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MONDAY PROFILE

Christina Kline



Christina Kline grew up in the East Bay area of California and earned her English degree from the University of California Berkeley. She attended law school at the University of Illinois, College of Law, in Champaign-Urbana, where she was organized a symposium on equality for the Women's Law Society and worked at the Domestic Violence Clinic, providing free legal service to individuals who were victims of abuse.

Last year, she moved to Michigan to be with her husband, Philip, who works in Ann Arbor. She I started a fellowship with the ACLU of Michigan and worked on cases which involved First Amendment free speech rights, LGBT issues, and immigration policy. In June, she was hired as an associate at the Ann Arbor litigation firm, Lorandos Joshi Trial Attorneys.

BY JO MATHIS
Legal News

Residence: Ann Arbor.

My father always told me ...

"Take a deep breath." He is a lawyer in California and understands that this job can get tough and overwhelming. When things felt out of control in law school or at work, making a conscious effort to breathe first and react second has always helped and still does to this day.

What advice do you have for someone considering law school?

If you can, take some time between undergrad and law school. Make sure you do something that you are passionate about, explore any other interests you may have (especially the non-law variety!). Going into law school with a better idea of what you enjoy will help you cope with the pressures of law school and will give you a sense of what kind of law you want to practice in the future or if you want to use your law degree for something else entirely.

If you weren't a lawyer, what would you be?

Several people have suggested that I join the circus because of my quirky hobbies. First, while in law school, I learned to spin fire poi. It is a performance art that involves swinging tethered weights (which are on fire) through a variety of rhythmical and geometric patterns. Second, during my fellowship with the ACLU of Michigan, Michael J. Steinberg, the executive director, taught me how to juggle. Finally, I plan on taking some aerial acrobatics classes being offered in Detroit. I think that these skills would make me an excellent clown for Cirque Du Soleil.

Favorite local hangouts:

Barton Pond in Ann Arbor. I like to buy a sandwich from Zingerman's deli and have dinner by the pond with my husband.

Your proudest moment(s) as a lawyer?

The day the University of Michigan announced that they would be implementing a tuition equality plan for undocumented student-immigrants. I had written a letter with Michael J. Steinberg during my fellowship at the ACLU asking that a new, more equitable, policy be implemented. Certainly, most of the credit goes to the students who fought and protested, but I was proud to use my law degree to help shape policy and fight for equality.

What is your happiest childhood memory?

My parents bought me a kitten when I was five. My dad still has the voicemail recording of me screaming "Dad, I got a kitty!"

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At Thanksgiving dinner, would you rather talk politics, religion or the weather?

None of the above. There are five people in my family and we have completely different interests, different jobs, and live in different places. I love coming home each year and hearing about all the kids my mom helps each day at the school where she works, my sister's modeling career, my brother's study of biomedical engineering, and my dad's law practice (of course!).

What one thing do you wish people knew about your work?

This job is very personal, especially in a small litigation firm. There is a perception that lawyers are cold and only think about money or winning. That isn't the case. I, and all the lawyers and I have worked with, form deep, meaningful, personal relationships with the clients and their families. Certainly, it is good to keep some distance in order to best assess options and decide strategy. At the same time, however, we will go to great lengths and put in the extra hours to help a client because of that deeper relationship.

Favorite joke:

First lawyer: I sleep like a baby before trial.

Second lawyer: Really?

First lawyer: Yeah, I wake in the middle of the night crying and peeing my pants!

Must-see TV:

The Poirot & Marple series created by the BBC based on Agatha Christie's novels. Also, "Duck Dynasty"—It's important to mix a little bit of silly in there.

What's your favorite animal?

My cat Isaac. He loves to play fetch and is a great stress-reliever if a lot starts happening at work.

If you could have dinner with three people, living or dead, who would they be?

The first two people would be my former University of Illinois law professors Laurie Reynolds and Andrew Leipold. The third person would be Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Favorite movie:

Anything with Doris Day. My mom and I are huge fans of "Pillow Talk," "Move Over Darling," and "Glass-Bottom Boat." Every time I go home, I try to bring a Doris Day movie with me so that she and I can take an afternoon to hang out and watch it together.

Favorite law-related movie:

"The Paper Chase." I had a law school ritual where I would watch it over and over in the weeks running up to finals.

Where would you like to be when you're 90?

In an RV with my husband, somewhere I have never been before. I want to be that crazy, old, retired couple that treks around the country and gets into plenty of mischief.