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Finding Your Passion in the Profession

By Amy Elizabeth Stewart



Amy Elizabeth Stewart

I am one of those lawyers who actually admits that I like practicing law. Among close friends, I have even been known to say I love it. After spending the first 17 years of my career in a big-firm environment, I recently made the decision as a mid-career lawyer to launch my own firm. Now, not only do I love practicing law, I also love the business components of running a practice. I'm thankful for the circumstances—even

those that were, at the time, less than pleasant—that propelled me into my new venture.

The Circumstances

I am not a natural seeker of change. I struggle with the idea that abandoning a course of action, even one that is completely unproductive, is somehow admitting defeat. I

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The Benefits of Sharing Knowledge

By Pamela Ginsburg



Pamela Ginsburg

is the passion we, as neophytes, shared for the legal profession. Our passion was evident in our excitement and, sometimes, terror as we crossed each milestone in preparation for becoming lawyers: the first Socratic class discussion, the first legal memorandum, the first client we represented in legal clinic. The halls were abuzz with our zest for the law. At times, the atmosphere was electrifying.

It is the same atmosphere I notice every August when I arrive to teach a class as an adjunct professor at a local law school. My students are passionate about the legal profession. Many of them have just completed their first summers as associates or interns.

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The announcement for my law school class reunion just arrived, and it stirs up many memories. Regardless of whether we loved or hated law school (I am unabashedly among the former), what stands out about my class

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Letter from the Chairs



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Summer for litigators may not be the same as our halcyon days of childhood summers, where months of long slow lazy days stretched ahead of us, during which we could plan how we would reinvent ourselves during the next school year. Back then, summer was a time for reflection and re-creation. The opportunities for renewal may not come that frequently for adults, but summertime for many litigators does slow down a bit. Summer is a particularly good time to reflect on this issue's theme, "passion for the profession."

We all recognize that there must be some greater meaning to the work that we do than just earning a living. If there was not, how else would we justify the long hours spent away from family, home, and our personal lives? In this issue, we focus on the passion that we all had when we first began in the profession, the need to reignite that drive when we lose it, and whether it is possible to maintain enthusiasm and passion as we battle through these tough economic times. We have some wonderful articles that underscore the point of renewal that comes from time away, from the story of Jennifer Raymond, who left her firm on the verge of becoming a partner to try out a year as a staff

attorney for the U.S. District Court of Appeals to the tale of new mom Emily Mulder Milman, who took maternity leave at the peak of the economic uncertainty of 2009, and came back to help develop a women's network initiative at her law firm. Patricia Thompson describes the perspective gained by stepping back from the daily chore of billable hourly work and taking on a pro bono case that may not have generated revenue, but that undoubtedly fed her soul. Amy Elizabeth Stewart writes about the renewal that comes from the exhilarating (but nerve-racking) process of starting your own practice after many years in a big firm.

What is the common message throughout? Regardless of the stage of your career, we all need that sense of shared meaning and connection to the work that we do to maintain our commitment to the profession. Whether it comes from taking on a worthwhile pro bono case, teaching, or mentoring someone else in the profession, there are ways to recapture that sense of excitement and energy that we all felt when we were first beginning law school. Hopefully, the articles in this issue will help you recapture your vision of what the profession can be and rekindle your sense of purpose as to what it means to be a lawyer.

Becoming involved in the Woman Advocate Committee can also help you rejuvenate that sense of purpose and passion about the legal profession. In May, the Woman Advocate Committee held our second round of regional brown bag lunches. Women gathered to discuss what best practices actually work to develop careers and clients during this down economy. Another great way to become more involved in the work of the committee is to attend an ABA meeting. The next meeting is the ABA Annual Meeting, which will be held August 5-7, 2010, in San Francisco. The Woman Advocate Committee will be hosting its traditional Dutch Treat dinner on Thursday evening, and there are several other networking events that will give you an opportunity to meet other women litigators and share experiences as to what works for women

in the profession. Come join us!

The Woman Advocate Committee had a strong contingent at April's Section Annual Conference in New York City. The committee joined forces with the Business Torts, Corporate Counsel, and Commercial and Business Committees for a joint Dutch Treat networking dinner. We also had a business luncheon where members described what has worked best for them in developing and nurturing their careers. The following are some of the tips that were shared:

- Think about what your clients are thinking about, and make their worries and concerns your top priority.
- Be responsive to clients' phone calls

and emails. Keep them informed every step of the way during litigation.

- Don't assume people do not want to help you. Most people do, and they may have relationships with others that can be of assistance to you if you just ask. Everyone at the meeting agreed that the most difficult task for a woman lawyer is asking for what she wants.
- Be authentic. Be yourself when you are interacting with clients and with others in your firm as well as when you network to try to develop business. No one can maintain a false persona for a long period of time. It will not do you any good to cultivate a persona that may be

effective in the short run but in the end doesn't feel real to you.

- Advertise yourself in your own firm. Tell others what you are doing, and accept praise and credit when things go well.
- GOYA: Get Off Your A--. The only way to make things happen is when you are out doing things, taking risks, and becoming involved.

We hope to see you soon at an ABA meeting. We also invite you to join us during one of our monthly Woman Advocate Committee conference calls.

Nan E. Joesten
Lucia E. Coyoca

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A Year in the U.S. District Court of Appeals Staff Attorney's Office

By Jennifer J. Raymond



Jennifer J. Raymond

As a recovering academic in the field of 17th Century English Literature (think Shakespeare and John Donne), I have always been attracted to the more “bookish” aspects of business and employment litigation—i.e., researching obscure case law, crafting nuanced arguments, and writing complicated briefs. In my seventh year of private practice, a friend suggested I apply for an advertised position as a term staff attorney for the U.S. Court of Appeals. I had not considered leaving my firm, and I initially dismissed the idea. The deadline was just a few days away, and I intended to let it pass.

