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Boston College Law School

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BC Law to Open New Center for Experiential Learning

2013 NEWS ARCHIVE

11/18/13

Newton, MA—Boston College Law School is pleased to announce the creation of a Center for Experiential Learning on the Boston College Newton campus. Based at the Law School, the new Center will provide a home for all in-house clinics, internships, semester in practice and short-term externship programs at the school, and is part of a comprehensive long-term vision for the support and expansion of BC Law’s experiential learning efforts.

“Experiential learning is an essential part of providing the very best legal education for our students and complements the high quality academic preparation our students receive,” said BC Law Dean Vincent Rougeau. “With the creation of a Faculty Director for Experiential Learning position and the appointment of Paul Tremblay, we began a comprehensive plan to bring our various efforts under one roof. This is the next step in that plan. I’d like to thank Paul and the clinical faculty for their hard work and support. We are determined to provide significant hands-on learning opportunities for our students in the years to come, with the ultimate goal of having all of our students participate in some form of experiential learning before they graduate.”

The new Center will initially be housed in the Law School’s Smith Wing and serve as the primary site for the school’s in-house clinics, including the Civil Litigation Clinic, the Community Enterprise Clinic, the Housing Law Clinic, the Immigration Clinic, the Juvenile Rights Advocacy Clinic, the BC Defenders, and the BC Innocence Project. Several of those clinics will operate as a single law firm and share student workspace, support staff, resources, and technology. The Smith Wing will be reconfigured to contain a client waiting area, interview and conference rooms, student work space, and faculty and support staff offices. Also housed in the Center will be external initiatives such as the Attorney General Clinic, Semester in Practice, and externships.

Importantly, the Law School will maintain existing partnerships and establish new community outreach offices for clients who cannot travel to Newton Centre.

“We are very excited about the synergies that will come from bringing everyone under one roof,” said Paul Tremblay, Faculty Director of Experiential Learning. “We’re also very committed to maintaining our ties to the local community. We’ve built strong connections during our 45 years in Waltham, and we’re focused on continuing to serve that area and an even wider community around Boston. This move will allow us to maximize resources and expand our services to a larger client base.”

In addition to the expansion of experiential learning initiatives, the other potential benefits of the Center are very exciting, Tremblay said. “Clinical faculty can now work side-by-side, with many opportunities for shared teaching and lawyering across courses,” he said. “Clinics will have a fully functioning law firm with the necessary support and infrastructure. Students will have the ability to move seamlessly from classroom work to clinic work, and the new space will encourage non-clinic faculty members to learn about, and we hope to participate in, the work of the clinics. We can also expand the pilot program currently in place in which clinics share the expertise of the Law School’s social worker.”

