



Monte Dube '81

BY JANE LINKER

A View from the Top

Several Cardozo graduates—partners and associates—at some of the largest and most prestigious firms in the country recently spoke to us about large-firm practice. As a group, they share an enthusiasm for their work, even when long hours are involved; they also give us insight into why Cardozo does so well in the large-firm market.

Asked how members of the Cardozo class of '81—the third in the law school's history—got jobs, **Monte Dube** laughs. “A combination of chutzpah and grit, I guess. There was very much a sense that we were pioneers, and that was exciting,” recalls Dube, a partner at McDermott Will & Emery LLP, based in Chicago. A nationally known specialist in health law, Dube, who joined the firm in 1984, headed McDermott's health law department, the nation's largest, from 2001 to 2006.

Dube's legal career started with a year as a Bigelow Teaching Fellow and lecturer in law at the University of Chicago Law School. He'd been recommended for the prestigious fellowship by two of his Cardozo professors, who had both taught at the University of Chicago.

“I figured I'd spend a year teaching and then go back and conquer Wall Street, but in those days being a Bigelow Fellow didn't make much of an impact in New York, though it did in Chicago,” he recalls.

After two years at a litigation boutique in Chicago, Dube decided to make a total career shift into health law. “The field was just beginning then. Now, health care is the most heavily regulated industry on the planet. You have to understand both the regulatory milieu and the reimbursement side to do deals in what is now a \$2 trillion industry sector that includes everything from hospitals to insurance behemoths to medical device manufacturers.”

When Dube joined McDermott, he was the 12th lawyer in the health law department. Today, its 90 lawyers include three health attorneys in Munich, with more to come in London and elsewhere. In the last 25 years, he has served as counsel in the sale, merger, affiliation, and acquisition of hundreds of hospitals and academic medical centers, hospital corporate restructurings, public-hospital privatizations, hospital-physician joint ventures, reimbursement and regulatory compliance and litigation, and hospital and medical staff operational legal issues of all types. Ranked as a leading lawyer in health care law in *Chambers USA: America's Lead-*

ing *Lawyers for Business*, Dube frequently lectures in America and abroad.

"We're exporting our expertise to Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America, working with all kinds of health care providers," Dube points out. "I'm fortunate to represent one of Israel's largest health insurers, as well as Dubai Health Care City, a free-trade zone where they're building a mega-health center that will be a magnet for the Middle East and Africa. American providers like Harvard Medical and the Cleveland Clinic are creating satellites there. It's a whole new health care universe."

Dube admits that while McDermott doesn't actively recruit from Cardozo, there are eight Cardozo grads currently at McDermott, including Daniel Mullen '94, a partner in Washington.

Dube, who lives in Evanston with his wife, Lori, and three teenaged kids, wanted the advantages he felt a large international firm would provide. "A large firm gives you great exposure and diversity of opportunities: you see every imaginable type of legal and business issue, and there are extensive networking opportunities. You also have a bigger pool of potential mentors," he points out. "It takes more effort in a big firm to find the work/life balance. It's not for everybody, but for me, even after more than two decades, doing what I love, working with brilliant colleagues, and being well paid for it, that's an easy decision."

When **Harold Gordon** '88 graduated, getting into the top law firms was still difficult for Cardozo graduates, but Gordon has seen that change dramatically at Jones Day.

"In the mid-1990s, I arranged a lunch at the Gotham Bar & Grill, a Cardozo neighborhood favorite, with the Jones Day New York recruiting partner and Dean Frank Macchiarola and Associate Dean Ellen Cherrick. I always say it just took a good tuna burger and chardonnay to get Jones Day to participate in Cardozo on-campus recruiting. The rest is history," says Gordon. "Cardozo students became standouts in the Jones Day summer classes, generating office-wide enthusiasm for more Cardozo students, who got hired full time and moved up. Today we have about 20 Cardozo alums, including at least three partners."

