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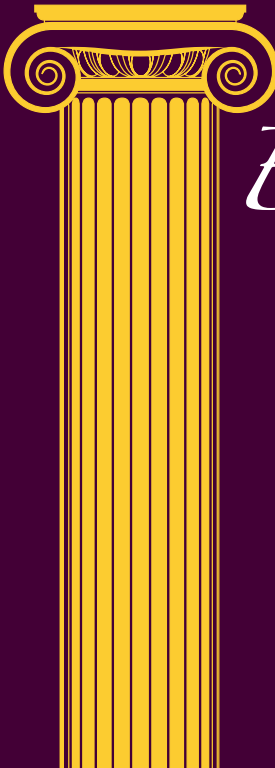
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LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER



Dear readers,

We hope you enjoy this special Excellence in the Law section, which recognizes various achievements in the legal community.

Our Up & Coming Lawyers are rising stars in the legal community — Massachusetts attorneys who have been members of the bar for 10 years or less, but who have already distinguished themselves and appear poised for even greater accomplishments.

Those selected for awards in Excellence in Pro Bono are role models for their work in giving back to the community. In addition, we are honoring the often unsung heroes who keep law offices running smoothly with our Excellence in Firm Administration, Marketing and Paralegal awards.

The honorees for Judicial Excellence and Excellence in Legal Journalism, chosen by our partner in this event, the Massachusetts Bar Association, are also featured in this section. The MBA this year is celebrating retired Superior Court Judge Suzanne V. DelVecchio and Carl Stevens of WBZ News Radio.

The pages that follow offer insights into the slate of 2014 honorees. Please join me in congratulating them.

Susan A. Bocamazo, Esq.
Publisher, Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly



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Sarah Allen

POSITION: PARTNER, PABIAN & RUSSELL, BOSTON | AGE: 34
LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2004



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

SERVING AS THE CO-MANAGER of her firm’s estate planning department allows Sarah M. Allen to showcase both her sophisticated tax expertise and strong litigation skills. In addition to handling complex estates, she dedicates significant time to representing families of children with special needs. Allen also contributes volunteer education and MCLE training to raise awareness of elder abuse. This year, she will earn her LL.M. in taxation from Boston University.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*
A. I am most proud of the book of clients I’ve developed and the level of service I’ve given them. I have the privilege of talking to clients about the things that matter most to them — their families and their finances. I get the opportunity to help them plan their legacy and outline their wishes in a way that their family, friends or whoever is benefiting from their estate has an appreciation for how much thought and care they put into that estate plan.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*
A. This is not the biggest case I’ve worked on, nor is it the easiest, but it is the most gratifying: I represented beneficiaries who were contesting the way two provisions in a will were interpreted by the executor. I represented the grandchildren of the decedent, who were intended to receive the bulk of her estate. Because of poor drafting and a will that was done in a hasty manner, we spent more than four years working through the estate and the ensuing

litigation. Ultimately, we were able to get the grandchildren everything we felt the decedent intended to leave them.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*
A. The best advice was on a plaque that used to be in my mother’s office and is now in my office. It’s a quote from Vince Lombardi: “The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence.”

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*
A. Spend as much time as necessary finding which area of the law resonates the most, so they are practicing in an area where they are committed and enjoy what they’re doing. The practice of law is a business more now than it ever has been, and it’s important to understand the connection between the practice of law and the business of being a lawyer.


Q. *If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*
A. I would have been a news anchor/broadcast journalist.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*
A. When I am working on an estate plan for somebody who is terminally ill, or working

on an estate for someone who passed away unexpectedly or very young, the toughest part is helping the family deal with the grief as well as the financial and legal ramifications of someone’s death when they’re going through such a stressful time.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*
A. It’s probably one of the traits I also like the most, in that I always speak my mind. I sometimes will say something before I have thought through whether it’s something I should verbalize at that time or not. But I also find that’s part of being honest and upfront.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*
A. I love country music.
Q. *What is your greatest fear?*
A. Not doing something now that I’ll regret later.

Q. *What was your very first job?*
A. I was a waitress at a breakfast restaurant in Georgetown. It involved me serving coffee and eggs at 5 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday mornings.
Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*
A. Driven. 

Theresa Barbadoro

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, BAKER, BRAVERMAN & BARBADORO, QUINCY | AGE: 34
LAW SCHOOL: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW
BAR ADMISSION: MASSACHUSETTS, 2005; NEW YORK, 2006; CALIFORNIA, 2009



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

THERESA A. BARBADORO’S well-rounded background has included practicing in London, in-house experience at Red Bull North America, and now a wide-ranging corporate law practice in Quincy. When Barbadoro learned the Quincy Chamber of Commerce was creating a Center for Innovation, she volunteered to provide legal office hours to aspiring entrepreneurs. She initiated firm sponsorship of a “Quick Pick Competition” for new startups, and she leads the firm’s clothing drive for a domestic violence shelter.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*
A. I think it’s finding out what you like about the law and finding a job that allows you to enjoy the aspects of the law that you like, with the people you like — finding that spot where you’re really happy with your career. For me, that took a long time.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*
A. It’s more a matter of establishing the relationships. My preference is to be a general counsel for businesses — somebody they can call, no matter what the issue is, and I can help be a part of the solution.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*
A. Probably my dad, who is a partner at my firm, although we do very different things. He has been instrumental in helping me understand the importance of client relationships. It’s not about

just getting the results, but providing the right relationship so clients feel comfortable with you, trust you, and want to do repeat business with you.


Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*
A. If you develop your own client base, you always have job security and you always have relationships you can rely on.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*
A. I would advise them to explore different areas of the law. I did a multitude of things before ending up where I am, and I don’t think I would be as happy as I am if I hadn’t had the opportunity to explore other types of law, in terms of both practice area and size of practice. I think a lot of people think the first thing they go into, they have to stay there. It’s important to explore what you like so you can figure out what really is the best fit for you.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*
A. In a lot of transactions, people want things done very quickly, and the nature of those

transactions is unfortunately not something you can do in a week. There’s a lot of management of expectation of timelines.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*
A. Trying to please everybody.
Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*
A. I’m a certified wine professional. I took a break from law for about six months and had the opportunity to study wine at the Culinary Institute in NapA. That was tremendous. Someday in the distant future, I want to start a wine bar.

Q. *What was your very first job?*
A. I hosted kids’ birthday parties at Discovery Zone.
Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*
A. No. I like practicing in a collaborative environment like the one we have here. There are so many advantages to having an established group setting. 

Jessica Berry

POSITION: SUPERVISING STAFF ATTORNEY, CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER OF MASSACHUSETTS, LYNN | AGE: 36 | LAW SCHOOL: UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LAW SCHOOL | BAR ADMISSION: CALIFORNIA, 2008; MASSACHUSETTS, 2009

SINCE SHE WAS A TEENAGER, Jessica C. Berry has been drawn to volunteer and professional activities that serve young people, especially those who are vulnerable and at risk. As an advocate for low-income children in welfare cases, Berry brings compassion, creativity, dedication and initiative to her work. She is often selected by the court to take on the most challenging cases, and she continues to provide mentorship to former clients. Berry is the vice chair of the Massachusetts Bar Association's Juvenile and Child Welfare Section Council.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. I have a few clients where I was proud and happy with the outcome in terms of getting them into different school placements, services or home placements that seemed to enable them to succeed in a way they had not before. Those are the accomplishments I get the most excited about.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. I had one client who was living with his mom, and his school, from my perspective, had given up on him. I helped his aunt get custody and helped him with a change in school services. Right before I closed his case, he had made honor roll and his aunt reported he was doing fabulously at home.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. The three supervising attorneys when I started at the Children's Law Center have all been extraordinary mentors. All three have different personalities and styles around advocating, so it was fabulous to have an opportunity to ask all three the same questions and see the breadth of responses.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. Early on I got the message that you have to be flexible. Things don't always work out the way you expect, so you have to be flexible and adapt.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Get as much practical experience as you can in the areas you're interested in practicing, because it's difficult to understand what the job can be like unless you have worked in that environment. Think about what might make you happy and figure out what steps you can take to get there.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. Thurgood Marshall.

Q. What's the toughest part of your job?

A. It is frustrating when the law is not adequate to handle the situation. With a lot of family matters, the law just doesn't fit the situation, so that can be extremely frustrating. The other piece would be systemic failures — institutions or systems that don't operate properly to help kids.

Q. What talent would you most like to have?

A. Being able to do a back flip or tumbling.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. The irony is that some of the traits I used to not like really serve me well in the law, like stubbornness and argumentativeness.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I do odd activities. Last year, I had all my family and friends do trampoline dodgeball with me. I like to climb trees and play laser tag. I think that's surprising because I am a serious person.

Q. What is your dream vacation?

A. I went to surf camp in Mexico, and that was pretty close to my dream vacation.


Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Independent.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. I play sports.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. Not really. I like the nonprofit world and I do work with a lot of solo practitioners, but I think it would be hard. There's a lot of frustration, so it's nice to have other people around to vent and brainstorm with. 



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Sarah M. Allen
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Congratulations to Boston University
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Sarah M. Allen (J.D. '04)
Up & Coming Lawyer

Katy E. Ward (J.D. '09)
Excellence in Pro Bono

Boston University School of Law

Brian Bialas

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, FOLEY HOAG, BOSTON | AGE: 31
LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL
BAR ADMISSION: 2008



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

ALONG WITH DEVELOPING a successful business and employment litigation practice, Brian P. Bialas has dedicated significant time since graduating law school to professional and community organizations. His leadership in the Massachusetts Bar Association’s Young Lawyers Division includes serving as this year’s chairman. He is an active member of the Frank J. Murray American Inn of Court, Catholic Lawyers’ Guild, Cooperative for Human Services, Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance and other organizations. Bialas also makes time for a wide variety of pro bono work, advocating for young people, military veterans, victims of racial discrimination and other clients.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?
A. Getting my clerkship with Judge Paul Kelly on the 10th Circuit. I was one of only two people in my graduating class to get a clerkship at the circuit level right out of law school, so I consider that to be a great achievement.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?
A. I did a discrimination case for a community bank. Because it was a smaller case, I was able to handle everything for it with very loose partner supervision, and I won summary judgment. This was a couple of years ago, so I was still a very new lawyer, and I was really satisfied to be able to handle the whole thing, to argue in front of a judge, and to win.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?
A. Three partners at Foley have been mentors to me: Brandon White, Mike Rosen and Ken Leonetti. They have taught me how to be a lawyer, more than just doing

the job — how to carry yourself as a lawyer and how you’re supposed to act in servicing clients, not only on a particular case but in all facets of the business. They’ve all acted as very good models for how I should conduct myself, eventually, as a partner.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?
A. Go with your gut. It was my father who told me that. You can analyze things to no end, but when you know something is right, that’s usually what you should do. I think that has a lot to do with your conscience and the way you’re brought up. You just know what you should do and what is right.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?
A. Mother Teresa said, “We are called to faithfulness, not success.” I define faithfulness broadly to mean faithful to your principles, whether they be religious, moral or professional, but following them is really what you’re supposed to do. It won’t always lead you to immediate success, but in the long run you’ll be happier.

Q. If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?
A. I probably would have gotten involved in politics and gone to work in Washington, D.C.,

or I would have become a priest. I might also have become a country singer.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?
A. Abraham Lincoln.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?
A. Doing what the client wants even though it’s not what you think they should do, because that’s what they want you to do even after you’ve tried to convince them otherwise.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?
A. I got really bad grades in high school.

