

CONGRATULATIONS TO JAMES ABRENIO ON MAKING PARTNER AT BENGGLASSLAW

For nearly a decade, James has been making a massive impact on the community by helping people through their car accident cases, defending those accused of crimes, and working *pro bono* on cases that make a difference.

If you've ever interacted with James, you know that he puts a lot of passion and care into every case and every client he takes on. This month, we're proud to announce that James has been made a full partner at BenGlassLaw, which is a massive achievement in any attorney's career.

"Ben has always treated me with respect. I feel like I've been a partner from day one!" says James. "I'm doing trial work, I'm involved in the business side and the process side of the firm... I always wanted to be a trial attorney, and Ben brought me in to do high-level work immediately. The heart of it for me is seeing someone come to a resolution, not just for their case, but for their life. Going to trial is fun for me, but seeing a client get the result they need is so rewarding."

James grew up in southern Virginia and was always "a talker, an arguer, looking to fight for the little guy." He became infatuated with

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Virginia Attorney
Ben Glass



A Monthly Publication of BENGGLASSLAW

This newsletter is for informational purposes only and no legal advice is intended.

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Joe “The Married Bachelor” WITH SOME MICROWAVE PRO TIPS



Some say that being a bachelor is more art than science. I disagree. When it comes to microwaving processed, American food, there is absolutely a science to it. I’ve been married for three years now, but old habits die hard, and the time has come to share my bachelor food knowledge with the microwaving public.



Pro Tip #1: Jimmy Dean’s Breakfast Line is the Brother You Never Had

Point of fact, I do have a brother named Charley. I’m simply acknowledging that Jimmy Dean’s convenient microwave breakfast line is superior to him in every way imaginable. From the breakfast bowls to the croissant sandwiches to the English muffin sandwiches, you’re guaranteed a product that’s solid as a rock and mostly made of cardboard, but there’s no better way to start your morning.

The key to any good microwave meal is getting to know your microwave inside and out (and maybe even cleaning it once a year). Every microwave has different wattage and different personality

quirks. For me, the perfect Jimmy Dean croissant sandwich cooks for 2:08, and I know that because of the deep emotional connection I’ve built with my microwave.

Pro Tip #2: Hot Pocket Etiquette

Hot Pockets get a bad rap in today’s society, but let me assure you from the bottom of my heart that significant advances have been made in Hot Pocket architecture. The master chefs at their culinary institute in Tuscany have been really hard at work because both the flavor and the “crisping sleeve” have made leaps and bounds technologically.

The old adage is that Hot Pockets are always frozen in the center and boiling hot on the outer rims. I

submit to you that these users are incorrectly using the crisping sleeve and overcrowding their plates with multiple Hot Pockets. Rookie mistake. If you follow the directions and have the sleeve turned up in the proper direction, you’re left with an exquisite, delicious piece of “food.”

Pro Tip #3: Love and Care

You’ve heard that “a watched pot doesn’t boil,” but I tell you that “a watched bowl of SpaghettiOs tastes better.” Canned goods have feelings, and they sense whether you scraped them out of a can with love or with disdain. Our love waves interact with microwaves in ways that scientists are just now beginning to understand. Stay on the cutting edge of science by gently caressing your Lean Cuisine before hitting Express Cook. Trust me. ■

When not at work, Joe “The Married Bachelor” spends his time failing to water plants, leaving beard hair in the sink, and eating all of the good Girl Scout Cookies. Stay tuned for future columns from Iron Chef Joe.



Local Graduate Spotlight: Da’Quan Greene

We want to take this opportunity to give a HUGE congratulations to local high school graduate Da’Quan Greene who overcame obstacle after obstacle to get where he is today. Diagnosed with ADHD, Da’Quan and his family searched for a local high school that could cater to his needs and administer his IEP (Individualized Education Program) properly.

Coming into his junior year, Da’Quan had nine credits and was on pace to fall short of graduation. The administration at Osbourn Park High School went above and beyond the call of duty to help Da’Quan finish his work and give himself a fighting chance at his high school diploma. The family would like to thank Miss Nancy Tebell and Mrs. Cheryl Clarke in particular for their outstanding work with Da’Quan.

Da’Quan is interested in automotives, and is looking at local colleges to further his education. His brother and two sisters couldn’t be more proud of what he has accomplished. He finished his senior year with As and Bs, which is a testament to the hard work and support of everyone around him, as well as a testament to his own grit, courage, and work ethic.

