



Many Career Paths, ALL IN ONE CITY

By Alan J. Borsuk

Beating Apple head-to-head on a legal matter. Negotiating international treaties for all of the American military bases in Italy. Sorting out how to create high-speed maglev train service between Washington, D.C., and New York City. Heading a national consortium aimed at improving health care. Assessing whether chemical reactions on moons of Jupiter are pertinent to a patent application. Prosecuting prisoners held on terrorism charges at the Guantánamo Bay detention camp.

And just plain helping people while making successful legal careers.

What does it mean to be a Washington lawyer?

ANNIE OWENS, L'05, realizes that some people react negatively to the term “Washington lawyer.” But to her, it means making “a career dedicated to public service and bettering the country.”

TOM SCHENDT, L'85, says, “For me, a Washington lawyer is a person who is focused and very directed toward politics and what’s going on, whether it’s regulatory or litigation. You know what is happening. You have to be on the edge—you don’t read about it; you experience it.” To be a success, “you have to be on your toes, you have to lean forward, you have to be opening up stuff as it comes off the presses. That’s what it means to be a Washington lawyer.”

“There’s more opportunity to do different things here than there is probably anywhere else in the country or the world,” says **D. JEFFREY HIRSCHBERG**, L'71. “There is a whole list of things that you can do that nobody ever thinks about. A law degree is a leg up and an open pass to do some of that.”

JOEL TEITELBAUM, L'96, says, “What makes D.C. special, a destination place, and also so transient is that there are things that you can do and experience here as a lawyer that you just really can’t do in most other places.”

KRISTINA SESEK, L'11, says, “To come to D.C., you have to be passionate about it. It’s a very expensive city, and when you first move here as a young lawyer, you’re not making very much money. But if you really want to do it, you can make it work.”

In Washington, **BRANDON CASEY**, L'09, says, “everyone is a lawyer.” Carrying that title “either means nothing or it means it’s on you to prove yourself.” Dozens of Marquette lawyers are doing the latter, proving themselves in a wide range of substantial and successful ways.

As part of this Washington-themed issue of the *Marquette Lawyer*, we talked with 16 Marquette lawyers who now make Washington, D.C., their home. We spoke with them about their careers, their daily lives, and their insights on the high-pressure world of Washington. Several of them are involved in work that definitely could be called political. Several felt that they are not political at all. The range of their experiences is wide.

The lawyers we spoke with are by no means the only Marquette lawyers doing well in Washington. They aren’t even all of the ones we set out to meet, given the realities of scheduling and logistics, and we may feature others in subsequent issues of the *Marquette Lawyer*. But we had interesting conversations. Feel free to listen in on some of those conversations in the pages that follow.

Illustrations by Stephanie Dalton Cowan

The Hill People

ANNIE OWENS says she always wanted to work in policy and government in Washington, D.C. Brandon Casey relates he got “the political bug” a bit later—while a Marquette undergrad learning at the university’s Les Aspin Center for Government. And Kristina Sesek calls it “unexpected” that, after law school, she got a position in Washington and, in 2019, came to work in the U.S. Senate.

Government and politics are probably the first thing that comes to mind when you think of working as a lawyer in Washington. So, while that’s actually only one part of a big universe of legal work in the nation’s capital (as we will see in subsequent entries), we start with these three Marquette lawyers. Each is making a significant career operating in the milieu of “the Hill,” where Congress is located.

AT THE HEART OF THE “CHAOS,” AND LOVING IT

BRANDON CASEY has a great office. It’s spacious and wood paneled, with a large desk, a table, stuffed chairs, and other elements that give it a feeling of aged elegance. Casey, L’09, settles into the big chair in front of his desk, facing away from the desk itself. The chair is flanked by other chairs where people sit when they come to talk to him.

Sounds pretty cushy?

Definitely not. As we talk, staff members rush in to ask a question or peek in the door to see if Casey can be interrupted. The desk phone rings. His smartphone buzzes. A television monitor keeps bringing the news of a hectic day.

Some of that news—and, on some days, a lot of it—is coming from right outside Casey’s office. He is chief of staff for the House Ways and Means Committee, which means that he heads up a staff of 55, serving Rep. Richard Neal (D-Massachusetts), chair of the committee. The committee handles all revenue bills and for generations has been regarded as one of the most powerful committees in Congress.

Health care policy, the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement on trade, and a wealth of other big issues have been before the committee in recent sessions, which means they cross Casey’s desk. Often, you’ll find him on the floor of the House of Representatives or in the large committee room across the hall from Casey’s office. The committee room was the location of a number of the hearings that led to the impeachment of President Donald Trump, although Casey and the Ways and Means Committee were not directly involved.

A typical work week for Casey? “Chaos,” he says with a laugh. But does he like the job? “I love it.”

Casey grew up in a single-parent home on the South Side of Chicago, with limited means and no history of family members going to college. He went to a public high school and, thanks to a guidance counselor’s involvement, enrolled at Marquette University. He majored in history and criminology and thought about becoming a lawyer specializing in criminal cases.

While spending a semester at Marquette’s Les Aspin Center for Government in Washington, Casey did an internship in the office of Rep. Bobby Rush, a Democrat from Chicago. “I caught the political bug,” he says.

He continued at Marquette, enrolling in the Law School. “I took Professor Patricia Bradford’s tax law class and fell in love with tax law,” he says. “It’s like putting together an IKEA bookcase,” by which he means that if you follow the instructions carefully, it works out. Professor Vada Waters Lindsey showed him what he calls “another side of tax law,” namely how demanding it is. “Professor Lindsey is very exacting,” Casey recalls.