Q. What is your greatest fear?
A. That I won’t live up to my own expectations.

Q. What was your very first job?
A. I was a groundskeeper for my local church.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.
A. Loyal.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?
A. Possibly someday, but I would much rather be at a firm that’s established with partners that I like. But it’s a possibility. **LV**

Benton Bodamer

POSITION: SENIOR ASSOCIATE, WEIL, GOTSHAL & MANGES, BOSTON | AGE: 34 | LAW SCHOOL: OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY MORITZ COLLEGE OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: TEXAS, 2006; MASSACHUSETTS, 2008

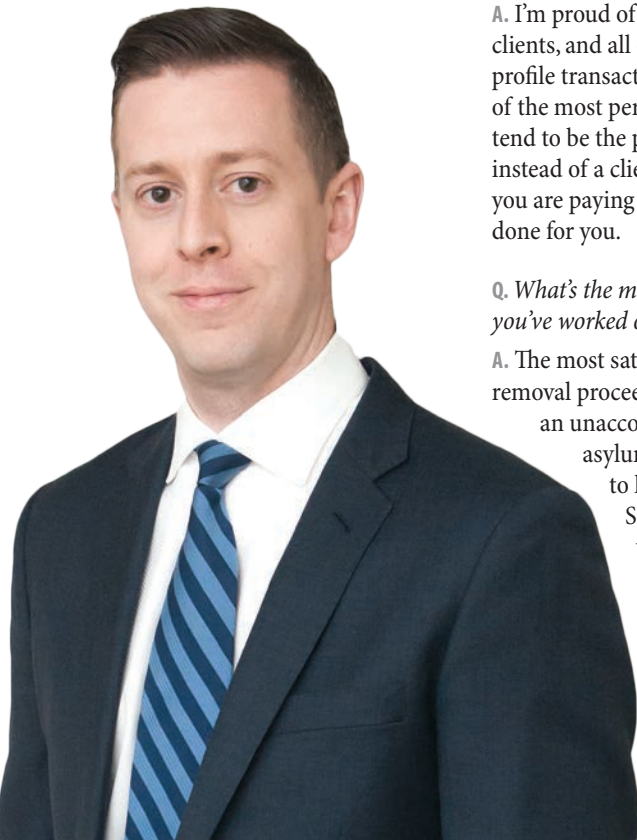


PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

BENTON B. BODAMER’S commitment to pro bono work has enabled several non-profit organizations to reap the benefits of his legal expertise. Among others, he advised the United Way of Massachusetts Bay & Merrimack Valley in negotiating social innovation financing with the state on a project to address chronic homelessness. Bodamer co-chairs his firm’s Boston Pro Bono Committee and serves on its Global Pro Bono Committee. He also co-chairs the Boston Bar Association’s Public Service Committee for the Business Transactions Section.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?
A. I’m proud of all of the work with different clients, and all of the sophisticated high-profile transactions are rewarding. Some of the most personally rewarding matters tend to be the pro bono engagements, where instead of a client paying for your services, you are paying the community for what it’s done for you.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?
A. The most satisfying was a contested removal proceeding, where we represented an unaccompanied minor for his asylum application. We managed to keep him from returning to El Salvador, where he had a very well-founded fear for his life. Hopefully, we gave him an opportunity to create a life that he might not otherwise have had.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?
A. Be nice to everyone.

The level of respect you give to other people should be the same no matter who they are or what they’re offering.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?
A. Keep an open mind about where they might end up as an attorney. Sometimes the area of the law that will be the most interesting to you isn’t something you might have thought of in law school. Instead, it shows up as an unexpected wrinkle in a transaction or an unexpected level of enjoyment in something you never thought you’d find yourself doing.

Q. If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?
A. I would be an archaeologist. We live in a 300-year-old house, and I feel like the desire to renovate has a lot to do with a desire to reconnect with the past and bring the past into the present.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?
A. Since this is a fantasy question, I’d like to meet young attorney Fidel Castro, circa 1950, and convince him that the real revolution is

in real estate and cigars.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?
A. Finding the right balance between demanding high-profile work and a personal life, and always pushing to make sure you maintain the right balance.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?
A. Impatience.

Q. What is your most treasured possession?
A. My cufflink collection. I have pairs from my great-grandfathers, my grandfather, my Uncle Howard, who recently passed away, and my father and my wife have given me several pairs.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?
A. My undergrad senior thesis was about the use of hallucinogenic toads in pre-Colombian Mesoamerican shamanic ritual.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?
A. Absolutely. It will be located in the Cayman Islands, and we will accept payment in fruity blended ice drinks. **LV**

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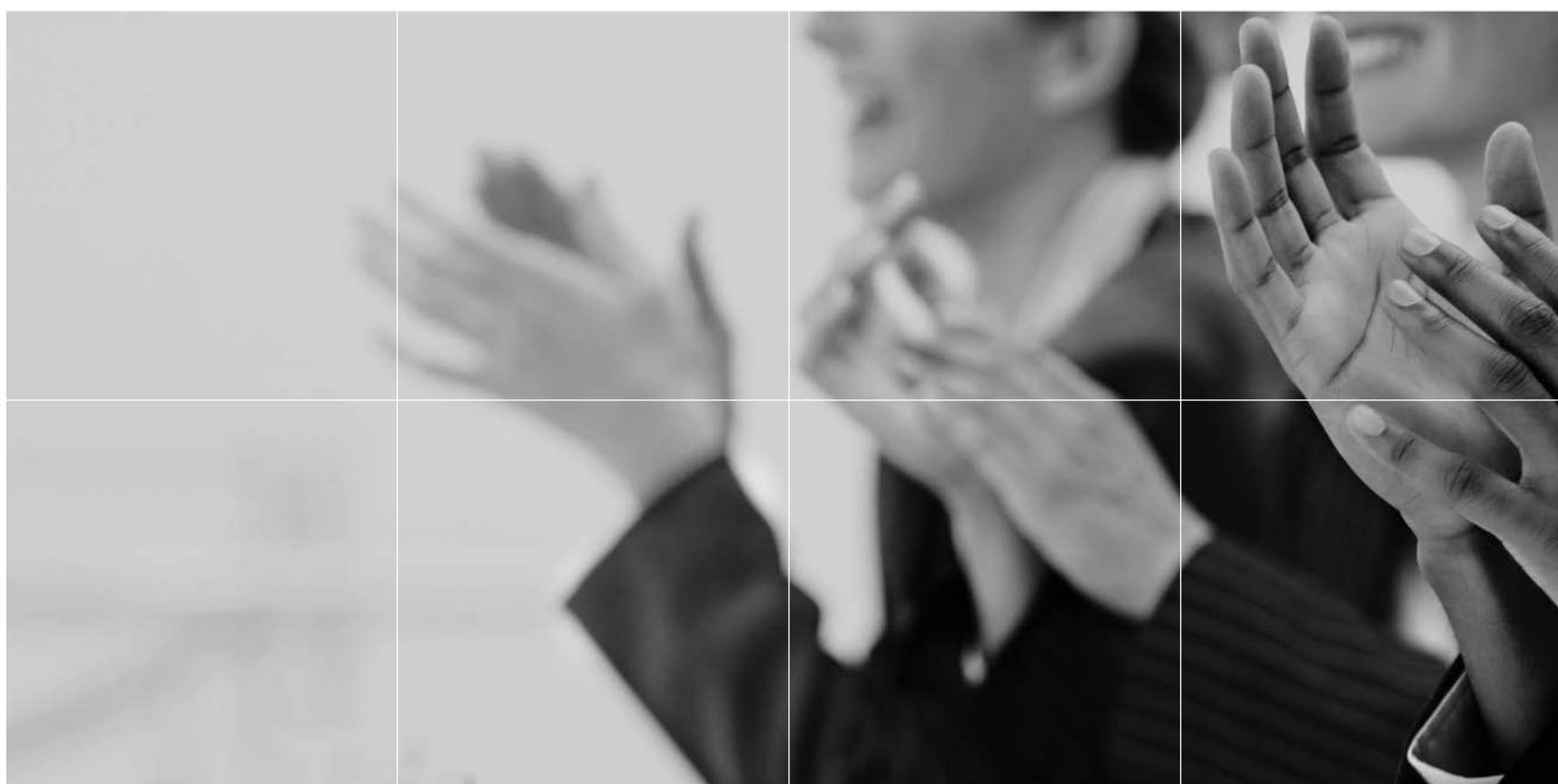
Benton B. Bodamer

on receiving the

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and the Boston office of Weil, Gotshal & Manges on receiving the

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Asya Calixto

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, PRINCE, LOBEL, TYE, BOSTON | AGE: 27
LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
BAR ADMISSION: 2011



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

AS A MEMBER of her firm’s media and intellectual property group, Asya Calixto has a reputation for solving problems with intelligence and common sense, engaging effectively with clients, and tackling her practice with a strong work ethic. She has shared her expertise through seminars for the New England Newspaper and Press Association, American Society of Magazine Editors, New England Scholastic Press Association and Design Exchange Boston. She also represents diverse pro bono clients, from a Boston Marathon bombing survivor to a documentary film producer. Calixto chairs the Boston Bar Association’s International Intellectual Property Law Committee.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*

A. A lot of my work entails working with magazines, so seeing a publication come together is something I see as an achievement, especially when we’re dealing with sensitive issues. Even if I’ve seen a photo or a story dozens of times, there’s something about opening up a magazine and seeing it there. I love being a part of that process.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*

A. Having spent the first years of my life in Russia, where freedom of speech was not highly regarded, it’s satisfying to work on access matters where we help reporters get access to public records or open meetings. We run a media law hotline at the firm, so getting the chance to help local news outlets exercise the rights we have and get government transparency, I find that very satisfying.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*

A. I’m especially fortunate to have Rob Bertsche as my direct boss and mentor. ... It’s been a privilege to be able to learn from him.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*

A. To always stay curious and to never lose the hunger for knowledge.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

A. I’d tell them to follow their passions and find a way to do what they want to do in the legal field, rather than settling for a job and perhaps burning out from practicing a type of law that might not be as interesting to them.

Q. *If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*

A. As a media lawyer, I get to work with amazing writers, editors and reporters. I admire what they do, and I think it’d be interesting to try my hand in that.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*

A. Dealing with external factors that aren’t particularly legal but can impact a case, and knowing that a decision might be made

regardless of what side the law is on.

Q. *What talent would you most like to have?*

A. I would love to have a great voice for karaoke.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

A. I’ve been working on dropping in at the top of a steep ski trail. I’d like to lower my response time for jumping into an inherently risky situation.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*

A. I used to be into pottery and made a lot of masks.

Q. *What was your very first job?*

A. My first job was with my mom’s adoption agency.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*

A. Enthusiastic.

Q. *What do you do to blow off steam?*

A. I love to run, but cooking plays as much of a role as running. **EW**

Julia Devanthery

POSITION: STAFF ATTORNEY FOR MATTAPAN INITIATIVE, LEGAL SERVICES CENTER OF HARVARD LAW SCHOOL, JAMAICA PLAIN | AGE: 31
LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
BAR ADMISSION: 2010



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

USING HER LEGAL EXPERTISE on behalf of public service has been a consistent theme in Julia E. Devanthery’s career. She was a clinical law fellow at Northeastern School of Law’s Domestic Violence Institute, represented low-income tenants facing homelessness at HomeStart, Inc., and now represents tenants in post-foreclosure eviction defense. She also participated in the Boston Bar Association’s Public Interest Leadership Program. Devanthery was recently elected board president of RESPOND, a domestic violence shelter and services agency.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*

A. The work I’m doing now is something I’m incredibly proud of. We’re providing legal services to anybody facing eviction from a foreclosed home in Mattapan, so we’re trying to flood that area with access to legal services. And we’ve been able to build some exciting coalitions.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*

A. One of my clients was facing eviction by a bank that foreclosed on him. We were able to make some persuasive arguments convincing the bank they hadn’t complied with the required regulations, so they agreed to rescind the foreclosure. That client has gotten a successful loan modification and is back on track to stabilize his housing and maintain ownership of his home.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*

A. Lois Kantor, who was my professor in the Domestic Violence Institute at Northeastern.

She absolutely believes her students can make an impact on people in the Boston community. She was endlessly inspiring in pushing you to do your best work. It instilled a deep-seated commitment for me to try to live up to the expectations she set for us.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*

A. The relationships you build with people in your practice community and across the aisle are really important. Even if you’re fighting zealously in the courtroom, being able to speak to them respectfully and thoughtfully outside the courtroom really benefits your client at the end of the day.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

A. The demand for civil legal services from the low-income and underrepresented community is huge, and it’s our responsibility as members of this profession to do something to try to meet that need. It doesn’t require that everybody devote their lives to legal service, but it requires that everybody do something to increase access to justice.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*

A. You have to have a radical sense of empathy

to be an effective advocate for clients in crisis. But I struggle with balancing that with the need to step back from work in my downtime to recharge and be ready for the next day.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

A. I am not a morning person.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*

A. I was a Division I track and field athlete in college.

Q. *What is your greatest fear?*

A. While we have made enormous progress toward addressing domestic violence in the past several years, I believe it remains the most pressing human rights and public health crisis facing our communities. I am concerned that, in spite of all we have learned about making families safe, the cycle of violence persists and we continue to witness tragedies in our families and neighborhoods.

Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*

A. A group of law school friends and I have fantasized about starting our own legal services advocacy agency. But I would say it’s still in the early planning stages. **EW**

Carline Durocher

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, BINGHAM MCCUTCHEN, BOSTON | AGE: 38
LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL | BAR ADMISSION: 2007

CARLINE M. DUROCHER has been involved in community service since high school, when she belonged to the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. Today, she devotes time and energy to pro bono service and to several nonprofits. Durocher is especially committed to Boston's Haitian community, providing business workshops and serving on the Boston Foundation's Haiti Fund Advisory Council.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. Before I was a lawyer, I had a career as a research analyst. When I decided to go to law school, one of the drivers was that I enjoy working with companies that were on the cutting-edge. I'm very fortunate to have part of my practice focus on emerging companies. It's an opportunity to work with the same type of individuals — smart, engaging, excited about their projects and ideas.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. There are a lot of great little companies out there that are still pushing uphill to get the idea out, market it and get seed capital. It's very satisfying to work with people who are completely into their idea and to watch them realize something that's so important.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. One is Sue Finegan, a partner at Mintz Levin. Sue and I met when I was 13. She was a student at Boston College Law and came to our parish to tutor. She stayed involved [with me]. She's a source of support and inspiration. The other person who has been instrumental is Wayne Budd, of counsel at Goodwin [Procter]. He's been phenomenal. He always makes the time to talk to me.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. You're your own CEO. As a service provider, you're selling your services to partners internally and you're selling yourself to your peers every time you interact with them. Having that mindset allows you to focus in terms of how you market yourself. It also frees you to be guided by your own goals instead of other people's expectations.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Approach your first work environment like an apprenticeship. Find someone who wants to take you on and train you, and learn as much as you can. Your first three years are your defining years, because a lot of habits are set then.

