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‘Lunch with a Lawyer’ event features firm’s president

By Christina E. Krogh

UDM Law Alumni Program

University of Detroit Mercy School of Law alumnus Mark Cantor ('80), president of Brooks Kushman PC, was a recent guest at the school's Lunch with a Lawyer program. Seated at a round table with 25 law students, Cantor gave them a brief picture of his background, and then allowed time for discussion.

The purpose of the school's Lunch with a Lawyer program is to give students the opportunity to speak to past UDM Law graduates about the realities of practice, how to pursue jobs in a particular field of law, how to be successful, and other tips and tricks of the trade from those who are out there doing it.

Cantor graduated from what was then called U of D School of Law in December of 1980, after working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during his years in law school. Eager to begin his work in the field of law, Cantor took the first job that was offered to him.

Three years later he was one of five attorneys breaking off to start the firm of Brooks Kushman PC, which continues to be a boutique firm serving the intellectual property needs of clients. The practice has since expanded nationally and internationally. When the firm's managing partner died in an automobile accident in 2007, Cantor took on the role of president and has continued the firm's trend of success and development. He told students that many of his career developments have been unexpected, and challenging. "You just never know where you're going to end up when you finish law school," he cautioned.

Cantor spoke to students about selling your firm to clients who are already with you, insisting that "they have to like working with you. You can't just be competent; they already expect that you know what you're doing." He gave tips on dealing with fickle clients, why it's important to keep in touch with clients, and-the topic most on students' minds-how to stand out in job interviews.

Cantor warned students that after being hired they should always show their desire to be there by coming in early, staying late, and working hard. He also told students to avoid the classic mistake of first-year associates: not asking for help. "If you knew it all," he told students, "you wouldn't be an associate; you'd be running the firm."

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