



## 4 Outstanding Real-World Law School Personal Statement Examples

What does a successful law school application essay look like? Look no further. Below you'll find five real-world examples from some of the students admitted to New England Law | Boston's fall 2019 entering class.

Though the subjects vary widely, these personal statements all work for similar reasons:

- They exemplify the passion and determination it takes to succeed in law school.
- They illustrate the reasons why a legal education is an essential next step in their careers.
- They display an understanding of the law school's values and sincere interest in attending.
- They tell an attention-grabbing yet relevant story.

Check out the personal statement examples below to get inspired, and be sure to read our [advice for writing an outstanding law school application essay](#) of your own.

### Empowering others through intellectual property law

**Maria A. D. RePass**

**Hometown:** Leominster, Massachusetts

**Undergrad school:** Worcester Polytechnic Institute

**Grad school:** Tufts University, PhD

As my PhD training was drawing to a close, I found myself unsure of what my path forward would be.

When I started the program, my path was clear—I wanted to work in biotech and someday hopefully lead a research group helping to shape the research portfolio of the company. While I enjoyed the rigors of scientific research, I began to realize that I enjoyed the communication aspects as well. While some of my classmates dreaded their annual research presentations, I looked forward to the opportunity to present my work to others, whether it was an oral presentation before a group of my peers or in writing. At the same time, I knew I did not want to leave science behind and transition into a purely business or administrative role within a company. This, combined with my educational and professional experiences, make me eager to embrace the challenge of pursuing a legal education.

I consider myself to be a life-long learner and am the type of person who thrives when challenged, a problem solver who enjoys working through puzzles in order to arrive at the ideal solution. I knew that I needed to find a role in which I could stay up-to-date with the latest scientific discoveries, while continuing to challenge myself intellectually on a daily

basis. I began to look for a way to fulfill my love of science and personal interaction in my career. After talking to several program alumni, friends, and colleagues in the scientific field, I took a leap of faith and jumped into a role as a technology specialist at an intellectual property law firm. I am so very glad that I did, as this role has provided me with the balance of science and communication that I was seeking.

**Related:** [View other law school application requirements](#)

That law is a service-driven vocation resonates with me. I have truly enjoyed drafting patent applications that breathe life into the clients' inventions and formulating replies to show how their novel and inventive discoveries have contributed to the advancement of their respective fields. At the same time, I find myself wanting to understand more about how the case law has shaped the evolution and application of the laws, so that I may better help the clients—the scientists—protect their hard-earned discoveries. I believe that an education in law, beyond the intellectual property discipline, will help me to become a better patent practitioner and will help inform my decisions and strategy when assisting my clients.

My graduate training as a scientist constantly challenged me to think critically and outside the box. A good scientist never accepts information at face value; one must listen, analyze, ask questions, and then seek out the answers to formulate their own conclusions. During graduate school, we read papers and listened to presentations objectively, and with a healthy dose of skepticism. I was encouraged to look at the data within the figures to develop my own analysis and conclusions first, and then read the accompanying text to see if I arrived at the same conclusion as the author. This approach affords one the opportunity for a bit more scrutiny.

Simply reading what is presented and accepting it at face value often leads to overlooking important details and subtle nuances. I find myself applying these basic tenants of my scientific training in my role as a technology specialist. Life science research is a very competitive field, and the ability to secure a patent for a client often comes down to very small yet important details and nuances that separate their work from that of the prior art.

I know that I would thrive as a student at New England Law as part of a small community of students who are not in competition, looking to outshine their peers, but rather will look to be a team player and help one another through the rigors of law school. I have been fortunate to have attended institutions that encouraged open discourse between students and faculty, and that stressed the importance of teamwork for both my undergraduate and graduate training. I look forward to the opportunity to take the next step in my career and to study law under the direction of the school's dedicated professors.

## **An unconventional career change**

**Nicole Davies**

**Hometown:** Manhattan, Kansas

**Undergrad school:** Kansas State University

**Grad school:** Southern New Hampshire University, MA

It was a hot summer afternoon and I had just finished setting up the local farmer's market when the call came. The phone buzzed in my back pocket, like it has thousands of times before, but this was different. It was my boss, the hospital's CEO, and what happened next changed everything for me.

