

PERSONAL & PRACTICE:

# Faegre Baker Daniels Attorney Profiles

## Steve Kubiowski

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OFFICE: Washington, D.C.



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### PERSONAL:

#### WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS?

- ▶ A morning run on a morning like today — a nice crisp spring or fall day — in the D.C. mall or on Lake Shore Drive in Chicago.

#### WHICH LIVING PERSON DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

- ▶ Pope Francis.

#### WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

- ▶ I am an autograph collector, particularly historical autographs. I'm especially proud of my Abraham Lincoln autograph dating to when he was an attorney in Springfield, Illinois. I started my own career as a prosecutor in the Springfield U.S. Attorney's office.

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE JOURNEY?

- ▶ I've traveled a lot, so that's a tough one. One of my favorite journeys was hiking the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu.

#### WHICH TALENT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE?

- ▶ I'd love to be a talented musician. I had a musical background when I was growing up and fell off of it during college until seven or eight years ago when I picked up guitar. I'm decent at guitar and occasionally dabble with the ukulele, but would like to be much better.

#### WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

- ▶ Getting to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. I've run 17 marathons, all of which were challenging. Nothing was as physically grueling as hiking to the top of Kilimanjaro. It takes several days so you have to be very physically fit, but you also have to deal with a lot of adversity.

#### WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?

- ▶ Since I was a little kid in the late 1960s, my family has had a lake house in the Chain O'Lakes in Northern Illinois, on Pistakee Lake. I love getting away there for long weekends.

#### WHAT DO YOU MOST VALUE IN FRIENDS?

- ▶ Honesty.

#### WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE HERO OR HEROINE OF FICTION?

- ▶ Indiana Jones.

#### WHAT IS IT THAT YOU MOST DISLIKE?

- ▶ I hate cheese.

## PRACTICE:

### WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO PRACTICE LAW?

- ▶ During high school I was in debate, which got me thinking about law early on. In college I considered other paths, like going straight into government or banking. Ultimately, I enjoyed the thought of making my arguments for a living.

### WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST CAREER ACHIEVEMENT?

- ▶ I tried a case against a pharmacist for a long-term care pharmacy who was re-dispensing drugs that were returned to the pharmacy unused. The returned drugs should have been destroyed, or, if they hadn't expired, Medicaid should have been credited for their value. The defendant was ably represented by a former United States Attorney from one of the marquis litigation firms in Chicago. The trial was hard fought and lasted for more than two weeks, but it ended up being one of my fastest verdicts — the jury came back within two hours, guilty on all counts.

### IN WHAT AREA WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE OR IMPROVE?

- ▶ Technology. I don't think the government is as up to speed with technology as the private sector, so that's something I've always been a little behind on — I'm working to change that.

### WHAT DO YOU MOST ENJOY ABOUT WORKING AT FAEGRE BAKER DANIELS?

- ▶ The people. Certainly during the interview, I got the sense that I connected with folks here. As a former prosecutor, I like to think I'm pretty good at reading people, and I think my read has been right so far. Folks here are very talented, and their personalities are also great.

### WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU COULD CHANGE ABOUT THE LEGAL INDUSTRY?

- ▶ More civility. The judge I clerked for, Judge Kanne, is a true gentleman. I never saw him raise his temper or chew out a litigant. He always maintained a civil atmosphere and was stern but polite. There's no reason to tear down opposition in a demeaning way or take things personally. You want to feel vested with your positions, but you also don't want to resort to name-calling.

### WHAT DO YOU FIND MOST CHALLENGING AND REWARDING ABOUT YOUR AREA OF FOCUS?

- ▶ After being with the government for almost 20 years, the challenge now is looking at everything from a completely different angle. It's challenging in a refreshing and fun way. As a prosecutor, I had seen and resolved almost every type of case, and I looked forward to moving to the private sector to force me to think differently and look at things from a different perspective.

### WHAT IS THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED?

- ▶ Preparation. I always try to anticipate opponents' litigation moves to the extent possible. The only way to do that is through preparation. I hate doing things last minute because that's when you're most prone to error. There are times when you have to rely on experience to make the right judgment call on the fly in court. For the things you can anticipate, make sure you're ready to go, because there will always be unforeseen things that will command attention.

### IF YOU COULD CHANGE YOUR AREA OF FOCUS, WHAT WOULD YOU SWITCH TO AND WHY?

- ▶ I actually have changed it. When I first started practicing law, I went into tax litigation. I previously taught appellate advocacy in Chicago, and I told students not to make the mistake I did — if you enjoy a class, don't assume that the subject matter will be as entertaining in real life as it was in class. I enjoyed tax courses, so I thought tax litigation would be good blend of my two interests. After 2 ½ years, I was ready to do something different. An opportunity to join the government presented itself, and I jumped at it.

### WHAT IS THE NEXT BIG PROJECT YOU'D LIKE TO TACKLE?

- ▶ Meet and work with as many folks here at the firm as possible and do my part to enhance FaegreBD's legal reputation.