

ENTREPRENEURIAL **LAW PROJECT**

Annual Report

June 2024 - June 2025



A collaboration between the Office of Entrepreneurship & Innovation
at the Sam M. Walton College of Business and the School of Law

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THE PROJECT

ENTREPRENEURIAL LAW PROJECT

One of the primary barriers for early-stage entrepreneurs is the cost to obtain legal counsel. The Entrepreneurial Law Project (ELP), a collaboration between the University of Arkansas School of Law and the Office of Entrepreneurship & Innovation, provides free access to legal education and programming for Arkansas-based entrepreneurs.

OUR SERVICES



Entrepreneurial Law Checkups

This service offers brief, **30-minute consultations**, with pro bono business law attorneys. Entrepreneurs can ask specific questions, have documents reviewed, and receive guidance on completing legal forms.



Legal Project Support

When capacity allows, we match Arkansas entrepreneurs with pro bono attorneys for more complex projects that go beyond what can be addressed in a single consultation. Entrepreneurs must first attend an Entrepreneurial Law Checkup to be considered for legal project support.



Legal Forms & Video Resources

We also provide self-service legal forms and have developed educational video resources on entrepreneurial law topics such as intellectual property, funding, and business entity selection.

C.P.R.
Checkups,
Projects,
Resources

Letter from the Managing Director

As the Entrepreneurial Law Project enters its second full year of operation, I'm proud to reflect on how far we've come—and energized by the work still ahead.

What began as a pilot effort to fill a critical gap in Arkansas' entrepreneurial ecosystem has quickly grown into a statewide initiative serving founders, students, and attorneys alike. In 2025, we expanded our legal checkups, deepened our attorney partnerships, and launched new resources to make legal support more accessible for early-stage entrepreneurs. Every data point in this report reflects not just numbers, but real people building real businesses—often with limited resources and boundless determination.

This project is about more than legal guidance. It's about unlocking opportunity and removing friction for those with the courage to start something new. And it's about training the next generation of attorneys to do that work with empathy, precision, and purpose.

Thank you to the students, attorneys, partners, and supporters who continue to make this work possible.

With gratitude,

Rachel Sullivant, JD, MBA

Managing Director, Entrepreneurial Law Project
Director of Entrepreneurial Resources,
Office of Entrepreneurship & Innovation
University of Arkansas



OUR STAFF



Will Foster is a professor of law at the University of Arkansas and of counsel with Conner & Winters, LLP, where he practices tax and business law.

Will Foster Director of Legal Programs

The ELP is made possible by the enormous contributions from our incredibly supportive legal community. Several of our volunteers have participated in multiple programs and all have been generous sharing their deep expertise.

It's heartening to reach out to a busy lawyer who has plenty of paying clients and know that they'll take the call and do what they can to support a stranger who is navigating the intimidating process of starting a business. We hope ELP also provides value to those generous legal professionals. We provide opportunities for transactional and business attorneys to provide pro bono services in their practice area. And junior attorneys gain valuable one-on-one client exposure.

Our law students have been champs, too. By doing background work, they help us prepare to help ELP clients on a wide range of matters.



Professor Cummings (J.D./PhD) is a faculty member in the Walton College of Business where he teaches entrepreneurship. He is admitted to practice law in Arkansas and Minnesota.

Michael Cummings Director of Experiential Learning

It's been deeply rewarding to help law students catch the vision for both pro bono work and transactional practice. Having experienced summer clerkships and externships with little to no client contact during my own legal education, I'm impressed by the enthusiasm and confidence our UARK law students are showing as they engage directly with entrepreneurs facing real legal challenges.

I'm also encouraged by the high level of collaboration from Arkansas' entrepreneurial support organizations; they've been generous with referrals, allowing us to add valuable legal guidance to the comprehensive support ecosystem that startups across our state depend on. This collaborative approach strengthens legal education and (we hope) leads to greater entrepreneurial success.

OUR IMPACT

OUR MISSION

ELP's mission is to improve access and provide legal support for entrepreneurs while educating and empowering the next generation of Arkansas attorneys.

ENTREPRENEURIAL
LAW PROJECT

SINCE JUNE 2024

28

LAW STUDENT
VOLUNTEERS

389

ENTREPRENEURS
SERVED THROUGH
ASSESSMENT, CONSULTS, AND
EDUCATION EVENTS

44

ATTORNEY
VOLUNTEERS

\$233,922.50

**DOLLARS WORTH OF TIME DONATED TO
ARKANSAS ENTREPRENEURS**



668

HOURS

OF OVERALL ATTORNEY &
STUDENT HOURS CONTRIBUTED

93

**LEGAL CHECKUPS
CONDUCTED**

8

**PROJECTS
COMPLETED**

ENTREPRENEURIAL
LAW PROJECT



VOLUNTEERS

“It can be as basic or as in depth as you need.”

