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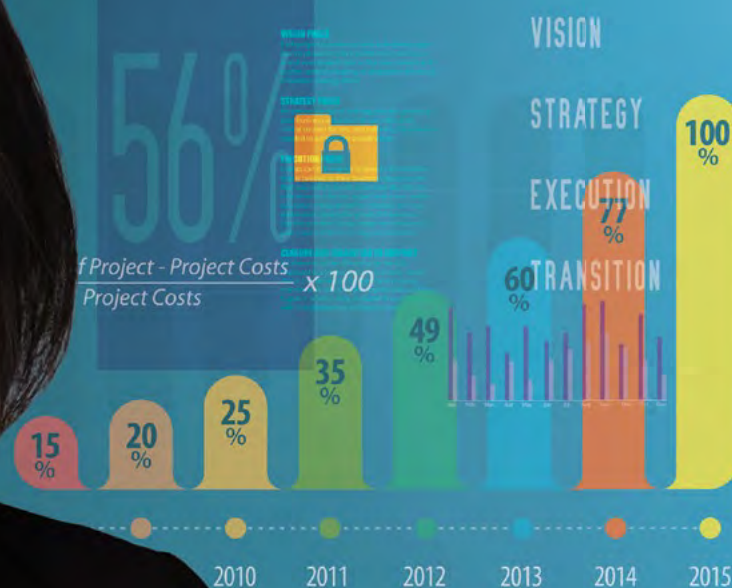
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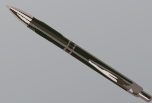
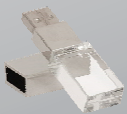
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Drew Michael Zamansky

Nanny taught us that we should never brag about
our children. This time is an exception.

Drew we are very proud of you as you have most
deservedly been selected as a 2016 Up and
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You now join your brother Rory who was selected
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~ Mom and Dad

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A year of making the grade

Happy autumn!
It always feels like back to school this time of year and thus it feels right to recognize our up and coming lawyers (our student leaders) and our unsung heroes (the teachers and administrators, if you will).

Just as you can't have school without teachers and students, you can't have an effective law practice without the up and comers and the heroes.

Our heroes are the office administrators, law librarians, court administrators, bar association executives and all-around go-to people.

For example, law librarians help attorneys and pro se clients alike with their research. IT folks work "under the hood" to keep systems running. Bar association executives keep the education, network and charitable bar functions running smoothly. Legal assistants, paralegals and law clerks pull on tall rubber boots and wade through discovery. One office staffer is the "director of first impressions" and a court officer at the immigration review office is a "firm mother hen." Several of our heroes implement pro bono efforts for their lawyers. Last but certainly not least, the financial team members make

sure the receivables and payables go out the door.

The up and coming attorneys are honored for their remarkable achievements early in their careers. They've done well. Some of them have won big verdicts in tough situations like medical malpractice, and some have won defense verdicts in situations that may have been tragic but not caused by their clients. They have participated in gazillion-dollar transactions, straightened out insurance coverage tangles, helped families through dissolution and achieved the best possible outcomes in criminal court.

They've also done good, with impressive amounts of time spent in pro bono cases and getting needed new projects off the ground. They've helped the vulnerable — children, domestic abuse survivors and immigrants. They have helped student debaters stay in school and graduate and educated their colleagues about the law in history and the law going forward.

Up and comers are realistic and idealistic; they are dreamers and doers. We were all like that at one time and if you aren't now, these lawyers will inspire you.

—Barbara L. Jones

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UP & COMING
ATTORNEYS

MINNESOTA LAWYER

2016



Kate Baxter-Kauf

LOCKRIDGE GRINDAL NAUEN

It's a matter of when, not if, your data gets hacked.

That's the opinion of Kate Baxter-Kauf, and she should know, with an active practice in the area including class actions involving household names such as Target and Home Depot.

Data breaches involving health care records are even more worrisome because the information in there doesn't change. And, although there is protection for consumers, "the harder question is what happens five years from now when there is information [hacked] that you can't change, like your social security number," Baxter-Kauf said.

An associate at Lockridge Grindal Nauen, Baxter-Kauf also practices antitrust and other class actions. Her first big case was against Symantec, where



class members will get back as much as they paid, or more, for extended download insurance that was automatically added to their carts when they bought software. The case settled for \$60 million.

Her other claim to fame is with the local debate community. She chairs the Minnesota Urban Debate League Young Professionals Board, which facilitates debate programs in more than 20 schools. It results in increased grades and literacy and a 100 percent on-time graduation rate for participants. She has an active pro bono practice as well.

Whether you are for the affirmative or the negative, you want Baxter-Kauf on your team.

—Barbara L. Jones

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A. Elizabeth Burnett

ROBINS KAPLAN

Robins Kaplan made a mark years ago representing the government of India against Union Carbide after a natural gas explosion in Bhopal, India. Carrying on that tradition is A. Elizabeth Cutter, better known as Liz.

Many of Burnett's cases involve fires and explosions related to combustible dust and natural gas. In a recent case, she won a motion to dismiss her client on a natural gas explosion that occurred in Mexico. The explosion resulted from combustible dust, but her client's role in the event was not accurately pleaded, she said.

Burnett literally is a "boots on the ground" attorney as she visits the scenes of these accidents. "I never thought I'd be putting on steel-toed boots and



traveling to disaster scenes, but I love that part of it," she says.

Burnett has published articles on insurance-related topics, including the effect of climate change on risk modeling and the application of the contra proferentem doctrine to broker-drafted policies. She represents clients pro bono through the state public defender's office, legal aid and guardians ad litem. She prevailed for a client at the Court of Appeals, which held that individuals using motorized devices as a substitute for walking are not subject to DUI laws.

It appears that Burnett's career will continue to explode.

—Barbara L. Jones



Meghan DesLauriers

DORSEY & WHITNEY

As a first-year associate at Dorsey & Whitney, Meghan DesLauriers worked on cases for the Mayo Clinic. She now has a large practice in medical malpractice defense, counseling professional medical associations, leading hospital peer review proceedings and representing physicians before the Minnesota Board of Medical Practice. It just grew organically over the years, she says.

The big issue in the area right now is confidentiality, both internally and in litigation, DesLauriers said. That includes protecting nurses and doctors without opening them up to liability as well as keeping records and other data secure. Laws require hos-



pitals and doctors to be acutely and constantly aware of confidentiality issues, she says.

DesLauriers' extraordinary skills as a trial lawyer were evident early in her career, say Bryn Vaaler and William Stoeri of the Dorsey firm. One judge wrote to the firm after a jury trial calling her "prepared; poised; thoughtful; well-spoken; and persuasive."

DesLauriers is active in bar associations and in the greater community, where she is secretary of the board and chair of the governance committee for Benilde-St. Margaret's School and has served other nonprofits. She represents domestic abuse survivors and low-income clients pro bono.

—Barbara L. Jones



Joshua A. Dorothy

GREGERSON, ROSOW, JOHNSON, & NILAN

Joshua Dorothy handles insurance coverage claims primarily for incidents that occur indoors, such as professional negligence, commercial crime or errors and omissions claims against executives and board members.

As a newer attorney, he also did outdoor work such as slip and falls but found he preferred the coverage work and advising closely-held businesses. It involves litigation and work at the early stages of dispute resolution.

Dorothy became a shareholder in the firm in 2015. He says the firm has a “unique generational situation” because there are four partners who have practiced together since the 1980s and two younger partners who began practice in 2004 and



2008. (Dorothy is the youngest.) The older partners are encouraging the younger to take the lead, he says.

Dorothy is an active writer on legal issues, most recently in *For the Defense*, a national publication of DRI. He has been Hamline University School of Law’s national moot court competition coach, taking teams to the quarter, semi and national finals. His teams have finished first and second in the region as well.

Dorothy is active in the Twin Cities arts community, and currently is a member of the Guthrie Theater’s Corporate Council. But his commitment to the law is no act.