He came to Capitol Hill straight from law school. “I fashioned myself as a tax lawyer,” he says. He interned

on the staff of one member of Congress and then worked for three years as tax counsel for Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-Pennsylvania). In 2013, he moved to Neal's staff, where he was legislative director for six years. Neal was the ranking Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee, and when Democrats gained the majority in the House in the 2018 election, Neal became chair. He named Casey to the committee's top administrative position.

In a press release issued at the time, Neal said, "Brandon has provided me with critical advice and insight. . . . From tax policy to trade issues, Brandon has gained a wealth of knowledge here in the House of Representatives."

Instead of calling himself a tax lawyer, Casey now labels himself "a facilitator" who oversees everything that comes along. "I'm probably not the world's biggest expert on anything," he says. "When you're staff director, it's sort of letting others shine."

Whether you're in the minority or majority is "night and day in the House," Casey says. He was in the minority for eight years. These days, "things are looking up."

There are big differences in policy positions between Republicans and Democrats in Congress, of course. But Casey says he aims to have professional relationships with the Republicans on Ways and Means and their staff members. "Ways and Means prides itself on at least being civil," he says. "You can be adversarial without being a jerk."

Did law school help prepare him for his current job? He says law school taught him critical thinking and triage. It helped develop skills he applies now to figuring out what someone really wants. And the Socratic method of learning, a hallmark of legal education in which students can be called on at any time to discuss an issue, is valuable in a place where you're always "on call." Casey says "the scariest thing you'll ever do" is to answer a question on the spot from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Casey puts in long days, especially in the middle of the week when Congress does most of its business. It's not unusual for a workday to start at 7 a.m. and end at 11 p.m. He and his wife have three young children, and he is committed to spending time with the kids, especially on weekends. He generally drives the oldest, who is four years old, to school as one way to spend time with her.

At 36 and with more than a decade of work in Congress, Casey calls himself "sort of a dinosaur" among the generally younger aides on Capitol Hill who work several years and then move on.

What's ahead for him? A position such as the one he has now was a goal for him. He says, "This job has been fantastic, and I'd love to keep doing it as long as possible."

"Ways and Means prides itself on at least being civil. You can be adversarial without being a jerk."

Brandon Casey



“AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY” TO WORKING FOR THE U.S. SENATE

KRISTINA SESEK says she is “a Wisconsin girl through and through,” so she didn’t want to move to Washington, D.C. But what she calls a series of “unexpected” turns brought her to the nation’s capital. They were fortunate turns—she has thrived in D.C. and now works on the staff of the U.S. Senate. Sesek got her bachelor’s degree from Carroll College in Waukesha, Wis., and went on to Marquette Law School, graduating in 2011.

“After law school, I was doing temporary document review in Wisconsin. I had a friend, the executive director of the Republican Party of Wisconsin at the time, who said, ‘I need a counsel; would you like to come interview?’ I had no desire to get into politics. It wasn’t even on my radar. I honestly wanted to practice business law in Wisconsin, but the job opportunity came up. I said ‘O.K., I’d rather not do doc review anymore; this sounds great.’ So I wound up at the Republican Party of Wisconsin. I started the day after people started circulating the recall petitions against Governor Scott Walker and stayed through the 2012 presidential election.

“Through connections I met during the campaign, I wound up coming to D.C. This was another thing not on my radar. I had no desire to live or work here, but people kept telling me to ‘look in D.C.; they’re looking for really good lawyers there.’ I ended up at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, working on civil-justice-related policy at its Institute for Legal Reform.

“I switched jobs in February 2019 and am now at the Senate Judiciary Committee, working on crime and national security policy—another unexpected turn.”

And how’s the new job going?

“It’s great. It’s busy. It is a whole host of new issues that I have not thought about since

law school, if ever, and it’s kind of an exciting time. I really like it. I work for Chairman Lindsey Graham. So South Carolina is now something of a second home.”

What does the term “Washington lawyer” mean to you?

“I think you’re exposed to some of the most brilliant minds in the country, and it’s kind of a hodgepodge of folks from everywhere around the country in one spot. So you get a variety of ideas, input, different ways they think about the law and were taught. As a younger lawyer, I’ve had the opportunity to be exposed to some of those people, talk to them, listen to their ideas. I think it’s very special.

“People think that being a lawyer in the kind of work I’m doing is a little more contentious than it is, at least in the policy-making process. I work across the aisle with Democrats probably more than with some of my Republican colleagues who work for the Senate Judiciary Committee, because we’re constantly going back and forth and exchanging ideas and negotiating different pieces of a bill or whom to call as witnesses for a hearing, anything like that. It is unique, because you don’t have just one case against an individual—you see your ‘opposing counsel’ day in, day out, on a whole variety of issues, so you have to maintain a pretty civil and cordial relationship.”

What’s a typical day like?

“To give an example, today we had a hearing at ten o’clock this morning, so in the days leading up to that, we were writing a very large policy memo on the issue. It gets distributed to all the chief counsel on our side of the aisle, who read it to prep for the hearing. I write all of those on the crime and national security issues. It includes writing questions for our boss to potentially ask, writing an opening statement for him to potentially use.

“Other days, it involves meeting with people, from constituents from South Carolina to advocacy groups from all over the country. I meet with police organizations; I meet with criminal justice reform advocates; I meet with folks who are on both sides of the marijuana debate because I deal with the illicit-drug portfolio. It’s a great range of work.”

“It’s great. It’s busy. It is a whole host of new issues that I have not thought about since law school, if ever, and it’s kind of an exciting time.”

