



With

... Joshua Rubenstein Katten Muchin Rosenman, New York

Tell us about your background. When did you join Katten?

I am the fourth generation trusts and estates lawyer in my family. My father joined his father's law firm, as his father joined his father's father's law firm. I committed the ultimate act of rebellion by becoming a trusts and estates lawyer but joining forces with a large, full service Manhattan law firm. I did that because of my early belief that the private client practice was growing to be interdisciplinary.

As the creator of Legal Week's Private Client Forum Americas, why are the Americas so important for the private client industry?

There is no global ultra-high net worth family that does not have a connection to the Americas, whether it is an investment in the Americas or a family member connected to the Americas. Until recently, acknowledgment of this connection has been overlooked or willfully ignored. There is now a recognition that the connection represents opportunities to be embraced.

What distinguishes you from your peers?

One cannot be the best at everything, and I do not pretend to be. There is always someone better than you at something. I liken myself to a decathlete. It takes many skills to be a good private client lawyer, and I am fortunate to be very good at all of them, if not the very best at any one of them.

What kind of matters do you enjoy the most?

I enjoy seemingly insoluble, multidimensional problems. Every problem has one or more solutions, whether or not the solutions are perfect. I enjoy using my experience to pull rabbits out of hats.

Where do you see your practice heading?

The world becomes smaller by the minute. Private client practice is increasingly becoming cross border and increasingly demanding real time solutions.

You head up Katten's private client business development efforts globally. What are the top goals that Katten are looking to achieve over the next 3 years?

Our top goals are to react to changes as they occur and constantly stay ahead of them, so that we can navigate clients in a world that has increasingly lost its goal posts.

What has been your favourite case to be involved in and why?

Most private clients don't like you to talk about them, lest they not remain private. But in terms of what is in the public domain, I have been privileged to represent the iconic Broadway composer Richard Rodgers and his family for many generations. We have done cutting edge planning, sophisticated administration of multi-generational structures and critical dispute resolutions to keep the family and its wealth intact and thriving.

What is the biggest challenge in the private client sphere in 2019? What does the future look like?

Many things taken as givens have changed in a short timeframe. Things formerly regarded as constants are no longer constant. The new constants are change and controversy. Keeping up with change and controversy is the future.

Where's the best place to eat in New York and what's the best thing to do?

So many amazing places to eat, but my vote is Del Posto. Best thing to do? Professional hazard: Broadway!

How do you keep up to date with the mounting regulatory developments and concerted enforcement efforts among countries globally?

I used to be vain enough to think I could keep up to date with everything. It takes a village. I am blessed to have an amazing team.

Looking back at your career, what is the best lesson you've learnt?

In law school we are taught to speak, but in the real world, no one takes your advice unless you have listened before you speak. Listening is the best lesson that I have learned.

What practical strategies do you put in place to manage the different stakeholders in a cross border case?

The key to cross border cases is finding common denominators. I try very hard to identify anything and everything that the stakeholders have in common in order to try to bridge their differences.

Finally, if you were alone on a desert island what one item could you not live without and why?

I am assuming no internet, no wi-fi, no electricity and no batteries. My item would be my guitar, so that I can be my own desert island playlist. Of course the music will grow older the longer I am marooned. But so will I.