Q. If you hadn't become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. Foreign policy development work.

Q. What's the toughest part of your job?

A. The billable hour. If you're not careful, you start to focus more on that and less on the bigger picture.

Q. What talent would you most like to have?

A. I would love to be an Alvin Ailey dancer.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I'd like to think I could sing.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. To think that you're living life and to wake up one day and realize you haven't been living at all. I constantly remind myself I need to stay in the present.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Energy.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. If opportunity were to take you there and it makes sense, then sure. If it doesn't make sense, then probably not. It would have to be a practice that's completely thinking outside the box. **LV**



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Lydia Edwards

POSITION: DIRECTOR OF LEGAL SERVICES, BRAZILIAN IMMIGRANT CENTER, ALLSTON | AGE: 33 | LAW SCHOOL: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2006

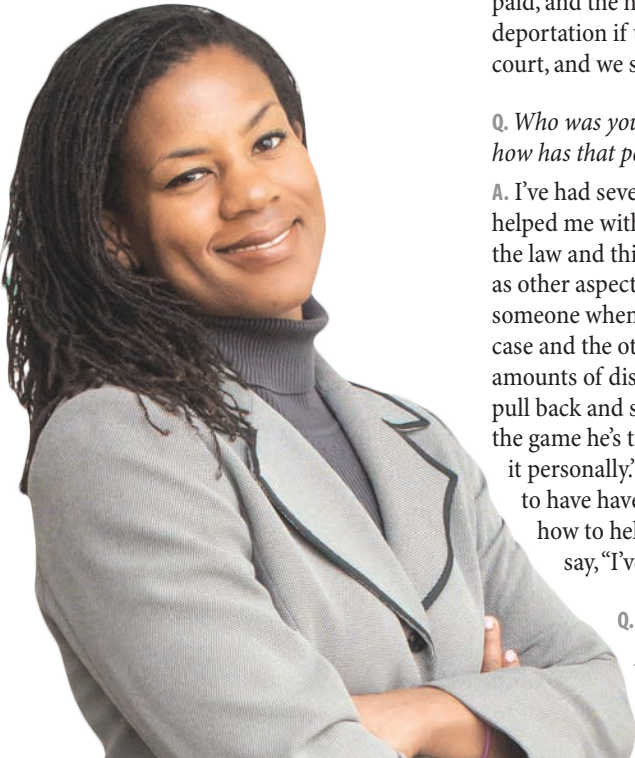


PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

LYDIA M. EDWARDS had been volunteering at the Brazilian Immigrant Center for two years when she saw a need to enhance services to some of its most vulnerable clients. Today, she leads the Domestic Worker Law and Policy Clinic, representing clients, advocating in government, and educating workers about their rights and resources. She also created and leads the Domestic Worker Mediation Project. As part of her Equal Justice Works Fellowship, Edwards is advocating for domestic workers who are also victims of trafficking.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*

A. I worked on a domestic worker case where I represented four house cleaners. They worked with one family as part house cleaners, part personal help. They didn’t get paid, and the husband threatened them with deportation if they spoke up. We went to court, and we settled at the court.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*

A. I’ve had several along the way. They have helped me with the nitty-gritty of “this is the law and this is how it can work,” as well as other aspects. I had great advice from someone when I was overwhelmed with a case and the other lawyer had ridiculous amounts of discovery. He said, “You need to pull back and see it for what it is, see it for the game he’s trying to play, and don’t take it personally.” The mentors I’ve been lucky to have have been able to not only tell me how to help, but also to empathize and say, “I’ve been there, too.”

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*

A. When you do what you love, the money will come.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

A. Within their means and their capacity, I would say take an opportunity to be young and to pursue a passion, and when you pursue the passion, the money will come.

Q. *If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*

A. I might have been an investigative reporter.

Q. *If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?*

A. Charles Hamilton Houston. He is the father of breaking down “separate but equal” and segregation laws. He mastered it, and he mentored Thurgood Marshall in how to do it. He was a genius and fundamentally changed the U.S. legal system. My life and that of any person of color, to this day, is directly affected by him.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*

A. The hardest part of the job is knowing when to say “no.” When you work in legal services, especially, you really have to manage the resources you have available to you, not just financially and physically, but emotionally. Sometimes it does require you to say “no,” and that’s hard to do because you understand

the dire straits that some people are in. But, you can decide to do some cases really well or all cases not as well. That’s a hard balance to strike, and I’m still learning that.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

A. I’m a little insecure.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*

A. A lot of people are surprised to learn I’ve been practicing capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian martial art, for eight years.

Q. *What was your very first job?*

A. At Larry’s Family Foods. I was a bag girl and stocked the shelves.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*

A. Trustworthy.

Q. *What do you do to blow off steam?*

A. I love to play capoeira. I just started to learn how to snowboard.

Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*

A. I see myself being a clinical law professor. I don’t see myself doing my own practice anytime soon. **EW**

Michael Fenton

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, SHATZ, SCHWARTZ & FENTIN, SPRINGFIELD | AGE: 27
LAW SCHOOL: WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW
BAR ADMISSION: 2012



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

FOR MANY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS, earning an MBA and a law degree at the same time would be plenty. Michael A. Fenton, however, in 2009 became the youngest member of the City Council in Springfield’s history and authored a historic foreclosure ordinance that was the first of its kind. This year, he became council president. Meanwhile, Fenton has developed a successful practice in estate planning, land use and business law.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*

A. My biggest achievement has been my ability to successfully multi-task in the last three years, in terms of completing law school, my MBA, developing a successful legal practice and becoming an elected official. That required a great deal of commitment. I’m extremely passionate about being an attorney, and I’m really happy to have found such a great practice in Springfield to help me realize that dream.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*

A. The most satisfying case was the sale of a large closely held family business that helped a longtime client achieve their dreams in retirement.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*

A. Steve Grossman, our current state treasurer. He’s been a friend to me both personally and professionally and has provided me with a great example of how to lead and how to foster longstanding relationships.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*

A. The best piece of advice I’ve been given was never give up — not ever. Those are words to live by for the personal relationships that matter to you, for the professional causes that define who you are, and for the moments in life that require an ability to persevere.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

A. Don’t be afraid to explore a variety of areas of law. While your passion should guide your practice, you should also recognize that circumstances outside your control will sometimes dictate the path you pursue, and that’s a normal and healthy progression for a successful attorney. Seize the opportunities that are in front of you.

Q. *If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*

A. I have my MBA, so I probably would have ended up in the corporate world in some respect.

Q. *If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?*

A. Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*

A. Finding time for myself, my family and my friends.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

A. It’s a trait that I dislike in myself, but also one that I think has provided me with a lot of opportunity, and that is my willingness to take on a variety of challenges at once.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*

A. I really enjoy Tyler Perry’s “Madea” series. I love those movies.

Q. *What was your very first job?*

A. Working at the Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield as a guest services representative.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*

A. Passionate.

Q. *What do you do to blow off steam?*

A. I play ice hockey.

Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*

A. I don’t think any attorney can rule that out, but it’s certainly not in my immediate future plans. **MF**

Julie Ferraro

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, KREINDLER & KREINDLER, BOSTON
AGE: 35 | LAW SCHOOL: NEW ENGLAND SCHOOL OF LAW
BAR ADMISSION: 2006

AS A PLAINTIFFS' ATTORNEY who handles pharmaceutical mass tort and complex civil litigation, Julie S. Ferraro is often her clients' best hope for justice against large corporations. She has represented parties in numerous high-profile cases, including Vioxx, Avandia, Paxil, the BP oil spill and hormone replacement therapy litigation. In keeping with her desire to give a voice to those who are most vulnerable, Ferraro is a volunteer with On the Rise, which helps battered women who are trying to become independent. She also is an adjunct professor of U.S. history at Middlesex Community College.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. Making sure that I am the best attorney for my clients, that I give them their day in court, that I allow them a voice against the big companies, and that I am able to get them justice for how they've been wronged. At the end of the day, I'm proud of that.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. I worked on the hormone therapy litigation, representing women who took hormone therapy during menopause and got breast cancer as a result. That was personal because I had an aunt who had breast cancer when I was growing up. It was a very personal case because you're dealing with women's issues, so I found that was most rewarding.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. I've had the opportunity to work with many great litigation attorneys in my career, specifically Gregory Bubalo,

Steven Rotman, Paula Bliss and now Anthony Tarricone. I have learned a tremendous amount from all of them. They all have different litigation styles, so it's been very rewarding for me to work with them, as I'm still trying to better myself and better my skills.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Try to take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way, whether it's in a different area of the law that you've never been exposed to or working with someone different. The more experiences you have as an attorney, the more you become a successful and well-rounded attorney.

Q. If you hadn't become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I would have stayed with teaching. I love working with kids. It's fun to be able to share with students the connections that are happening currently with historical events and to show them that history constantly does repeat itself. I love being able to explain that to students and have them have a moment where they say, "I get that! I understand how we've gotten where we are because of past

events, and this is how we can learn from those mistakes."

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. Sandra Day O'Connor.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. I can be emotional when it comes to cases and clients.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I love April Fools' Day. I love playing pranks on people and practical jokes. I will plan weeks in advance for April Fools' for my family and friends.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. I was a lifeguard for six years.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Loyal.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. I've thought about it. I just don't have any plans to do that in the immediate future. **LV**

Kanasha Herbert

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, MINTZ, LEVIN, COHN, FERRIS, GLOVSKY & POPEO, BOSTON
AGE: DECLINED TO ANSWER | LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL
BAR ADMISSION: 2007

KANASHA S. HERBERT started her career as an electrical engineer but always had her mind set on becoming a lawyer. Both fields require their practitioners to be expert problem-solvers, and that's how Herbert views her service to her clients. Working with public companies and early-stage enterprises, she thrives on the opportunity to help clients grow, flourish and achieve their goals. Herbert makes a point of investing the time to listen and to help, whether in her day-to-day practice or in the informal mentorship she extends to law students.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. I would say when I left the engineering world. I had always wanted to be a lawyer. I remember telling [my colleagues that] I was going to be a lawyer, and I remember they all had this reaction: "What are you talking about?" There was not an easy model in front of me to go from engineering to quit my job and go to law school. But I said, "I'm going to go ahead and do it."

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. I really enjoy helping people get to whatever their goal is. For some clients, it takes a long time for them to be successful. So just saying, "I have an idea and I want to start a company," and seeing that I take them seriously, it really means a lot to them.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. The first day I started as a lawyer, my secretary told me, "There's nothing you do here that

can't be fixed by paper" — meaning that if you mess something up, you can always fix it. It may be painful or embarrassing, but no one's going to die based on the work you do. This helps me to keep perspective of my role in the process and to not be hard on myself when I make a mistake.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. The profession of law has changed dramatically. As a lawyer, now, you are expected to not only be a good practitioner, but to also develop business. Whether you're a solo practitioner or you're working for a large firm, there are fundamental business concepts you need to be aware of. Learning how to develop yourself as a business generator will be helpful in the future.

Q. What's the toughest part of your job?

A. The law firm structure is not a corporate structure in which you have a boss that you report to. We all work for multiple people and multiple clients, so what one client or one partner likes may be very different from what someone else likes. You're always trying to figure out what this person wants, while at the same time working on seven different things.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. Being a lawyer makes you critical of everything, and that can creep into your life. When I look at documents [outside of work], I probably look at them with the eye of a lawyer. You're trained to look for what's wrong, and I think that's probably annoying to other people.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I'm a pretty good rapper.

