

ENTREPRENEURIAL **LAW PROJECT**

2026 IMPACT REPORT



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS®



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



One of the primary technical assistance 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

Education & Outreach

ELP partners with organizations across Arkansas to deliver workshops, guest lectures, and educational programming that help entrepreneurs better understand legal issues before they become legal problems. Programming includes the UA Student Business Incubator, UA Side Hustle Hub, Mena Chamber of Commerce, the UA Engineering Technology Commercialization Speaker Series, Ignite Professional Studies, among others.

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.

Letters from our staff



Managing Director Rachel Sullivant, JD, MBA

Managing Director, Entrepreneurial Law Project

*Director of Entrepreneurial Resources,
Office of Entrepreneurship & Innovation
University of Arkansas*

Most entrepreneurs would rather talk about almost anything other than legal issues.

Their latest customer. The product they're building. The employee they hope to hire. The idea that woke them up at 2 a.m. and refused to let them go back to sleep. Operating agreements tend to rank a little lower on the list.

Unsurprisingly, legal questions have a way of showing up anyway. Sometimes quietly. Sometimes all at once. Often right in the middle of everything else.

Over the last year, we've had the privilege of meeting entrepreneurs in those moments. We've also had the opportunity to work alongside attorneys who volunteer their time and expertise simply because they believe founders deserve access to good guidance. And we've watched law students discover that transactional law isn't just documents and deal terms. It's people. It's problem solving. It's helping someone build something that matters to them.

The numbers in this report tell part of that story.

The other part is the community that continues to form around this work. Entrepreneurs willing to ask questions. Attorneys willing to share what they've learned. Students eager to jump in and help. Partners across Arkansas who believe that starting a business shouldn't require navigating every challenge alone.

Thank you for being part of it. We're excited to keep building.

With gratitude,
Rachel



Michael Cummings

Director of Experiential Learning

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.

It's been deeply rewarding to help law students catch the vision for both pro bono work and transactional practice. I'm impressed by the enthusiasm and confidence our UARK law students are showing as they engage directly with entrepreneurs facing real legal challenges. Opportunities for this kind of direct client contact were rare back when I was in law school, which makes facilitating them all the more rewarding.

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.



Will Foster

Director of Legal Programs

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.

The ELP runs on the goodwill of Arkansas's legal community. Our volunteer attorneys show up for strangers navigating the intimidating process of starting a business, and they do it without hesitation. Many have returned for multiple programs. All have been generous with their time and expertise.

We believe the work is also meaningful to them. For transactional and business attorneys, ELP offers a rare opportunity to provide pro bono services squarely in their practice area. For junior attorneys, it's one-on-one client experience that's hard to come by early in a career. And our law students have made the whole operation possible by handling the background research and maintaining meeting records

Our Impact

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

→ **STATS** Since 2024

591

Entrepreneurs Served

63

Attorney Volunteers

41

Law Student Volunteers

A woman with dark hair, wearing a bright red dress and a gold necklace, is gesturing with her right arm towards the left. She is standing in front of a light-colored wall. In the foreground, the back of a person's head is visible, looking towards the woman. The overall scene suggests a presentation or lecture.

1054

**Hours of overall attorney & student
time contributed**

47%

**Increase in legal checkups
conducted from 2025 to 2026**

**ENTREPRENEURIAL
LAW PROJECT**

Entrepreneur Testimonials

“I learned a **life-changing perspective** on how to think about legal issues: not as binary 'this is legal, this is illegal' but an understanding that each decision we make affects the risk involved and that like everything else in business we must weigh the costs and benefits along with our personal values. **This was more of a level-up than any one specific piece of advice!**”



“All the attorneys were super helpful, and their assistance made me feel confident in spending the \$600 to submit the form to the IRS. As a non-profit running on donations and volunteer hours, **having access to free legal guidance was a game-changer.**”

“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.”



Volunteer Attorneys

“The **ELP program plays a crucial role in the startup ecosystem of Northwest Arkansas, and increasingly the entire state.** Specifically, the ELP provides resources to entrepreneurs that otherwise might be overlooked. In addition to helping themselves and their families, some of these entrepreneurs are creating businesses which will be engines of job creation. Personally, I have found my time working with ELP clients and staff to be rewarding and enjoyable, and sparks my optimism about the future of our state.”

-Randy Pulliam, Partner at Carney Bates & Pulliam



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FRIDAY | ELDREDGE
& CLARK LLP



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PULLIAM
PLLC

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LAW
FIRM

RMP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

KUTAKROCK
ATTORNEYS AT LAW



QG&T
QUATTLEBAUM, GROOMS & TULL PLLC

Rashauna
NORMENT
LAW FIRM, PLLC

MITCHELL
WILLIAMS
LAW FIRM

HootOwl
ESTATE PLANNING

REGNIER LAW FIRM
THE STARTUP BOUTIQUE



SpencerFane

IPANEMA LAW

TRUST & TREE®

“

I love that through ELP, local attorneys with relevant subject matter expertise can contribute to the success of Arkansas entrepreneurs.”

-Elise Alexander, former General Counsel, AcreTrader



Student Engagement

“ In the last year, we've hosted two externs and almost twenty 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



“ 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

“ Getting to work with clients with a wide range of legal issues and hearing how experienced lawyers address those issues was invaluable.”

-University of Arkansas School of Law, 2L

“ Externing with ELP was one of the most rewarding parts of my law school experience. I enjoyed gaining client-facing experience and the opportunity to assist local entrepreneurs in all stages of their business.”

-Nick Martin, Spring 2026 Extern

The Future

This Work Only Happens Because People Say Yes.



YES TO HELPING A FOUNDER UNDERSTAND A CONTRACT.

YES TO MENTORING A LAW STUDENT.

YES TO OPENING A DOOR, MAKING A REFERRAL, OR SHARING EXPERTISE.

YES TO BUILDING A STRONGER ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM FOR ARKANSAS.

The Entrepreneurial Law Project exists because attorneys, students, entrepreneurs, and partners continue to show up for one another.

Want to get involved?

We would love to talk.

Volunteer • Partner • Refer • Support

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