

Member Spotlight

Kendall Mills

Attorney

Allstate Insurance Company

Northbrook, IL

Current position since: 2012

Years in-house: 5

Law School: John Marshall Law School

Undergrad: University of Illinois, B.S., Advertising

Best thing about my current job:

The work itself. I practice employment law, and it is an exciting and ever changing field of work. I love the opportunity to work with our business leaders to develop solutions that accomplish our company's goals as well as that keep us in compliance with the existing law. I also love acting as a strategic partner with our outside counsel as we determine the course we will pursue when defending litigation against Allstate.

Most challenging thing about my current job:

occurs in the litigation space. Sometimes I have to advise clients to settle cases in which the plaintiff is less than upstanding. Although I'm comfortable with the risk versus exposure analysis, I still find it to be a challenging situation.

Most pivotal move in my career:

Prior to coming to Allstate, I was an Assistant Attorney General with the Illinois Attorney General's Office. I left the government in order to take a position conducting internal integrity investigations with Allstate. Leaving the government to work for Allstate was certainly the most pivotal move in my career. As the first attorney in my family, the only attorneys that I had known were prosecutors. (My uncle was a deputy sheriff and as result, I began working for the Lake County State's Attorney's Office when I was sophomore in college.) Naturally, I became a prosecutor, even though my desire when I left law school was to practice employment law.

Moving to the private sector gave me an opportunity to meet with and learn from employment lawyers and ultimately to practice employment law. I have been blessed to work for and with some truly brilliant attorneys that have mentored me and challenged me to be a better attorney.

Hardest lesson I've learned as a lawyer:

There are no do-overs. Whether it's an action taken by one of my clients or a different strategy or action that I wish I had taken, what's done is done and you have to move forward.

Worst job I ever had: Working in food service at the local amusement park and it resulted in me suffering heat stroke. Even though I did not enjoy food service, I learned the importance of valuing workplace relationships and of doing my best even when I didn't enjoy what I was doing.

Most valuable life lesson that I still apply today:

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us." (Ralph Waldo Emerson) It is often very easy to be consumed by circumstance and to become stressed out about things that are only important in the moment. The key to success is keeping things in perspective and remembering who you are and what you value.

How I achieve work/life balance:

I got a dog. Getting a dog forced me to leave the office at a reasonably decent hour and has put more smiles on my face than I could have ever imagined.

What I like most about ACC:

The opportunity to obtain CLE credit in an environment that supports and encourages networking. On any given day, the Chicago Chapter is offering a number of programs on various topics about which in-house attorneys are seeking more information. These offerings provide in-house attorneys with the names of subject matter experts with whom they can connect. This is invaluable.

People may be surprised to learn that I:

wrote a screenplay. It was a legal "thriller" with a female protagonist that happened to be a prosecutor. After completing the script, I boarded a plane, flew to Los Angeles and pitched it to a Hollywood reader. It wasn't optioned by the studio but the experience was invaluable.