My complacency was interrupted, however, by the loss of an important mentor—a retired judge who had a sharp legal mind, an even sharper tongue, and the stern but generous spirit of a teacher. He had always encouraged me to pursue a more scholarly path in law, and it was at his memorial service that I decided to apply for the job. I was about to make partner, and leaving my firm was a frightening leap into the unknown world of temporary government service. Nonetheless, when I was offered the appointment, my family and I felt that I would always regret it if I passed up the opportunity.

Being a staff attorney was an academic's dream. I spent my days (from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with a half-hour break for lunch) reading case files, researching legal issues, and writing for the court. I spent my evenings, weekends, and federal holidays with my family, enjoying guilt-

free time away from work.

There were no clients to bill, partners to placate, or grueling hours to log. I handled cases in rapidly evolving areas of law, such as criminal sentencing, immigration, and civil rights. Examining the pre-sentence reports of federal drug offenders, undocumented immigrants, and career criminals—many of them facing decades in federal prison—was the most eye-opening part of the job. The common thread of childhood abuse, neglect, and poverty ran through almost every report. It was a very different world than the one populated by the executives, bankers, and business owners with whom I was used to working.

I had developed a deeper understanding of the types of arguments that judges find persuasive.

Also, for the first time in my career, I was in an office run entirely by women. The senior staff attorney and the supervising attorneys were all smart, accomplished women with families. It was a unique atmosphere—relaxed and congenial.

As my one-year anniversary approached, I considered my options and arranged to return to my old law firm. Even though I had spent the year working as a lawyer, it seemed like I had been on sabbatical, and I worried that I could no longer function in the fast-paced, stressful environment of private practice.

Upon my return to law-firm life, I knew I would continue to enjoy the academic side of my work. But, I was surprised to find that I appreciated the non-academic aspects, too—the phone calls, meetings, negotiations, deadlines, court appearances, and the latest in BlackBerry technology. After spending a year in the

calm, library-like atmosphere of the staff attorney's office, I felt energized by the bustle of a law office.

My experience gave me a new confidence in my writing and my substantive knowledge of civil procedure, evidence, and other areas of law. Also, I had developed a deeper understanding of the types of arguments that judges find persuasive and the general ineffectiveness of the technicalities of which we litigators are so fond.

My new perspective had a positive impact on my personal outlook as well. Working for the court, I saw many appeals that involved actual life-and-death issues. As a result, I have become better at real-

istically evaluating and resolving crises at work and at home. I view criticism and conflict less personally. I listen to clients and colleagues more empathetically. I am not rattled by opposing counsels' inevitable displays of bravado in or out of the courtroom.

My decision to veer off the conventional career track felt a tiny bit rebellious—especially to a naturally risk-averse lawyer—and it imparted a sense of strength and independence that has remained with me. Although I had to wait an extra year to make partner, I believe my time away from private practice was one of personal and professional growth that helped me become a better lawyer, a better mom, and a more authentic person.

Jennifer J. Raymond is a partner with The Stolar Partnership, LLP, in St. Louis, Missouri.

More “Ps,” Please: Parental Leave Left Me a Better Practitioner

By Laurie Carr Mims



Laurie Carr Mims

While feeding mashed peas to my baby and fielding questions from my toddler about what else starts with the letter “P,” I realized that the letter “P” comes up a lot in association with maternity leave: pregnancy, prenatal, postpartum and—most importantly—parent. Upon further reflection, I discovered that in returning to my practice after my two generous five-month paid leaves, I have experienced some additional life-altering “Ps” that have left me a better, more successful, and happier lawyer.

Passion

When the most complex analysis I had done in months was calculating the hours since the baby’s last feeding, I longed for the intellectual stimulation of my cases. We are lucky to be in one of the few professions where we learn new things daily. Whether it is learning a new industry to understand the compensation scheme for an employment case or researching an esoteric area of constitutional law for a pro bono matter, it feels great to get those synapses firing. I never appreciated this benefit of our work like I did after spending several months on maternity leave.

Perspective

Too often as lawyers we lose touch with business or life realities while we are immersed in the legal and procedural aspects of our cases. Usually, talking to our colleagues only exacerbates this problem. While on leave, I left the legal world and

started spending the majority of my days interacting with people who were too young to talk or other new parents. For me, meeting other new moms and dads was one of the best surprises that came with parenthood. We had a unique bond, even if we came from very different walks of life. Unlike legal-world dwellers, these other new parents from different walks of life and professions did not have any idea what an interrogatory or a TRO was—and they couldn’t care less. Besides trading

Now that I have limited time, I must hone in on the most important aspects of a case rather than getting wrapped up in hours of minutia.

tips on diaper-changing and baby-proofing, we discussed their lives and their jobs in various industries. When I returned to work, I had a fresh perspective on how the world functions that was shaped by these interactions. I found that I approached issues differently and could more easily understand my clients’ business-driven, real-world interests and goals.

Priorities

You hear it countless times while pregnant: Kids change everything. It’s true. No more movie dates on a whim, no more leisurely weekends, no more sleeping in—more like no more sleep, period! But what I did not expect was the change in priorities. Having time and energy to spend with my kids became critical, which meant that I needed to focus on efficiency at work. When I have to get home to my kids, there’s no

dillydallying over emails or following every potential lead in my Westlaw research when I have already found cases directly on point. Because I now have limited time, I must hone in on the most important aspects of the case rather than getting wrapped up in hours of minutia. Realigning my priorities has made me a more focused attorney, resulting in more cost-effective services for my clients.

