

NEVADA TRAILBLAZERS

Meet Tianna Jefferson:

Young Attorney Wants to be Role Model for Young Women

BY MARY BACON, ESQ.

Tianna Jefferson was born in Riverside, California, when her mother was in her third year of law school at Western State College of Law. After her mother finished law school, the pair moved back to Las Vegas, where her grandfather was stationed at Nellis Air Force Base.

Jefferson was the older of two children and attended Scherkenbach Elementary School. As a girl, she was shy and introverted, with a “Type A” personality. At just 5 years old, she needed to be on time everywhere she went, follow the rules to a T, have outstanding behavior and earn all As. A natural athlete, she also enjoyed playing sports. Elementary school field days always meant a handful of first-place ribbons and her standard 1,000-watt smile. In fact, on one field day, the school did not let her participate in the last several events because she already had accumulated so many first-place ribbons throughout the day, and the school wanted to give the other children a chance.

Jefferson’s mother is a criminal defense lawyer. As a young child, Jefferson spent her elementary and middle school summers observing at the courthouse. She sat in the

back row of the courtroom and fell in love with watching lawyers craft their arguments and think on their feet.

Jefferson attended Arbor View High School for a year before transferring to Desert Oasis High School. She was the only sophomore to play on the varsity volleyball team. She graduated at the top of her class in 2013 and started a family tradition: every time she graduated; her family would take an international vacation. For their first trip, they went to the Bahamas for a week.

After vacation, Jefferson packed her bags for Southern California, deciding to attend Whittier College. Despite her fascination with the courtroom, law school was not on her radar. Having caught the travel bug, she wanted to select a major that would allow her to be anywhere in the world. She settled on business administration. While at Whittier, she immersed herself in the college experience. She was a resident assistant for the dorms and studied abroad her sophomore year, traveling to Greece and Rome while studying English and ancient Greek philosophy.

“Traveling abroad ignites my soul,” Jefferson said. “I wanted to try all the food and visit all the monuments. I went to Sunday mass at St. Peter’s Basilica and went to the Grecian stadium where they had the first Olympic games.”

Jefferson was so committed to taking every opportunity to travel, she also studied abroad her last year



of college, going to Germany and France to study business.

Over two summer breaks, Jefferson came home and interned with the Clark County District Attorney's Office. After significant deliberation, she decided to take the LSAT during her last year at Whitter. Once she received her acceptance letters, where to attend was an easy decision. She accepted a seat at Western State University College of Law—her mother's alma matter. During both her 1L and 2L summers, she came home to Las Vegas and interned at the DA's office. Being at the DA's office with family nearby crystalized that Las Vegas was her long-term home, and she transferred to the William S. Boyd School of Law to finish her degree. Already having completed two years of law school, she was able to hit the ground running at Boyd, and she was able to argue various criminal cases in court her third year.

"I loved being in court. It was almost addicting," she said.

During Jefferson's last year of law school, she was supposed to study abroad in China with a fellow group of Boyd students. Just before they were supposed to leave, COVID-19 brought those plans to a screeching halt. Always one to turn lemons into lemonade, Jefferson said, "At least COVID meant an all-essay bar exam. That was a huge blessing." She graduated after fall semester and attended a "Zoom graduation." Consistent with tradition, after she graduated, her family went to Bora Bora to celebrate.

Boyd held an in-person graduation in May the following year and invited Jefferson to walk. She felt grateful for an experience almost no one else gets to have: she was able to walk at her law school graduation, confident in the knowledge that she had already passed the bar.

After law school, Jefferson took the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with and learn criminal law from her mother.

"We worked together during the court's Covid protocols, so we

both had masks on," she said. "With masks on, no one could tell us apart. It was quite funny to be speaking with someone—only to find out they thought they were talking to your mom."

Jefferson's mom inspired her to go into the legal field, and she aspires to be an amazing attorney just like her mother. Without her mother's guidance, Jefferson would not be where she is today.

After two years, Jefferson was hired by the Clark County District Attorney's Office in September 2022, assigned to the general litigation unit.

"I had interned with the district attorney's office for so many years," she said. "It was amazing to start working and already know some of my colleagues."

After years of being in a courtroom and observing trials, Jefferson prosecuted her first jury trial, a sex assault of and lewdness with a minor case. The defendant was found guilty.

Jefferson's favorite way to give back to the community is coaching 10-13-year-old girls' volleyball for Underrated Volleyball Club. And while some of the girls have never had exposure to professional young women, Jefferson is making sure she is changing that.

"I had such an incredible female role model growing up. I hope one day I can be a similar role model for young women," she said.

In her free time, Jefferson enjoys relaxing with her dogs, Shadow and Scruffy, running, and riding her Peloton. She laughed while revealing her guilty pleasure and Sunday night tradition: eating Chipotle and watching reality television with her roommate. She loves going to music festivals and has seen the Jonas Brothers in concert a dozen times. She wants to visit every Disney Park—Disney Tokyo is next.



Tianna Jefferson celebrates graduating from the William S. Boyd School of Law with her grandparents.



Tiana Jefferson celebrates graduating from law school with her mom and sister on a trip to Bora Bora.



A young Tiana Jefferson poses for her preschool photo.



Tiana Jefferson enjoys a Las Vegas Raiders game with her sister.