From the entire team at BenGlassLaw, congratulations, Da’Quan Greene! ■

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Congratulations to James Abrenio on Making Partner at BenGlassLaw

the civil rights movement and saw the real impact that attorneys can have on minority communities like his own. “Our current news environment shows how important this is,” says James. “Without lawyers to bring the right cases up, it’s a lot of talk without much action or change. Attorneys can be a big force for good in that way.”

James went to UVA undergrad, then Syracuse for law school. A friend of a friend recommended working with Ben after seeing him speak at a conference. James reached out and Ben happened to be hiring. The rest is history.

James’s list of accolades and membership organizations is an eyebrow raiser. We’re strong believers that these awards are not as important to our clients as our core values and our behavior are, but making partner is as good a time as any to reflect on how far James has come. James is a member of the Fairfax Bar, Fairfax Young Lawyers Association, Virginia Trial Lawyers Association, American Association of Justice, Justice for Virginia, National Alliance of Mental Illness for Virginia, and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, just to name a few.

On top of it all, James has a perfect track record (knock on wood!) on the lawyer rating site Avvo. Of the 70 reviews James has accrued, every single one is a 5-star rating. At this point, we’re hoping he gets a 4.5 star review so that people know the rest are real! James was also named in the

National Trial Lawyers’ Top 40 under 40 in 2013 and 2014, and named a Virginia Super Lawyers Rising Star in 2016.

“At this point in my career, I think a lot about justice itself,” says James. “Questions like, what is a fair trial? If the outcome is fair but the process isn’t, was it really a fair result? There are a lot of important issues surrounding Criminal Justice Reform, which is why I’m heavily involved in a PAC called Justice for Virginia. At

the state level, I’d like to see more simple discovery in criminal cases so people charged with crimes know exactly what they’re being charged with. I’m a big fan of changes to expungement laws, so that people who have paid their debt can get their records clean. Mental health is also a big issue. The criminal justice system should not be used for mental health treatment.”

In his spare time, James enjoys comedy. He even pushed himself to take part in an improv comedy group last summer. “I’m not good at it, but I’m obsessed with it... When I was younger, getting up and speaking in front of people

was my greatest fear. Conquering that has been a huge step forward for me.”

From the entire team at BenGlassLaw, we offer a huge congratulations to James Stanton Abrenio for being formally named a partner at our firm. As strong as James is as an attorney, he’s even stronger as a person, and we are honored to work with him. ■

“AT THIS POINT IN MY CAREER, I THINK A LOT ABOUT JUSTICE ITSELF”



Reminder About Our Firm’s Communication Policy

Our promise to you is that while we are working on your case, we don’t take inbound phone calls, faxes or emails. Ben Glass takes no inbound unscheduled phone calls whatsoever. It makes him much more productive and helps get your case resolved faster. You can always call the office at 703-544-7876, and schedule an in-person or phone appointment, usually within 24-48 hours. This is a lot better than the endless game of “phone tag” played by most businesses today. Remember, too, that email is “quick,” but is checked no more than twice a day. Replies are then scheduled into the calendar. So if it’s really important, don’t email—call the office instead.

This publication is intended to educate the general public about personal injury, medical malpractice, and small business issues. It is not intended to be legal advice. Every case is different. The information in this newsletter may be freely copied and distributed as long as the newsletter is copied in its entirety.

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Sportsmanship Challenge Update Ben Presents Checks to Winning Teams

This spring, in an effort to combat referee abuse in our local community, Ben launched the BenGlassLaw Varsity Soccer Sportsmanship Challenge. Teams had a chance to win \$500 each for their girls' and boys' teams (\$1,000 per school) if they could make it through the whole season without yellow cards or red cards for unsportsmanlike conduct (dissent against the referee, profanity, fighting, etc.).



Ben Glass speaks to the West Springfield Varsity Girls' team players, coaches, friends, and families about creating a culture of good sportsmanship.

At the end of the season, we are proudly awarding checks all over northern Virginia to schools who succeeded. What may surprise you is the number of schools that did not make it! To see a full list of winners and losers and to nominate your school for next year's challenge, just visit www.SportsmanshipChallenge.com.

Our hope is that, over time, the Sportsmanship Challenge will make a measurable difference in how referees are treated in youth sports and help combat the referee shortage that has resulted from the problem. As a referee for 25+ years, Ben knows that often it's the parents and the coaches who are setting the worst examples. The next time you interact with a youth referee, thank them for their time and give them some encouragement. It can make a world of difference. ■



Sarah Smith (left), head coach of the West Springfield Varsity Girls' Soccer Team, accepts the team's \$500 reward from referee Ben Glass.



