



Company name: Robins Kaplan LLP

Industry: Law

Who is your personal hero?

Our farm workers. Though invisible to most of us, they toil long hours under the sun in hopes of a better life for their families and they bring fruits and vegetables to our dinner tables. They are some of the most vulnerable and exploited members of our society. Yet they live with courage and faith and hope.

What book(s) are you reading?

For Whom the Bell Tolls by Ernest Hemingway

What was your first job?

I joined the United States Navy when I was seventeen.

Favorite Charity:

California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.

Interests/hobbies: Coaching pony baseball, skydiving, the gym, and skiing. All things outdoors.

Built His Career on a Foundation of Hard Work and Service to Others

I believe deeply in the power of hard work and helping those that are less fortunate. My father was a Baptist minister before he retired. But he always had a second job to make ends meet. My mother balanced a fulltime job with raising four children. For my parents, being in the ministry was about helping people as much as religious dogma. I have early memories of my parents as church leaders ministering to the sick, the elderly, the homeless. They believed in and practiced volunteerism.

I've tried to emulate those qualities in my life. I recall experiencing impostor syndrome out of law school even though I graduated cum laude. But I figured out early on that I had the willpower to outwork anyone in the room. That was extraordinarily empowering, particularly in this profession. And it has served me splendidly throughout my career. I have my parents to thank for that.

My experience in the U.S. Navy has always been a good barometer as well. I joined the Navy out of high school and served a four-year enlistment. I was aboard aircraft carriers much of that time. Deployments were very difficult. We worked twelve-hour days with no weekends or holidays, sometimes for several months a time. I also saw a lot of abject poverty overseas. It gave me a deep appreciation for the opportunities we have in this country. And it really opened my eyes to inequality.

I've tried to even the playing field one pro bono client at a time over the last twenty-five years that I've been practicing law. I'm blessed to be part of a firm that provides world class client service but is also devoted to our communities. My partners are leaders in public interest organizations, and we are recognized year in and year out for our tremendous commitment to pro bono work. We encourage our lawyers to do good while doing well and we reward them for doing so. I've handled all types of pro bono matters, but as an immigrant, I've always had a keen interest in asylum cases and have represented families from all over the world in asylum proceedings. That work has been particularly gratifying.

I also serve my partners and the partnership as a whole as an elected member of the Firm's Executive Board, where I have the ability to influence the future of the Firm. It is a hugely important undertaking and responsibility. My colleagues on the Board are fabulous leaders, and it is very much a marketplace of ideas where vigorous discussion on difficult issues is the norm, as it should be.