

## From the Career Ladder: Meet Graig Zappia

From a very young age, Graig Zappia wanted to be in the courtroom. Early on, though, there were competing interests.

His parents owned a vending and wholesale distributing company in western New York, and Zappia grew up around the business. For a while, he toyed with continuing in their footsteps.

“But every step of the way, the thought of becoming an attorney became more prevalent in my mind,” Zappia said.

Zappia got a taste of the courtroom right out of law school—in a case that’s still one of his most memorable.

A group of about 60 retirees in the Rochester area had filed a lawsuit contending that the benefits they were receiving in retirement were less than what they were entitled to.

“It was amazing—all these 60-and-over people come in, full of fire and brimstone,” said Zappia. He represented the company in the dispute.

The company won the case because it was not contractually obligated to provide the benefits in question, Zappia said.

He said it didn’t take long to open his eyes to the nuances of the business world, and the particular challenges that companies face while doing business. “I never realized until I got into litigating, just how many overtime violations there are. It’s not just small businesses. It’s large companies as well,” he said.

Much of his practice area is focused on business law.

In his free time, and at the urging of his wife, an avid runner, Zappia recently took up running. Last year, he ran his first half-marathon, the Saratoga Palio, a 13-mile race that winds through scenic Saratoga Springs.

“I don’t have to have my game face on all the time,” Zappia said. “You have to have a balance and have fun, or you’ll burn out at an early age.”

Vital s

tats

Name:

Graig Zappia Title:

Partner, Tully Rinckey in Colonie Since:

Aug. 1 Age:

34 Years on the job:

8 Hometown:

Newark, New York (about 30 miles east of Rochester) Resides:

Cohoes Education:

Bachelor's in political science, Siena College , Loudonville (1999); juris doctorate, Albany Law School (2002) How I got here:

Internship through Siena in the workers' compensation bureau of the state Office of the Attorney General; summer intern for Dolin Thomas Solomon in Rochester while attending law school; associate attorney at law firms in Latham, Clifton Park and Rochester; founder, Prosperity Title Agency; founded the former Zappia Law Firm Areas of practice:

Real estate

, civil litigation

, business law

, trusts

and estate planning

Path to partnership:

Based on experience and past performance with the firm. "My case is a little different. I came on as a partner; I'd developed a portfolio of clients who came with me." Hours:

8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; longer hours at the end of each month, when people want to close on their properties. Employment-related cases pick up in summer and winter In my spare time:

Run, golf, root for the Siena Saints Personal:

Married to Dr. Kendra Zappia, owner of Kendra J. Zappia DDS in Albany; English bulldog, Mookie

About the firm

Tully Rinckey PLLC

Headquarters:

Colonie Other offices:

Washington, D.C.; Arlington, Virginia. Attorneys in Colonie/firm-wide:

15/35

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