

Annual Report of
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Philanthropy

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The Weil Family Supports Education Advocacy by Funding Fellowships

As his 15-year reunion approached, Matt Weil '91 got inspired—and creative—about the many ways he could give back to Boalt Hall. Weil, an intellectual property law partner in the Orange County office of McDermott Will & Emery, started with an act of personal generosity. The Boalt alum, who already was busily serving as a member of his Class of 1991 Reunion Campaign committee, decided to make the law school the beneficiary of his largest-ever charitable gift. Through his philanthropy, Weil not only provided important resources for Boalt, but also set the bar for fellow classmates celebrating their reunion year.

But Weil didn't stop there. He also began thinking about how he could further support his alma mater, its students and initiatives.

Learning that some first-year Boalt students were hoping to pursue legal advocacy projects helping underserved youth, Weil saw that funding targeted summer fellowships was a natural fit with the mission of his family's charitable Patricia & Christopher Weil Family Foundation.

"It's part of my family ethic," he says, to promote education reform, particularly in needy communities. Family members were likewise intrigued. The Weil Foundation wound up supporting a total of five Boalt students who participated in a variety of innovative youth advocacy programs this past summer.

Matt Weil's father, Christopher, says he was pleased to have an opportunity to support Boalt students while helping "people who need quality legal services and can't afford them."

Robyn Gould '08 and Lynn Wu '08 were two of the Boalt students who benefited from the Weil family's support. The two spent last summer as fellows at the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL) in Oakland, engaged in public service projects focused on education and youth advocacy.

The experience was "incredible," says Gould, who joined a NCYL team working to ensure the delivery of community-based mental health services to California youngsters who are in foster care or at risk of entering that system. The organization's efforts grew out of a class-action suit challenging the way the state cares for tens of thousands of abused and neglected children. "I worked in an area of youth law that I had never previously explored," Gould says. "And I hope to do more."

Wu, meanwhile, pursued impact litigation cases at NCYL, focusing on foster youth services. She developed a training manual on the rights of foster children that will be put to immediate use in Boalt's Education Advocacy Clinic.

Matt Weil is delighted that his family could simultaneously back worthy programs while helping his alma mater provide valuable training to eager students. "Giving students a chance to further their education and help at-risk youth was a win-win," says Weil. But the Boalt students "didn't just have an impact on children and their families," he says. "They brought resources back to Boalt that will leverage long-term institutional change. That's a slam dunk."



Matt Weil '91 (center) with parents, Patricia and Christopher; wife, Svetlana; and daughter, Kia