Gordon—the second Cardozo graduate hired by Jones Day—actively recruits at the Law School, organizing and doing on-campus interviews every year. Though he points out that the firm looks primarily at or near the top of the class, there is flexibility because Cardozo students have become a known quantity.

"Sometimes a resume just jumps out even if a student is not in the top 10 to 15 percent of her class because of impressive pre-law school work, for example, and we'll look at the applicant. Grades are not our sole focus."

Gordon himself chose government service when he graduated from law school. He served as a staff attorney and then a branch chief in the division of enforcement at the

Securities and Exchange Commission. He also clerked for Judge Lowell A. Reed, Jr., US District Court, Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

"The right government position can get you more litigation experience faster than you would encounter at a large law firm. Starting at the SEC was a good initial career position for me," says Gordon.

When he finished his clerkship, Gordon picked Jones Day from several options and made partner in 2000, specializing in corporate and commercial litigation and product liability. A large part of his practice also involves counseling clients involved with investigations and enforcement proceedings pursued by the SEC, the Department of Justice, state securities regulators, and the securities industry self-regulatory organizations.

For him, the benefits of a large firm were the deciding factor. "A large firm at the formative stages of your career can give you excellent training in multiple departments, and you're exposed to complex legal matters. There are also attorneys in many different practice areas and at different levels you can turn to for advice, not unlike the atmosphere at a teaching hospital."

Gordon has had extensive experience assisting clients in



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Harold Gordon '88

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multiple SEC investigations and other matters, including class actions in state and federal court. His clients in recent matters have included Symbol Technologies, Verint Systems, Mitsubishi Corporation, and the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company.

“Representing R. J. Reynolds gave me the opportunity to take lead roles in multiple high-profile jury trials in New York and elsewhere, an unusual experience for many big-firm litigators. Doing those trials provided invaluable professional experience that’s readily transferable to all other types of cases. In certain respects, it’s not until you try a case that you really learn how to work up a case before trial.”

Gordon, who met his wife, Cardozo graduate Carrie Kolinsky ’88, during his first year at Cardozo, is well aware of the work schedule that being a partner in a major New York law firm entails. He has two daughters, one of whom is starting at the age of 13 to talk about becoming a lawyer.

“Law is probably one of the most laborious ways to make a living. It’s very intense and doing it well can easily consume 10 to 12 hours a day and sometimes more. We’re also a client-service industry and you have to accept the relentless nature of client demands. I don’t think this necessarily differs depending on where you practice—I’m sure lawyers in boutique firms and solo practitioners work as many hours as I do. It’s the inherent nature of what we do and what it takes to be a good lawyer.”

Shai Waisman ’96 admits that there isn’t a day he doesn’t pay attention to work. But to him, that’s just the nature of being at a large international law firm like Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP.

Waisman recruits for the firm around the country and says he is always asked about the hours. “I tell them if you love what you do, you don’t work a day in your life.”

Waisman became a partner at Weil in January 2004 in business finance and restructuring, having made a lateral move from another firm his first year out of Cardozo because he wanted to concentrate on restructuring and Weil is the acknowledged leader in the field. “Weil really created the field and we’ve handled every major matter, including Enron and WorldCom.”

Waisman himself has worked with a range of major corporate clients, including American Airlines (he represented American when it bought TWA), Reuters, Loral Space & Communications, and the major Chapter 11 of its day, Global Crossing. Named “Outstanding Young Restructuring Lawyer” by *Turnarounds and Workouts* in 2006, he is currently involved in restructuring the 276-store apparel chain Steve & Barry’s.

Increasingly, he finds himself traveling around the world, as restructuring becomes a global business. Recent overseas





Julian S. H. Chung '95

ENRIQUE CUBILLO

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business trips have been to London, Paris, and even China, accompanied by representatives of the US State Department. He has worked in a wide variety of industries, representing purchasers and sellers of assets in complex multinational restructurings. He feels the international nature of the field has added a whole new dimension to his practice.

Over the past decade, Weil has hired more Cardozo graduates than any other top firm, contends Waisman, and the numbers back him up. Currently there are more than 30 Cardozo alums working at Weil, and some years the number has been as high as 50. There are now four Cardozo partners at the firm, including three in bankruptcy.