-Meredith Lowry
Partner at Wright, Lindsey & Jennings LLP

“My favorite thing about participating in the ELP program is that we get to meet interesting new people who are entrepreneurial minded and need a little boost along their startup journey. Our state has so much to offer and we need more entrepreneurs to foster the development of new businesses. I love that through ELP local attorneys with relevant subject matter expertise can contribute to the business success toolkit for Arkansas entrepreneurs. For me personally, it's so rewarding to feel like I've helped someone on their journey.”

-Elise Alexander, the former General Counsel of AcreTrader

To our valued law firm partners,

Thank you for the expertise, generosity, and heart you've brought to the Entrepreneurial Law Project this year. Your willingness to show up—not just with legal guidance, but with patience, empathy, and a true commitment to community—has made a lasting impact on the entrepreneurs we serve.

Whether it was through legal checkups, pro bono projects, or helping us train the next generation of business attorneys, your involvement has been essential to our growth and success. You've helped Arkansas founders navigate critical early decisions and contributed to building a more inclusive, accessible legal ecosystem across the state.

We're deeply grateful for your partnership and look forward to continuing this important work together.

With appreciation,
The ELP Team

POWERED BY



ENTREPRENEUR TESTIMONIALS



“ELP is a **critical resource** for the Arkansas entrepreneur community because it illuminates blind spots we all may have in working towards our goals and big dreams.”

“Their willingness to go above and beyond, while the group’s attention to detail for all aspects that govern state law are **priceless in their value** to my company and other founders in the future.”

“The legal liability waivers that have been written up and provided from the ELP ... have set in place the structure for my company to **officially take the first steps to launch** while being protected and setting the legal foundation.”

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

“This program shows law students a side of transactional law accessible at their level. It shows law students how they can be advocates and exposes them to the needs within their community.”

-University of Arkansas School of Law, 2L



“The professional networking and the mentorship relationships that I have gained are invaluable.”

-University of Arkansas School of Law, 2L

“In the last year, we've hosted two externs and about a dozen other law students who have not only contributed meaningfully to our mission but have also developed practical skills and confidence that will serve them throughout their careers. Watching these future attorneys discover their capacity to make a tangible difference in Arkansas' entrepreneurial ecosystem has been one of the most fulfilling aspects of this work.”

-Michael Cummings, Director of Experiential Learning

“ELP has been a great opportunity to gain experience in the transactional work of an attorney. I have really enjoyed engaging in pro bono work to help the small businesses and entrepreneurs in our statewide community.”

-Wilson Strange,
Summer 2025 Extern

THE FUTURE OF THE ENTREPRENEURIAL LAW PROJECT

1. Expanded Access through Legal Aid Designation

As of July 2025, the Entrepreneurial Law Project (ELP) is officially recognized as a legal aid organization under Arkansas Supreme Court Administrative Order No. 15.2. This designation expands our ability to serve Arkansas entrepreneurs by allowing out-of-state attorneys, including those in in-house counsel roles, to volunteer with ELP and provide transactional legal support.

2. Self-Service Legal Tools for Founders

We are launching a new digital library of Arkansas-specific legal forms—accompanied by video walkthroughs and guidance—that will empower founders to take action, even before meeting with an attorneys.

3. Statewide Roadshows & Rural Outreach

In the coming year, we plan to scale our Legal Checkup Roadshows, bringing free legal services to underserved regions of Arkansas.

4. Deeper Student Engagement

We are deepening our commitment to experiential learning by expanding pro bono and externship opportunities for law students—and launching the Entrepreneurial Law Fellowship in 2025. Fellows will support ELP operations, coordinate legal programming, and serve as ambassadors for entrepreneurial law. Through increased participation in legal checkups, roadshows, and project-based work, students will gain meaningful transactional experience while making a tangible impact on Arkansas's startup ecosystem.



5. Strengthening the Legal Ecosystem

We are building a statewide referral network and hope to expand CLE opportunities focused on startup law. Our goal is to increase the number of Arkansas attorneys equipped and inspired to work with entrepreneurs.

6. Sustainable Growth through Strategic Partnerships

As our EDA funding sunsets in 2026, we are pursuing long-term support through a diversified mix of university funding, private philanthropy, law firm partnerships, and programmatic grants.

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