Q. What is your dream vacation?

A. Because I'm from an island, I love traveling to islands and being around nature, so I would love to go to a South Pacific island.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. I am deathly afraid of mice to the point that if there was a mouse in my house, I would relocate.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. My mom worked for a distributor of liquor, spirits and perfumes. When I was a kid, I used to go to her office [and would] fill these teeny-tiny Oscar de la Renta perfume sample bottles. I made \$200; Oscar de la Renta wrote me the check himself. **LV**

Sofia Lingos

POSITION: PRINCIPAL AND FOUNDING ATTORNEY,
LINGOS LAW, BOSTON | AGE: 30
LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2009



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

SOFIA S. LINGOS established her practice as a way to provide affordable representation to entrepreneurs, recognizing an unmet need for legal advice within that community. Lingos’ mission to increase access to justice also led her to establish a practice serving Greek-Americans, here and overseas, who need transparent, accessible representation. Lingos is a 2014 American Bar Association Law Practice fellow and a member of the Lenny Zakim Fund executive board, among other organizations.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. Creating a practice that allows me to focus on the access to justice mission for the two populations I’ve selected to serve — entrepreneurs/business owners and Greek-Americans. The tools that I am trying to employ for those populations are hopefully tools that other people could utilize in the practice areas they’re passionate about.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?

A. Most satisfying is working with small businesses and entrepreneurs, when each company starts from an idea through formation to opening. They’re all different, but being able to see them fulfill this idea all the way through is incredibly fulfilling.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. I was privileged to start teaching at Northeastern with professor James Rowan. He has the experience, the vision, the excitement, the passion. I learn many things from him about how to run my practice and how to teach.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. One of the fears of going out on your own is that you don’t know everything, until you realize that each matter is new and different to even the most experienced practitioners. The best way to not make mistakes is to reach out to your network.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Remember why you went to law school. I find people at that stage are just excited to get a job, and there are so many opportunities that it’s important to reflect on what you wanted to do. Obviously, that evolves as you gain experience, but make sure you’re not just taking a job to be a lawyer. Make sure you’re practicing in an area that’s going to be fulfilling.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?

A. Time management. I am privileged that I enjoy what people refer to as networking, so I don’t think of it as part of the job, but it gets to the point where you have to balance the amount of time you can be available to clients.

Q. What talent would you most like to have?

A. When I was younger, I was a hopeful professional ski racer. I wish I had had the opportunity to have succeeded as a professional athlete.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. Being too busy.

Q. What is your most treasured possession?

A. My camera. I like to see the world and I like to remember things. I probably take a picture a day.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I’m from Utah. People are incredibly surprised. I talk at the speed of a New Yorker.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. Failure. When you take on the responsibility of having your own practice and you’re the boss, you have no one to blame but yourself. So if anything goes wrong, I take it personally. It’s a great driving force to be successful.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. Babysitting and working as a counter girl at Baxter’s on Cape Cod.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Motivated.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. I love to be in the mountains, so if skiing is an opportunity, that’s ideal. **LV**

Christopher Logue

POSITION: STAFF ATTORNEY, CASA MYRNA
VAZQUEZ, BOSTON | AGE: 32
LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2011



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

CHRISTOPHER B. LOGUE chose law school as a path to activism, particularly as an advocate for feminism. Now, representing victims of domestic violence at Casa Myrna Vazquez, Logue serves clients who primarily are female, providing them with a voice, empowerment and ultimately the freedom to transform their lives. As an Equal Justice Works fellow, Logue designed and implemented a partnership between Casa Myrna and two local hospitals that was so successful he was able to obtain funding to continue the program. Logue volunteers with Greater Boston Legal Services and the Women’s Bar Foundation’s Family Law Project for Battered Women.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. A lot of the achievements I feel that I have attained come in much smaller forms in the work I do with clients. It’s the occasional— sometimes frequent— small victories that I have with clients inside and outside the courtroom that feel like real achievements to me.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?

A. I have had a couple of clients with whom I worked for extended periods of time. I’ve followed them for a long time through these incredible periods in their lives, so I’ve seen personal progressions and transformations. Those events are particularly rewarding.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. Without a doubt, that has been my supervisor, Janet Donovan. One of the things I feel luckiest about is having been trained as a lawyer by Janet and by my mentor in law school, Lois Kanter. I’ve been lucky to have these brilliant and inspiring leaders around me.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. When I was a law student, I had a supervisor at Greater Boston Legal Services who told me all of life’s problems can be solved at the office supply store. It’s a joke, but it’s true that it’s easy to underestimate how important organization is in every facet of being a lawyer.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Try not to underestimate the importance of quality of life and finding meaning in your work. Often, the prospect of high-paying jobs is alluring, especially given the vast amount of debt law students have, but getting paid less money to do work that feels important and meaningful can make you happy and help you sleep at night. I think that’s sometimes a difficult decision to make, but it’s worth it.

Q. If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I imagined I would have a career in academia, getting a Ph.D. in political theory and teaching. I also love working with my hands, so I almost stuck with construction and carpentry.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. Gandhi.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?

A. The most difficult aspect is standing in the shoes of your client when your client is involved in incredibly high-stakes and high-conflict legal issues. Oftentimes, in being the face and the voice of one side of that conflict, it is a challenge for that to not feel like you are personally part of it.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. The quality that is the biggest challenge for me is my inclination to avoid conflict and to have conflict create anxiety in me.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. The thing people in the legal field are most surprised to learn about me, which you would not know from looking at me, is that I’m covered in tattoos. In my lawyer costume, you’d never know.

Q. What is your dream vacation?

A. I’m a serious meditator, so occasionally I’ll go on vacation where I’ll do a silent meditation retreat, which is a nice contrast to the rest of my life.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. Snakes. **LV**

Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues

POSITION: CHIEF OF STAFF, CITY OF EVERETT | AGE: 31

LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2008



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*

A. When I first graduated from law school, I came on to the city as city solicitor and worked on a lot of housing cases. Often we were helping poor or immigrant residents who didn't know they were being taken advantage of by landlords, and we helped them to get safe housing. When I first started here, people were living in situations that were unimaginable. One of the nice things about working in local government is that everything you do affects people in their day-to-day. Whether it's regulations about trash removal or marijuana dispensaries or zoning, it's something that affects how people live every day.

Q. *What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?*

A. The most satisfying thing is seeing how I'm making a positive impact not only on the community I grew up in, but

for my neighbors, teachers that taught me in elementary school, family members, and people I went to school with. I live in the community, so I go to the grocery store or a local restaurant and people come up to me and talk about the job I'm doing. It means a lot to have that positive feedback.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*

A. My uncle, Richard. I had two uncles who were both local attorneys. They had an office across from my high school, so I went to their office after school and saw them practicing. My mom has always been a strong female role model in taking care of my family.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

A. I would tell them to keep their eye on their goals. It's easy to get distracted and to get off your life path, but what we're doing here is so important as attorneys — the impact we can make on people's lives — that sometimes those sacrifices are worth it.

Q. *What's the toughest part of your job?*

A. Sometimes you have to make tough decisions that aren't always going to be popular, like advising the mayor on the tax rate or making a decision about funding for schools. Sometimes you have to make the decision that's going to be best for the city, but isn't going to be the most popular, and that's difficult.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

A. I think any attorney probably deals with this: We're such perfectionists, we like things done in a certain way, and we have trouble delegating things to other people and trusting them to do the work.

Q. *What's one thing about you that might surprise people?*

A. When I was 18, I went skydiving. I'm a pretty safe person — feet on the ground.

Q. *What was your very first job?*

A. I worked at the Everett library.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*

A. Friendly. 

Benjamin Novotny

POSITION: PARTNER, LUBIN & MEYER, BOSTON | AGE: 34

LAW SCHOOL: SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL | BAR ADMISSION: 2006



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

AS A CIVIL LITIGATOR and medical-malpractice attorney, Benjamin R. Novotny has secured nearly \$25 million in settlements and verdicts on behalf of clients who have suffered life-changing injuries. As lead counsel in *McCollins v. Judge Rotenberg Center*, Novotny brought to light the use of electroshock treatment on autistic children. The case led to responses from the United Nations and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, along with new Massachusetts legislation setting standards for electroshock therapy.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*

A. The most memorable, certainly, is the first time you win a case. It's not the biggest verdict, and it's not the most well-known one, but it's probably the one you'll always remember because you're really not expecting to win. When you do things early on, they're not exactly slam-dunks.

Q. *What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?*

A. The McCollins case, which has less to do with the international attention than the fact that, for decades, these things were happening to children and no one knew about it. It's one case, but I feel like it has affected scores of children, not only presently but going forward. What was happening there was really brought to light. No one had known, until we finally got that video released, exactly what was happening behind closed doors.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that*

person impacted your career?

A. I get to work with a great group of trial attorneys here. As corny as it sounds, we pick up things from one another. They took me out when I was in law school and let me watch and learn from them. So it's really been a team effort here.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*

A. Preparation is key to any trial. That includes reading everything you can read on the subject, going to seminars, doing everything you can.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*

A. Be creative in the ways that you can use your skill set to ... get your foot in the door. You need to play to all your strengths, not just grades and GPA.

Q. *If you hadn't become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*

A. I might have been a ski bum. I also always loved environmental biology. That's one of the fun things about medical practice — you get to teach a jury about science.

Q. *What's the toughest part of your job?*

A. The toughest part is when you're not successful. The family still has a loss, so regardless of whether you win or lose, that doesn't take away from what happened. The alternative, though, when you are successful, means that someone was negligent and it caused harm. Everything we deal with involves catastrophic injury to someone's loved one or to themselves.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*

A. I'm a perfectionist. When you expect perfection out of yourself, it has the potential to weigh on you, especially when things don't go perfectly, because court and trials can be so unpredictable.


Q. *What was your very first job?*

A. My grandfather owned a trash business, so when I was 7 and 8, he let me ride on the back of the trash truck. It was awesome to ride on the back of the truck and lift bags and crush them.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*

A. Driven.

Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*

A. No. I'm completely happy where I am. 

Audrey O'Shaughnessy

POSITION: PRINCIPAL, LAW OFFICE OF AUDREY H. O'SHAUGHNESSY, WALTHAM | AGE: 32
LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2006



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

WHEN AUDREY H. O'SHAUGHNESSY opened her practice fresh out of law school, she found few resources for new graduates setting up their own shop. She and two colleagues decided to create one: Starting Out Solo, now an incorporated bar association that provides training, education and networking. A dedicated elder law attorney, O'Shaughnessy is an active member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys' Massachusetts chapter, serving on the board and helping to grow the Young Attorneys Section. She volunteers frequently with pro bono and community service organizations.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. Having a successful law practice while staying true to my own morals. I have been able to do good in the world, to give reduced fees when I want to, to practice law in an ethical way that makes a difference, and to still be profitable and recognized.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. I had a Medicaid hearing for a client who had been caring for an ill mother for 14 years. The family couldn't afford to stay in their mother's house, so they sold it to move to a less expensive house. However, there is an exception to Medicaid that allows for the transfer of a house to a child who is caring for a parent. We appealed, recognizing that the purpose of the law is to help children care for their parents. This was a case that turned on the technical application of law versus the point of the law. The family got to keep the house, so it was a great win for them, and I felt like I had righted an injustice.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. My mother and father, both of whom are successful attorneys. There's nothing like being able to call a parent before you go into the courtroom and ask questions. One of the reasons I started SOS is that I had that resource and other people didn't.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. From my parents: Be the best lawyer you can be and the business will follow.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. A lot of new graduates don't have enough experience to understand the business of the law practice, so they have all these questions about professionalism. The answer is to be the best lawyer you can be — help other lawyers when you can, and the recognition and the business follow from that.

Q. What's the toughest part of your job?

A. Having to tell clients when they are suffering from Alzheimer's or dementia and they need to talk to their doctor. Often I notice it, and the clients will tell me they're forgetting more things and feeling confused. Yet family members can be reluctant to talk to them, so it often falls to me.

Q. What talent would you most like to have?

A. I would love to be able to be so confident on my motorcycle that I could do a track day, racing my bike on a closed track.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. I'm actively working on being more flexible: setting a plan but being OK with changing it.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I am an intellectual geek. I love nerding out about the law. I love it when I have a problem that comes in that's really thorny and I just sit there and pore through my law books to figure out how to fix it.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. Accidentally being a bad person. I see people all the time who are being jerky and they don't see it in themselves. My big fear is finding out at the end of my life that I've been doing something all those years that was harmful to other people and I never knew it.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. Babysitting and working in an auto parts store.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Eclectic. **EW**

Damien Powell

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, DONOGHUE, BARRETT & SINGAL, BOSTON | AGE: 36
LAW SCHOOL: SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL
BAR ADMISSION: 2005



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

IN THE SEVEN YEARS he's been at his firm, Damien C. Powell has established a strong track record for his clients and earned a reputation for leadership, insight and exceptional case management. Practicing in complex business litigation and white-collar criminal defense, he is a skilled advocate for clients in crisis. Powell also has handled several pro bono cases, including a federal civil rights lawsuit on behalf of a disabled prisoner, and served as a guardian ad litem in Suffolk Juvenile Court. He is active in professional and community organizations.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. I think having the opportunity to represent a diverse group of clients, from big businesses to individuals, in both the civil litigation and criminal contexts, is what I've found to be the most rewarding.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. A recent case that I found particularly satisfying was a young woman who was indicted for Medicaid fraud in connection with alleged conduct that took place at her workplace. After a couple of years of pretrial discovery and motions, on the eve of trial

I was able to negotiate what I think was a pretty benign disposition for her. I found that to be satisfying because this was a criminal case, so her liberty was at stake.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. My boss Bruce Singal has helped me in a number of ways. He's a very successful trial attorney with a wealth of knowledge and experience he's

imparted to me. I'd have to say my dad as well. My father was a minister, so there are a number of things he did in his job I find particularly interesting. I think there are a lot of similarities in helping to assist people who are in crisis and counseling them through it.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. To be a successful attorney, the client has to come first. Having open lines of communication with the client is one of the most important things — keeping them updated about what's going on, understanding their goal in the litigation, and mapping out a clear plan so you can achieve their goal.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Find a place to work where there are attorneys who are committed to helping you develop professionally and giving you the types of opportunities that help you get experience.

