

M.C. Sungaila for Law360: What I Learned in My First Year: A Judge's Example

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This article is part of a continuing series featuring attorneys' true-life tales from the earliest days of their legal careers.

Here, Mary-Christine "M.C." Sungaila of Haynes Boone reminisces about the lessons she learned just after law school while serving as a clerk for a district court judge, and about how the judge's words — and actions — have continued to resonate over the course of her career.

Law school taught me how to think like a lawyer, but Judge Alicemarie Stotler, the judge for the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California whom I clerked for my first year out of law school, taught me how to be a lawyer. This was the gift she gave to all of her law clerks, in one form or another.

We worked hard alongside her (although never quite as hard as she did), and learned from her example. In honor of Judge Stotler, compiled here are some of the lessons learned from clerking for her that continue to shape my practice. In a “pay it forward” way, my hope is that these will help shape the next generation's practitioners as well. ...

Excerpted from *Law360*. To read the full article, click [here](#). (Subscription required)