—Barbara L. Jones



Emily Faber-Densley
2016 Up & Coming Attorney
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*Thanks, Scott, for your leadership in the field and commitment to
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Rebecca Duren

LESCH & DUREN

One of the worst things that can happen in a lawyer's professional relationships is the death of a partner. When criminal defense attorney Rebecca Duren's partner, Dennis Casey, died nine months into their practice, it caused personal grief and also doubled her caseload.

She secured three not-guilty verdicts in felony matters in the following months.

A former public defender, Duren was used to a big caseload, but still. But she notes she has the assistance of a very supportive criminal defense bar. "We rely on each other," she says.

Attorney Mel Welch says Duren "has had significant success in criminal defense, obtaining nu-



merous acquittals and respectable results in complicated cases, such as criminal sexual conduct, assaults, weapons charges and murder. She was instrumental in avoiding a murder conviction in Dakota County through a wise plan of defense to serve her client's best interests." That case was pleaded down to first-degree aggravated robbery.

Duren says she planned on being a transactional attorney but got bitten by the defense bug as a clerk in the Ramsey County public defender's office. She was a public defender in Noble County before starting her practice. She says, "I like being in a courtroom. I like being a trial attorney."

—Barbara L. Jones



Christine Eid

STINSON LEONARD STREET

The great thing about a real estate practice is that the parties have a common goal — to reach a deal. “Everybody is trying to get to yes and build something,” says Stinson Leonard Street attorney Christine Eid.

Eid came to Stinson after practicing on her own after graduating in 2008. She liked being solo but also wanted more mentoring and more exposure to sophisticated transactions.

One of her notable transactions was the former Northwest Airline’s property in Eagan, which her client acquired from Delta and conveyed to an affiliate of the Minnesota Vikings. “Christine has consistently and repeatedly shown aptitude and skill in negotiating successful deals with sophisticated coun-



terparties and has gained the confidence of many of the firm’s most valued clients,” said Stinson chair Lowell Stortz.

Eid has led the charge to create a walk-in legal clinic to provide financial advice to pro bono clients along with Habitat for Humanity and Volunteer Lawyers Network. VLN opened a second real estate clinic in St. Paul and also sees clients in Minneapolis. The need arose because many lower-income homeowners did not have good title and thus could not participate in Habitat for Humanity home improvement programs. Attorneys gain valuable experience and everybody gets to yes.

—Barbara L. Jones



Emily Faber-Densley

3M COMPANY

When 3M acquired Capital Safety in 2015 for \$2.5 billion, it was the company's largest acquisition ever, and Emily Faber-Densley was a leader. In the same year, she also led on the company's acquisition of Ivera Medical. Both those acquisitions were critical and strategic additions to 3M's portfolio, says Gregg Larson, deputy general counsel.

3M has five business groups operating in 70 countries, which means that Faber-Densley could be working in any country across the globe. "As we embark on new transactions, we get to learn all about that industry. It's a very collaborative process," she says.

Faber-Densley is a role model for professionalism, diligence, collaboration and a first-rate legal



intellect, Larson said. She was selected by general counsel Ivan Fong as one of the department's first participants as a Leadership Council for Legal Diversity fellow.

Faber-Densley was instrumental in the presentation of "Asian Pacific Legal Experience in America: Opportunity, Economics, Racism and Hope." It featured Karen Korematsu, daughter of Fred Korematsu, whose Supreme Court case is infamous. She is also active in the Minnesota Asian Pacific American Bar Association, which is important to mentoring students and attorneys and encouraging the appointment of Asian Pacific judges to the bench, Faber-Densley says.

—Barbara L. Jones



Scott Flaherty

BRIGGS AND MORGAN

Scott Flaherty's wide-ranging practice at Briggs and Morgan requires a lot of planning and not a lot of sleep.

He doesn't seem to mind. His work involves intellectual property, antitrust, commercial crimes and cybersecurity. In *Brown v. Minnesota Medical Development, Inc.*, he defeated the plaintiff's TRO motion in a patent case and settled the case after showing that his client in fact owned the patent. He also led the team that won the case for the alleged organizer of the Black Lives Matter demonstration at the Mall of America in 2014, for which he received the 2016 Social Justice Award from the Minnesota National Lawyers Guild.



In his nine years of practice, he's argued four cases at the Minnesota Supreme Court – one is under advisement and he won two. Pending is *Storms, Inc. v. Mathy Construction Co.*, where his team got a defense verdict in a highway repair dispute reversed at the Court of Appeals.

Flaherty sits on the board of the ACLU and the Hallie Q. Brown Foundation, and has served on the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission. He represents clients pro bono through the Children's Law Center and the Federal Bar Association's Pro Se Project.

—Barbara L. Jones



Kimberly Hanlon

KIMBERLY M. HANLON/MORELAW MINNEAPOLIS

Solo practitioner and entrepreneur Kimberly Hanlon is always going for the Wow.

She moved from New York City to Tulsa, Oklahoma, for family reasons. (Wow.) Tulsa turned out to be bad for her asthma so she moved to Minneapolis and her parents came with her.

She couldn't find a law office-sharing space here so she started one – MoreLaw in downtown Minneapolis, which offers traditional and virtual office solutions for solo and small firm practitioners.

In Tulsa, Hanlon said, she found a community she could bounce ideas off of and also refer cases to and from. She wanted that here. A law firm wasn't right and office-sharing wasn't stable. "Neither was



a good option. I saw a gap," Hanlon says.

The result is MoreLaw, where a lawyer can have a real or a virtual office, with access to conference rooms and a war room. (Wow.) It also has a full kitchen with an oven and dishes that match and a TV lounge. (Double wow.)

She charges flat fees so attorneys aren't dinged every time they make a photocopy and provides support services by the hour or by the project. (Wow.)

And, she has a Director of Wow working with her – her co-owner and mother, Sara Hanlon. (Exuberant wow.)

—Barbara L. Jones



Carly West Holler

SMITH, PAULSON, O'DONNELL & ERICKSON

The highlight of Carly West Holler's professional accomplishment to date is the level of professionalism she brings to her family law practice.

"Not only does [her professionalism] serve the best interests of her clients and promote the efficient resolution of emotional family law disputes, it also fosters a level of respect and trust among her peers in the professional and members of her community that is typically reserved for veterans of the profession," says colleague Jacob Erickson.

Additionally, Holler has taken on a leadership role in the 18th District Bar Association, as secretary, treasurer and now vice president. "As bar



leader, Carly has displayed a passion for advancing the profession and making the legal process accessible to disadvantaged members of her community through her commitment to the free legal advice clinic at the Wright County Law Library as well as offering free representation to qualifying clients through the volunteer attorney program," Erickson says.

Holler grew up in Buffalo, Minnesota, and now practices in Monticello, evincing a strong commitment to her community. She is a Rotary International member and a board member of the local rotary district, and a volunteer with Central Minnesota Legal Services.

—Barbara L. Jones



Patrick J. Hynes

MESSERLI & KRAMER

When Patrick Hynes joined Messerli & Kramer's lobbying shop in St. Paul last year, he arrived with an insider's perspective on Minnesota politics. Before deciding to go into the law, he had spent six years as a Capitol staffer, working his way up from page to committee administrator before landing in the office of then-Senate Majority Leader John Hottinger.

Hynes, a political science major in college, says the countless hours of poring over statutes and bills triggered an interest in the law. It also gave him an admiration for the nonpartisan legal staff at the Capitol.

"These guys have a fantastic institutional knowledge and I really enjoyed working with them. It was one of the main reasons I thought about going to law school," Hynes notes.



After getting his J.D. from the University of Minnesota, Hynes took a break from the Capitol and relocated to Red Wing, where he got a taste of the small-town lawyer life. A few years later, he returned to the Twin Cities to take a government relations job at the League of Minnesota Cities.

The atmosphere has become more partisan since Hynes' first stint at the Capitol but, he says, it's not as bad as the rest of the country: "You can still sit down with legislators and have a frank conversation about your client's issues and they'll still listen and get stuff done."

