

2009

William & Mary Business Law Review to Publish First Issue in Spring

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By Katie Peebles '12

November 23, 2009

Last winter, an e-mail from Benjamin David Novak '10 began the chain of events that eventually created the Law School's newest student-edited publication: the *William & Mary Business Law Review*.

"Feb. 19, 2008, I sent a letter to our then-dean - Dean Lynda Butler - expressing my interest in creating another law journal at the Law School. Personally, I was a little over halfway through my law school career," Novak recounted. "I realized I was going to be here for another year and a half, and I wanted to put that time to good use. So, I analyzed the needs of the Law School, considered which needs I could address best, and decided to create a new law journal."

According to Novak, who now serves as the *Business Law Review's* Editor-in-Chief and as a staff member on the *William & Mary Bill of Rights Journal*, one of his primary goals in forming the journal was to get more students involved with the Law School's student-edited publications.

Novak set out to determine what type of journal would best serve the Law School, its students, and the academic community. Investigating the careers that Law School alumni pursue and areas in need of additional scholarship led him directly to business law.

Dean Butler encouraged Novak to move forward with his idea. For support, Novak tapped into the Business Law Society, which he had founded the prior year. A group comprising five students in all crafted a 100-page proposal. They pitched their plan to an administrative committee, which allowed them to seek final approval from the faculty.

"And we got the vote," he recalled. "We were approved to bear the William & Mary name." The journal was also approved to begin the process of seeking credit-bearing status by completing a procedure outlined by faculty policy. "So, after hundreds of hours of work, it all began," Novak added.



Novak and the journal's other four founders - Stanley W. Jackson '11, Emily S. Kirkpatrick '11, Brittany K. Mohler '11, and Gardner Rordam '11 - formed the *Business Law Review's* first Editorial Board Selection Committee. They created an application process that allowed students with prior journal experience to apply for the fledgling journal's inaugural editorial board.

In August, the new editorial board completed selection of its forty member staff through the *William & Mary Business Law Review* Membership Selection Competition. Since then, the *Review* has selected two articles, two essays, and three student notes for publication in its first issue. Issue II will feature four articles and two student notes. According to Novak, both issues of Volume 1 will be in-hand this spring.

Although the *Business Law Review's* first volume will feature only two issues, Novak explained that the staff intends to publish four issues per volume by Volume 5. By Volume 3, the *Review* should be in a position to seek permanent status as a credit-bearing journal.

"We're trying to provide more publication opportunities," Novak said. "That's another reason that we started this journal."

Despite his instrumental role in getting the *Business Law Review* up and running, Novak repeatedly emphasized that the journal's creation has been a group effort. Through teamwork, the journal's staff and founders have transformed the idea embodied in his e-mail last February into a successful publication.

"The team has been incredible. I am extremely pleased to see my idea come to fruition," Novak said. "It's been a fun ride."