

## Amber Davis, Kevin Wimberly and Erica Cipparone: Three Alumni ... One Law Firm ... Many Shared Experiences

Amber Davis ('06), Kevin Wimberly ('08) and Erica Cipparone ('10) have a lot in common – much more than their mutual bond as Barry Law graduates. They work for the same law firm. They are deeply involved in the growing field of intellectual property (IP) law. They are active in the Orlando legal community. And they each share a number of common threads in their professional and personal lives.

The first commonality between the three is their experience as Barry students. Each one credits the Law School with establishing a solid foundation for their future career in the IP field.



“At Barry I was on Moot Court and was the Chief Justice in 2005-06,” Davis says. “Also, I was very interested in trademarks and competed in the Lefkowitz Trademark Competition two years in a row. I had originally planned on transferring to another law school after my first year, but after making the Moot Court team and making friends, I decided to stay. It was the best decision. I was even part of the team that placed first in the Best Oralist award that second year.”



Wimberly, too, cites his experiences on Barry’s Moot Court as an asset in pursuing his legal career. “Moot Court is how I made my initial connections with the IP bar in Orlando,” he says. “I also attended Barry at a special time due to the excellent IP faculty such as Professor Tropp (copyrights), Professor Musone (patents), Professor Randazza (trademarks) and Professor Holland in Moot Court.”



Cipparone also believes Barry Law delivered a solid footing for her career. “Barry provided me with the basics to search for and find a position in IP,” she says. “And it was because of the bar preparation program at Barry that I passed the Florida Bar exam the first time I took it.”

After graduating from Barry in different years, each of the three alumni found a job at the same Orlando law firm – Beusse Wolter Sanks & Maire, PLLC (BWSM) – working in the burgeoning field of IP law. They remain there today, part of a team of lawyers using their skills and experience to assist clients with protecting, enforcing and defending an array of international IP rights. BWSM’s attorneys assess and protect patents, trademarks, copyrights, trade secrets and other areas of intellectual property which are important assets for most businesses in today’s environment of global commerce and communication.

While BWSM is one of the most recognized IP law firms in Florida, the firm also has a global reach, representing clients before international governments and judicial bodies. The firm’s attorneys deal with complex contemporary issues such as domain name disputes, false endorsements and the misappropriation of name / image / likeness.

Davis was the first to begin her career at BWSM. Today she is a partner at the firm, utilizing her Board Certified experience in IP law. “About 70% of my practice involves IP and commercial litigation in federal and state courts as well as in front of the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board,” Davis says. “The other 30% is dedicated to searching, preparing and filing trademark or copyright applications and other legal matters involving the licensing of IP.”

Wimberly also joined BWSM immediately after graduating from Barry Law and today is an associate working with the firm's clients on litigation matters and to prepare and file copyright and trademark applications. "I also advise clients on FTC and online marketing issues regarding commercial email, cybersquatting and the Communications Decency Act," he says.

Like Davis and Wimberly, Cipparone also was hired by BWSM after graduation. Presently she is an associate in the firm and a Registered Patent Attorney. "I practice in all areas of IP including patent, copyright and trademark law," she says. "A large portion of my practice also includes preparing and prosecuting trademark applications before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office."

In addition to their Barry Law roots and their successful careers at BWSM, the three alumni are also connected through their involvement in Central Florida's legal community.

Davis is the immediate past president of the Young Lawyers Section of the Orange County Bar Association (OCBA) and is an active member of the Florida Bar's IP Committee and the Orlando chapter of the Federal Bar Association. Additionally, she is chairing the OCBA Gala this year and was just recently recognized by the World Trademark Review® as one of the leading trademark professionals in the State of Florida.

Wimberly has co-chaired the OCBA IP Committee and is a Florida Bar Foundation Fellow. "I also have the distinction of winning two cases against former adjunct professors I had while at Barry," he says.

Cipparone, too, is involved with the Young Lawyers Section – of both the OCBA and the Seminole County Bar Association. She is also finishing work on her master's in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Central Florida. "This will broaden my knowledge in the sciences and enhance my work in the biotechnology field of patent law," she says.

Another common thread between the three alumni is their willingness to offer tips for success to current and future Barry students.

"Do whatever you can to distinguish yourself from your classmates," says Davis. "Make yourself stand out. Get on Moot Court or law review, participate as a Certified Legal Intern with the State Attorney's Office or undertake some other type of internship or externship."

Wimberly suggests Barry students "find something that makes you memorable, or create something memorable. My technology background helped me stand out, as did having Moot Court experience in the area of law where I wanted to practice."

Cipparone says it's important to "get experience, even if it is unpaid. The lessons you learn and the experience you obtain will be worth it in the end. Getting your foot in the door early with a law firm is essential to landing a position when you graduate."

The three Barry grads also have some advice for other alumni, particularly immediately after graduation.

"Join your local bar association," Davis urges. "Get involved in the legal community, work hard, and be professional and courteous to your colleagues, judges and opposing counsel."

"Don't be afraid to ask questions," Wimberly says. "Sometimes new attorneys fear that if they ask for clarification or guidance on a topic, they will be seen as not being up to the task."

"Find a mentor and learn as much as you can from that person," says Cipparone. "School can only prepare you so much for your career. You'll learn the most from being around those who practice law and do so with the utmost integrity and passion for what they do."

As if sharing similar Barry experiences and working at the same firm weren't enough in common, there is yet another thread that ties Davis, Cipparone and Wimberly together – each has a spouse who is also a practicing attorney. Davis' husband is a shareholder at an Orlando law firm, Wimberly's wife is an attorney in Orlando and Cipparone's husband has his own law practice in Lake Mary.