With two young children, Hynes says he spends most of his free time wrangling kids. "It seems that's become my hobby, which is fine by me, because it's very fun," he says.

—Mike Mosedale

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Jennifer Ives

STINSON LEONARD STREET

With her practice exclusively focused on employment law, Stinson Leonard Street partner Jennifer “Jenni” Ives spends her days counseling clients on a wide range of issues. But whether the question at hand involves an employee’s medical leave or the theft of trade secrets, there is one constant: plenty of client interaction. That’s just fine with Ives.

“It’s a very people oriented practice,” say Ives. “I like the technical part of solving problems and applying the law to real life situations.”

An Eagan native, Ives is the first member of her family to go into the law. At Northwestern University, she majored in gender studies and political science. A Fulbright Scholar, she spent a year in Cameroon, where she studied the efficacy of micro-credit programs for women in the central African nation.

Ives’ interests in social justice, and her gift with the pen, made law school a good fit. At the University of Minnesota Law



School, she garnered several awards for her legal writing and graduated magna cum laude in 2008. As a clerk for U.S. District Court Judge David Doty, Ives got a taste for employment law.

As a junior lawyer at Stinson, Ives was assigned to the appellate team in a long-running and bitter minority shareholder/tortious interference claim, *McGrath v. MICO*. Ives did a lot of the brief writing for the Minnesota Court of Appeals and Minnesota Supreme Court, helping to preserve a \$22 million jury verdict for the firm’s client.

Ives is active in pro bono service at the Deinard Legal Clinic in Minneapolis’ Phillips Neighborhood, where she helps screen prospective cases. The mother of three young children, Ives likes running, hiking, and virtually any other activity that gets her outside. She and her husband are also avid bird watchers.

—Mike Mosedale



Christine Kain

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS

After working as a substitute teacher in the Minneapolis school system for three years, Christine Kain decided it was time for a career change. She figured her classroom skill sets and natural inclinations would translate to a legal career. “I talk a lot and I like to boss people around,” she explains wryly.

Kain didn’t take the leap right away. But after putting in two years as a paralegal, she brushed off advice from lawyer friends who told her business school was a better move and headed off for the University of Minnesota Law School, where she graduated magna cum laude.

Nine years later, Kain, now a partner at Faegre Baker Daniels, is glad she trusted her instincts. A member of the firm’s product liability practice group, Kain defends pharmaceutical companies, device manufac-



turers and food industry clients. A career high point came last summer when she was part of the Faegre team that won a defense verdict in an artificial hip suit after a four-week trial in state court in Illinois — “a very plaintiff-friendly venue,” she notes.

On the pro bono side, Kain does immigration asylum work on behalf of unaccompanied youth, represents foster kids in child-protection hearings, and staffs several legal clinics, where clients seek help for a wide range of troubles. “As a products liability lawyer, I often don’t have the answer, but I usually know people who do,” says Kain.

With two young children of her own, Kain says she spends a lot of her spare time “picking up socks” but also wedges in as much leisure reading and tennis as she can.

—Mike Mosedale



Christina Rieck Loukas

WINTHROP & WEINSTINE

When Christina Loukas enrolled at the University of Chicago Law School, she didn't envision a career as a commercial litigator. At the time, the St. Paul native was still mulling a life in politics. But while pursuing her master's in public policy, Loukas decided to get a J.D., too. Then a funny thing: She fell for the law.

Since joining Winthrop & Weinstine's business and commercial litigation group, Loukas has played a key role in defending clients both large and small and, along the way, garnered admiration of her bosses and co-workers. While Winthrop shareholder William McNab praises Loukas' talent for "identifying key facts and critical legal principles, colleague John Sellner highlights her "grace and poise."



In Loukas' view, the most gratifying professional experiences typically come "when it doesn't appear there's going to be a good solution."

"My favorite thing is the strategizing. I really like getting to the root of the problem and figuring out how to solve it," she explains. "People think commercial litigators just make companies spend money on frivolous pursuits and don't contribute in a productive way. But that's not true. A lot of the clients I represent are doing good in the community."

Between career and two young children (ages 3 and 5), Loukas doesn't have much time for extracurricular activities these days. "I used to love to read until I started doing it 10 hours a day for my job," she adds.

—Mike Mosedale



David Paul McKinney

OGLETREE DEAKINS NASH SMOAK & STEWART

Growing up on Chicago's south side, McKinney never planned on a law career. He had his eyes on a career in the ministry. But after a year of student pastoral work, McKinney concluded that he wasn't destined to be a man of the cloth.

"The thing that initially drew me to graduate school and church work was an interest in social justice, and that led me to law school," says McKinney, who found plenty of like-minded future J.D.s at the Loyola University Chicago School of Law.

McKinney moved to Minnesota at the urging of his wife, Christine, a Wayzata native who succumbed to the tug of her home state after the birth of the couple's daughter. Landing at the St. Paul firm of Larson King, McKinney spent three and a half years as a commercial litigator.

He switched practice focus with a move to employment law behemoth Ogletree Deakins Nash Smoak &



Stewart. While he still litigates, McKinney prefers the "preventive" aspects of his practice which, he says, helps keep clients out of court and their workers on the job.

McKinney is active with Twin Cities Diversity in Practice, a nonprofit organization dedicated to boosting the numbers of attorneys of color at metro area law firms. "It often seems like it's been one step forward, two steps back," he observes. "We're better at recruiting than when I started — the recruiting classes are more diverse — but retention is still more of a challenge."

In keeping with interest in social justice, McKinney put in a couple of years as a volunteer attorney at the Harriet Tubman Center, where he helped low income women secure restraining orders. He is also a board member of the Minnesota Children's Museum.

—Mike Mosedale



Isaac W. Messmore

BOWMAN AND BROOKE

With his academic background in philosophy, the decision to go into the law was a natural one for Ike Messmore. When he enrolled at the University of Minnesota Law School, Messmore explains, he realized he had a leg up on some classmates when it came to putting together a coherent argument.

“For a lot of people, it was completely new and weird to write persuasive briefs. For me, it was almost the same as what I used to do for philosophy papers,” says Messmore, who wound up graduating magna cum laude in 2012.

Now an associate at Bowman and Brooke (where he was a summer intern in 2011), Messmore “is one of the best young lawyers I’ve had the privilege to work with,” according to George Soule, a former Bowman partner and still an informal mentor. Soule, who praises Messmore’s “powerful and adventuresome intellect,” says



he was particularly impressed by Messmore’s brief for the Minnesota Supreme Court in *Seagate v. Western Digital*, a high-stakes trade secret misappropriation case in which the firm successfully defended the individual scientist accused of the pilfering.

For his part, Messmore highlights his role in crafting the defense brief in litigation arising from a power plant explosion. “We were able to cap an \$11 million claim at \$1 million through a motion to judgment on the pleadings, so that was something I was very proud of,” he says.

Along with cultural interests in literary classics, music and film, Messmore is a motorcycle buff — an enthusiasm that has taken him from Sturgis, South Dakota, to Death Valley to the Swiss Alps.

—Mike Mosedale



Graham Ojala-Barbour

OJALA-BARBOUR LAW FIRM

When Graham Ojala-Barbour was still a teen, he took a job at a Northfield restaurant where many of the kitchen workers were undocumented. After one co-worker was deported “for what seemed like no reason,” Ojala-Barbour says he started to think about what he could do to help.

His interest in immigration law was ramped up at the University of Minnesota Law School and later, after a fellowship at the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota, the die was cast.

“I never applied at any of the big firms because I knew that wasn’t what I felt passionate about, or what I’d even be able to get myself up in the morning to do,” Ojala-Barbour explains.

Following a brief stint in the office of another



immigration attorney, Ojala-Barbour, who was just three years out of law school at the time, hung up a shingle in St. Paul. As a solo practitioner, Ojala-Barbour says he has come to realize that “helping one person at a time can be very satisfying.”

