

Rising Star: Jenner & Block's Alison Stein

Law360, New York (July 16, 2017, 3:02 PM EDT) - Jenner & Block LLP's Alison Stein has helped preserve the intellectual property of prominent figures in the media and entertainment landscape, including the late wife of author John Steinbeck and the sister of an electrocuted street artist, earning her a spot as one of four media and entertainment law practitioners under age 40 honored by Law360 as Rising Stars.

THE MOST CHALLENGING CASE OF HER CAREER:

Stein currently represents the estate of Elaine Steinbeck, the late wife of novelist John Steinbeck, in a copyright dispute over the rights to film adaptations of his works, particularly "The Grapes of Wrath" and "East of Eden." Stein said that the suit, in which she argues Steinbeck's son and other family members have caused certain movie deals to fall through, has been challenging because of the frustration it causes for her client, Elaine Steinbeck's daughter. The case will head to trial in August, she said.

"It's a particularly interesting case because it deals with the intersection of an author's will and the Copyright Act," she said. "We're very excited for this trial to confirm what other courts have already held — that my client controls the exploitation of the Steinbeck works — so that his work can once again be adapted and shared with the world."

PROUDEST MOMENT AS A LAWYER:

Stein well remembers the feeling of elation she had when she successfully helped Christina Wulf, the sister of a prominent New York City street artist who was electrocuted while he was painting in the subway system, secure the

RISING ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ STAR



Alison Stein

Jenner & Block

Age: 36

Home base: New York

Position: Partner

Law school: University of Pennsylvania Law School

First job after law school: Clerked at the Third Circuit Court of Appeals for Judge Kent Jordan

copyrights to her brother's art. After Jason Wulf died tragically, Stein said, people began to use his images without permission, so she worked through the trust and probate courts to assign his copyrights to Christina Wulf.

"She was so moved by the services that we were able to provide," Stein said. "It's what I love best: helping people create content but also helping them protect content and protect legacies."

KEEPING UP WITH A QUICKLY CHANGING LANDSCAPE:

The fast-paced and ever-changing landscape of technology and media is part of what drives Stein to succeed, she said. Along with enjoying media law professionally, she said she is always digging into new books, movies and TV shows. Her latest picks are "Option B" by Sheryl Sandberg in books and "This is Us" in TV shows.

"The law is always one step behind technology. You really have to keep up," Stein said. "I like to think that I consume so much media because it's part of my job."

WHY THE FOCUS ON MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT IP:

Stein said she was exposed to the intersection of intellectual property and media at an early age. Her maternal grandfather was Irving Fine, a renowned composer, and her mother was a professional horn player. Growing up, Stein said she helped her mother manage her grandfather's intellectual property rights.

"I come from a family in the creative industries," she said. Stein chose intellectual property law "when I figured out I could combine that personal background with my legal career," she said.

ADVICE FOR YOUNG ATTORNEYS:

Developing a niche early on can be a key step toward professional development as well as a sense of accomplishment, Stein said.

"Find something you're passionate about and specialize," she said. "The more you specialize, the more self-satisfaction you feel, and ultimately when you become a partner, it makes it easier to develop business."

--As told to Kelcee Griffis.

Law360's Rising Stars are attorneys under 40 whose legal accomplishments belie their age. A team of Law360 editors selected the 2017 Rising Stars winners after reviewing more than 1,200 submissions. This interview has been edited and condensed.

Correction: This story has been corrected to clarify the family members involved in John Steinbeck's rights litigation.