

CLOSING STATEMENT

INSTANT IMPACT

After son's diagnosis, Kirkland and Ellis's Wolfe started raising money for type 1 diabetes research



Tracking billable hours and measuring completed transactions are common metrics within the legal industry.

But what about the transactions that can't be measured as easily? For Kirkland & Ellis partner Brian Wolfe, those unmeasured moments are adding up. While he can't measure their total impact, he's trying his best to help the world where he can.

At work, Wolfe found himself tackling pro bono projects. He started on them immediately after joining Kirkland and even before he passed the bar. Wolfe said the firm encouraged him to accept pro bono work and that set the tone for him to give back to the community.

"Kirkland has led the way in the legal community by encouraging its team to go out and do big things that are important for the community," Wolfe said. "I've been fortunate to have that support."

Throughout his 15-year career, Wolfe has evolved in his professional roles as well as in opportunities through pro bono assignments. He drafted legislation and government documents for the International Olympic Committee's visit to Chicago in 2016 for the city's Olympic bid. He's also argued in front of the 7th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals on a pro bono case.

Five years ago, Wolfe's generosity was reciprocated after his son Sam was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes. Since Sam's diagnosis, the Wolfe family has accepted a greater leadership role in fundraising for type 1 diabetes research. Earlier this year, they were named a "Fund a Cure" family for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's annual gala in December. As a Fund a Cure Family, the Wolfes chose to step into the spotlight and share their personal journey with type 1 diabetes and commit to fundraising in advance of the gala.

"We feel so blessed to be the 'Fund a Cure' family and do whatever we can to raise money and awareness for this important cause," Wolfe said. "When the announcement [about our role] was made, we experienced an outpouring of support from family, friends and the legal and local business community. Everyone stepped up big time and in just a few short weeks, we hit our personal \$150,000 fundraising goal and have since raised that goal."

It's been five years since Sam's diagnosis, but the memories of the early warning signs remain vivid. Their son, who loves sports, suddenly displayed less energy and began drinking large amounts of water. It raised concerns.

"Sam wasn't feeling his best and had lost weight in a short-time and while he was playing in a hockey game, he was drinking a tremendous amount of water. That was a real tell-tale sign," Wolfe said.

With no prior family history with diabetes, the diagnosis was a surprise. It immediately transformed the family's lifestyle as monitoring Sam's blood sugar levels became a round-the-clock matter. They also had to help Sam maintain his active lifestyle, especially his love for hockey and baseball.

Not long after the diagnosis, the family became aware of the JDRF and its fundraising programs in Chicago.

"If there's a silver lining, it's that we learned we're not alone," Wolfe said.

When the family announced its fundraising goal, it was stunned by the outpouring of support.

"It's really amazing," Wolfe said. "Our personal goal, we started at \$150,000 and hoped our family, friends and community would invest. Everyone stepped up in a huge way and we are so appreciative."

Wolfe said he was humbled by the support from his colleagues at Kirkland & Ellis and the greater legal community. Beyond the financial contributions, he heard from several close connections who have been personally impacted by type 1 diabetes.

"We've been so blessed. Everyone is heeding the call and leaning in to support our family and this

community we feel really passionate about," Wolfe said. "People at Kirkland, clients, people in the legal community, everyone has really stepped up to help us move closer toward a cure."

It's not the first time Wolfe and his fellow Kirkland attorneys have contributed to the type 1 diabetes community. When a local family approached them with a desire to establish a nonprofit hockey camp exclusively for kids living with type 1 diabetes, Wolfe stepped in pro bono to assist with legal matters. The camp, which takes place each summer in Florida, provides a well-rounded experience focused on hockey and living with type 1 diabetes.

Sam attended the camp two summers ago. While Wolfe can measure the number of players that register and the interest in the camp as a metric, he'll never quite know all the connections built on and off the ice among players. They are the ones who relate to each other and the complications of the lifelong disease requiring them to deal with issues such as where to best place an insulin pump under hockey pads.

"It was a really inspirational opportunity for these kids," Wolfe said.



Brian Wolfe

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