In the midst of the chaos, with vendors unpacking their goods and waiting for the surge of customers in the hospital's parking lot, my only thought was, "Oh, boy. What does he need?" He knew not to call me on market days, so this had to be urgent. All he told me was to come to his office immediately. I knew something was horribly wrong.

As I quickly moved through the blistering Kansas heat, I hustled up to his executive suite and plopped down on a cushy, leather seat. I took a deep breath, trying not to pant like a dog, and regained my composure before he told me the earth-shattering news. The hospital's most profitable surgeon had been arrested for allegations of sexual misconduct with a male minor.

These things don't ever happen here, not at a mid-size rural hospital like ours. I saw the look of despair of the CEO after a call with the hospital's attorney, but as the director of public relations, I didn't skip a beat and immediately went into triage mode.

The attorney and I assessed the situation, listed the facts we knew at the time, and formulated a solid plan to move forward. We created scripts internally for employees, press releases, and memos for the Board of Trustees and medical staff to follow in both the short and long term. It was a terrible situation, but I was able to navigate and lead smoothly through this crisis.

Throughout the last ten years, I've fine-tuned my talents and passions for negotiating deals, writing contracts, and advising top leaders of various organizations on critical issues. In that frantic moment of the hospital's biggest crises ever, I was positioned as the co-pilot to our counsel, and an air of confidence blanketed my thoughts and actions. I had been called to the CEO's office on serious matters before, but it was on this day I realized how comfortable and at home I felt in this role.

That's when it finally clicked. Legal counsel and advocacy, particularly in health care, is my true calling.

My journey to decide to go into law was obviously an unconventional one. I do not come from a long line of college graduates in my family. In fact, I am the first in my immediate family to earn a bachelor's and master's degree, and now I'm looking to pursue a Juris Doctor degree. I haven't always been a "straight-A" student, and I am not the greatest test taker, but that has never deterred me. I'm a creative problem solver, a hard worker, and I have always found a way to succeed.

#### **Related: Everything You Need to Consider in a Law School**

I went into the public relations industry after completing my undergraduate degree in communications with the idea of one day being a marketing director for a major firm in a big city. The responsibilities and roles I have held along the way as a director include more than just creating graphics and advertising campaigns. I'm often called upon by administration to troubleshoot, mediate, or somehow "fix" a problem or situation, regardless of the relevance to my position.

Public service and government have always been a strong passion of mine. Serving my community as an attorney in either the private or public sector, I plan to create a loyal and trusting bond with my clients, colleagues, and neighbors. Thankfully, in my current role as a leader and representative for a multi-specialty hospital, I have had the opportunity to discover how much I really enjoy advocating and providing a voice to those who don't have one.

Take the farmer's market, for example. Some may think it is a little strange to host a farmer's market in the front parking lot of a hospital. However, it was a highly successful brainchild of my CEO and me as an effort to create an accessible venue for local produce in our notoriously food-insecure and obese community. We wanted to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem. We've received statewide recognition, grants, and awards for our collaborative program that continues to gain momentum and help low-income families each year.

My career and educational experience with the media, high-ranking officials, population health management, and the mitigation of highly sensitive legal issues has been much like a long race. I have been training, have proven my ability to apply schoolwork knowledge to real-life situations, and am ready for this next step in my professional life. With a decade of maturing and learning on a more diverse path than most, I am confident I will provide a unique and enriching perspective for my fellow classmates at New England Law I Boston.

New England Law is absolutely my top choice for law school. It would be an honor to attend such a great institution that has been on the forefront of progression since 1908. The curriculum is strong, the faculty is outstanding, and the school is committed to diversity and accepting all walks of life. Most importantly, we share very significant core values of taking care of one's community, respecting the law, and advocating and representing clients with integrity.

