

have also reminded him that there are limits to legal reasoning and to what an adviser can do. “Be a good advocate, but understand that local problems should be solved locally, by the owners of those problems,” he suggests. “Purely imported solutions aren’t always solutions that are sustained.”

Maintaining strong Duke Law ties

At each stop along his career path, Knight has relied upon lessons learned years ago in Duke Law classrooms, and recalled certain courses with ongoing relevance. “Contracts with John Weistart was one,” he says, “because that creates a framework by which understandings are reached, and which when broken are remediated.”

Don Horowitz’s course on social policy was another, he adds. “I learned that adjudication has its limitations, that there are other modes that may be appropriate for making policy and solving problems.”

And Corporations, with Jim Cox, was very important. “We are all about social responsibility, strong corporate governance, and raising local companies to international standards at Mumtalakat,” Knight says. “Everything I learned about corporate law comes into play here.”

Knight’s education is ongoing, as he meets and connects with alumni around the world and engages with students in Durham. While at Shearman & Sterling, he interviewed Duke Law students. At JPMorgan Singapore, he had Duke student interns. More recently, he has helped Duke students seeking placements in the Middle East. He has served on the Law School’s Board of Visitors since 2006 and returns annually for meetings, though his travel has been recently limited because of events in Bahrain.

“I’ve just thoroughly enjoyed staying in touch with students and alumni,” he says. “I’m still learning from some very interesting, well-educated people.”

Knight also has been a significant donor to the school’s Annual Fund, a role he underplays when reflecting upon his involvement. He views his donations to the school as incidental to a larger purpose. “Of course, funding is necessary for excellence in higher education,” said Knight. “But when alumni give back to Duke Law, they support an educational process that helps sustain and renew the rule of law in a society. In this sense, giving is about something even larger than Duke and is a way of supporting the rule of law as an element of a good society. That is something that most of us believe in.”

He has seen that vision of ordering justice in society take hold in his company, and is encouraged by the example it has set. “Mumtalakat is part of a reform agenda aimed at strong corporate governance and the responsible management of state-owned wealth,” says Knight. And he is proud, as well, of its staff of bright, young, and dedicated professionals, many of whom were educated in the U.S. “Throughout the period of unrest, our offices were open and attendance was very good, even though many employees had to negotiate either illegal civilian checkpoints set up by the protesters or military checkpoints,” says Knight. “The quality and integrity of our employees and the absence of sectarian tensions in our office leaves me optimistic about a promising future for Bahrain.” ♣ — Sharon McCloskey



Blaine Stanley '87 Legal assistance pays forward lifetime of opportunity

AS VICE PRESIDENT and counsel for ACE Group, a global insurance organization with U.S. headquarters in Philadelphia, Blaine Stanley works every day to represent her company’s policy interests through legislative efforts and with state regulatory groups. But insurance law was “absolutely not” her intended path when she attended Duke Law, she notes.

“I remember planning my courses second or third year and I specifically looked at the insurance law course and thought, ‘Well, I’m never going to need that,’” she says. “My career — it’s funny — has evolved. Now when you look at my resume it makes a lot of sense, but at one point it might not have.”

Stanley joined a Philadelphia firm as a litigation associate after graduating from Duke Law, and in subsequent positions began to represent insurers in litigation involving insurance disputes. It became her specialty.

She took a detour into the public sector in 1994, when she was invited to interview for the position of assistant counsel to Christine Todd Whitman, who was then embarking on her first term as governor of New Jersey.

"I've always been fascinated by politics, so I jumped at the chance," Stanley says. "I wasn't sure exactly what it was going to entail, but I thought, 'Oh well, it's a chance to learn something new.' That's my continuing theme."

Relocating across the state line to the bucolic town of Lambertville, N.J., Stanley advised Governor Whitman on matters involving various governmental departments, reporting directly to the governor's chief counsel. She also served as liaison to the New Jersey General Assembly and as Whitman's elections counsel.

