

## **Thank you, Bob**

JON TYACK\*

I was recently approached by representatives of The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and asked to put in writing my thoughts and feelings about Professor Robert Krivoshey. But even saying the name “Professor Robert Krivoshey” feels unnatural to me. To me, and all of us “Krivoshey Alumni,” he was simply “Bob.”

Bob’s academic credentials are unmatched; however, he was never an academic in my eyes. Instead, Bob bridged the gap between law and society through his teachings and application of law to real-world scenarios that many people face. Bob understood that the foundation of our entire legal system relied upon the ability of lawyers to enter a courtroom and advocate on behalf of their clients in front of a judge or a jury. He was passionate about arming young lawyers with the tools they would need to provide such client advocacy, and he was relentless in his approach as he molded, forged, and sharpened young law students into highly capable trial attorneys.

In my third year of law school, I first crossed paths with Bob as a student in the Prosecution Practicum. I will never forget the first day of class when he handed me a piece of paper and simply said, “Tyack, go ahead and get that into evidence.” After sputtering a little bit and waving the paper around, spewing forth some gibberish that I am sure made no sense, Bob relieved the tension with his famous cackle. He howled, “It’s not as easy as you thought is it Tyack?” (It is worth mentioning here that he often referred to students by their last name only.) Having relieved the tension in the room at my expense, he took the paper from my hand, and promptly taught me how to lay a foundation for admitting a document into evidence appropriately. No learned treatises were consulted. No online research was performed. Instead, one craftsman, a master in the art of trial advocacy, passed along his personal knowledge to a room full of apprentices, and we eagerly absorbed the lesson. This was how Bob operated. He taught by example. He instructed by war story. He educated by anecdote.

A few months later, I was fortunate enough to become a member of Bob’s famous trial team, which had a stellar reputation after the successes in prior years. It was an honor to be on his team, and I was tremendously confident and determined. All of my teammates had the same confidence in their abilities, as such confidence was a prerequisite for making the team in the first place.

Prior to our first practice, we were provided the mock trial problem. We arrived for our first practice ready to impress our new coach. At the beginning of practice, Bob barked out, “Tyack, give your closing argument for the Plaintiff’s side.” I stepped up to the podium and gave what I was sure had to be

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the most brilliant closing argument Bob had ever heard. After I concluded my remarks, I sat down at counsel table ready to reap the reward that would surely come; a gush of compliments and flattery from one of the most esteemed teachers of the trial bar.

After a long pause, Bob bellowed, “Tyack! That sucked! You sounded like Captain Kirk on the bridge of the Starship Enterprise. For crying out loud, would you please just simply talk to the jury.”

After another long pause in the room, Bob asked, “Okay, who wants to go next?” And so began my four-month journey with Bob as a member of the Mock Trial Team. It was one of the most valuable journeys that I have ever taken.

Bob didn’t talk to us like other professors did; he talked to us as if we were colleagues. And Bob didn’t treat us like students; he treated us like fellow trial attorneys. His expectations were high, and his criticism could often be harsh. However, his passion for the art of trial advocacy, and his love of his students was apparent to everyone, especially us.

Bob was a teacher, coach, counselor, and most of all, a friend. That is how I know him. That is why I always take pause whenever I hear somebody refer to him as “Professor Robert Krivoshey.” Sure, he was a professor at a very prestigious law school. But at the end of the day, Bob was a mentor to hundreds of young law students who aspired to enter courtrooms to advocate for clients in both the criminal and civil justice systems.

After I graduated from law school, my relationship with Bob continued. He would often invite me back to the law school to help with a trial team practice or to speak to one of his classes. I looked forward to those invitations every year. I looked forward to the opportunity to meet with Bob, catch up on our lives, share a meal, have a drink, or just sit in his office and talk for an hour before or after whatever school-sponsored activity he had asked me to attend. During our time together, the conversation would often turn away from the law school, and away from the practice of law altogether. Over the years, Bob became a mentor to me, not only as a trial lawyer, but also as a husband and a father. His stories about his own family, whether it be about trips to Chicago, a Bexley High School soccer game, or any other family event, held lessons for me that were in many ways more important than the lessons taken from his courtroom war stories. While the lessons I learned from Bob in law school are invaluable, it is the example that Bob set for me as a husband, father, and a friend, that I most cherish.

I am also proud to say that I had the pleasure of teaching a class with Bob. In the spring of 2015, I served as an adjunct professor for the Criminal Defense Practicum. The opportunity to sit in class with my mentor, work with him, and assist young law students to learn some of the same lessons that I had learned almost twenty years earlier, was a tremendous honor. However, to be honest, I don’t remember ever cracking a book either in class or out of class to assist Bob. In fact, I don’t remember him cracking a book at any point either. What I remember is a lot of hard work, and deep thought as we assisted the students in representing criminal defendants in the Franklin County Municipal Court. I

remember laughing a lot, and relishing in the opportunity to hear once again the many war stories that I had heard as a student myself. We worked together to help the students formulate defense strategies. We worked together to help the students address potential ethical issues that arose. We worked together to help the students understand not only what they could do for the clients according to the law, but what they should do for the clients in pursuit of the clients' best interests. I loved every minute of it.

Even after all this time, I miss my friend. I miss my mentor. I miss Bob. As I am writing this, I can hear his voice, "Tyack! Quit blubbering and get back to work." And so, it is time for me to conclude my remarks, pack up my briefcase, and head up to court; exactly like I was taught.

Thank you, Bob.