Q. If you hadn't become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I'd probably be in some facet of business.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. If historical, Abraham Lincoln. If current,

David Boies.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. It's tough to admit this, but I have a terrible sense of direction when it comes to driving. Thankfully, GPS has saved me and ensures that I always end up at the right courthouse.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I've officiated two wedding ceremonies.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. I worked packing macaroon cookies for a cookie company. I can't stand the smell of macaroons to this day.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Competitive.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. In addition to spending time with my family, I'm a big skier, both snow and water skiing.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. Possibly, but I enjoy the team atmosphere that my firm has, where everybody is willing to pitch in when there's a challenge or a need. **EW**

Todd Ratner

POSITION: ATTORNEY, BACON WILSON, SPRINGFIELD
AGE: 43 | LAW SCHOOL: PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
DICKINSON SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2004



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

TODD C. RATNER is on his second successful career, following six years in senior business and managerial consulting positions for a Fortune 100 company. With an MBA and a J.D., Ratner now practices estate planning, real estate and business law. He has conducted numerous seminars in estate planning, elder law and planning for families with special needs children. Ratner also is active in many professional and community organizations, including serving as chairman of the Alzheimer’s Association Tri-County Partnership.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. Being able to take complex situations, identify the options, and communicate those options in such a way that clients can make informed decisions.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?

A. Most satisfying is any case where I can rightfully protect assets from both tax and long-term care obligations.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. Attorney Hyman Darling at my firm has a practice that I respect and one that I am modeling my practice after.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. The best advice I have received is to not look at a client as a one-time transaction, but to look at a client as a lifelong relationship.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. I would let them know that the law practice does not solely encompass private practice, so they should explore all facets of the legal world and all opportunities.

Q. If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I’m still waiting to be drafted by the Red Sox. In the event the Red Sox don’t come to their senses, I would have remained in the business world in managerial consulting.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?

A. The balance between work and family life.

Q. What talent would you most like to have?

A. I would like to continue to improve as a triathlete.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. A lack of patience.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I think a lot of people don’t know that I had a prior career in the business world. I was the youngest manager in a Fortune 100

company, Anheuser-Busch. At Anheuser-Busch, either you relocate every two years or so or you stay in St. Louis, and in speaking with senior vice presidents I learned that their 15-year-old children had been in four or five different school systems. That did not strike me as conducive to raising the family that I envisioned. That’s when I made the decision to enroll in Boston University’s MBA program.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. My first job was working at a beach stand at the age of 15. I was not quite honest about my age with the employer so I could get the job.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Ambitious.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. Anything athletic. I’ve played in just about every over-30 and over-40 sport program and am now heavily involved in competing in triathlons. I’m up at 5:30 most days for workouts.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. I really enjoy working in a team environment, although I do prefer to be the one with the ball. **EW**



Congratulations to Damien Powell Attorney, Donoghue Barrett & Singal on being named a 2014 Up & Coming lawyer.

On behalf of everyone at DBS,
congratulations on being
recognized by Lawyers Weekly
for your distinguished work;
the honor is well deserved.



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Soraya Sadeghi

POSITION: FOUNDING ATTORNEY, SORAYA LAW,
BOSTON | AGE: 31 | LAW SCHOOL: SUFFOLK
UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL | BAR ADMISSION: 2006

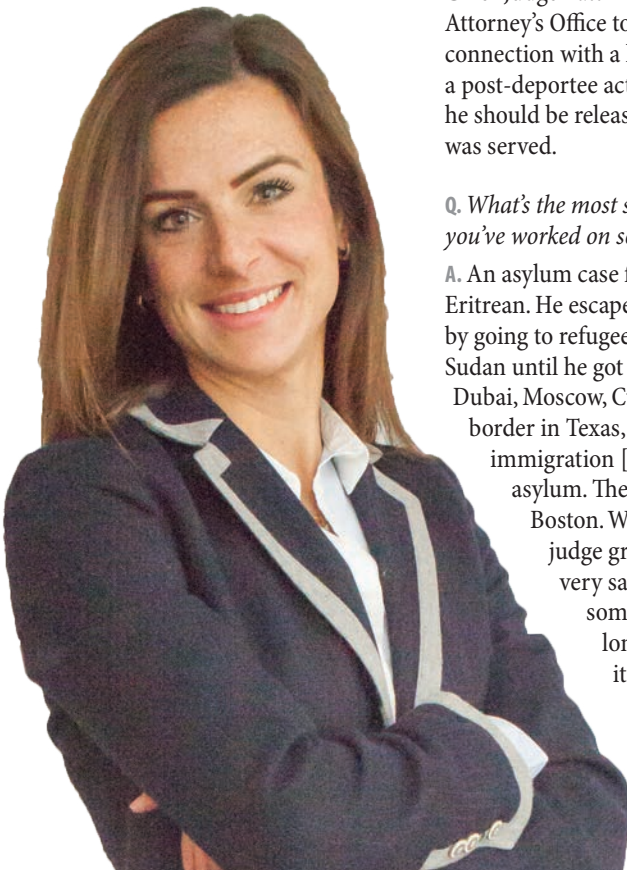


PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

AS A SOLO PRACTITIONER, Soraya Sadeghi is dedicated to providing exceptional family law representation. She is equally committed to her pro bono work with the Lawyer for the Day program at Suffolk Probate & Family Court. For the last three years, she has represented clients and provided training and mentorship to other attorneys. Sadeghi also volunteers with the Federal Bar Association’s CARE/RESTART programs and is a fundraiser for Bike for World Health.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. I would say the big accomplishment would be the completion of more than 37 federal District Court cases. In one case in particular, Chief Judge Patti B. Saris ordered the U.S. Attorney’s Office to pay my office legal fees in connection with a habeas corpus action for a post-deportee action. The court found that he should be released. So I thought justice was served.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?

A. An asylum case for a client who was Eritrean. He escaped national military service by going to refugee camps in Ethiopia and Sudan until he got enough money to go to Dubai, Moscow, Cuba and then the U.S. border in Texas, where he submitted to immigration [authorities] and claimed asylum. The case was transferred to Boston. We had an immigration judge grant him asylum. It was very satisfying and rewarding that someone could go on such a long journey and then make it here to the United States.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. My siblings. I’m one of five children, and we grew up in a very challenging environment, so they have been the biggest influences in my life.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. It can take a lifetime to build a reputation, but it can be destroyed in one instant.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. To work hard, and if they’re dealing with clients — because not all students are going to have jobs where they interact with clients — to always keep an open mind and to not pass judgment on your clients when they come in to see you.

Q. If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I think I would be a medical doctor. It’s another professional career where you can help people. My two sisters are doctors, and my baby brother is in medical school. I might even still go. Who knows?

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. [Former N.Y. Gov.] Eliot Spitzer. He was a great lawyer who had a rise and a downfall, but he still keeps going and working hard, and I look up to that. People have weaknesses

and sometimes have some bumps in the road, but he continued on with his work, even after his downfall.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?

A. Not being able to help every client that walks through the door. Specifically at the Lawyer for the Day program, there are just so many people who need help and there is not enough time. So it’s frustrating when you have to turn people away from help that you know you can give them.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. I take my stress from my work into my personal life.

Q. What is your most treasured possession?

A. My running shoes.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I played violin for 15 years.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. I was an information tech consultant at Accenture in Manhattan when I was 20.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Resilient.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. Run, bike, swim and yoga — any sports. **LV**

Victoria Santoro

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, MEEHAN, BOYLE, BLACK &
BOGDANOW, BOSTON | AGE: 28
LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL
BAR ADMISSION: 2010



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

VICTORIA M. SANTORO has built a successful practice in plaintiffs’ civil litigation, but that’s only part of what she has achieved since finishing law school. Santoro also has established herself as a speaker, panelist, author and blogger, educating other professionals on the use of social media, trial preparation and other topics. Santoro serves on the board of the Massachusetts Bar Association’s Young Lawyers Division. Before joining her firm, she held internships in the U.S. Attorney’s Office and the Middlesex County District Attorney’s Office.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. I find nothing more rewarding than hearing from our clients at the end of the case that they’re happy, satisfied and grateful for our representation. My firm generally focuses on representing single plaintiffs, so it provides a unique opportunity to get very close to one person and that person’s family.

Q. What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?

A. As a woman, some of my most meaningful cases have been representing victims of sexual assault. Because you’re forming a deep bond with a woman who has been through an experience that has shaken her entire world, it’s very rewarding to be able to effect change or, to the extent that you can, help somebody feel like they’ve been made whole again.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. I work with a small firm, so I often tell people that they not only hired me, they also adopted me. Michael Bogdanow is probably the most supportive individual I have ever come across. All the attorneys at my firm have filled different roles for me.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. When you start, you’re sitting in a room with these intelligent, accomplished people, and you’re thinking, “Do I pipe up and give my opinion? I’ve only been practicing law for three months.” I was told that you should never censor yourself. They hired you because they think you’re intelligent, and they want your perspective.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Being prepared is unbelievably important. If you are flawless in your presentation, you’re putting forward the best version of yourself and people sense it.

Q. If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I would have pursued written journalism or broadcast journalism. I also do triathlons and half-marathons, so I think a small part of me would have liked to become a personal trainer.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. Robert Morris, one of the first black lawyers in the United States. I think he would have had incredible insight and wisdom to pass on to lawyers today, given the hardships he faced and the type of world he lived, practiced and

was ultimately successful in.

Q. What’s the toughest part of your job?

A. Knowing that no matter what you do, you can’t ever completely fix the terrible injustice that has happened to your client or to a client’s family. We have the civil justice system we have, and I believe in it deeply, but it only goes so far when somebody has passed away.

Q. What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I’m vegan.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. Not achieving the things I’d like to achieve.

Q. What was your very first job?

A. Teaching tennis.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Passionate.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. I love to run. That really is helpful for me for managing stress. I also like to walk with my dog.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. Right now, no. I can’t imagine leaving my firm. **LV**

Courtney Shea

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, LOONEY & GROSSMAN,
BOSTON | AGE: 31 | LAW SCHOOL: SUFFOLK
UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL | BAR ADMISSION: 2008



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

WHILE DEVELOPING HER COMMERCIAL LITIGATION and malpractice/liability defense practice, Courtney C. Shea has contributed strong leadership to the Massachusetts Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division. This fall, she will become its first female chair. Recognizing the challenging legal market facing new graduates, Shea is committed to ensuring the MBA provides meaningful opportunities for education, networking and support. She also promotes MBA charitable drives among her peers and volunteers with the Dial-A-Lawyer program.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. Becoming the first female chair-elect of the Massachusetts Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division was a big accomplishment for me. I think it's an important group, and it influences a lot of young attorneys, so being able to be the head of that is a big accomplishment.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. Last year I worked on two cases that were tried in tandem in federal court. I second-chaired those trials, which were bench trials, and they went to a successful outcome for my clients.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. I have two mentors, both from Barron & Stadfeld, where I worked after my clerkship: Kevin Scanlon and Kerry Choi. They were instrumental in teaching me the basics of how to be lawyer, because it's a lot different when you're actually out in the field. They're still always willing to answer questions for me. It's really good having people who take the time to look out for younger lawyers and give them advice.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. This comes from a judge that I clerked for, Judge Robin Pavia. She stressed that when you're looking for a job, it's important to find something you really enjoy doing, because if you enjoy doing it, you're going to succeed at it.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Even though it's a tough job market right now, they should stick with the legal field if they really enjoy it. They should look for mentors, bar associations and places that can assist them in growing their career. It's important to have resources like that that you can rely upon as you move forward.

Q. If you hadn't become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?

A. I would have been an event planner. When I was in college and law school, I was always involved in extracurricular activities where I had to plan events. Today, with the Massachusetts Bar Association, I still get a piece of that.

Q. If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?

A. John Adams. Working in Massachusetts as an attorney, he's definitely someone to look up to as one of the founding fathers of the nation and [someone who was] instrumental in our country's

independence. One of the neatest things I found when I was sworn in in Faneuil Hall is that it's the same place where John Adams was sworn in as a lawyer. That really hit home to me.

