

The Trial Lawyer

A MAGAZINE FOR TRIAL LAWYERS & A VOICE FOR JUSTICE

JUSTICE
FOR ALL



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**What was the first job you had?**

My first job was in high school, cleaning the showers at a homeless shelter in Phoenix. I had other duties, but that is the one that sticks in my mind. I'm not sure there is a job that humbles you more quickly, which is a good thing for a teenager to experience.

What's your proudest moment as a trial lawyer?

My proudest moment occurs any time I sense genuine gratitude from a client. I think most trial lawyers went to law school to help people, and it's rewarding to have a moment when someone confirms that you are making a difference in their life.

I attribute my success to...

Mentorship. There's a real mentorship crisis in our profession: many partners become jaded by associate turnover and see millennials as "job-hoppers" who aren't worth the time required to nurture an aspiring trial lawyer. I was fortunate enough to have a handful of exceptional trial lawyers mentor me throughout law school and my young practice, and they generously shared their wisdom.

What is your most notable verdict or settlement?

I'm very blessed to have been a modest part of some litigation and trial teams that have secured great recoveries, and to learn from veterans of the bar such as Leo Beus, Pat McGroder, Tim Casey, and Marc Harding. I think my favorite memory is a comment that followed a favorable and unanimous 7-figure verdict, after which the client said to me, "you are the only people who believed in me."

What is your fantasy job?

Call it a cliché, but being a rock star who performs to sold-out arenas sounds like a rush.

What is your guilty pleasure?

Indian food and gummy bears. Not together, of course.

What do you like to do in your time off?

When I'm not spending time with family, friends, or girlfriend, I enjoy reading and traveling. I also devote time to a blockchain consulting firm that I co-manage with a close friend and fellow attorney.

What's your favorite hobby?

I enjoy working on a family genealogy project. I'd like to finish putting together a book that will tell my future kids about their ancestors.

What's one word that describes you?

Enterprising. A large part of my practice consists of plaintiff-side economic torts and business dispute litigation, so I recently launched a Commercial Contingency practice at my firm. It's a model that has worked well at elite boutiques serving major corporations but needed to be applied to smaller business plaintiffs (particularly in the Midwest). When a small or mid-size business (or its owner) become victims of another corporation's predatory practices or tortious conduct, the contingent fee arrangement saves the plaintiff from having to choose between the pursuit of justice and the retention of capital. It's an underserved market with lots of opportunity, but it takes a risk-tolerant and experienced team to make it work.

What keeps you awake at night?

Thinking of ways to improve my cases and my performance as an attorney. I try to regularly attend trial-oriented CLEs such as the Lanier Trial Academy, and either observe trials or read the transcripts of notable trial lawyers. There is always something new to learn from the leaders in our profession, whether it is as big as a new cross examination technique or merely a memorable turn of phrase.

What newspaper do you generally read daily?

I've been a daily reader of *The Atlantic* since 2015. Other than that, I try to skim Axios, the *New York Times*, and the *Des Moines Register*.

How do you relax?

Watching a good TV show or movie comes second only to a good dinner with close friends.

What's your most embarrassing life moment?

I introduced myself to a colleague and learned that his father is a defense attorney. I said, "hey, as long as he doesn't defend State Farm." His father defends State Farm. Oops.