

Katherine Hedges: Leading with Care and Confidence

By Megan Koerber

Katherine Hedges did not grow up dreaming of being an attorney. It was only after college – while navigating legal paperwork to support her hometown’s volunteer fire department – that she began to see law as a way to make a meaningful impact.

After graduating from Boston University with a double major in environmental analysis and policy and international relations, Hedges entered the workforce and spent about five years in business-to-business sales. During that time, she helped form a nonprofit to support her hometown’s volunteer fire department.

“A local attorney gave me some advice along the way, which is what first got me interested in law school,” she recalls. “I liked the challenge of completing the approval paperwork, and it was rewarding to be able to give back to my community in this way.”

Hedges earned her JD from the University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law in 2014 and began her legal career in corporate law and civil litigation at Hage Hodes, PA.

“I was lucky enough to work on some challenging civil litigation matters alongside excellent attorneys while there,” she says. “Getting to know the client’s life, expertise, and the impact that the lawsuit had on them could be inspiring but also devastating.”

Some matters even offered the chance to help shape new law – an experience she describes as rewarding.

Laurie Young, who met Hedges in law school, isn’t surprised at the level of care she puts into each case.

“Kat has a quiet, kind confidence she brings to her practice,” Young says. “Clients naturally trust her, and she takes the time to explain every detail and risk in each case. This has fostered her reputation in the Bar as a detail-oriented, collegial attorney. She is also a natural leader.”

When she joined Rath, Young & Pignatelli in 2022, she found a place where her corporate law skills and her passion for energy innovation could intersect.

Today, Hedges is part of a team of attorneys handling project financing for a wide range of energy developments. Her work also spans real estate transactions, business formations, the purchase and sale of companies, and contract negotiations for both energy clients and businesses in other industries. While she once enjoyed the pace of litigation, she appreciates that her current practice allows her to build a deeper, more specialized understanding of the areas of law she works in every day.

“The most interesting part of my job is seeing the real-world impact of the legal work I am doing,” she says. “I have been able to see some of the projects I have



Katherine Hedges (right) and her sister Sarah Hedges exploring Scotland. Courtesy Photo

worked on after they are built. I also have been able to visit clients after they have opened or purchased a business. While I think the specifics of what I am working on do not always resonate with people, energy generation is something that touches everyone’s lives.”

Beyond her practice, Hedges is the current president of the New Hampshire Women’s Bar Association (NHWBA), an organization she has been a part of since law school.

“I believe in the organization’s mission of achieving gender equity in the legal

profession,” she says, noting that even in law school she became aware of “the uneven representation of women in leadership roles.”

She says the NHWBA’s strong network and welcoming culture drew her in, and over time she took on increasing leadership responsibilities.

“I have really enjoyed my time on the board because I get to work alongside and learn from a great group of leaders,” she says. “Although there is work that remains

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Demystifying Perfection: A Wellness Revelation

By Coda Campbell



This article serves as a reminder that self-advocacy is crucial for achieving wellness. Through my nearly three-year journey, I learned the importance of listening to my body and advocating for myself. In sharing my story, I hope to demystify the image of "perfection" and to inspire fellow attorneys to prioritize their health.

It was February 2023. I felt a pain in my chest. When the pain did not resolve on its own, I took myself to the ER. I was diagnosed with high blood pressure that day. High blood pressure is also known as the "silent killer." I was mortified. Strokes, heart attacks, and aneurysms are common in my family. I was 32 years old and in very good shape. This diagnosis was sudden and confounded everyone. After many tests over several months, the doctors had no answers about the cause. They gave me medicine – I began taking it and moved on. I hypothesized it must be due to stress.

My father passed away suddenly in March 2023. Grieving the loss of a parent who abused and traumatized you is complicated; I knew I needed help navigating that process, so I went back to therapy. In May 2023, I opened my solo practice. My



schedule became less predictable, and my stress increased. By the time we were preparing to relocate to Florida, I was quite overwhelmed. My primary care provider prescribed a serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor. I declined this medication and pushed for one last test.

The diagnosis was very clear: I have ADHD-C (Combined Type) at age 34.

I learned that women with ADHD present differently than men. The chaos is internal for us. I also learned there is a strong genetic link, and my family tree is well-decorated with the diagnosis.

I am a perfectionist who is chronically discontented. I am also an empath with high justice sensitivity. On the outside, I am always calm and collected. However, the dry cleaners who wash the sweat out of my suits know better. I always felt like I had to work three times harder than everyone else in school just to grasp the basics. It's like my intelligence is inside a box with a series of locks on it. The signs were there all along – I misinterpreted them because my childhood trauma taught me how to mask. That "special skill" was rapidly catching up to me in my 30s and exacerbating my stress.

I was cautiously optimistic about the diagnosis. All doubt was resolved when the medication kicked in. For the first

time in my life, my brain fell silent. Tears quietly streamed down my face as I realized we had gotten it right. My sleep improved. A week later, I was experiencing low blood pressure. I came off my blood pressure medication and continued monitoring. I no longer have high blood pressure, and my doctors are blown away.

By advocating for my mental health, we found the cause of (and eliminated) my high blood pressure. My story is a cautionary tale about the physical manifestations of stress. Let's not forget that advocating for ourselves is just as important as advocating for our clients. Wellness decisions are not one-size-fits-all; they can take many forms. Whether it's seeking therapy, pursuing a healthier work-life balance, or addressing mental health challenges at any age, every step toward self-care is a step toward empowerment. ♦

Coda Campbell is a solo practitioner at Campbell Law, PLLC. She practices military law and veterans benefits law globally (VA accredited). She also handles criminal defense and administrative law cases in New Hampshire and Florida. She is serving her third term on the NHBA Special Committee on Attorney Wellness. She can be reached at codacampbelllaw.com or (603) 456-9709.

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to be done, I do think the organization has made a positive difference."

Her leadership and mentorship have not gone unnoticed by her peers. Lyndsay Robinson describes Hedges as a powerful force for others in the profession.

"Kat has been a fearless champion for women and young lawyers," she says. "Since I started practicing, I have watched Kat mentor countless women in the Bar. As a young lawyer, I looked up to her and her leadership style. I wanted to be like Kat as a lawyer ... one thing I have to say about Kat is that she is always smiling. Her smile is so genuine, and she always lights up a room!"

Outside the office, Hedges is an avid traveler with a passion for history. Recent trips have taken her to Scotland, Mexico, and cities across the United States. On a recent trip to the Old Courthouse at the Gateway Arch National Park in St. Louis, Hedges visited an exhibit examining the legacy of Dred Scott and the landmark case that bears his name.

Among her many accomplishments, Hedges is most proud of the role she plays as a mentor.

"I have gotten to know and learn from many different members of the New Hampshire Bar, and I am glad that I am getting to do that for others as well," she says.

Her commitment to supporting newer attorneys reflects the same openness that has shaped her own career. If she could offer one piece of advice to young lawyers, it would be to embrace the unexpected.

"I think the most important thing is to be open to trying new things," she says. "I would not have guessed that I would end up in the type of practice that I am doing now when I started law school." ♦



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