From Dean Dan

Please join me in congratulating the Black Law Students Association (BLSA) at the William S. Boyd School of Law for their recent accomplishments at the organization’s National and Western Regional conventions.

The Boyd chapter earned numerous accolades, including:

- 2014-2015 Chapter of the Year at the national convention, and Western Region Chapter of the Year at the regional convention
- President of the Year to Scott Morris, chapter president
- Sister in Service Award to Crislove Igeleke, chapter vice president of operations and philanthropy
- Brother in Service Award to Steven "JT" Washington
- Best Respondent Brief of the Year in the Thurgood Marshall Moot Court Competition to the team of Loline-Marie Djidade, chapter secretary, and Mahogany Turfley

Boyd is fortunate to have student organizations whose achievements are recognized in Nevada and around the country. Congratulations to BLSA and to the students at the law school who have taken the lead in building a community that values diversity and promotes discussion of legal issues and ideas.

You can read the full story on BLSA's accomplishments by clicking here.
FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: Linda Edwards

A legal education that integrates theoretical knowledge and practical skill is essential if our graduates are to be successful, ethical, professionals. Long ago, Karl Llewellyn, one of the most famous legal minds of the 20th century, suggested that teaching theory without practice leads to a "mess," yet teaching practice without theory is a "menace." Indeed, both theory and practice are important.

One of our distinguished and prolific scholars is a leading authority on this subject. Linda Edwards has written at length about curricular design in legal education. Edwards' other scholarly works bring some of the most abstruse theories to bear on the lawyer's most practical and concrete task: writing for a judicial audience. Simply put, writers who understand theory have more tools to deploy. Students of her work (and one should appreciate that her classroom extends well beyond the walls of Boyd) are better equipped.

One of Professor Edwards' recent articles is titled "Advocacy as an Exercise in Virtue: Lawyering, Bad Facts, and Furman’s High-Stakes Dilemma." In this piece, Edwards dissects the facts section of one of the appellants' briefs in the consolidated cases known as Furman v. Georgia, a famous death penalty case. Edwards frames her inquiry with legal rhetoric and virtue ethics as theoretical lenses. Legal rhetoric is the study of the conventions of legal argument. Virtue ethics approaches moral reflection
by asking what sort of person a particular moral choice encourages the actor to become. To Edwards, virtue is not an external constraint on good lawyering but rather is a fundamental part of the narrative of good lawyering.

With theory as her frame of inquiry, Professor Edwards' article offers what amounts to a master class in addressing a dilemma that is all-too-familiar to litigators, to-wit, dealing with bad facts. The facts were unusually disturbing in this capital case, and the lawyers made some unconventional and risky choices. They pursued a strategy "that t[old] the truth, yet turn[ed] traditional factual assumptions on their heads." Edwards presents the case as an example of how good advocacy can help a lawyer practice the cardinal virtues of classical antiquity - prudence, fairness, temperance, and courage - even in the most difficult settings and roles.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Collin Jayne

"You know I always wanted to pretend that I was an architect," George Costanza emphatically proclaimed on more than one priceless Seinfeld episode. In contrast to Jerry's hapless sidekick, Collin Jayne actually talked the talk and walked the walk, earning his B.A. in Architectural Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. His is a real and thoughtful fascination with the art/science of buildings. "All buildings are meant to be invested with meaning so deep one must study them for days, at least, to fully appreciate them," Colin observes. "Architecture, to me, is about listening to a person's dreams for their new home, hospital, school, or office and translating them into a physical building which shapes its inhabitants' every moment."

While it was not an immediate turning point in his professional aspirations, Colin took a course titled "Law and Practice for Architects" as part of his degree program. He enjoyed the study of contracts, liability, and the like, and found himself adept with the legalese that bothered and stymied many of his classmates. So some time later when a friend - who happened to be a county judge in his Wisconsin hometown - suggested he give law school a go, Colin flashed back to that particular class and decided to give the matter further serious thought.

Well, we're guessing you've figured out Colin's chosen course of action. He will graduate from Boyd this May and begin his legal career, mindful of the possibility that "my unique background among lawyers would make me an asset to any architectural firm looking for legal counsel." While at Boyd, Colin has served as executive managing editor of the Nevada Law Journal, social media coordinator for Boyd's Phi Alpha Delta chapter, and an extern for Judge Adriana Escobar of the Clark County Eighth Judicial District Court.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Ryan McInerney '11

Ryan McInerney '11 serves as deputy research director for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) in Washington, D.C. He manages a team of political and public policy researchers, providing strategic messaging guidance and support to U.S. House campaigns throughout the country.

Originally from Los Angeles, Ryan majored in Political Science at the University of California, Irvine. During college, he worked at a U.S.
Senator's Washington, D.C. office and on a gubernatorial campaign in Sacramento. These opportunities encouraged Ryan to pursue a legal education in order to better understand the legislative process. Ryan explored alternative public service paths in law school, including interning with the Clark County District Attorney's Office and participating in the Juvenile Justice Clinic. Despite these experiences, he could not shake his strong interest in working more directly in shaping policy.

After a stint as a Capital Fellow working on judicial policy issues, Ryan joined President Obama’s re-election campaign where he coordinated rapid response research efforts from the Chicago headquarters. After the election, Ryan moved to Washington, D.C. to work for the non-partisan California Institute for Federal Policy Research as its legislative director. Later, he joined the DCCC as the West Regional research director where he managed research efforts for congressional races throughout California, Arizona, and Nevada.

"Although I chose an alternative career path after law school, I credit Boyd’s rigorous training, experiential programs, and enlightening professors - particularly Professor Mary Berkheiser - for developing and honing the skills I needed to be an effective researcher and political professional."

Ryan and his wife, Mallory - a fellow Running Rebel - live in Washington, D.C. with their dog, Marlow.