Kristina Sesek





THRIVING AT THE INTERSECTION OF LAW AND POLICY

“My mother will tell you it’s no surprise I ended up in Washington,” Annie Owens says.

Since childhood, she has had a great interest in politics, policy, and government. (And sports—she was involved in athletics herself, and her father was general manager of the minor league baseball team in her hometown of Louisville, Ky.)

Owens, L’05, says there’s no better place to be than Washington for what motivates her. “Every day you see the confluence of all of it,” she says. A Washington legal career, for her, means moving in and out of government, “working at the intersection of law and policy.” Owens has moved through a series of jobs at that intersection. How’s it turning out? “So far, it’s been very rewarding and interesting.”

She agrees that some people attach negative connotations to the term “Washington lawyer.” Not Owens. She hopes that it describes “a career dedicated to public service and bettering the country.” And she is aiming to have such a career. “It’s gratifying to use my law degree to be able to help people and benefit the country.”

But back to sports, because that played a role in how she got from Louisville to Marquette Law School and Milwaukee, which got her on the path to Washington, D.C.

Owens went to Brown University in Providence, R.I., for her undergraduate degree. She wanted to go to law school somewhere within a day’s drive of Louisville. Milwaukee met that standard, if only barely, and Marquette’s sports law program attracted her.

But a constitutional law class Owens took as a first-year student sparked a love for the subject that continues to this day. It led Owens to gain an affinity for constitutional law and separation-of-powers doctrine.

After her 1L year, she got a summer internship in the Washington office of then-senator Herb Kohl from Wisconsin. Owens returned to D.C. in the summer after her 2L year to work for a large private law firm, Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale & Dorr (now WilmerHale). Even there, all of the cases she worked on had substantial government and policy aspects.

After completing law school, Owens headed south instead of east, moving to Houston to clerk for Judge Carolyn Dineen King of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

Then to Washington: Owens won a prestigious Bristow Fellowship to work for a year in the Solicitor General’s Office of the U.S. Department of Justice. “You really learn how Supreme Court cases work,” she says. Paul D. Clement was the solicitor general at the time, and Owens says that she learned a lot from him.

After that, it was back to WilmerHale, where she worked in the appellate and Supreme Court litigation group for five years.

In November 2013, she joined the Office of Legal Counsel

in the Justice Department. The office, with a staff of about 20 attorneys at the time, advises the White House and executive agencies on the legality of actions and orders. She says that it was a “constitutional-law heavy” job—which was just what she liked. It began a formative time for her career. “That was a pretty fascinating three years that I ended up spending there.”

With the end of the Obama administration, Owens left the Justice Department to join the staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee, working for the ranking Democrat on the committee, Sen. Dianne Feinstein of California. She worked initially on the nominations team, including preparing materials for the Democratic caucus on the nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court. She was promoted to senior counsel and ran the oversight group focusing on questions such as executive versus congressional power and executive privilege.

But, after two years, she told herself, “Time for something else.” In 2019, she joined the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection at Georgetown University Law Center. Owens says that there are 10 people who work for the center, which

“My mother will tell you it’s no surprise I ended up in Washington.”

Annie Owens

engages in a mix of traditional civil rights litigation and challenges to executive-branch policies, including immigration matters. She is currently on a team of attorneys representing the House Judiciary Committee in its lawsuit seeking to enforce its subpoena against former White House counsel Don McGahn.

How does she make her way amid so many lawyers in Washington? “I just try to keep my head down and work hard,” she says. She recalls some of the things that Marquette Law School Dean Joseph D. Kearney said when she was in courses he taught: You need to be careful and pay attention—and “you have to win the easy ones.”

And does she like what she’s doing currently? “I do,” Owens says. “It all sort of checks that box”—the one that has carried a label since her childhood, saying she’s at the heart of where law, policy, and politics shape the course of the nation.



A MENU OF FULFILLING CAREER PATHS

We invited a few Marquette lawyers who have made their careers in Washington to dinner one evening at a restaurant in D.C. The lively conversation included descriptions of their work, both the routine elements and the highlights. In the following pieces, three who were at the dinner (Joel Teitelbaum, Creighton Macy, and D. Jeffrey Hirschberg) talk about their work. Two who could not make it, Lynne Hallbrooks and Tom Schendt, were interviewed later.

BRINGING TOGETHER LAW AND HEALTH POLICY

JOEL TEITELBAUM, L'96, is a professor at George Washington University. He is director of the Hirsh Health Law and Policy Program and the co-principal investigator of the National Center for Medical-Legal Partnership, both based at the university, which is located in the nation's capital. He has taught undergraduate, law, and graduate courses on health care law, health care civil rights, public health law, minority health policy, and long-term care law and policy. He has written numerous academic pieces and lectured at universities across the country. In 2016, he was named the first lawyer to serve on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives. Teitelbaum also is an advisor to the American Bar Association's Coordinating Committee on Veterans Benefits and Services and a board member of the American Bar Association's Health & Human Rights Initiative.



"I'm a native of the north shore of Milwaukee. I attended Nicolet High School and then went to Madison for undergrad. I took a couple years off after college and got my master's degree in traveling and bartending and the like. I had known for a long time that I wanted to go to law school, and after two years of being away from school, I was ready. I was more than happy to look at Marquette. I was very happy to be there.

"While I was in law school at Marquette, I took the health law course, and it was as if all of my interests suddenly came together—my interest in health and health care, my interest in civil rights, my interest in law. So, after law school, I didn't end up in D.C. by mistake; I came here intentionally. I got my LL.M. from George Washington University in health law because there was a woman here who is sort of a national star in health law, and I wanted to learn from her. She hired me right out of the LL.M. program into the very large research center at the university that she was operating at the time, and I joined the faculty a year later. So I've been on the faculty of GW since 1998.

