

Being a lawyer means filling multiple roles: an advocate, a counselor, a writer, an interpreter, sometimes just a sounding-board for a frustrated client. Studying and working in the legal field necessitates the use of my whole mind in a way that I find deeply satisfying. It challenges and requires me to access not only my analytical intelligence, but also intuition, emotion, imagination, and conscience, to solve problems. But, being a good lawyer is more than learning to regurgitate elements of torts, the “Mailbox Rule,” or writing an iron-clad appellate brief. To quote Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The good lawyer is not the man who has an eye to every side and angle of contingency, and qualifies all his qualifications, but who throws himself on your part so heartily, that he can get you out of a scrape.” The relationship between a lawyer and a client is more than purely transactional. Lawyers carry an ethical and professional responsibility to the clients who place their trust in the lawyers’ ability to advise, resolve, mitigate, and mediate their conflicts. Practicing law is a privilege, and not one to be taken lightly. I take my law school education seriously because I hold myself accountable for the public and private obligations that accompany the profession I have chosen to pursue.

That said, I would be lying if I said that I always knew that I wanted to be a lawyer. In fact, I spent many years thinking that I would become a schoolteacher. It was shortly into my undergraduate career that I realized teaching did not meet my calling, at least not in its entirety. When my career counselor told me that all of my aptitude and interest tests pointed towards law, I rejected the idea; I had in my mind a preconceived (and admittedly unflattering and somewhat jaded) picture of attorneys, and decided (read, hoped) that I did not fit that bill. But those preconceptions quickly disappeared after I entered the legal field and spent more time getting to know the real people behind the profession. The idea of being an attorney took on a new color. What is more, I found that working in the legal field not only satisfied my intellectual needs, but also provided me with the opportunity to use my unique skillset to help people in a very tangible and meaningful way. I knew that pursuing my further legal education would enable me to give something back to the community that raised me.

As an attorney, my hope is to be able to focus my practice in areas of need and offer more specialized services, to better diversify the legal market and serve the McLean County community. My current goal is to emphasize handling primarily complex civil matters, including litigation and complex estates and estate planning, as well as to hopefully remain involved in the immigration law community, both within my practice as well as pro bono work. I have been fortunate to find a wealth of opportunities over the years to utilize my bilingualism, and feel honored to serve and (quite literally) lend my voice to the local growing francophone immigrant population. I believe that giving people a voice and making them feel heard is one of a lawyer’s purposes within society. I am grateful that I can take that one step further by meeting people where they’re at linguistically, helping to meet the most basic emotional need of feeling accepted for who they are, and build a relationship of mutual trust and respect to meet their legal needs from there.

I am proud to say that McLean County is, and always will be, my home. Oftentimes, I have found that the greatest contribution one can offer is simply being present and willing to serve. As a legal professional, I hope that I will be a valuable asset to not only the legal community, but also to the McLean County community as whole. I intend to strive to maintain and even expand my

involvement in the organizations that help make this a good place to live. We are, after all, a community, and where my skills (legal or otherwise) can be put to use, I consider it a personal duty. To me, being a lawyer means having the opportunity to use the law to make someone else's life better, in whatever role I fill.