

LAW WEEK

COLORADO

Meet The New Class Of Lawyers

Kasey McDaniel

YOU WANT PREPARATION for being a good lawyer? Try being a good collegiate track athlete.

As with all sports, there are hours of practice each day. For Kasey McDaniel, that was four hours every day of training for the 100-meter hurdles. But unlike most other sports where the event is a singular game played on one day, track meets are often three or four-day stretches taking students out of the classroom starting on Thursday. If you've got a Tuesday and Thursday class, that means missing half your classes for the entire spring semester.

"In terms of managing stress and managing different people's expectations, it was great training," said McDaniel, a new associate at Snell & Wilmer.

She grew up with an attorney father and from as early as she can remember was telling people she wanted to be a lawyer. It seemed a natural course for her. After all, she was always advocating her position.

Her father would laugh and say, "You're a lawyer in training."

In terms of sport, she initially did gymnastics, but she was missing a lot of school and wanted a more ordinary high school experience. She also still wanted an athletic pursuit and the hurdles, with its demands for coordination, seemed a good fit.

She first ran at Drake University on scholarship, and because she had a year of eligibility remaining when she graduated then went to University of Mississippi. There, she was able to get a scholarship, run for that team and get her master's degree



program paid for.

At Ole Miss, she tutored a lot of athletes and saw the difference between the Type-A personality often associated with track runners and the Type-B athletes, who she said can be "great athletes but not great student athletes."

She was good enough in college — she was named she was named an Academic All-American twice — that a European clothing company sponsored her to run professionally. At one point, she was ranked in the top 30 in the world and was on track to run at the Olympic Trials. But the draw of her childhood dreams beckoned, and she

quit to enter the University of Denver Sturm College of Law.

As the new person at the firm, a potpourri of legal work crosses her desk in the commercial litigation department — some products liability, some general contract disputes.

It can be hard nowadays to watch a track meet and see the women she raced against. But she wouldn't have it another way.

"Had I not wanted to be an attorney, I probably would have achieved more on the track," she said. "But I always knew this is where I wanted to be." •

— James Carlson, JCarlson@CircuitMedia.com