In Memoriam: Richard S. “Chip” Morse, Jr.

September 15, 1941 – December 14, 2014

December 18, 2014

When it came to his work, Chip was a man of vision and adventure, words not commonly associated with the practice of law. Yet in 1993, as the doors opened to what became Morse, Barnes-Brown & Pendleton, PC, there was already a trend-setting commitment to a unique business model, one which entailed no secretaries but a reliance on technology to propel attorney work product and to streamline work processes; a radical idea which has become today’s standard. He and Peter Barnes-Brown deliberated a long time before concluding that establishing their new firm in Waltham along Route 128 made the most sense, allowing them to concentrate their client demographic on the early stage tech and life sciences companies to be found along the “technology corridor.” With that foundation, and with over 21 years of natural and strategic growth, the firm that bears his name has evolved into a noted corporate and IP boutique, testimony to Chip’s foresight and dedication.

Chip was an expert in his field of corporate and securities law, and, among other honors, he was nominated by his peers and named by Thomson Reuters as a “Super Lawyer” in both 2004 and 2006. He also was the acknowledged leader of the firm, a tireless rainmaker and unsurpassed marketer.

> His partner Lea Pendleton said it best, “Aside from being the principal rainmaker during his years of active practice, he was responsible for attracting many lawyers, paralegals and staff members to the firm.... I think the reason so many people took a chance and joined our firm when it was getting off the ground was the fact that, in what was becoming a dog-eat-dog legal world, those people he attracted had faith in Chip’s decency and fairness.... Chip practiced with the highest level of integrity, honesty and ethics, and he expected all his colleagues in the firm to do the same.”

Chip was never too busy to take time for a cup of coffee and some sage counseling with someone who was down on his luck, and preached the value of so doing. You never know where that person will end up, he’d say, and no one ever forgets a kindness. Chip set the example for experienced partners mentoring young associates in the ways of the legal world, taking them on marketing pitches, leading by example, insisting that they learn the ropes. Chip was the go-to guy for unemployed C–level executives, recommending them to clients and referrers and friends, helping them land their next position. Chip also relished giving advice to young people who needed wisdom and tough love from a non-parental source.

In addition to being a real “old school” attorney, Chip was an “old school” citizen as well, giving of his time, his keen intelligence, and his notably unflagging energy to myriad charitable and environmental causes. In other words, Chip was that rare combination of sophisticated lawyer, canny businessman, and innate gentleman, and these qualities made him a well-loved, well–respected colleague, mentor and friend.

We are proud to have been associated with Chip, and we shall miss him dearly.

Contact

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Richard S. Morse, Jr. Obituary.