

Richard Budden, '12, Reflects on Law Clinic



I am starting my seventh year at Shambert, Johnson & Bergman, Chtd. representing injured plaintiffs and their loved ones after spending two years clerking for Judge J. Thomas Marten in federal court. My experience as an attorney has always been fulfilling and fascinating, and it started at the Washburn Law Clinic. I started at the front desk, where I mostly filled out intake sheets after speaking with potential clients. This taught me the important skills of politely focusing people on the reason they needed legal help and getting all of the relevant information that I needed from them---critical stuff in being a real attorney!

I was also privileged to take Law Clinic for a semester, where **Professor Curtis Waugh, '87**, guided me through the civil litigation process. Professor Waugh worked with me to perfect my legal correspondence, petitions, and requests for discovery. I learned how to bill hours, which taught me I would rather practice as a contingency-fee plaintiff's lawyer. I also learned how to play hardball with creditors, which continues to take up more time in my practice than I'd prefer.

My favorite client during my semester in Law Clinic was a trans woman who wanted to change her name on several official government documents to reflect her female gender identity. My job was to research and figure out what documents the state and federal governments would actually allow her to change and how to get it done. The topic was pretty unique, and it was an excellent growth opportunity to hear this woman's story and see the world through her eyes.

The Washburn Law Clinic was my first real-life law firm experience, and all law students would do well to take advantage of it.

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