“When I started, Cardozo was a relatively new addition to the schools where Weil hired. Basically, it’s come down to the performance of the students we get. The attorneys here saw the caliber of the product Cardozo was turning out: they’re educated, hungry, and very impressive.”

During college—he earned a B.A. from American University—Waisman worked in the public defender’s office and in speechwriting at the Clinton White House. Torn between law and politics, he reasoned that “politics would always be there” but the time for a law degree was now.

Coming to Cardozo was the result of a rather unusual encounter. “My dad was cofounder of a printing business in Queens, where I worked growing up. He’d printed some campaign materials for Frank Macchiarola when he ran for comptroller. When I decided to apply to Cardozo, Dad called a friend who’d worked on the campaign to see if anyone could offer advice about the school. A few days later I got a call in Washington from Dean Macchiarola’s office to come to New York to interview with him. That visit made all the difference. I got to see firsthand the fantastic combination of enthusiasm, community spirit, and scholarship that sets Cardozo apart. Dean Macchiarola was a tremendous mentor to many students, and I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to have him as a professor and to work as his research and teaching assistant throughout law school. It

came full circle for me when I spoke at commencement and was able to publicly thank Dean Macchiarola, who was retiring, for what he did for so many of us.”

Waisman and his wife, Kate, travel extensively and are involved in numerous causes and philanthropies, including Cardozo and the Bank Street College of Education, where they have endowed the Waisman Family Scholarship. In the little spare time he has, Waisman trains for and runs in marathons. He’s successfully run the New York race three times, as well as ones in Philadelphia and London.

“When I joined Weil, my plan was to work here for a few years, and then move on, but I was having so much fun I forgot to leave!”

Julian S. H. Chung '95 is very familiar with how large law firms operate. She spent 10 years at Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP in its corporate department before joining Cadwalader Wickersham & Taft LLP in 2005 as special counsel. She was made a partner a year later. She’s the only Cardozo partner at Cadwalader, though there are more than a dozen Cardozo associates currently working there. Chung’s principal practice involves the representation of large financial institutions in commercial lending transactions, with an emphasis on senior secured finance for leveraged acquisitions, primarily representing the lead agents and arrangers. Lehman Brothers is a client and she has worked with JPMorgan Chase, Bear Stearns, and Barclays. She recently represented the lead banks for a portion of the financing for the going-private of Archstone.

To Chung, the workload issue is not about the firm—it’s about the deals. “At any given time, I can be working on eight different things. As you become more experienced, you become more adept at estimating how long things take. Then you triple it because you’re never totally sure what’s going to happen,” she laughs. “At any top law firm, it’s a

given that you will be available when you're needed and responsive to what your clients want. That holds true whether you're an associate or a partner."

Chung grew up in Hawaii. Before graduating from New York University, she spent several years working as a fashion photographer in New York, eventually moving to the business side, representing other photographers. Interested in the entertainment industry, she figured a good way in was through law, and applied to Cardozo because of the School's strong program. During her second year in law school, a friend arranged an interview with a partner in an entertainment law firm.

"There was a very small entertainment law community in New York at that time, and for the most part they didn't hire right out of law school. I was advised to get some 'big law' experience and come back in a few years. I joined Simpson and found the corporate work I was doing really interesting and my career focused on that."

When Chung was a summer associate at Simpson, it had a single corporate pool. When she arrived as a first-year associate, the firm was just developing a rotation system and she started in the finance group. Her second year was spent in capital markets, and as a third-year she was offered the opportunity to split her time between the two groups. Since then her practice has focused on bank financing.

Chung lives in Union Square with her two sons, seven and nine, and her husband, a network engineer. Her typical day runs about 10 hours and her free time "is spent with my kids." The only photography she does now is on family vacations.

