

LEADERS in the LAW 2018

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Herrmann focuses on litigation and alternative dispute resolution, and serves as the firm's co-general counsel. He is an officer of the Eastern District of Michigan Chapter of the Federal Bar Association and spent many years as co-chair of its pro bono committee. He spent 10 years as a member of the State Bar of Michigan Representative Assembly, including a stint as chair. Herrmann leads discussion groups in the University of Michigan Law School's Professionalism in Action Program.

What does practicing law mean to you personally and professionally?

I never waited tables but I'd be a better lawyer if I had. Like food, we all need the law. I try to serve it faithfully.

Know your customers. Treat each customer like she is the only one you're serving. Know when to interrupt, and when to let the customer enjoy her business. Own your mistakes.

Know the menu. Combine the selections to make your customers happy and your restaurant unique, but be candid about choices lest your customer demand a fatal allergen. Work with the chef after hours to change menu items you don't like.

Junior servers are not your competition. They will take care of your customers when you can't. Mentor them.

Not everyone wants sushi every night. Referring your customers to the Italian place across the street builds good will for everyone.

And remember that the man who can't afford a seat at the table still needs your services.

Where did you grow up? Please provide one memorable anecdote about your childhood.

Flemington, New Jersey (site of the Lindbergh kidnapping trial). In grade school, I manufactured miniature crossbows and sold them to my classmates at a remarkable profit, until my wise science teacher saved me from juvenile detention with a rational, respectful conversation.

What do you consider your biggest professional accomplishment and why?

Service as General Counsel for my firm. Being asked to serve as the lawyer for a group of

accomplished lawyers I deeply trust is a distinct honor.

Describe the biggest challenge you've had to face in your legal career.

Evaluating and addressing potential misconduct of other lawyers. I have encountered this challenge on few occasions, but it is one of our most exhausting professional duties.

If you could not be a lawyer, which occupation would you choose? Why?

I deeply valued my service as a Marine Corps logistics officer and likely would have remained on active duty had I not pursued my civilian legal career. No longer quite as physically qualified as I used to be, though, today I would lean toward the construction trades. My hobby is home renovation, and I get great satisfaction from planning a project, designing it down to the smallest detail, and executing it with care (*usually* to the great satisfaction of my #1 client).

What advice would you give to young lawyers to help them find success and fulfillment in their career?

Read *A Message to Garcia* by Elbert Hubbard.

How has the profession changed throughout your career?

Email has swallowed us whole. Resist! Pick up the phone and talk to people.

What is something about you that not many people know?

I hiked over 800 miles of the Appalachian Trail with my Dad.

How would you describe yourself in one word?

Patient