

Attorneys Pay Tribute To Scalia, A Beautiful Legal Mind

By Christine Caulfield

Law360, New York (February 16, 2016, 9:38 PM ET) -- Tough on counsel arguing before the court but a "softie" with clerks, a profound legal mind with a generous heart and a quick wit, that is the Justice Antonin Scalia attorneys will remember. Here, former law clerks and appellate lawyers share their recollections with Law360 of the legendary justice who loved a good intellectual jousting, and a better joke.

Jameson R. Jones, partner Bartlit Beck Herman Palenchar & Scott LLP, and former Scalia clerk



"I owe Justice Scalia not only for bringing me to Washington, D.C., for a clerkship, but also for telling me to leave it. After the cases for the October Term of 2008 were decided and in the books, I told the Justice that, although I was leaning toward working at a white-shoe D.C. law firm, I was considering flying to Denver to interview at a small trial firm called Bartlit Beck. The Justice exclaimed — 'By all means, Go! Get out of D.C. and build your own life.' As much as the Justice was viewed by the public as being political and a citizen of the District, he viewed the politics of D.C., and the grind of billing by the hour there, as inimical to building a good family life. The Justice was, above almost all else, a family man."

"Justice Scalia also viewed his clerks as part of his extended, professional family. My favorite interaction with the Justice happened when my trial practice at Bartlit Beck improbably landed me back in D.C., arguing before the Supreme Court. The Justice spent much of the argument leaned back in his chair, watching with a smile. But there came a time when he believed I was handling questions too easily. The Justice then leaned forward in his chair, furrowed his brow into a serious expression, and proceeded to lob questions my way. After one or two minutes of legal banter, the Justice leaned back into his chair, again with a large grin. There is nothing quite like experiencing the pride of a parent after a job well done. I felt a little bit of that at the One First Street podium that day. I will forever be grateful to the Justice for the many lessons he taught me (legal and otherwise) and for including me in the Scalia clerk family. Rest in Peace, Justice."

--Editing by Emily Kokoll.