

PROFILE

MUSIC CITY PEOPLE

A CONVERSATION WITH | RANDALL KINNARD

Randall Kinnard is a founding partner of Nashville-based Kinnard Clayton & Beveridge, one of the top personal injury and medical negligence law firms in the country. In August, Kinnard, 66, was inducted into the Inner Circle of Advocates, an exclusive, invitation-only group composed of the top 100 trial attorneys in the country. Kinnard is the only representative from Nashville in the group, and one of only two from the state of Tennessee. Among his most notable cases, Kinnard recently won the largest medical malpractice case in Tennessee history, securing a \$22.2 million award on behalf of a client who went into the hospital for a broken leg and came out a paraplegic.

Background

Title: Senior partner
Company: Kinnard Clayton & Beveridge
Address: 127 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville 37205
Web: kinnardclaytonandbeveridge.com
Employees: 14
Most recently read book: "Traitor to His Class," by H.W. Brands
Favorite music artist: Slow Motion Centerfold
Education: U.S. Military Academy; Memphis State University School of Law
Community involvement: Alive Hospice, Friends of Warner Parks, The Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee, NotAlone, Wounded Warriors, Operation Stand Down Nashville, Centerstone.



JAMES YATES | NASHVILLE BUSINESS JOURNAL

WHAT IS THE MOST OUTSIDE-OF-THE-BOX IDEA YOU HAVE EVER HAD IN YOUR PROFESSIONAL CAREER? Moving our office from downtown to the suburbs in 1992. Back then, the general perception was that if you were a courthouse lawyer, your office should be downtown, near the courthouse. I believed the old saying, "Do good work and the world will beat a path to your door."

WHAT WAS THE RESULT? The number of our clients increased. Our clients, many of whom are hurt badly, have difficulty walking or are wheelchair bound, told us they appreciated parking 20 feet from our door. We did not anticipate this benefit when we made the move.

WHAT SINGLE THING MAKES YOUR ORGANIZATION STAND OUT? Our relationships. Just as our move indicates, we make it a priority to make our clients feel comfortable and welcome in our offices, like they're part of our team.

WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION HAVE IN THE WORKS FOR 2010? Increasing emphasis on helping children. We are in the process of founding The Children's Justice Center, a nonprofit organization which will provide free legal help, advice and court representation for abused and neglected children.

HOW DID YOU WIND UP IN YOUR CURRENT POSITION? I started practicing law in Nashville in 1977 and opened my own firm. I had no clients in my solo practice. I took small cases no other lawyers wanted. I had to try most cases because nobody had ever heard of me, and no one wanted to settle with me. I started surprising people, including myself, with some good jury verdicts.

WHAT MAKES AN EFFECTIVE BUSINESS LEADER? The ability to listen and being willing to suffer more than anyone else in the organization.

WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT? Nothing.

WHAT WORD BEST DESCRIBES YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE? Benevolent-discipline. I hyphenated that so it would be one word.

GOAL YET TO BE ACHIEVED? To give a speech I call R-E-S-P-E-C-T to all 50 states' trial lawyers' associations. I have given this speech 10 times so far.

PROFESSIONAL PET PEEVE? Failure by anyone to show respect.

WHAT DO YOU DO TO RELIEVE STRESS? Exercise.

WHAT IS THE SIMPLEST THING YOU NEVER LEARNED TO DO? Tie knots.

FAVORITE HOBBIES? Avid outdoorsman, golf, fishing, hiking and reading American history.

PETS? Three dogs: a Portuguese water dog, a maltipoo (our daughter's dog which apparently has become ours since Jessica lives in New York City now) and a mutt.

WHAT'S THE BEST GIFT YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED? Life.

PERSON OUTSIDE OF YOUR FAMILY YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO SPEND TIME WITH ON AN ISLAND? Abraham Lincoln.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO CROSS OFF YOUR "BUCKET LIST" NEXT? I am currently writing a book, and I would like to have it published. Also, climb Mt. Kilimanjaro.

YOU'VE JUST BEEN GIVEN \$100,000 TO DONATE TO CHARITY. WHERE WOULD YOU GIVE IT, AND WHY? I would split it equally between charities that support soldiers and help their families adapt after returning home from war. Non-profits like Centerstone, NotAlone, Wounded Warriors, Operation Stand Down Nashville, etc., help these families. Having served in Vietnam, I have

experienced the void upon returning home that a soldier can feel. The feeling of what to do now for not only yourself, but for your family.

WHEN FACED WITH TWO EQUALLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATES, HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHOM TO HIRE? The one who exudes optimism. Optimism will overcome many hurdles.

WHAT LINE OF WORK WOULD YOU PURSUE IF YOU COULDN'T WORK IN YOUR PRESENT ONE? Ministry.

ORGANIZATION OR COMPANY OTHER THAN YOUR OWN THAT YOU MOST ADMIRE? 101st Airborne Division.

CAN YOU NAME A PERSON WHO HAS HAD A TREMENDOUS IMPACT ON YOU AS A LEADER? Jesus. He set the bar on conduct. If I am wondering what I should do in

a hard-situation, I often ask myself, "What would Jesus do?" and the answer comes quickly. The hard part is the carrying out of that answer.

WHAT IS THERE ABOUT YOU THAT PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO LEARN? I cry easily.

WHAT IS THE ONE BEHAVIOR OR TRAIT THAT MOST OFTEN DERAILS LEADERS' CAREERS? Dishonesty.

THEY'RE MAKING A MOVIE OF YOUR LIFE. IS IT A DRAMA OR COMEDY AND WHO PLAYS YOU? Drama. Burt Lancaster. But since he's dead, they won't be making the movie.

WHAT SKILL WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO IMPROVE? My writing skills.

IF YOU COULD LIVE A DOUBLE LIFE, THE OTHER WOULD BE: I would like to be Todd Jones, minister of my church.