

# GOING FURTHER WITH A MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LAW

By Christianna McCausland



CLARKE

Veronica McBeth '18 spent 15 years in the public sector, eventually becoming transit bureau chief for the Baltimore City Department of Transportation. She was not actively looking to leave her position, though she had contemplated a shift away from government work. When she assisted with a two-year National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study for the Baltimore and Potomac Tunnel Project, her interest was piqued.

"I wanted to find a way to do more of that work, making sure that people who are under-represented have a voice when there are major events of environmental impact in their neighborhoods," she states.

A colleague mentioned a new program offered by Maryland Carey Law, a two-year Master of Science in Law (MSL) degree with an environmental law specialization. The program was the perfect fit to help the 38-year-old mother of two transition from the public to the private sector.

Mark Clarke '18

"I had an executive level job with many demands, I'm the mom to two little kids, and I have many other commitments," McBeth explains. "I liked that this program was very dense and substantive, and really taught the material you need and would want to apply when you graduated."

McBeth graduated from the MSL program in 2018 but had a new position even before she graduated. She's now an associate planner with Kittelson & Associates, Inc., a transportation engineering and planning firm. Her new position enables her to apply the skills she gained locally in a national consultancy role.

McBeth's story exemplifies why the School commenced research into the creation of an MSL program approximately five years ago. José Bahamonde-González, associate dean for professional education, states that in his more than 25 years of recruiting for law schools, he frequently met individuals who were not interested in a full law degree, but who thought a few courses would be beneficial. The MSL program welcomed its inaugural class in 2015 to meet that need.

"We wanted to design a master's level education in law for working professionals who found themselves wanting legal knowledge to enrich their contributions in their professional field," says Bahamonde-González.

The MSL is a fully accredited degree with five tracks: environmental, healthcare, patent, cybersecurity, and homeland security and crisis management law. The specializations were carefully selected for professionals in fields where legal knowledge would bring the most value, like healthcare administrators who deal with regulatory compliance and malpractice, or a commercial development executive who needs to understand environmental legalities, for example.

In addition to the offered programs, the MSL program is also structured to allow working professionals to integrate their studies into their personal and professional lives, says Crystal Edwards, assistant dean for academic affairs at Maryland Carey Law.

"The program is part-time, and students complete the degree requirements in just four semesters," Edwards explained. "Evening classes allow students to attend class after work, and our online specialties give students more flexibility to complete the required coursework."

The demand is real. This year alone the program has more than 100 students enrolled across all five specialties.

"The amount of contributions [graduates] can provide in the process of a litigation, in transactional work, in consulting, or just giving subject matter expertise, is tremendous," states Bahamonde-González. "And how much money and litigation can be saved if we can negotiate a case before it goes to the courts? A required course for everyone in the MSL is negotiation and alternative case resolution."

Cozanne Brent '17 is a senior clinical nurse in the pediatric cardiac surgery unit at University of Maryland Medical Center. Even though she works in healthcare, she found the MSL while looking online for resources to help her guide family members with health issues through the complexities of the health system.

Brent states that although she started the program for personal reasons, the program has been invaluable to her career, especially as her work involves overseeing research and clinical trials affiliated with the FDA.

"[The degree] has definitely helped me to step back and think about the legal and ethical decisions made for our patients," Brent states. "It helps me to know my patients' rights and my rights. I also was able to learn about lawsuits and how to stay on top of malpractice and things that can lead to malpractice, and the importance of making sure documentation is up to date and consents are informed and signed."

Since her graduation, Brent has taken on a new managerial role. She would eventually like to be a chief nursing officer for a hospital where she can translate government regulations into effective hospital policies. "I see a huge demand for nurses or others like me with a healthcare background to be included in decision making and policymaking," she states. "A lot [of regulation] comes out that doesn't work with nursing and patient care. I want to bridge that gap."

Bahamonde-González underscores that graduates are not lawyers and will not give legal advice, but as professionals with subject matter expertise, like Brent, knowledge of the law gives them an edge in the performance of their jobs.

Graduate Kristie Brooks '17 had considered law school, but at 34 years old was not sure she could

manage the time and expense. The MSL program in health law allowed her to get the foundation she needed in a format that met her professional goals. Previously Brooks worked at Johns Hopkins University with the technology transfer department, helping faculty commercialize devices and therapeutics.

"I wanted a better understanding of what the faculty would be facing so I could better steer them," says Brooks.

Brooks is now a consumer safety officer at the FDA, where her MSL knowledge helps her understand the many regulations and compliance requirements that guide her daily.

Robert McMullen '18 also works in compliance. As facilities manager for the Institute for Systems Research at the University of Maryland, College Park, he manages 14 different labs involved in technology activities. One of the younger MSL graduates, McMullen worked in the University's department of environmental safety after his graduation from the school in 2015 with a degree in chemical engineering.

