Courtney Ekmark\textsuperscript{1} may add to her many achievements the distinction of being the first 2020 graduate of the Sandra Day O’Connor College of Law to be included on this website. A Phoenix native, she has had a unique path to the legal field. Besides being a law student, Courtney was also a student-athlete on the ASU women’s basketball team.\textsuperscript{2} Balancing life as a full-time law student with her commitments as a top basketball player tested her time- and stress-management skills, but she was up to the task.

**Pre-Law School Training and Basketball Career**

Courtney played high school basketball for Saint Mary’s, a private high school in Phoenix, earning Arizona Gatorade Player of the Year honors in her senior season. Following her successful high school career, Courtney played at the University of Connecticut for two seasons, earning two national championships. The decision to come back home came in 2017 amid injuries and a lack of playing time with UConn.\textsuperscript{3}

During her college basketball career, Courtney played in 129 games, and started in all 68 of the games she played for ASU.\textsuperscript{4} At the end of her 2019 season at ASU, she finished second on ASU’s list for most 3-pointers in a single season (66) and sixth on the career list (126).\textsuperscript{5} She was ASU’s leading scorer in five postseason games and successfully scored on 38 percent of her field goal attempts in those games.\textsuperscript{6} It isn’t hard to guess where her dog, Rebound, got his name.\textsuperscript{7}

**Law School**

With two parents who are lawyers, Courtney was confident from a young age she would pursue a career in law or at least go to law school: “It’s always been in my head because both of my parents are attorneys. . . . Growing up around them, I’m used to hearing legal terms in the house. They told me that


\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
having a law degree, even if you don’t want to practice, will help you for the rest of my life.” She still is not sure if she will practice law, but feels she has benefited from her decision. “[Going to law school] helps you think critically about things and I know after my first year of law school that I am completely different in the way I think.” But that doesn’t mean it has been easy. “It’s definitely time management, but I always make sure I get my sleep because I know that’s huge, and because I have a positive attitude about it, that keeps me going.”

Knowing it would be a daunting challenge to be both a 1L and a student athlete, Dean Sylvester “at first looked at me like I was crazy,” said Ekmark in a recent interview. But her longtime friend and ASU basketball coach Turner Thorpe knew she was up to the challenge. Thorpe calls Ekmark the poster child for what Sun Devil women’s basketball is all about. “To a T, in everything. . . . In terms of attitude, effort and being the best about everything you do. Not only in law school but on her game, she works really hard to lead by example and be there for others. Two years is going to be too short a time with her.”

At the printing of this book, Courtney is finishing her final year of law school and isn’t sure what the future holds. In the short term, she would love to go on to the WNBA or go overseas in the coming years to continue playing basketball. What her long game will be, only time will tell. But one thing is certain, she will have done her alma mater proud.

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9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.