"Every lawyer has to create a work/life balance that fits. Not every practice lends itself to flexibility, though some areas of law are more predictable than others. For example,

practice areas which don't have such stringent deadlines, or where a great deal of what a lawyer does is reviewing regulations, can be more amenable to regular hours."

Born in Miami, raised in Israel, **Vered Rabia '98** chose to be a summer associate at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom in 1997 because the firm did a lot of work with Israeli companies and that was where she hoped to focus her career. She spent two years in the Israeli Air Force before college.

It didn't quite work out that way. Ten years later, Rabia's varied real estate practice includes clients such as Alexandria Real Estate, the developer of the East River Science Park, the first bioscience project in New York City; Bank of America in the acquisition and development of its new Times Square headquarters; Madison Square Garden; and Apollo Real Estate. She does have a few Israeli clients and visits Israel every year.

Initially undecided between business and law, Rabia, who spent a year at Bear Stearns after college, chose law school because she felt that a legal education would serve her well no matter which direction she took.

Skadden does a traditional six-month rotation for its associates, but because Rabia graduated from Cardozo in December, she started six months before the rest of her class. Skadden agreed that she could use that extra six months to stay in real estate for a year before she began the rotation.

"Six months isn't really enough time to get the feel of a real estate practice because deals can often take much longer than that to evolve," she points out. "After a year, I loved what I was doing so much, I've never left."

Rabia is active in all areas of the firm's real estate practice. She's represented clients in connection with acquisition, financing, development, and disposition of office buildings, hotels, and residential developments. Increasingly, her work is international. In the past year, she closed a deal on a joint venture in Macao that combined a casino with a retail operation. That meant several trips to China, no hardship for Vered, who loves to travel and chooses the most exotic locations she can find for vacations.

She works a lot with hotel developers and operators—Ian Schrager, Orient Express, and Andre Balazs are all clients—and is involved in acquisition, development, and financing of



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their projects. Hotels are an area she's especially familiar with: during college, she worked at both the Barbizon and the Plaza, starting on the reception desk and ending up as front-office manager.

Rabia estimates that there are about 15 Cardozo graduates working at Skadden. Many more have been hired over the years, but she points out that some people have stayed only three or four years and then moved on, often to a client.

"It takes time for a school to build a reputation, for graduates to come into the firm and perform well. Cardozo has always had an exceptional faculty, and that's becoming increasingly well known."

Asked about the Skadden reputation for working long hours, Rabia laughs. "That's silly. Many of my friends who work at midsize firms put in just as many hours as I do. With clients, you have to be available when they need you. Sure, I've had to cancel plans, but that comes with the territory. The benefits of working at Skadden—recognition, reputation, and experience—far outweigh the deficits. I love the people I work with. I went with my initial gut reaction and I was right."

During her second year at law school, **Sarah Jones '02** looked at some midsize firms but decided they didn't offer what she wanted. "I quickly found out that a larger firm has resources that can make a significant difference for a new lawyer. There are more lawyers you can draw from, for example," says Jones. "If you know which area you want to specialize in, a small firm can be the right choice, but if you're undecided, I'd say go with a large firm if you can."

Ranked first in her class, Order of the Coif, and a supervising editor of *Cardozo Law Review*, Jones was the first Cardozo summer associate hired by Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP in several years. The firm began recruiting on campus in 1999 and now averages at least one summer associate a year.

"Cravath is known for giving its summer associates real work," recalls Jones, who was assigned to a partner in commercial banking. "They also have a very specific rotation for their associates. It's called the Cravath system: you switch about every 18 months, and if you don't want it, you shouldn't come here. It's a good system because you have the opportunity to focus on different areas, and you get to work with a lot of different partners. It also makes you more versatile as a corporate lawyer."

Now in her fifth Cravath rotation, Jones does a range of



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Sarah Jones '02

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corporate work, including mergers and acquisitions, corporate advising, private equity, and venture capital. Through her prior rotations, she's had experience in commercial banking, M&A, and securities. She's done IPOs, representing issuers and underwriters; syndicated bank transactions, representing borrowers and lenders; public and private offerings of debt and equity securities; and 1934 Act filing and Sarbanes-Oxley compliance advising.

