



Volunteer Attorney: Herb Bratt

Where did you work and what type of law did you practice?

I am retired now. I practiced for 53 years in different settings. The last 5 years with Gonzales Saggio and Harlan, who have since dissolved. They were the largest minority owned law firm in the country, and I enjoyed being there. I practiced in a variety of areas but the last years were commercial real estate and some estate planning.

Looking back on your career what was the most satisfying part of being an attorney?

When a client calls and thanks you for doing something that's always something you remember.

Where did you go to undergrad? What did you study?

I went to Madison and I majored in pharmacy.

How did you decide to become a lawyer?

I had roommates who were in law school and they would talk about what they were doing, and I wanted to do that.

Where did you go to law school?

I got my degree at Yale law school, class of '56.

What activities were you involved in in law school?

Yale had a program where we could volunteer at the local legal aid and I would go there to volunteer, and those cases were not that different from the ones I see at the MVLC.

What was your favorite class in law school?

Evidence, just because of the professor. He had a great sense of humor, was very engaging, and an excellent professor.

How did you start volunteering at MVLC?

I knew I was retiring, and I wanted to do something to stay active. My wife was a teacher and we used to volunteer together at the literacy center. I searched for places to volunteer and found the clinic. I made a couple of calls, and it was suggested that I go to the House of Peace and I started volunteering.

How long have you been volunteering with the MVLC?

I retired in 2009 and have been volunteering for the decade since.

Do you have any advice for students volunteering at MVLC?

I enjoy working with the students, I think all of them are dedicated to volunteering and eager, bright young people. It is very nice to work with all of you. I tell everybody, in law there is no math or science, it is reading, writing, and talking which is something we all do all the time. Keep your mind open and try to analyze and when you are there volunteering. Volunteering shows a dedication to learning and its just a matter of being there and listening to the client. Also permitting the lawyer you are working with to try to mentor you.

What do you do like to do in your spare time?

I used to run almost daily, but I walk now. I have 7 grandchildren, 4 of whom are in Milwaukee and I spend time with them.