

BRIAN FINDLEY '07 SHARES THE BEST ADVICE OF HIS PROFESSIONAL LIFE

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For Brian Findley '07, the most rewarding part of being a medical malpractice and injury lawyer is the ability to help people who are truly in need, during a particularly challenging time in their lives. "They are usually at the darkest point in their lives, overwhelmed, hurt, maybe betrayed by someone they trusted. I can take those problems away, or at least win them the resources they need to heal. That's an awesome feeling," says Findley, a partner at Mulligan, Banham & Findley.

The 2007 Thomas Jefferson School of Law graduate followed a winding road to find his passion. Findley began law school with the intention of focusing on intellectual property, and was particularly interested in entertainment law.

He poured his energy into taking contracts and entertainment law classes, studying under two professors he says were among the best he ever had - Professor Thomas Golden and Professor K.J. Green.

During his first year of law school, Findley began clerking for a local entertainment law attorney, Paul Mirowski, who upon graduation hired the young Thomas Jefferson Law alum to be a post bar clerk, and later an attorney.

After getting a taste of litigation as a young attorney, Findley became hungry for more. He soon found a position with Eppsteiner & Fiorica Attorneys in San Diego's North County. There he practiced plaintiffs' class actions and construction defect defense, an experience that allowed for important skill building.

"I learned a wealth of information about insurance coverage and litigation, and took gobs of depositions. I was representing corporations and 'classes,' and I was doing some of the best work of my career. But after three and a half years of working with E&F, I was ready to represent *people*."

At the suggestion of a friend, Findley looked into medical malpractice and injury law, and found what would ultimately become his true passion and calling. He joined forces with Jan Mulligan and Elizabeth Banham, two attorneys at the top of the medical malpractice and injury field in San Diego.

"I am forever grateful to my partners for welcoming me and mentoring me in this work. My clients now are people, often children, that have had catastrophic, life-changing injuries, and I can help them – often when other professionals, maybe their doctors, have let them down. It's the most rewarding job I've ever had," he says.

The firm, since renamed Mulligan, Banham & Findley, has a total of five attorneys, two of whom are also medical professionals. As a partner, Findley helps direct legal resources, case strategies, and charitable giving. It's a role he finds both empowering and humbling.

"We have the skills and resources to make real change in the world, for the better. I get to see that and own it on a micro and macro level, from changing one person's life, to pushing for greater consumer protections for an entire industry," Findley says.

Looking back on his unique career path and achievements to date, Findley notes that one of the most important things a young attorney or recent graduate can do is show energy. Bringing a positive, can-do attitude and consistently going the extra mile is one of the primary ways to set yourself apart at the start of your career, he says.

"Making yourself indispensable is the key to any job," he explains, adding: "The indispensable quality that students and young attorneys have, that more seasoned, experienced and connected attorneys may have forgotten, is energy. Show others that you have the drive to execute on the skills and connections available to you, to turn them into a win. Attorneys and clients alike value younger attorneys for their vigor and positive attitude. Show them you have these things by greeting them at networking events, volunteering your time at organizations, boards, and charities that matter to them, and knocking assignments out of the park."

Which brings him to one last piece of advice, a bit of wisdom received from a Thomas Jefferson Law professor that he still remembers today and regularly passes along to young attorneys when they tap him for guidance.

"Professor Judybeth Tropp gave me the best advice of my professional life. 'Be scrappy.' Every lawyer applying for your job went to law school. Set yourself apart."

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