## **Eager for the next challenge**

**Dina Megretskaia****Hometown:** Saint Petersburg, Russia**Undergrad school:** Carnegie Mellon University**Grad school:** University of Pennsylvania, MA

In sixth grade English, alongside reading Ray Bradbury's short stories and learning that (according to Mark Twain), "the difference between the almost right word and the right word is...the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning," my class contemplated the notion that knowledge is power and ignorance is bliss. I knew straight away, with the invisible shiver of a lightning spike through my vertebrae, that I wanted both knowledge and power—and that my life would be a thrilling, focused journey of acquiring both.

In my current profession, financial planning, I optimize my clients' financial lives so that their whole lives can be better. I relish building my own knowledge base as I tackle esoteric pension plan provisions and subsections of our tax code, but most of all revel in the empowerment that my work creates for my clients. I intend to bring such clarity and compassion for my clients to my studies at New England Law and eventual practice as an attorney.

This need for knowledge brought me to a sawdust-strewn shop room at a local community college on Tuesday and Wednesday nights this fall for a Basic Residential Carpentry Class. I'd return home in the first weeks with a mountain range of blisters along my index finger, the product of my carelessness in holding a hammer (and blatant disregard for basic rules of physics) multiplied by the excitement of hitting hard against wood planks to create our little house. Every week I felt uncoordinated, ungainly, and stronger than I'd been just days earlier. I was gaining knowledge and experience in a trade that was entirely foreign when I'd begun the class. We installed subfloor on our floor framing, framed exterior walls, put up and spackled drywall, installed a door and window, adorned both with trim, and finished it all off with baseboards and crown molding. I was seeking (and found) a challenge, practical carpentry skills, and the euphoria of transforming from a state of ignorance to one of engagement.

Smashing a staple gun in rapid succession along a Tyvek polyethylene house-wrap, driving nails into wooden studs that were synonymous with our house's structure, and steadying the might of a power saw to cut planks precisely: these all felt like expressions of power. Power I hadn't initially possessed but built up as I felt the silent sting of being graceless and slow, watched my classmates and instructor, asked questions and modeled my technique after theirs. That uncomfortable place where earnest attempts at learning meet with the inability to produce something beautiful, in the language of the new knowledge area, is where I find power.

**Related: [How to Be Smart About Law School Financial Aid: 12 Tips You Need to Know](#)**

My family came to the United States (from the Soviet Union) when I was five. Like most Russian families, mine had extremely high expectations and a strong sense that praise and encouragement were good for spoiling children, nothing more. Thus, it's not outside accolades or acknowledgement from family that marked my successes—the yardstick was internal, with hours of struggle as unit of measurement. Inevitably, facing the limits of my brain's knowledge on a given day enabled me to look back months later and acknowledge that I had developed expertise where at first I was ignorant (and often, felt hopeless). That I had the ability to end up so far from when I had begun, simply by setting my mind and time toward a problem, was a revelation.

I knew, by sixth grade, that those with power could accomplish tremendous things. I aspired to gain power through knowledge and feel tremendously fortunate that as part of my trajectory toward adulthood I've created an internal turbine to churn through the awkwardness of inexperience, enjoy the productive discomfort of fighting to be knowledgeable, and ultimately unleash all of the resultant power to better the circumstances of my clients (and myself). I'm pursuing a JD degree in order to have the right training to be a trusted attorney, with an expertise in tax. Having grown up in Boston, and returning to Boston permanently in the summer of 2019 after nearly 10 years away, New England Law offers a unique opportunity for me to pursue a JD degree as part of an evening program, and I would be thrilled to attend.

## **Breaking down new barriers**

**Rebecca Boll****Hometown:** Buffalo, New York**Undergrad school:** Boston University**Grad school:** University of Oklahoma, MA

The reader of my law school application will see that I am in the middle of my life. I already have a career that I am proud of. Recently, I accepted the role of Chief Technology Officer/VP of Strategy for a new company. This change happened after spending thirteen years at the General Electric Corporation, holding titles such as CTO, Managing Director, General Manager, and Commercial Leader. There are still not many women in my line of work, and that has been true for my entire journey through corporate America and, before that, my time in the military.