Q. What's the toughest part of your job?

A. The amount of time that you have to put into it. It's hard finding a good work-life balance, but it is possible.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. I don't give myself enough time to rest. I'm always going. I wish I could be better at relaxing and taking it easy sometimes.

Q. What is your most treasured possession?

A. I'd say my Boston College football tailgate spot.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I was a studio art minor in college. I used to spend hours and hours oil painting during college.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. I play softball.

Q. Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?

A. Not at this point. I really enjoy working with a firm and being able to collaborate with others. **EW**

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David Travers

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, TODD & WELD, BOSTON | AGE: 33
LAW SCHOOL: SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL | BAR ADMISSION: 2006



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

DAVID H. TRAVERS takes every opportunity to show new attorneys, law students and high school kids that while the law is demanding, its potential for positive impact is great. Travers coordinates his firm’s internal mentoring program and serves on the hiring and marketing committees. In his construction and business litigation practice, he embraces technological tools such as e-discovery to ensure he provides the most effective representation possible. Travers is a founding member of the USA 500 Club, which brings together legal, accounting and financial professionals with civic and nonprofit leaders to address community issues.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*
A. For me, the achievement is that opportunity you get to solve your client’s problem, whether it’s affirmatively to right the wrong when they’re a plaintiff, or to defend them against someone who is coming after them. In the business of litigation, you get presented with a client who has an issue, and when you get to solve that issue for them and bring them a good resolution, that’s a great achievement.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*
A. There are two significant construction cases that ran over a number of years and were factually intense. In both, I worked on the contractor side, and the litigation was against a public entity. Public projects can be enormous; getting into that level of factual detail and dealing with the very fine legal points that get raised in high-stakes litigation is incredibly satisfying.

Q. *Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?*
A. I’ve been able to get great advice from my parents throughout my life. Professionally, I’ve worked at two firms and at both I’ve been fortunate to have partners who took an interest in what I was doing and took the time to coach me and point out those things that only come with experience.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*
A. Do the right thing.

Q. *What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?*
A. Recognize that there’s an enormous amount that you don’t know about practicing law, and that’s OK. In knowing that you need to learn more, you’re going to buckle down and do the hard work, whereas if you come out thinking you know everything, that’s a tough position to take when you’re new to practice.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*
A. In my free time, I often am found engaging

in activities that require you to sign an “If you die, it’s not our fault” waiver. I scuba dive, I skydive, I go skiing. I like to try to overcome obstacles or fear. I don’t particularly like heights and speed, so I try to do activities that expose me to both of those things.

Q. *What is your dream vacation?*
A. I had the privilege of going on my dream vacation for my honeymoon. I went on a safari in Tanzania. That had been my dream vacation for many years, and it was exactly as jaw-dropping as I had hoped.

Q. *What was your very first job?*
A. I was a sales clerk at CVS in my hometown.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*
A. Happy.

Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*
A. I really don’t. One of the things I enjoy about my practice is the ability to interact with my colleagues and brainstorm an issue, and that would be much more difficult if I was off on my own. **LM**

Anjali Waikar

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, KROKIDAS & BLUESTEIN, BOSTON
AGE: 36 | LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW | BAR ADMISSION: 2007



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

A STRONG BELIEF IN PUBLIC SERVICE led Anjali S. Waikar to law school and remains one of her most important values. Waikar first saw the potential for lawyers’ service to the community as a paralegal at South Brooklyn Legal Services, where she worked with low-income HIV-infected clients. Post-law school, she joined the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts and was selected for an Equal Justice Works fellowship in racial profiling and immigrants’ rights. Today, Waikar represents nonprofit, social services and health care organizations, supporting their front-line efforts with a professional expertise and personal commitment.

Q. *What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?*
A. I would say the two that stand out the most for me are my very first clients. They were undocumented immigrants who were stopped by the police for a pretextual traffic stop and transferred to federal immigration authorities to face removal from the United States. After close to six years of litigation, the government agreed not to prosecute their cases. I’m still in

touch with those clients, and it’s certainly something I feel very proud of that those individuals are still in the United States with their families.

Q. *What’s the most satisfying case or matter you’ve worked on so far?*
A. It’s hard for me to single out one case, but generally speaking my clients do such incredible

work that it’s really a pleasure to be able to serve so many different organizations doing such a tremendous amount of good in Massachusetts.

Q. *What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?*
A. My mother always told me that it’s better to be very specialized in your field, whatever field it is, so that you become the go-to person in that area. I’m not sure my legal career has taken on that advice, but I do think there’s a lot of value in becoming an expert in a certain area so that your name becomes synonymous with that issue. The other piece of advice is to do what you love and what you’re truly passionate about, because then you won’t see it as work.

Q. *If you hadn’t become a lawyer, what field would you have entered?*
A. I probably would have gone into international development.

Q. *If you could meet any famous lawyer in history, who would it be?*
A. Gandhi.

Q. *What’s the toughest part of your job?*
A. Managing the expectations of so many different people at once, including clients, partners, colleagues, potential clients, etc. That can be challenging. I’m continually

learning how to improve my juggling skills.

Q. *What talent would you most like to have?*
A. Deep intuition.

Q. *What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?*
A. I need hard and fast deadlines.

Q. *What’s one thing about you that might surprise people?*
A. I love public speaking. I literally get a high from it.

Q. *What is your greatest fear?*
A. I have a phobia of raccoons.

Q. *What was your very first job?*
A. I was a server at Dairy Queen.

Q. *Describe yourself in one word.*
A. I’ve been told I’m disarming.

Q. *What do you do to blow off steam?*
A. I’m a wannabe gym junkie.

Q. *Do you see yourself striking out on your own one day?*
A. No. One of the things I appreciate about my firm is the collaborative atmosphere. I appreciate being able to draw upon the various expertise of the different people in my firm. **LM**

Ruthanne Withers

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, COOGAN, SMITH, MCGAHAN, LORINCZ, JACOBI & SHANLEY, ATTLEBORO

AGE: 36 | LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN

UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

BAR ADMISSION: 2005



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

RUTHANNE D. WITHERS has dedicated her family law expertise to helping people facing domestic violence, divorce, custody disputes and other challenging issues. After eight years as a staff attorney at Community Legal Aid, she joined a firm where she could serve moderate-income clients who do not qualify for legal services. Withers provides pro bono representation, mentors attorneys who are new to domestic violence cases, and trains attorneys through the Women's Bar Association Family Law Project for Battered Women. She is a board member for New Hope, Inc., a domestic violence and sexual assault agency.

Q. What do you consider your biggest achievement as a lawyer to date?

A. The *Morales v. Morales* case, representing a woman seeking a modification of her child support order. Ultimately, we argued before the full panel of the [Supreme Judicial Court]. The whole process was incredibly challenging, and when we ended up with a favorable decision at the SJC, it was very exciting.

Q. What's the most satisfying case or matter you've worked on so far?

A. The first trial I ever did was an interesting case of arranged marriage out of Pakistan, and I represented the wife in an annulment and divorce. That was exciting because I had been practicing for less than a year, but I was handling the whole trial myself and getting experience.

Q. Who was your most important mentor, and how has that person impacted your career?

A. Tina Paradiso and retired Judge Edward Ginsburg. Tina

is a great trial attorney, so I learned a lot about trying cases in the courtroom. Judge Ginsburg had such a unique perspective from the bench, and he forced me to think of things from a judge's point of view. Here, I'm learning a lot from Paul Lorincz. Being in private practice is quite different, and he has been very supportive.

Q. What is the best piece of professional advice you ever received?

A. When you're in Family Court, it's important to work well with all the players involved — the judge, clerks, court officers, everyone in the system.

Q. What advice would you give to students just graduating from law school?

A. Family law cases tend to be dramatic and emotional, so I would advise people to separate their professional and personal lives as much as they can. Also, try to foster cordial relationships with your opposing counsel. It's a small legal community in Massachusetts, so you're going to be working with the same people over and over again.

Q. What's the toughest part of your job?

A. You're dealing with people who are going through a tough time, so there are a lot of emotions involved. It's tough to explain

to people our role in the process: I'm an attorney, not a therapist or a social worker.

Q. What is the trait you most dislike in yourself?

A. I can advocate very well on behalf of others, but sometimes I feel like I can't advocate as well for myself, whether it's buying a car or in everyday life.

Q. What's one thing about you that might surprise people?

A. I once attended a state arrival for King Juan Carlos of Spain. The White House asked if any George Washington students [with] upper-level Spanish could help to welcome guests, so I got to hang out there. I met Whoopi Goldberg and Sammy Sosa.

Q. What is your greatest fear?

A. I'm afraid of flying.


Q. What was your very first job?

A. I worked in a movie theater, taking tickets, and I worked my way up to concessions.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.

A. Fun-loving.

Q. What do you do to blow off steam?

A. I love to exercise. Right now I'm on an Ultimate Frisbee team. 

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Weil, Gotshal & Manges

TWO FEATURES of the pro bono program at Weil, Gotshal & Manges are especially notable. First, attorneys serve a diverse set of organizations, from the Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project to the Longwood Symphony Orchestra.

Second, attorneys do more than strictly provide legal expertise. Along with staff, they give their time to sort food donations at the Greater Boston Food Bank; organize donated clothing for Room to Grow, which supports babies and toddlers in low-income families; and prepare meals for homeless women at On the Rise.

“Our pro bono service challenges each member of our firm to identify some organization, program or issue that they are truly passionate about and to come up with ways to be of service,” says Patrick O’Toole, Jr., a partner and Pro Bono Committee member. “When someone identifies a cause ... we pride ourselves on supporting their commitment.”

The firm aspires to have every attorney give at least 50 hours of service each year. Partners are expected to take on a pro bono project annually, and each new attorney is required to do so. Over the last decade, that commitment has represented more than 800,000 hours.

According to O’Toole, the firm’s view is that practicing law is a privilege that carries responsibility.

“As lawyers, we are very fortunate to have been given the unique skills to provide organizations and individuals with access to legal services and the justice system, which they may not have otherwise



The Weil Gotshal team, from left: (seated) Mariel Dator, Shayla Harlev and Andrew Burke; (standing) Patrick J. O’Toole, Corey Brown, Bryan Settelen and Benton B. Bodamer

had,” he says. In 2013, the firm’s work on behalf of Hurricane Sandy victims earned it the Legal Aid Society’s Pro Bono Publico Award. More than 80 attorneys helped people obtain relief from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. In partnership with the Legal Aid Society, they also filed a class action suit to stop New York City from discontinuing a rental assistance program for those left homeless by the storm. Thanks to a temporary restraining order and a preliminary

injunction, families had the opportunity to locate alternative housing. Among its many pro bono relationships, Weil is outside counsel for the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley, the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corp. and the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation. The firm also has a longstanding relationship with PAIR and has obtained asylum for numerous clients. Other pro bono clients include Edesia Global Nutrition Solutions, Kids in Need of Defense, PALS Animal Life Savers,

the Northeast Wilderness Trust and the Middlesex County District Attorney’s Office 209A Pro Bono Program. O’Toole attributes the success of Weil’s pro bono program, in part, to the fact that the firm encourages attorneys to pursue causes that are meaningful to them. “If they feel there is something they can be of service to, and it makes sense for that organization, our firm and our partners will support them,” he says. “I think that really does distinguish us as a culture, as a firm and as a pro bono program.”

Susan Abbott

POSITION: PARTNER, GOODWIN PROCTER, BOSTON
LAW SCHOOL: DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

ONE FUND BOSTON, the charitable fund for victims of the Boston Marathon bombing, depended on many people in the Boston community. Susan L. Abbott is honored to have been one of them.

Less than 24 hours after the April 15, 2013, attack, John Hancock had

pledged \$1 million to the fund and asked Goodwin Procter for legal assistance. As chair of the firm’s Exempt Organization Group, Abbott was asked to take the lead. “It’s something that meant so much to the city and to all of us who have been involved,” she says. “It was a huge honor and a privilege to be a part of it, and the level of support was both inspiring and humbling.” While Abbott’s expertise played a special role in organizing the fund, the firm contributed “a huge team effort,” she says. “There were a lot of people here who were involved.” Within 48 hours, the fund had more than \$10 million in donations. The next challenge was to incorporate and obtain expedited

“The way that [One Fund Boston] qualified as a 501(c)(3) is, I think, a new approach to how disaster relief organizations have qualified. Overall, it’s something that worked very well as a public-private partnership that brought a lot of sectors of the community together in a very effective way.”

