

Definitions | As a final note, the term “law for the elephant” comes from the mid-19th-century expression “to see the elephant.” Although the phrase “to see the elephant” refers to “gaining experience in the world,”¹⁰ it also means going through hardships, such as crossing the Nevada desert to get to the California gold rush¹¹ or facing military battle with little training.¹² Perhaps these sources will help your western legal history research before you reach the point of “seeing the elephant.”

1. Definitions are given in this article’s last paragraph.
 2. John Godfrey Saxe, *The Blind Men and the Elephant*, in ARTHUR ASA BERGER, *BLIND MEN AND ELEPHANTS: PERSPECTIVES IN HUMOR* 7–8 (1995) (fable written as a poem).
 3. *Id.* at 8 (emphasis omitted).
 4. Source 3 in this article at 23; source II at 2–3.

5. Source I at 106.
 6. *Id.*
 7. Source 3 at 23.
 8. Source II at 2.
 9. Robert Hornstein, *Mean Things Happening in This Land: Defending Third-Party Criminal Activity Public Housing Evictions*, 23 S.U.L. REV. 257, 276 (1996) (how to handle an “elephant-sized task”). *Cf. In re* EDC,

930 F.2D 1275, 1281 (7th Cir. 1991) (“a mouse was trying to eat an elephant at one sitting”).
 10. WEBSTER’S THIRD NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY 2055 (1968). *See also* GEORGE P. HAMMOND, WHO SAW THE ELEPHANT: AN INQUIRY BY A SCHOLAR WELL ACQUAINTED WITH THE BEAST (1964).
 11. Source 8 at vii–x. *See also* THE ELE-

PHANT AS THEY SAW IT: A COLLECTION OF CONTEMPORARY LEVY, THEY SAW THE ELEPHANT: WOMEN IN THE CALIFORNIA GOLD RUSH XV–XVI (1990); R. R. TAYLOR, *SEEING THE ELEPHANT: LETTERS OF R. R. TAYLOR, FORTY-NINER* (John Walton Caughey ed. 1951).
 12. *See* JOSEPH ALLAN FRANK & GEORGE A. REAVES, “SEEING THE ELEPHANT”: RAW RECRUITS AT THE BATTLE OF SHILOH (1989).



Regional v. National

Neither the ABA nor the American Association of Law Schools have issued guidelines defining a “national” law school. Whether a law school is considered national or regional has much to do with that school’s reputation in the legal and greater community. However, schools that have developed a national reputation do share some common characteristics, including prestigious faculties, high admissions standards, and a wide geographic distribution of graduates. If reputation and these other characteristics are taken into consideration, BYU has a national law school. In the short time it has been open, the J. Reuben Clark Law School has become one of the leaders in legal education.

Whereas charter class members remember Dean Rex E. Lee persuading them to attend the Law School, today Scott Cameron, associate dean of Admissions, must determine which of the many qualified candidates will be admitted. In fact, the class of

Vicki M. Huebner | As the assistant director of the Career Services Office, I occasionally have the opportunity to counsel prelaw students about their legal career options. Generally these students are most concerned about the type of job they will be able to find after graduation, especially if they want to practice outside the Wasatch Front.

Two years ago one student in particular caught my attention. She was a gifted young woman who had done well in school, had participated in several extracurricular activities, and was being heavily recruited by many law schools. She had been raised in Utah and had done her undergraduate work at BYU. After graduating from college she had worked as a high school teacher just outside Boston, and as we talked she expressed her desire to return there. She was particularly interested in knowing whether the Law School had any connections in Boston and whether she could find a job.

I started to answer her inquiry with my usual sales pitch: describing the outstanding legal education at BYU, the efforts the Career Services Office has made to attract an increasing number of recruiters, and the Law School’s growing reputation. Halfway through my answer she interrupted me and said, “I know that BYU has a good law school. I just want to know if I can find a job in Boston. Is this a regional or a national law school?”

1999 had one of the highest combined GPA/LSAT entrance scores in the country, scoring above students at many other fine academic institutions.¹

Furthermore, the faculty was recently ranked as the 28th most productive in the nation.² Many of these individuals, such as Gerald Williams, David Thomas, Dale Whitman, Michael Goldsmith, and Richard Wilkins, are recognized nationally and internationally for their expertise in the areas of alternative dispute resolution, property law, RICO, and U.N. policy making.