While some heartbreak is unavoidable in the practice area, Ojala-Barbour says he performs a valuable service even for clients for whom no relief is available under current immigration law. “When you can’t help, you know it and you don’t give them false hope,” he explains.

In his spare time, Ojala-Barbour likes to write creative fiction and, as befits his Finnish heritage, indulges his love for the sauna.

—Mike Mosedale



Ryan Osterholm

PRITZKEROLSEN

Ryan Osterholm doesn't eat sprouts, won't touch undercooked ground beef and would never dream of drinking raw milk. These prejudices arise from his professional perspective on the risks of exposure to E. coli, Listeria, Salmonella, Campylobacter, Cyclospora and other such pathogens.

Just seven years out of the University of Minnesota Law School, Osterholm has carved out a national practice focused almost exclusively on food-borne illness litigation at PritzkerOlsen, a Minneapolis personal injury firm that has pioneered the use of sophisticated new technologies to identify the source of outbreaks. Along the way, Osterholm has also become a go-to source for reporters looking for expert comment on the latest stomach-turning episodes.

The Edina native grew up in a medical household. His father, Michael, is the noted epidemiologist; his mom is a nurse practitioner; his sister is a physician. But Oster-



holm was more interested in political science. After his second year of law school, he landed as a summer associate at Marler Clark, a Seattle firm with a food-borne illness practice, and something clicked. "I didn't even know this area of law existed, but the more I was exposed to it, the more I was fascinated," he explains.

Osterholm sees his work as important — and not just for his injured clients. "If we didn't exist, I don't think companies would take food safety as seriously," he says. "We are championing the cause of safer food and that's something I take a lot of pride in."

In his spare time, Osterholm cultivates giant pumpkins. "Last year, I grew one that weighed about 600 pounds," he says. "It's an interesting hobby but I don't know how the hell I got started on it."

—Mike Mosedale

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Christine Kain
Up & Coming Attorney



Tyler Young
Up & Coming Attorney



Keith Badenoch
Unsung Legal Hero



Christine Page
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Rob Van Beusekom
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Lara Page

STINSON LEONARD STREET

When Lara Page strolls around downtown Minneapolis, she can see the fruits of her labor in the city's rapidly changing skyline. As a transactional lawyer at Stinson Leonard Street, she has represented lenders in connection with over a half billion dollars-worth of construction projects across the country, including the much-ballyhooed transformation of the historic Pillsbury A Mill on the Minneapolis riverfront into high-end artist housing.

"We go to every groundbreaking and every grand opening. That's the coolest thing — to watch them turn the dirt for the first time and then come back 18 months later and see the Pillsbury sign lit up," says Page. "Sometimes, I have to try to not to pat myself on the back."

The Lincoln, Nebraska, native got her J.D. from Hofstra and spent five years at a New York City firm working on mergers and acquisitions before relocating to Minnesota in 2011 with her husband.



As lenders' counsel, Page says her services are typically needed for complex projects "with a ton of different funding sources" and other obstacles. The redevelopments of the Pillsbury A Mill and the former Schmidt Brewery in St. Paul, for instance, tapped affordable housing tax credits and historic preservation credits; they also involved numerous public and private stakeholders.

"We take pride in the fact that we work well with others. That's the part I like the most. You get to see all these people come together," says Page.

Outside the office, Page volunteers on the board of Eureka Recycling, a nonprofit devoted to a zero waste goal, and serves on the board of the Cowles Council, which oversees the Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts in downtown Minneapolis and provides free dance instruction to kids across the state.

—Mike Mosedale



Diana Marianetti Ringuette

MASLON

With her background in speech, mock trial and debate, Diana Ringuette was groomed to become a litigator even though, deep down, she says she realized she didn't have "that litigator gene" and an adversarial practice focus might not be the best fit. "I like to be cooperative and solve problems before they become problems," she explains.

Ringuette discovered her niche when she was still a student at Hamline University School of Law. At the time, the legal job market was in the tank and the job posting boards virtually bereft. Eventually Ringuette spotted a posting for an estate planning law clerk. "I thought, 'I don't know what that is and it sounds boring' but I took the job," she recalls with a laugh.

Now a member of the estate planning group at Maslon LLP, Ringuette specializes in estate planning, probate and trust administration. She also spent a couple of years doing commer-



cial litigation — an experience she thinks made her a sharper transactional attorney by helping her identify potential conflicts.

Ringuette says she especially enjoys counseling clients on the benefits of smart planning, like how setting up an irrevocable trust can reduce tax liabilities. "They'll say who pays the taxes? And I tell them, 'No one. It's tax exempt,'" she says. "That's really satisfying."

In addition to her activities with various women's groups and professional organizations, Ringuette volunteers for Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid. Recently, she set up a conservatorship for a minor whose mother was murdered. Ringuette, who grew up in Albuquerque, moved to Minnesota at 18 to attend Macalester College. An avid cellist, she regularly performs with the Kenwood Symphony Orchestra and also serves on the board of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

—Mike Mosedale



Rebecca Scholtz

MID-MINNESOTA LEGAL AID

Anyone who's paid attention to the news knows that immigration is a hot topic. Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid attorney Rebecca Scholtz has made it her life's work to bring the issue down to a human level.

She has represented children in asylum and in special immigrant juvenile cases, a task that can be especially challenging because of the trauma many unaccompanied children go through before, during and after their journey here.

"I was interested in immigration issues even before law school," recalled Scholtz, who also worked with migrant children in the Peace Corps. "This was my dream job. I'm lucky in that I get to do both direct representation and broader work."



In a number of cases, she has been able to secure permanent legal relief for unaccompanied Central American children who are facing deportation from the United States.

"The piece you provide them can sometimes be the one thing that allows them to move forward and flourish," said Scholtz, who also works with law students via the University of Minnesota's Center For New Americans.

Scholtz has created a working group that meets quarterly to discuss legal issues facing unaccompanied children, among other initiatives.

"We try to educate the community, increase legal resources and identify kids who need help," she said.

—Dan Heilman



Benjamin J. Skoglund

AMAZON.COM (PREVIOUSLY LINDQUIST & VENNUM)

During five-plus years at Lindquist & Vennum, Ben Skoglund honed his skills by working primarily on mergers and acquisitions – but also by developing what amounted to a secondary practice in technology transactions. Those two areas have now come together for Skoglund in his new position at Amazon.com.

“At first I was doing mostly M&A work, but the transactions I worked in had more and more of a technology component – whether the target itself was in a tech-related industry,” said Skoglund.

“The opportunity at Amazon is pretty exciting, and it happened in no small part because of the experience I got at Lindquist.”



Recently, Skoglund played a key role for Lindquist in a complex divestiture deal that took in 10 countries at once and totaled more than \$500 million. The case required him to manage foreign counsel across 10 jurisdictions, including making sure they knew what was expected of them and that they were doing their jobs as asked.

In his new role, Skoglund looks forward to the volatile landscape in technology law and how it will affect his practice.

“Data privacy and security will be the key legal issues,” he said. “Also, the number of sensors and devices is set to expand by the billions over the next decade. We’re on that cutting edge.”

—Dan Heilman



Pamela Steinle

SUNDE OLSON KIRCHER & ZENDER

If Pamela Steinle's career trajectory is any indication, it turns out you can go home again. After several years with a Minneapolis firm, Steinle and her husband decided to return to their roots in south-central Minnesota.

"We always wanted to move back, and the firm had a need for a trusts and estates attorney," said Steinle. "The opportunity came up, and everything fell into line."

Steinle's law career followed time teaching science in middle school and high school, as well as some time with Politics in Minnesota, now known as Capitol Report, Minnesota Lawyer's sister publication.

Now, Steinle does litigation for Sunde Olson



Kircher & Zender in addition to working in trusts and estates. That new responsibility led to a professional milestone last year when she first-chaired her first trial and received a directed verdict in a trust dispute.

Steinle has learned about the personal side of the law by becoming guardian to two children from her family who needed a place to stay. That has led to volunteering with the Children's Law Center of Minnesota and has added a new dimension to her work.

