

Alumni Spotlight: The Patrick Salvis, '78, '07

All in the Family

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“What do I want to be when I grow up?” is a question many people ponder from an early age. Children—even college students—often declare their commitment to a number of careers before deciding upon one. Not so with Patrick Salvi, II, a 2007 Notre Dame Law School alum. “Patrick has been interested in what I do long before going to law school,” says dad Patrick Salvi, who graduated from NDLS in 1978. “I think he learned a lot about the personal injury practice through osmosis.”

Whatever the method, he learned well. The father-son duo recently won a \$33.2 million jury verdict in a personal injury case in Waukegan, Illinois where they practice law together in the firm founded by the elder Salvi. It was their first jury trial together, and netted the largest verdict in the history of Lake County. “When you’re preparing for a big case, you must be almost 100 percent consumed by it—you have to think about it 24-7,” says Salvi, Sr. “There’s no doubt trials are a lot of work, but they are more fun when you are working with your son.”



The recent legal victory is yet another thread among the ties that bind the two men. “It is a great joy to be able to go to work with him,” says Salvi, Sr. of his son. “It’s nice to have a colleague you have total trust in, and with whom you can be completely candid.” He acknowledges that this business relationship is still a bit surreal, and says it sometimes feels strange to call his first-born child a “colleague.”

Salvi II agrees with his father’s sentiments, and adds that along with the opportunity presented through their working relationship comes the challenge to create his own identity. “People at the outset may have a preconceived idea about why I’m here. I need to turn that notion on its head. It’s a challenge that makes me work harder,” says Salvi, who received the award from the International Academy of Trial Lawyers for excellence in trial advocacy while at Notre Dame Law School.

The senior Salvi maintains his close connection with NDLS as a member of the Law School Advisory Council and as an adjunct law professor at Notre Dame. “That we’re both alums of the school is another one of those ties between us,” he says. “Notre Dame has played, and continues to play, an important part in our lives.”