Her clients have included most of the major New York investment banks and several top corporations. Involved in a variety of corporate deals over the past five years, Jones has participated in representations of the lead underwriters in initial public offerings for a manufacturing company and a technology company, a major international corporation in the sale of a division to a Chinese buyer, and a pharmaceutical company in financing for an acquisition and subsequent public offerings of common and preferred stock.

In 1999, Jones, who grew up in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and got her B.A. from James Madison University as a music business major, traded in her car, put down her clarinet, and headed for Manhattan and Cardozo. "Now I just try to keep up a subscription to the Philharmonic," she jokes.

Like every other associate in a top firm, Jones has also had to learn how to manage her time and create a life outside of work. She's found that living within walking distance of the office actually means she spends less time at work. For the past two years, she's taken her monthlong vacation in one stretch, finding that she comes back to the office rested and recharged.

"My hours vary each day, week, and month. To work in a firm like Cravath—and I imagine any other major firm—you have to realize that you can't plan on a predictable level of work. Things come up and you have to be ready to handle them. That's just the way it is. It does become a little easier as you get more experienced and better at managing your time. Still, a senior partner will have to be prepared to take a 1:00 a.m. phone call from time to time, just like I do."

When she interviewed with Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP for a summer associate slot, one of the attributes that appealed most to **Davida Williams '03** was the firm's strong international presence. Little did she know that three years later, when her new husband, Joseph Knoll, got a job offer in London, that international aspect—Cleary has a dozen offices worldwide, with about 70 lawyers in London—would become critical to her own career.

"I loved the New York office, but working and living in London has been really interesting. In New York, I was in litigation; here I'm mainly focused on corporate work, primarily doing IPOs and some equity offerings," she explained. "In New York, travel for work is limited and not particularly exotic. In London, I've traveled all over Europe."

Since moving to London in September 2006, Williams has done an IPO and privatization of a bank in Pakistan, and worked on deals in South Africa, Slovenia, Latvia, the Netherlands, and Ireland. She has represented corporations and investment banks in connection with corporate restructurings as well as public and private debt and equity offerings.

Williams joined Cleary as a litigator and spent her first two years as part of the team that worked on the Oracle-PeopleSoft transaction, a case, she proudly points out, now taught in law schools. "It was an amazing experience for a new associate. We were four partners and five associates, often working around the clock. Law school can prepare you, but until you are actually in practice, you don't really know what it's like," she points out. "I chose a large firm because I wasn't 100 percent sure of which area of law I wanted to focus on, but I wanted to be in a place where I could explore, that would give me good experience, and where I could do some pro bono work. Cleary absolutely has fit all these criteria."

Williams, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, looked at a number of East Coast law schools but chose Cardozo because she was impressed by the alternative dispute resolution program. She participated in the school's Mediation Clinic, where students are trained to mediate at community dispute resolution centers, small claims court, and civil court. Articles editor of the *Cardozo Law Review*, Williams was a judicial intern for Judge Alvin Hellerstein, US District Court, Southern District.

"The Cardozo placement resources were extremely effective. Before the interviewing process, I had two rounds of mock interviews and my résumé was vetted by a number of

people. Cardozo really prepared me, which was very lucky since my first interview was actually with Cleary!"

Now a fifth-year associate, Williams proudly points to a strong Cardozo presence at Cleary. The firm actively recruits on campus. Three graduates joined the firm the year she joined, and all are still there. Cardozo alumni at Cleary have donated two seats to the School's Moot Court Room, and Williams herself has contributed six more. As a new mother—Williams gave birth to her first child at the end of August, one day after she posed for the portrait shown here—she is aware of what she terms Cleary's excellent maternity policy.

"At Cleary, they hire you because you're passionate about your work. I've found the Cleary culture to be a very open environment, very collegial. It's one of the few firms that's still 'lockstep' through partnership. For me, it's been everything I had hoped for." ■



MARK TURNBULL