"Kids without parents are some of the most vulnerable," she said. "It's gratifying to be one of the few stable things in their lives."

—Dan Heilman



Cathleen Sykes

SYKES FAMILY LAW

Cathleen Sykes was on her way to being a doctor, majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology and primed for medical school. One problem.

“Halfway through, I developed this horrible aversion to blood,” she said. “Medical school wasn’t in the cards for me.”

Though disappointed, she took the LSAT and never looked back. “I can’t imagine doing anything else,” said Sykes.

Sykes earned her law degree in 2010, when, to put it mildly, jobs for baby lawyers were few. So she channeled her passion for LGBT rights and marriage equality into a volunteer researching job with a small family law firm that was on the front lines of chal-



lenging Minnesota’s Defense of Marriage Act.

“It set me up well to open my own practice, which I did in August 2012,” Sykes said.

Since then, Sykes has succeeded by combining the backbone necessary to be a strong advocate for family law clients with the compassion to be a sympathetic ear when needed.

“You deal with people in the most trying times of their lives,” she said. “It takes a lot of patience, but you have to be firm and decisive with your clients – not only in areas of law, but things like how to co-parent. You’re doing more than advising them about what the courts might do.”

—Dan Heilman



Brandon E. Vaughn

ROBINS KAPLAN

During his eight years in practice, Brandon E. Vaughn has developed a keen eye for the ins and outs of personal injury, medical malpractice and product liability law. That ability has given him the tools to be a fierce advocate for his clients – a job he was seemingly born to do.

“I was the kid on the playground who read the student code of conduct,” he said. “I advised my classmates on how much trouble they could get in for doing whatever they were doing.”

Now Vaughn brings his skills to bear in helping clients who have experienced a catastrophic event. He helped gain a \$4.5 million settlement on behalf of a



baby who suffered severe and permanent neurological damage when a hospital and midwife let the mother’s labor continue under unsafe circumstances. Vaughn has gained first-chair experience in other cases involving malpractice and wrongful death.

“All of my cases are gratifying in various ways,” he said. “Obviously, I like to see my clients get compensated for their injuries, but I’ve often found that my greatest successes are in some of my losses. Even when you lose at trial, clients express gratitude that you were able to give their family a day in court to tell their story.”

—Dan Heilman



CONGRATULATIONS **Ryan Osterholm**

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Congratulations to **Diana Marianetti Ringuette:** Up & Coming Attorney

Diana is an outstanding lawyer, as well as our respected colleague and friend. Her **leadership, integrity, dedication to clients,** and **service to both the community and the profession** are qualities we hold dear at Maslon. We are extremely proud of all of Diana's achievements and congratulate her on the well-deserved recognition as a *Minnesota Lawyer* **2016 Up & Coming Attorney.**



Tyler Young

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS

Trade secret cases intrigue Tyler Young regardless of the level of stealth involved.

Young, an associate and leader in the business litigation group at Faegre Baker Daniels, has distinguished himself in handling multimillion-dollar trade secret cases across the country.

He likes the opportunities trade secret cases offer to be on both the plaintiff's side and the defense and to learn about different industries and technologies.

"Sometimes there is the cloak-and-dagger, parking garage type of secret meeting element to it," Young said. "Sometimes it's much more plain vanilla, just someone putting company information onto a flash drive, walking out of the building. But it's always interesting to uncover."



The more complex case the better for Young, a Harvard Law School graduate who litigates class-action cases and high-stakes issues for technology companies and companies in highly regulated industries. Part of the appeal is working on big teams and handling day-to-day case management.

"It's the opportunity to bring order to chaos," Young said. "You can add value by having a strategic, ordered approach to things. You have to be proactive and have a plan of attack and that's how I like to handle any situation in life."

In his pro bono work, he's part of another big legal team representing a death-row inmate in Alabama.

—Todd Nelson



Drew M. Zamansky

ZAMANSKY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

The calm with which Drew Zamansky learned to approach high-pressure situations while playing competitive tennis has carried over to his business law practice.

Local ties the Twin Cities native forged growing up here and attending the Blake School in Minneapolis, where he was State Boys' Class A tennis singles champion in 1999, have helped him build a significant client base.

"That competitive aspect of playing a lot of tennis around the country at different levels has paid off in my professional career," Zamansky said. "It has helped prepare me, whether it's time management, a negotiation or a discussion, to take a step back and look at the big picture."

Zamansky has focused on business transactions



and serving as general counsel to a business clients since he joined Zamansky Professional Association, his father's Minneapolis firm, in 2006 after graduating from the University of Denver College of Law.

Projects the younger Zamansky has handled include legal work on a \$55 million apartment and townhouse development that recently began construction in Golden Valley.

Zamansky also helped former Blake classmate Eric Dayton and his brother Andrew from the start with legal work on The Bachelor Farmer restaurant and Askov Finlayson retail store they developed in an old warehouse they bought and renovated in Minneapolis' North Loop neighborhood.

—Todd Nelson



Sasha Zekoff

OFFICE OF THE STEELE COUNTY ATTORNEY

A positive relationship with her adoptive parents inspired assistant Steele County attorney Sasha Zekoff to work on behalf of children.

Zekoff volunteered to lead the Steele County Attorney Office's child protection practice based on her personal background and professional experience in delinquency cases.

"I have always wanted to be part of a process that advocates for children and that works towards finding permanency outcomes that are in a child's best interests, whether that is with the child's parents or another safe and stable home," Zekoff said. "My hope is to help other children have amazing parents like I have and am lucky enough to have because of my adoption."



However, Zekoff said, "It is always the best outcome when children remain with their family and reunification is successful because that means children are with healthy parents who can look after their best interests."

Zekoff worked with others last year to launch the Steele County Truancy Court to address habitual truancy in students 12 and older. The court is to expand to other county districts after beginning as a pilot in the Owatonna Public Schools district.

Zekoff earned her law degree at William Mitchell College of Law in 2011 and worked in juvenile delinquency in the Ramsey County Attorney's Office from 2008 to 2012.

—Todd Nelson

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Jason Zucchi

FISH & RICHARDSON

Jason Zucchi had just begun practicing in 2007 when he started working on a team representing a small family-owned firm in a patent infringement case against several large competitors.

So, some nine years later, winning a favorable opinion in June from the U.S. Supreme Court in *Halo Electronics v. Pulse Electronics* was particularly satisfying.

“It feels good to finally have what we think to be the right resolution,” said Zucchi, a principal at the Minneapolis office of Fish & Richardson, the country’s largest intellectual property firm.

The Supreme Court opinion changed the test for willful patent violation, and the case has been remanded to determine whether Halo will receive



enhanced damages under the Supreme Court’s new test, Zucchi said.

Zucchi enjoys the challenge of making complex subjects such as GPS and mobile app technology understandable to jurors and judges in both high-stakes corporate litigation and in David and Goliath cases such as Halo.

“When they’re smaller companies or a small inventor it really personifies the client,” said Zucchi, a University of Minnesota Law School graduate. “Representing big companies ... you work just as hard and it’s just as good, but when you have these smaller clients, everything matters.”

—Todd Nelson



Unsung Heroes
& Legal

MINNESOTA LAWYER

2016



Pauline Afuso

WASHINGTON COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

Whether scheduling weekly legal advice clinics, coordinating continuing legal education classes for attorneys or pointing pro se individuals to needed information and forms, law librarian Pauline Afuso serves the public.

With Afuso's leadership, the county law library served about 700 pro se clients in clinics in 2015 and has assisted an untold number of individuals in finding the legal forms they needed to enter the legal system, says her supervisor Joyce Schneider, deputy director of the Washington County library system.

Afuso says, "I like the challenge of trying to provide excellent service to all the law library users, whether they are attorneys trying to find



current information or self-represented litigants. The two main user groups have such disparate needs that it is a constant challenge to make sure that we are allocating adequate resources to meet the information needs of both groups."