501(c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service — not an easy task. “There were challenges on two fronts,” Abbott says. One was timing. The IRS typically takes a year or longer to approve new applications. The second involved the rules that the IRS applies to disaster relief charities. “Ultimately, we were able to work with the IRS to get the organization approved based on its very close ties with the city of Boston,” Abbott says. She hopes to see One Fund Boston serve as a model for other cities. “The way that this qualified as a 501(c)(3) is, I think, a new approach to how disaster relief organizations have qualified,” Abbott says. “Overall, it’s something

that worked very well as a public-private partnership that brought a lot of sectors of the community together in a very effective way.” In her 14 years with the firm, Abbott has dedicated considerable pro bono service to nonprofit organizations, particularly the Lawyers Clearinghouse and the Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston. For 10 years, she and her colleagues have offered seminars for people who seek to establish nonprofits. Working with tax-exempt organizations is particularly rewarding, she says, because they often have a great need for assistance and it is a meaningful way to support the community. “I’ve found it to be a wonderful experience, in terms of the kinds of groups and people that I’ve had the chance to work with over the years,” she says. In 2005, Abbott received her firm’s Robert B. Fraser Pro Bono Award. She serves on the Charitable Planning Committee of the American College of Trust and Estate Counsel and MCLE’s Estate Planning Curriculum Advisory Committee. She is a former co-chair of the Boston Bar Association’s Trusts and Estates Section Estate Planning Committee, and a member of the Boston Public Library’s Collections Committee and the advisory board of Teach Plus.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Lennox Chase Jr.

POSITION: FOUNDER, CHASE LEGAL SERVICES,
WALPOLE | LAW SCHOOL: NORTHEASTERN
UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

IF LENNOX C. CHASE JR. has a motto, it might well be: “Pay it forward.”

Noting that he benefitted from the help of others as a young person, Chase says he is now motivated and inspired to extend the same helping hand to others.

As a result, he provides pro bono representation and board member participation to a wide range of organizations, including Casa Myrna Vazquez, South Shore Habitat for Humanity, Top Banana Education Board, the Hale Reservation and Needham Bank. He is an advisor to the Urban League of Eastern Massachusetts and a trustee for The Angel Fund.

Chase says he started from “humble beginnings.” As a boy, he participated in the Head Start program and the Metco busing program, which enabled him to attend better-funded schools from kindergarten through high school. That experience broadened his horizons and planted the early seeds of a desire to help others succeed.

“Seeing the challenge of people trying to elevate themselves and looking for a hand up has always inspired me. Now I’m grateful to be in a position to pay it forward.”

“Seeing the challenge of people trying to elevate themselves and looking for a hand up has always inspired me,” Chase says. “Now I’m grateful to be in a position to pay it forward.”

As a first-generation college student, Chase went on to law school and established his own practice in real estate and banking law. He also runs MyBarPrep, which provides online tutoring for law students studying for the bar exam. That, too, reflects his desire to help people pursue their goals — in this case, to become attorneys.

“Helping someone achieve a lifelong goal and empowering someone to face down a hurdle, you get inspired by that process,” Chase says.

He also finds inspiration in his work with Casa Myrna, where victims of domestic violence work to rebuild their lives.

“That shows you the power of the

human spirit and of being tenacious and determined and focused — not letting others or bad situations hold you back,” he says.

Chase’s work with the Hale Reservation is especially meaningful to him. Each year, the organization enables 4,000 children from the inner city to experience nature at camps and other programs. Chase, a Dorchester native, says he appreciates the importance of that exposure for children who rarely see green spaces.

“It changes your worldview,” he says. “It shows you there’s a world beyond what you knew, so it’s a very powerful process for a young child to experience.”

Chase’s membership on the board of Needham Bank fits the theme of providing opportunities for people to empower themselves. By financing small business owners, they, too, can be allowed to move forward to achieve goals that once may have seemed impossible.

Reflecting on the path he has traveled, Chase says he feels gratitude daily for the opportunity to be an attorney, a husband and a father. He especially values the opportunity to contribute his time, energy and expertise to nonprofit organizations.

“I’m most proud of being able to help people — who are down and out — to elevate themselves,” he says. **EW**

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IN PRO BONO

Sander Rikleen

“What’s somewhat unusual about this is that, in many ways, we are the keepers of the history of the Jewish community.”



POSITION: PARTNER, SHERIN & LODGEN, BOSTON |
LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON COLLEGE LAW SCHOOL

WHEN SANDER A. RIKLEEN first got involved with the Jewish Cemetery Association of Massachusetts, he simply signed on as a board member. But then one thing led to another.

Twelve years later, Rikleen has provided JCAM with substantial pro bono services, initiated an ambitious documentary project and, along the way, discovered fascinating history. He has served as board president since 2006.

“These aren’t just Jewish issues,” Rikleen says.

“They’re history issues and they’re cultural issues, so I find the whole thing really interesting. I had the expertise they could use, so I got deeper and deeper.”

The Boston Jewish Federation started JCAM to care for abandoned and neglected Jewish cemeteries. One

PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

solution was to streamline ownership of the properties, some of which were adjacent yet belonged to different organizations. With his real estate expertise, Rikleen was well-suited to help JCAM track down records and handle related transactions.

In light of JCAM’s limited budget, Rikleen’s ability to help with numerous legal issues, from zoning to contracts to lawsuits, was extremely valuable.

“I knew how to do those things, so I began helping them,” he says.

He also started to get interested in the history behind the cemeteries.

“I started by asking, ‘Why are there so many Jewish cemeteries?’” he says. “The more I asked, the more interesting it got. ... There was this whole network of Jewish organizations, some of them no longer in existence.”

Realizing there was no resource for people to learn about the cemeteries, Rikleen decided JCAM ought to create one. That led to a guidebook and the Cemeteries Are for the Living program, in which JCAM leads historical tours. In addition, JCAM now has a website for genealogical research.

“What’s somewhat unusual about this is that, in many ways, we are the keepers of the history of the Jewish community,” Rikleen says.

He also worked with JCAM and colleagues from his firm to create a new Jewish cemetery that is notable because it accepts interfaith families for burial. That presented challenges in the form of land acquisition, financing, permitting and negotiating with community members.

Today, JCAM oversees 110 cemeteries, most of which are no longer used for burials but still require facility and landscaping care. It has also become a model for other cities facing the problem of abandoned cemeteries.

Meanwhile, Rikleen saw another opportunity, this time related to his son’s high school crew team, the Wayland-Weston Rowing Association. Realizing the students badly needed a new boathouse, Rikleen and other parents raised money, partnered with the parks department and built a new one.

“I hope it will serve as an example of other ways that towns and local organizations can partner together to achieve what neither could achieve on their own,” he says.

Rikleen says he is most proud of being able to use his knowledge to help others.

“If you have valuable expertise and you donate it, you can help create an interesting, meaningful project that others will benefit from for a long time,” he says. **EW**

Excellence
IN PRO BONO

Tara Shuman

POSITION: COUNSEL, VERRILL DANA, BOSTON
LAW SCHOOL: SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL



WHEN SETTTLING ON AN AREA in which to develop her pro bono expertise, Tara A.T. Shuman felt drawn to immigration and political asylum cases because of their potential to provide substantive help to clients.

“When they have fled their country and gone through what they’ve gone through, this is often their last hope,” she says. “They really have a chance at a new beginning, and a new beginning for their family, if they are able to stay here. I just find it so rewarding to be able to help them do that.”

In 2013, Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project honored Shuman as its Pro Bono Asylum Attorney of the Year.

“It’s very tangible work when you know you’re affecting a hospital organization that will then treat patients.”

Shuman has obtained a favorable outcome in four affirmative asylum cases, among them an El Salvadoran family whose political opinions made them a target for gangs. She also represented a young father from Iraq whose wife was killed and son severely injured during Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition, she has counseled clients at the Dorchester House Multi-Service Center through the Medical-Legal Partnership Boston.

In 2012, Shuman was representing a Ugandan woman who had been persecuted for her political beliefs. That summer, Shuman’s own life took a sharp turn when she was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. During her six-month medical leave, Shuman continued to work with her client, determined to complete the process they had started.

“I had been working with this client for a year and a half, and she had been through a lot,” Shuman says. “For her to have a consistent supporter in me, no matter what was going on in my life, that was not something I was willing to give up.”

The client’s Immigration Court hearing

happened to coincide with Shuman’s first day back at work, and ultimately she was able to obtain asylum for her client. Now, she is pursuing derivative asylum for the woman’s husband and daughter.

Effective representation of asylum cases, Shuman says, starts with genuine caring and a desire to help people. A streak of stubbornness can be useful, too.

“The government can be a tricky thing to navigate. Often, it really is just a matter of being very patient and persistent.”

Most recently, Shuman has been working with an attorney who is new to asylum cases, assisting his representation of a physically disabled woman from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Serving in an educational and mentoring role is familiar to Shuman, who was a high school teacher for five years before becoming a lawyer. She now concentrates her practice on health law, advising hospitals, health systems and medical schools on issues related to health care reform, corporate transactions, conflicts of interest, regulatory guidance, and academic and clinical research.

“To me, it’s very tangible work when you know you’re affecting a hospital organization that will then treat patients,” she says. “It’s very rewarding. Our clients have great missions, and that’s always nice to be able to help them forward their mission.” **EW**

PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

Excellence
IN PRO BONO

Katy Ward

POSITION: ASSOCIATE, MINTZ, LEVIN, COHN,
FERRIS, GLOVSKY & POPEO, BOSTON
LAW SCHOOL: BOSTON
UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

KATY E. WARD has a simple yet powerful reason for her extensive commitment to pro bono service: “As lawyers, we have an obligation to do this work because there are people who are less fortunate, and we have an ability that’s different from other fields to help people.”

Ward, who joined her firm’s Pro Bono Committee in 2012, notes that Mintz Levin’s support has made it possible for her to pursue so many pro bono opportunities.

As co-director of the firm’s Housing Court program, Ward coordinates

participation with the Lawyer for the Day program at Boston Housing Court by staffing cases, recruiting attorneys and training them. A small commitment from an attorney, she says, can provide major benefits to clients.

As co-director of her firm’s Housing Court program, Katy Ward coordinates participation with the Lawyer for the Day program at Boston Housing Court by staffing cases, recruiting attorneys and training them. A small commitment from an attorney, she says, can provide major benefits to clients.

“By just giving them advice, you can really make a difference in someone’s life,” she says.

As a result of her Housing Court work, Ward was asked to co-chair the Boston Bar Association’s Real Estate Public Service Committee in 2012.

She also participates in her firm’s domestic violence program and appealed one of the first harassment protective order cases to be heard by the Appeals Court.

She advises nonprofit organizations, and she co-leads Mintz Levin’s participation in the corporate pro bono program of the Association of Corporate Counsel.

One of Ward’s biggest achievements is her work on the inaugural Know Your Rights program, developed by the

Women’s Bar Association and Women’s Bar Foundation in 2012. Mintz Levin partnered with the organizations to create a nine-month program designed to educate leaders of nonprofits serving low-income women and children about legal issues and resources to enhance their client services.

“The feedback has been great,” Ward says. “It highlighted the issues they need to focus on and be aware of.”

The program earned the National Conference of Women’s Bar Associations’ Public Service Award. Now, organizers are planning the 2014 program with the Massachusetts Bar Association and South Asian Bar Association. They also are creating webinars and toolkits, Ward reports, with the hope that the program will be a model for bar associations nationwide.

Ward’s work was recognized by the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law in 2011, and in 2013 she was asked to join the Massachusetts Bar Association’s Individual Rights & Responsibilities Section.

She serves on the Jimmy Fund Council of Greater Boston and has volunteered at the Children’s Hospital’s oncology floor monthly since 2006. She received the Jimmy Fund’s Bob Cheyne Lifetime Commitment Award in 2013. [LW](#)

Excellence
PARALEGAL

Jennifer Collins

POSITION: PARALEGAL, BOVE & LANGA, BOSTON

JENNIFER COLLINS had been a paralegal at Bove & Langa for several years when she decided to obtain her certificate in paralegal studies. The additional training and study weren’t required, but going the extra mile to continue her education was just something she wanted to do.

That decision is a good example of Collins’ determination to set high standards for herself and to meet them, day after day.

In her 12 years with the firm, Collins has earned a



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

When the new Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code took effect, that “changed everything we do with Probate Court,” Jennifer Collins says. In response, she developed an office-wide system to deal with the new forms, timelines and requirements.

reputation for being willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done, without stopping to worry about whether it’s “her job” or not. As a result, she has earned her firm’s respect for her work ethic, her excellent performance, and her commitment to being a team player.

“I’m happy that I found a job that I enjoy doing and that I feel like I excel at,” she says. “It’s just my thing — being able to do good work, with filings or a client or an estate — knowing that I’m doing a good job and making the client happy.”

As one of two paralegals supporting five attorneys, Collins stays busy with matters related to the firm’s trusts and estates work. She handles a significant amount of trust administration, managing financial records

and annual accountings and working with nonprofit foundation clients in their grant-making activities.

Initially drawn to the structure of the law, Collins says she still finds the “behind the scenes” work interesting. The ability to prioritize a heavy and ever-changing workload is critical to performing well in her position, adds Collins, a top-notch organizer who pays close attention to detail.

