



Volunteer Attorney: Josh Gimbel

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

I went to Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin and majored in history.

Where did you go to law school?

I went to University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School.

What activities were you involved in in law school?

In law school, I was involved in the Legal Defense Project. During my second year, I went to court and tried cases. We represented indigent clients in misdemeanor cases.

What was your favorite class in law school? Which class did you learn the most in?

My favorite class was Property. I do a little real estate work now, so that was beneficial. I also took a juvenile justice class that was very interesting. I learned the most at the Legal Defense Project clinic. There, I learned how to be a lawyer and work with clients. In law school, you aren't really taught how to deal with clients, so it was great practical experience that has influenced my career.

When did you know you wanted to become a lawyer?

It was in my DNA. My grandfather on my mother's side was a lawyer, my father is a lawyer, and my two brothers are lawyers. Also, probably four or five of my cousins are lawyers. It was preordained.

Do you enjoy being a lawyer?

There are good days and bad days, of course, but I am always happy when I reach a favorable verdict for my client.

What are your main legal practice areas?

About 70% of my practice is civil litigation, mostly land use, like property, lease, or zoning disputes. The rest is a mix of general business, real estate advice, and some city hall work. For city hall, I do some work with licensing and other entitlements.

How did you start volunteering at MVLC?

I have been volunteering at the Milwaukee Justice Center since it opened in 2009. When the MJC was established, I was serving on the board of the Milwaukee Bar Foundation, which is one of the partners of the clinic, along with Milwaukee Bar Association, Milwaukee County, and Marquette University Law School. I was especially interested in making it a success, so I volunteered my time, and have been volunteering ever since.

Do you think volunteering enriches your practice?

Volunteering enriches my practice because I am confronted with issues I do not normally encounter in my own practice. In that regard, it enables me to learn about other legal areas and issues. Volunteering also enriches me as lawyer because it makes me a better person and a better lawyer by providing legal services to those who cannot afford it.

What is your favorite part about volunteering?

I enjoy providing services to those who cannot afford it and working with law students. I enjoy working with law students because I think it is important for students to see how a lawyer handles a client and how a lawyer attempts to problem-solve with a client. My goal is for both the client and the law student to benefit from the meeting. After meeting with a client, I always try to talk to the law student to see if they understood the approach that I took and what I said.

Do you have any advice for students volunteering at MVLC? How to be the most helpful?

My best advice is to listen; and that goes for both lawyer and law students. Students should always listen to what the client's problem is and focus on how you can get them the result that will satisfy their concerns. If you listen to them, then you can focus on obtainable results and how to get there in the best fashion and least expensive way possible. I also think that lawyers should always be honest, almost to a fault. It doesn't make sense to say things that are not accurate.

What advice would you give current law students?

I would advise current law students to always listen to the client. If you start now, it will carry over into practice.

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

I try to ride my bike at least once a month. On the weekends, a bunch of my friends, who are mostly lawyers, like to bike and beer – we do a bike ride and stop at a beer garden on the way back. I also like to play and watch sports. I am a Packers, Brewers, and Bucks season ticket holder.