Poise under Pressure

Let’s face it—being a litigator is a stressful, demanding job. But in many ways, it is easier and more manageable than comforting a colicky infant or placating a screaming toddler. And, it no doubt causes less stress than a child’s health issues or decisions about how best to discipline and educate your children so that they grow into the people that you want them to be. Coming back from leave, I felt I was a more grounded and resilient version of my former self. A discovery mishap or ugly exchange with opposing counsel no longer fazed me as in the past. I am now a parent with profoundly important decisions to make and actions to take regarding my kids, and the pressures of litigation seem light in comparison. This transformation has lifted a weight from my shoulders, and I am able to think and act more calmly and decisively as a result.

Before my maternity leave, I worried that taking time away from work and having kids would negatively affect my career or my enjoyment of legal practice. Now that I am back, one of the great surprises is that my temporary absences from the profession and becoming a parent while away have improved not only how I feel about practicing law, but also how I practice it. My life and career are enhanced in ways I never expected.

Laurie Carr Mims is a partner at *Keker & Van Nest LLP* in San Francisco, California. Laurie will serve as vice-chair of the ABA Young Lawyers Division’s Litigation Committee for the 2010–11 term.

The Unexpected Pleasure of Pro Bono Work

By Patricia Thompson



Patricia
Thompson

The most beautiful Christmas card I received as an attorney was from a partially blind, third-grade educated, elderly former construction worker whose inner-city home we saved from foreclosure by negotiating a new reverse mortgage and the reduced payment of various hurricane repair-related liens on his home. When I called to thank him for the lovely card and its touching message, he explained he had asked his sister to buy it especially for me. Because of his age, I always called him Mr. Russell and he always called me Mrs. Thompson. He was a pro bono client, referred to me by the local legal aid service. It was an honor to represent him. His thoughtful gesture captures one of the unexpected pleasures of working pro bono publico.

In my 34 years of commercial litigation practice in various areas of law, I have been blessed with success and few regrets. I like what I do. Yet, on reflection, I believe there are at least four reasons why my pro bono work has been particularly meaningful and rewarding.

First, it allows me to be of assistance to clients who likely have no one but me to whom to turn assistance. If I did not help them, they would be lost in a complex system they did not understand and likely could not successfully navigate. Second, in some instances, my clients likely would have been taken advantage of by opponents who do not care about justice or what is right. Representing the otherwise defenseless against those who would do harm is thrilling. Third, pro bono litigation often involves legal issues that are both of vital importance to my clients and

intellectually challenging. For example, I have argued issues of church and state separation, defended non-profits against humiliating charges of discrimination, defended an elderly widow and her mentally disabled son against wage claims by their caregiver, and set aside a default judgment against a church to foreclose a fraudulent construction lien. Finally, and possibly because of the first three reasons, there is nothing quite as satisfying as a pro bono victory. At several levels, this work speaks to the heart of why I became a lawyer and a litigator.

how well we did in a case that he still remembers; he had been predisposed to rule against us. After all, the case hinged on my jailed clients' word against that of two attorneys.

As I think about my pro bono work over the years, I realize that I have discovered a truth. Commercial disputes come and go. While some may be serious and high-profile and may even threaten a company's existence, I know that my commercial clients forget the details of the disputes that—important as they are at the time—are, in the end, only busi-

My commercial clients forget the details of disputes that are, in the end, only business. This is not true of my pro bono clients and matters.

By way of illustration, one such victory came after a year of nasty litigation, a full non-jury trial, an appeal, and hundreds of hours of work. In that case, we successfully argued that a mortgage on our Haitian clients' home in favor of their prior attorneys was void for fraud and breach of fiduciary duty. The circumstances of this case were challenging. Unfortunately, the foreclosing attorneys, who represented themselves, often were discourteous and rude. I tried the case when I was eight-and-a-half months pregnant and wrote the appellate brief while on maternity leave. My clients were in prison for most of the lawsuit. Nevertheless, the pleasure of winning after an uphill battle on issues that go to the very integrity of the attorney-client relationship was so strong that I still experience it viscerally when I think about it 17 years later. As an added bonus, to this day, when I see the judge who tried the case, he comments about

ness. Similarly, over time, the specifics of some of the issues I have litigated in such cases have faded in my own memory.

This is not true of my pro bono clients and matters. For many of them, the litigation I handled may have been a watershed event in their lives. I still remember the details of their cases and feel a special satisfaction in my work on their behalf. There is something very good for one's soul in serving justice one person at a time under such circumstances. Pro bono cases seldom make news, but, in the end, our profession should not be about promoting ourselves. It should be about service to others for the public good.

Patricia Thompson is a shareholder in the Miami office of Carlton Fields, P.A. She is past chair of the TIPS Fidelity and Surety Law Committee and the Section of Litigation's Construction Litigation Committee.

Creating an Upturn after a Slump

By Emily Mulder Milman



Emily Mulder
Milman

Slump [sluhmp]

verb (used without object)

1. To decline or deteriorate, as health, business, quality, or efficiency.
2. To sink heavily, as the spirits.

In 2009, the legal industry declined and our business deteriorated along with the country's economy. In law firms, layoffs were widespread and earnings were reduced as the health and vitality of our profession diminished. Collectively and quite uniformly, law firms slumped, taking along with them the spirits of their lawyers.