McMullen knew he didn't want to work actively as an engineer, but he could see a future where

he would apply his engineering knowledge in another position, perhaps at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. When he heard Bahamonde-González give a presentation on the MSL, he knew it would give his resume the diversity he needed. McMullen even mentioned the program to his father, Thomas McMullen, assistant to the provost at the University of Maryland, College Park. His father completed the MSL in Homeland Security and Crisis Management Law in 2018.

McMullen describes the program as rich with relevant, applicable course work. As his capstone project he drafted a patent for an invention created by the lab where he worked. The success of that project netted McMullen an invitation to work for the university's office of technology commercialization. It's a tempting offer but one that might wait. McMullen decided to apply to law school with a focus on intellectual property.

"The law was something I never considered," says McMullen. "I always thought law was for political science managers and not people like me who play with equations."

"Going through these classes and seeing how most of my patent class faculty had science backgrounds showed me that you don't need

## The Value of Cybersecurity Legal Education

By Markus Rauschecker



Markus Rauschecker '06 is the Cybersecurity Program Manager at the University of Maryland Center for Health and Homeland Security (CHHS). He has also developed and teaches two courses: "Law and Policy of Cybersecurity" and "Law and Policy of Cyber Crime." These courses are offered to JD, LLM, and MSL students at Maryland Carey Law.

Cybersecurity is not just about technology. Indeed, cybersecurity has become an interdisciplinary problem that requires involvement from stakeholders in all types of positions. CEOs, government agency directors, lawmakers, policy makers, privacy officers, human resources specialists, and lawyers all have a role to play in improving cybersecurity.

While cybersecurity certainly requires technical expertise, there are also many critical legal and policy issues at stake. For example, government must craft effective and acceptable cybersecurity laws and regulations. As these new cybersecurity laws and regulations pass, organizations must know how to comply. Plus, everyone should develop plans and policies that outline how they prepare for, respond to, and recover from a cyber incident. At every stage, professionals who understand the relevant legal and policy issues are needed.

a political science or writing background to understand the law and its applications. There's a place for someone who understands engineering to be a good lawyer."

McMullen is at the start of his career; Mark Clarke '18 is at the start of a new chapter in his. Clarke has spent 23 years in the U.S. military, including deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is currently a senior analyst at the Joint Chiefs of Staff Office at the Pentagon. Now 52, Clarke is making plans for his retirement next year. Seeing the booming growth in cyber careers, he obtained a master's degree in cybersecurity policy. The MSL in cybersecurity law completed the education he needed for a competitive edge.

"It was the perfect union because a lot of things are done through policy and law—that's where the decisions are made and where long-term strategic planning is done," Clarke says. "I wanted to complement my military experience handling secure information and having cultural knowledge from placements overseas with cybersecurity credentials."

Clarke has already seen benefits from the program in his oral and written presentation skills. "I can look at documents and really question

what they're saying and, in responding, I can be very clear in my approach. These are real benefits that show immediate results," he says.

As he works with recruiters, Clarke's resume is drawing attention. "I've received so much positive feedback and I'm very excited about the future," he states.

Clarke, like all students, can access professional development lectures and career counseling through the MSL. According to Bahamonde-González, the entirety of the program is focused on targeting professionals committed to improving their career contributions and prospects through a better understanding of the law.

"Everything in our lives now involves the law," says Bahamonde-González. "The law school now has the opportunity to attract these students and give them a sound opportunity to study that law." ■

Both government and the private sector are therefore searching for qualified individuals who can navigate legal and policy issues in cybersecurity. The demand for these professionals is growing rapidly. Graduates with a degree in the area of cybersecurity law and policy have the advantage of being able to demonstrate to employers that they have the knowledge required to fulfill the need.

Maryland is a premier place to pursue a career in cybersecurity, with many opportunities at all levels of government and the private sector. The state is often referred to as "the epicenter for cybersecurity" since it is the home of government agencies such as the National Security Agency (NSA), U.S. Cyber Command, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence. Maryland's proximity to the nation's capital, where national cyber laws and policies are made, is

also a benefit. Finally, Maryland has attracted hundreds of private cybersecurity firms that are supporting government agencies or developing new, cutting-edge technologies.

It's an exciting time to be involved in cybersecurity. The need for professionals with legal and policy expertise already exists, but the field is also still developing. Many of the legal and policy issues in cybersecurity are far from being settled. A person who decides to become involved in cybersecurity law and policy has a real opportunity to be part of lively debates involving fundamental rights, practical considerations, and exciting technological developments. Anyone currently involved in cybersecurity law and policy has the chance to shape the future of this field. ■