Afuso works with other county departments, staff at other county libraries, volunteer attorneys, and the Washington County Bar Association. She also she serves on the 10th Judicial District Self-Help Steering Committee.

Afuso has worked at the Washington County Law Library since 2012 and as a law librarian since 1993. She has a master's degree in library science and a juris doctor degree.

—Betsy Carlson



Keith S. Badenoch

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS

With a warm, approachable demeanor, data architect Keith Badenoch has been resolving the most technical hurdles for Faegre Baker Daniels with extreme professionalism and unparalleled discretion during his 11 years with the law firm.

Because of his trustworthiness, firm leaders regularly call on Badenoch to plan and design information technology solutions for “extremely confidential” processes and data, says Ray Swift, FaegreBD manager of data services in Indianapolis.

Badenoch is well known across both the lawyer and administrative ranks for his dedication and his ability to translate business needs into highly effective technical solutions, Swift adds.

For example, Swift says Badenoch’s technical



guidance was instrumental in bringing together the “entire breadth” of the administrative departments of Baker & Daniels and Faegre & Benson when the firms merged in 2012.

He has developed and implemented custom, client-specific databases so the firm can respond quickly to the needs of clients in very high-profile, time-sensitive cases.

The unsung hero responds quickly and quietly to requests from legal teams, who rely heavily on his heroic efforts “under the hood.”

Says Badenoch, “I like to think my work has a positive effect on the legal and administrative teams within the firm. If I can make someone else’s work a little easier, then I feel good in what I am doing.”

—Betsy Carlson



Amanda Booth

ROBINS KAPLAN

Robins Kaplan paralegal Amanda Booth was recognized by Judge Thomas S. Fraser for having “assisted throughout” a case when he awarded attorney fees and costs in a recent order.

Fraser credited Booth with benefiting both parties and saving time and expense for the opposing party, reports Robins Kaplan partner Jennifer M. Robbins.

The paralegal assembled numbered exhibits for both parties, prepared trial binders for the court and jury and took charge of setting up the courtroom for the electronic display of exhibits.

Describing Booth as a perfectionist, Robbins says the paralegal holds herself to the highest standards.



For example, a Robins Kaplan client in a different case explains that Booth painstakingly waded through thousands of pages of evidence and unearthed a “smoking gun” document in a “titanic legal battle” that may have multi-million dollar ramifications in favor of his firm.

Robbins says that by coordinating e-discovery, expert discovery and documents necessary for filing with the court, Booth “generally keeps all of our attorneys in line by gently nudging us in the right direction.”

Booth says she truly enjoys being part of legal teams, making daily progress on their cases, “It is a rewarding environment that offers a good balance of problem solving and teamwork.”

—Betsy Carlson

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Ike Messmore

2016 Up & Coming Attorney

Val Ferrian and Kelly Mills

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Jan Buster

HONSA & ASSOCIATES

Since July 2000 Jan Buster has served as a legal secretary, receptionist, proofreader, mathematician, document redactor, supply organizer and manager of miscellaneous projects at Honsa & Associates.

But through her many tasks, she became director of first impressions.

From answering clients' initial phone calls through proofing decrees, Buster significantly contributes to each of their client's cases, says attorney Deborah M. Gallenberg.

"Jan knows our clients by name, many of whom are quick to confide in Jan about their family law matters," says Gallenberg.

Sixteen years ago Buster wanted a career change



from administrative positions to working directly with people. She chose family law.

"It took me a long time to get to my area of 'social work,' but I truly do love it.

My co-workers gave me the plaque that sits on my desk that says, 'Jan Buster – Director of First Impressions.' On the phone or face to face in the office, that's me."

Buster adds, "My favorite thing about my job is working with clients—from the first contact through the conclusion when they jokingly say, 'I hope I never have to see you again.' And sometimes I get a big hug as they are walking out the door—with a smile on their face."

—Betsy Carlson



Valerie Ferrian

BOWMAN AND BROOKE

Whether booking flights at a moment's notice, scheduling client meetings and depositions across the country or deciphering illegible scribbles for court documents, Bowman and Brooke legal secretary Valerie Ferrian always goes the extra mile and is always a positive team player.

So says Kim Schmid, executive managing partner at Bowman and Brooke. Schmid is leader of the firm's life sciences practice. Ferrian's other assignments are with Mary Novacheck, leader of the electronic discovery and document retention practice, and with Steve Reitenour, head of the intellectual property practice.

Ferrian's meticulous work in preparing, assembling, double-checking and sending out a vo-



luminous package of letters for warranty claim customers during a discovery process with an automaker helped turn the tide in the right direction and earned a letter of praise from the special master in the 2014 Montana case, says Novacheck.

And, Reitenour says, "I cannot imagine practicing law without her. Val handles all projects with a smile and anticipates what needs to be done before I ask her."

Ferrian says she loves the people she works with and being appreciated for her work inspires her to do her best. "I take pride in doing my job well," she says.

—Betsy Carlson



Mary Hagen

SIEBENCAREY

When Mary Hagen saw Twin Cities' attorney John Carey regarding a real estate matter, she left her meeting with more than legal advice.

"At the time I was looking for a part-time job, and John offered me a position in his new practice which included handling various types of cases," Hagen recalled. She accepted Carey's offer in June of 1974.

Forty-two years later, Hagen is still working as a paralegal for Carey at SiebenCarey P.A., assisting him with medical malpractice cases at the Minnesota-based personal injury law firm.

"Mary is an integral part of our medical malpractice team," said attorney Shannon Carey. She noted



Hagen has extensive knowledge of birth trauma cases, "one of the most difficult areas of the practice."

"Mary goes the extra mile to ensure the clients and their families feel supported while they are facing tragic life-changing events," Shannon Carey said. She added that Hagen's preparation of the files "exceeds expectations," including learning the "intricate details" in the cases.

For her part, Hagen said her job "is a constant learning experience." The mother of three grown children and seven grandchildren, Hagen's hobbies include playing piano and organ; for many years, she was a church organist.

—Scott Carlson



SiebenCarey Congratulates One of Its Own Mary Hagen Recognized as a 2016 Unsung Legal Hero

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*Jan's lengthy and devoted service to the
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Marie Hansen

EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR IMMIGRATION REVIEW

Through times of transition, budget crunches, hiring freezes, updated software that slowed efficiency, and even a government shutdown, Marie Hansen, legal assistant for the Executive Office for Immigration Review at Fort Snelling, has been the go-to person for answers.

With the immigration court since it opened 19 years ago, Hansen has weathered many storms, according to Cassondre K. Buteyn and David L. Wilson, immigration attorneys with Wilson Law Group.

After the 2013 government shutdown, there were mountains of work to reschedule hearings and myriads of questions to answer for confused respondents. With other changes, tight budgets and at times the heavy influx of new cases, she has led staff to do more with



less and handled increased work flow in ways described as always professional, friendly and helpful.

She's a firm mother hen with new attorneys, saving them from themselves, acquainting them with court procedures and scolding new and senior attorneys alike, says Buteyn.

"Putting everything together under changing priorities has probably been my biggest challenge and what I have enjoyed the most," says Hansen. "Actually I have enjoyed just about every aspect of this job."

"I will miss it as I joyfully head off into retirement this month (August) after working 37 years with the federal government."

—Betsy Carlson



Janet Johnson

GREGERSON, ROSOW, JOHNSON & NILAN

Now in her 25th year at Gregerson, Rosow, Johnson & Nilan, Ltd.; Janet Johnson is the firm's "go-to person."

Johnson was hired as a legal secretary in 1992, promoted to office manager in 2000 and then given the added duties of finance manager in 2005. Her duties range from hiring support staff and administering the firm's medical insurance to overseeing office furniture, telephone systems and computer purchases. She also coordinates the law firm's social events including its annual outings to Twins baseball games.

Johnson "goes out of her way to help the firm and everyone who works at the firm," said attorney



Richard Rosow. "She is still our go-to person in the firm."

Johnson said she especially enjoys "working alongside such great co-workers. We really are a great team and it is rewarding to watch the firm continue to succeed and know that we play a part in that success."

