President, having previously served as President, and she is also Community Service Chair for the Child Advocacy Law Association.

Last summer, Shannon received a PILA grant to work at the Clark County Public Defender's Office. She also did her social work practicum there the previous spring, working on mitigation strategies for capital murder cases. Last fall semester, she represented clients in the Juvenile Justice Clinic where she made an indelible mark on her fellow students and faculty supervisors. Her diligence and persistence on behalf of her clients is exceeded only by her multi-faceted, holistic and caring approach to the resolution of their criminal charges.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Janet E. Traut '01

Janet E. Traut '01 is a proud member of Boyd's charter class. She resides in Reno. Janet writes that "Nevada has been good to me, and I am working to be good for Nevada, too."

After graduation, she joined the Nevada Attorney General's office and has served four Attorneys General over the past 12 years. Janet has represented the Department of Corrections for most of that time -- first for inmate civil rights defense, then working up to the Senior Deputy level, functioning as general counsel. Four years ago, Janet agreed to move to the Attorney General's then-new Personnel Division -- created to provide better and more consistent advice to client agencies, as well as better litigation outcomes.

Today, she serves as the Supervising Senior Deputy Attorney General with the Bureau of Litigation. "There are numerous unsung heroes serving the public through our government agencies, and I am privileged to have their backs," she adds.

"I am terribly proud of being a Boyd graduate, so it is easy to advocate for our school and our alumni. As a supervisor, I appreciate being able to help other attorneys advance in their careers. It is particularly rewarding to have another Boyd graduate, Dominika Morun '11, on my staff. This is part of my legacy as a Boyd charter class member." Janet also assists Professor Jean Whitney when Boyd students must give presentations to mock legislative committees as part of their class work in Carson City.

Janet accepted a seat on the Nevada Opera Board a few years ago, and then served as its president during a tough transition period. The bad economy eliminated a lot of non-profit performing arts, so she is glad to still have a place to sing when she can fit rehearsal time into her litigation calendar. When budget woes hit the University of Nevada,

Reno, Janet began working with the UNR Alumni Band and Band Boosters to keep the “Pride of the Sierras” alive. Janet remains hopeful that the Fremont Cannon can return to blue (after the artillery “trophy” was transferred from UNR as defending champion to in-state rival UNLV and painted red to commemorate the UNLV Rebels' victory over UNR’s Wolf Pack football team last October), but she is always thankful for her time “in Paradise” at Boyd.



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