As the environment in law firms spiraled downward with increasing layoffs, I was looking forward to the birth of my first child. While I certainly got a small taste of the unpleasant effects of the slump before I departed for maternity leave in March, I stepped out in time to avoid what I thought would be the most emotionally difficult part of the year for our industry. I expected that things would be back to normal by the time I returned to work in July. That unfortunately was not the case.

With clients across all industries continuing to feel the economic strain of the recession, work for lawyers was scarce, profits continued to sink, and layoffs persisted. Lawyers like me, who for so long had the problem of working excessive hours, found themselves in the position of looking for work to fill the day. I found it extremely challenging to lift my own spirits in the gloom and doom atmosphere that pervaded

our industry. And, it was nearly impossible to continue to think positively in my role as cochair of our firm's Women's Network.

Upturn [uhp-turn]

noun

1. An upward movement, curve, or trend, as in business activity.

While the upturn for many law firms was still distant on the horizon in the fall of 2009, many lawyers were desperate to move onward and upward. The women lawyers at my firm were among them. Forcing ourselves into optimism, we selected "lift as we climb" as the theme for our Women's Network programming for 2010. With our inspirational label in place, our task was to translate our desire for upward movement into a concrete plan of action, taking full advantage of our best asset—ourselves. From this challenge, a new initiative was born: Women Attorney Networking Teams, or WANT.

The idea behind WANT is simple: We boost morale by providing women lawyers with increased opportunities to network internally and build meaningful personal and mentoring relationships with their colleagues. To ensure the most rich and vibrant interaction possible, we created five diverse WANT teams. Each team of 11 women lawyers was carefully selected from different practice groups at varying levels of seniority at the firm and was led by two members of our Women's Network leadership team. For 2010, we scheduled four meetings for the teams: a comprehensive kickoff of the initiative and three additional sessions focused on substantive topics of interest to women lawyers.

At the WANT kickoff meeting in February, we described our goals for the initiative.

- To create connections and build relationships between women attorneys at all levels of practice

- To expand our professional and personal networks
- To identify potential business development opportunities
- To strategize to achieve our own professional goals
- To broaden our knowledge of the practices of our women colleagues
- To share experiences and lessons learned
- To build our exposure at the firm
- To give back and have fun

With only 55 women attorneys at our firm, most of us felt like we knew each other fairly well. Still, we broke the ice at the first WANT team meeting with an activity that gave each team member a chance to talk about herself and her interests (both personal and professional). Each of us walked away from that meeting with a better and more personal understanding of the women with whom we work every day as well as a foundation for upcoming meetings together.

The positive energy generated by the kickoff of the WANT initiative has been palpable. In fact, while our original agenda set forth quarterly meetings for our teams, many teams elected to meet once a month for breakfast, lunch, or coffee. Our women were looking for a way to reconnect with each other and focus on the positive. WANT has given them the vehicle to do so. As we plan our meetings for the remainder of 2010, including our summer meeting focused on leadership in the community, we will continue to lift as we climb, making our way out of the slump in an upward trend to greater success, fulfillment, and satisfaction in our professional lives.

Emily Mulder Milman is a partner at Neal, Gerber & Eisenberg LLP, where she cochairs the firm's Women's Network.

Words of Wisdom

What have you found most rewarding about being a lawyer?



Kelly-Ann F. Clarke

Kelly-Ann F. Clarke is an associate at Greer, Herz & Adams, LLP, in Galveston, Texas. She has also served as the Young Lawyers Division chair for 2009–10.

The most rewarding part of being a lawyer is that, through work and bar service, I am able to change lives—both my own and others. Following Hurricane Ike in October 2008, I was assigned to represent a woman named Sonya whose case was going to trial in January 2009. Sonya had been fighting the State of Texas for 14 years for ownership of beachfront property in Galveston. It was a race to get up to speed. But we won, changed the laws, and, most importantly, got Sonya the justice her family had been seeking for over a decade. Sonya still has big battles facing her with appeals, bankruptcy, related lawsuits (now that she legally owns the beach), and the cost of maintaining a beach in a tough economy. This case was more than just a fight about sand and saltwater. Sonya taught me about family honor, justice, perseverance, and strong will.



Dale M. Weppner

Dale M. Weppner is partner at Greensfelder, Hemker & Gale, P.C. in St. Louis, Missouri. He is a member of the Section of Litigation's Marketing and Membership Committee and the editorial board for the ABA Tort, Trial and Insurance Practice Section's publication, *The Brief*.

I know this may sound a bit insincere, but the most rewarding thing I have found in being a lawyer is bar service. The benefits of participation in the organized bar cannot, in my opinion, be overstated. Bar service has exposed me to some incredibly talented lawyers and business professionals, many of whom have served as mentors. It has also provided opportunities to give back through participation in pro bono and public service activities. However, the most rewarding benefit of bar service has been the friendships I have developed. These people have, in many ways, become my own personal support group in that we all share in the same challenges and rewards in what can be a very difficult profession. The fact that bar service has also been a boon to my practice is simply icing on the proverbial cake.

For additional Words of Wisdom responses and for advice for those considering law school, please visit our website at www.abanet.org/litigation/committees/womanadvocate.

The Woman Advocate Committee would like to thank Christina Plum for her assistance in compiling the contributions to the Words of Wisdom column.



Judi L. Calhoun

Judi L. Calhoun is deputy prosecutor at the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office in Muncie, Indiana. She has also served as the Young Lawyers Division district representative for Indiana and Illinois.

