

WASEA  
STUDENT EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

JULIETTE BALL

*Office Specialist in the Office of the General Counsel*

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY (4-Year Institution)

Ball00@byu.edu

SUPERVISORS

Andrea Hill

Andrea\_Hill@byu.edu

Sarah L. Brinton J.D.

Sarah\_Brinton@byu.edu

Juliette works as an office assistant in the Office of the General Counsel, where she serves fourteen attorneys, two full-time staff, and a few peer student employees. We are unanimous: Juliette is the best student worker we've ever encountered and may be the best student worker on any university campus ever. Juliette is brilliant, kind, thoughtful, good at asking questions, excellent at independent work, visionary in the way she anticipates what's coming and takes action to prepare herself and others, and a gentle leader among her student peers. Juliette has contributed to the office in literally countless ways, but two stand out: (1) her attorney-quality work on drafting court petitions that, once granted, will free up millions of dollars of donated scholarship money to be distributed to students in nondiscriminatory ways (e.g., without sex or race restrictions), and (2) her above-and-beyond efforts to be a leader among her fellow student employees, particularly in the face of transitions among full-time staff. These contributions will be described more in the NACE Competencies section below.

### **NACE Competencies.**

1. **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Juliette is a creative and effective problem solver at every turn. Three examples: (1) When drafting the court petitions described earlier, Juliette created a digital folder filing system, a spreadsheet with relevant divisions, and a color-coding system, inputting information from hundreds of sources, including some information she generated by calling relevant parts of campus. Then she identified significant issues needing attorney review and color coded the information to make it easier for the reviewing attorney to digest. (2) A busy attorney recently solicited Juliette for help answering a legal question requiring statutory and regulatory research and gave Juliette minimal guidance on how to find the answer. In less than an hour, Juliette had found the relevant legal codes, identified the answer, and emailed the necessary citations to the attorney. The attorney was able to verify Juliette's work and respond to the client the same day! That turnaround is exceptional, even for practicing attorneys. (3) At a recent OGC lunch, Juliette was asked to set out everyone's orders on the table. Instead of merely putting the food on the table, Juliette carefully stacked each person's sandwich, chips, and cookie in an attractive pyramid at their respective seats, which were identified by the printed and precisely cut labels she created for each OGC staff member. The General Counsel noted that Juliette's creative and intentional table setting made the office lunch much more welcoming.

2. **Oral/Written Communications:** Juliette is an excellent, professional-level writer. Despite being a junior microbiology major, she writes as well as many trained attorneys. For that reason, an attorney in our office sought Juliette out to assist her in drafting two massive court petitions. Juliette learned quickly how to adopt a court-appropriate writing tone, and she did first drafts of both petitions that could have been filed as she wrote them. They needed no meaningful copy editing and very little legal editing. These petitions, once granted by the court, will allow BYU to once again lawfully award more than sixty student scholarships that have been held up because of gift terms that have become unlawful over the years. Juliette's writing and editing work has been instrumental on completing these petitions, which are being prepared for filing with the court. The busy attorney who recruited Juliette to assist with this attorney-level task has said, "Juliette is an excellent attorney, and she hasn't even finished her undergrad! Her writing is clear, concise, easy to read, and always accurate. If it weren't illegal, I would hire her as a full-time attorney today."

3. **Teamwork/Collaboration:** There are likely a million stories about Juliette and her teamwork, but here's just one. One new student employee needed to learn how to care for the office vehicle. Juliette recognized that her new student colleague needed to learn this information and that the interim staff supervisor might not know how to manage the vehicle. Juliette approached the interim staff supervisor and said, "I know that Ben needs to learn how to manage the car. I am happy to teach him, but Ben's shifts and my shifts never overlap, so I'll work my shift, go to class, and then come back after class when Ben is working. That way, I can take him to the vehicle office, get him set up in their system, and show him what he needs to do." The interim staff supervisor was floored and relieved. Juliette had identified a need in the office, a need in her colleague, and a solution, all without being asked to do so. There is no teammate better than Juliette.

4. **Digital Technology:** Juliette has taken the lead among the student employees in the Office of the General Counsel to learn our software and digital systems. Without guidance, she trained her fellow student employees on our document management and production systems. Her fellow students have found her guidance critical in our high-stakes, legal environment. Additionally, she seeks feedback from the attorneys and office staff on how she's using the systems and how the student employees can be most effective in their work. For example, Juliette saw a need for a hard copy document signed by a VP to be scanned, saved, and emailed to an attorney. Juliette observed that the students needed more direction in adopting a standardized file naming system. So she identified the needs for convenient file names (e.g., date with year first, document title, parenthetical indicating it was a signed document and who signed it), named the file accordingly, emailed it to the attorney who needed the file, and, in addition to offering to send the hard copy via interoffice mail to the intended recipient, asked for feedback from the attorney on whether the file name was useful or could be improved. The attorney had no suggestions (and appreciated the new idea of indicating who'd signed the document). She is now sharing this file naming system with the other student employees—again, all on her own initiative.

5. **Leadership:** Juliette is the best kind of leader: she is humble, service-oriented, and interested in working to benefit the whole. When a new student employee was hired, but was given insufficient training by a full-time, non-student supervisor, Juliette saw an opportunity to help. Juliette went out of her way to train her student colleague in office practices and norms. That student employee ended up being a diligent and useful worker. When she eventually left employment, she shared in her exit interview that almost all her training had been provided—and provided well—by Juliette. Juliette's leadership deeply benefited the work of the OGC, and she has never asked for praise or recognition for taking on what is as-of-yet an unofficial role of student team leader.

6. **Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Juliette is always calm, cheerful, and engaged in her professional interactions. She presents herself with poise and care. She can be trusted with the office vehicle, important documents, critical assignments, and new issues. During finals and the Christmas break, she made herself available for extra hours, both to make sure the office staffing needs were met and to meet the needs of the attorney for whom she was preparing the court petitions. She can be counted on to show up, do the work, and go the extra mile every time.

7. **Career Management:** Juliette took an office assistant job in the OGC that pays less and has less prestige than her previous on-campus job to prepare her for law school and give her exposure to legal work, which she'd not yet had in her life. She was willing to do entry-level office work, despite her considerable skills as a teacher and leader, because of how the experience could shape her understanding of a life working in the law. Also, during her first week on the job, Juliette went out of her way to connect with and meet the attorneys in the office (which most office assistants do not do). She specifically and very respectfully asked at least one attorney in the OGC if that attorney would be willing to provide feedback for Juliette's work during her time in the OGC with the idea that, in a year or so, that attorney might consider writing a letter of recommendation for Juliette's eventual application to law school. This attorney said, "I was impressed and in awe when Juliette expressed her interest in developing a relationship with me such that I might have the opportunity to write her a substantive letter of recommendation for law school, if in the end I wanted to. I have been reading leadership and business success books to be clearer and more upfront about what I want in my career, and a student does exactly what the experts recommend—and in an impeccable and genuine way! I want to be more like Juliette!"

8. **Global/Intercultural Fluency:** Juliette's work requires her to be the face of the Office of the General Counsel. She interacts with staff, students, faculty, and campus visitors with kindness and engagement. She treats everyone with respect, regardless of their status on campus or their overt friendliness. We would trust her in any situation to represent the OGC's high standard for deeply respectful interactions.

**Concluding Statement.** One OGC attorney summed it up best, "Frankly, it is hard to imagine any university or organization being better served by a student employee than BYU is by Juliette. Her work ethic, kindness, and intelligent problem-solving are unmatched. The world is lucky to have her."