

# MEGAN HLADILEK

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## PERSONAL

### WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS?

- My perfect day starts off with an early-morning swim, bike or run (yes, I'm a triathlete) followed by spending a hot summer day in the backyard listening to bluegrass, working in the garden and on the yard with the chickens, and capped off with my husband grilling up a feast for friends and family.

### WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE OR INDULGENCE?

- Musicals – whether on stage, on film or on soundtracks. I have even traveled to see a tour a second time.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE JOURNEY?

- One that my husband and I took where we stayed at a little bed and breakfast in rural France and learned about French farming and country life. Dinners there consisted of homemade sausages, and breakfast was fresh yogurt from the farm and jams made with local fruit. C'était magnifique!

### WHO OR WHAT IS THE GREATEST LOVE OF YOUR LIFE?

- My greatest love is my high-school sweetheart and true partner – my husband.

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

- I would love to sing or dance well enough to be in a musical!

### WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

- I'm very proud of maintaining a yoga practice for over two decades (so far).

### WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?

- My library card. I can learn about anything, find favorite stories or explore new ideas. And pick up a few musicals, too.

### WHAT IS IT THAT YOU MOST DISLIKE?

- Excessive air conditioning. If my friends give me a choice of sitting outside or inside, they know I will pick outside - even on the hottest summer day - before suffering through the chill of being indoors. On hot, humid days, I'd rather bike to work than ride a frigid bus.

# PRACTICE

## WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO PRACTICE LAW?

- I love reading and wanted a career where I could continuously learn and also counsel people about what I'd learned. And, it really struck me as an option when my brother asked me why I wasn't going to law school when I was researching a potential legal claim to just a few dollars.

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST CLIENT ACHIEVEMENT?

- Each time we find a solution that meets the client's business objectives and time table within a level of risk acceptable to the client, whether that's a complex pension plan project, fixing an erroneous 401(k) loan or offering a new idea about health coverage in a deal when the parties seem to be in a deadlock.

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

- It is always helpful to learn more about the historical context of how the laws developed to where they are today. I find that explaining why the law is a certain way is helpful for my clients to accept the restrictions and make informed decisions.

## WHICH OF YOUR COLLEAGUES DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

- Doug Heffernan. He is calm and level-headed, even when he has to give bad news or handle a difficult issue. Doug is practical, fiscally-responsible, and willing to take the time to explain the history and context. He also has fun and stays active with friends and family.

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

- The people I get to work with everyday – reliable, dependable, top-quality colleagues and respectful, intelligent, thoughtful clients.

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

- I would like to shift the law firm focus away from where the work is performed to what work is performed. Don't get me wrong, some conversations are best face-to-face, and there is value in "being in the office," but we could learn from our clients on ways to improve retention and long-term goals by accepting that we can work from a variety of locations.

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

- The challenge of staying on top of developments is also what attracted my sense of curiosity and quest for continual learning.

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

- I enjoy sharing my knowledge, and counseling clients through tough decisions.

## HOW HAS YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON LAW CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?

- I've learned to better appreciate that there are several possible "answers." The more that I know about the client, the better I can help the client evaluate the risks.

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

- Ask questions. Ask questions of your clients and colleagues to better understand the facts, the risks and the preferred outcomes.

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

- I wouldn't change. I find benefits to be the perfect blend of nerdy technical details and interpersonal human factors.

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