My answer to this question has changed over time. At first, it was most rewarding to show young women that you can accomplish anything you put your mind to. I did not come from a family of lawyers. I was raised to believe that with hard work you could accomplish your dreams, and I have done that. Later, as a family law attorney, I felt most rewarded when I was able to support my clients in making tough decisions—such as whether to get divorced—and to lead them through that process while showing them how to be strong. I again felt rewarded years later when I would see those same clients leading successful lives. Now I am a deputy prosecutor, and I feel rewarded by seeking justice for those who may not otherwise have a voice, including abused children. I feel great satisfaction when children stand up to their abusers and say they will no longer be victims. I would have missed out on this feeling had I not chosen to be a lawyer.



Shaunda Patterson-Strachan

Shaunda Patterson-Strachan is partner at Jordan Burt LLP, in Washington, D.C. She currently serves as executive committee member of the Lawyers Conference of the Judicial Division. She also served as the former chair of the TTIPS Life Insurance Law Committee.

The biggest reward is being privileged to be a member of a noble profession. Yes, I've heard those lawyer jokes. Despite the cynicism about the profession, lawyers are still revered. The raw effect of my personal experiences—not egotism—compels this view. After practicing for over 10 years, I remain the sole lawyer in my family. Across generational lines, my family members think this is a big deal. Why? They view lawyers as individuals who right wrongs. That means I get random calls seeking assistance on matters on which I have zero expertise. It seems, though, that they're not the least bit bothered that I often cannot actually resolve their particular crises. Rather, they're happy that they were able to call upon someone they know who—they think—had the real potential to resolve their problems. They have access to justice. That the position I hold not only matters to clients and colleagues, but is of tangible significance to my extended family, serves as a quiet yet constant motivator for me and is profoundly rewarding.

Passing on the Profession to Young Lawyers

By JoAnne Epps



JoAnne Epps

Life is joyous, exhilarating, and full of demands. Families bring abundant joy but require sustenance and nurture. Professional development enriches our public lives but takes energy and focus. Our own health and wellness require constant attention.

Though our plates may already feel full, we also have an obligation to think about and nurture the future. Not just to improve our personal future, but the world's future—a future that will be lived long after we are gone.

To be sure our time here has meant something valuable, we must ensure that we have handed off to those coming after us a commitment and passion to work for the best possible world. For me, that means inspiring young lawyers to understand the unique opportunity our profession provides to serve our clients, ourselves, and our world.

The best way to inspire is to pass along our passion. To do so, determine what it is that you love about the legal profession. In making that determination, reflect on what encouraged you to apply to law school. Perhaps, like me, you were drawn to service and the pursuit of justice.

In the midst of the competing pressures that every lawyer faces daily, it can be easy to forget that ultimately ours is a profession of service. It is important for us to share our passion for service to counter the distorted image of our profession—one that is focused on self-serving pursuits—that has been created by an abundance of decontextualized information. This distortion may lead young people to mistake what lawyers

actually do. For many lawyers, the truth is that the very best professional experience was not the one that made the cover of *American Lawyer*. Rather, it was the one where the lawyer was able to meet her client's needs and see justice served.

be mindful of the future we are creating and ensure it is the one we want to create. When you observe an existing opportunity for a young lawyer, encourage her to pursue it. When you are able to create an opportunity for a junior colleague, do so. And,

Our profession must identify and encourage people who will make good leaders. The best leaders are strong, intelligent, and courageous people, regardless of color, gender, or background.

Lawyers have the ability to shape the world in which we live. Lawyers also have the unique privilege of giving voice to the community's view of justice, e.g., what is right and what is not, what should be encouraged or discouraged, what should be protected and what must protect itself. Now and in the future, our communities, our nation, and our world need lawyers who are committed to service and to envisioning and shaping a future that is fair and just. We can help craft that future by making sure that we share the passion that makes us proud of what we do.

To ensure a fair and just world, our profession must identify and encourage people who will make good leaders. The best leaders are strong, intelligent, and courageous people, regardless of color, gender, or background. However, young lawyers may not recognize their own potential unless we convey to them what we see through our more experienced lens. Many people who would be outstanding leaders may not see themselves in that role if we do not encourage them to put forth the extra effort. Of course, not every leader need be a lawyer. Nonetheless, legal training increases a person's talent to think critically—an important skill for leaders. So, as we look at our colleagues, we should

when you see someone with an aptitude for leadership, impart to them an encouraging word. You will be giving our future world a very valuable gift.

Passing on our profession to young lawyers also means that we must encourage a future generation of role models. However, invention and innovation are not the only traits of a progressive society; there is also security in an unbroken legacy of justice. Our profession rests on a foundation of integrity, honor, and loyalty. We should embody these principles in our dealings with others and remind those coming behind us of their obligation to embrace these values in everything they do as well. Soon, they will be the models whom others will seek to emulate.

Finally, we must pass on to future lawyers our commitment to be caring and giving. In many ways, it is what we do best. As a service profession, lawyering involves caring for and about others. Our professional conduct rules (requiring, among other things, attention to our clients' needs and a duty of communication) remind us that we cannot be effective if we do not serve our clients with care. While it is true that this care is required of us, our rules simply codify one of the legal profession's core principles: a duty of

care. If we recognize and remember this, live it, radiate it, and transmit it, we will ensure that the core tenet of our profession remains unbroken.

There are many ways to achieve these goals, even in our pressure-packed lives. Personal engagement is one way to help young lawyers realize the importance of service in our profession. For example, serving as a mentor is a great way to invest in our professional and private relationships. Mentorship does not have to be difficult or time-consuming. It is not parenting. It does not require a daily commitment. It can be done formally (with scheduled interactions) or informally (checking in from time to time). And, it can be grounded in a professional context or have nothing at all to do with the law.