Finally, as an institution privately sponsored by a world-

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wide church, the Law School produces graduates who are able to extend their service beyond that of students from many public schools. Our graduates find satisfying employment throughout the world³; and, serving in church callings, they assist many more, often beyond their ward boundaries. The members of those early classes, who were persuaded by Rex Lee to attend the Law School, now serve on the bench and are in leadership positions in academia, government, private practice, and industry. With this increasing presence in the legal community, it is no wonder that the Law School is becoming better recognized throughout the nation.

The Law School's Influence Is Meant to Be Felt Beyond the Wasatch Front

During that exciting time when the Law School was first established, many people wondered why the Church had decided

to invest time, talent, and money in a law school at BYU. Despite these doubts, no official statement of its mission or purpose was issued, nor has it been since. Although many different people have publicly stated reasons for the Law School's existence, Rex Lee summed it up best when he asserted:

So what is the mission of this law school? I'm not sure. But I'm convinced of two things. The first is that it is multifaceted and probably can't be reduced to a few words, or even a single sentence. The second is that the amalgam of values that constitute the mission of this law school will become more apparent to us over the years. . . .

[W]hat I still believe is that the value of this institution—and therefore its mission—becomes more apparent as we see what has come from it.⁴

What has come from the Law School? Attorneys educated in an environment that affirms the restored gospel, who are able to serve governments, industry, societies, and the Church. To further this accomplishment, the Law School's administrative committee has proposed that the school adopt this mission statement: "We educate and empower lawyer-leaders in a Christ-centered atmosphere to benefit families, churches, nations, and the world." Each graduate has much to offer. As we look now at a few of our alumni who are practicing in various areas, you will notice that each serves the community—through either their legal contributions, their church service, or their willingness to build up the J. Reuben Clark Law Society.

Nikolai C. Ivanov: Bringing a New Perspective to the British Isles

Nikolai Ivanov is a 1995 graduate from the LLM program, which provides foreign-trained lawyers a one-year education in American law. "Although I received my initial legal training in England, I personally identify more closely with the law school at BYU," he admitted. Nik received extensive training in commercial law from his British law school. However, he claimed that he learned how to synthesize law and ethics and find a more balanced perspective through his training at BYU.

Nik currently works as a solicitor for Holman, Fenwick & Willan, a large London-based firm with 34 foreign offices. The firm consists of approximately 160 attorneys specializing in shipping, international trade, and commercial arbitration. After obtaining his LLM from BYU, Nik spent three months in Bulgaria before beginning practice. Thereafter, he worked in the firm's London office as a trainee solicitor and recently qualified as a shipping litigation practitioner. He has worked in the firm's Piraeus, Greece, office this year and will soon return to London.

Nik's practice focuses on the areas of shipping and international trade, representing ship owners in contractual disputes regarding the carriage of goods. Although he works for an English firm, only 5 percent of his clients are English, with the remaining 95 percent located in other countries, particularly Greece, India, and the Far East. He finds that the most rewarding aspect of his job is this international focus. "In any one day I can find myself

speaking with clients in four different continents, with vastly different backgrounds—from government trade ministers to a carrier’s untrained crew members,” he said.

In his travels throughout the world, Nik has found that many people are acquainted with Brigham Young University, if not the Law School. He feels a duty to enhance the Law School’s reputation through his professional conduct, and he especially feels a duty to represent the Church, particularly in areas where the Church is still in its infancy. He hopes that the lessons he learned while at BYU will help him attain professional excellence and an eternal perspective.

J. Anthony Jarrett: Adding Southern Hospitality and Charm to the Law Society

Everyone who knows Tony would agree that he is an outstanding lawyer with great leadership capabilities. After graduating in 1996, Tony began working at Alston & Bird, one of the largest law firms in Atlanta, Georgia. He is currently an associate in the tax department focusing on employee benefits law and ERISA. He was attracted to Alston & Bird because of two J. Reuben Clark Law Society members, who he felt would be wonderful mentors. He finds his work challenging and enjoys the opportunity to work on complex benefits matters.

