



News and Events

Jordan Toone gains experience at Oxford

Jordan Toone, a 2L student at the J. Reuban Clark Law School, is spending his summer at Oxford as part of the externship program offered through the laws school. Toone has been working for Professor Stefan Talmon by helping him conduct research on international law and current legal issues in the Middle East/

Toone's biggest interest is the practice of public and private international law within the Middle East, which initially drew him to Professor Talmon—because of Talmon's work on the topic.

"Professor Talmon is a self-proclaimed 'generalist' – that is, he prides himself on staying abreast of major issues and developments in international law throughout the world without being confined to a particular theoretical, substantive, or geographical area," Toone said.

A large part of Toone's role has been to assist Talmon in a book he is writing about the legal implications of an occupying power's administration and occupation of another country. Toone has been helping Talmon research resolutions adopted by the Iraqi Governing Council during the initial stages of the occupation.

Toone graduated from Oxford in 2007 with a M. Phil.—a two-year research degree—in Modern Middle Eastern Studies. He said he has many happy memories at Oxford with his family; his second son was born during his studies there.

"It has been fascinating," Toone said. "There are few places as beautiful as Oxford in the spring. I only wish my wife and two little guys could be here with me."

Toone commented that he has had many great opportunities during his time at Oxford and has learned a great deal.

"I was able to attend a case where Professor Talmon and two Queen's Counsel lawyers—top lawyers in England—argued before the High Court in London," Toone said. "The case was about international law, sovereignty, and treaties in relation to the unique and politically-charged situation in Northern Cyprus."

"It was a landmark case that will undoubtedly be in international law textbooks for years to come," Toone added. "Plus, it was fun to see 15 men dressed in robes and wigs speaking of highly interesting things."

One of the most important things Toone has learned from his experience at Oxford is the value of relationships.

"There is more to legal work, I concluded, than simply the ability to provide cogent analysis and expert advice," he said. "Relationships, I am learning, are an integral part to any lawyer's success."

The externship program at the J. Reuben Clark Law School has allowed students to make connections with professionals throughout the world. Toone has also been able to increase Professor Talmon's interest in coming to BYU either to teach international law for a semester or to deliver a paper.

"He is very interested in furthering his connections and relationship with BYU," Toone said. "I promised I would do everything I could to make that happen."

Through his externship, Toone has become more aware of the major themes, debates, and areas of practice in international law.

"It also solidified my interest in and excitement for international law—both public and so-called private international law," Toone said.

After he graduates, Toone initially plans to work for a law firm in the Middle East for a few years. In the long-term, he hopes to improve relations between the Arab world and the West.

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