Making yourself a positive presence in the community is another way to share your passion. Slip out early from work one afternoon and stop by your local community's hockey or softball game. Soak in the teamwork, the celebration of effort, and the moments of personal and collaborative excellence. If sports are not your thing, you can instead support your local choir, orchestra, or theater troupe. It is possible both to nourish yourself and support those around you by letting their achievements inspire you.

On an individual level, you can do things as simple as having breakfast or afternoon coffee with a junior associate. Make a phone call to let someone know you are thinking about her. Letting younger people into your life can do wonders to inspire

them, and it will feel good to you too.

As lawyers, we have been given a license to help people. It is what we do. It is hard work and, at times, discomfiting. But, it is worth it. Serving your client well is a gift to yourself and the world. We owe it to those coming after us to let them know that our profession provides a wonderful opportunity to positively impact others around us and future generations. Think of the world as a poem and your life as a verse. When we pass on our passion for the profession, we hand the pen to those who will write the next verse.

JoAnne Epps is dean of the Temple University Beasley School of Law in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Woman Advocate Members Provide Sound Advice

By Haley Maple

Whether on the go or at your desk, Woman Advocate Committee members can gain valuable insight from other attorneys through Sound Advice, audio files available for download on the Section of Litigation's homepage or in iTunes by searching for "Section of Litigation." Topics vary from substantive issues, such as how to get Internet evidence from social media outlets into evidence to practical mentoring tips, such as how to be a superstar associate. The sound advice on the latter topic was recorded by former chair of the Woman Advocate Committee, Carmelite Baurteau. Another Woman Advocate Committee member, Anne Marie Seibel, recorded one of the first pieces in the extensive and growing library from impressive contributors. Seibel's piece follows up on her article previously published in *The Woman*

Advocate newsletter, titled "Rainmaking in a Busy World" and available online at www.abanet.org/litigation/committees/womanadvocate/ newsletter. The sound advice on this topic is available at www.abanet.org/litigation/soundadvice.

The audio files vary in length and form and come from a diverse group of contributors. Often funny and always useful, you should take advantage of this unique resource available to Section of Litigation members. You can also sign up to receive the weekly Sound Advice email by visiting the Section of Litigation website at www.abanet.org/litigation/soundadvice/subscribe.

Haley Maple is editor in chief of The Woman Advocate, a member of the Section of Litigation Marketing & Membership Committee, and an attorney at Forizs & Dogali in Tampa, Florida.

The Woman Advocate on the Web

- View our directories of leadership and subcommittee listings
- Find additional resources
- View our newsletter archive
- Plan to attend committee events

Visit the Section of Litigation Woman Advocate Committee webpage at www.abanet.org/litigation/committees/womanadvocate.

Finding Passion

continued from front cover

want to overcome my challenges, not run from them. As a result, I tend to stay in undesirable situations too long, determined to improve them. I'm also a mom with two young children. Not exactly the best time to plunge headlong into a new business venture—or is it?

My decision to launch my own firm was compelled by a myriad of factors. Some stemmed from the discombobulated economy and what I perceived as opportunities not to be missed. Corporate executives and in-house counsel were complaining about high rates charged by law firms, inattentive lawyers, staffing inefficiencies, and a lack of flexibility in billing arrangements. These were issues I knew I could address.

I also faced some challenges specific to my former firm and my insurance coverage litigation practice. My former firm represented virtually every insurance company in some capacity or another, and someone other than me controlled the business. This made it difficult for me to cultivate my own book of business, which meant I was not meeting expectations in the business development arena—my own or the firm's.

In one way or another, this is a prevalent challenge for young partners in large law firms. Given the perspective I now have, hindsight and all, this is probably a good place for me to inject some advice. Throughout my career, people told me that to be successful, I should work hard, do good work, and cultivate relationships with my clients. You may have heard or even given the same advice. I did, and I believed it. But I was wrong. At some point, I bought into the notion that I was at a big firm with institutional clients and that the work would always be there. Accepting the premise that it was impossible for someone at my level to control any business and that my work was enough to ensure my job security, I unintentionally became a service partner. I am convinced that, as a general proposition, this is a risky place to be—and one that is too often occupied by women lawyers.

One of my partners once asked me to speak to a young female associate following the departure of another associate

for a much more lucrative position. The partner encouraged me to tell the young lawyer that not everyone needed to be a rainmaker to make partner. Some people are better suited for client development, while others (like me, the service partner)

New business has come from unexpected sources.

were needed back at the office to do the work. I was too mortified (and mad!) to speak. Even more incredulous was the fact that my colleague thought this information would encourage the young female associate to stay at the firm.

The Coach

Discouraged and annoyed, I hired a business coach. Never underestimate the power of an ally and mentor. A good coach can make an enormous difference. My coach was the mentor I always wanted but never had. She validated my ideas and encouraged me to pursue them. She pushed me over my fears, challenging me to confront them and defeat them. I will be forever grateful.

The Goal

Early in my coaching, I determined that I needed to leave my firm to make specific, meaningful advances in my career. I embarked upon a business development plan with great fervor while beginning to explore the market. The decision-making process that ensued forced me (or, rather, presented the opportunity) to clarify my values and figure out what I really wanted to be doing in two to five years.

