

BRYAN MacCORMACK

STAYS TRUE TO NORTHEAST ROOTS IN BOSTON

Law school was not a clear-cut goal for Brian MacCormack (Moore Class, 1993) following his graduation from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst with a bachelor's degree in business.

Allowing himself the necessary time to weigh his options, MacCormack secured a sales position with a local retail computer company. He also took a summer job with UPS in its Management Training Program. It was during this time, hefting and delivering packages in the signature brown uniform, that MacCormack decided to apply to law school.

MacCormack's law school aspirations took him to WMU-Cooley, a far cry from the East Coast for the New Jersey native. Determined to do well and learn as much as he could, MacCormack took advantage of a student teaching opportunity that he credits with helping to solidify his interest in tax law. Having done well in his tax classes, MacCormack participated in a peer mentoring program that provided access to a classroom where he tutored anywhere between 50-100 students in tax law.

MacCormack labeled obtaining his law degree as the single most important decision he has made.

“Cooley was a wonderful academic experience,” MacCormack reflected. “It really opened my mind and made me who I am today.”

He valued the professors' real-world experiences brought to life in the classroom and learning about various professional opportunities for individuals with a law degree. Academics aside, MacCormack enjoyed the Midwest atmosphere – the kind

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demeanor of the people and slower pace of life.

That first impression, along with all his fond memories of Lansing, Michigan, have stuck with him, even today, over 25 years later.

“Michigan is absolutely awesome; I miss it, I loved it,” reminisced MacCormack. “I remember the first time I landed at the Lansing Regional Airport, I had a couple of bags, and was waiting for a cab. I was on my way to my new apartment. Out comes the couple I sat next to on the plane, along with their four kids, all toddlers. I only recall chatting, mostly small talk, with them on the plane, but what came next shocked me.

“The father comes right up to me on his way out and says, ‘Hey do you need a ride?’ Well, in Boston if someone were to ask you if you needed a ride, you would have looked at them like they were crazy!

But I wasn’t in Boston, and he seemed so genuine, that I said, ‘Yeah sure, I’ll take a ride.’ So we all got in the car, all seven of us, and this nice couple drove me to my apartment. That was the beginning of my Michigan-Cooley story. It doesn’t get any better than that, when would that ever happen? I knew that this place was a good place because good people live in Lansing. That kind of story held true throughout my whole time in Michigan, it really did. There wasn’t anything I didn’t like about it. Because there’s just good people there.”

Following his idyllic time in Lansing and graduating from WMU-Cooley, MacCormack was ready to make the next step. Given the competitive job market, along with the advice of some respected attorneys he knew, he went about the business of gaining an LL.M. degree to increase his career opportunities. With advanced degree in hand, he gained experience through a variety of legal positions, including an appointment down South as an Assistant State Attorney in Florida.

MacCormack practices law in the areas of estate planning, asset protection, tax law, probate and trust administration and real estate at the MacCormack Law Firm in Boston, which he founded in 2004.

Stemming back to his days as a student tutor, MacCormack frequently leads seminars and workshops for a number of professional groups, and has published several articles. MacCormack finds great value in connecting with other professionals within the industry at various conferences.

“I have been doing this for a long time now and still, there’s just so much to learn,” said MacCormack. “I think that’s what makes the law interesting.”

Acknowledging law school as a major investment, both financially and in years, he encourages law students today to seek real-life experience while still in school. Whether volunteer, internship or part-time work, any exposure of this nature would help to differentiate students as candidates in the future.

Speaking about work-life balance, MacCormack makes time for himself and his family. For his personal “release” he swims about a half-mile four times a week. Additionally, he coaches his kids’ teams, which forces him out of the office.

“I don’t want to be the dad that looks back and says ‘What happened? They’re gone,’” MacCormack said. “I make time for family and that’s really important to me.”

