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Seven years after father's death, son joins dad's namesake firm

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After being sworn into the Illinois bar today, Michael J. Schostok will be the newest addition to a firm that bears his last name.

He is the son of former Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard P.C. partner Michael P. Schostok, who died in July 2012 at age 51 from an aggressive form of brain cancer.

The younger Schostok, 26, said his childhood memories are steeped in his father's personal-injury work.

"I think that having seen my dad practice growing up, I kind of have this advantage of seeing

personal-injury law in a way that a lot of other people can't say that they can see," he said.

Years before he had entered law school, family life often centered around law.

"Every single day I would wait for my dad to come home — oftentimes he'd be flying into the driveway — I'd throw my hockey stuff into his car only to learn that he was running a tad late because he was coming from a deposition or a client meeting or a strategy meeting," Schostok said.

He recalls his dad's phone calls with his firm's co-founder, Patrick A. Salvi, who remains the firm's managing equity partner and chairman.

"As I'm sitting there, I'm

hearing all these things about motions and depositions," he said.

Schostok's mother is 2nd District Appellate Justice Mary Seminara Schostok. His sister, Marisa Schostok, is an associate at Dudley & Lake LLC in Libertyville.

Despite being raised in such a legally focused home, Schostok said it never felt like a foregone conclusion that he would pursue his own legal career. He attributes that feeling of freedom to his parents' unwavering support.

"It was definitely the first of many paths," he said. "I think I first really wanted to go to law school sometime in late high school ... that's when I started getting really into politics," he said.

Schostok studied political science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and graduated in 2016, then enrolled at IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law.

"I could maybe see myself maybe running for office someday, or maybe being an adviser or a staff member — I'm not ruling it out — but it just felt more right being an attorney," he said.

Schostok serves as a board member for the Michael Matters Foundation, a nonprofit his family started to offer financial assistance to brain cancer patients and their families.

He was drawn to practice personal injury law because



Former Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard partner Michael P. Schostok fishes with his son, Mike, in this family photo. The elder Schostok died in 2012 after a battle with brain cancer. On Thursday, the son was admitted as an Illinois attorney and joined Salvi Law as its newest associate. Photo provided by Mike Schostok

he saw it as a way to "help people that truly need your help," he said during an interview.

"When someone gets in a car accident or goes to the doctor's office, and it doesn't go as planned ... that is the most important thing that is going on in their life both personally and financially," he said.

During his last semester of law school earlier this year, Schostok began working as a law clerk at the Salvi firm.

"Graduating law school, I was a little unsure of where I wanted to end up, but I knew at the end of the day that this would have been the right place for me to learn from Pat Salvi Sr. who I grew up

watching work with my dad," he said.

"Learning and working with everyone in this office who I have all known for a very long time, I felt gave me the biggest advantage and the biggest benefit at becoming the best lawyer that I could be," Schostok said.

Schostok is one more addition to an already multigenerational firm. Patrick Salvi's sons Patrick A. Salvi II and Brian L. Salvi and daughter-in-law Eirene N. Salvi are all attorneys on staff.

The elder Salvi called Schostok "a chip off the old block."

"He reminds me a lot of his dad," he said. "But he's earned [the job] based on merit."