



Elizabeth Olszewski's Legacy

BY STEPHEN J. RICE

I'd like to offer a short story about Elizabeth Olszewski. I knew Elizabeth primarily from seeing her at LCBA functions. Elizabeth was the kind of person you noticed, not because she was young and pretty, but because she radiated megawatts.

If someone had asked me: "What is Elizabeth like?" I think a good simple answer would've been: "She shines."

We all know such people, but they are uncommon, in a special way. My mother was one too, so I feel like I know one when I see one.

By avocation, lawyers take on many roles. So was Elizabeth's "shine" just one of these roles—was it merely a superficial projection? It was not, and here is how I know that.

Over the past two years, the Lake County Bar Foundation has worked to support a local organization called Waukegan to College (W2C). W2C supports Waukegan students in grades five through college graduation. The purpose of the organization is to take kids whose families do not have a history of being college educated, mentor those kids through their secondary school years, and assist them into going to college.

Periodically, W2C's staff will call me to ask if I can solicit some vol-

unteers for special training exercises that they program for their students. Sometimes the exercise is helping interview the students so that they are prepared for their college interviews. Other times we have worked with students one-on-one to revise college essays.

About six months ago, I organized a small group to go to W2C's office (a church on Grand Avenue) to confer with students on their essays. Among others, Deb Goldberg and Judge Rochford are people I can always count on. I went into the church's big basement and was milling around waiting to get started when all of a sudden Elizabeth came up to me: "Hi!"

"Hi back," I said, and "what are you doing here?" (she hadn't been someone from whom I'd solicited help). "I've been mentoring a student," she told me. "How did you get involved with that?" I asked. "Tara Devine told me that the Bar Foundation was supporting Waukegan to College, so I got involved."

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Mentors like Elizabeth work with students, meeting with them at least monthly. They help the students set goals, track their academic progress, and assist them in preparing for the rather byzantine college application process. Elizabeth brought her energy—her shine—to a student through this program, mentoring her, and even visiting colleges with her. Perhaps as importantly, Elizabeth set a wonderful example for this student, showing her what an education can produce: you could wind up working at one of Illinois' most successful law firms! Elizabeth set this example for other W2C students, too.

Just a few months ago, a group of W2C students spent a day in Chicago at Salvi, Schostok & Pritchard, where Elizabeth worked.

That is how I learned that Elizabeth's "shine" was

anything but a superficial projection—it was, rather, a reflection of her deeper character. I mentioned above that my mother was also a person with such a shine. Like Elizabeth's, my mother's life was also cut far too short.

That experience has taught me something about people like Elizabeth, and if I could speak to her family, I would tell them this:

Not a year goes by—since my mom's death, 26 years have—where a person does not reach out and express a fond remembrance of my mother, who was a beloved teacher. The same will be true of Elizabeth, whose life shined on so

many family members, friends, associates, and the clients she served. I have no doubt of this, because when people shine like Elizabeth did, their light does not abate when their time on earth ends.

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Lake County Bar Association and Medical Society's Annual Doctor-Lawyer Dinner

Medical cannabis updates: The 5-year journey since medical cannabis legalization in Illinois: A physician's perspective.

The Illinois' Compassionate Care Act for Medical Cannabis Patient Program started in 2014, with the first dispensary opening for business in November 2015. Dr. Leslie Mendoza Temple, Family and Integrative Medicine physician in Glenview, and former chair of the Medical Cannabis Advisory Board for the Illinois Department of Public Health will share her perspectives on how cannabis has impacted her medical practice. She has certified over 430 patients since the program started. She will discuss the ongoing challenges and opportunities that face patients and the medical community with respect to clinical benefits and side effects, public health risks, and education.

March 11, 2020

Primo's Restaurant

720 N. Milwaukee Ave., Gurnee

5:30 pm Reception

6:30 pm Dinner

7:30 pm Program

\$55 per person

Spouses and Guests welcome

Presented by

Dr. Leslie Mendoza Temple

Medical Director of the Integrative Medicine Program at NorthShore University HealthSystem and Clinical Associate Professor in Family Medicine at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine.



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