Since arriving in Atlanta Tony himself has become active in the Law Society, which currently has 50 members in the metro Atlanta area. Prior to their becoming an official chapter, members met informally for a quarterly breakfast. Now they are working to increase

their membership. Regardless of where they attended law school, all LDS attorneys are invited to join the Law Society, which exists to encourage high moral and professional standards throughout the legal profession, serve the professional needs of its members, and assist the Law School in fulfilling its educational and professional mission.

With regard to his involvement with the Law Society, Tony stated, “We would like to see our chapter continue to grow. We realize that to do so, we must attract not only LDS attorneys within our own community to the organization but also more BYU students to this area. I feel it was a great honor to attend BYU, and it is incumbent upon me to assist in the placement of BYU law students.” In an effort to bring more BYU students to Atlanta, Tony requested and received permission from his firm’s hiring partner to recruit on campus last year. He said, “It marked the first year that we recruited at BYU. In fact, it was probably the first year we have recruited at any school located in the West, other than Stanford or Berkeley.” Shortly after Tony’s recruiting trip, Alston & Bird extended one student a summer clerkship offer. Another student who met Tony during on-campus interviewing was able, with some networking assistance from Tony and another Law Society member, Craig Pett, to secure employment at a different Atlanta firm.

Tony adds that Atlanta is a great area to work, live, raise a family, and, of course, enjoy major-league baseball. He also emphasizes that his colleagues in the Atlanta chapter are looking forward to meeting inter-

ested students and attorneys and showing them a little Southern hospitality.

Albert Mailo: Serving His People in American Samoa

If the Law School is measured by how its graduates assist others, then Albert Mailo has done much to enhance the school’s reputation. A member of the charter class, Albert has been practicing in American Samoa, his native land, for the past 20 years. His varied career has included both private and government practice. Some of his notable accomplishments include acting as legal counsel to former Governor Coleman and being appointed the attorney general for American Samoa in January 1997.

Practicing on a small island of 100,000 citizens with a proportionally smaller bar, Albert notes the collegiality among bar members. He explained that this unique setting allows him to personally serve the Samoan people. “Through my professional experiences, I have learned to understand people with different perspectives and have gained access to political leaders, and I now have the opportunity to shape the law. Because of my legal training, I have been able to affect the lives of many people.”

Although another BYU graduate worked in American Samoa for a short time, Albert is currently the only Law Society member there. When asked whether it was difficult to be the only J. Reuben Clark graduate in this area, Albert responded, “No.” He stated that he was able to find good mentors who were willing to assist him in the early days of his career. Additionally, there are many members of the

Church who share his beliefs and values. He adds that for those with a sense of adventure and the willingness to work in a different climate and be exposed to different cultures, practicing in American Samoa can be a rewarding career.

John Scukanec: Exploring the Alaskan Wilderness

“Sometimes I think the best part of my job is looking out the window and seeing the whales swim up Cook Inlet,” John Scukanec remarked. “The worst part of my job is the tree that blocks my view of Mount McKinley.” As you may have guessed, John Scukanec works in Anchorage, Alaska.

John first arrived in Alaska in 1956 when he was five years old, and, except for the time he spent out of state to attend college and law school, he has remained there ever since. He still recalls observing his classmates from the Law School’s charter class scheduling all their interviews during the last hectic weeks of the semester and wondering if they would really find jobs in Utah or anywhere else. However, John was not as apprehensive about his job search, since he had always planned to return to Alaska after graduation. Although he may be living far from Utah, he continues to feel closely attached to the university. His son, Jason, plays football for BYU, and he is looking forward to making a couple of trips to Provo each year to watch him play. (John and his wife and golf clubs are already planning to have their trips include the games in Hawaii!)

Currently an assistant attorney general in the Office of Special Prosecutions and Appeals, John argues criminal

appeals before the Alaska Court of Appeals and its supreme court. The most rewarding aspect of his career is successfully arguing and prevailing on appeals in cases involving violent crimes against children. He commented, “It is very satisfying to know that these offenders are in a place where they cannot harm another child. But you never forget the faces of the victims and the families. You just try to move on to the next case.”

John presently serves as a counselor in the Alaska Bush District presidency. It is one of the largest districts in the Church, covering more than 300,000 square miles from the interior of the state to the tip of the Aleutian Islands, and John says it is the best calling in the Church. He advises those who are considering leaving the Wasatch Front to realize that they will be challenged in every phase of their lives and personal beliefs. However, he adds, it is only by being challenged that you are able to have the experiences needed to strengthen your testimony, skills, and professional ethics. And, perhaps, you may just find yourself in an office with a nice view!

