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Q&A > department

Jeremy R. Kriegel

Age: 40

Family: He and his wife, Michelle, have three children, Kayla, 8, Asher, 7, and Daniel, 4.

Education: He earned his mechanical engineering degree from the University of Rochester in New York in 1992 and his law degree from Washington University School of Law in St. Louis in 1995.

Professional: An intellectual property partner at Marshall, Gerstein & Borun, he guides clients in such industries as medical, industrial and consumer products, particularly for their mechanical and electro-mechanical innovations, and across all phases of the product life-cycle. He has 15 years of experience with many technologies. Some of his recent works include: He successfully secured patents on label printers and label print control/operation for a leading manufacturer of labeling solutions marketed to consumers; and he counseled several medical device developers and manufacturers through patent application processes and freedom-to-practice issues.

1. Why did you become a lawyer?

I decided to be a lawyer when I went to a high school career day and the engineers that I heard from gave their presentations and said if you wanted to do something different you should not only get an engineering degree, but you should also get a law degree and be a patent attorney. And I thought that sounded interesting.

The next session was with a group of attorneys presenting, and they were talking

about how great and wonderful it was to be an attorney and how if you really wanted to do something different you should get an engineering degree before you go to law school and be a patent attorney. I just put two and two together, and I said, "that sounds like what I want to do."

2. What's the last big case or matter that you handled, and what did it entail?

Like many attorneys, my big matters aren't necessarily the ones with big dollars associated with them. Matters that I'm proud of involve patenting inventions that, for example, help a medical device company provide products that give patients faster recovery time, and increased dignity when they are strapped with an uncomfortable post-operative situation. I think that's probably most of my business. ...

3. What's the strangest thing that's happened to you as a lawyer?

I was in practice about three years, and I was representing a not-for-profit minority health information provider. They asked for my assistance in helping them obtain a domain name for their website. About a year later I got a call from the president of a major broadcast television news department interested in acquiring that same domain name.

The next thing I knew I was on a plane to New York City negotiating in Manhattan the terms of a deal to provide my client with a national audience for its minority health message and an ongoing relationship with this broadcast news agency. I got back to Chicago and a few months after the deal closed, I got a call from one of the attorneys who worked on the deal offering me a job to move to New York. But I had just gotten engaged and bought a house in Lincoln Park.

4. If you could have lunch with anyone, living or dead, who would it be and why?

Henry Kissinger. I love his accent, and I think he would have fantastic stories. He's been the fly on the wall at so many amazing things that have happened in our country's modern history, and I would just like to pick his brain.

5. What's your favorite television show, movie, book or play about lawyers?

It's always been L.A. Law. L.A. Law was on while I was in engineering school. I knew

while I was in engineering school that I wanted to be a patent attorney and it just kept reminding me of my goal every Thursday night, 9 o'clock.

6. What advice do you have for new or future lawyers?

My best advice is never ask somebody to do something for you that you haven't done yourself at least once.

7. What do you like the most and the least about being a lawyer?

I like the teaching quality of it. I like being able to convey cryptic information to people that don't live and breathe patent law every day in a way that they understand and can make applicable to their business.

[And least], I'll say e-mail because it's a never-ending battle.

8. If you didn't become a lawyer what career would you have chosen?

I went to Cranbrook Schools in Bloomfield Hills, Mich. It was a fantastic architectural setting for my prep school. I think that's why I always kind of wanted to be an architect if I couldn't be a lawyer.

9. What was your favorite childhood vacation?

Space Camp, Huntsville, Ala. It was a middle-school class trip, and when I was kid, I wanted to be an astronaut, and I thought it would be a cool thing to do. Actually I didn't want to be an astronaut; I wanted to be the person who sat in the control room and talked to the astronauts.

10. What are your favorite hobbies?

I just enjoy playing with my kids and watching them succeed at things that they try, and the rare nights I get out alone with my wife.

11. What is your favorite Chicago restaurant?

Iberico Cafe. It is a place I love to take out-of-towners because it's not touristy, it's not sceney. It's just a real good reflection of what I think Chicago is.

You can get out of there with a party of 12 people, lots of Sangria around, and the food never stops coming, and you get the check and it's about \$12 a person. ■

By Olivia Clarke