“There are a lot of timing and deadline issues, so being on top of deadlines and scheduling” is key, she says.

When needed, Collins also takes the initiative to design new procedures in order to accommodate new legislation and changes in the law. For instance, when the new Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code took effect, that “changed everything we do with Probate Court,” she says. In response, she developed an office-wide system to deal with the new forms, timelines and requirements.

Outside the firm, Collins participates in athletic events to raise money for charity, participating in two or three each year. She is a frequent participant in the Lawyers Have Heart 5K, which her firm supports annually, Spin for Hope and Walk for Hunger. [LW](#)

Joanne McBride

“I have my finger on the pulse of pretty much everything that’s going on around here. My managing partners point everybody to me: ‘Talk to Joanne and make sure she knows what’s going on.’ Then they expect me to solve it as much as I can.”

POSITION: OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR, SEYFARTH SHAW, BOSTON

THERE’S A PHRASE that’s become commonplace in Seyfarth Shaw’s Boston office, and it speaks volumes about the importance of its office administrator: “Talk to Joanne.”

A 15-year veteran of the firm, Joanne McBride has helped to grow the Boston office from the ground up since it opened in 1999 with seven attorneys. The team now includes more than 150 employees.



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

“I have my finger on the pulse of pretty much everything that’s going on around here,” she says. “My managing partners point everybody to me: ‘Talk to Joanne and make sure she knows what’s going on.’ Then they expect me to solve it as much as I can.” McBride started out as a legal secretary and a training coordinator. At first, she wasn’t sure she wanted the responsibility of running an office. She quickly found that the job suits her well.

“I like being able to remove roadblocks and seeing things come to a finish, and I like being involved in the success of the office,” she says.

McBride oversees all of the office’s administrative departments, including day-to-day operational matters, human resources and information technology. She also works on several of the firm’s national efforts, including the Global Mobility Department and the Labor & Employment Department budget.

“I like to know what’s going on in case there’s anything I need to do to jump in and help, or to solve issues between us and the main office,” says McBride, a past president of Boston’s Association of Legal HR Managers

As the firm’s longest-serving office administrator, McBride serves as a resource and a mentor for her counterparts in other offices.

Excelling in her role, she says, requires

a down-to-earth personality and an unflappable willingness to “be in the weeds” with co-workers. “You need to understand where they’re coming from. You can’t just listen to them and push it off. You need to be nice,” she says. “That’s one thing I think people would say about me. . . . That’s how I was brought up: to treat people how you want to be treated.”

With everything that has changed in the legal field during her tenure, McBride says the most challenging part of her job has been helping attorneys to recognize and embrace new ways of doing business.

“People have to think differently about how they’re going to get the same work done, whether you’re doing more with less or asking people to do different things,” she says. “It’s really getting people to think about the way the workforce has changed, the way we do our work, and the way we serve the client.”

McBride is the firm’s liaison with Best Buddies of Massachusetts, which provides leadership and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. With the help of McBride’s leadership, the firm now employs two Best Buddies clients, supports the annual bike ride fundraiser, provides office space to Best Buddies International, and has encouraged other Seyfarth Shaw offices to connect with chapters in their own cities. ■

Debora Kennedy

POSITION: OFFICE MANAGER/PARALEGAL, BRICK & SUGARMAN, CAMBRIDGE

THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, when Debora A. Kennedy came on board as a paralegal for solo practitioner James L. Brick, she had no clue just how much her role would grow and evolve. Today, Kennedy still handles paralegal work, but she also is responsible for all office management at Brick & Sugarman, a firm that now has five attorneys.

Brick’s practice took its first step toward growth in 2010, when he partnered with Thalia H. Sugarman. Twice the attorneys meant twice the accounting, and Kennedy was asked to step in. She had never been a bookkeeper before, but she embraced the challenge, learning QuickBooks and the accounting principles she would need to keep the business on track.

“I panic a little inside, and then I get it done,” Kennedy says. “I just do it.”

Her contributions didn’t end there. As the firm took on more attorneys, it needed more established



PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

“I never thought I’d be part of something so incredible as watching a law firm start out so small and grow so big. I’m glad to be part of it and part of the decision-making and trying to figure out the best way for this firm to run smoothly.”

procedures, and Kennedy played a key role in developing them.

“We’ve grown from one person to seven [staff], and we’re still growing,” she says. “I never thought I’d be part of something so incredible as watching a law firm start out so small and grow so big. I’m glad to be part of it and part of the decision-making and trying to figure out the best way for this firm to run smoothly.”

Kennedy handles a significant portion of the firm’s business operations, including health insurance, liability insurance, office leasing, accounts payable and other matters. On a typical day, she might go from trial preparation to accounting to scheduling

meetings to making sure the printer isn’t jammed.

From her perspective, one of the most important parts of her job is supporting the attorneys in a way that allows them to focus on serving clients. That means that when the firm needs to move forward on critical decisions, Kennedy often is the one who gathers the information and facilitates the evaluation process.

“I will do my homework and get the information for them, and then we will sit down and make an educated decision for the firm,” she says.

Kennedy credits her success at the firm with her willingness to jump in and overcome a challenge in order to learn new skills.

“It’s pushed me to do things I never thought I would do,” she says.

Kennedy’s employers describe her as the backbone of the office, noting that they have entrusted her to handle every aspect of their professional practice.

Kennedy believes she was fortunate to have taken that paralegal job, back when it was still a one-attorney office.

“I got lucky,” she says. “I didn’t just find a job; I found a career.” ■

Liz Cerasuolo

POSITION: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, FISH & RICHARDSON, BOSTON



LIZ B. CERASUOLO has an eye for detail that is almost unmatched. Case in point: When Fish & Richardson relocated its Boston offices, she made sure that the last four digits of the new ZIP code were “1878,” the year the firm was founded.

“We’re so strategic and thoughtful in everything we do, which is how I feel we are with our marketing, too. Little things like that may seem insignificant, and you might not notice it right away, but it’s always going to be there,” she says of the ZIP code.

That’s not to say Cerasuolo doesn’t also have her eye on the big picture. As director of communications since 2007, she has guided the firm’s response to a significant shift in the way attorneys communicate with clients and potential clients. One of her team’s biggest initiatives was to launch a social media campaign in 2009, together with

“I think we’ve only scratched the surface of what we can do for legal marketing. There’s a lot still that we’re digging into.”

an ambitious search engine optimization program. Their work paid off, increasing organic traffic to the firm’s website by 250 percent.

“When we started to dig through our numbers to set goals [for this year], we were pretty excited about that,” Cerasuolo says.

She also collaborates with the firm’s attorneys to help them engage social and mobile media to network and build their practices. She starts by learning about each lawyer’s practice, goals and clients, and then researches options that would be a good match.

“We talk a lot about putting yourself in your clients’ shoes and taking a look at what are your clients doing, and [the attorneys] have gotten on board with that,” Cerasuolo says. “If your client is communicating in a certain way, that’s how you need to communicate, too.”

The accomplishment she is most proud of is successfully increasing the firm’s touch

points with clients and taking advantage of emerging opportunities in the field.

“I think we’ve only scratched the surface of what we can do for legal marketing,” she says. “There’s a lot still that we’re digging into.”

Cerasuolo is vice president of the Legal Marketing Association’s New England Region and she co-chaired the 2013 regional conference. She also worked with the LMA to launch “Future Leaders,” a program that provides mentorship to younger colleagues. This year, she will be a featured speaker at the LMA national conference.

Cerasuolo is her firm’s coordinator of the Boston Debate League, a nonprofit organization that supports academic debate teams in Boston public high schools. In 2013, the firm became a sponsor of City Championships, a debate competition for more than 300 students; Cerasuolo worked closely with the league to coordinate the tournament. Most recently, the league invited her to join its development committee.

“I love the idea of being able to provide a service to someone else, teeing things up and sending them out the door,” she says. “I love making our clients shine and, beyond that, the attorneys.” **LW**

PHOTO BY MERRILL SHEA

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Beth Cuzzone

POSITION: DIRECTOR OF CLIENT SERVICE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, GOULSTON & STORRS, BOSTON



TO BETH M. CUZZONE, having the right skills is only half the equation of successful legal marketing and business development; the second half is finding the right chemistry with the right firm. Cuzzone certainly has the skills, and she found the chemistry at Goulston & Storrs. Since Cuzzone came on board in 2001, she and her team have won more than 20 awards for legal marketing. “I’ve been incredibly fortunate to have the kind of ... colleagues that I’ve had, because that’s the secret sauce: having a bunch of people on the team who have leadership and great ideas,” she says. The firm’s willingness to take a chance on creative ideas, Cuzzone says, has paid off with innovation and distinctive strategies. “Every morning there’s a new challenge,” she says. “Let’s try some things that other firms haven’t necessarily tried, or let’s try something new and different for clients or for our brand or for market awareness. That makes it very exciting to come to work.”

“You have to be incredibly persistent because you’re trying to get people to do things that they didn’t go to law school to do. Marketing and sales is not always intuitive and a hot priority for lawyers.”

Cuzzone’s business development work includes in-house sales training, client relationship support, firm branding and external communications. She also partners with attorneys to gather client feedback, learning what’s working well and where they see room for improvement. “It’s all about client service — keeping those clients and growing those clients,” she says. “We have a mantra: ‘Every one of our clients is another law firm’s prospect.’ It’s our role and responsibility to think about how we are constantly adding value to clients.” Cuzzone has been instrumental in helping the firm’s attorneys appreciate the importance of a sales culture, sometimes a challenge in a profession that, historically,

has not embraced that approach. “You have to be incredibly persistent because you’re trying to get people to do things that they didn’t go to law school to do,” she says. “Marketing and sales is not always intuitive and a hot priority for lawyers.” Her strategy is to speak their language: “We can switch the conversation from sales to solving problems and creating solutions.” Cuzzone, a past president of the Legal Marketing Association’s New England chapter, is a fellow of the College of Law Practice Management, a member of Suffolk University Law School’s Law Practice Technology Institute advisory board and co-founder of the Legal Sales and Service Organization. “I’ve been truly fortunate to have landed at Goulston & Storrs when I did, when the marketing function at law firms began to shift. To some people, it was a luxury, and then when it became a necessity, the industry started looking at marketing and everything that goes with it,” she says. “I just came to the right firm at the right time, and it’s been one terrific ride.” [LW](#)

DANIEL F. TOOMEY
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Excellence

Judge Suzanne DelVecchio (ret.)



JUDGE SUZANNE V. DELVECCHIO is a former Superior Court judge who retired in 2006 after a 21-year career on the bench. In 1999, DelVecchio became the state’s first-ever female chief justice of the Superior Court, implementing the court’s Business Litigation Session during her tenure. DelVecchio also previously served as the regional administrative justice in Plymouth County. Before her appointment to the bench in 1985, DelVecchio was a partner at Boorstein & DelVecchio in Boston. She also worked as

corporate counsel for the City of Boston and as a staff attorney for the Boston Legal Aid Society. A graduate of Wheaton College and Boston College Law School, DelVecchio has served as an adjunct professor at Boston University School of Law and received honorary degrees from Suffolk University Law School and New England School of Law. She is the recipient of the Judicial Merit Award from the Massachusetts Academy of Trial Lawyers, the Distinguished Jurist Award from the Massachusetts Association of Women Lawyers and the Essex County Bar

Association, and the Jurist of the Year Award from the Justinian Law Society. DelVecchio is a former member of Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly’s Board of Editors. Since her retirement from the bench, DelVecchio has worked as a senior mediator and arbitrator at Commonwealth Mediation & Conciliation, Inc. She currently sits on the Massachusetts Bar Association’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Criminal Justice Compensation, which examines the impact of low prosecutor and public defender salaries on the state’s criminal justice system. [LW](#)

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IN LEGAL JOURNALISM

Carl Stevens



CARL STEVENS is an award-winning general assignment reporter for WBZ NewsRadio 1030, who also uses a video camera to report on unique and enterprising stories for RadioVision on [wbz.com](#).

Stevens was part of the news team that received the 1995 Edward R. Murrow Award for Best Breaking News for its coverage of the John Salvi abortion clinic shootings, and the Murrow award for feature reporting in 1996 for a story entitled “Blue M&M’s.” He went on to receive the first-ever Edward R. Murrow National Award for Writing, presented in 1999. Stevens was also named “Best Radio Reporter” by Boston Magazine in its August 1997 “Best of Boston” issue. Prior to joining WBZ in 1990, Stevens

worked at WEEI Radio in Boston; WENH-TV Channel 11, the public television station in Durham, N.H.; and WOKQ Radio in Dover, N.H. In addition to his work in radio, Stevens has performed a variety of other jobs including baling hay, playing drums, roofing and teaching English to junior high school students. Born in Goshen, Ind., Stevens received a bachelor’s degree in English from Goshen College and a master’s in English from the University of New Hampshire. [LW](#)

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