

Steven J. McDonald



Steven J. McDonald has served as general counsel of Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) since 2002. In that role, he is the college's primary legal counsel and manages its legal affairs, providing legal services to trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, student leaders, and affiliated entities in connection with their activities on behalf of the institution.

For the decade before he came to RISD, Steve served as associate legal counsel at The Ohio State University. He began his legal career at Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue, where among other things he successfully represented CompuServe in *Cubby v. CompuServe*, the first online libel case. He also taught at Ohio State's College of Law and at Capital University Law School.

An active participant in the higher education legal community, Steve is a past member of the Board of Directors of the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA), the editor of the NACUA publication *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: A Legal Compendium*, one of the developers of its NACUANOTES legal information service, and a regular leader or member of its committees.

Steve also presents and writes frequently on issues of higher education law. He has spoken at ACE, AGB, CUPA-HR, EDUCAUSE, IAPP, ICPL, NACUA, NACUBO, NASAD, NASPA, NERCOMP, URMIA, and United Educators programs, among others, as well as at the Stetson, University of Vermont, and Valencia higher education legal issues conferences. In addition, his articles have appeared in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Education*, and other publications. He served on the legal advisory boards for the *Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for Academic and Research Libraries* and the *Code of Best Practices in Fair Use for the Visual Arts*. At RISD, he often lectures on intellectual property law and artistic freedom.

In 2007, NACUA named Steve a Fellow in recognition of his "extensive scholarship in higher education law over an extended period of time." In 2016, NACUA granted him its Distinguished Service Award for "extraordinary service both to NACUA and to institutions of higher learning over an extended period of time."

Steve received his AB in political science from Duke University and his JD from the Yale Law School. In *State, ex rel. Thomas v. The Ohio State University*, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled that he really is a lawyer.