Rosow said one of Johnson's most recent, noteworthy successes was overseeing the law firm's relocation into new office quarters. "On the day of the move and over the weekend, she put in numerous hours above and beyond a regular work day to make sure everything was delivered to the right location," Rosow said.

—Scott Carlson



Susan Kjelvik

DORSEY & WHITNEY

As pro bono coordinator in the Minneapolis office, legal secretary Susan Kjelvik matches Dorsey & Whitney's pro bono lawyers with individuals and organizations in need of their assistance, says Bryn R. Vaaler, chief marketing and professional development officer for Dorsey.

He adds that as a member of the firm's volunteer council, Kjelvik organizes other activities, such as Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity builds and an annual program to bring holiday cheer to families in need.

"Without her quiet and persistent efforts behind the scenes, these valuable community service programs would not be possible," says Vaaler.



Kjelvik staffs and sets the schedules for five different clinics presented by Dorsey pro bono lawyers and client partners, he says and adds she's called "Sue the Glue" for her work in keeping it all together.

Kjelvik says, "In the business world, success is often measured by dollars. In the pro bono world, I leave the office everyday feeling I'm making a difference in the firm and in our community."

A legal secretary for 23 years, Kjelvik has been at Dorsey for more than 19 years. An active volunteer in private life, she is also the proud mother of her Eagle Scout son.

—Betsy Carlson



Sara Larison

CHILDREN'S LAW CENTER

During her three years at the Children's Law Center of Minnesota, Sara Larison became a "true cornerstone" of the small nonprofit.

Larison, as office manager, helped CLC staff coordinate work for some 300 volunteer attorneys, who annually provide legal representation to more than 650 children who have been removed from home because of abuse, neglect or abandonment.

"Sara is a solid employee: very kind, professional, passionate about her work and the cause and incredible," said Lilia Panteleeva, CLC executive director.

One example: When the nonprofit's computer system crashed and lost all backup data covering three months, Sara quietly helped through the cri-



sis, while also continuing to stay abreast of her ongoing, regular work, Panteleeva said.

Before joining the CLC, Larison worked three years for Barnes & Thornberg, where she started as a contract employee in the office services division of the law firm's Minneapolis office. While at Barnes, Larison learned of the CLC because her law firm had attorneys who were volunteers for the nonprofit. When CLC had an opening for an office manager, Larison immediately applied for the job and got it.

"Being a part of an organization that helps those children was very fulfilling," said Larison, who recently left CLC to move to Colorado with her significant other.

—Scott Carlson



Jamie Lindahl

ROBINS KAPLAN

In a contest for the legal administrative assistant who epitomizes grace under pressure, Jamie Lindahl might take first prize.

For nearly 32 years, Lindahl been renowned medical malpractice attorney Kathleen Flynn Peterson's right-hand person at Robins Kaplan in Minneapolis. When she started with the firm, Lindahl assisted two attorneys, two nurses and a law clerk. She now supports a paralegal and a legal nurse consultant, but keeping up with Flynn Peterson, three times a Minnesota Lawyer Attorney of the Year, is more than enough to fill her schedule. Flynn Peterson has had up to 100 open cases at a time and travels frequently.

Lindahl not only fulfills her day-to-day LAA re-



sponsibilities, but her positive attitude and extreme competence lift the performance of others, according to Flynn Peterson. Lindahl has served as lead LAA on one of the firm's busiest floors, coordinating workflow and managing coverage when other staffers are absent. She has also been the main point of contact for aspiring LAAs at the firm.

It's not part of her job description, but Lindahl also supports Flynn Peterson in her leadership roles for nonprofit and volunteer activities. Lindahl executes all of these duties with humility and aplomb, according to the attorney.

"I can't think of a mistake she's ever made that's significant," Flynn Peterson said. "Ever."

—Nancy Crotti



Kelly Mills

BOWMAN AND BROOKE

Kelly Mills' job title is legal secretary, but she largely functions as a paralegal, too.

The staffer at Bowman and Brooke in Minneapolis brings a strong analytical approach to managing a case and a profound interest in product liability defense, according firm co-managing partner Alana Bassin.

Mills also supports the works of firm partners Barry Koopmann and Molly Given, and of associate Rachelle Velgersdyk. She brings a secretary's knack for organization and attention to detail, and a paralegal's flexibility to adapt to changing tasks and client needs to each assignment, Bassin said.

Mills recently served as a key member of the legal



team that is defending a Johnson & Johnson company in a major mass tort regarding pelvic mesh implants. During one of the discovery waves, the team needed a massive volume of scientific information gathered and organized for expert disclosures and depositions. Mills managed the entire project, directing a team of paralegals and other secretaries to compile and organize the information and send it out on time. Mills takes it all in stride.

"I do what I'm supposed to do and help out and keep it moving," she said. "'It's not my job' is not something I believe in."

—Nancy Crotti



Christine E. Page

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS

Lawyers who work at firms have to keep up their billable hours and log pro bono hours. They don't have to do community service, but many do.

At Faegre Baker Daniels, Christine Page makes sure of it. The manager of community service for the firm's 12 U.S. offices and London office, Page develops and manages a diversified array of firm-sponsored community service projects. For 10 years, she has been the firm's liaison with nonprofit, public interest, charitable and other community organizations, coordinating current and potential community service projects.

Page's vision of service encompasses a broad swath of the community: high school students, families of sick children, children in shelter care, homeless



youth and adults, immigrants and people in work-readiness programs.

Rather than deploying lawyers and staff from Faegre to volunteer as mock job interviewers, the firm brings clients of Twin Cities RISE! to its offices. That way, firm attorneys and staff can work more interviews into tight job schedules, and program participants can practice their presentations, including answering tough questions about their past with a focus on the future. Talking with firm employees who have overcome challenges also bolsters their confidence, according to Page.

"They feel, 'I can go do this anywhere,'" Page said. "Hopefully, it makes them feel a little bit more empowered."

—Nancy Crotti



Linda Peterson

BARNES & THORNBURG

You could call Linda Peterson selfless, forward-thinking, supportive, skilled, knowledgeable, straightforward, and a ray of sunshine. That's what they call the 18-year legal assistant at Barnes & Thornburg, Minneapolis.

"She's always selfless, and certainly she is always thinking about the client and the needs of the client first," said Trisha Volpe, an associate at the firm. "Because she's so experienced in litigation, when you're trying to figure out which way to go, she can definitely look at all sides of it."

Peterson is also a mentor to new attorneys and staff, demonstrating how to meet the firm's standards and remain self-sufficient and humble.

When one of her attorneys recently needed



hotel reservations in London for three client representatives and four lawyers, Peterson negotiated the hotel down from its three-night-minimum stay rule to a 24-hour checkout notice. The arbitration ended sooner than planned, and Peterson saved the client more than \$10,000.

Peterson can also anticipate others' needs and understands the dynamics and stress of practicing law, according to Volpe.

"She exudes a calming presence and gives a sense that everything is under control, even in the most stressful situations," Volpe said. "She makes us all want to work harder to meet her high caliber."

—Nancy Crotti



Debra Pexa

MINNESOTA WOMEN LAWYERS

Debra Pexa says the heart and soul of Minnesota Women Lawyers is its volunteers. But MWL president Bridget Nason says that Pexa is the heart and soul of the organization.

Pexa has been the executive director of Minnesota Women Lawyers for 17 years.

Since then, MWL has grown in every direction. It has strong finances, a solid membership base, good relationships with many law firms (but is always looking for more), strong committees and a charitable foundation. That's a significant initiative of MWL developed in recent years and encompasses the charitable and scholarship work MWL has engaged in, but also allows expanded



opportunities for donations and planned giving, Pexa said. "So now I've been named executive director of another organization, the MWL Foundation," Pexa said.

Deservedly so, according to MWL. "Through her guidance and leadership, Deb Pexa has had a tremendous impact of MWL and its mission over the years. Many initiatives and efforts championed by Deb have had a remarkable and long-lasting effect on our organization, our membership and the greater legal community," Nason wrote.