Although she loved the work and it cemented her fascination with politics, Stanley says it also deterred her from ever wanting to directly enter the fray.

"I would probably never want to run for office," she explains. "You really put yourself out there when you do that. It would be a very difficult thing to do to yourself and your family. It's a very demanding job."

A passion for helping homeless Philadelphians

Throughout the course of her varied career, Stanley's volunteer service on behalf of homeless Philadelphians has been a constant.

Shortly after her initial arrival in Philadelphia, Stanley came together with an informal group of local young professionals, only one of whom was a native of the city.

"Just in meeting each other socially and talking, we kept going back to how upsetting it was for us to see so many people on the streets," Stanley recalls. "Except for the person who had grown up in Philadelphia, none of us had really ever experienced this firsthand."

They decided to do something about it.

In the fall of 1987 the group incorporated a nonprofit organization called Young Philadelphians for the Homeless. While members volunteered their time with local shelters, soup kitchens, and Habitat for Humanity, their primary focus was fundraising.

"We were fairly ambitious," Stanley says. "I guess it was idealism and it never occurred to us how difficult this could be."

For three consecutive years, the group threw a fall fundraising ball, raising a "considerable amount," she says. They disseminated grants to local organizations that worked directly with homeless citizens, giving preference to applicants focused on moving people toward independence through education, training, and transitional housing. In 1990, Stanley and her friends learned that the Philadelphia Bar Association was teaming up with other local groups to form an organization to provide free legal services to the homeless, the Homeless Advocacy Project, or HAP.

"We were so taken with them that we gave them everything we had left in our treasury, dissolved our corporation, and joined forces," Stanley says.

"The philosophy was that homeless people have very unique and complex legal problems that are not often adequately addressed by traditional providers of legal services to the average low income person," she says. "Part of that is because homeless individuals are so transient. They also feel so disenfranchised that they would not go to a community legal services office in search of help. In fact, they may be hesitant to speak to anybody because they're not even sure if they have a legal problem or not."

HAP goes out into the community and holds legal clinics — about 130 per year — in shelters and soup kitchens. "We meet our clients in an environment where they're more comfortable," Stanley says. "It also makes it much easier for someone to approach an attorney and explain what is going on and just say, 'Can you help me with this or not?'"

Much of HAP's work deals with helping individuals who are eligible to obtain benefits, including social security, disability and veterans' compensation — benefits that might help pay for transitional or, possibly, permanent housing. It also assists with wrongful evictions, child custody disputes, and mounts a biannual birth certificate clinic.

"In Pennsylvania, if you have no other identification you can't apply for a copy of your birth certificate unless an attorney signs the applications," says Stanley, who, along with five ACE colleagues, processed more than 30 applications for birth certificates during one recent clinic. "If you don't have a birth certificate you can't apply for benefits, a picture ID, or some types of housing. Someone who has been bounced around and possibly evicted doesn't have anything."

Since its inception, HAP has served more than 27,000 clients, providing legal services worth \$35 million. Stanley served as president in 2009 and continues to serve on its executive board.

"Blaine has served faithfully on the HAP board of directors for over 20 years, stewarding an agency which started with one employee and a budget of \$50,000 in 1990 to an organization with 17 employees and a budget of \$1.2 million in 2012," says Marsha Cohen, HAP's executive director. "Blaine brings great energy, intelligence, creativity, and leadership to all of the decisions, big and small, that have gone into making HAP the thriving legal services agency that it has become today."

Stanley says her compulsion to act is partly spurred by her emotional reaction to the plight of homeless people, and also by her desire to pay forward some of the good fortune she's had in her own life.

"I have been so fortunate and had so many opportunities in my life — chief among them the opportunity to go to a law school such as Duke," Stanley says. "I feel very compelled to help people, to reach out, and to try to give other people some opportunities as well. I think those people who are fortunate really have a duty to share with those who are not." ♡ — *Valerie Marino*