Envisioning my options, I realized I had reached a point in my career where I sought either to head an insurance coverage section in a firm or start one myself. I had the requisite expertise and was craving the chance to try out my own brand of leadership, which is markedly different from the culture in which I was then practicing. Upon making that determination, I stopped exploring “safe” opportunities

with other national law firms tied heavily to the insurance industry. Although it scared me somewhat to abandon those opportunities for which I was potentially best qualified, I felt certain I was making the right decision.

Opportunities at other firms were limited due to a reduction in work at most big firms. I pitched my ideas to several excellent firms where I had close connections, but the market was tight. I wasn't sure how to go about finding opportunities at smaller firms. And I was determined not to compromise my qualitative standards. I felt it would be a mistake to settle for “just a job”—a mistake from which I might not recover at this stage in my career. I was also convinced that the lateral opportunities available to me as a non-equity partner with virtually no portable business were even more limited—perhaps non-existent. Now what?

The Leap

One advantage to having a law license is that I knew I could always support myself, even if I had to learn a new area of the law, hang my shingle, or adapt my practice in some way. It was not until last summer that I began to appreciate that it was more than a fall-back plan. In July, I went to Nashville to visit my best friend from law school and follow up on some business leads and introductions. The physical separation from my usual day-to-day routine, coupled with some exceptional opportunities and the encouragement of several close friends, made that trip a turning point for me. Initially, I thought I needed to rule out a few areas of interest, but as I began pursuing my ideas, the distractions quickly faded, and starting my own firm emerged as the clear front-runner. My excitement (bordering on outright giddiness) about my new venture was grounded in a calm confidence that was new for me, but I liked it. I made the transition with very little portable business but with relentless enthusiasm, incredibly supportive friends and family, and a million ideas.

The Progress Report

Six months out, I am thrilled (and not to mention relieved) to report that my practice is growing. New business has come

from unexpected sources, due in large part to persistent networking and marketing my practice, along with supportive clients and friends. My mantra has been “Go even when you don’t feel like it.” And, it seems to be working.

Now I make my own decisions about how and when to spend time and money on marketing. If it ends up being a bad idea, it

was my bad idea, and I learn from it. When I work until 2:00 a.m., I reap the benefits of my hard work in a completely different way. It is an exhilarating experience, and one for which I am thankful beyond measure.

In addition, I have learned something invaluable and important. Fear hinders our ability to identify what we want to accomplish and to take the steps necessary

to achieve it. Your passion may be something completely different from launching your own firm. But, the same principles apply with equal force whatever your passion may be. Eschew fear; it is worth it!

Amy Elizabeth Stewart represents policyholders and insurers in complex insurance coverage litigation and bad faith litigation.

Rainmaking Corner

This month, the Rainmaking Subcommittee chairs interviewed Gilda Turitz, a partner at Sideman & Bancroft LLP, about the most important tips and success strategies she has learned through her career in making it rain.

Q: What is the most surprising thing you have learned about rainmaking?

A: The most surprising thing is how personally satisfying rainmaking success feels. While I always felt gratified and satisfied by doing a great job for an existing client (e.g., winning a dispositive motion, an arbitration, or a trial or getting a great settlement), I get an even more energizing feeling of satisfaction from bringing new clients and new work in the door.

Q: Are there reasons to engage in rainmaking efforts that lawyers may fail to appreciate?

A: Yes. At least initially, lawyers may fail to appreciate that developing your own book of business gives you power within your law firm and options to pursue other opportunities that you would not have without rainmaking. By power within the law firm, I mean that, because rainmakers are usually recognized in firms as the people who bring in the business and control the clients, they are generally held in high esteem by their colleagues. I have found that my firm was more likely to be flexible and willing to accommodate my initiatives or needs (e.g., pro bono projects, support for taking on a time-consuming bar association position, or greater latitude for work-life balance issues).

Q: How do you make time for rainmaking?

A: I consider rainmaking a priority and make time for it. I have read many time management books and learned how to prioritize rainmaking efforts, build them into my workday, and block out time for larger projects, such as writing an article. For me, devoting time to rainmaking has meant sacrificing time from other hobbies and pursuits. It is all a question of prioritizing time and deciding that the rainmaking time is worthwhile. After all, rainmaking is an investment in yourself.

A key question a lawyer has to ask is: How much time am I willing to invest in building my client base and my reputation to attract more clients? There are always choices to make about how to balance that time with raising a family or other personal interests that you want to pursue.

Q: What useful rainmaking tips can you share about how to become a rainmaker?

A: Get to know your client’s business and the industry and economic environment in which your client competes. Identify and understand their issues, concerns, and areas where you may be able to provide a benefit. To do that, you need to invest your time in research and development, such as reading trade journals that your clients read and attending industry seminars. Once you do, you will find a lot to talk about with them, and they will differentiate you from other lawyers that do not understand their business nearly as well as you do.

Q: What have you learned the hard way while trying to bring in business?

A: To bring in business, you must follow up in a timely manner. There have been times when I did not do the follow-up that I should have due to the press of business on my desk at the moment. When I had time to return my attention back to rainmaking, I felt that it was too late to follow up, and the momentum was lost.

Q: Has writing articles and giving speeches helped you get business?

A: Yes. Writing articles and speaking can get you business if your efforts are reaching the right audiences and helping you to gain a reputation as someone with true expertise in a specific area. If you are able to get in front of people that are in a position to retain or recommend counsel, speaking and writing will contribute positively to your chances of getting business. Speaking and writing also add to your credentials and is increasingly important for visibility and name recognition in today’s world of web presence, social media, and search engine optimization.

Q: How does rainmaking keep you passionate about the practice of law?

A: I love learning something new every day about the practice and business of law. I am excited with each new client and case that comes in as a result of my rainmaking efforts. For me, seeing my efforts pay off keeps it fresh and keeps me passionate about my practice.