"A typical workday for me? I have flexibility in my job, and I don't wear just one hat. I have the traditional roles of an academic, including teaching and advising students, and

I run the joint degree program between the law school and the university's school of public health. For 11 years, I was vice chair of academics of the Department of Health Policy and Management, one of the larger departments on campus. We started the department from scratch, really, and so I was exposed to this world of academic programming. I really liked that administrator role, although I eventually gave it up to focus on teaching, research, and policy. There is never a lack of professional interests to engage me."

SETTING OUT TO PRACTICE CRIMINAL LAW, ENDING UP INVOLVED AROUND THE WORLD

D. JEFFREY HIRSCHBERG, L'71, grew up in Oshkosh, Wis. He enrolled in Marquette Law School "because I wanted to practice criminal law in a big city," namely, Milwaukee. And he did so for a while, including serving as an assistant U.S. attorney. In 1975, then-U.S. attorney general Edward H. Levi asked Hirschberg to work in Washington for the U.S. Department of Justice on wiretapping lawsuits filed against the Nixon administration. Hirschberg has had a wide-ranging career since then, involving time in private practice, a stint as a vice chairman of Ernst & Young in New York, and extensive engagement in government and private nonprofit organizations promoting democracy internationally. His extensive work in eastern Europe included three years in Russia defending a company there from a hostile takeover by another Russian company. Most recently, he has been vice chairman of Northeast Maglev, a private venture aiming to build high-speed rail service (involving magnetic-levitation technology) between Washington, D.C., and New York City.



On being a Washington lawyer:

"There's more opportunity to do different things here than there is probably anywhere else in the country or the world, whether it's politics or law or business, or all three of these. In Washington, if someone asks you to do something and you



do a good job, all of a sudden you're asked to do something else. You didn't have any clue growing up that you'd ever do any of this kind of stuff. I mean, I thought I was going to practice criminal defense law in Milwaukee. I thought I'd be doing murder, rape, and armed robbery trials. It just turned out completely different."

A typical day for you?

"There's no such thing. What I'm doing now [involving magnetic-levitation train transportation] is the intersection of law, policy, politics, and money. A day for me is trying to get something done positively on a project development basis, connecting with leaders, dealing with the federal government, the Japanese government, five states, the District of Columbia. It's project management. It was easier when I was a federal prosecutor. It was easier when I was a partner at a major law firm, because you're singularly focused. It started becoming more complex when I was a vice chairman of Ernst & Young, back in the mid-1990s. The only thing typical about my days now is that I get into the office at seven o'clock in the morning."

His career:

"I have been fortunate. I haven't been bored—I haven't been bored the last 50 years."

Advice to law students?

"I'd say, what is it that you think you want to do? Then put yourself in a place where you can have the most expansive set of possibilities, wherever that is. There's an entire universe of opportunities out there."

IMMERSED IN ANTITRUST WORK—AND IN KEEPING THE TRAINS RUNNING

CREIGHTON MACY, '08, is a native of Portland, Ore., and received his bachelor's degree from Marquette University. During this time, he was also a student-athlete and co-captain of the men's tennis team. For law school, he again chose Marquette because of his interest in sports law. But he clerked in the summer after his 1L year for a firm in San Francisco and was assigned to work on an antitrust case. He found the work interesting and quickly decided to head in that direction. Shortly after completing law school, he started work in the U.S. Department of Justice's antitrust division. Macy has been an antitrust lawyer for the government or in private practice in Washington since then. He is currently chair of the North America antitrust and competition practice for Baker



McKenzie, a large multinational firm. Previously, he was the chief of staff and senior counsel at the Department of Justice's antitrust division.

"My practice is a Washington-focused practice. I started in the antitrust division as a trial attorney, which was an incredible place to begin a career. I then went to a law firm to work in its antitrust practice. Part of the reason why I joined private practice was because a highly respected and well-known former DOJ antitrust division leader recruited me. I worked with her, among others, very closely at that law firm for several years. Then she left to join the Obama administration. Several years later, when she was taking the position as the head of the antitrust division, she called me and said, 'Do you want to be my chief of staff and senior counsel?' So I immediately said, 'Yes, when can I start?' When the Obama administration ended, I joined Baker McKenzie. At this point, I had served in the antitrust division in both career and political capacities. This kind of experience is perhaps unique to Washington. Many friends whom I met at the Department of Justice are still there; others are in private practice or in-house."

What's a typical day like for you?

"On typical days, I'm thinking about our team and how we can ensure our clients the best results. I'm also thinking about the pipeline of client matters that we have. We're fortunate to be extraordinarily busy right now. So I work on the types of matters that we have, the types of matters that we're pitching for, and then work with the team to consider how it impacts the future of our practice and how to achieve success for our clients. Most of my day is on the phone, either corresponding with clients, managing the team, preparing for external presentations, or speaking with my non-antitrust Baker colleagues. A lot of it is ensuring that there are many trains and then keeping them running as effectively and efficiently as possible.

"I feel very fortunate that I enjoy my work and that it interests me. I get a front-row seat to learn about many different businesses and industries, and that is what attracted me to being an antitrust lawyer at the outset of my career. I am also grateful to have made close friends at the firm or the Department of Justice along the way."

Was it ever an issue that you didn't have an Ivy League background or graduate from a D.C. law school?