Jeffrey Siebach: Conducting Business in the Far East

Jeffrey Siebach has known he wanted to be a lawyer ever since he was in junior high. His teachers quorum advisor was an attorney who brought in cases for the teachers to discuss during MIA. As a teenager growing up in Wichita Falls, Texas, he never considered working overseas, however. Later, serving as a missionary in Fukuoka, Japan, and living in Tokyo for an undergraduate study abroad program, he

developed a love for the Japanese people and a desire to use his legal talents in that area.

Jeff has spent almost his entire professional career working in Japan or Hong Kong assisting Japanese clients. He is currently working in Hong Kong as the Asia regional counsel for Intel Semiconductor, Ltd. Jeff stressed the important role both his mission and his legal training played in accomplishing this goal: “My mission and the decision to obtain a degree in Japanese were the most important decisions I made. They have determined my career path thus far.” In more than one interview, he saw the words “speaks Japanese” written across his resumé. Additionally, his understanding of Japanese culture was enhanced by a multidisciplinary class taught at the Law School by Walter Ames, a lawyer and professor of anthropology.

The Siebach family has enjoyed the opportunity to live overseas, serve in the Church (Jeff is the bishop of his ward), and travel frequently throughout Southeast Asia. “The most enjoyable aspect of my position is the diversity of legal issues and geographical areas within which I work,” Jeff said. “I work with issues that arise from China on the north to New Zealand on the south to Pakistan and Japan and everything in between. It is a dynamic area of the world in which to live, work, and serve.”

Russell and Sarah Jean Watterson: Beginning Their Careers in Canada

Sarah Jean Tingle, a native of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, decided to attend the J. Reuben Clark Law School for a combination of reasons. Her sister

was accepted into a master’s program at BYU, and they felt it would be a great experience to attend graduate school together. Sarah Jean also felt that attending the Law School and receiving a background in u.s. law would be beneficial when she returned home to Canada.

During law school Sarah Jean met and married one of her classmates, Russell Watterson, a Colorado native. Upon graduation, they were presented with the challenge of finding two jobs in one city. Since they both found positions in Calgary, they decided to begin their legal careers there. They are both members of the Colorado Bar Association but are currently practicing as Students-at-Law during their articling year. Russ is working for Bennett Jones Verchere, the largest law firm in western Canada, and Sarah Jean is practicing at Milner Fenerty, the second largest firm in Calgary.

Sarah Jean is enjoying the rotation system at her firm. She has already spent three months in the financial, property, and personal services practice section and is currently working with the insurance, surety, and construction litigation group. Russ’ firm does not have a formal rotation system, but he is attempting to pursue a variety of projects that are of interest to him. Because Calgary is the corporate seat for several large oil and gas companies, most of whom have international operations, Russ has had the opportunity to begin practicing international law. His Spanish language background has particularly proved to be an asset, since the firm has clients throughout South America. Russ has translated several legal documents from Spanish to

English, and this past October he traveled to Colombia to participate in the acquisition of an electrical plant.

As Russ and Sarah Jean begin their professional careers together, they look forward to being admitted to the Canadian Bar Association and to the many opportunities that will be presented to them in the coming years.

Our Worldwide Reputation

So, is the Law School a regional or a national school? The extrinsic data such as faculty reputation and admission scores certainly point to an affirmative answer to that question. The most important evidence, however—the lives of our graduates—confirms the growth, power, and reach of this institution. Clearly, the J. Reuben Clark Law School has a national, even international, mission.

Notes

1. According to the 1996–97 NAPLA Law School Locator developed by Dr. Joseph Burns at Boston College, the combined average undergraduate grade point average and LSAT scores of BYU students placed them in the second out of 16 matrix cells.
2. Lindgren, James and Seltzer, David, *The Most Prolific Law Professors and Faculties*, 71 *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 781, 794. The authors reviewed articles published in the top-20 law reviews between 1988 and 1992 to make their findings.
3. At press time, the most recent employment statistics were for the class of 1996. Graduates in that class found employment in 25 states and two foreign countries. Fifty-four percent of employed graduates found jobs outside of Utah.
4. Rex E. Lee, “Thoughts After 15 Years,” *Clark Memorandum*, p. 17.