Sharing Knowledge

continued from front cover

They are excited about what they have experienced, the courses in which they are enrolling to build on that experience, and what the future holds for them as lawyers. They cannot stop talking about it.

Inspiring and Being Inspired

Being with these students rekindles my own passion for the profession. It is not just that their enthusiasm is contagious or that I traipse down law-school memory lane when I am around them. What also rejuvenates me is the satisfaction I get from sharing knowledge and experience that will help them develop into our next generation of lawyers.

It is something I recommend for every lawyer who needs some career revitalization. As a practicing attorney, you can serve an important role by supplementing a law student's basic legal education with practical skills and tips for professional development. Oliver Wendell Holmes once said, "The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience." Use your experience as a teaching device.

Because you have something students do not have (namely, your experience and the concomitant perspective it gives), and because there is often immediacy for law students to put into practice what they learn in the classroom, you will find that law students are highly attentive. At the beginning of each course, I encourage my students to ask me questions they have been too embarrassed or uncomfortable to ask in other classes. And, they do. My students rely on me for the lowdown on what the profession is really like, the pitfalls to avoid and what they can do to excel. They seek my opinions. They stay after class to bounce ideas off me. We discuss mistakes and what can be learned from them. They report back to me after trying out something I have suggested.

I'd be lying if I said it wasn't fun. It is, but it's also more than that. It's inspiring. I go back to my office enthused. By teaching a class, especially one you have designed yourself, you get to focus on the things you love most about the law. Those may or

may not be the things most prevalent in your daily practice, but no doubt they are the reasons you went into the profession in the first place. And, they serve as a healthy reminder of your purpose.

Liberating the Lawyer's Soul

Every year when the assistant dean of the law school first contacts me to make sure I'll be teaching my course in the fall, I hesitate. It's time-consuming to teach a class. Like you, I'm busy. I have cases that need attention, clients who make demands, a social calendar filled with networking events, and a full personal life unrelated to the office. It would be easy to make excuses. So, why do I agree to do it again each time? It is not for the money. Most of the opportunities you will have to

firm-related work, I enjoy looking more broadly at what might be of interest or use to my students. Also, when I am tempted to send a strongly worded letter to an opposing counsel, I think about whether it exemplifies the legal civility I teach. If not, I tone it down and feel better for it.

Another plus is that teaching gives exposure to promising candidates you may want to recruit in the future. It can expand your professional network by introducing you to others in the field. It can enhance your management and communication skills.

Opportunities Abound

You may be thinking you do not have time to teach a course. Or perhaps you would like to teach, but there are no openings at the law school in your com-

The positive impact you make on others is one way to measure your success as a lawyer.

impact someone else's career will be gratis. Even at the law-school level, and depending upon the school, adjunct teaching positions may be volunteer positions. It's the non-monetary benefits that make the effort so worthwhile.

Maya Angelou was right when she said, "Giving liberates the soul of the giver." Giving a few hours of your time to help someone else develop professionally will renew your own sense of purpose and reacquaint you with your passion for the law. For me, the brief change of pace from office to classroom is refreshing. Designing my own curriculum taps into creative juices I do not always get to use in my practice. And, teaching feeds a natural desire to share knowledge that helps another person grow. One of the greatest rewards is when a former student tells me that my class made a positive difference in preparing her for her first full-time attorney position.

You may find that teaching changes you for the better. For me, it has changed the way in which I read developments in the law. Rather than concentrating solely on those decisions that impact my

munity. There are still plenty of other ways you can share your knowledge and feed your passion by educating others and, perhaps, playing a role in the development of future attorneys.

For example, law schools and secondary schools may need volunteers to judge moot court competitions. These competitions are most effective when local attorneys and judges participate and give students the feedback they need to master court procedure and case presentation. As little as two or three hours of your time can make a valuable contribution to a student's development.

If there are no law schools where you live, check local secondary schools. There likely are mock trial programs in these schools and competitions among the schools. Mock trial competitions need attorney volunteers to act as judges and legal advisors. Which one you choose depends on the amount of time you have to contribute. Either way, you will help introduce students to the legal process and develop numerous skills as well as provide them with guidance.

Even at the elementary-school level, you may find opportunities to share the things you love best about the legal profession. Let schools know of your willingness to speak on a legal topic or lead a field trip to a courthouse. If your office participates in a program such as Adopt a Class or Take Your Child to Work Day, use that opportunity to introduce students to the legal profession and its importance.

If teaching a course is something you would like to do, but there are no law school opportunities in your area, consider one of the many programs that train paralegals. Paralegals are an important part of any legal team and are dedicated legal professionals. The schools that train them

often look to local attorneys to introduce students to basic contract or tort law or even to teach some of the more practical aspects of the profession, such as drafting documents or conducting title searches.

Finally, a word about mentoring: If you feel your practice constrains your ability to teach outside the office, keep in mind you may only need to go down the hall to impact another lawyer's career. Mentors are valuable at every stage. Do not hesitate to be a mentor to a new associate or lateral hire. By spending a few lunch hours with a lawyer in transition, you can help her learn the unique workings of your office, fit in socially, develop skills that will meet your firm's expectations,

and achieve her professional goals.

Remember, the positive impact you make on others is one way to measure your success as a lawyer. This is true not just in terms of clients. It also applies when you make a beneficial difference in someone else's legal career and when you influence someone outside the profession to think of lawyers positively. So, share your knowledge and experience. Do not be surprised if along the way you re-discover the passion you felt while first discovering the law.

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