"No. I've worked with plenty of people from all types of law schools, and I've always seen a tremendous respect for Marquette here. There are significant opportunities here, and there are large numbers of Marquette lawyers in Washington who are really excelling and making a difference. I am a very proud two-time Marquette graduate, and the Law School prepared me well to be a successful lawyer."

“I ALWAYS LIKE MY JOBS”

“My thought was I would come to Washington for a couple years and then go somewhere else,” **LYNNE HALBROOKS** says. “I just never left.”

A good reason for Halbrooks to stay: Washington has provided a chain of good opportunities for her. “There are so many different positions available and agencies and things that can be done by lawyers here,” she says. “Each job I took was better than the last job.”

When Halbrooks, L’88, was heading toward graduation from the University of Minnesota Duluth and was considering law school, an advisor suggested she look at Marquette. She agreed, and she loved law school and Milwaukee more generally. After graduation, she returned to Minnesota as a clerk with the state supreme court, after which it was back to Milwaukee to work for a private firm. She left that to join the U.S. attorney’s office, which opened the door to working for the Justice Department in Washington, including several years with the executive office for U.S. attorneys.

After a dozen years with the Justice Department, someone told her that the U.S. Senate’s Office of the Sergeant at Arms was hiring a general counsel. She got the job.

What does the sergeant at arms do? Halbrooks rattles off a list of things that called for involvement. “We did protocol, security, parking, the capitol maintenance crews, the hair salon, information technology, the infrastructure of the Senate.” As general counsel, she was involved in processing legal claims against the Senate, an investigation into a breach of a computer system, and even a bankruptcy issue when the company that supplied some carpeting to the Senate went broke. Plus ethics advice, employment issues, and discrimination concerns. Even arrangements for the state funerals of Presidents Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford.

“The work was wonderful,” Halbrooks says. “I learned the Senate without being in the partisan mess of it all.”

But another big opportunity came up: Halbrooks was recommended for the position of inspector general for Iraq for the Department of Defense. That led to her being named deputy inspector general for the Defense Department, which led to two years as acting inspector general. “That was an amazing chance to have an impact on the department,” she says. She worked on audits and investigations of many aspects of defense spending, including fraud and waste. Some of the investigations made front-page news, and Halbrooks testified before congressional committees twice. “It was a huge leadership challenge,” but very rewarding, she says.



The work allowed her to see the scope and breadth of what military leaders do, which she calls “awe-inspiring.” It created an appreciation that she didn’t have before.

Overall, Halbrooks worked for the government for 24 years and says, “I really got to experience the best of government service.”

In 2015, she decided to move to the private sector, joining the international firm Holland & Knight. Three years later, a corporate client, Caliburn International, hired her as compliance manager and deputy general counsel. The firm does extensive work as a contractor with the federal government, including defense-related work overseas.

Halbrooks says that working for Caliburn International marks the first time she has worked for a private business. It is “energizing to be learning something new at this stage of my career,” she says. “It’s wonderful; I love it—I always like my jobs.”

“WE DON’T PRACTICE LAW. WE SOLVE PROBLEMS . . .”

TOM SCHENDT, L’85, might have been set for life. He had strong roots in Milwaukee, and he was, as he puts it, “a 4M’er,” first graduating from Marquette High School, then receiving undergraduate and master’s degrees from Marquette University (the latter in business administration), and finishing his education at Marquette Law School.

With those degrees in hand, he started working at Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren, a large law firm in downtown Milwaukee. “I loved that firm. It was exciting—it was fantastic,” he says.

Then, in 1988, Schendt gave it up. He wanted something new and wanted to try living somewhere else. He got a good job offer to work in Washington for the Internal Revenue Service.

“I loved it, and I made enough money to survive,” he says. But after several years, he moved on from the IRS, when he was offered a partnership in the Washington office of the international law firm Alston & Bird. This time, he stayed put: Schendt’s been with Alston since 1994. He is the longest-serving lawyer in the D.C. office.

Schendt has developed a practice as a tax and employee-benefits advisor to some of the largest corporations in America. As he puts it, “We don’t practice law. We solve problems that large employers have.” Law is part of it, “but then you come in with other skills.” He credits his Marquette experience, including his law school classes, with teaching him a lot about those skills as well as the law. “Marquette





taught me to listen as opposed to speak,” Schendt says. “You have to listen to what the client wants. After that, you have an ability to respond. So many attorneys speak and never listen. It’s just foolish.”

Schendt says he plans his work carefully, often looking a year ahead. For one thing, he is involved in board meetings of huge corporations, sometimes leading parts of the meetings, all of which means travel around the country. A board meeting can require two weeks or so of preparation. A typical day means a lot of contact with corporate leaders, often helping them chart a path to major business decisions.

“You never know what’s going to happen,” Schendt says. On the day he spoke with us, he had a morning phone call with a corporate leader who was concerned that the Alston & Bird attorney whom the company had worked with on day-to-day matters had left the firm. “This is a large client, a good client,” Schendt says. “How do I make sure that they feel assured that we will be with them? . . . We want them to have an open channel to us if they’re not satisfied.”

What are the best experiences he’s had? He gives two answers. One was when he was working with the IRS and a

case of his was argued before the U.S. Supreme Court. The other was the first time he made a presentation at a board meeting of a very large financial institution. The meeting was at the top of a tall office building. “I’m almost up to the clouds, and there’s a secretary with white cotton gloves on, and she welcomes us. I walk in, and it’s a huge, gorgeous room, 15-foot ceilings, mahogany paneling.” He presented findings of a corporate investigation, and it went well. “I said to myself, ‘Remember this day.’ It was a pivotal day in my life.”