WHAT SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DO

IT IS NOT AN EMPLOYER'S JOB TO "GIVE" YOU A JOB AT ANY PARTICULAR WAGE

Here we go again. I'm sure you heard the story of lawsuits being filed by NFL cheerleaders who claim they were underpaid for the hours they put into the job. In a case filed against the Houston Texans and the NFL, former cheerleaders claim the team allegedly failed to pay the cheerleaders for "off-the-clock" and overtime work, and paid them less than the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour.

Minor league baseball players have filed similar lawsuits alleging that when you add up all the hours that they "work," they, too, are underpaid.

What a bunch of nonsense that sends a very bad message to young people. The cheerleaders and the baseball players VOLUNTARILY signed up for these "jobs." No one forced them to make these career choices.

Here's the deal: Employers don't create businesses in order to give you a job. No one owes you anything. If an employer is able to "underpay" you, it means there is a long line of people who are ready, willing and able to take your place and those people who are ready to replace you think the wage is fair. It also means your skill set is nothing special.

In my view, the government should have ZERO role in setting wages in this country. It is YOUR job to make yourself valuable to the world.

The good news in America is that the economy is doing very well and unemployment is at record lows.

This makes YOUR job tougher.

Here are some "Message from Ben" tips for making sure you aren't scrambling all your life at the low end of the pay scale:

1. **Be curious.** Never be satisfied with what you already know. If there is someone in your profession or field of work who is making more money than you are, find out what they did to make themselves valuable.

2. **Make new friends.** You want to hang out with people who are doing things bigger, better and faster than you are..
3. **Have a growth mindset.** This doesn't mean that you can make life cheery all the time simply by thinking good thoughts. This DOES mean that your past does NOT define your future.
4. **Get off your device.** It is re-wiring your brain and not in a good way. We recently had custom blinds installed in our house. There was the installer (who I bet is making pretty good money) and his "helper," a young guy. I watched the young guy a bit. Every minute that he wasn't actively holding a tool, he was on his cellphone, checking out his Facebook page. My prediction: that dude is going nowhere. ■



Big Move Coming Up

Later this summer, BenGlassLaw is moving to a much larger and nicer space! Our business is booming (thanks to your referrals and the many, many positive Internet reviews that we have) and we needed more space. By September, we will be in new space about five miles from our current office location. The space will include an 1,110 square foot “training center” that, in addition to being used to train young lawyers, will also be available as a “community space” for organizations wanting to hold their own events (think Scouts, referee meetings, small group seminars). Much more on that later.

Our move also means that we are hiring. You can check out those details at WorkForBenGlassLaw.com. ■



Although it's a bit hard to tell from these photos, our new space will cover almost 8,000 square feet and include 14 offices, a video studio, 2 kitchens and 3 conference rooms! We'll make sure you are invited to our grand opening!



SMALL BUSINESS TIP GETTING OUT OF THE WAY

I consult with and coach a lot of small business owners. I love entrepreneurs. If you are one, I believe that you are epitome of the American Dream and the backbone of our economy.

A lot of small business owners don't really own a business, though. They just have a job (with, maybe, the worst boss in the world!).

What's the difference?

A business will run without your being the “cook in the kitchen.” A business does not consume you. A business will keep running even when you are away.

It took me many years of running BenGlassLaw to actually create something that is more like (hey, it's not perfect!) a business than a job.

Here are some things I've learned along the way:

1. Hire people smarter than yourself. No, you aren't the only one who could ever do whatever it is your do for your business.
2. Figure out what your “value add” to the business really is and then do more of that and get someone else to do everything else in the business.
3. That having been said, never sacrifice your business's core values (YOUR core values, really) when hiring. It does the business no good if you hire someone who is “good” at a particular skill, but who poisons the rest of the team with their attitude.)

4. Utilize people at their fullest and demand their capability. Don't be shy about this. When they grow, your business grows, and everyone benefits.
5. You don't need to know the answers to all the questions. You just need to ask the right questions. Keep asking better questions and let your team and the folks you hang out with (see Successful People article in this insert) help deliver answers. This is why it is so important to be on the lookout for talent all the time. You don't have to hire everyone; it is a huge benefit to have good, smart people in your “ecosystem.”

A Message to Ponder:

“The skillful management of your attention is the *sine qua non* of the good life and the key to improving virtually every aspect of your experience.” (Winifred Gallagher, **Rapt**. 2009, Penguin Books. New York Times Bestseller.) ■

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