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David M. Paris

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CARLO WOLFF
CJN Staff Reporter | 0 comments

As might be expected of an attorney who has made the annual Ohio Super Lawyers list since 2004, David M. Paris loves trial work.

"Being a trial lawyer in a personal injury firm turned out to be a perfect fit for me," said Paris, managing partner of Nurenberg, Paris, Heller & McCarthy LPA, a personal injury law firm in Cleveland.

"My siblings and I were raised with a strong sense of personal responsibility and accountability, and particular sensitivity for those who are less able to protect themselves," he said. "Growing up with athletics was a great benefit as well. Trial work is like a big game or big match."

As in athletic competition, the following rules apply to trial work, according to Paris: "work hard, prepare, make good calls, be humble in victory and gracious in defeat."

Paris grew up in Cleveland and attended Cleveland State University's Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, joining the Nurenberg firm as a clerk in 1976. He became a principal in 1988 and managing partner in 2002. He has been an Ohio Super Lawyer each year since 2005.

Among his mentors were "some of the greatest trial lawyers in the state, like Marshall Nurenberg, Leon Plevin and Jack McCarthy," he said, adding he "was able to watch and learn from others like Fred Weisman and Craig Stangenberg. That was a huge development in my career."

Nurenberg Paris specializes in cases of personal injury, wrongful death and class actions, including mass torts,

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aviation disasters, medical mistakes, train, trucking and motor vehicle accidents, and industrial and construction accidents.

"We're in the business of changing behavior, identifying poor judgments, foolish decisions and unsafe policies, and changing that paradigm so people aren't exposed to unnecessary hazards," Paris said.

Engaging with a wide range of fields brings Paris into contact with professionals in engineering, medicine, science and human behavior, and his vocabulary is continually expanding, he said. For example, a recent case forced him to become conversant with tribology, which he called "the science of rubbing surfaces."

"We're often working with world-class experts who wrote the definitive book on the topic and have to be on a level where we can converse intelligently on the topic as well," he said. In a sense, Paris is always going to school – which he enjoys.

His firm doesn't win every case, nor does every case have merit. But there are elements in many that give Paris satisfaction.

"It might be uncovering corporate policies that cheat consumers and going through the lengthy process of having those monies returned to the consumer," he said. "It might be representing an inarticulate and uneducated black trucker from Philadelphia who was catastrophically injured in a small southern Ohio town by a local company and this poor guy never thought he had a chance in a hostile courtroom with 12 white jurors. This fellow cried like a baby when the jury unanimously saw the truth and restored his faith in the American justice system. That was a tearful moment for me."

According to the Nurenberg Paris website, Paris, who heads the firm's class action department, has resolved suits against insurance companies on behalf of a class of 600,000 and suits against auto dealerships on behalf of a class of 75,000. He has recovered more than \$170 million in settlements and verdicts for his clients.

He also said he's proud of his firm's community outreach and charity work.

The level of lawyering at which Paris operates can be wearing, he suggested, adding he couldn't have been successful without the support of his wife, Michelle, and his daughters, Lauren and Dana, and the Nurenberg Paris support staff.

Dana Paris recently joined Nurenberg Paris as an associate, her father said. "The legacy continues."

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