



**“The Career Services Office at Boyd specializes not only in connecting students and alumni with employers, but also in teaching professional skills essential for long-term success.”**

# Dean's Column

BY LAYKE M. STOLBERG, ESQ., DIRECTOR OF CAREER SERVICES

## BOYD GRADUATES FACE THE FUTURE PREPARED

Since I became the director of career services in March, the number one question I have been asked is, “How is the job market looking for 2011 graduates?” My response usually focuses on the success of past Boyd graduates in the marketplace and on the talents of this year’s graduating class. The class of 2011 is an accomplished one. Graduates have competed successfully in national moot court and counseling competitions; they have worked with law school faculty to represent clients in criminal and civil matters; they published the inaugural issue of the UNLV Gaming Law Journal; and they have helped teach classes that provide information to the public about family law, bankruptcy, foreclosure mediation and small claims court. Some members of the class of 2011 completed law school in the evening while working full-time. Boyd’s class of 2011 includes nurses, educators, entrepreneurs and government leaders. However, despite their hard work and success in law school, some graduates from the class of 2011 have yet to secure permanent legal employment.

The job market is extremely difficult for entry level attorneys. Anyone who has perused the postings on Boyd’s online job board or the state bar’s website can see that the market in Nevada for lateral attorneys has become more competitive, mirroring the national trend.<sup>1</sup> Many Nevada firms that used to have summer associate programs, have, instead, been able to successfully meet their attorney staffing needs by recruiting attorneys with one to five years of experience. The decrease in summer associate programs has impacted our students in that there are fewer of them crossing the stage at graduation with a firm offer for post-graduate employment in place. Across the country, nearly 20 percent of law

firms that had summer programs in 2009 canceled those programs completely for the summer of 2010, resulting in far fewer offers for post-graduation employment coming out of summer programs.<sup>2</sup> Despite a slight increase in the number of summer programs for the summer of 2011, we are still far below 2007-2008 levels.

Boyd students are especially well prepared for practice, having participated in externships, taught legal education classes for the public and taken skills courses in Boyd’s nationally recognized Lawyering Process Program. Our clerkship numbers reflect the judiciary’s confidence in our graduates’ abilities. Boyd ranks 22nd among all ABA-accredited law schools in judicial clerkships. Boyd 2011 graduates will be clerking in all of the state and federal courts in Nevada and with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Employment statistics for the class of 2011 are still being collected; however, nearly 20 percent of the class of 2010 spent their first year after graduation in state or federal clerkships. Boyd’s high clerkship placement rate owes much to the robust externship program, where students are placed with judges and public interest and public sector employers during a semester and, in exchange, receive school credit. Boyd’s externship program is not only an invaluable experiential learning opportunity for students; it provides judges and hiring attorneys with an opportunity to conduct a summer- or semester-long evaluation of a student’s work. While post-graduation employment is not the goal of the externship program, from a career services perspective, it is a very positive result.

Many Boyd students have secured or will secure post-graduation employment with small- to medium-