He says, “What did I learn from that? I learned to be ready for opportunities because they will present themselves, and you never know what will carry you forward to another path and then another path and another path.”

He adds, “Every time I went and did something, I found that my roots in Milwaukee—but especially at Marquette—really became a stronghold for conversations and connecting with people.” Schendt says, “I preach to people now, ‘Don’t lose your basic roots. Washington people come and go, but your ethics, your beliefs, your basic law grounding will continue.’”

WHETHER IN ARMY GREEN, NAVY BLUE, CAREERS BRING BIG OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

You get the feeling that Lawrence Morris, L'82, and Robert Blazewick, L'87, could talk for hours about the things they have done during long careers as military lawyers, and that you'd want to keep listening the whole time. You think, as your conversation with them unfolds, that they are old friends. But when they sat down at a table in Morris's office at The Catholic University of America in Washington, where he works now, it was the first time they had met.

Yet they traveled similar career paths. After Morris talked about his career, Blazewick prefaced his story by saying that it was much the same, "just navy blue instead of army green."

Each of them moved a lot for career reasons, within the United States and overseas. Both were given big responsibilities, starting early in their careers. Both liked most of their assignments. Each lives in Washington now but isn't sure about being called a Washington lawyer because that wasn't where he spent most of his career.

LARRY MORRIS worked as a part-time reporter at the *Milwaukee Journal* while he was an undergraduate and then a law student at Marquette, and he expected to make journalism his career. When he graduated from Marquette Law School, he began four years of active duty with the Army to fulfill a condition of his undergraduate ROTC scholarship. He says that he never exactly decided to make the Army a long-term career choice—he just liked the assignments he was given and stayed in the service for more than 30 years. "Some of the things we sell as an army are really true," he says.



Morris lists places where he worked—Belgium, Oklahoma, Germany, elsewhere. During his assignment as a prosecutor in Germany, he tried cases "all day, every day—it was addicting almost." He went on to serve as chair of the criminal law department of the Army's law school in Charlottesville, Va., then chief lawyer for the 10th Mountain Division in New York state.

He was assigned to work in what he called a satellite office of the Pentagon, focusing on army criminal law policy, and then was named chief of criminal law. After the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Morris says, "I was detailed to put together a team to come up with what became the president's military order that he signed in November 2001 to try these terrorists through military commissions that had not been used since World War II."

Morris became general counsel at West Point and then chief defense counsel for the Army. He was working in Iraq when the Army's chief prosecutor for the terrorism suspects being held at the base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, quit amid controversy. Morris was assigned to take over, and he did that job for almost two years, based in Washington but traveling often to Guantánamo.

The prosecutions have been highly controversial. What is his perspective now on his Guantánamo service? "I am grateful to have had the opportunity to do it," he says. He says that mistakes were made early in the process, which built in "frailties." But overall, "it's a legally defensible process," he says. "Certainly the most just, defense-friendly war crimes tribunal in history."

Morris retired from the Army eight years ago. An adjunct professor he had at Marquette Law School had become a leading scholar and litigator in the field of religious liberty. Through their continuing relationship, Morris became aware that the position of general counsel was vacant at The Catholic University of America, in D.C. The first person who interviewed him for the position was Jane Sullivan Roberts, wife of Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. She pointed out that he had no experience as a general counsel. He answered that both the Army and Catholic University were mission-based organizations and he was good at mission-based work. He got the job. Six years later, he was named chief of staff and counselor to the president of the university.

His brief perspective on his military career? "There are great enriching parts of it."

What does a lawyer on an aircraft carrier do? Some of everything, says **ROB BLAZEWICK**. He was in the Navy and a year out of law school when he was assigned duty on the USS *Abraham Lincoln*. A ship that size is like a floating city of 5,000, Blazewick says, and the two lawyers on board did everything from helping sailors with debt and divorce matters to military justice.





Blazewick loved his year on the *Lincoln*, and it paved the way to a long career as a navy lawyer. Stops included Washington, where he worked on claims cases; Naples, Italy, as senior defense counsel for the European region; and Newport, R.I., where Blazewick got a master's degree at the Naval War College, followed by teaching there.

After the 1991 war with Iraq, Blazewick was sent to sea as a battle group adjutant ("that was a terrific job," he says) and then returned to Naples as staff judge advocate and general counsel for the Navy's European region. "I started to specialize at that point in international negotiations," he says. After a couple years in Naples, he transferred back to Washington as head of the Navy's appellate defense division.

Next: Hawaii, where for three years he was in charge of prosecutors and served as the general counsel for the mid-Pacific region of the Navy. Then he worked with the Army at the George Marshall Center in Germany ("It was heaven").

Subsequently the Navy offered him a position as a judge for the Navy's southeast circuit, based in Jacksonville, Fla.

In 2016, he retired from that position. But not exactly. Blazewick continues to work, now living in the Washington area again and serving as chief administrative counsel for the Defense Office of Hearings and Appeals. What does that office do? "We do all the security clearance litigation" for all branches of military, as well as for civilians and contractors, including some who work for the State Department or other agencies.

When he was a law student, Blazewick signed up for a course in international law, taught by Professor Michael Waxman. He took it largely because it fit into his schedule. "I thought it would be nothing I was interested in, and I remember sitting there thinking, 'This is really interesting.'" His subsequent career across the world would keep that thought underscored all along the way.

AWAY FROM THE SPOTLIGHT, A SATISFYING SPECIALTY THRIVES

Do you think of politics, lobbying, and making big waves when you think of Washington lawyers? Yes, there is that world. But there is far more to the legal scene in the nation's capital—and to the opportunities for lawyers in the area—than that.

