

8-6-2013

## Newsroom: RWU Law Guarantees Practical Experience

Roger Williams University School of Law

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.rwu.edu/law\\_archives\\_life](https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life)

---

### Recommended Citation

Roger Williams University School of Law, "Newsroom: RWU Law Guarantees Practical Experience" (2013). *Life of the Law School (1993-)*. 135.

[https://docs.rwu.edu/law\\_archives\\_life/135](https://docs.rwu.edu/law_archives_life/135)

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives & Law School History at DOCS@RWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Life of the Law School (1993- ) by an authorized administrator of DOCS@RWU. For more information, please contact [mwu@rwu.edu](mailto:mwu@rwu.edu).

# Newsroom

## RWU Law Guarantees Practical Experience

Experiential learning center and real-world legal experience guarantee add RWU Law to a short list of schools that fully commit to practice-ready training.



**BRISTOL, R.I., August 6, 2013** – Further

expanding its already strong commitment to delivering a rigorous and marketable legal education, Roger Williams University School of Law has introduced two key initiatives: a **new experiential learning center**, and an **explicit guarantee** that students will get the hands-on training essential to success in today's market.

The recently launched **Feinstein Center for Pro Bono and Experiential Education** will be RWU Law's flagship for coordinating experiential learning opportunities for students. It is the vehicle through which the school will fulfill a new guarantee that every qualified student will be afforded a substantial clinical experience, either via RWU Law's in-house legal clinics or through its growing array of externship programs.

"What we're offering is a continuum of opportunities," says Laurie Barron, the Center's executive director.

"Whether a student wants to forge a career in business law, immigration law, criminal law or anything in between, they can come to us and plan for a structured sequence of legal experiences. Whatever the specialty, we'll guarantee them a semester in the trenches gaining real-world legal skills."

While the law school has offered clinical experiences since its early years, **the guarantee** that every qualified student can participate in at least one clinical experience before graduation makes RWU Law one of the few schools in the country to commit to such a promise.

“There is really no substitute for learning from experience,” explains Professor Andrew Horwitz, director of RWU Law’s clinical programs. “Real life presents an array of challenges and situations that can never be replicated in a simulated exercise.”

The Center grew out of the Feinstein Institute for Legal Service, founded in 1996 as the hub of RWU Law’s public service initiatives and offering pro bono legal services for low-income populations. The institute was established with a \$1 million donation from Rhode Island philanthropist Alan Shawn Feinstein, who offered input on the recent expansion and refocus of the Institute’s name and mission.

“Pro bono service *is* experiential learning,” Barron says, emphasizing a philosophy that remains largely unique to RWU Law. “But now we’re taking the well-honed model we have developed – which has won recognition as a best-practices approach for pro bono programs nationwide – and using it to deliver an even wider range of experiential learning opportunities to our students.”

RWU Law, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, was founded at a time when legal education first began trending toward hands-on training.

“The school built into its initial curriculum a greater attention to skills training than was prevalent at the time,” says Dean David A. Logan. “Since then, the number and type of experiential opportunities have dramatically multiplied. The result is practice-ready graduates who are prepared to give back to their communities and enhance their profession.”

Current students, for example, can choose from:

- a growing roster of clinics including ones focused on criminal defense, immigration and mediation;
- dozens of externships, working under the close supervision of lawyers and judges in both state and federal courts, with non-governmental organizations, and even with the offices of corporate counsel;
- RWU Law’s unique Pro Bono Collaborative, which partners with major law firms and community based organizations to provide legal representation to underserved communities; and
- capstone courses that enable third-year law students to integrate doctrinal knowledge learned earlier into real-world settings.

RWU Law is also a member of the Alliance for Experiential Learning in Law, organized by Northeastern School of Law.

***About RWU Law:*** *The only law school in Rhode Island, Roger Williams University School of Law offers future attorneys a rigorous, hands-on legal education in a supportive, personalized environment. In its 20th Anniversary year, RWU Law proudly looks back on a legacy of outstanding scholarship, accomplished alumni, and profound impact on legal culture and communities in need throughout the state*

*and region. It is both a signal achievement and an ongoing legacy – fulfilling the promise of the school's founding mission as RWU Law enters its third decade.*

**About RWU:** *Roger Williams University located in Bristol, R.I. is a leading independent, coeducational university with programs in the liberal arts and the professions, where students become community- and globally-minded citizens. With 42 academic majors, an array of co-curricular activities and study abroad opportunities on six continents, RWU is an open community dedicated to the success of students, commitment to a set of core values and providing a world-class education above all else. In the last decade, the University has achieved unprecedented successes including recognition as one of the best colleges in the nation by Forbes, a College of Distinction by Student Horizons, Inc. and as both a best college in the Northeast and one of the nation's greenest universities by The Princeton Review.*