Assuming the past is prologue, MWL and the foundation have a bright, savvy and shipshape future.

—Barbara L. Jones



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Joni Spratt

TREPANIER MACGILLIS BATTINA

Joni Spratt has brought the human touch to her workplace for more than a decade.

Until recently, the office manager and legal assistant for Trepanier MacGillis Battina in Minneapolis was the sole support staff person at the small business law firm, said co-founder and shareholder James MacGillis.

As MacGillis sees it, Spratt has several other job titles: receptionist, financial watchdog, sounding board and chief party planner. Her demeanor and comportment have helped retain clients for the firm and for the criminal defense attorneys who once shared their offices. Spratt also ensures that the attorneys feel noticed and appreciated.

“She is the reminder of the importance of rec-



ognizing successes, birthdays, and anniversaries among staff, associates and shareholders,” MacGillis said.

Spratt joined the firm in 2004 and has logged almost 30 years in her field. In addition to meeting the firm’s administrative needs, she trains its law clerks and summer associates.

The firm is now up to eight attorneys, and Spratt just passed along the titles of receptionist. The attorneys recently hired someone else to staff the front desk, and Spratt got an office, where she will focus on human resources, financial supervision and administration duties.

“She has handled the duties like Superwoman for basically the entire office,” MacGillis said.

—Nancy Crotti



Duane Stanley

HENNEPIN COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION

As he prepares to retire after nearly 30 years serving Hennepin County Bar Association (HCBA), Duane Stanley leaves behind a solid legacy and a history of commitment.

“He is the heart and soul of the HCBA and has dedicated his career to furthering access to justice, improving the administration of justice and supporting the leadership and career development of HCBA members and staff,” said Joseph Satter, the association’s director of membership and marketing.

Stanley noted that it has been a great team effort, kicked off by his predecessor. The association has evolved to become a valued resource for attorneys and others in the state.



“There’s more engagement with important issues in the legal world than when I started,” Stanley said. “The association has really stepped up in taking on a leadership role when it comes to strategies like getting more diversity into the talent pipeline and building community around law and justice.”

One duty he’s particularly enjoyed is mentoring, which Stanley believes will help prepare the next generation of HCBA leaders to step in and continue the organization’s momentum. “The bar’s work isn’t always visible to others, but it serves such an important role,” he said. “I’ve been honored to have been a part of that.”

—Elizabeth Millard



Ben Stellpflug

GOLDENBERGLAW

While a case load of 300 is considered standard at GoldenbergLaw, legal assistant Ben Stellpflug has always gone above and beyond.

Handling 450 cases, with litigation that wasn't consolidated, he fielded client calls, untangled the complexities of each case, and often stayed into the wee hours of the morning to meet filing deadlines, said associate attorney Marlene Goldenberg.

More than that, Stellpflug knew each client and not just by name. "He knew about each person, and I know this made a tremendous difference in the level of service we have been able to provide our clients,"



Goldenberg said.

For Stellpflug, it's been a passion as well as a vocation. "I really do enjoy almost every aspect of my role with the firm," he said. "I love the fact that no two days are ever the same. The variety and complexity of the work is what has really kept me intrigued."

This fall, he'll take the next step in his legal career by attending Mitchell Hamline School of Law. "I believe that our legal system is a powerful and integral entity, with a lot of room to grow and improve," he said. "I look forward to advancing my foothold in it."

—Elizabeth Millard



Kelly Street

SOULE & STULL

Of her role at Soule & Stull, Kelly Street said, “I’m the best administrative assistant they’ve ever had. Let’s face it, I run the show.”

The declaration is tongue-in-cheek, since she’s the only administrative assistant the firm, started in 2014, has had. But partner Melissa Stull insists that there’s a great deal of truth in the statement, too.

“In our small firm, Kelly fills so many roles so well that she is our most valuable player,” she said. “She’s critical to our success.”

Street made a career move back into law in order to join the firm. She had worked for lawyers before switching to a career in veterinary technology.



But a chance reconnection with George Soule, along with a job offer, proved too tempting. “It was a chance to help build a new business and a new challenge to take on many different roles,” Street said. “At a big firm, you’re a specialist. Here, I’m a generalist.”

At the firm, she’s a paralegal, office manager, accounting coordinator, receptionist, marketing assistant, IT coordinator and administrative assistant. Stull noted, “She does a brilliant job juggling the tasks typically assigned to a number of different departments at a large firm.”

—Elizabeth Millard



Robert Van Beusekom

FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS

If dedication is defined as the effort someone puts in when nobody's watching, then Robert Van Beusekom is the epitome of that sentiment.

As the manager of financial analysis and planning for Faegre Baker Daniels, he guided the firm through a major transition last year — and put in the hours to make it work, noted Laurie Schrader, Faegre's chief financial officer.

"He stepped up his already significant contribution," she said. "He is truly an unsung hero who deserves to be recognized."

Last fall, just prior to the busy forecasting, billing and budgeting season, the firm's other two seasoned financial analysts left for other opportunities.



That left just Van Beusekom, who joked that he didn't go home much after that.

What he did do was complete the budget without missing a deadline, while interviewing candidates to build his team, and managing other key planning processes. After bringing that focus into the hiring process, he's helped put a team of five analysts in place, and relishes the chance to work on a variety of projects.

"I enjoy my work immensely here," he said. "I especially enjoy being part of a finance team that helps chart the future of the firm, and we actually have a great deal of fun along the way."

—Elizabeth Millard

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Judith Wasilkus

FISH & RICHARDSON

Although she doesn't have a science background, Judith Wasilkus has a passion for reading about nucleotides, amino acid sequences and other complicated mechanisms.

As a patent paralegal for Fish & Richardson, she artfully handles the type of multifaceted biotech patents that drive science and medicine forward. And she enjoys every moment of it.

"I get to see an application from the very beginning all the way through the process, so every patent is like my baby," she said. "I love the variability of what we handle, and patent law itself is fascinating."

Wasilkus has been at Fish & Richardson since



1997, and she has put the client first since day one, believes Patrick Finn, managing principal of the firm's Twin Cities office. "She manages very large, complex dockets with a smile and yet always finds time to make sure our clients receive immediate attention for any of their requests," he said.

Her efficiency and excellence are so notable that she's been asked to train new paralegals in Fish offices across the country. She's happy to help others find the blend of skill and curiosity that drive her every day.

"When you love what you do, then it's easy to stay motivated," she said.

—Elizabeth Millard



Julie Zierden

FOLEY & MANSFIELD

Peter Torseth, the CEO of Foley & Mansfield, doesn't skimp on the praise for his firm's director of finance. "Julie is the most dedicated, hard-working individual that I have had the pleasure to work with, and I cannot think of anyone more worthy to be recognized," says Torseth, who recruited Julie Zierden to Foley six years ago.

A few years after arriving at Foley, Zierden was tasked with a logistically challenging, multi-year project: transitioning from the firm's legacy accounting and billing software to Thomson's Elite 3E product. According to Torseth, Zierden managed the shift expertly, with minimal disruption to the work flow in the firm's 11 offices.

Not surprisingly, she was soon promoted from controller to director of finance.

A native of Gilford, Illinois, Zierden first came to Minnesota to attend Saint Mary's University in Winona,



where she majored in accounting and minored in computer science. After college, she returned to Illinois and worked as an accountant for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for a spell before deciding to move back to Minnesota in search of new opportunity.

Prior to arriving at Foley & Mansfield, Zierden hadn't worked at a law firm, but, as it turned out, that wasn't much of an impediment. "There are some nuances for the accounting for each industry but it's pretty easy to pick up once you have the basics down," notes Zierden.

While the demands of the work don't leave much time for hobbies, Zierden likes to spend her spare time with her two adult sons and a newly acquired puppy, a shepherd lab mix. "We swore we weren't going to get another puppy but, of course, we caved," she adds.

—Mike Mosedale

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