A good example: Patent and trademark work. A significant number of Marquette Law School graduates have found good and satisfying careers in these intellectual property fields. While many such alumni practice in Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Chicago, or elsewhere across the country, we concentrate here on Marquette lawyers in Alexandria, Va. The city, across the Potomac River from D.C., is headquarters of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO). We invited several Marquette law alumni to talk with us in the offices of Ted Breiner, L'79, and Mary Breiner, L'82, a brother and sister who have a private intellectual property practice in Alexandria.

Let's first introduce the participants and then listen to some of what they say about their work.



XHENETA ADEMI, L'15, grew up in Albania and other European countries before moving to the United States as a teenager. Her family runs a restaurant in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She developed an interest in intellectual property law while at Marquette Law School.



MARY BREINER and **TED BREINER** have strong roots in Wisconsin. They were born in Racine, where their father was a chemist and patent agent. He moved to the Washington area, where he became a patent attorney and opened a law practice focused on patent and trademark matters. Both Ted and Mary got undergraduate and law degrees from Marquette and then joined the practice their father started.



JUSTIN PATS, L'06, is originally from Maryland and received an undergraduate degree at Columbia University. He wanted to go to law school and had an interest in intellectual property (IP) law. He heard that Marquette had a good IP program. This led to what he calls three good years in law school. His goal was to return to the Washington area, and the PTO gave him a good opportunity as an examiner. He moved up to a supervisory job and is currently a lawyer with the office's Patent Trial and Appeal Board.



COLLEEN RAPHAEL, L'04, got bachelor's degrees from Notre Dame, where she majored in physics, and from Indiana University South Bend, where she majored in chemistry. A master's in chemistry from the University of Wisconsin-Madison followed. Next: Marquette Law School. Her first position after graduation was at a law firm in California's Silicon Valley. In 2010, she was offered a position in the PTO in Alexandria, and, given her background, she joined the electric chemistry division, where her specialty is applications that involve chemical reactions.



ANDREW RHIM, L'97, is a native of the Washington suburb of Bethesda, Maryland. While at Marquette Law School, he took what he calls a "fantastic" course on unfair competition and trademark law. It got him headed toward a career as a trademark-examining attorney with the government.



Is there something about being a Washington lawyer that's special or different or particularly attractive to any of you?

RHIM: "It just seems that if you're starting out in Washington, you kind of can get your feet wet; you can get a first job maybe a little easier. You have a large legal community, so you have more opportunity, in some ways, just because of the size of the community."

TED BREINER: "The intellectual property bar is very small, compared to the larger bar. We're a pretty small group of specialized people in the Washington area. I don't know if we consider ourselves Washington lawyers. The focus of lawyers in the Alexandria Bar Association is the Alexandria courts. So, instead, we're either in the Federal Circuit Bar Association or the American Intellectual Property Law Association, and they have their meetings all around the country. So I don't consider myself a Washington lawyer."

PATS: "I echo Ted's comment. I view myself more as a lawyer in the intellectual property community. I feel sometimes that 'Washington lawyer' is kind of a label that maybe originates from outside of Washington, that everybody is kind of politically motivated in everything they do. Intellectual property for all intents and purposes is apolitical, at least for us. I mean, we only have, I think, one political appointee in the whole agency."

Have you learned more science in order to do your work?

RHIM: "In a lot of ways, we have, because a lot of applications that come to the PTO involve technical things that you may not be aware of. So a lot of the time you're on Google, you're researching, you're doing factual and legal research to figure out what those goods and services are, and kind of educating yourself. I've learned so much more on this job about other products and services, especially about science and technology, than I ever would have imagined starting out."

ADEMI: "Right. And that's my favorite part. Because we're not very specialized, one day you're reading about a cancer drug, the next day it's software, while the next day it may be smart clothing."

RHIM: "And the next day it's cryptocurrency."

ADEMI: "Exactly."

So what do you like about your jobs?

RAPHAEL: "What I like about my job is that I get to see the newest technology. I get to see the cutting-edge stuff. In some instances, I'll look at an application. I might think, 'I don't believe I've seen that in the patent literature. I'm going to have to go search the non-patent literature, go search the journal articles, to see what the academics are publishing.' Then again, sometimes I have to go back fairly far. For instance, people have been using ultraviolet light for chemical reactions for a long time, and back in the late 1950s, early '60s, people were using Cobalt-60 as a source of radiation. So, the thing is, I get to see both that very cutting-edge stuff, and then I also have to keep in mind that our scientific ancestors were not stupid and they did a lot more than a lot of people give them credit for. So I have two charts of the electromagnetic spectrum up in my office; I have one chart that is very modern, and then I have one chart from the 1940s or so."

MARY BREINER: "What Colleen says is right: You get to see the spectrum of the old to the new. You see how things have changed, but also how sometimes the old contains the concept."

PATS: "My job requires a lot of legal analysis and writing, and I enjoy both of those. And I work on electrical technology appeals, so I see a lot of interesting inventions as well."

MARY BREINER: "One of the things that makes it so interesting is that technology always keeps it new. The law of application is different because the facts are always different with the technology. I do a lot of initial patent investigation, both for patentability and right-to-practice clearance. You get to see the spectrum of the old to the new and to see how things have changed."

What's a typical day like for you?

ADEMI: "I'm tempted to say that my day is just clicking buttons on a computer all day, trying to catch up. I can click a button and get ten new cases. I probably work on ten different cases every day, and then people are always calling—attorneys from the outside, or pro se's, without attorneys, who may think that just because we denied their trademark, now they have to shut down their entire business. They're freaking out, so you have to babysit them a little, but we can't give them legal advice. And then they get surprised that I work for the government and we're nice, we come to the phone."