One of the things that encourages me to press forward in the industrial working world is that doing so enables me to mentor, sponsor, and support diversity of all kinds: for women and all others. I hire with diversity in mind, ensure that the introverted and outsiders have a voice, create informal support groups, provide insights to others regarding moving up the “ladder,” fight to see the non-traditional candidates get the promotion, and accept collateral duties leading diversity agendas within my companies.

At this point in my life, I am old enough to know that this sponsorship of diversity and deep desire to help the less advantaged are more important to me than the quarterly profits. This insight culminates from almost thirty years of personal experience, enhanced by some of the painful issues being played out in current day society. In my personal experience, I was the first woman commander of my ROTC detachment. Not everyone approved of that, including some of the notable teaching staff at Boston University. My first squadron commander on active duty told me he did not believe women should be in the military. Oddly, he and I got along just fine. It was the people that didn’t say it out loud but acted with malice that made life tricky at times. For example, they would withhold information regarding key training missions, making it difficult to accomplish them and proving their “point” that women were not fit for the combat roles. The sexual harassment in my military years was ever-present and aggressive. I have not personally experienced harassment in corporate America in that same manner, but I regularly deal with the quieter discriminations of being a woman. It is not amusing when someone at a corporate function assumes I am the event coordinator or the head of HR, rather than a key business and technology leader.

I often see an underlying set of activities that make it hard for women or other non-mainstream persons to get the same chances as the majority. For example, one year a co-manager told me that no women who went on maternity leave could get a top performance rating. I fought that battle with him (in partnership with HR), and we changed his mind. Another example was a long-used personnel rating system we consulted to choose who were top and bottom employees in the annual cycle. It clearly favored people who spoke out a lot in meetings and other venues. There are some cultural norms and personality types that do not align with the idea of talking all the time just to be heard and seen, and that decades old system accidentally pushed them aside. A final example is the odd assumption by many people that military veterans have a limited set of skills, aligned to security or plant management.

My interest in helping women, families, and the disadvantaged has been building over some years in relation to my own interactions with family courts as well. I am a woman who is successful in business and life, yet I know how intimidating dealing with a hostile lawyer and unknown legal process can be. I have seen what the result can be when a lawyer is not working as hard as they can or perhaps is just not as good as the other lawyer. I cannot imagine being in the shoes of someone who does not have resources or is disenfranchised—an immigrant, a child, or someone who has been abused—and has to deal with the courts. I was frightened and confused inside the court room. I think they must be as well.

A big part of my interest in law school is my concern for people who don’t have advantages and need help navigating the legal systems. I can easily have another career that spans decades, carry the wisdom of my personal experiences into it, and practice law with the primary goal of helping people. It would make sense for me to consider intellectual property law, given my current and previous roles in business, but what I really want to learn about and apply is family, youth, and social justice law.

The prompts for the personal statement suggest talking about overcoming obstacles. One final thing I want to share is that I grew up on a farm in western New York. We had cows, chickens, horses, and goats. We spent the last week of every August at the county fair. I competed for and won an ROTC scholarship that paid for my undergraduate degree at Boston University. In reviewing that transcript, which is twenty-six years old at this point, I can reflect on a girl who struggled there in the very first semester. This was not because the academics were too hard but because I was so taken in by the city and the diversity of people and the cosmopolitan feel of it. I did not know how to handle being on my own and succeeding back in 1989. It makes me cringe a little seeing those first semester grades, but I can be proud of ending my undergraduate studies on the Dean's list senior year. My course of study in applied mathematics was not an easy one, but it has served me well in my various technology leadership roles.

My master's degree, which I achieved at the University of Oklahoma while on active duty, tells a much nicer academic tale with a 4.0 average as an outcome. I would be honored if you consider me for acceptance to New England Law | Boston and look forward to the journey of studying and applying law.

**After you've read these law school personal statement examples, be sure to check out our [personal statement tips for law school applicants](#).**



© 2024 New England Law | Boston

The NEW ENGLAND LAW BOSTON trademark and Shield Design are Registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

154 Stuart Street, Boston, MA 02116  
617-451-0010