What's the most interesting or significant thing you have worked on, at least to this point?

RHIM: "I battled Apple. At the board, yes. They tried to register a downloadable app for music—downloadable music software. It was this little app, this orange box with, like, a music staff. And there was already a registered mark, very similar designs. They kept going back and forth, back and forth. And finally, they went up to the board, and my view won. That was fun."

RAPHAEL: "I had a case where the claims involved basically taking ice with oxygen bubbles in it, and exposing it to UV light, and the UV light would then create ozone. And the claims were written so broadly that I was advised, well, 'Go look for this as a process of nature.' And sure enough, I found in an astrophysics journal article that out on the moons of Jupiter, ice is getting exposed to ultraviolet light. So I was able to make the 'process of nature' rejection over something occurring in the outer reaches of the solar system."

TED BREINER: "What I like best probably is the counseling side and, hopefully, to counsel a client the right way, whether it's getting the patent, whether it's getting the trademark, and then hopefully you tell them something's open, that you can get it. And I echo everything else everybody has said here. It changes daily, and, whether it's patent or trademark, it's an exciting area of law to be in. I don't think I've woken up a day that I didn't want to come to work."

Would you have advice for our current law school students as they start picking their own career path as to whether they should come to Washington or get into IP?

ADEMI: "I would say 'Yes,' and I think this is something that needs to be said and heard more at the Law School. We have a really good IP program, and I feel like there are a lot of people who want to do IP, like me, but don't have the background that they may think they need. So I think students just need to know that there are opportunities out here. I think a lot of people don't know that this job exists. I applied to perhaps a hundred jobs in Chicago. I was set on Chicago. I applied for one job here."

And has that worked out better for you, do you think?

ADEMI: "Well, absolutely."

RAPHAEL: "I know that for some of the design-patent examiners and the design patents, you actually don't need the science or engineering degree as much as you need a fine arts background. So if people have a fine arts background and they would be interested in the patent examining, they should go ahead and look into it."

PATS: "There's nothing stopping you if you're really interested in IP from getting a master's in a technical discipline, if you want to take the patent bar, etc. For Marquette undergraduate students, before you even get to law school, it's important to know about intellectual property, to know about the patent office, know about patents, trademarks, etc., what's out there. So then you can choose your path accordingly. There are more and more opportunities now for litigators who do not have technical backgrounds."

TED BREINER: "If you want to go into IP and you have the right background, you're going to get a job offer, I think. I think anybody is. And what Justin said is exactly right. If you know you want to be a lawyer, but you're not sure what kind of lawyer you want to be, in your undergraduate years, you better take some technical background. . . . If you know you want to be a lawyer when you're starting as an undergraduate, then make sure you get the science, because then the opportunity's huge."





BEST MOMENTS, from the Simple to the Grand

We asked our discussants to name a particularly memorable accomplishment or a day that especially sticks out during their career to date in Washington, D.C. A few of the answers:

JOEL TEITELBAUM: “Not long after the Affordable Care Act was passed, we were funded by the nation’s largest health foundation to run a project that a colleague and I co-directed. Basically, we’re talking about the Affordable Care Act, a 2,000-page statute, which to date has spun off probably upward of 20,000 pages of regulations. And we were tasked with—in the early days, months, and first few years of implementation—basically writing about the key implementation issues for an incredibly broad audience. You’re talking about folks who know very little about the law’s details but for whom the Affordable Care Act will be a wonderful event. You’re talking about policy makers and scholars and others. So we were playing the role of helping folks understand the implementation of this incredibly complex statute and its implementing regulations. It’s a very D.C. type of situation, but it’s also a fairly memorable one.”

ROBERT BLAZEWICK: “Negotiating the basing agreements for all the U.S. military bases in Italy—and there’s a lot more to it than that. . . . There was a muddle of agreements. You’re dealing with multiple cultures. We worked on this for years. After six years, we came to ‘Yes,’ and now we have unified basing agreements throughout Italy. It seems like a small thing, but it was a big deal.”

JEFF HIRSCHBERG: “February ‘96, four of us from the Center for Democracy were over in Strasbourg, France, helping the Russians get admitted to the Council of Europe. In order to get admitted to the Council of Europe, you have to subject yourself to the European Court of Human Rights. And that night, we were having a retirement party for Miguel Martinez, from Spain, who was completing his three-year term as the president of the Council of Europe. There were 5 Americans and 12 Europeans. Miguel was an elegant man, always wore a beautiful suit, white on a white shirt, and no tie. . . . At the end of the dinner, Miguel requested that we all stand up. We held hands and sang ‘We Shall Overcome.’ So, when someone asks me what I’ve done in politics and the law and my kids ask me, ‘Why do you subject yourself to this misery?’ I tell them basically it’s for moments like that. They don’t come along very often, but when they come along, they’re basically worth everything.”

KRISTINA SESEK: “In 2018, while working at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, I had the opportunity to lobby in Wisconsin on a comprehensive civil litigation reform package that was signed into law. Wisconsin Act 235 deals with a variety of issues from class actions to the disclosure of third-party litigation funders. Getting to work on these issues in my home state was a very special experience.”

CREIGHTON MACY: “I’d say probably the first time I ever got to pick up the phone and say I am a trial attorney with the Department of Justice’s antitrust division. Or to give a presentation, or put my name on a brief, and say I work for the United States Department of Justice. Those were incredibly special moments, and I was very proud to be able to say those words each time I said them.” ■